

Reflection

What is reflection?

Reflection allows you to engage in a process of self-development to recognise your strengths and weaknesses and identify areas for change.

Why reflect?

There are a number of benefits associated with reflection:

- Developing a questioning mind
- Identifying areas for change
- Formulating effective plans for responding to new challenges

Employers are increasingly looking for employees that are able to identify and utilise learning outcomes from their experiences. This makes reflection an essential part of professional practice, as it allows us to identify our strengths, as well as areas for further development.

Tips for reflection:

Beginning the reflective process isn't always easy; here are some tips to help get you started:

- Question everything - reflection is analysing past experience to find meaning and to make improvements for the future. This can involve challenging preconceived ideas that we hold about ourselves and others, groups and institutions.
- Try to think about events as objectively as possible - take a step back and be prepared to be critical of your actions.
- Consider events from the perspective of another individual.
- Recall how you were feeling at the time of the event -how did this influence your behaviour at the time or your subsequent interpretation of the event?
- Would changing your behaviour have changed the outcome of the situation? If so, why? Or why not?
- Would your behaviour be different if you were faced a similar situation in the future?
- Has the experience changed your understanding? (*it is important to note that excellent reflective writing will frequently acknowledge that your understanding/views will change and adapt over time*)

Reflecting on events and interactions:

If you are completing the Hallam Award and choose interpersonal/presentation/public speaking skills as one of your development areas you will be required to submit a piece of reflective writing as part of your portfolio of evidence. The following questions/prompts can be used as a handy guide to help structure your reflective writing:

- A brief account of what happened (*it is important that you anonymise your writing and avoid including any information that could be used to identify people*).
- What do you think went well? Why?
- What skills do you have that contributed to what went well?
- Was there anything that didn't go well/you found difficult? Why?
- Are there any skills that you would like to develop to help improve your performance?
- Is there anything that you will do differently in future? Why?
- How could the skills you have identified (both your strengths and those for development) be used in to achieve success in a work environment?