

Reflective Writing

What is Reflective Writing?

Reflective writing is different to most types of academic writing. This is because it requires you to record your personal reaction or response to material you have read, viewed or listened to.

Format of a Reflective Response

While the format of your reflective response will be determined by your lecturer's specific requirements, your reflective response should be structured around three major elements: **description**, **analysis** and **outcome**.

Description

- Identify what you are reflecting on (whether a journal article, book chapter, film, podcast, presentation or image) and who the author, artist or speaker is.
- Describe the main theme of what you are reflecting on.

Analysis

This is the most important part of your reflective response and is the part your lecturer will be most interested in as it is where you critically analyse and evaluate the content of what you have been exposed to. In this part of your response you should:

- Identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the material you are responding to.
- Evaluate the relevance of the material you are responding to.
- Analyse what you gained from the material, and how it might help you in your career.
- Critique the assertions and conclusions of the material.
- Ask yourself some of these questions to assist your analysis:
 - Are there parts of the material you found particularly interesting or challenging?
 - Does the material tie in with anything you have been exposed to before?
 - Has the material changed the way you think, or affirmed something you already knew?
 - What theories might help explain the material further? Are there other perspectives that challenge your views? (Monash University, n.d.).

Outcome

In this part of your response you should reflect on what you have learned and what you might change next time:

- Offer some recommendations in terms of who might benefit from the material and why.
- Explain how you may be able to incorporate what you have learned from the material into your professional life.

Word Limit

Often you will be subject to a fairly strict word limit when writing a reflective response (sometimes only 200-400 words), so if this is the case, you will need to be selective about what elements you include in your response. You will need to write as clearly and directly as you can.

Remember...

This resource has been created to give you an idea of how to respond reflectively to material you have read, viewed or heard. However, your lecturer may have some specific ideas of what should/should not be included in your assignment, or how it should/should not be structured. Always consult with your lecturer if you are unsure.

Resource References

Monash University. (n.d.) *Reflective writing structure*. <https://www.monash.edu/rlo/assignment-samples/education/education-reflective-writing/reflective-writing-structure>