

Reflective Writing

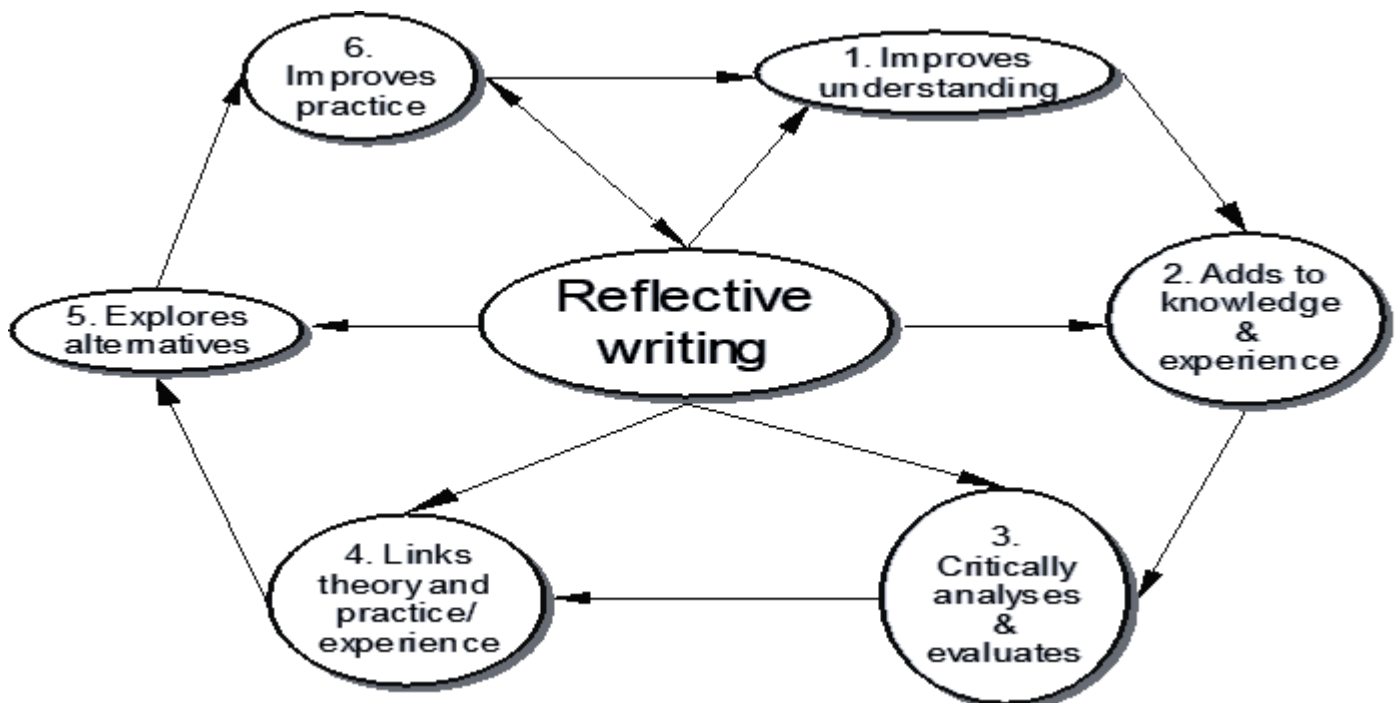
Please analyse your reflective assignment instructions and marking guide carefully, because what is specifically required by your tutor may vary from this guide.

Reflective writing:

- Records a process of describing, evaluating and thinking critically about relevant past professional practice, events/experiences/critical incidents (at work placements or work attachments).
- Enables you to apply what is learnt from the past, in order to improve practice and decision-making in the present and future.

Some common types of reflective writing assignments:

- Journal: a written account of daily activities.
- Portfolio: this can be a collection of coursework and/or readings with reflective comments.
- Self-assessment.



The style for most types of reflective writing

- It is usual to use 'I' and 'my' when writing about yourself.
- However, formal language is still expected, and a conversational style of writing must be avoided.
- Pseudonyms (fictitious names) are often used to protect the privacy of individuals.

The Usual Stages of Reflective Writing

<p>Stage 1: <u>Description</u> - What ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is the purpose of returning to this situation? - exactly happened, in your own words? - did you see? - did you do? - was your reaction? - did other people do that was relevant to the situation? - do you see as the key aspects of the situation? <p>Stage 2: <u>Interpretation</u> - So what ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - were you trying to achieve? - were the reasons for the way you responded? - beliefs and values influenced your actions? - assumptions did you make? - were your feelings at that time? - are your feelings now? Are there differences? <p>Why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "good" emerged from the situation e.g. for self, others? - troubles you, if anything? - were your experiences in comparison to your colleagues, etc.? - were the feelings of others involved? How do you know? - are the main reasons for feeling differently from your colleagues, etc.? - knowledge did or should have informed you? 	<p><u>Rationale ('What')</u>:</p> <p>Clarifies and develops insight into the nature of past events/experiences.</p> <p>Identifies, examines and builds insight into your personal aims, values, beliefs and assumptions.</p> <p><u>Rationale ('So what')</u>:</p> <p>Critically analyses and evaluates the achievements and concerns/problems/failures.</p> <p>Compares, critically analyses and evaluates the perspectives, thoughts and actions of you yourself and relevant others.</p> <p>Relates past events and experiences to relevant theories and concepts; points out the extent to which specific aspects of theories account for certain situations.</p> <p>Incorporates new knowledge into your prior knowledge.</p>	<p><u>Sample reflective writing ('What')</u></p> <p><i>Specific tasks were shared amongst members of my team. Initially, however, the tasks were not seen as equally difficult by all team members.</i></p> <p><u>Sample reflective writing ('So what')</u></p> <p><i>Cooperation between group members was at risk because of this perception of unfairness. Social interdependence theory recognises a type of group interaction called 'positive interdependence', meaning cooperation, and many studies have demonstrated that "cooperative learning experiences encourage higher achievement".</i></p>
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<p>Stage 3: <u>Outcome</u> - Now what ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are the implications for you and others involved? - needs to happen to alter the situation? - happens if you decide not to alter anything? - might you do differently if faced with a similar situation again? - would be the consequences of alternative actions for yourself, others? - information do you need to face a similar situation? - are the best ways of getting further information about the situation should it arise again? 	<p><u>Rationale ('Now what'):</u></p> <p>Explores the possible responses or solutions, and the likely outcomes.</p> <p>Learns from what has happened, in order to improve future practice by making informed decisions.</p>	<p><u>Sample reflective writing ('Now what')</u></p> <p><i>Ultimately, our group achieved a successful outcome. However, to improve our achievement, we perhaps needed a chairperson to help encourage co-operation when tasks were being shared out. In my future group work (on the course and at work), I would probably suggest this.</i></p>
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Note. Adapted from *Reflective writing: A basic introduction*, by M. Hampton, n.d., <https://tinyurl.com/y3xva9zt>

To access other useful Learning Services resources and handouts, use the StudySmart tab on the My Ara homepage – <https://myara.ara.ac.nz/pages/academic-support/learning-resources>.

References

Hampton, M. (n.d.). *Reflective writing: A basic introduction*. James Cook University.

https://www.jcu.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/120478/jcu_128366.pdf

University of Portsmouth. (n.d.). *Reflective writing*. <https://www.port.ac.uk/student-life/help-and-advice/study-skills/written-assignments/reflective-writing-introduction>

Suggested readings

Monash University. (2020, November). *Reflective writing and critical incidents*.

<https://www.monash.edu/rlo/assignment-samples/medicine-nursing-and-health-sciences/reflective-writing-and-critical-incidents>

New Zealand Nurses Organisation. (n.d.). *Reflective writing* [Education and professional development guideline].

<https://www.nzno.org.nz/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=3oTgEOEbXws%3D&portalid=0>

University of Auckland Business School. (n.d.). *Reflective experience*. Learning Hub.

<https://www.learninghub.ac.nz/writing/reflective-writing/>

University of Reading. (2019). *Practice based and reflective learning* [Study advice study guide].

https://libguides.reading.ac.uk/ld.php?content_id=32363105

University of Toronto Mississauga Experiential Education Office. (n.d.). *Reflective writing & thinking*.

<https://tinyurl.com/y5osnh3x>