

VicTESOL Webinar 11 March 2026

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# Learner Centred Assessment: Portfolio Assessment of the EAL Framework



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# Objectives

- Why is portfolio assessment beneficial?
- How can an EAL Framework course be delivered and assessed with concurrent and integrated units?
- What assessment documentation supports this type of delivery and assessment?

# What a portfolio is

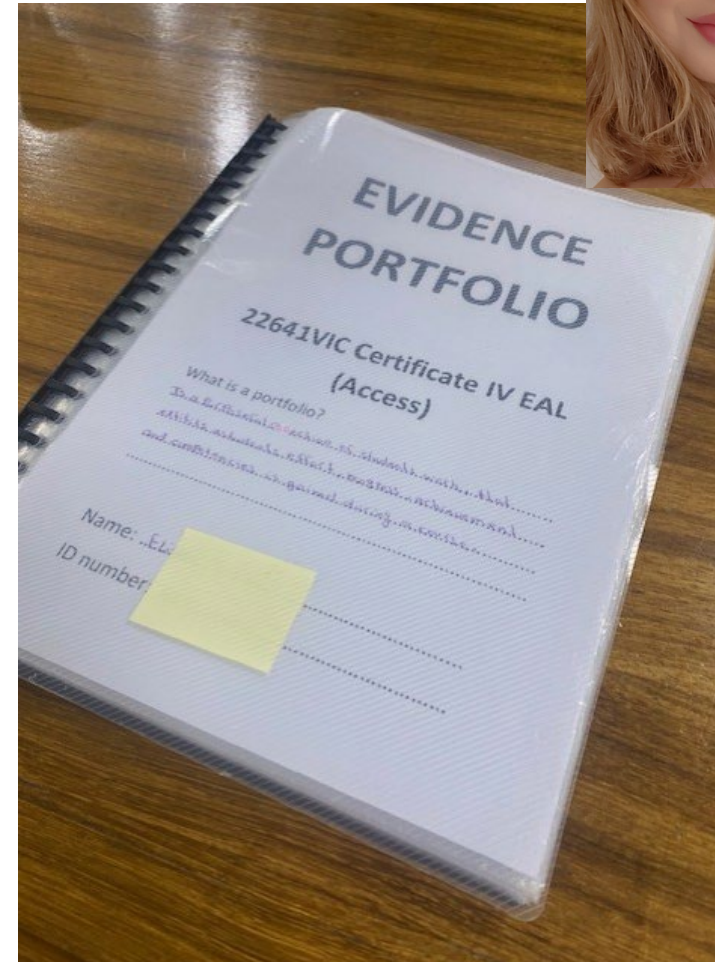
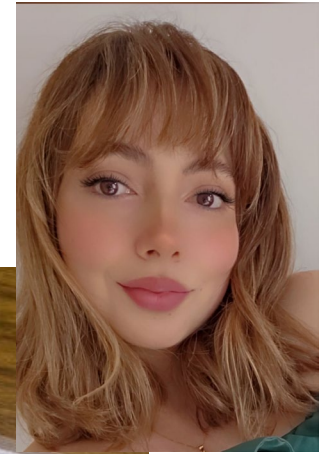
***A learning portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits a student's effort, progress, achievements and competencies gained during a course.***

*(Adapted from Paulson, Paulson & Mayer (1991))*

**A portfolio is “a carefully crafted portrait of what someone knows or can do”** *(F.L. Paulson & P.R. Paulson, 1991, p.2).*

# How we assess – the one slide version!

- One portfolio folder per student – includes ALL their evidence, organised into mini portfolios
- Portfolios have components and criteria that students are aware of
- Each component of the portfolio is assessed against a Checklist



# Who we are

- Regional TAFE
- Small EAL program - currently three levels: Cert II, III & IV (Access)
- One teacher per group
- Victorian Skills First funded program (no AMEP)

# Why we chose portfolio assessment

- Assessment not tied to specific texts (ie assessment is not prescriptive)
- Flexible (evidence can be on any topic or theme and from any UOC)
- Learner-centred
- Allows for maximum integration of units and scaffolded learning
- Allows for formative and summative assessment

# Why we chose portfolio assessment

- Encourages student participation and reflection in the assessment process
- Links really well to the Learning Plan core unit
- Reduces assessment load - one piece of evidence can relate to more than one unit/element
- Students get a good sense of their overall progress and development

# Why it works for us

- One teacher, one course, one intake
- Gives a lot of professional autonomy to the teacher – is a positive teaching experience
- Saves time wasted teaching the same things over and over
- Is complicated to manage, but efficient

# Today's examples

- Cert IV EAL (Access)
- Speaking – casual & formal conversations
- Eliane – current issues project

# Cert IV EAL (Access)

- One semester (18 weeks of classes + 2 weeks term break)
- 20 hours per week
- 8 units concurrent **integrated** delivery
  - VU22411 Research pathways and produce a learning plan and portfolio
  - VU23529 Analyse and participate in complex conversations
  - VU23530 Give and respond to complex spoken texts
  - VU23531 Read and write complex transactional texts
  - VU23532 Read and write complex instructions and advisory texts
  - VU23571 Research significant events in Australian history
  - VU23574 Research current issues
  - VU23576 Investigate Australian identity (from Cert III electives)

# Delivery

- Monday – General English (all units)
- Tuesday – General English (all units)
- Wednesday – General English (all units)
- Thursday – Australian studies (History and Identity content only)
- Friday – General English – online learning (all units)

# Learning and assessment is scaffolded through the semester

- From the personal to the impersonal
- From the familiar to the unfamiliar
- From smaller texts to longer texts
- From less complex to more complex language



Photo by [Paul Becker](#) on [Unsplash](#)

# Syllabus – session plans

- Provides scaffolded ‘chunks’ of learning
- Each ‘chunk’ is a learning sequence
- Skills and knowledge scaffolded week by week
- Chunks based on themes, topics or language focus

# Syllabus

- Sample – Weeks 3 & 4

# Learning and assessment is theme based

To maximise:

- Integration of units
- Contextual learning
- Real language usage
- Authentic text experiences

# Themed assessment

- Let's look at some examples of how to include themed tasks in a portfolio
- THEME 1 Culture
- THEME 2 Jobs and Work

Reading & Writing	Speaking & Listening	Electives	Core
<p>Read a travel blog about cultural etiquette (R transaction &amp; advisory text)</p> <p>Read a website giving cultural tips for living in Australia (R trans)</p> <p>Write a travel blog about cultural etiquette (W transaction &amp; advisory text)</p> <p>Write an email to a friend giving advice about life and culture in Australia (W transaction)</p>	<p>Listen to a YouTube presentation about Aussie cultural etiquette for international students (L pres)</p> <p>Give a presentation to the class about tips for visiting their culture (SP pres)</p> <p>Listen to a pres about culture shock (L pres)</p> <p>Watch a YouTube video about the cultural iceberg theory and take-notes (L pres)</p> <p>Have a conversation with a volunteer about culture (SP cas conv)</p>	<p>Identity – investigate Australian etiquette (complete a Log of sources reviewed in class)</p> <p>Identity – have a discussion about cultural etiquette and norms in Australia (SP formal conversation + elective)</p>	<p>Collate completed tasks in a learner portfolio</p>

Reading & Writing	Speaking & Listening	Electives	Core
<p>Read website tips for job interviews (R transaction &amp; advisory text)</p> <p>Read a job application (R transaction)</p> <p>Write a formal thank you to teacher for arranging appointment (G reported speech, W transaction)</p>	<p>Listen to a video presentation about common job interview questions (L pres)</p> <p>Listen to a job interview (L formal conversation)</p> <p>Have a Zoom conversation with a teacher from a vocational course/field (SP formal conversation)</p> <p>Listen to a conversation about study problems (L casual conversation)</p> <p>Listen to casual conversation in work tearoom (L cas conv)</p>	<p>Current Issues – investigate an issue related to work in Australia and discuss in groups (SP conversation)</p>	<p>Have a zoom appointment (recorded) with a careers advisor (SP formal conversation, LP seek advice)</p>

# The differentiation between learning and assessment

- Colour coded labels (**red** for learning and **green** for portfolio tasks)
- Teacher guided “This task will be suitable to include in your portfolio.”

# Assessment Documentation at the Gordon

- **TAS** = Training and assessment strategy at course level
- **DAP** = Delivery and assessment plan: UOC level mapping
- **Assessment Task** (for students) and **Assessor Guide** (for Teachers – includes **Checklists**)

# Assessment Documentation

- Each UOC has its own DAP where delivery and assessment is mapped in detail against the curriculum
- Each UOC has its own Assessment Task and Assessor Guide, but R/W and S/L units are clustered
- Each UOC uses Portfolio as the **summative** method of assessment BUT the task lists evidence components
- Components use a range of **formative** assessment methods – these methods are listed in the course TAS to show the breadth of assessment methods used
- Evidence is assessed against the relevant Language Skills Checklist (there are 9 for Cert IV)
- Evidence for one Unit can be used as evidence for other Units, as long as the relevant checklist is applied
- **Language Skills Checklists are the key to rigorous portfolio assessment**

# A note about nomenclature

- **Assessment Task** = the Unit assessment documentation.
- In total the whole course has 7 Assessment Tasks:
  - SP/L portfolio (2-unit cluster)
  - R/W portfolio (2-unit cluster)
  - Current Issues portfolio
  - History portfolio
  - Australian Identity portfolio
  - My Portfolio (for Learning Plan unit)
  - My Learning Plan
- **Portfolio Task** = individual pieces of evidence that students and their teacher collect that form part of their portfolio. These are the **components** of a portfolio. They are the formative assessment.

But for students they submit **ONE** course portfolio with all their assessment evidence, the summative assessment (= My Portfolio).

# Supporting Documentation - Examples

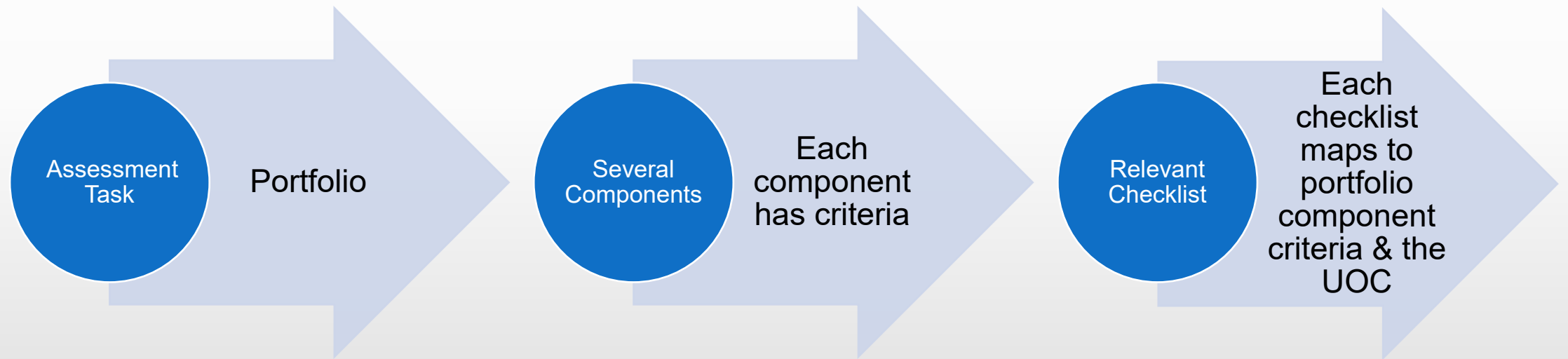
- Assessment Task Sample – SP/L
- Checklist sample – SP Conv
- DAP VU23529

## **MAPPING is key**

All parts of the checklists are mapped to:

- ✓ Portfolio component criteria
- ✓ The curriculum in our Unit DAPs (one checklist might map against several units)

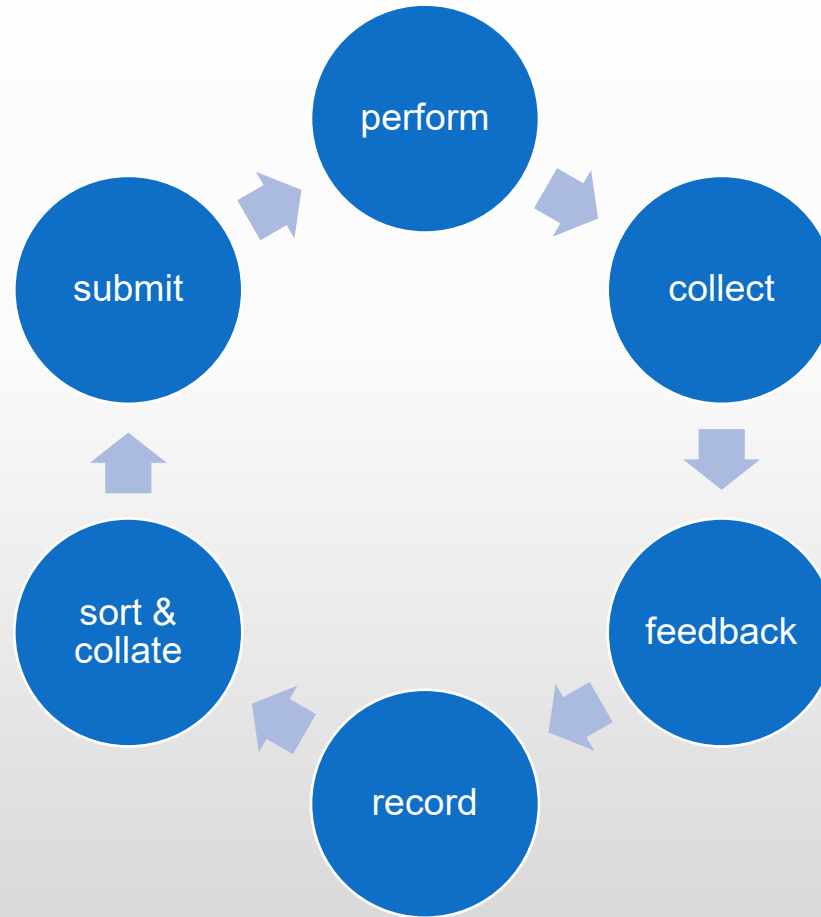
# Assessment Tasks - Summary



# Collecting evidence and Record Sheets

- Volume of evidence requirements need to be met.
- Record keeping and collecting of evidence as you go through the course is the key to a stress-free end of course assessment.
- WE KEEP THE EVIDENCE!

# Evidence collection



# Record sheet - example

- Record sheet anonymised – S/L Portfolio

# Eliane's example

Evidence submitted	Assessed & recorded against Portfolio & Component	Mapped to Unit
Completed note-taking showing research and text analysis from a range of sources on two current issues topics	Current Issues C1 (research issues)	VU23574
	Identity C1d (investigate issues)	VU23576
	R/W C1 (R transactional)	VU23531
Wrote an opinion essay on a chosen topic – social media. All drafts and plan submitted.	Current Issues C2 (W opinion text on issue)	VU23574
	R/W C2 (W transactional text)	VU23531
Teacher observations (completed Checklists) of her leading & participating in group discussions on current issues	Current Issues C3 (discuss issue)	VU23574
	Identity C2 (discuss contemporary Aus society)	VU23576
	Sp/L C2 (SP formal conv)	VU23529



# Some final points

- Well-mapped checklists are essential
- Record sheets help teachers keep on top of who has done what, when and what they need to do
- Portfolio evidence is not prescribed by the Assessment Task (ie it is flexible and learner centred)
- Over time, teachers develop a “library” of suitable Portfolio Tasks they can use, depending on topics and themes
- Portfolio library tasks go through a validation and moderation process within our team to ensure they are pitched right and cover the curriculum

# In conclusion – our objectives

- How portfolio assessment is beneficial.
- How an EAL Framework course can be delivered and assessed with concurrent and integrated units.
- What assessment documentation supports this type of delivery and assessment.

# Finally...

- Don't be afraid – give it a go!

# References & acknowledgements

Paulson, F. L., Paulson, P. R., & Meyer, C. A. (1991). What Makes a Portfolio a Portfolio? Eight thoughtful guidelines will help educators encourage self-directed learning. *Educational Leadership*, 48(5), 60–63.

F.L. Paulson & P.R. Paulson. (1991). *The making of a portfolio*. ERIC. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED334251>

Thank you to Eliane for sharing her work with you.

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