

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG



THERAPEUTIC
Sciences

The use of learning portfolios as a tool to encourage reflection on online learning activities.

Dr Janine van der Linde



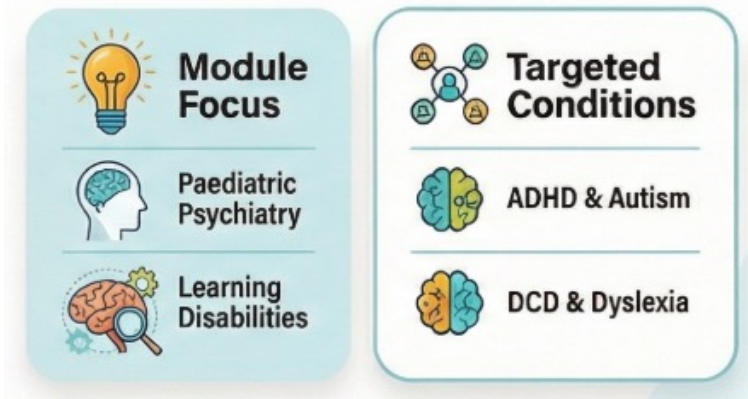
DISCLAIMER

- No financial disclaimers
- I used Notebook LM to generate visuals
- However the text is my own work

Background: Context

The ability to **reflect on practice and context** → essential professional behaviour included within OT practice guidelines and standards.

A **learning portfolio** was used as a **formative assessment** for the 3rd year OT Paediatric Psychiatry



3 week module **PBL** → additional group work with individual online tasks
Introduced **continuous assessment** during block to check learning

Background: Module Development

Individual Online activities → designed according to **21st Century learning design**

❖ **ICT for learning** → online learning activities

❖ **Self-regulation** → managing themselves and taking control of their own learning

→ setting their learning goals

→ deciding on the best strategies to achieve these

Background: Online learning activities

Moodle LMS: Learning activities

- Individual Online lessons
- Voiced over PowerPoints
- Videos
- Quizzes
- Assignments
- Peer review for competency tests
- Online discussions
- Learning Portfolio

Background: Why Learning Portfolios

The Reflective Power of Learning Portfolios

Core Benefits for Learners

Enhancing Learning and Reflection

Portfolios help students reflect on how their specific context influences their learning.



Demonstrating Long-term Progress

These tools track skills development and academic growth over extended periods.



Encouraging Student Ownership

Portfolios empower students to take personal responsibility for their educational journey.



Practical Application and Support

Assessment and Documentation

Portfolios are used to formally document and verify what a student has learned.



Showcasing Individuality

The format allows students to display their unique creativity and personal identity.



Guided Reflection Support

Using guided questions helps students effectively direct their reflective thinking process.



Structured Learning portfolio questions

FORMAT: Voiced over PowerPoint answer selection questions

INSTRUCTIONS

Question will be asked that will provide you with an opportunity to reflect on your learning. The questions ask you about the work you did throughout the module. I want you to consider your theory, but please focus more on critical thinking and reflecting on your learning during this block.

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS

1. What is a **learning disability**? What did you learn about a learning disability that you did not know before?
2. Which assessments do you think will be the best test to use and why?
3. 5. What else do you think you would like to learn about in the treatment of children with learning disabilities?

Learning portfolio reflexion for analysis

1. Challenges online learning

During this block, there were some challenges in terms of connectivity, online lessons, not enough time for lessons etc.

What did you learn about yourself from these challenges? How would you approach online lessons differently in future?

2. Did you manage to reach your learning objectives?

What hindered you from reaching them & what helped you to reach them?

3. Learning approaches

During this block, you had time to engage in a variety of learning activities e.g. reading, watching videos, doing assignments, and working through an online lesson.

What is your strongest learning approach?



Aim of study

- Learning portfolios encouraged OT students to:
 - → reflect on the ***challenges and positive experiences*** they faced during online learning
 - → reflect → ***learning activities*** → helped to learn best during online learning

Methodology

- **Retrospective record review** → 3rd year learning portfolio
- 320 learning portfolios completed between 2020 – 2025.
- A qualitative content analysis was done using **MaxQDA**
- Data years 2020 -2025
 - ❖ Similarities
 - ❖ Differences

Results

Navigating the Digital Classroom: From Adaptation Struggles to Student Success

The Hurdles of Digital Adaptation

Emotional and Mental Strain

Students reported significant feelings of being overwhelmed, fearful, and stressed during the transition.



Technical and Environmental Barriers

Issues like load shedding and environmental distractions frequently disrupt concentration and progress.



Workload and Time Management

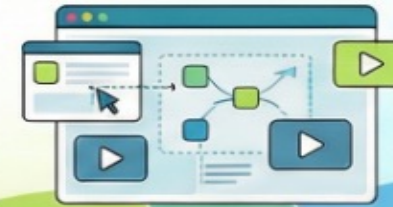
Learners struggle to plan effectively while feeling burdened by the volume of work.



Strategies for High Engagement

Visual and Active Learning

Students showed a clear preference for videos, visual aids, and active learning activities.



Structured Learning Frameworks

Well-organized lessons combined with rigid schedules help students maintain focus and direction.



Collaborative and Interactive Tasks

Quizzes, assignments, and collaborative learning are highly valued for maintaining student interest.



Discussion

- ***Time management*** is a difficulty for students
- Connectivity & loadshedding → improved 2024 & 2025
- Collaboration with other students missing

- Online lessons & discussions improved learning & knowledge
- Students found it hard to work independently without input from the lecturers → improved towards 2025

- Initially students complained about tasks
- Students reflected on resilience & perseverance
- Self-awareness → not to be so hard on themselves

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG



THERAPEUTIC
Sciences

Thank You

Janine.vanderlinde@wits.ac.za