

Reflective Practice: Guide and Template

What is reflective practice?

Reflective practice involves thinking carefully about an experience, considering what can be learned and deciding how that learning will influence future practice.

A reflection is different from a factual statement or timeline. It should not simply describe what happened; it should demonstrate your thinking, learning and planned actions.

How to write your reflection

When completing your reflection:

- Write in the first person, using “I”.
- Be honest, factual and professionally respectful.
- Maintain confidentiality and do not include identifiable information.
- Include what went well as well as what could have been different.
- Focus on your own actions, decisions and learning.
- Consider the perspectives of others without making assumptions about their thoughts or intentions.
- Refer to relevant professional standards, guidance or local procedures where appropriate.
- Identify clear and realistic actions that you can take forward.

The examples within this template demonstrate the type of information that may be helpful. They should not be copied or treated as suggested responses.

Reflective Practice Template

Name:

Role or profession:

Placement area or organisation:

Date of the experience:

Date of reflection:

1. What?

What happened, and what was your involvement?

Provide a brief factual overview of the experience or concern. Explain the relevant context, your role and any action taken at the time. Avoid including unnecessary detail or identifiable information.

Example:

During a student's placement, I identified repeated gaps in their clinical documentation. I initially discussed this with the student and provided verbal feedback. When the concern continued, I arranged a formal meeting with the student and contacted the university to agree the support and actions required.

2. So what?

What did you learn from the experience?

Consider why the experience was important. Explain what went well, what was challenging and whether anything could have been approached differently. You may wish to consider communication, decision-making, professional responsibilities, supervision, safety, policies or the support available.

Example:

I addressed the concern directly and gave the student examples of the required standard. However, I recognise that I could have documented the earlier conversations more clearly and contacted the university sooner. Earlier communication may have enabled a structured support plan to be introduced before the concern became repeated. The experience reinforced the importance of giving clear, timely and documented feedback.

3. Now what?

How will this learning influence your future practice?

Identify what you will do differently, continue doing or develop further. Actions should be specific and realistic. Include any support, learning, supervision or follow-up that may be required.

Example:

In future, I will document feedback and agreed actions when they are discussed. If a concern continues or may affect safe practice, I will follow the relevant escalation process and contact the university promptly. Before supporting my next student, I will review the placement guidance and confirm who to contact if concerns arise.

Summary of learning

In one or two sentences, what is the most important learning you will take forward?

Example:

This experience has reinforced the importance of addressing concerns early, documenting feedback clearly and involving the appropriate people promptly.

Further support

Please state whether you require any further professional, educational or wellbeing support:

Important information

This reflection does not replace a factual statement, incident report or the requirement to escalate an immediate safety or safeguarding concern.

Where there is an immediate or ongoing risk, the appropriate local reporting and escalation procedures must be followed without delay.