# Report contents

There are some key elements of an action research report that it may be necessary to include, depending on your audience and purpose. Here are some of the most commonly used ones, though you may feel that you wish to add additional/ alternative elements in your own research report:
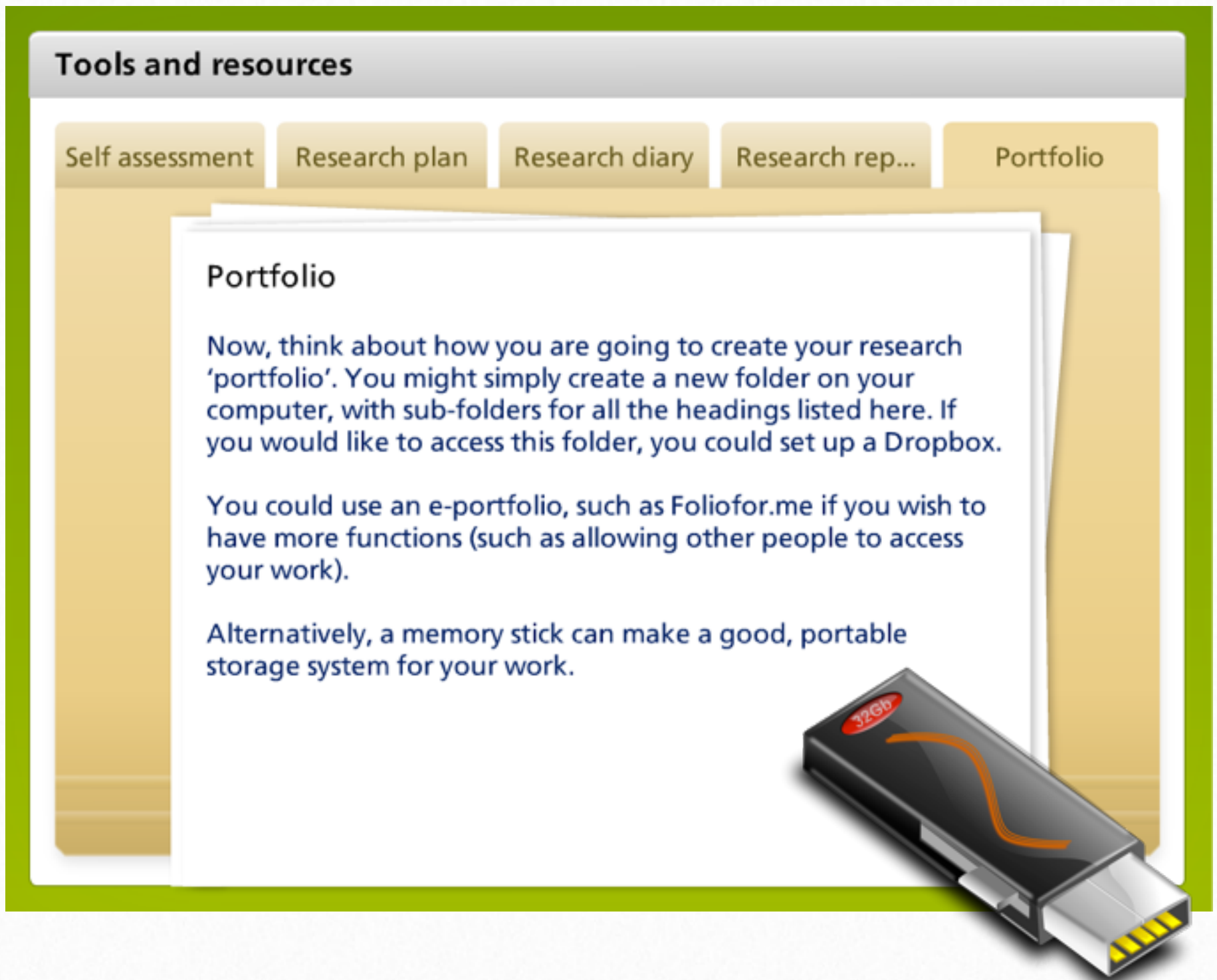

There is more information about each of these suggested elements below. As you read, think back to the various multimodal approaches that are explored in this guide, such as; graphics, audio, video, etc.: Consider whether people will see, hear or interact, onscreen or in person, with your report.
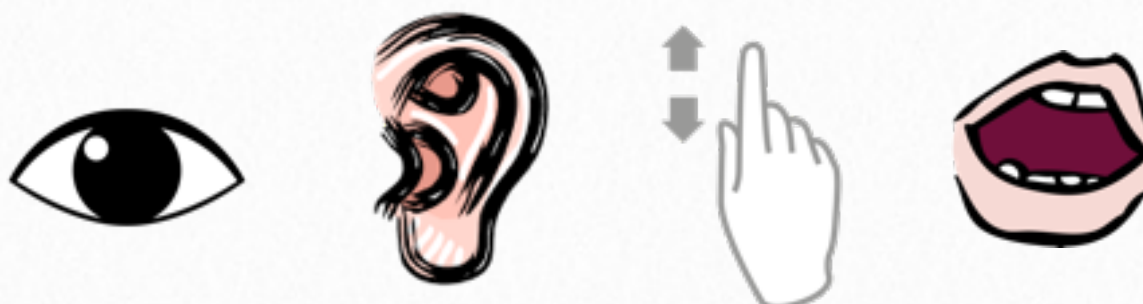
A collection of different 'texts'

Think about the 'texts' (tools, documents and/ or resources) you will collect as you undertake your action research project. The Action Research eCPD that accompanies this guide illustrates some of these as follows:

Tools and resources

| Self assessment | Research plan | Research diary | Research rep... | Portfolio |

Portfolio

Now, think about how you are going to create your research 'portfolio'. You might simply create a new folder on your computer, with sub-folders for all the headings listed here. If you would like to access this folder, you could set up a Dropbox.

You could use an e-portfolio, such as Foliofor.me if you wish to have more functions (such as allowing other people to access your work).

Alternatively, a memory stick can make a good, portable storage system for your work.

The CPD extract above suggests ways of collecting the different texts that could form your report in a portfolio. This portfolio may, for example, be a folder structure on a memory stick, a cardboard folder or a more interactive online portfolio. It's not essential that you use a portfolio but it is a good idea to keep your texts organised and in one place.

Elements of an Action Research Report

Report Element	Contents / Things to consider...
Introduction / Background	☑ Explain what you wanted to improve and why (i.e. why was this important and what evidence is there for this?) ☑ If this is an issue that has been recognised before, can you refer to any related information or research? ☑ Summarise and reference any reading relevant to your project and explain its relevance. ☑ Describe what approach you tried that was different. ☑ Try to justify why you chose this different approach (is there evidence from elsewhere to show why it might be better?)
Method	☑ Explain, specifically, how you carried out your 'change' (intervention) – what exactly did you do that was different? ☑ What, and how much, data did you collect before and after your intervention and was it enough to make a reasonable and valid judgement about what is going on? ☑ Describe how you analysed the data (e.g. quantitative - mean, median or modal average; qualitative - sorting quantitative data into factors / categories, etc.) ☑ If you used any questionnaires, data collection or ethics/ consent forms, say this and include blank copies in the appendix.
Results	☑ Keep copies of 'raw results' (e.g. records, scores, completed questionnaires) some of which you may include in your appendix. If you include them, make it clear which are 'before' and 'after'. ☑ Analyse your 'raw results' to provide summaries of the before and after data (such as totals, averages, key factors, etc.) and, ideally, illustrate this (e.g. using bar or pie-charts and graphs) to give a visual idea of what the data represents. ☑ Interpret your 'summarised' data and explain what 'meaning' it might have. You may also need to explain whether you are confident in these results or whether you have any concerns about making any judgement about them. ☑ Explain whether there has actually been a 'real' change (for the better or for the worse) or is the before and after data inconclusive? ☑ Critically evaluate whether your data collection went to plan – if not, in what way did it go wrong?

Report Element	Contents / Things to consider...
Conclusion	☑ Explain what conclusions can be drawn from your results – did the intervention appear to work? If not, have you any ideas why not? ☑ Mention any relevant research (e.g. as described in your introduction) that supports your conclusion. ☑ Explain whether, on the basis of your experience in this project, your intervention might be further improved? ☑ What else, if anything, would you have done differently, now you have completed your project (e.g. the location and extent of your research, etc.)? ☑ What suggestions do you have for further useful (action) research?
References	☑ Referencing ensures that you credit any, and all, sources of information that you use in your report. It also enables others to check these sources and to critically evaluate your interpretation and argument. The most common convention in research reports is to use Harvard Referencing.
Appendices	☑ Data collection forms (blanks) ☑ Ethics / consent forms ☑ Raw results (e.g. samples of completed questionnaires) NB/ make sure that personal data is blanked out.

Different report types

As outlined in this guide, you can present your report in a wide variety of forms. For example, you could write it, using text and graphics/ charts. Alternatively, you could create a multimedia presentation, (such as a Prezi) or an online noticeboard (such as a Padlet), e.g. with embedded audios, files and/ or links to further research findings.