

# Introduction

In this digital age, the web is an ideal home to share and showcase your work. A digital portfolio is a collection of your work which can be shared onscreen, and made available to anyone with a computer and internet connection.

Digital portfolios come in many forms, depending on the information they contain, the person providing them and the target audience. They may be:

- simple collections of files of varying types with a simple user interface for a specific purpose, such as the information held by estate agents on the different types of properties they are selling
- a virtual learning environment (VLE), such as Moodle, which teachers use to store a portfolio of lecture notes, exercises and assignments
- sophisticated databases and associated interfaces, such as some of the medical diagnostic and treatment portfolios.

A digital portfolio is an exciting way to share and showcase your talent and achievements. Not only can you share information in real-time on a global scale, you can also connect with new audiences and include multimedia elements within your portfolio.

In this unit you will learn how to create a digital portfolio that uses web pages to show examples of your work. You will also learn about the life cycle of a project, and gain an understanding of how to design, create and review your digital portfolio. For the purposes of assessment, you will need to design your portfolio to support an application, whether for a job or to college, further training or Higher Education.

The work that you include must cover something from **all** the units in the BTEC First I&CT course, and you could also include work undertaken outside education, such as from hobbies or a part-time job.

**Assessment:** You will be assessed by a series of assignments set by your teacher.

## Learning aims

**In this unit you will:**

- A** design a digital portfolio
- B** create and test a digital portfolio
- C** review the digital portfolio.

# A digital portfolio

Draft

3

This table shows what you must do in order to achieve a **Pass**, **Merit** or **Distinction** grade, and where you can find activities to help you.

Assessment and grading criteria			
Level 1	Level 2 Pass	Level 2 Merit	Level 2 Distinction
Learning aim A: Design a digital portfolio			
<b>1A.1</b> Identify the audience and purpose for the design of a digital portfolio. <b>Assessment activity 3.1, page 17</b>	<b>2A.P1</b> Describe the audience and purpose for the design of a digital portfolio. <b>Assessment activity 3.1, page 17</b>	<b>2A.M1</b> Produce detailed designs for a digital portfolio, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• alternative solutions</li> <li>• detailed storyboard of the layout and content of pages</li> <li>• a detailed structure chart with complete navigation routes</li> <li>• fully referenced sources for the ready-made assets.</li> </ul> <b>Assessment activity 3.1, page 17</b>	<b>2A.D1</b> Justify the final design decisions, explaining how the digital portfolio will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fulfil the stated purpose</li> <li>• meet the needs of the intended audience.</li> </ul> <b>Assessment activity 3.1, page 17</b>
<b>1A.2</b> Produce designs for a digital portfolio, with guidance, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• outline storyboards of the layout and content</li> <li>• a list of ready-made assets to be used.</li> </ul> <b>Assessment activity 3.1, page 17</b>	<b>2A.P2</b> Produce designs for a digital portfolio, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a timeline for the project</li> <li>• a storyboard of the layout and content of pages</li> <li>• a structure chart indicating navigation routes</li> <li>• a list of ready-made assets to be used, including sources.</li> </ul> <b>Assessment activity 3.1, page 17</b>		
Learning aim B: Create and test a digital portfolio			
<b>1B.3</b> English Prepare portfolio content, with guidance. <b>Assessment activity 3.2, page 19</b>	<b>2B.P3</b> English Prepare portfolio content and save in appropriate file formats, using folders, demonstrating awareness of purpose. <b>Assessment activity 3.2, page 19</b>	<b>2B.M2</b> English Select and refine a range of portfolio content and save in appropriate file formats, using a logical folder structure and demonstrating awareness of the audience. <b>Assessment activity 3.2, page 19</b>	<b>2B.D2</b> English Refine the portfolio to improve navigation and include commentaries that justify the choice of content. <b>Assessment activity 3.3, page 27</b>
<b>1B.4</b> Create a functional digital portfolio, with guidance. <b>Assessment activity 3.3, page 27</b>	<b>2B.P4</b> Create a functional digital portfolio, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• home page and section pages</li> <li>• context pages.</li> </ul> <b>Assessment activity 3.3, page 27</b>	<b>2B.M3</b> English Develop the portfolio demonstrating awareness of the audience, using: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a range of suitable assets on the web pages</li> <li>• consistent navigation</li> <li>• commentaries to explain the content.</li> </ul> <b>Assessment activity 3.3, page 27</b>	
<b>1B.5</b> Test the digital portfolio for functionality, with guidance. <b>Assessment activity 3.4, page 30</b>	<b>2B.P5</b> Test the portfolio for purpose and functionality on a different system and browser, and take appropriate action. <b>Assessment activity 3.4, page 30</b>	<b>2B.M4</b> Gather feedback from others and use it to improve the portfolio, demonstrating awareness of audience and purpose. <b>Assessment activity 3.4, page 30</b>	

## Assessment and grading criteria

Level 1

Level 2 Pass

Level 2 Merit

Level 2 Distinction

## Learning aim C: Review the digital portfolio

1C.6

Identify how the final portfolio is suitable for the intended purpose.

**Assessment activity 3.5, page 33**

2C.P6

Explain how the final portfolio is suitable for the intended audience and purpose.

**Assessment activity 3.5, page 33**

2C.M5

Review the extent to which the final portfolio meets the needs of audience and purpose, considering feedback from others.

**Assessment activity 3.5, page 33**

2C.D3

Evaluate the final digital portfolio against the initial designs and justify any changes made, making recommendations for further improvement.

**Assessment activity 3.5, page 33**

English

English Functional Skills signposting

## How you will be assessed

The unit will be assessed by a series of internally marked tasks. You will be expected to show an understanding of the design and development of digital portfolios. The tasks will be set in the context of designing and creating your own digital portfolio, which you can use to apply for courses or employment. For example, you might be given a scenario in which you are asked to describe the purpose of your portfolio or plan out the content using a structure chart.

Your assessments could be in the form of:

- an illustrated report explaining the purpose of your portfolio and identifying who the audience is
- a structure chart listing all your content and assets
- a storyboard showing your portfolio's content and running order
- a report containing screenshots of your home page, section pages and content pages
- a test report and user testing feedback.

# Designing a digital portfolio

## Get started

Technology, social media and multimedia are popular ways people share and engage with information. How do you think digital portfolios can help you develop your own learning? Why do you think potential employers like seeing work presented using an online portfolio? What skills do you think you will acquire from being able to design and create your own digital portfolio?



## Introduction

A **digital portfolio** is an exciting and dynamic way of presenting a set of electronic documents for a specific purpose – in this case to showcase your achievements on your BTEC First I&CT course. Your portfolio's design is an opportunity to showcase your technical and creative abilities, as well as your energy and passion. A strong design tells potential employers immediately that you're a candidate worth taking notice of.

## Digital portfolio – background planning

Before you start planning your digital portfolio, you need to go back to basics. It's important that you understand what the project is and the different stages involved. This background knowledge will help you successfully plan, create and produce your own digital portfolio.

## Defining a project

A significant part of the BTEC First I&CT course involves creating/developing different types of **computer-based products** (e.g. a website or digital graphics), and **systems** (e.g. a computer network or an automated guided vehicle). The term used to describe the process for creating/developing either a product or a system is a **project**.

All projects have a number of common characteristics including:

- a purpose (e.g. to create/develop a product or system)
- a unique start and end point in time
- a scope (a set of activities that need to be undertaken to achieve the purpose)
- a limited set of resources (time, people and budget).

Every product and system has a set of features and functions which define what they are. Your digital portfolio will also have a set of features and functions. Establishing what these are early on in the planning stages will help you to define your project.

The more features and functions you include in your digital portfolio, the more complex it will be to create and the more work you will have to do to complete the project.

## Project lifecycle

Every project has a **lifecycle**. This means that there are stages you will go through as you create/develop the product or system. There are different methodologies for the project lifecycle, but for the purposes of this course we are using three basic stages:

- 1 **Design**. The design stage includes flushing out the idea, creating storyboards, structure charts, deciding on images and graphics, and choosing the type of software required. (See pages 14–17.)

## Key term

**Digital portfolio** – A collection of digital documents gathered together for a specific purpose.

**Project lifecycle** – The process of developing a project through a series of stages.



- 2 **Create/test.** The create/test stage involves creating and developing the product and all elements associated with it. It also involves testing your product to ensure that all elements work. If you are launching a new website, you would need to check that all the links work, and that all the graphics and pages are displaying properly. (See pages 18–30.)
- 3 **Review.** Once you have created your portfolio, you'll need to evaluate it and check whether it meets the original requirements and audiences' needs. (See pages 31–33.)

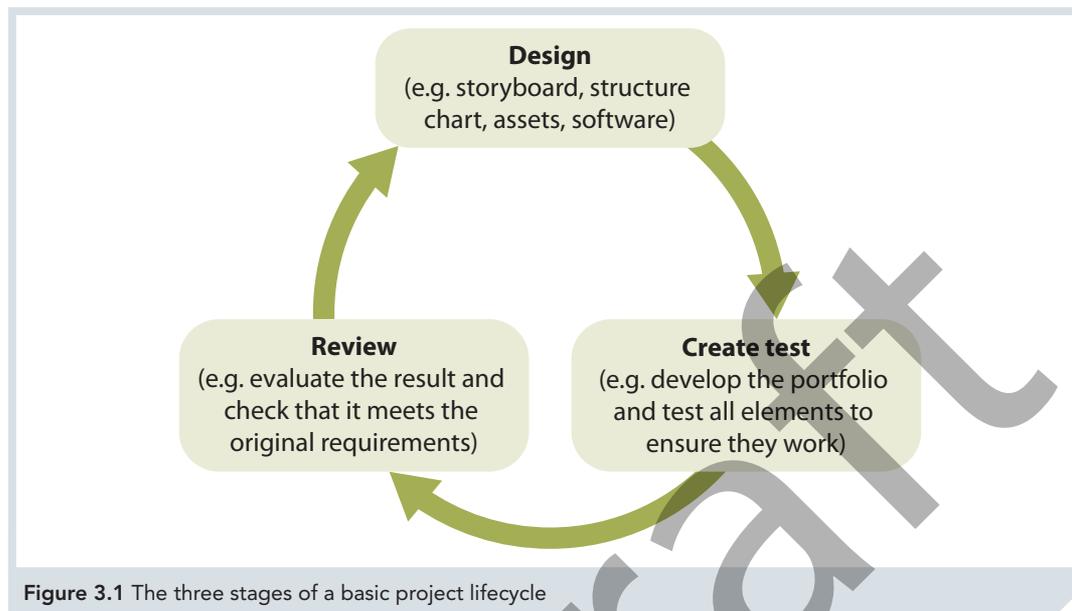


Figure 3.1 The three stages of a basic project lifecycle

Within any stage of the lifecycle, you can make changes. However, once you have finished a stage you should not make further changes. Instead, if you identify any things you'd like to change then create a record of what you would do differently. (More further information on this see section *Reviewing your final digital portfolio*, page 31–33.)

## Digital portfolio structure

Structure refers to how your portfolio is put together. The structure of a digital portfolio depends on the type of portfolio, what it contains and what it will be used for. The structure of your portfolio will be different from one that is used by a commercial organisation to inform people about its products.

### Structure types

When thinking about the structure of your own portfolio, you should consider using one of the following structures:

- 1 **A unit-based approach.** This approach involves presenting information on a unit-by-unit basis.
- 2 **A product-based approach.** This approach involves gathering together information from across different units and presenting it on a product basis. For example, information on a mobile app may require you to pull together work completed in *Unit 6 Creating digital graphics* and *Unit 8 Mobile apps development*.

## Page types

Every digital portfolio should contain the following three types of pages.

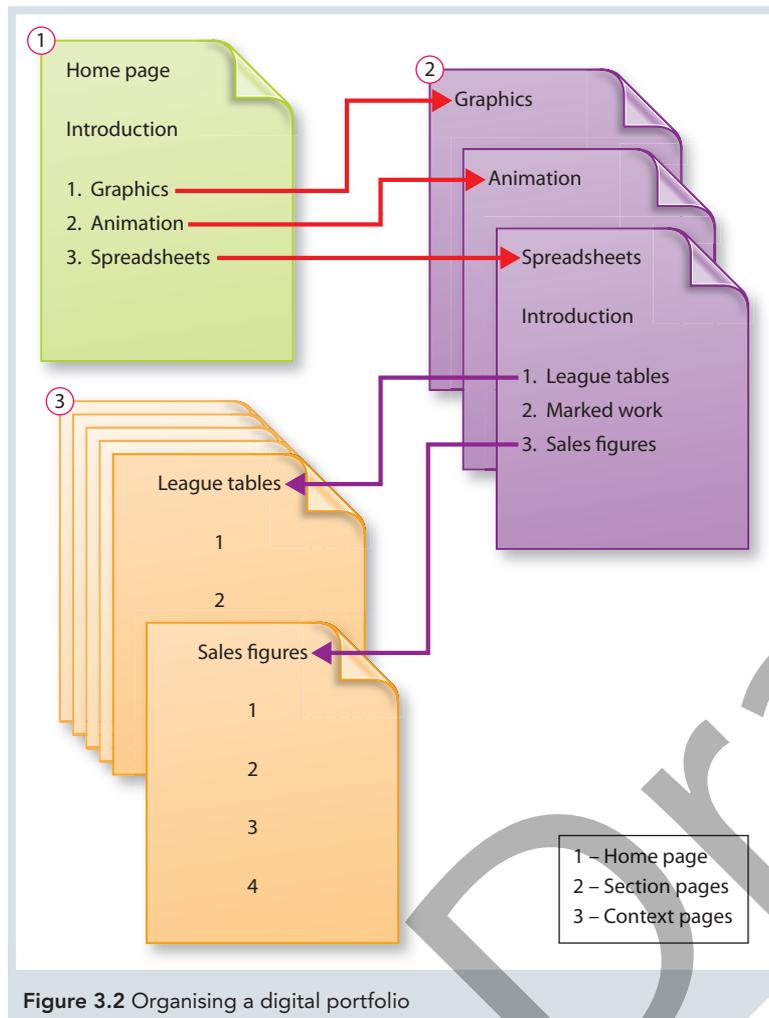


Figure 3.2 Organising a digital portfolio

### 1. Home page

The **home page** is the first page in a portfolio. There is usually a brief introduction to the whole portfolio on this page. Navigation to the section pages in the portfolio is controlled from this page. If your portfolio is going to contain samples of your work on graphics, animation and spreadsheets, you should be able to go to each of these sections from the home page. People looking at the portfolio will normally return to this page when they have finished a section.

### 2. Section pages

A **section page** starts each new section of the portfolio. Each section page should contain a brief description of the section. There may be one section page each for graphics, animation and spreadsheets. There will be navigation controls to the context pages within the section so that the user can navigate to animations you have created and supporting work, such as your design documentation.

### 3. Context pages

The **context pages** are the areas of the portfolio which contain the work you have created in the other units. The context pages will contain a brief description of the pieces of evidence that you have collected and information about how you collected it. They will include navigation links to each item of evidence and back to the section pages and home page.

## Structure chart

You need to create and include a structure chart to show how your pages will be linked together. You could use your work in Activity 3.3 (page 12) to create this.

There are many different ways you can create a structure chart, including a basic block diagram, a navigation chart or a storyboard. An example of a basic structure chart is shown in Figure 3.3. A similar structure would be used for other sections, such as those dealing with the animation and spreadsheet units.

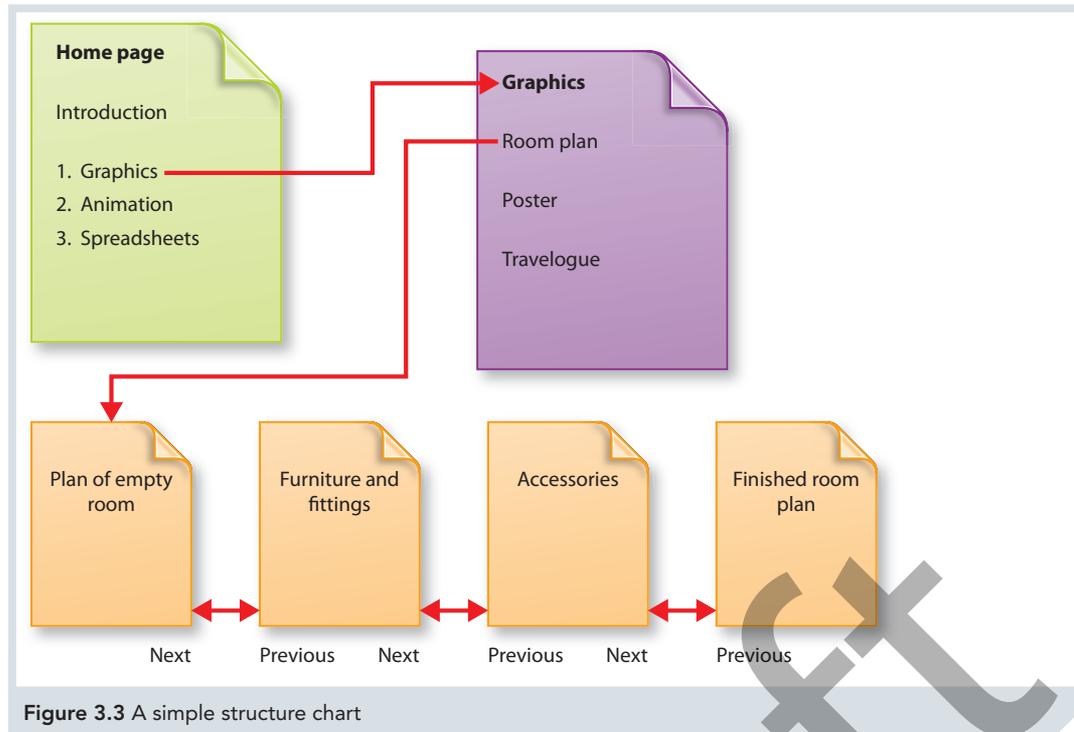


Figure 3.3 A simple structure chart

Once you have completed your structure chart, it is good practice to set up a similar folder structure. As you complete your work, you can save the relevant content into a folder. You will then be able to easily locate all the relevant information when you come to create your portfolio.

## Timeline

A timeline is used to try to predict the total time needed to complete the project and the time needed to complete key stages of the project. It also indicates what you should be working on when and should help you manage your time, e.g. so you don't spend too much time on any one activity! There are many ways that you can do this. Your timeline should identify the different project stages as well as showing which tasks can be done at the same time and which must wait for a previous stage to finish.

### Activity 3.1

Using sheets of paper create a simple design for a home page and try different combinations of colours and fonts.

Decide which you think are the best three combinations.

Show these to a small group of people and see what they think.

Keep the examples and notes of comments for when you start to design your portfolio.

### Just checking

- 1 What are the three stages of a basic project lifecycle? What happens during each stage?
- 2 What are the three types of pages you need to include in your digital portfolio?

**Link**

See Section *Folder structure and storage* page 18 for more on folders.

**Key terms**

**Home page** – The starting point for the portfolio and the page to which readers will return after completing a section.

**Section page** – The introduction page for each major section. It should describe the section and provide navigation through the section.

**Context pages** – Pages which hold the content of the portfolio.

**Discussion point**

What do you understand by the term digital portfolio?

Discuss this in small groups and present your findings to the rest of your class.

Collate the findings of all of the groups and produce a definition.

# User interface

## Introduction

A user interface is a program designed to let people (users) interact with a system. It controls the user's display (screen) and allows the user to exchange information with the system through a series of controls, including buttons, commands and type-in fields.

Simple ways of inputting include data input forms, buttons and **mouseovers**. Simple forms of output include printouts and tabulations, diagrams and sound.

The design of your user interface for your digital portfolio is very important. You will need to sketch out your web pages to show how they will look and what they will contain.

### Did you know?



Design is often about choosing a balance between opposing ideas. It is relatively easy to produce a portfolio that's easy to use if it has hardly any content, or to produce one that has lots of content but has a complex structure and is difficult to navigate. You must decide where you want your portfolio to fit between these two extremes.

## Audience and purpose

The design of your user interface needs to reflect the target audience. How your portfolio looks and how easy it is to navigate will create an impression on your audience.

The people who will be looking at your portfolio could be managers in the organisation you are applying to: for example, the Human Resources Manager, the Technical Manager or the division's Director. All these people may be looking at different things; for example, your ability to communicate, your grasp of technical skills and whether your experience would fit in with their needs.

During your initial design stage, produce a short paragraph describing the purpose of the portfolio. This will help you define its purpose. Make sure your paragraph sets out the following:

- Why you creating the portfolio.
- What you hoping the portfolio will achieve.
- What attributes your portfolio is likely to have. Will it be easy to use or very detailed? Explain why you have chosen to have these attributes.

Image to follow

**Figure 3.4** An example user interface for a digital portfolio

**Activity 3.2**

Create a list of people who you think are likely to see your portfolio. Beside each person, write a short sentence outlining what you think they want/expect to see.

Make a list of the work you would like to include in the portfolio.

List the formats of this work.

Write a few brief notes about how these items will help support your application.

Keep copies of this work, as your notes may help you with your assessment.

## Navigation

Good navigation is essential to allow users to move around your digital portfolio easily. If your portfolio is arranged in sections, your home page should include a **hyperlink** to each section, and each section should include hyperlinks to all the topics relating to that section. This navigation should work whether you're moving forwards or backwards through sections.

Hyperlinks are normally positioned within a **navigation bar**. The location of the navigation bar requires some thought, as while users need to find and access it easily, it also shouldn't take over your page's design. It should also allow easy access to all pages in your digital portfolio, without having to keep going back through the home page.

Hyperlinks often appear as text. Users will click on this to 'jump' (move) to another page. If you prefer, you can also set up menus, images and buttons to provide the navigation.

Whichever navigation scheme you decide to use, it is important that you use it consistently within your portfolio. If you use a navigation bar or menu, make sure you position it in the same place on every page, as this will make it easier for users to navigate through your portfolio.

## Page formatting

This is where you think about how the web pages will look. You will need to decide on a style for the web pages to provide some **consistency** and **continuity**.

### Colour scheme

What colour scheme are you going to use? The colour scheme you choose must be accessible to everyone. Here are some examples of the type of things which you will have to consider:

- Red and yellow is an exciting combination but not one which people can look at for long periods

**This is an example of red on yellow.**

- The combination of red and green causes problems for people who are colour blind.



### Link

See Section *Page content*, page 24, for more information on internal hyperlinks and navigation bars.



### Key terms

**Mouseover** – Something that happens when you hover the mouse pointer over an item. Hovering your mouse over the top level of a menu, for example, might cause the menu to expand.

**Assets** – Things of value that you want to include in your portfolio. Digital assets can include images, sound and video.

**Hyperlinks** – A link (which can be text or a graphic) which takes you to another web page or location within a document.

**Navigation bar** – Is a section of a web page that contains hypertext links, which connect you to other parts of the website.

**Consistency** – When all similar pages look similar throughout the portfolio (e.g. all section pages have the same format).

**Continuity** – When sections flow without major interruptions such as big changes in format or colour.

## ▶▶ CONTINUED

- White on cyan has been found to be a combination which is easily readable, but is it a pleasing combination?

Cyan is a type of blue. Some early home computers used this combination.

- Black on white is the most usual combination, but does it really make an impact?

The use of too many colours can result in the reader losing concentration.

## Fonts and sizes

Once you have decided on a colour scheme, you will need to decide on fonts and sizes for your text.

- Scripts have their place but can be very annoying to read.

*How easy do you find it to read this font?*

- Headings are important as they direct the reader to things that they are interested in. You need to use different fonts or different sizes of a font for headings.
- **Bold**, *italic* and underline need to be used with care. Just use them to highlight occasional words or phrases which have a particular meaning. In this Student book, for instance, you will find that the key terms (important words) and the illustration captions use bold. This helps these features to be easily identifiable from the remainder of the text.
- You need to select readable font sizes, but ones which do not take up too much space. If people cannot easily read material they are likely to ignore it.

### Activity 3.3

Draw a neat, hand-drawn draft of your section pages to show the layout of your portfolio.

Draw a draft of a diagram showing how your home page will be linked to the section pages.

Add the linkages to the context pages to your diagram and note how you will link between context pages.

Note what type of link (e.g. buttons, menus, etc.) you are going to use and what your navigation bar will look like.

Keep this diagram to help you with your design work.

### Just checking

- 1 Name three things you need to consider when planning your colour scheme?
- 2 Why are consistency and continuity important?
- 3 What is a navigation bar and why is it used?

# WorkSpace

## Tim Symmons

### Team leader: interface design

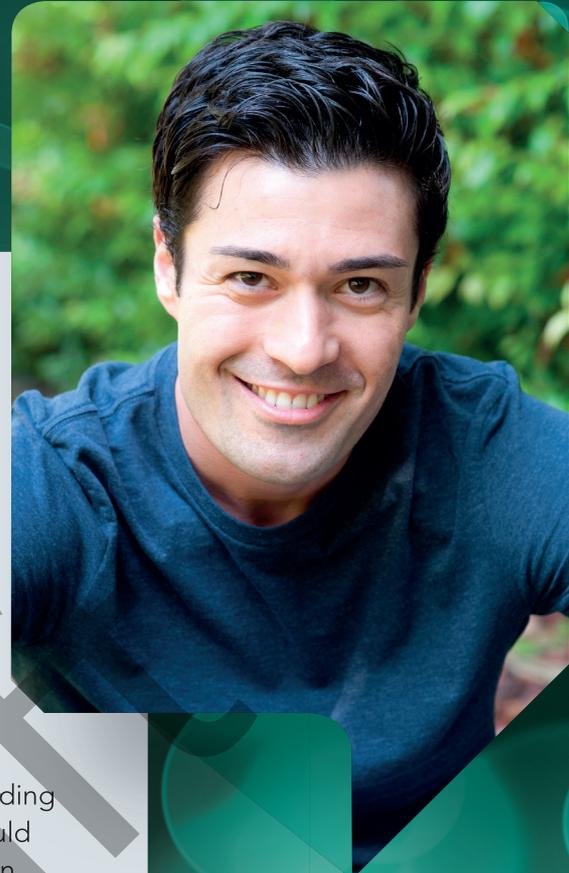
After getting Distinctions in my National Diploma, I went to university to continue my education in Information Technology. In my second year I could pick specialist options, and I chose Human Computer Interaction (HCI). I became fascinated by this developing area, from the design aspects to the psychology and science behind it, and I felt that this was a field in which I could carve out a career.

My first job was a junior designer within a large team of software designers. At first I was given, fairly small tasks, including roughing out designs which more experienced designers would develop. Gradually more interesting and technical work began to come my way. I had an interest in designing system interfaces for users, and my manager spotted that I had a talent for this and encouraged this specialism.

Initially, my work dealt with websites, but gradually I became involved in more general software interfaces. Currently, I'm involved with designing HCIs for people with various disabilities, using different types of hardware and software. HCI technology is a huge field and the ever-expanding ranges of hardware (e.g. smartphone, tablets), and disciplines makes it extremely exciting. Part of what I do involves translating computer sensible information into human sensible information, and the reverse.

It's important to be receptive to new things and to have an aptitude for innovative design. You have to be able to look at a problem and ask questions about how people work, what the computer needs, and how best to provide the environment for both to talk to each other.

There are great opportunities in this field to be involved in pioneering, cutting edge work but also to progress your career and develop your skills and knowledge base.



## Think about it:

- 1 What is HCI?
- 2 What skills and characteristics do you think are needed for this type of job?
- 3 Consider all of the computer applications you use. What do you know about the number and type of interfaces they have?

# Digital portfolio content

## Introduction

Now that you have thought about how your portfolio will look, it is time to consider what it will contain. The portfolio is going to support an application for a job or for a place at college or in Higher Education, so you want to include your best pieces of work which showcase your talents and achievements.

Your digital portfolio must cover work from every unit of the course; you should select the most appropriate pieces which demonstrate a range of talents and skills (e.g. project planning, communication, creative flair, formatting techniques, asset selection), as potential employers will be looking for these.

### Did you know?



It is important to include a variety of extracts to show the full range of the work you have done.

### Key term



**Multimedia files** – Files which contain a mixture of digital images, sound or moving images.

**Storyboard** – A sequence of sketches or images. Storyboards then to be used to plan out photo or video shoots, as well as to plan sequences in TV programmes and films.

**Digital images** – Diagrams, drawings, still photographs and clip art held electronically.

**Audio files** – Any files containing sounds, speech and/or music.

**Moving images** – Any images with movement (cartoons, video, film, etc.).

**Compression** – A method of reducing the size of files.

**Compression ratio** – The approximate percentage by which a file is reduced in size.

**Accessibility** – A measure of how available and easy to use something is to all users.

### Link



For more information on how storyboards are used, see *Unit 4 Creating digital animation*, *Unit 7 Creating digital video* and *Unit 13 Website development*.

## What to include in your portfolio

You need to think about what content to include in your portfolio and what your selection of web pages will look like. You will also want to think about how the user interface, formatting and colour schemes fit together with the content.

You will also need to think about:

- how you will combine files of different formats into your portfolio
- what you can do to limit the size of **multimedia files**, which can be large (tens of megabytes in size)
- how you will get your audience to move systematically through your portfolio.

## Storyboard

A **storyboard** is a graphical representation of the 'story' being told. In the case of a digital portfolio, the storyboard will be a set of sketched web pages presented in a logical sequence determined by the structure chart.

The storyboard will contain a number of panels where each panel will represent a web page, including the user interface method. You need to create a storyboard for your preferred design solution, which may include some details of alternative design solutions (as outlined in more detail on page 17). Your storyboard should contain a minimum of eight panels, and should comprise the following elements:

- 1 A sketch of the home page containing basic notes about the main features and functions and how these relate to the audience and purpose.
- 2 Sketches of a few section pages containing basic notes about the main features and functions and how these relate to the audience and purpose.
- 3 Sketches of several context pages and how the user would move between them, with notes about the main features and functions, as well as how these relate to the audience and purpose

The actual content of the storyboards will depend on what work you are going to include in the portfolio.

## Digital assets

The term digital assets refer to any type of graphic/image, audio clip, video clip or animation sequence. Throughout your course you will produce assets which you could include in your digital portfolio and they include several different file formats.

How are you going to include these different assets in your portfolio? How will they support your application?

**Digital images** can have a variety of different file formats; for example:

**.bmp**                    .jpg                    .tif                    .psd  
**.gif**                    .tng                    .png                    .psp

Each one has its own characteristics and purpose. Digital photographs, drawings, clip art, illustrations, full colour images, black and white images and so on may all have different file types.

Do you have many images which between them use lots of different file formats? If you do, you should save them in just one or two different formats. This will make it a lot simpler to compile and use your portfolio.

**Audio files** also have different formats. Some of the most popular include:

wav                    .tta                    .mp3                    .mpeg

**Moving images** have a variety of formats which you will need to consider. The following file extensions represent some of the more common formats:

.avi                    .asf                    .asx                    .flv                    .mov

## File sizes and compression

The files used to hold digital media tend to be extremely large. One thing that can be done to reduce the size of these files is a technique called **compression**.

Compression is performed in different ways, usually depending on the type of file being compressed:

- **TIFF** files tend not to use compression at all and are always large.
- **JPG** files analyse the image and discard information which the eye is least likely to notice. It is often possible to set the compression ratio for .jpg files.
- **GIF** format reduces the number of colours and abbreviates information for repeating groups.

Compression methods are automatic within file types, although you can set the **compression ratio** (and by this the file size) within some types.

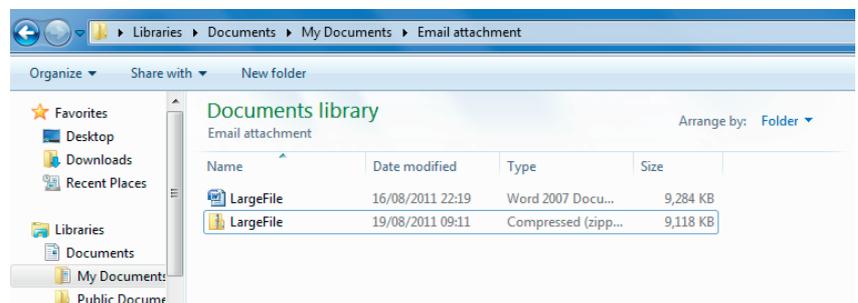


Figure 3.5 Example of a compressed file



### Link

For more information on digital image formats, see *Unit 6 Creating digital graphics*.



### Did you know?

Some file formats cannot be read by some web browsers (TIFF is problematic for web use), so make sure you use file types that can be accessed by everyone.

Vector images and bitmapped images tend to use different file formats, so you can usually tell which type an image is from its file extension.

Some file formats cannot handle large numbers of colours (GIF reduces the number of colours in colour-rich images), so for photos a different file format (such as JPG or PNG) might be more appropriate.



### Link

See *Unit 6 Creating digital graphics* for more information on vector and bitmap images.



### Remember

You will be using web pages for your portfolio, so use image formats which most web browsers can handle, such as GIF and JPG.

## Accessibility

**Accessibility** is a term used to describe how easily people can access the portfolio. It also refers to whether or not all members of your target audience can use your portfolio.

- Can they open the portfolio and find their way around it?
- Can they understand the content of your digital portfolio?
- Can they see and read the content? You will need to consider this for people with visual or auditory impairments.

You should include details of the folders in which you will store the relevant files, even if these are automatically allocated by the software you are using. People who will be reading the portfolio will also need instructions on how to start running the portfolio.

## Web accessibility

When creating web pages, it's very important to think about user accessibility, and whether the content is accessible to people from all abilities and disabilities. Things to consider include:

- **Font and screen colour.** The colour combination of red and green are difficult for some people to read, as are similar colours when layered together (e.g. pink font against a red background).
- **Size of text.** Some users might need to adjust the size of text so as to make text larger and easier to read.
- **Audio.** Some users might have visual impairments, making it hard to read text on a screen so including audio descriptions that can be used by screen readers can help users engage with a page.
- **Flashing effects.** Where possible, these should be avoided or made optional so that users who are prone to seizures caused by these effects are not put at risk.

When pages are correctly designed, developed and edited, all users can have equal access to information and functionality.

## Sources table

In your storyboard you will have identified buttons, pictures, audio clips and other assets that you want to include in your digital portfolio. These will either be original (made by you) or ready-made (made by another person or third party).

As part of your design documentation you need to create a sources table identifying each ready-made asset you are going to include, together with their formats and details of the folder structure in which you will store the relevant files. You may also want to include original assets in the table. (The work you completed in Activity 3.2, page 11, will help you to produce this.)

Remember that you do not need to create a sources table for any assets you have included as part of an alternative design.

## Alternative design ideas

It is important to think of alternate design ideas so that you can be confident that your overall design solution (everything which forms part of your design) is fit for the intended purpose and audience.

For the digital portfolio your alternative design ideas are likely to focus on different approaches to particular aspects of the design, such as an alternative structure (e.g. organised by theme or organised by course unit), a different style or positioning of a menu bar or font type.

The alternative design ideas should be identified and described on your storyboard. With all of your alternative ideas you will need to explain why you have decided not to use them.

You could also briefly describe a completely different design solution, but you do not need to produce a storyboard for this.

### Activity 3.4

Make detailed notes of what digital images your portfolio will include and what formats they are in at the moment.

Make similar notes about any audio files, moving image files and multimedia files you will be using.

Decide on the file formats you are hoping to use for these files.

Note any thoughts or concerns you have about accessibility.

### Just checking

- 1 Which digital image formats are best for use in web pages?
- 2 How can you reduce the file size of large multimedia files?
- 3 What does the term 'accessibility' mean?

### Assessment activity 3.1

1A.1 | 1A.2 | 2A.P1 | 2A.P2 | 2A.M1 | 2A.D1

Using the work you did for Activities 3.1 through to 3.4, start designing your portfolio. Make sure you include all of the following:

- description of the portfolio's purpose
- description of the anticipated audience
- timeline
- content
- structure chart
- storyboard
- alternative design ideas.

### Grading tip

To achieve a **Merit**, you will need to include alternative solutions for your portfolio in your design.

To achieve a **Distinction**, you will need to justify your final design decisions and explain how the portfolio will fulfil the stated purpose and meet the needs of the intended audience.

### Discussion point

In a future project you may need to include people with sight problems, hearing problems or mobility problems in your target audience.

Discuss with your peer group and teacher how you could make provisions for this.

# Creating and testing a digital portfolio

## Get started

Consider the software program(s) you are planning to use to create your digital portfolio. What tools and functions does it provide?

Using the internet, have a look at the different software options you can buy. Compare an expensive piece of software with a cheaper option. What are the similarities and what are the differences?



## Introduction

Now you need to take the designs you have been working on and use them to create your digital portfolio. There are four basic stages in the actual creation process:

- 1 Preparing the content
- 2 Using tools and techniques for page formatting
- 3 Building content into web pages
- 4 Including images and objects.

This section covers preparing the content, and the other stages will be covered later.

## Preparing the content

There are many different pieces of software available for creating web pages. The software that you use will usually be determined by what your school or college has available. This section only deals with the generic aspects of creating web pages and does not include specific techniques or specific software.

## Folder structure and storage

A folder structure and suitable storage is very important to ensure that the content you have selected for inclusion in the portfolio is stored in a logical place. Therefore, when you come to create your digital portfolio you will be able to find it easily. Remember to backup all content, as you don't want to lose any work if a software or computer error occurs.

If you start the course by designing your digital portfolio then it is a good idea to set up a folder structure which is similar to the portfolio structure at the same time. (See pages 7–9.) The advantage of this approach is that as you create suitable content you can store it in an appropriate folder for when you come to create your digital portfolio.

If you are developing the portfolio at the end of the course your teacher should have already asked you to store your work in an appropriate folder structure.

To create links from your web pages that work, you will need to group together only the information you are actually going to use into the appropriate folders in your structure.

Figure 3.6 shows a diagram of a type of folder structure that you could use.

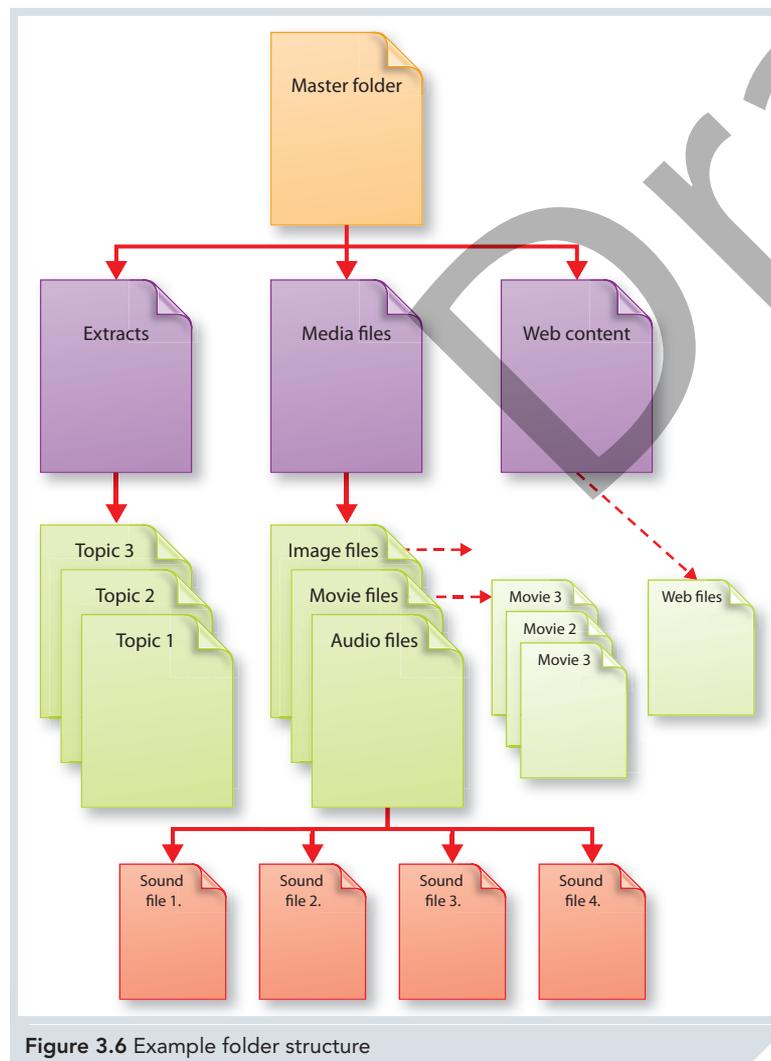


Figure 3.6 Example folder structure

## Gathering and preparing extracts and other content

During the design stage you will have identified the material that you want to include in your portfolio. This material, known as assets, can include some, or all, of the following:

- text extracts from coursework
- extracts from projects
- diagrams
- pictures
- audio files
- video files
- multimedia files.

You should gather all this information together into a single folder so that it is separate from other data on your computer. Having all the data in one folder will allow you to check that you have got everything you need.

## Selecting material from that collected

When you've gathered together all the information you'd like to include in your portfolio, you may find that you have too much material. You will need to **refine** your selection and focus on material which:

- 1 Has a specific purpose – in this case, your purpose is to show your audience what you can do and what sort of person you are
- 2 Provides information in a way which interests your audience and really shows off your achievement and potential – an employer will be looking for specific **characteristics** from applicants and you need to show to the best of your ability that you have these
- 3 Does not duplicate information elsewhere in your portfolio.

## File conversions

You will need to check that your assets (including digital assets), have been saved in the correct format for use within your portfolio. Your audience will also need to be able to view the assets so think about file sizes (as large files could cause a delay with pages loading/opening) and formats. (File formats are covered on pages 15, and you did some preparatory work on this in Activity 3.4, when you identified the best formats for the different types of file.)

You will need to check:

- if the software you have allows you to save the file in the format you have selected
- whether the file can be converted to the format you have selected
- how to convert the file using another software application if a simple saving system will not work
- that the selected format will work within your proposed portfolio.

### Assessment activity 3.2

1B.3 | 2B.P3 | 2B.M2

Prepare all of the material you want to include in your digital portfolio.

Save the content in appropriate file formats.

Set up folders and save material into them.

Show that the material is selected to meet the purpose of the portfolio.

### Grading tip

To achieve a **Merit**, you also need to select and refine a range of content. You need to use a logical folder structure and show that you are aware of the needs of the audience.



### Key terms

**Refine** – To make things better in some way. This could be by careful selection of things (as in this case) or by changing things so they work better (e.g. a computer program) or by making things easier to read or access.

**Characteristics** – The properties that someone or something has. Usually these are things which are useful in certain types of work or situations. Characteristics which are not useful are known as negative characteristics.



### Remember

You should only include file types in your portfolio that can be opened by typical users.

# Page formatting

## Introduction

Page formatting refers to all the basic formatting information (fonts, colours, line spacing and headings) which you need to add to your templates before you include content. You are likely to use whatever web page **authoring software** you have available to create page **templates** for your web pages. You will have to decide on some basic features which are consistent throughout your finished portfolio and include these in your templates.

## Key terms



**Authoring software** – A program used to create, edit and delete web pages.

**Templates** – Web pages that contain just the basic structure you want. You can then slot content into these templates to form the finished web pages. (Templates can also be used for items such as text documents, spreadsheets and slides.)

## Tables

Sometimes information looks better when it is organised in a table because people can easily see and compare information from different sources.

Look at and compare the following two examples. Example 1 uses text, while Example 2 uses a table format to display the same information. Which format do you think makes things clearer and is easier to read?

### Example 1

'I received a distinction for my work on spreadsheets, which received very good comments from my teacher. My merit for **Animation** received good comments from my teacher but I missed one part of the **Distinction** and didn't have time to add it, although I could have done. My **Graphics** work was marked as excellent, and my teacher commented that it "was some of the best work I've seen".'

### Example 2

Unit	Title	Grade	Comment
4	Animation	M	Good work but missed one D criterion
6	Graphics	D	Excellent work
9	Spreadsheets	D	Very good work

If you are going to use tables, you will need to decide on the fonts and headings you will use, and how the text will be aligned within the cells.

## Fonts

Fonts were discussed on pages 12. You need to use fonts that are easy to read and use a variety of sizes to represent different levels of heading.

In this Unit you will find the following types of headings and text:

# Main heading

## Section heading

### Subheading

Content text

You will need to have a similar scheme for your portfolio. It will help your audience to know where major sections start and finish.

## Alignment

Alignment is to do with the boundaries of your content in relation to the edges of a page; where something starts, where it ends and whether it lines up on the left, on the right or in the centre. This can apply to text on a page, in a box or in a table; and also digital assets.

This text is aligned on the left.

This text is aligned in the centre.

This text is aligned on the right.

## Colour

In your design work, you played around with colour combinations to try to find a combination which suited your particular portfolio. Within the software you are using to create web pages, you can set up templates which use your chosen colour scheme as a standard.

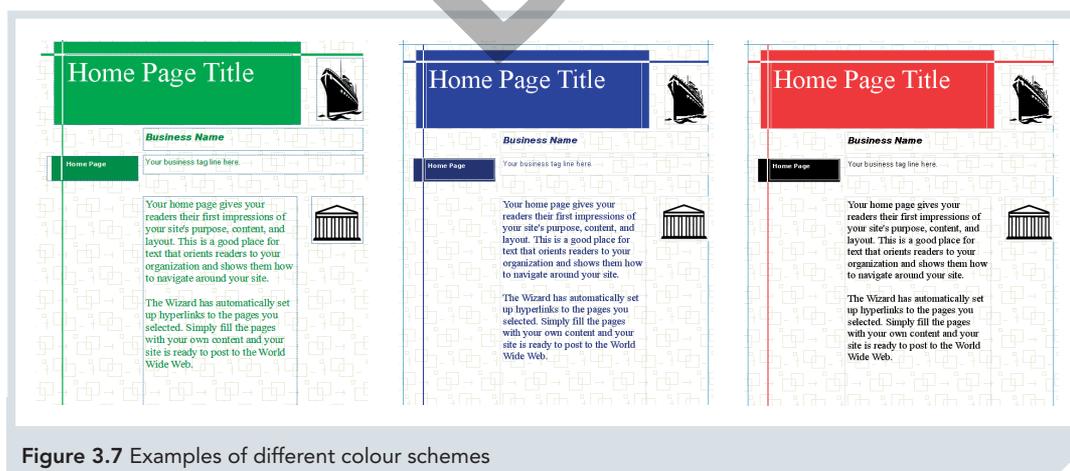


Figure 3.7 Examples of different colour schemes

If you are going to include boxes with important information that you want your audience to notice, using a different colour scheme for these boxes will help to make the information stand out.

## Line spacing

Line spacing can be used for effect. Normal blocks of text are single spaced with the next line of text appearing on the next possible line with no space between. This paragraph is printed using single line spacing.

Sometimes a spacing of 1.15 lines can help with readability, especially where a difficult colour combination is being used. This paragraph is printed using 1.15 spacing.

Increased line spacing is often used between paragraphs, before and after headings, and sometimes between items in a list. It can also be used to make text more easily readable; for example, when producing notes for giving a talk or presentation.

Double spacing can help things to stand out in the text, but if it is used too frequently it can make things more difficult to read. It should, therefore, be used with care. Line spacing greater than double spaced is rarely used as it can look clumsy.

## Bullets and numbered lists

Bullets and numbering are very good for highlighting lists of things. For many lists, bullets will provide better outcomes on web pages, although numbering can be used in menus. Bullets are used for many of the lists in this chapter.

### Activity 3.5

It is important that your digital portfolio looks consistent. Using templates is a very good way of ensuring your portfolio has a consistent look and layout.

- 1 Research what templates are provided by your authoring software. What other standard templates can you find?
- 2 Select a number of templates that you'd like to use in your portfolio. Practise adding in the following different formatting options to these templates:
  - Tables
  - Alignment
  - Fonts
  - Headings
  - Line spacing
  - Colour schemes.
  - Bullets and numbered lists

### Just checking

- 1 Why is it important to use a folder structure for the material you will be using in your portfolio?
- 2 Why are different styles of headings important? What do they tell you? Give an example of three different types of heading.
- 3 What does 'alignment' mean?

# Page content

## Get started



Find examples of different digital portfolios or web pages which are designed (where the focus is on how the portfolio/web pages are designed, the visual impact and the story they tell). Compare these with examples of digital portfolios which are more focused on the content and the messaging around the content.

How does the approach to design and content differ between these two styles?

## Remember



The work you include will have been done to satisfy various marking and grading criteria within the syllabus. It will probably have been done to fit a scenario or to answer a question set by your teacher. The audience for your portfolio will not necessarily have access to this information and so you will have to provide a commentary which describes the things you have included and gives reasons why you have included them.

## Introduction

There is no point in having a beautifully designed portfolio unless it also contains good content. You will need to consider why you are including each piece of content and make sure it is of the highest quality you can produce.

## Text

The text you include on your pages needs to explain the content to your audience. Each piece of content should include an introduction to explain what it is and why you have included it. The introduction should lead your audience into the content by including the reasons the work was undertaken, and which of your characteristics it demonstrates.

In addition to introductions, you may need to add some text to provide a link between the various pieces of work included.

## Images

Images can include photographs, drawings, illustrations, clip art or diagrams.

It is often said that a picture is worth a thousand words, but this is only true when the picture adds something to the work as a whole. The images you select must add something extra to the text, or provide further explanation or clarification of the text. You could also include an image used as a logo to help give a consistent look and feel to the presentation of your portfolio.

You may need to write captions for some of the images used to make sure that they fully explain the text.

## Sound and video

If you are going to use sound clips and video clips then, like images, they must have a real purpose. They have to add something special to the rest of the content, or demonstrate something which the text and images on the web page cannot.

As your portfolio is in support of an application, you might choose to include audio or video of a presentation that you have given to demonstrate your presentation skills. (The ability to present and effectively communicate information is highly valued by employers, and are key skills they look for.)

If you include audio files, you could also look at including a transcript (a written description of what is contained in the audio file). An audio file will give your audience an idea of your expressiveness when speaking to people.

Video will show not only your vocal control, but also your body language during a presentation. You could also include video of you performing a practical activity to demonstrate your practical skills.

While audio and video clips are very useful, you should not include too many. If you are going to use more than one clip, you should make sure they are varied to prevent them from becoming monotonous.

## Lines and shapes

Lines and simple shapes can be used to great advantage to divide sections of information on a website. They can also add to the consistent image that you want to portray in your portfolio.

You can use simple shapes such as rectangles to produce text boxes for highlighting specific pieces of text. You can use lines as dividers to separate different types of information in your text.

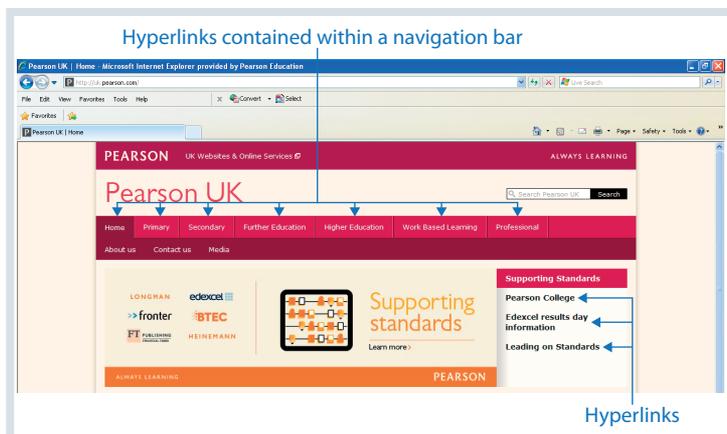


Figure 3.8 Different ways of presenting hyperlinks within a web page

## Internal hyperlinks

Hyperlinks control the navigation from web page to web page. There are many ways of presenting hyperlinks and some have been mentioned already on page 11. Popular ways include:

- a text menu in which the user clicks on the text
- graphics with mouseover and click states
- buttons
- drop-down menu
- navigation bars.

How you use hyperlinks is important from a user's perspective. It needs to be consistent and made easy for users, so that they are able to easily spot hyperlinks within different sections of your portfolio. To provide consistency across your portfolio, you should aim to apply the same style and positioning of your hyperlinks across your portfolio. Have all text hyperlinks the same colour, for example and have the navigation bar in the same location on each of your pages

## Navigation bars

This is the area of a web page which contains the hyperlinks. Navigation bars take up room and may, therefore, limit the space available for you to place your actual content. It is usual practice for every navigation bar to have at least one link to take you to the level above as well as ones to the levels below. Normally there is also a link which takes you to the home page.

### Activity 3.6

Using some of the templates you created in Activity 3.5, create a few sample web pages which include a number of the page content features covered in this section.

Keep notes of what you have done and save the pages you create, as they may be useful for Assessment activity 3.3.

# Visual assets: images and objects 1

## Introduction

Web pages do not just contain text – they also contain assets (graphics, audio, tables, hyperlinks and moving images). In fact, assets cover everything other than text. Within this Unit we have also used the terms ‘images and objects’ when speaking about visual assets. The careful use of images and objects can make your portfolio more interesting and useful. An object could be almost anything other than text which you want to include: diagrams, spreadsheets, graphics, tables and hyperlinks are all objects. In fact, many people would argue that the term ‘object’ includes images.

Earlier in this Unit, we looked at how assets can be used within your portfolio’s content and formatting. This section will deal with images and objects from the point of view of incorporating them into your web pages. It is worth bearing in mind that too many objects and images can be more difficult to cope with than too few.

### Did you know?

If it is appropriate, you can use **coordinates** to position an image or object precisely anywhere on the page.

### Key term

**Coordinates** – A set of values which relate to the position of an image or object. These values will tell you exactly where the image or object is positioned within a particular area.

## Position

The position of an image or object on a web page needs a lot of thought. It can be positioned top, middle or bottom or left, middle or right, but there are many combinations of these simple positions that you can use.

Starting the content of a web page with an image or other object is not always effective unless it immediately introduces the subject visually. It is often better to have some headings and a little text and then include an image or object.

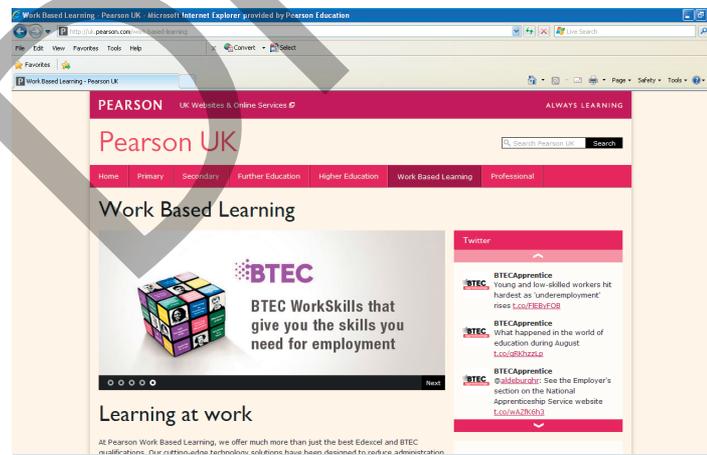


Figure 3.10 Using an image to introduce the content of a web page

Images in the centre of the page are rarely suitably placed. The page looks far more interesting when the image is offset. Placing a logo is also difficult – you need to decide if it should go in a header, footer, side panel or within the main body of the page.

You will have thought about some of these issues at the design stage, but it is only at the creation stage that you get to see what your web pages really look like. Don't be afraid of making changes to your design if you have good reason to do so; and remember to make a note of the change and the reason(s) for it on your design documents.

▶▶ CONTINUED

Link



See *Unit 6 Creating digital graphics* for more information on pixelation.

See *Unit 6 Creating digital graphics* for more information on resolution.

See *Unit 6 Creating digital graphics* for more information on cropping images.

Key terms



**Crop** – To remove parts of an image so that only the bit you want will remain.

**Pixelated** – When an image is enlarged so much that it appears blurry.

**Portrait orientation** – When the height of a page or image is greater than its width (i.e. it is tall and thin).

**Landscape orientation** – When the width of a page or image is greater than its height (i.e. it is short and wide).

**Resolution** – Refers to the amount of information an image holds. The greater the resolution aspect, the better quality the image is.

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Figure 3.12 Text flowing around an image

## Crop and size

Sometimes when you choose an image, you might only want to use part of the image. This is possible – you just need to **crop** the image. Cropping is a form of cutting. You select the part you'd like to keep and then you use the **Crop tool** to cut away the rest of the image. If you're using the cropped image on a website or printing it out, then you need to make sure that the resolution is still ok and that your photo hasn't become all blurry and **pixelated**.

## Alignment

Alignment of text was covered on page 21. Alignment is just as important with objects and images as it is with text.

You can align objects and images horizontally:

- with the left-hand edge of the page or sub-area of the page
- with the right-hand edge of the page or sub-area of the page
- in the centre across the page.

You can also align objects and images vertically:

- at the top of the page
- at the bottom of the page
- in the centre down the page.

As with text alignment, you should think carefully about the most appropriate alignment.

## Orientation

You will need to decide whether the images or objects fit the page better in **landscape** or **portrait orientation**. A web page is usually portrait orientation but that does not necessarily mean that the images have to be portrait orientation within the page.

The orientation will mainly be determined by the natural orientation of the image or object being inserted. Photographs are usually either clearly portrait or landscape. The same is true for most things such as spreadsheet pages, charts and diagrams. Occasionally, objects could be either portrait or landscape and then it is a matter of your judgement as to which looks better on your page.

## Text wrapping

There are various effects that you can apply to text to control how it interacts with nearby images. This is known as text wrapping.

You can set text to:

- flow around an image
- appear to the left and/or right of an image
- start above and continue below an image with no text down the sides of the image
- flow behind an image (for example, if some of the image is transparent)
- appear in front of an image.

When creating your portfolio and adding images, remember that:

- It is much more difficult to read and concentrate on text that runs down both sides of an image. It is better to have text to the left or right of an image rather than on both sides
- An image behind text may cause problems both with identifying the image and with reading the text. This option should be used with care.
- Most people will read text from left to right, so if the image is more important than the text, you might like to position it on the left. If the text is more important, you will probably want to position the image to the right of the text.

## Resolution

The **resolution** (dots per inch) of an image or object (visual assets) is important so that the audience is able to identify what it is showing. However, the resolution will largely be determined by the object being used. If you are presenting objects with a very high resolution, consider using low-resolution thumbnail images that link to the higher-resolution originals. These lower-resolution thumbnails will be smaller (and faster to load) than the originals.

One thing that you can influence is the sizing of objects – you can increase the size of an image until it is out of focus or decrease its size until it can no longer be identified.

### Activity 3.7

Using some of the work you produced in Activity 3.5. and Activity 3.6, include some images and objects to add clarity to your pages.

Keep notes of what you have done and save the pages you create, as they may be useful in Assessment activity 3.3.

### Assessment activity 3.3

1B.4 | 2B.P4 | 2B.M3 | 2B.D2

Create your digital portfolio, including a home page, section pages and context pages.

#### Grading tip

To achieve a **Merit**, you also need to show within your portfolio that you are aware of the needs of the audience by using a suitable range of assets including images and objects; using consistent navigation; providing commentaries to explain the content.

To achieve a **Distinction**, you also need to refine your portfolio to improve navigation and include commentaries that justify the choice of content.

### Just checking

- 1 Give three examples of objects you could include on your web pages.
- 2 Explain the difference between portrait and landscape orientation.
- 3 Which types of text wrapping around images make the text easiest to read?

# Testing your digital portfolio

## Get started



Testing is a broad term. In small groups, discuss what you think is meant by 'testing'. Write down the different steps you think the testing process involves – and at the end of this section, revisit your list and add in any missing stages.

## Introduction

Testing your portfolio is important as it will allow you to identify and correct any errors as well as make further refinements before you release it to your audience. Testing should be carried out when you complete a section of the digital portfolio and at the point that your whole portfolio is complete.

## What tests to complete?

You need to undertake the testing of your digital portfolio in a logical fashion. There are many ways of doing this, and an example test checklist is shown in Figure 3.14.

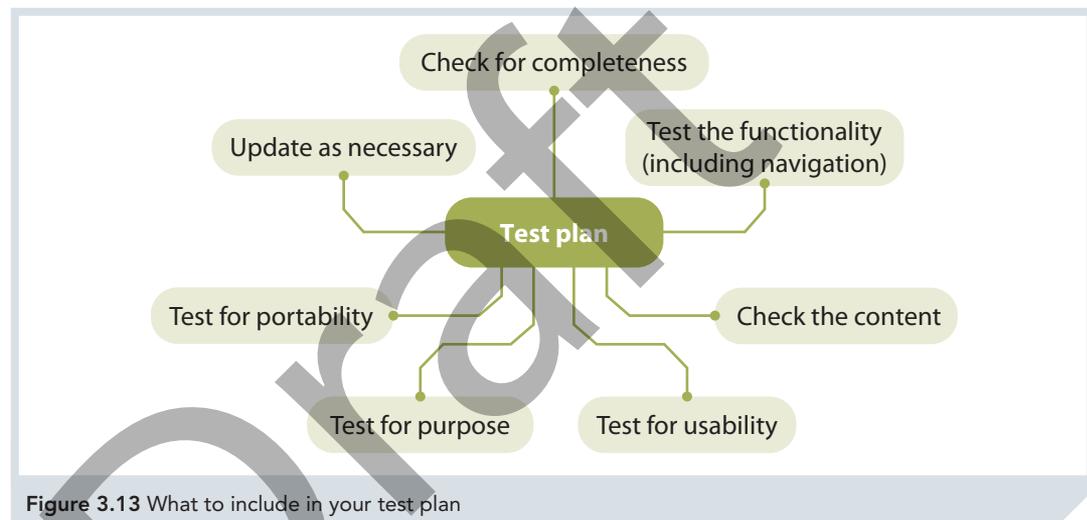


Figure 3.13 What to include in your test plan

## Audience and purpose

Part of the testing process involves checking whether your portfolio is suitable for your audience and if it meets its purpose. Ask yourself the following questions:

- 1 Does it contain everything I wanted to show the audience?
- 2 Does it contain everything that the audience would want to know about me and my work?
- 3 Does it showcase my work in the best possible (appropriate) way?

## Completeness

Checking for completeness involves making sure that all the things that you want to include, together with the commentaries and any additional text, are present in the portfolio.

Go through the lists of assets you made in Activity 3.2 (page 19) and make sure they are all present in the portfolio folder structure. If you have missed anything, make sure you put it into place before you continue.

## Remember



Your portfolio must be complete in itself. Your audience will not be able to access any information which is not in your folder structure.

## Functionality and navigation

Test every pathway through your portfolio. Check that all the hyperlinks work correctly and take you to the expected content. No link should escape being tested. If there are problems, now is the time to correct them.

## Content

- Check that the content is effective (i.e. well-suited to its purpose and audience).
- Check that every page contains what you expect it to contain. Occasionally, content can end up on the wrong page.
- Check every page for errors: spell check and proofread all the text.
- Make sure that assets (including images and objects) have the correct captions. It is surprising how often there are errors within captions.
- Check that there are sensible descriptions for links to other pages, particularly on the home page and the section pages. They should give users a good idea what will be on the page that is being linked to.

## Usability

Testing for usability means testing how easy the portfolio is to use. You should ask the following questions:

- Is the user interface pleasing to look at?
- Is it easy to find information on the pages?
- Can you understand what you have to do just by looking at the pages?
- Is the content eye-catching and consistent in layout?
- Does the content immediately make sense?
- Are there any sudden changes in style?
- Overall, is the portfolio straightforward to use?

Get other people to test your portfolio and give you feedback. Make notes as you go through and make any necessary amendments.

## Portability

**Portability** refers to the portfolio being used on different systems. Test your portfolio on another system using a different browser.

If it does not work on a different system or browser, then you need to work out what you can do to fix this. If the solution is simple (for example, replacing a component that requires Internet Explorer® with one that works in all web browsers), then you can fix it. If the solution is not easy to implement, you could issue a note with the portfolio which states the system requirements it will run on.



### Remember

Your portfolio is designed to help you get a job or a place on something.

Your audience is your prospective employers or admissions' tutors, and they will not want to have to spend time learning how to use your portfolio; any difficulty and they will just not bother.

You need to make an immediate impact.

Your portfolio needs to contain everything the audience is likely to want to see.



### Key term

**Portability** – This is when you can view or use your portfolio across different systems, meaning that your portfolio is 'portable' and can be viewed on systems using different browsers.

## Test users

It is a good idea to get someone else to test your portfolio and feed back to you on their experiences. You could arrange for a test user (whether a friend, family member or another learner), to test your portfolio to ensure that it is fit for purpose and audience and that it is useable. This should happen at several times during the development – so after you have completed each section – and it should happen before you complete the portfolio.

The test user should do a 'walk through' of the portfolio, taking on the role of user. They should note down their findings and recommendations. At this stage this does not need to be a formal process (e.g. creating a questionnaire), but following the testing you should have an informal discussion. This could, for instance, be recorded or the key points could be written down following the discussion.

You should use this feedback to refine your portfolio, noting any instances where you have chosen not to implement any feedback and why you have chosen not to do so.

### Assessment activity 3.4

1B.5 | 2B.P5 | 2B.M4

Test your portfolio for purpose and to make sure that it functions correctly.

Test your portfolio on a different operating system and browser, and take any appropriate action to fix problems.

### Grading tip

To achieve a **Merit**, you also need to get feedback from others and use it to improve your portfolio, demonstrating awareness of your audience and purpose.

### Just checking



- 1 What questions should you ask when checking usability?
- 2 What does 'portability' mean?

# Reviewing your final digital portfolio

## Get started



When you get to the end of a project, it can be very hard to review your own work objectively. This is why it is so important to establish at the start of a project what the purpose is and what the audiences' requirements are.

In the *Get started* section of *Page Content*, page 23, you looked at a number of different types of digital portfolios. Select one and write down what you think its purpose and audience requirements are. Does the portfolio deliver on these?

## Introduction

You should undertake a review of your final portfolio once it has been finished. Reviewing involves taking a critical look at what you have produced and comparing it to what you expected to produce, as well as what your audience actually needed. Reviewing is an extremely difficult skill which is usually only fully developed after many years of practice. It is a good idea to start practising your reviewing skills at every level of your work.

## What to include in your review

Your review process should include the following stages:

- 1 Check how closely the finished portfolio fits the original purpose.
- 2 Consider whether the finished portfolio meet the needs of the audience.
- 3 Evaluate the design documentation.
- 4 Evaluate any changes made during the development of your portfolio.
- 5 Carry out basic user testing (getting users to review the portfolio).
- 6 Incorporate users' feedback.
- 7 Suggest further improvements which could be made, and explain why these improvements are necessary.

## Reviewing for purpose

This involves going back to the beginning and looking at the reasons why you produced the portfolio in the first place. What was its purpose?

The purpose could have been to provide evidence of who you are and what you can do, to support a job application to an IT company. You now need to look at your finished portfolio and compare it against that original purpose.

## Activity 3.8

Ask yourself: 'Have I provided all the information I can to showcase my skills, talent and abilities to this employer?' If the answer is no, then ask yourself, 'What have I missed?'

Ask yourself: 'Could I have provided more information, or different information, which would have been better?' If the answer is yes, then ask yourself, 'What would have been better?'

Keep notes of everything you do in this part of the review, as they may help you with your final assessment.

## Reviewing for audience

Having considered the purpose of the portfolio, you now need to go back and think about what the audience expected.

The audience for your portfolio may be prospective employers who may come from different areas of the business to which you are applying. You need to think about the things these people may want to find out and compare what you have produced against their expectations. Figure 3.14 shows three examples of what different people might be looking for.

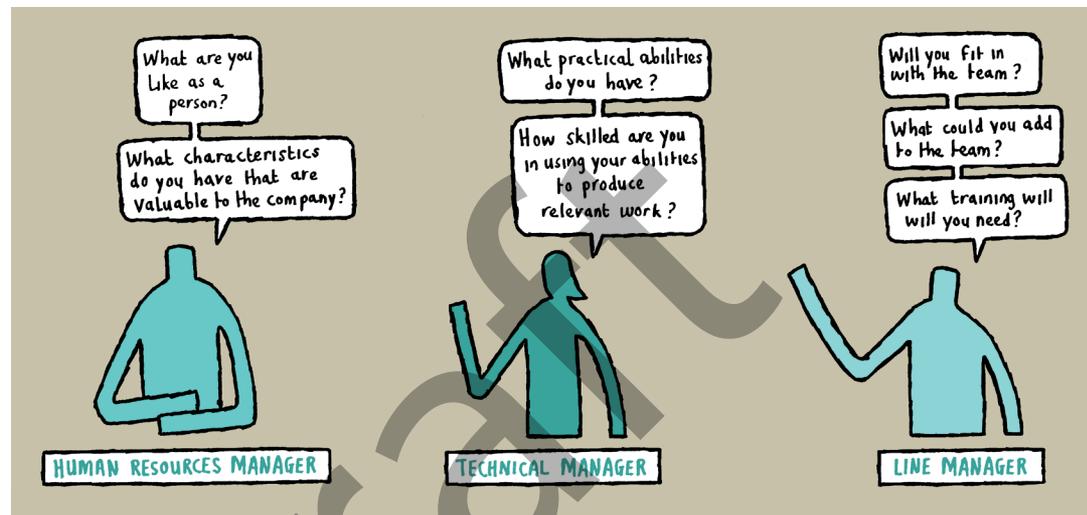


Figure 3.14 What different people within an organisation might be looking for in a potential employee

### Activity 3.9

Ask yourself: 'If I were one of the people likely to see this portfolio, would it provide all the information I need?' If the answer is no, then ask yourself, 'What have I missed?'

Repeat this for a selection of people who may be involved in appointing staff.

Keep notes of everything you do in this part of the review, as they may help you with your final assessment.

## Reviewing the development

This is a review of the processes you went through, not the outcomes or the product. To do this you need to go through all of the actions you have taken, and decide whether each step:

- went well and wouldn't need to be changed in a future development
- went acceptably, but would possibly need thinking about in future
- went badly and should have been done a different way.

This is a very useful activity which you can use for reviewing other projects that you undertake in the future.

**Activity 3.9**

Review all of the stages of making a portfolio and decide which have gone well, which have gone badly and which are merely acceptable.

Note practices you would not change and practices which need some modification.

Keep your notes, as they may help you in your final assessment.

## Reviewing user feedback

This is a more formal review of the portfolio where you ask test user to review what you have produced. The test users should **not** have been involved in the development or earlier testing of the portfolio. They should review the portfolio to determine if it would meet the needs of the intended audience and purpose, and how easy it is to use.

There are numerous methods you could use to gather test users' feedback. One such method could be a questionnaire. This method supports continuity as a questionnaire will contain pre-determined questions – meaning that all test users will be asked the same questions.

You should use the feedback to explain how your portfolio meets the needs of the intended audience and purpose, and it will help you make recommendations for further improvement.

## Suggested improvements

At the end of the review you should be in a position to suggest some further improvements to the portfolio. You should justify why the improvement is needed. Remember – you don't need to implement the recommendations, but it is important to record them. It is possible that such suggestions may lead to the start of a development cycle to update the product.

**Activity 3.10**

Review the user feedback and make a note of any feedback that caused you to make modifications as well as any that could lead to future modifications.

Carefully consider what improvements could be made to your portfolio.

Keep your notes, as they may help you in your final assessment.

**Assessment activity 3.5**

1C.6 | 2C.P6 | 2C.M5 | 2C.D3

Review your portfolio against its original purpose.

Review your portfolio against audience needs.

**Grading tip**

To achieve a **Merit**, you also need to include feedback from others in your review

To achieve a **Distinction**, you also need to evaluate the final portfolio against the design documentation and justify any changes made, making recommendations for further improvement