Guide to portfolio work for those admitted before 2012-01-01
This document replaces the previously used “Portfolio – Äldre version” (table format).

Purposes of the portfolio
The portfolio is a tool for documentation and in particular reflection, on your PhD education activities within a number of areas. The main purpose of this reflective work is to achieve goals of the PhD programme that are not necessarily reached or examined through your thesis work. Additionally, active reflection will improve the quality of your thesis and PhD education as a whole, and can serve as a basis for future CV writing.

How to work with your portfolio

When?
To fulfil the purposes above, the portfolio work needs to be initiated as soon as you are admitted and then be carried out continuously throughout your PhD studies.

How?
Mahara
The faculty offers a web-based tool; Mahara, that will facilitate your portfolio work. Using Mahara is not compulsory, but it is recommended since it has many advantages over simple text documents. Some of these include:

- access to the portfolio from different computers.
- the possibility to attach files and create links.
- when your portfolio is to be assessed or examined, you can create pages consisting of your choice of representative reflections within different areas.
- the portfolio, including viewing pages, can be electronically shared.

Reflection within seven areas.
You are expected to document and reflect on your activities within seven different areas of your PhD work, out of which the first 5 (A-E) are mandatory. It is mainly your ability to reflect on your work and your learning that is assessed, so don’t forget to practice this by writing down reflections on your various activities early on and then continuously through your studies. You can choose to reflect in Swedish or in English. In the following text, each area is described in more detail, including examples of what you are required to document and reflect on, and a list of questions that help you get started with your reflections.

A. Literature – overall subject area.

Here you are to reflect on the extent to which you have achieved general and specialised expertise in your subject and how you have used literature in this process.

Activities to document and reflect on:
Text books that have been important to you.
Papers that are key to your specific work.
Journal clubs.
Other activities through which you have increased your subject knowledge.
Relevant courses (for example Scientific Communication).
Questions to base reflections on:
Have I studied the literature as specified in my individual study plan?
Do I need to use additional information channels?
What journals and research articles are key to my research assignment?
What courses and other components can increase my subject expertise?
What is my learning process like and what are the ideal conditions for my learning?

B. Teaching

Here you are to reflect on your role and development as a teacher.

Activities to document and reflect on:
Teaching experience, including:
PBL tutoring
Supervision of students in the laboratory or in the clinic.
Supervision of practicals in graduate- or undergraduate courses.

Questions to base reflections on:
Does my study plan include teaching?
What type of teaching would be suitable and valuable for me (subject, level etc)?
How have I developed as a teacher?
Have I taken part in teaching- or course development? How did I go about? How did I document the results of the development?

C. Postgraduate courses – excluding compulsory ones (but including specialist courses for clinicians).

Here you are to reflect on courses you took and what you learned from them.

Examples of courses to document and reflect on:
Teacher training courses.
Methods courses.
University course.
Other courses.

Questions to base reflections on:
Does my study plan include teacher training or other courses?
Have I taken any teacher training course?
What was the most important knowledge gained from it?
Have I used this knowledge in my teaching?
Did I take any methods course? Did I implement any of the knowledge gained?
What course would I gain from taking in the future?

D. Conference participation

Here you are to reflect on your participation in conferences.

Activities to document and reflect on:
Conferences that you have attended including any abstracts/posters/presentations.
At least one international conference and one presentation (poster or oral) is required.
Conferences that you have organized.
Scientific retreats.
Relevant courses (for example oral communication and scientific communication)

Questions to base reflections on:
What type of conferences would be suitable for me? Which one would I specifically like to go to?
Is conference attendance specified in my study plan?
Which were the main take-home messages of the last conference I attended?
How was the quality of the research presented?
Have I implemented/used any of the knowledge I gained?
Who did I connect with?
What are my plans/goals for the next conference (ask more question, talk to more people?)?
How could I improve my presentations?
Have I improved my posters and presentations as a result of courses I took? How?
What do I need to do to be invited as a speaker?

E. Seminars

Here you are to reflect on your participation in seminars.

Activities to document and reflect on:
Seminars that you have attended.
Seminars (institutional/clinical) in which you gave a talk.
Seminars that you have organized.
Relevant courses (for example oral communication and scientific communication)

Questions to base reflections on:
Is seminar attendance specified in my study plan?
Which were the main take-home messages of the last seminar I attended?
How was the quality of the research presented?
Have I implemented/used any of the knowledge I gained?
Who did I connect with?
Did I ask any questions?
How did I do in the last talk I held at a seminar? How could I improve?

F. Work at/exchange with another University

Here you are to reflect on any exchange you may have had with other Universities.

Activities to document and reflect on:
Visits to other laboratories/universities.
Any visitors to your own group/department.

Questions to base reflections on:
Am I planning to spend time in a foreign laboratory during my PhD? Which one?
Why?
What was the most important experience from my visit to the other University? How can this be useful for my future career?

G. Administrative work or equivalent

Reflect on your activities in different working groups, boards and committees

Activities to document and reflect on:
Membership of boards and/or committees.
PhD student council work.
Other organizational work.

Questions to base reflections on:
In which ways are my administrative work valuable to me?
What have I contributed with? How could I increase my contributions?
What is my future plan with regards to engagements on boards and committees?

Assessment and examination of the portfolio

There are three different ways in which your portfolio work will be assessed:

1. You are expected to share and discuss selected parts of your portfolio with your supervisor in connection with your appraisals and the yearly revision of your study plan. Your portfolio reflections constitute an excellent basis for refinement and improvement of your plan.

2. At the half time review, you are required to provide the external opponents, with a copy of, or a link to (if you use Mahara), your portfolio at the same time as you send them your papers. They will assess your portfolio work and discuss it with you at the time of your half time review. After you have carried out any relevant changes to your portfolio, you should send the updated version to the head of the department with responsibility for PhD studies. At the half-time review, you are expected to have reflected on the following areas: Literature, postgraduate courses, conference participation and seminars. Ideally you should also have documented and reflected on activities within other areas of the portfolio.

3. When you apply to defend your thesis (3 months in advance), your portfolio needs to have been approved by your head of the department with responsibility for PhD studies. He/she is the one who examines your portfolio. Create a version of your portfolio (viewing page in Mahara or a word/pdf document) that you feel demonstrates that you have met the requirements as described above. The quality of your reflections is more important than the quantity, but as a general rule, around half an A4 page of reflections per area is most likely sufficient.

The principal for assessment is that you make a selection of activities and reflections within in each area, that you would like to share and be assessed/discussed. The selection should be made in a way that illustrates the progress of your portfolio work (assessment by supervisor and at the half time review) or, in the case of examination, that you have
completed all the mandatory areas as defined above. The portfolio is a means to both achieving/practising the goals and to examining them. It is therefore likely (and encouraged) that your portfolio contains many more reflections than needed as a basis for examination. You can also adapt the selection based on the type of assessment (supervisor, half-time review or examination).