

Tips on Writing Effective Reflective Notes

Useful Vocabulary

The following are just a few suggestions for words and phrases that might be useful in reflective writing. Using any of these words and phrases will not in itself make you a good reflective writer.

Description (the short bit!)

We are not suggesting specific vocabulary for any descriptive elements of your reflective writing, because the range of possible events, ideas or objects on which you might be required to reflect is so great.

Interpretation & Analysis (the most important bit)

↓	For me, the [most]	{ meaningful significant important relevant useful	{ aspect(s) element(s) experience(s) issue(s) idea(s)	was (were)
			learning	{ arose from... happened when... resulted from...
<hr/>				
↓		{ Previously, At the time, At first Initially, Subsequently, Later,		{ thought (did not think)... felt (did not feel)... knew (did not know)... noticed (did not notice)... questioned (did not question)... realised (did not realise)...
<hr/>				
↓	[Alternatively,] [Equally,]	This	{ might be is perhaps could be is probably	{ because of... due to... explained by... related to...
<hr/>				
↓		This	{ is similar to... is unlike...	because...
<hr/>				
↓		[Un]Like...	this	{ reveals... demonstrates...

Outcomes & Synthesis



Having { read...
experienced...
applied...
discussed...
analysed...
learned... } I now { feel...
think...
realise...
wonder...
question...
know... }



{ [Additionally,]
[Furthermore,]
[Most importantly,] } I have learned that...



I have { significantly
slightly } { developed
improved } my skills in...
my understanding of...
my knowledge of...
my ability to...
However, I have not [sufficiently]



This means that...
This makes me feel...



This knowledge { is
could be
will be } { essential
important
useful } { to me as a learner [because...]
to me as a practitioner [because...]
This understanding
This skill



Because I { did not...
have not yet...
am not yet certain about...
am not yet confident about...
do not yet know...
do not yet understand..... } I will now need to...

As a next step, I need to...

Guidelines for Reflection

Learning	Comments
Description:	What are you going to reflect on? Describe what happened (the learning event)
Feelings:	What were your reactions and feelings? What did you think and feel?
Evaluation:	What was good and bad about the learning event? Make value judgements.
Analysis:	What sense can you make of the learning event? Bring in ideas from outside the learning event to help you (such as work experience)
Conclusions (general):	What can be concluded, in a general sense, from these learning events and the analyses you have undertaken?
Conclusions (specific):	What can be concluded about your own specific, unique, personal situation or ways of working?
Personal Action plans:	What are you going to do differently at work next time based on this learning event? What steps are you going to take on the basis of what you have learnt?