

COMPLETED PORTFOLIO EXAMPLE

Applied Leadership Capability Portfolio

Five finished leadership documents produced across one qualification

BSB40520 Certificate IV in Leadership and Management

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Fictional example | Not an assessment submission

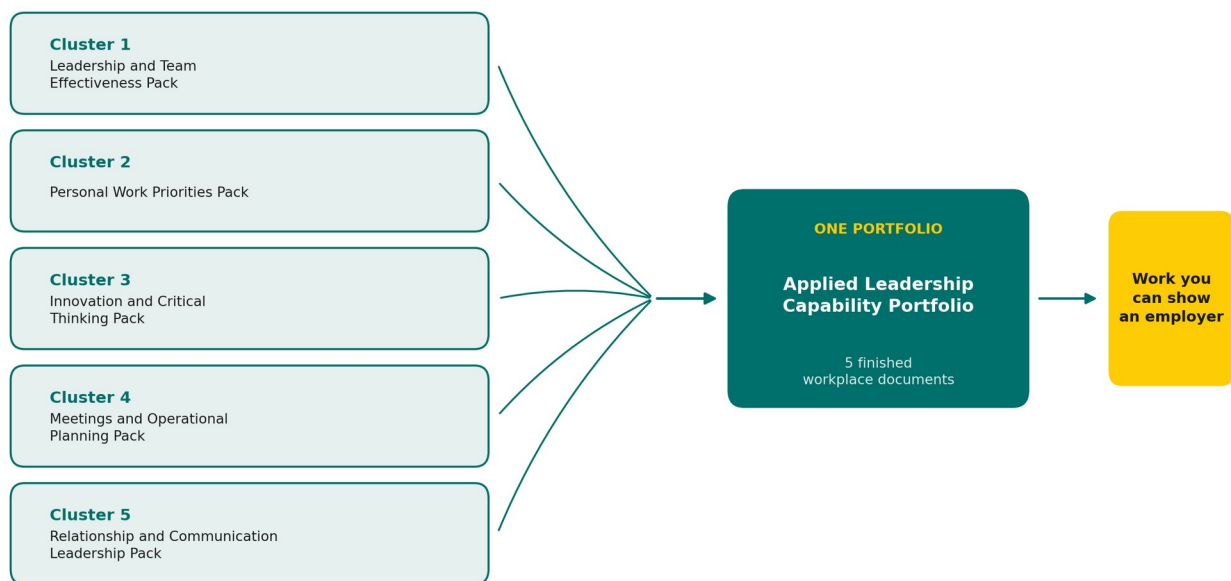
What this portfolio is

A learner finishing BSB40520 Certificate IV in Leadership and Management does not hand over five unrelated assignments. They hold a record of one person learning to lead, in one workplace, over the period it actually takes.

This example shows one document from each of the five stages. The team led in the first stage is the team whose work is improved in the third and reported on in the fourth.

This fictional completed portfolio example shows how selected satisfactory assessment work may be presented as evidence of capability. It is not a qualification, a statement of attainment, an assessment submission or a guarantee of an individual learner's outcome.

How the documents fit together



Each cluster produces one document. Nothing is written twice.

Diagram 1: Connected workplace projects, one portfolio

Professional profile

Name	Alex Mercer
Career direction	Team leadership, supervision and operational coordination
Workplace environment	Orion Consulting, leading a delivery team

I was promoted into my first team leader role at Orion Consulting and spent the qualification learning to do it. I led four people through a capability report, then got my own week under control, then investigated two things everyone complained about and fixed one of them, then ran the meetings and the operational plan, and finally led across a client project where nobody had to do what I asked. This portfolio holds one document from each stage.

Cluster 1: Leadership Foundations and Team Effectiveness

Cluster summary

Four people, a capability report due in four weeks, and a leader none of them reported to a month earlier. Two of the four were still building technical confidence and two had been doing the work longer than the leader had been leading. This cluster produced the plan, the briefing, the record of what was actually done, and an honest reflection on what the leadership changed.

Document details

Portfolio artefact	Leadership and Team Effectiveness Pack
Purpose	To lead a mixed-experience team through a four week project by setting expectations, monitoring progress and handling the problems before the deadline rather than at it.
Learner role	Emerging Team Leader, simulated
Workplace context	Sophia Martinez, Director of Consulting, assigned the project and the team.

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Leadership and Team Effectiveness Pack

Leadership approach	A coaching and collaborative approach, chosen because the team's experience was uneven: the same instruction would have been too much detail for one pair and not enough for the other.
Team goal	Complete the capability report by the end of week four, with findings supported by evidence and reviewed before submission. Written as a result rather than as an activity.
Roles and standards	Sarah Reed leads research. Daniel Brooks prepares the data summary. Ava Johnson reviews quality. Benjamin Hall handles client-facing communication. Each has a stated deliverable, a date and a standard, not just a task.
The briefing	Confirmed the goal, the roles, the standards, the communication channels, the check-in rhythm and how to escalate. Questions were invited before the meeting closed rather than after it.
Monitoring	Two check-in points set before the deadline rather than one review after it. The first found the problem the second would have been too late for.
Coaching record	Daniel missed an internal deadline. The conversation established that the instruction had been unclear rather than ignored, agreed what was needed by when, and set a twenty minute check-in after the first section.
Conflict record	Sarah raised that she was carrying more of the report. Handled on the work rather than the personalities: what was actually outstanding, who would do it, and a written follow up so it did not recur silently.

Reflection on the leadership

The report was delivered on time because the expectations were set early enough to be wrong and corrected, not because the plan was right first time. The check-in that found the problem was the whole difference.

Capability summary

- Sets direction and models the behaviour expected of the team.
- Allocates responsibilities with a stated standard against each.
- Briefs a team and facilitates genuine participation.
- Monitors performance at planned points before the deadline.
- Coaches a team member and addresses conflict without lowering the standard.

Capability reflection

In Alex's words

My first version of the team plan gave everyone a task and a due date and I thought that was the job done. It was not, because a task with no standard attached means four people privately deciding what good looks like. What I actually got wrong, though, was assuming Daniel had ignored the deadline. He had not understood the instruction, and I only found that out because I asked before I told. If I had opened that conversation the way I first drafted it, I would have been correcting the wrong thing and losing him at the same time.

Evidence snapshot

- Each responsibility in the plan names a deliverable, a date and a standard.
- The briefing record shows questions asked and answered, not just topics covered.
- Two monitoring points were scheduled before the deadline and both were held.
- The coaching record separates what was observed from what was concluded.
- The conflict record describes work impact rather than either person's character.
- The reflection cites specific events rather than general statements about leadership.

Cluster 2: Develop Personal Work Priorities

Cluster summary

Leading the team was visible and got done. The leader's own work was not and did not. This cluster covers one week: client reports, enquiries, a project tracker, a team meeting, and a status summary requested mid-week that nothing had been planned around.

Document details

Portfolio artefact	Personal Work Priorities Pack
Purpose	To plan, manage, monitor and review one week of the leader's own work, and to use feedback to change how the next week is planned.
Learner role	Emerging Team Leader, simulated
Workplace context	Sophia Martinez requested the status summary mid-week, which is the pressure the schedule had to absorb.

COMPLETED WORKPLACE DOCUMENT**Personal Work Priorities Pack**

The full picture	Every task listed, including the recurring ones nobody writes down: the tracker update, the enquiries, the meeting preparation. The list was longer than the week, which was the first useful finding.
Priority decisions	The client report, the tracker and the status summary were treated as high priority because each affected somebody else's commitment. Priority was decided by dependency, not by who asked most recently.
The schedule	Focused blocks for the report, shorter windows for enquiries, fixed tracker updates on Tuesday and Thursday, and deliberate buffer time. The buffer was what absorbed the status summary.
Monitoring	Daily entries recording what was completed, what slipped and what was moved. Written at the end of each day rather than reconstructed on Friday.
The adjustment	When the status summary arrived, the schedule was revised rather than abandoned. Two things moved, one was delegated and one was renegotiated with the person who wanted it.
Feedback and change	Sophia's feedback was to communicate schedule changes earlier. The response was a mid-week check-in and a habit of flagging a change when it happens rather than when it becomes visible.

What the week showed

Self-management is not time management. It is deciding what matters, telling the people affected when that changes, and being able to show at the end of the week why the work happened in the order it did.

Capability summary

- Identifies tasks, deadlines, responsibilities and barriers, including unwritten ones.
- Sets priorities by dependency and impact rather than by who asked last.
- Builds a realistic schedule with buffer time and stated dependencies.
- Monitors progress daily and adjusts rather than abandons the plan.
- Seeks feedback on personal work practice and acts on it.

Capability reflection**In Alex's words**

The uncomfortable part of this cluster was the list. Written out, one week's work was clearly more than one week, which meant something had been silently slipping every week and I had been treating that as normal. Sophia's feedback landed harder than I expected: she did not mind the status summary moving, she minded finding out on Thursday. Telling people early costs nothing and I had been treating it as an admission.

Evidence snapshot

- The task list includes recurring work that appears on no formal plan.
- Each priority decision states what depended on the work being done.
- The schedule contains buffer time that was deliberately planned, not left over.
- Monitoring entries were written daily, and record slippage as well as completion.
- The adjustment shows three different responses: move, delegate, renegotiate.
- The feedback record shows a specific change in behaviour, not an intention to improve.

Cluster 3: Critical Thinking and Innovation

Cluster summary

Two things at Orion that everybody complained about and nobody had investigated: information lost when work moves between departments, and client reports coming back for rework because every consultant formats them differently. This cluster turned both into evidence, options and one implemented change.

Document details

Portfolio artefact	Innovation and Critical Thinking Pack
Purpose	To analyse two recurring workplace issues using evidence, evaluate solutions against criteria, and involve the team in improving and testing the chosen idea.
Learner role	Team Leader, simulated
Workplace context	Both issues were raised repeatedly in team conversation and neither had been written down anywhere.

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Innovation and Critical Thinking Pack

The issues	Handover between departments loses information. Client report formatting is inconsistent and causes rework. Both were chosen because they were narrow enough to fix and frequent enough to matter.
Evidence gathered	Project records, examples of reports that came back, meeting notes, Orion procedures, and conversations with people on both sides of a handover. The evidence contradicted the assumption on one of the two issues.
Perspectives considered	The receiving department described the handover problem differently from the sending one. Both descriptions were true, and the difference between them was the actual problem.
Criteria, set first	Effort to implement, effect on the person doing the work, whether it survives someone leaving, and whether it needs anyone's approval. Written before the options were compared.
Options evaluated	For handover: a standard checklist against a short handover meeting. For reports: a template refresh against a peer review step. Each scored against the criteria rather than against preference.
Innovation activity	Two team sessions where the team improved the chosen idea. The checklist the team produced was shorter than the one drafted for them, and better.
Review	The change held because it was small enough to implement without approval and useful enough that people kept doing it after the attention moved on.

Recommendation to the Orion Leadership Team

Adopt the handover checklist with a named owner confirmation, and refresh the report template with a short quality review before client release. Neither needs a budget. Both need somebody to keep asking about them for the first month.

Capability summary

- Analyses a workplace issue using evidence rather than impression.
- Considers the perspectives of people the change would affect.
- Sets comparison criteria before evaluating options.
- Promotes and supports innovation within a team.
- Reviews whether an improvement actually improved anything.

Capability reflection

In Alex's words

I had already decided the handover problem was carelessness in the sending department before I gathered anything. The records showed the information was being sent and not being found, which is a different problem with a different fix. Setting the criteria before looking at the options was the discipline that made the difference, because by the time you have seen the options you already have a favourite and the criteria start bending towards it.

Evidence snapshot

- Each issue is stated narrowly enough that a solution could be judged.
- The evidence includes a source that contradicted the initial assumption.
- Both sides of the handover are recorded, in their own terms.
- The criteria are dated before the option comparison.
- The team session record shows the idea changed as a result of the team's input.
- The review states what was still being done a month later, not what was launched.

Cluster 4: Meetings and Operations

Cluster summary

Two meetings coordinated properly and an operational plan supported through implementation. This is the administrative half of leadership: the notices, the papers, the minutes, the resources, the contingencies and the measures that turn a decision into something that actually happens.

Document details

Portfolio artefact	Meetings and Operational Planning Pack
Purpose	To organise two different business meetings to Orion's requirements, and to coordinate the implementation, monitoring and reporting of an operational plan.
Learner role	Team Leader, simulated
Workplace context	An operational planning meeting and, later, a performance review meeting, both with people who did not attend the other.

COMPLETED WORKPLACE DOCUMENT**Meetings and Operational Planning Pack**

Meeting purpose	Each agenda separates decisions from discussion from information, so people know which items need them present and which are being sent for reading.
Notices and papers	Notice periods, agenda timing, supporting papers circulated in advance, and a distribution record. Papers went out early enough to be read, which is the only reason to send them.
Minutes and actions	Decisions recorded separately from discussion. Every action carries one owner and one date. Minutes approved and stored to Orion's records requirements, including confidentiality.
Resources	Human and physical resources identified against the plan's activities, with the assumption behind each stated so it could be checked rather than inherited.
Contingencies	Prepared for the two resources most likely to fall short, with the trigger for using each contingency written down in advance.
Monitoring and corrective action	Performance measures reviewed during delivery, not after. Two corrective actions taken, each recorded with what prompted it.
Performance report	Compares performance against the measures, states what was corrected and what was not, and makes recommendations rather than only reporting.

Recommendation to management

Keep the split agenda format. In both meetings the decision items were reached with time left, which had not been happening when everything was listed as discussion.

Capability summary

- Organises business meetings to the organisation's documentation requirements.
- Records decisions and actions so they can be followed up.
- Identifies the resources an operational plan actually requires.
- Prepares contingencies with a stated trigger.
- Monitors performance during delivery and reports with recommendations.

Capability reflection**In Alex's words**

Meetings were the part I assumed I already knew how to do. The change that made the difference was splitting the agenda into decisions, discussion and information, because it exposed how much of a typical meeting was people being told things they could have read. The contingency work taught me something else: writing the trigger down in advance is what stops a contingency being used too late, when it has stopped being a contingency and become a rescue.

Evidence snapshot

- Each agenda marks every item as decision, discussion or information.
- The distribution record shows papers went out inside the notice period.
- Minutes record decisions separately from the discussion that produced them.
- Every action has one owner and one date.
- Each resource assumption is stated so it can be checked.
- Each contingency has a written trigger, set before it was needed.

Cluster 5: Relationship and Communication Leadership

Cluster summary

Leading across the Aspire Retail Marketing Transformation, a client project running with the consulting team, the marketing department, the project office and the client. Nobody involved had to do what the leader asked, which is the point of the stage.

Document details

Portfolio artefact	Relationship and Communication Leadership Pack
Purpose	To build and maintain business relationships, lead workplace relationships and team effectiveness, lead two difficult conversations, and apply communication strategies across contexts.
Learner role	Team Leader, simulated
Workplace context	A project spanning departments and an external client, with no authority over most of the people involved.

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Relationship and Communication Leadership Pack

Two relationships, built deliberately	One internal, across departments, and one external with the client contact. Both were planned rather than left to happen: what each person needed, what was needed from them, and how often contact would be made.
Leading without authority	Four recorded occasions of influencing, supporting or guiding people through role confusion, competing deadlines and tension between departments. In three of the four the resolution was a conversation, not a decision.
Team objectives and monitoring	Objectives set with the team, performance monitored twice during the project rather than reviewed at the end, and progress reported to management with issues named rather than smoothed.
Difficult conversation one	About performance. Prepared with purpose, evidence, likely concerns and a target outcome. Held, documented, and followed up a week later, with the follow up independently confirmed.
Difficult conversation two	About behaviour affecting another department. Harder, because the person did not report to the leader. Prepared the same way and held anyway.
Communication strategy	Written, meeting and one-to-one communication chosen by situation: written where a record was needed, one-to-one where a relationship was at stake, and a meeting only where people had to hear each other.
Communication review	Feedback showed a project update everyone had read and nobody had acted on. Rewritten to name the person and the action in the first line.

Final review

The project finished with the client relationship intact and one interdepartmental tension resolved rather than survived. The performance conversation should have happened two weeks earlier, and the only reason it did not was that it was uncomfortable.

Capability summary

- Builds and maintains business relationships deliberately rather than incidentally.
- Leads workplace relationships across departments without authority.
- Sets team objectives and monitors performance during delivery.
- Prepares, leads, documents and follows up a difficult conversation.
- Chooses a communication method by what the situation requires.

Capability reflection

In Alex's words

The second difficult conversation was the one that taught me something. The person did not report to me and I had no lever at all, which forced me to be clear about the actual impact on the work rather than relying on position. It went better than the first one did. The communication review was humbling in a smaller way: my project updates were being read and ignored, which I had been reading as people not caring. They were not being told what to do.

Evidence snapshot

- Both relationships have a stated purpose and a planned contact rhythm.
- Four leading occasions are recorded with what changed as a result of each.
- Performance was monitored twice during the project, not once at the end.
- Each difficult conversation records preparation, the conversation and the follow up.
- One follow up is independently confirmed by a third party.
- The communication review names a specific failure and the specific change made.

Overall capability summary

This portfolio shows that I can lead people and the work at the same time. I can:

- set a team goal that can be measured rather than only agreed with
- give each person a responsibility with a standard attached to it
- brief a team and get real questions rather than silence
- find a problem at a check-in instead of at a deadline
- coach someone back to the standard without lowering it
- address tension on the work rather than on the person
- plan my own week so that a mid-week surprise does not break it
- tell people a plan has changed before they discover it
- investigate a recurring complaint and find out my assumption was wrong
- set comparison criteria before I have a favourite option
- run a meeting that reaches its decisions with time left
- monitor an operational plan during delivery and correct it
- build a working relationship with someone who does not report to me
- prepare and hold a difficult conversation rather than hint at it

Portfolio verification statement

This is a fictional completed portfolio example based on the Orion Consulting simulation used in BSB40520 Certificate IV in Leadership and Management. Alex Mercer is a fictional learner. It demonstrates the type and standard of professional work a learner may develop through the qualification. It is not a qualification, statement of attainment, assessment submission or guarantee of an individual learner's outcome. Learners must complete Vanguard Business Education's formal training and assessment requirements and submit their own work.

This example shows the standard and type of work a learner may produce. Alex Mercer is a fictional learner and no real learner work appears here. It is not an assessment submission, a model answer or a marking guide. Exact requirements are set out in each assessment document.

Build a portfolio like this one

Every document in this example was produced because leading the work needed it.

The qualification is delivered online with SmartCoach™ support alongside a qualified trainer.

Course page: [Certificate IV in Leadership and Management](#)

Questions: Questions about the course or enrolment are answered by a qualified trainer.