

A guide to reflective practice

As part of this learning resource you are asked to reflect on your personal and professional experiences as a health care student. There are different ways to undertake reflective practice. You may be familiar with a process that works for you.

The 5 Rs of Reflection

When reflecting on your practice it may be helpful to review the 5 Rs of reflection as per Table 1 below:

Table 1

The 5 Rs	What to do	What's included
Reporting	Provide a descriptive account of a situation/issue	What happened/what the situation or issue involved
Responding	Record your emotional response to the situation/issue	Observations, feelings and questions about the situation/issue
Relating	Report on your understanding of the situation/issue and how it relates to the theory	Your connections between the situation/issue and your experience, skills, knowledge and understanding
Reasoning	Explore and explain the situation/issue	Significant factors that underlie the situation/issue and how they relate to what happened and what the situation/issue involved
Reconstructing	Draw a conclusion and develop an action plan based on a well-reasoned understanding of the situation/issue	Your deeper understanding of the situation/issue, which you've developed through well-reasoned thought. This understanding is used to reconstruct the practice and/or the theory of health care

Adapted from:

Bain, J.D., Ballantyne, R., Mills, C., & Lester, N.C. (2002). *Reflecting on practice: student teachers' perspectives*. Flaxton, QLD: Post Pressed

Sample questions to aid reflection

Table 2 shows some sample questions that may be helpful as you reflect on situations/issues related to your learning.

Asking yourself searching questions will enable you to think critically. This will enhance your learning.

Table 2

The 5 Rs	Questions
Reporting	What is the situation/issue about? What are the key aspects of the situation/issue?
Responding	How do I feel about or react to the situation/issue? What makes me feel or react this way?
Relating	How does the knowledge/insight I have about the situation/issue relate to my: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - personal and/or professional experiences - knowledge, understanding and/or skills? In what way/s does it relate?
Reasoning	How does the practice relate to the theory regarding this situation/issue? How do different perspectives, such as my personal perspective, my perspective as a student and my perspective as a health care professional affect the way I understand the situation/issue?
Reconstructing	In summary what have I learned about the situation/issue? What conclusions can I draw? Why? Why is the situation/issue significant? What have I learned about myself and about professional health care practice? How will this situation/issue affect my future learning and the way I practice health care?

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