Tips for effective reflection

Reflection is a tool for gaining insight into ourselves and helping us move forward

❖ **Challenge your assumptions about yourself:** (both positive and negative)
   ❖ Ask yourself probing questions, for example:
     • Why do I think this about myself?
     • To what extent / under what circumstances is it true?
     • What evidence do I have to support this view?
     • But what if...?

❖ **Break things down:** you will probably be better at some parts or aspects of something than at others. For example:
   ❖ Steps in a process
     • How do I go about doing this task?
     • What strategies do I use at different points? How effective are they? Why?
     • What might I do differently?
   ❖ Facets of a role (e.g. your part in a group project)
     • What aspects of this do I do well? Why?
     • What aspects of this do I enjoy / dislike? Why?
     • What aspects do I find challenging? What can I do to meet these challenges?

❖ **Distance yourself and look at things from different perspectives**
   ❖ How might other relevant people see your and your actions / progress?
     • Peers you are working with
     • Academics who teach you (particularly useful for thinking about feedback)
     • A prospective employer

❖ **Relate what you find out to other contexts:** This can help you to identify skills and attributes that you can use elsewhere and to prioritise areas for further development. For example:
   ❖ Other areas of your learning and academic work
   ❖ Outside interests and activities
   ❖ Employability and future directions

❖ **Take action:** Reflection is often an on-going cycle
   ❖ Use the results of your reflection to plan concrete steps that will move you towards your goals
   ❖ Put them into action – then reflect again...