

# PERSONAL LEARNING PORTFOLIO

*Instructions by Marko Keskinen, 8.9.2016*

**WHAT:** You will create your Personal Learning Portfolio (PLP) as part of your Master's studies.

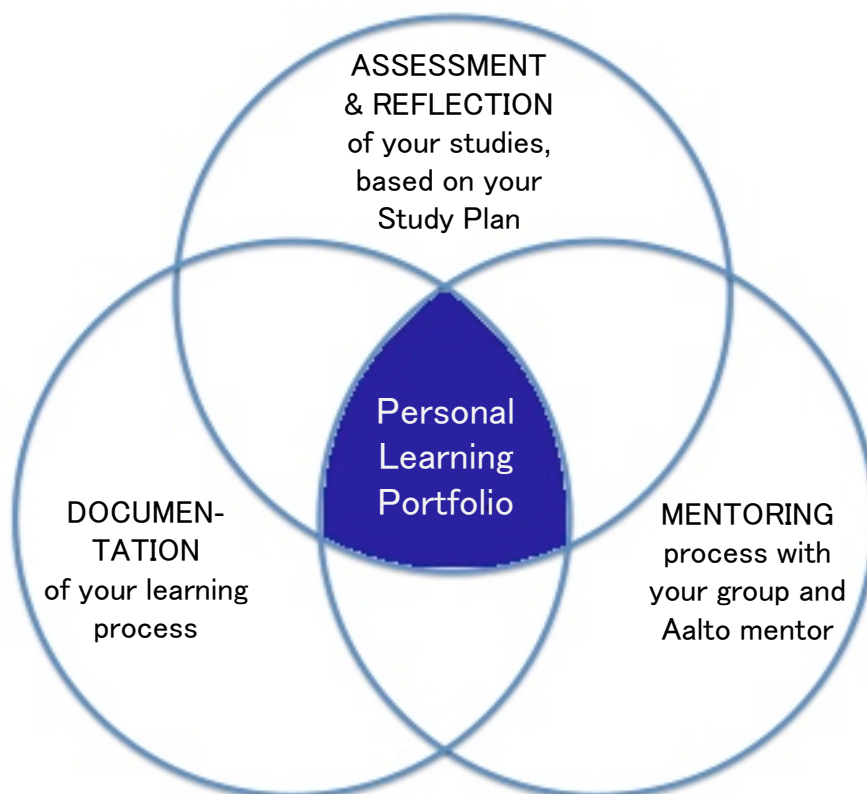
Portfolio forms a part of the course WAT-E1010, and you have to submit your final portfolio at the end of your Master's studies. The PLP is, however, as much about the process of creating your portfolio as it is about the final product.

**WHY:** The portfolio process supports you in your studies.

The portfolio process helps you to plan your studies and future career, provides a way to assess and reflect what you learn during your studies, and documents this all in a way that is beneficial for you when you for example apply for job.

While you will create your own learning portfolio, the portfolio process builds on a mentoring process, where you discuss your portfolio together with your fellow students (peers) in groups as well as your Aalto mentor (Figure on next page). Your portfolio is thus also used as an 'object' that guides and gives focus for your mentoring process.

The WAT teachers will use the portfolios also to assess how we have done in terms of our Master's Programme and its intended learning outcomes.



Adapted from John Zubizarreta: The Learning Portfolio - Reflective Practice for Improving Student Learning

**HOW:** The format of the portfolio is for you to choose, and you can also change the format during the process. The main point is that the chosen format documents the key characteristics of your learning process and answers to the key questions below.

As the **portfolio documents your progress over time i.e. during your studies**, it is recommended that you save your portfolio as a new version after each update. This allows you also to look back and compare your existing portfolio with your past ones: this way you can also assess how your knowledge and skills have developed during your studies.

While your Master's courses will be the core of your portfolio, you can also document in your portfolio learning from related activities, such as work experience or activities in student associations and/or in your hobbies.

The final portfolio can be written documents, e-portfolios (e.g. personal blog) or something completely different (e.g. a business plan, research plan).

To get going, we recommend you to start with a simple text template (see Annex): you can then change and adapt this as you progress.

Each **portfolio must answer to the following key questions:**

1) WHAT ARE MY CURRENT KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS?

*What is my current level of expertise in my field?*

*What have I learned so far during my studies?*

→ This is the **main question** you should answer in your portfolio

→ You should group your learning according to three criteria:

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Identity / Attitude ('general working-life skills')

2) WHERE DO I WANT TO GO + HOW DO I GET THERE?

*What I want to achieve during my studies?*

*What is my plan for my future career?*

*What kind of knowledge and skills I still need?*

*What kind of courses and activities will provide those?*

→ These questions help you to plan your studies and career, and reflect what you have learned so far

Portfolio should include two Annexes:

- Current version of your Personal Study Plan (eHOPS)
- Short record (100-200 words for each meeting) of your Group Meetings and Mentor Meetings, describing how they have contributed to your portfolio process (what you learned) + what you discussed.

## Portfolio process: Group Meetings & Mentor Meetings

The idea is that the portfolio is an evolving document that you update after each period when you have completed a new set of courses.

To help you to reflect and discuss your learning process, **you should meet with your Portfolio Group after each Teaching Period**. The location for the Group Meeting is for you to choose: it can be e.g. over lunch or in a meeting room.

One person from your group acts as a **Chair of the meeting**: the responsibility rotates among the group members. The Chair organizes the meeting place and invites others to the meeting. S/he chairs the meeting, keeping time and ensuring that everyone has a possibility to discuss his/her learning process and its progress and also gets constructive comments from others.

All group members must bring the current version of their portfolio to the meeting, and prepare to present its key points for others. The idea is to provide positive feedback and comments to each other's portfolios, and to reflect together your on-going learning process.

In addition, you will meet individually with your Aalto Mentor (i.e. Academic Adviser) once a semester: s/he will contact you and propose a time and place for your meeting. You must submit the current version of your portfolio to your mentor three days before your mentor meeting.

The diagram below shows the basic structure of your portfolio process and different meetings, including suggested main topics for different meetings.

