



NORWICH
UNIVERSITY
OF THE ARTS

stand out

portfolio advice



1. What is a Portfolio?

A portfolio showcases the creativity, skills and interests behind your work. Showing us your work is the best way to highlight your suitability for most courses at NUA. We will be looking for:

Making skills

What excites you? We want to see how and what you make! Include a range of work that shows off your creative ability through different media and experimentation.

Idea Development

How did you produce your final outcome? Show us how you think through your ideas as you develop your final work. Explain how you've pushed yourself creatively.

Influences

Who and what inspires you? Show how people, places, objects and narratives influence your ideas and approach to making.



2. The Basics

Think about how your work is presented:

- Include between 20-30 pieces of art work (from 2-5 projects). For digital content guidance please see our course pages of the website.
- Make sure the work is relevant to the course to which you are applying.
- Use neutral backdrops.
- Avoid repetition.
- Photograph large, delicate or heavy work.
- Use good quality images.
- Use neat and subtle labelling.
- Think about the layout and flow of your work – and the story you're telling.



3. Show Off

Your portfolio is your chance to stand out!
Think about:

How you respond to projects: Don't copy your classmates! Look at different influences and challenge the way you think and make.

Layout: Present your work in an order that makes sense to you. Why not include your strongest work at the front and back to leave a lasting impression?

How to stand out: Show your passion for your subject by including work you've created outside of school or college. You can also include evidence of internships, work placements, exhibitions or commissions.

Risk taking: Include work where you've stepped outside your creative comfort zone to learn a new way of making and thinking.

Development: Show the progression of your ideas and influences by including up to three sketchbooks alongside your portfolio.

4. Show it Your Way

Portfolios can be presented in a number of formats. Typical formats include:

Hardcopy (A1-A4 in size)

- **Folders:** Used to transport work mounted on paper, boards or within plastic wallets to help keep its order.
- **Photo boxes / Archive boxes:** Used to display work which is textured and tactile or on individual pages.

Digital

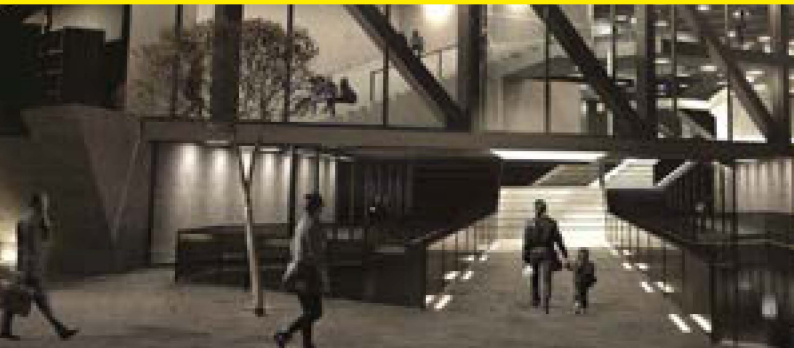
- **Website or blog:** Customise your display to create a distinctive and professional appearance. Website building services include Wix, Behance, GoDaddy and Squarespace.
- **PDF file:** A quick and easy way to compile work into a basic but intuitive digital document.
- **Online file storage:** These are quick to produce with servers such as Google Drive or Dropbox but can be tricky to navigate quickly during an interview.

5. Getting to Know Each Other

Interviews are a two way process! We get to know you; you get to know us. Take your time with your answers and relax! Expect a variety of questions at interview. For example:

- Why have you chosen NUA?
- What influences or inspires you creatively?
- What part of your practice are you most proud of and what do you want to improve?
- What do you hope to achieve at university?
- What are your goals after university?

Don't forget, an interview is your chance to ask questions too! It's best to come prepared.




6. Don't Forget

- **Ask** others for feedback, listen and refine your portfolio.
- **Think** about how you would answer the typical interview questions.
- **Check** the work before and after each interview.



For more detailed advice on your course please go to our website or visit NUA for an open day. We also run portfolio workshops in schools and colleges – just ask your teacher to get in touch!

For more information please visit www.nua.ac.uk or get in touch by emailing student.recruitment@nua.ac.uk

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***you only
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to make
a first
impression***

