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MANCHESTER

Writing a Reflective Log

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Student Reflective Logbook Writing Guide

Introduction

If you are engaging in work experience, a placement or part-time work, it is a good idea to start getting into the habit of reflective writing. It is good practice to complete a logbook or journal entry at regular intervals as this is a key element of your personal development and career goals. Your logbook is a collection of notes, observations, thoughts, and other relevant materials built up over a period and recorded together. You can use a regular notebook, journal or our online [Reflective Logbook](#).

If you choose to use our online logbook this is accessible via your Advantage Dashboard so you can refer to this as often as you like:

<https://myadvantage.salford.ac.uk/students/forms/submissions>

Reflection has three stages:

- The learning opportunity
- The information gathering and critical analysis.
- The changed perspective (Spalding, 1998)

To move through these three critical stages of reflection, the reflective logbook will use the **DIEP** four-step approach to describe, interpret, evaluate, and plan.

D – Describe objectively what happened

Give the details of what happened. Answer the question: 'What did I do, read, see, and hear?'

I – Interpret the events.

Explain your learning: new insights, connections with other learning, your feelings, hypotheses, and conclusions.

Answer the questions: 'What was the reason I did this activity?' 'What might it mean?'

E – Evaluate what you learned

Make judgments connected to observations you have made. Answer the question: 'How was this useful?'

P – Plan how this learning will be applied

Comment on its relevance to your course, program, future profession, life... Answer the question: 'How might this learning apply in my future?'

In your entries, attempt to:

- Analyse your own performance as a learner and employee.
- Evaluate your gains in understanding and completing tasks.
- Verbalise how you feel about your learning and development in the workplace.
- Make connections with other experiences and ideas.
- Demonstrate transfer of learning (you may be using skills you developed in a previous part-time job to help you in your current job role i.e., Excel use or how to deal with difficult people).
- Integrate the concepts taught in courses (including the literature where relevant)

Consider the principal activities you were involved in during the experience (this can include anything from office duties, training you may have attended or work you may have done on a project).

Reflect on your experience, using this list of prompt questions to help you complete the logbook.

DIEP reflection:

- Which single activity that you have undertaken in your job role do you consider your best achievement?
- How could you further improve upon that achievement?
- Which single activity that you have undertaken during your job role do you consider your least successful achievement?
- Why do you think you were unable to do better than you did?
- How would you go about doing that activity differently if you were called to do it again?

How long will it take?

Typically, each logbook entry should take 20-30 minutes. You may take more or less time depending on your time constraints and the amount of detailed information you wish to include.

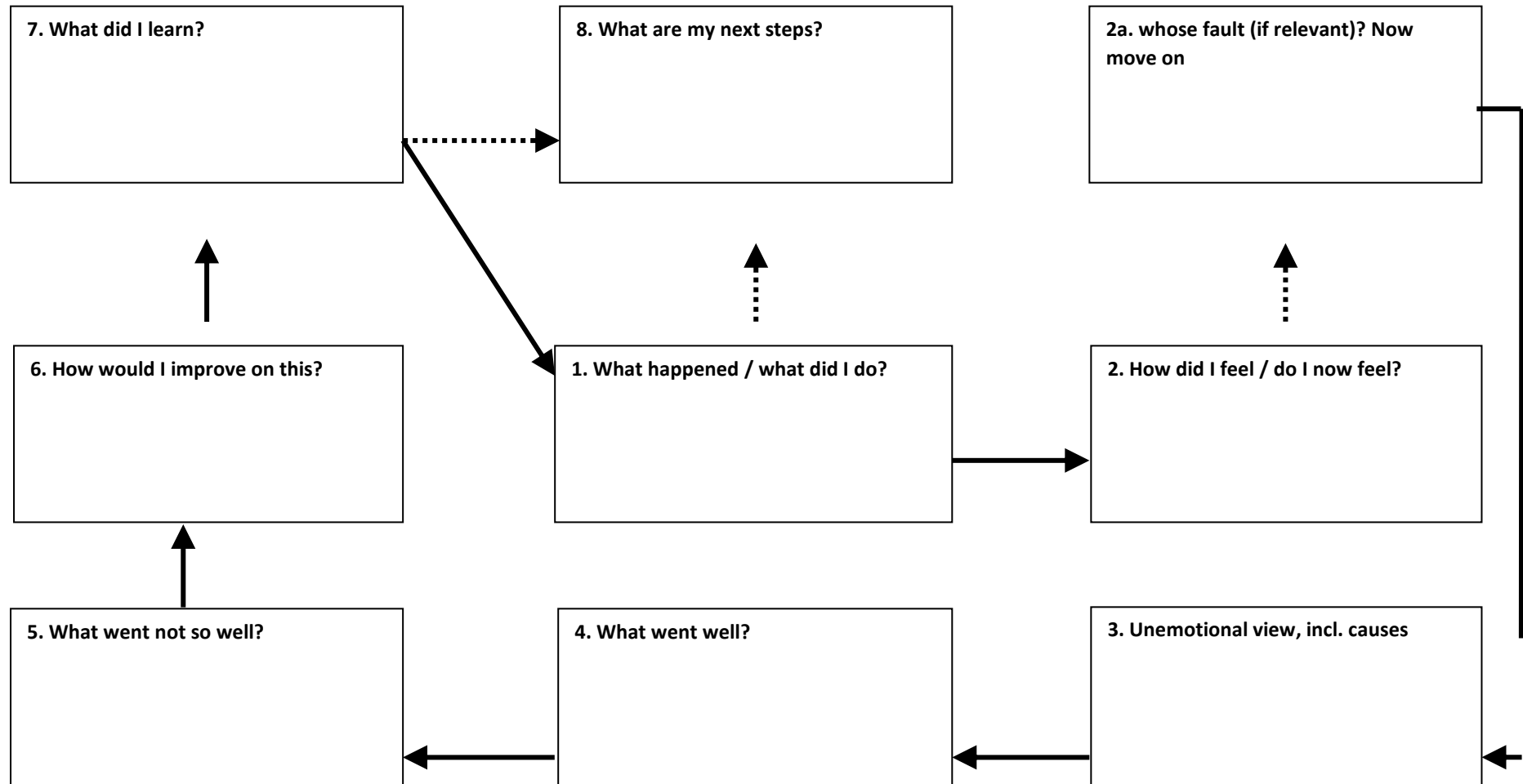
What should you write?

Remember, we are trying to access experience and thoughts about what you have done, how it has affected your development personally or professionally, or both.

Do not worry if you discover your answers overlap or if you feel one question has already been answered in response to another. Try to write something, no matter how brief your response may be to each question. If you find that you have nothing to comment on in certain sections, note so, maybe this is telling you something important about your role and its' ability to meet your intended learning outcomes.

Reflective Logbook Process Use the process to work through the **DIEP** strategy of completing your logbook entries, remember you do not need to complete each box in the process, as they may be irrelevant.

Date:



Anything else to remember?

- The process of learning is as important as the content of your Reflective Logbook.
- Avoid cataloguing what you have done each week/month – in a good logbook you reflect on what works or does not work, successes and failures, and how you can address the failures and use the successes in the future.
- Use plenty of examples and details.
- Feelings are an important part of the logbook. Interest, joy, frustration, and anger can be included. Reflect on why and when and what you can do about certain situations.

The logbook entry sheet uses the DIEP Model to encourage and structure your reflective writing while working, to help facilitate deep reflective learning and key personal employability skill development.

Reflective Logbook Weekly Entry Sheet

Nature of the learning activity

Date:

Briefly describe the learning activity: for example, undertaking an ICT task, attending a meeting, or presenting a report to a management team:

State how many hours this took:

DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING ACTIVITY

D – Describe objectively what happened

Give the details of what happened. Answer the question: **‘What did I do, read, see, and hear?’**

Describe why you chose the learning activity or how this opportunity came about; where, when, and how you did the learning activity, the type of learning activity and what you hoped to gain from it.

I – Interpret the events.

Explain your learning: new insights, connections with other learning, your feelings, hypotheses, and conclusions.

Answer the questions: **‘What was the reason I did this activity?’ ‘What might it mean?’**

E – Evaluate what you learned

Make judgments connected to observations you have made. Answer the question: **‘How was this useful?’**

P – Plan how this learning will be applied

Comment on its relevance to your course, program, future profession, life... Answer the question: **‘How might this learning apply in my future?’**

Notes