

Reflective Learning Diaries

Reflective learning can be traced back as far as Socrates and is a powerful tool for autonomous learning in a personalised way.

Reflective learning aims to enhance your learning by providing a process to encourage reflection on the learning, rather than a descriptive account. It aims to help you to keep a record of your thoughts and ideas, identify your strengths and weaknesses and identify areas for improvement/further learning. It can also help you to identify your preferences in learning.

These diagrams and templates aim to help you to develop your own reflective learning diary, which suits your needs and can become a regular part of your life-long learning. Do not feel constrained by them.

Your reflective learning diary could be in a notebook, a Word document, in Evernote or recorded on audio or video file. You could also link individual entries to a big mind map. Choose the method that works for you.

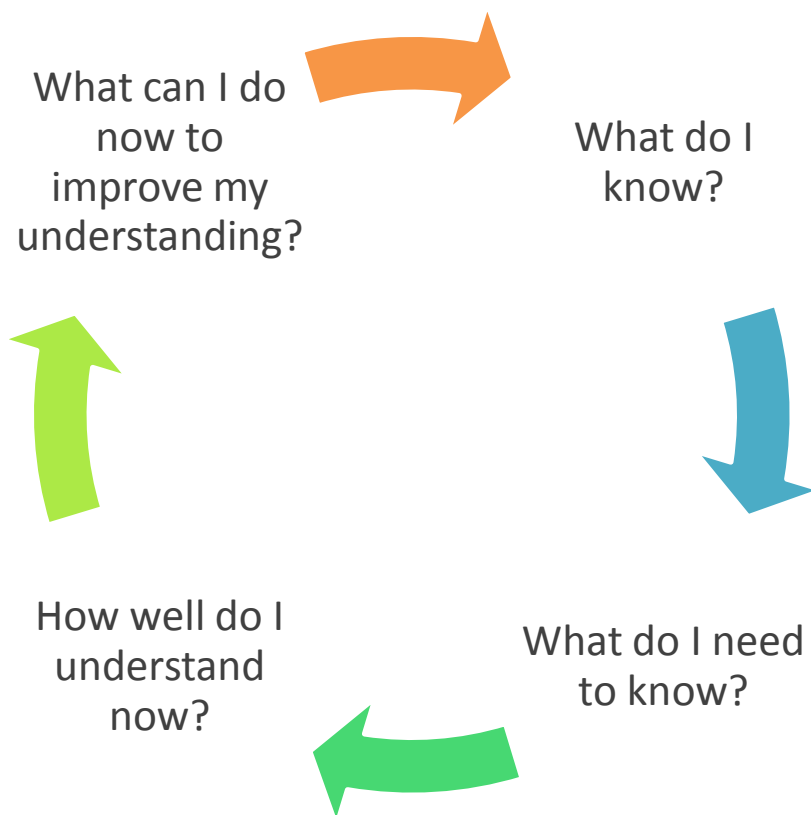
You could include:

- Training sessions that you have attended.
- Experiences in the workplace.
- Conversations with peers.
- Personal research and learning (moocs, articles, books etc).
- Connections between practice and theory.
- Flashes of inspiration.
- Things you find puzzling/contradictory and want to understand better.

You should also consider

- How you can improve your learning, thinking and practice.
- The next step in your development – what should you do now?
- What resources have worked for you.
- Is anything blocking your learning and how could you overcome this?

How do we learn and what do we need to know?



Reflective Learning Diary – Template

What	<i>This section should cover a factual note of the training you attended, the reading you have done, the occurrence during practice which you thought was notable.</i>
Why	<i>This section should contain brief analytical notes. Why it was useful. What learning outcomes it aimed to address.</i>
Reaction	<i>This section can cover your emotional response to the activity. This can help you to understand your learning style (Why did I like/dislike this session?) and identify important aspects when things go wrong (Why did I feel defensive when?).</i>
Learning	<i>This section should contain notes of what you think you have learned from the experience. How does this learning connect with previous situations? This will probably be the longest section.</i>
Goals	<i>What will you do next as a result of the learning occasion? If you have identified areas you need to improve, what knowledge or skills will you now brush up on? If you are happy with what you have learned, can you check your understanding and contribute by passing this knowledge on, perhaps through an internal training session or writing an article or blog post?</i>