

4.7

WRITING

An essay

I can write a structured essay supporting my arguments with reasons and examples and using a range of cohesive devices.

1 SPEAKING Discuss the questions.

- 1 Do you know what you want to do when you leave school or university?
- 2 If not, how will you decide?
- 3 If you do know, what helped you make a decision?

2 Read UK TODAY and answer the questions in pairs.

UK TODAY

Portfolio working is when an individual has multiple strands to their career rather than just one. This trend has been growing for some time in the UK, where, fuelled by desire and also economic necessity, younger people are actively seeking more variety in their employment than older generations did. Portfolio working acknowledges that people are not one-dimensional but have different skills and interests and can successfully fulfil more than one professional role.

- 1 What advantages and disadvantages to portfolio working can you think of?
- 2 Do you think portfolio working would suit you personally? Why?/Why not?
- 3 Given the choice, which two or three careers would you like to combine?

3 Read the task and answer the questions in your notebook.

Portfolio working is a modern alternative to the traditional 'job for life'. Write an essay of 300–350 words in which you present your opinion on the topic. In your essay discuss the following aspects:

- developing a variety of skills and knowledge,
- potential risks,
- career building.

- 1 What could be the advantages of developing a variety of skills and knowledge through portfolio working?
- 2 Describe your idea of an average working week for someone engaged in portfolio working.
- 3 Which career path appeals to you more: one offered by a single employer or one working independently for a variety of employers?
- 4 What are the potential risks of working in two or three different fields at the same time?
- 5 What is your overall opinion on portfolio working?

4 Read the essay. How does the author answer the questions in Exercise 3?

Portfolio Working



It is often said that the traditional 'job for life' is on the way out and is being replaced by portfolio working, or in other words, holding a variety of jobs at the same time. If this is true, **what is most important to consider** when deciding if portfolio working

is suitable for you?

To begin with, few of us have just one ability and in fact, most of us possess a range of skills and are able to fulfil a variety of different professional roles. This is where portfolio working comes in since it provides the opportunity for individuals to work in many different fields. **What this means is** that someone with computer skills, **for instance**, could be employed two days a week by a software company. In addition to this job, if he or she also has good writing skills they might find employment as a journalist for a further two days, then spend another day volunteering. Working in this way allows the use of different talents rather than only one. However, **this is not to say that** there are no drawbacks. It is, for example, not easy to manage a variety of working environments and this can cause considerable anxiety for those engaged in portfolio working.

Perhaps a more important aspect to consider, however, is choice. Portfolio working allows people to choose how they will develop their own careers, rather than following a set career path laid out by a company. **There is also** the potential advantage of being able to fit work around home life and interests, thus maintaining a more favourable work/life balance. **It can be argued**, though, **that** the financial uncertainty which goes hand in hand with this freedom makes portfolio working too risky for some people.

On balance, it would seem that what is most important to bear in mind about portfolio working is the variety it offers by taking advantage of different skills and interests. **Nevertheless, we should remember that** it may not be suitable for everyone, particularly those uncomfortable with risk or uncertainty.