

Georgia 4-H Dean's Awards Portfolios

The portfolio is cumulative, spanning a 4-H'er's entire career. What this means and how it looks will vary from student to student. You will likely see evidence of participation from as early as elementary school all the way through high school, with many grades/schools in between. Look for evidence of growth and development from their starting point to where they are today as a youth experiencing and participating in the 4-H program. Moreover, we state that one of our objectives is to recognize youth who have participated and excelled in a broad spectrum of activities and experiences on a sustained basis over time.

5 Scoring Criteria

Clear Description of 4-H'er (up to 8 points):

As you judge this portion, look first to the 4-H'er's cover letter, and then consider how they portray themselves throughout their portfolio. Considering the portfolio in total will help you gain an understanding for who they are, where they are in their 4-H career, and what they have accomplished in the "project area" that you are judging.

The 4-H'er's Experience (up to 15 points):

This section is similar to the Clear Description of the 4-H'er, in that you are looking for evidence in their letter and throughout the portfolio of their experiences in 4-H and how those have guided their path, impacted their life, and shaped decisions for their future. The student may also mention experiences in other organizations that have contributed to their work in their project area. We can appreciate their work in other organizations and how it contributes to their knowledge and sharing of the project area.

Project Work (up to 37 points):

Evidence of project work will primarily be found in the two pages of accomplishments. This is the category with the highest weight. A guiding thought is that the portfolios should inform you of the things that the 4-H'er has done to become an expert in their project area. Focus primarily on their learning activities, which may include workshops, judging event preparation, tours, awards, and other activities that allow them to become an expert in their area.

As a judge, you can also think about this section in terms of the learning taking place through hands-on experiences -- anything that shows evidence that the 4-H'er developed skills.

Sharing and Helping (up to 25 points):

Evidence of sharing and helping will primarily be found in the two pages of accomplishments. This is the category with the second-highest weighted score.

Look for statements and documentation on how the 4-H'er has taught and shared information with others. This could be from facilitating a workshop, contributing to a newsletter, leading a



project club, giving a presentation, developing an exhibit, or using their project area to improve the lives of others. Sharing and helping can mean direct or indirect contact.

One overarching idea that should be communicated through their two pages of accomplishments is how they, as leaders, have taught and shared information with others. You should also expect to see clear evidence, through documentation, illustrating and communicating how the 4-H'er has applied what they learned in a manner that allowed others to learn and/or benefit from them.

Reliability, Layout, and Accuracy (up to 15 points):

Evidence of reliability and accuracy should come from the letters of support included in the portfolio. Do the letters of support affirm their work, honors, and awards? In the supporting material, has the 4-H'er been honest in the role they played and the impact of their sharing and helping work? Are there pictures and materials to document their work? The Layout component of this part of the score sheet is rather subjective. Consider the following: Do you like the layout? Is the layout appealing and easy to follow? Does it communicate to you the priorities for their project work, or do you have to search for the priorities?

Strong Portfolios Will Show Evidence Of:

- Quality work
- Quantity in numbers (not just that they have done a few things for a few people). The conflicting part of quantity is that big numbers don't always mean big impact.
- Activities done and experiences had by the 4-H'er with examples of how it has helped them learn, positively develop, and impact others.
- Variety - because it is cumulative, there should be growth in what they have done, showing how their knowledge has increased. Think of it like basic science as a building block -- what a student studies in the fifth grade is not the same as what they study in high school, but their learning does build from year to year.

Additional Scoring Tips:

Some judges may prefer the method of reviewing all the portfolios without scoring to find the most ideal one. Then, they use that portfolio(s) as a basis for scoring the rest.

As a judge, the main focus is to be consistent, if you tend to score 4-H'ers high, then approach each portfolio in that way. If you tend to score 4-H'ers low, then approach each portfolio in that same way. This is much like reviewing resumes from job candidates and selecting the one that you consider best suited for the position.

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Summer 2016

06/2020



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