

**Guide**

**The Individual Reflective Report**

**and**

**Maintaining your Reflective Workbook**

## Requirements for Individual Reflective Report

You are expected to submit:

A **1,500 word** (maximum) reflective report. In this report you will reflect upon the following:

- a) What you have learnt during this assignment: focussing on
  - subject knowledge and subject skills
  - how your ability to think critically has developed
- b) The ways in which your learning in a) above was supported or hindered:
  - Through interaction with others in your learning group
- c) How your views about group work and critical thinking have changed during the assignment

To support this, you will draw on the Reflective Workbook that you maintain during the period that you are working on the assignment and the records of your group meetings.

Please submit the following:

1. **Two copies** of your Individual Reflective Report.
2. **Two copies** of your Reflective Workbook.
3. Insert these documents in **a sealed envelope** and print your **student number** on the envelope.

**You will submit these documents together with those required for the Case Study group work.**

### Why is reflection important?

In this assignment we ask you to reflect upon your learning. We ask this because it will support you in carrying out your assignment – and allow you to get more out of it.

Reflection is now widely-recognised to be an important skill for professionals. But it has to be structured and should involve several stages of deepening reflection – the key point being that it lead to **a change** in your knowledge, skills and how you will act in the future. So we ask you to maintain a Reflective Workbook during the period that you are working on the assignment.

## **How do I maintain my Reflective Workbook?**

### ***What does it look like?***

Your Reflective Workbook can be maintained manually or using a word-processor. We shall ask you to hand in two copies of your Reflective Workbook, so you should consider the issue of how you intend to copy the workbook/

### ***How often do I write in it?***

We expect that you will write in it often as you work on your assignment. For example, after:

- you have read through and thought about the assignment
- after you have joined a group
- you have done some background reading/revision of course materials
- after each group meeting
- after each session of working on the assignment

Probably this means that you will write in your Reflective Workbook at least two or three times a week.

### ***What should I write?***

Reflective writing involves several states. For example, it might include the following stages:

- you write an objective description of what has happened (reading the assignment, reading a chapter in a textbook, meeting your group, attempting to solve a problem within the assignment). This will involve minimal judgement or evaluation
- you move into more reflective writing by acknowledging any feelings or reactions that may have obstructed the activity, perhaps leading to a re-evaluation or reappraisal of the experience. This might involve a different way of looking at it or looking more deeply at underlying issues
- you then move into reflecting on how you might change how you are dealing with an issue (e.g. relating to the subject or how you work with others, or reflecting on how you now understand a situation compared with previously).

But remember – in your Individual Reflective Report, you are asked to reflect upon the following:

- a) What you have learnt during this assignment: focussing on
  - subject knowledge and subject skills
  - how your ability to think critically has developed
- b) The ways in which your learning in a) above was supported or hindered:
  - Through interaction with others in your learning group

So clearly, you need to be focussing on these areas.

### **Guidance on critical thinking**

We ask you to reflect upon how your ability to think critically has developed. So here is some guidance to help you on your way.

1. Very early on, in your Reflective Workbook, write out what you think is meant by 'critical thinking'. Preferably do this now!
2. Once you have done that, read the guidance below on how you might develop your views on what 'critical thinking' is. Please reflect on this in your Reflective Workbook immediately and then as the assignment progresses.
3. As the assignment progresses, make several entries in your workbook on:
  - How, and in what ways, critical thinking is needed in this assignment
  - How working with others in your group supports or inhibits the development of your ability to think critically.
4. As you get to the end of your assignment, make another entry in your Reflective Workbook – how have your views about what 'critical thinking' means, changed during the assignment?

### **What is 'critical thinking'?**

Please only read this **after** you have written your first entry in your Reflective Workbook – point 1 in the previous section.

We provide two resources to support your reflection in this assignment. The first is the TASC problem-solving framework. The second is the LearnHigher website on critical thinking.

## TASC

TASC stands for Thinking Actively in a Social Context. It is a creative problem-solving framework used in schools and businesses. Please visit the website:

<http://www.tascwheel.com/>

On that webpage you will see the TASC wheel.



On the webpage, as you move the cursor over each part of the wheel, further information becomes visible. If you click on a segment, you will access more information. For example, if you click on 'Gather and Organise', you will see the following:



### **Gather/Organise**

- **What do I know about this?**
- **Where have I met this before?**
- **What information do I have?**
- **How much do I understand?**

- **What questions can I ask?**

**Thinking Involved**

- Establish what is already known
- Do a memory search
- Identify gaps/ misconceptions
- Show how ideas link
- Extend the ideas
- Identify questions that can be asked
- Identify the section(s) to be focused on

You can see that this might be an interesting start to your assignment! And it might involve more thinking (and critical thinking) than you had thought about.

Familiarise yourself with all parts of the wheel. You might find it useful to print out, and refer to, the more detailed information provided within each spoke.

***LearnHigher website on critical thinking***

This is available at: <http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/Students/Critical-thinking-and-reflection.html>

You can explore these resources, but you might find yourself asking: 'is critical thinking for this assignment different to the critical thinking needed for an essay?'. Well it might well be, and that is something for you to write about in your Reflective Workbook!

**How do I write my Individual Reflective Report?**

Firstly, re-read the requirements for the Individual Reflective Report (page 1 above). If you have followed the advice provided on maintaining your Reflective Workbook, you should have been reflecting on these aspects for several weeks.

What you need to do now, is to start drafting your report, drawing on your Reflective Workbook and reflecting on the entirety of the assignment process.