

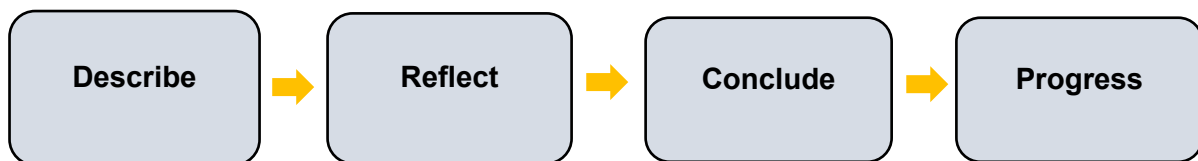


What is a reflective journal?

- Journals can reflect upon practical work, research, critiques, visits, exhibitions and talks.
- They can help you to learn from your experiences, build critical thinking and develop problem-solving skills (Moon, 2006, pp. 44-48).
- Unlike an essay or report, journals can use first person 'I, me, my'. However, the style should still be formal, avoiding slang, abbreviations and shortened versions of words.

What should I record?

- You can cover three basic elements: description, reflection, conclusion and progression. This is based on Jasper's (2003) ERA model of experience, reflection and action.
- The experiences that you select can show a mixture of high and low points.
- Be careful to avoid being overly descriptive. Description outlines details such as Who? What? When? Where?



Questions to Guide Journals

Description:

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- When and where did it take place?

Reflection:

- Was the experience positive or negative? Why?
- Why did you decide upon a particular approach or action?
- What contribution did you make to the situation?
- What new skills were you able to learn? How might these be useful?
- What skills do you need to develop?



Study Skills: Reflective Journals

- How did you try to overcome any challenges?
- If the situation arose again, would you do anything differently?

Conclusion:

- What was learnt overall from the experience?
- How did it impact on your practice or process?
- What progress have you made? How can you measure this (feedback, assessment, against past performance)?

Progression:

- What might you do next?
- What ideas might you develop further?

Phrases for Reflective Journals

The most significant event occurred when ...

My greatest challenge was ...

As a way to overcome this, I ...

Alternatively, I could have ...

This has taught me that ...

This skill will be useful as ...

In the future, I aim to ...

Reference List:

- Bassot, B. (2016) *The reflective journal*. 2nd edn. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jasper, M. (2003) *Beginning reflective practice*. Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes Ltd.
- Moon, J. (2006) *Learning journals: a handbook for reflective practice and professional development*. 2nd edn. London: Routledge.
- Portsmouth University (no date) *Reflective writing*. Available at: www2.port.ac.uk/media/contacts-and-departments/student-support-services/ask/downloads/Reflective-writing---a-basic-introduction.pdf (Accessed: 22 May 2019).