

Engaging in reflective writing

STUDENT HANDOUT

This activity requires you to design or choose a tool or medium that will help you to engage in reflective writing as your course progresses. Reflective writing helps you to gather your thoughts and commit them to paper. It enables you to describe, summarise, translate and process experiences and learning, enabling you to break down, draw on and apply what you have learnt. This helps you to find solutions to dilemmas, leads to new insight and helps with decision making, judgement and reaching conclusions.

There is a variety of tools and mediums that you can use to record reflective thought and some of these are listed below. Find a tool that works for you. When we next meet you will need to give a brief description of your chosen tool and illustrate how you intend to use the tool for reflective writing as this course progresses. We will discuss your progress in reflective writing halfway through the course and then evaluate your reflective writing and the tool/medium that you have used at the end of the course, so ensure that you engage in reflective writing on a regular basis throughout your studies.

Examples of tools and mediums that you could choose are given below, but there are plenty of other methods available, so try to be inventive and creative (and you can use more than one method, if you wish). This is a personal choice, so ensure that you choose a method that works for you. If you find that one method is not working, you can change to another as your studies progress (your reasons and justification will be recorded in your reflective writing). If you do change your tool or medium, be prepared to discuss why you made this decision. Tools that you could consider include:

Personal learning journals	Documentary style reporting
Personal diaries	Teaching sessions (hypothetical or role play, for example)
Storytelling	Counselling sessions (third person, hypothetical or role play, for example)
Theatre performances/plays	Reflective interviews
Book chapters	Blogs
Spreadsheets	
Tables	

When you use your tool to engage in reflective writing, ensure that you move beyond the purely descriptive, to include comprehension, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, conclusions and action, for example. If you are unsure of what is meant by some of these terms, read around the subject and record your thoughts, action and reasons for action in your reflective writing.

Learning outcome: By the end of this activity you will have chosen, used and evaluated a tool or medium that has helped you to engage in reflective writing over the duration of your course, which will help to raise awareness of the value of reflective writing during your studies and beyond.