

Sharing your written reflections

Reflection is often something private but it can also be helpful to share our reflections with someone like a tutor, a mentor or our peers. This can be done in writing, for example, by sharing the 'later reflection' pages of your reflective journal.

Although you may be advised against using the first person (I) in other kinds of academic writing, it is natural to use it in reflective writing.

Effective description

In shared writing, it is important to be aware of what your reader will and will not know about your specific context and, therefore, what you need to tell them in order to set the scene. Give a **short** account so that they can understand what happened as you saw it:

- Give a concise overview of the context
- Pick relevant, significant detail but don't describe too much
- Make your writing clear, concise and well-structured
- Make the tone of your writing objective rather than emotional – i.e. your thoughts and feelings are recorded rather than colouring the language you use

Effective analysis and critical evaluation

This is the main part of your reflection on the event, process or experience you are writing about. You are aiming to assess and communicate such things as:

- What you have learned from it
- What skills and attributes you have gained from it
- How much progress you have made towards any goals you have set
- Any questions, issues or aims that remain problematic or unfulfilled

When doing the things listed above, justify what you say – for example:

- Show why you believe it to be true
- Explain how your experiences have brought about the changes
- Compare where you are now to where you were previously
- Give specific examples
 - you can include things you wrote in the 'at the time' section of your journal or from earlier reflections
- Relate your experience to other contexts, knowledge, writers or theories if relevant

Use your reflection to think about moving forward

It is often helpful to finish your reflection by considering aims or directions for the future.