

Creating a Portfolio in Microsoft Word

Using Styles & Table of Contents

Purpose of this Briefing

This guide will help you create a clear, well-structured academic or professional portfolio in Microsoft Word.

You will learn to:

- Apply and customise **Styles** for headings and body text
- Create **consistent, professional formatting**
- Produce an **automatic Table of Contents (ToC)**
- Use **appropriate colour schemes and layout choices**

Using Styles is an essential workplace skill — it communicates professionalism, improves readability, and supports accessibility standards.

Step-by-Step Guide

1. Start With a Clean Document

- Open **Microsoft Word**
- Save your document immediately with a meaningful filename (e.g., *Portfolio_JohnSmith_2025.docx*)
- Set margins to **Normal (2.54cm)**
Layout → Margins → Normal

Tip: Set font to Calibri, Arial, or Times New Roman before starting.

2. Use Word Styles for Structure

Word applies structure automatically when you use Styles — not manual bolding or font changes.

Section	Style to Use
Main Title	Title
Major Sections	Heading 1
Sub-sections	Heading 2
Content text	Normal

How to apply:

- Highlight your text
- Go to **Home → Styles**

- Click *Heading 1*, *Heading 2*, or *Normal*
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3. Customising Styles (Professional Look)

Right-click a style (e.g., *Heading 1*) → **Modify**

Recommended settings:

Headings

- **Font:** Calibri, Arial, or Cambria
- **Size:** Heading 1: 18–20pt; Heading 2: 14–16pt
- **Weight:** Bold
- **Colour:** Dark professional tones only
Examples:
 - Navy (#1F4E79)
 - Charcoal Grey (#333333)
 - Dark Green (#0A4D2C) (*good for sustainability-themed work*)

Body Text

- **Font:** Calibri / Arial / Times New Roman
- **Size:** 11–12pt
- **Colour:** Black or very dark grey (#1A1A1A)
- **Spacing:** 1.15 or 1.5 for readability
Home → Paragraph → Line Spacing

Avoid bright colours (red, neon green, yellow) as they look informal and reduce accessibility.

4. Add Page Numbers

Insert → Page Number → Bottom of Page (Centre)

5. Insert your details

Put your name and candidate number into the document header.

Put it on the title page in the next section.

6. Insert a Title Page

A portfolio title page should include:

- Your Name
- Course / Programme Title

- Unit or Project Title
- Submission Date
- Logo (if allowed)

Keep it centred and clean — no WordArt, please.

7. Insert an Automatic Table of Contents

Once headings are applied:

References → Table of Contents → Automatic Table

Your ToC should update as you edit the document:

- Right-click ToC → **Update Field**
 - Choose **Update Entire Table**
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8. Add Professional Page Breaks

Never press Enter repeatedly to start a new page.

Use:

Insert → Page Break

9. Maintain Consistency

Good portfolios follow consistent formatting:

Element	Recommendation
Alignment	Left for body text
Paragraph spacing	Space after paragraphs, not multiple Returns
Bullet styling	Simple dots or dashes
Images / screenshots	Use Captions and Alt text
Justification	Left or Justified, depending on readability preference

Professional & Accessibility Considerations

- ✓ Avoid excessive all-caps
- ✓ Leave white space — don't crowd pages
- ✓ Use ALT text on images
- ✓ Check spelling & grammar (*Review → Spelling & Grammar*)
- ✓ Use headings for screen reader compatibility

Example Style Guide

Element	Style
Font	Calibri (Body)
Colours	Navy + Greyscale (accessible, professional)
Heading 1	20pt, Bold, Navy
Heading 2	16pt, Bold, Dark Grey
Body	11pt, Black
Line Spacing	1.15
Margins	Normal

Self-Check Questions

1. Have I used **Heading Styles** rather than making text big/bold manually?
 2. Does my ToC update automatically when I edit?
 3. Are my fonts consistent throughout?
 4. Have I avoided bright or unprofessional colours?
 5. Does each section start on a **new page using Page Breaks**?
 6. Are page numbers present and correctly positioned?
 7. Is my document easy to read with clear spacing?
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Quick Troubleshooting

Issue	Fix
ToC doesn't update	Right-click → <i>Update Entire Table</i>
Headings not showing in ToC	Ensure you applied <i>Heading 1/2</i> style
Headings formatting changed unexpectedly	Right-click style → <i>Modify</i> → <i>New documents based on this template</i>
Spacing looks messy	<i>Home</i> → <i>Line & Paragraph Spacing</i> → <i>Add Space After Paragraph</i>

Final Tip

Your portfolio represents your professionalism. Clear structure, consistent formatting, and correct use of Word tools demonstrates competence and care.