

The language of Reflective Writing

Individual reflective essay
assignment

LLP008 COLLABORATIVE
PROJECT

Semester 2, 2022

Martin Hyams
English for Academic Purposes Tutor
M.Hyams2@lboro.ac.uk



By the end of this session, you should:

- **feel more confident about the key features of reflective writing**
- **recognise the difference between strong and weak reflective writing**
- **be better able to apply theory to your practice (experience)**



Individual Reflective Essay

Essay Question

Write an individual reflective essay about your personal Belbin Team Role profile and the utility of Belbin considering your group work experiences:

Describe Belbin's 'Team Role' Model and reflect on the outcomes of your own Belbin evaluations:

- ***Why is Belbin useful in relation to small group work?***
- ***How does it relate to your industry?***
- ***How could it be useful regarding your future career?***



- ✓ critical reflection of your own Belbin outcomes
- ✓ team working theories and practice
- ✓ practical issues: collaboration, team dynamics, personal project role, leadership and communication issues, project outcomes

Individual Reflective Essay



- *40% of module assessment*
- *2,000 words* maximum (excluding appendices and references)
- *Deadline: Tuesday 25 May*
 - **Make use of the weekly CP sessions and tweets: download all your reflections at the end of the module**
 - **Read the ‘Reflective Practice’ folder on Learn and *Reflective Practice – A Guide for Students***
 - **Use the Reference list and online videos on the Learn module**

Note: Marking criteria for the Individual Essay will be made available via Learn.

- **Too descriptive** (lacks analysis and evaluation)
- Language is **too informal**
- No reflection about **other people's perspectives**
- Connections are not made between the **experience** and the **learning outcomes of the assignment**
- Implications for **future** learning/personal development are not identified
- No links are made between **experience/reflections** (**practice**) and **academic literature** (**theory**)



REMEMBER



Connect your personal experiences and reflections with academic theory (appropriate frameworks and literature)

Analyse the following texts from previous students' reflective essays:

1. Identify **strengths and weaknesses** in the writing
2. Identify **descriptive and critical language**
3. How **could you improve the text?**



Reflective writing

I can have good contact with my classmates. We all have a positive, determined and enthusiastic completion of the business plan. Because our team members have different learning backgrounds, we are lucky and based on our strengths, we can easily divide our work. We have identified how we can maximize our strengths to reduce our vulnerability. After that, we keep meeting to discuss our progress and consult with each other to improve our work. We have been in contact with mobiles and emails. I think teams are very important to us because everyone has their own strengths and weaknesses and if we can harness the strengths of each we are a very strong team. We did our best in group work and each team member made a big contribution to our group.

Note: The above extract of student writing has previously been submitted via Turnitin. Reproduction of any part of this extract will be identified as unoriginal work upon submission.

I can have good contact with my classmates. We all have a positive, determined and enthusiastic completion of the business plan. Because our team members have different learning backgrounds, we are lucky and based on our strengths, we can easily divide our work. We have identified how we can maximize our strengths to reduce our vulnerability.

Note: The above extract of student writing has previously been submitted via Turnitin. Reproduction of any part of this extract will be identified as unoriginal work upon submission.



After that, we keep meeting to discuss our progress and consult with each other to improve our work. We have been in contact with mobiles and emails. I think teams are very important to us because everyone has their own strengths and weaknesses and if we can harness the strengths of each we are a very strong team. We did our best in group work and each team member made a big contribution to our group

***Note: The above extract of student writing has previously been submitted via Turnitin.
Reproduction of any part of this extract will be identified as unoriginal work upon submission.***

After that, we keep meeting to discuss our progress and consult with each other to improve our work. We have been in contact with mobiles and emails. I think teams are very important to us because everyone has their own strengths and weaknesses and if we can harness the strengths of each we are a very strong team. We did our best in group work and each team member made a big contribution to our group.

Note: The above extract of student writing has previously been submitted via Turnitin. Reproduction of any part of this extract will be identified as unoriginal work upon submission.

There were two members of the group, B and D, who had a little difficulty in expressing and listening. I found that language barriers made some members feel less interested in communicating, and they seemed unconfident even when speaking, which caused a lack of cohesion in our team...Besides, the difference of subject background led to the lack of understanding. Fewer meetings and more online communication resulted in the slow transmission of information. One of the results was our focus evolved from teamwork to our point of views.

Oral communication is one of the most vital means of communication in society (Crosling and Ward, 2002). In addition, misunderstandings and repeated communication failures can cause negative outcome (McGovern, 2002)...We may have missed some great ideas due to the inaccuracy of information transmission...

Note: The above extract of student writing has previously been submitted via Turnitin. Reproduction of any part of this extract will be identified as unoriginal work upon submission.



There were two members of the group, B and D, who had a little difficulty in expressing and listening. I found that language barriers made some members feel less interested in communicating, and they seemed unconfident even when speaking, which caused a lack of cohesion in our team... Besides, the difference of subject background led to the lack of understanding. Fewer meetings and more online communication resulted in the slow transmission of information. One of the results was our focus evolved from teamwork to our point of views.



Oral communication is one of the most vital means of communication in society (Crosling and Ward, 2002). In addition, misunderstandings and repeated communication failures can cause negative outcome (McGovern, 2002)... We may have missed some great ideas due to the inaccuracy of information transmission...

What I need to introspect is that I didn't encourage members who were not confident in their language, and I should have let them try to explain their ideas in front of the team. I used a more time-consuming approach, contact and communicate with team members one-by-one. I should not neglect the problems caused by communication. Instead, we should establish our common goals face-to-face, to conduct more in-depth investigations based on the backgrounds of each member. We might get a better result in less time by doing this way.

Next time, I will encourage some unconfident members to express their ideas as much as possible. Besides, I will suggest using some auxiliary means to help us communicate effectively to understand the advantages and disadvantages of the whole team, so that make better use of everyone strengths.

Note: The above extract of student writing has previously been submitted via Turnitin. Reproduction of any part of this extract will be identified as unoriginal work upon submission.

What I need to introspect is that I didn't encourage members who were not confident in their language, and I should have let them try to explain their ideas in front of the team. I used a more time-consuming approach, contact and communicate with team members one-by-one. I should not neglect the problems caused by communication. Instead, we should establish our common goals face-to-face, to conduct more in-depth investigations based on the backgrounds of each member. We might get a better result in less time by doing this way.

Note: The above extract of student writing has previously been submitted via Turnitin. Reproduction of any part of this extract will be identified as unoriginal work upon submission.

Next time, I will encourage some unconfident members to express their ideas as much as possible. Besides, I will suggest using some auxiliary means to help us communicate effectively to understand the advantages and disadvantages of the whole team, so that make better use of everyone strengths.



Note: The above extract of student writing has previously been submitted via Turnitin. Reproduction of any part of this extract will be identified as unoriginal work upon submission.

Remember: two elements of reflective writing

Reflective writing is a way of processing your experiences to produce learning. It has two key elements:

- 1. Integrates theory and practice.** Identify important aspects of your reflections and write these using the appropriate theories and academic context to explain and interpret your reflections. Use your experiences to evaluate the theories – can the theories be adapted or modified to be more helpful for your situation?
- 2. Identifies the learning outcomes of your experience.** So you might include a plan for next time identifying what you would do differently, your new understandings or values and unexpected things you have learnt about yourself.



Tenses



- **Describe what you did (e.g. past simple)**
 - *We gained a lot of skills...*
 - *The process was effective...*
- **Identify what could be better (e.g. past tense modals)**
 - *... the meetings could have been improved*
 - *I should have given more feedback...*
- **Develop action plans (e.g. future)**
 - *I will make a strategy...*
 - *Next time I will encourage...*

Some useful vocabulary for feelings, evaluation and analysis



For me, the [most]	{ meaningful significant important relevant useful }	{ aspect(s) element(s) experience(s) issue(s) idea(s) }	was (were)...
		learning	{ arose from... happened when... resulted from... }

Previously, At the time, At first Initially, Subsequently, Later, }	I	{ thought (did not think)... felt (did not feel)... knew (did not know)... noticed (did not notice)... questioned (did not question)... realised (did not realise)... }
--	---	---

[Alternatively,] [Equally,]	This	{ might be is perhaps could be is probably }	{ because of... due to... explained by... related to... }
--------------------------------	------	--	---

This	{ is similar to... is unlike... }	because...
------	---	------------

[Un]Like...	this	{ reveals... demonstrates... }
-------------	------	--



Some useful vocabulary for conclusions and action plans

Having	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> read... experienced... applied... discussed... analysed... learned... 	I now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> feel... think... realise... wonder... question... know...
--------	--	-------	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Additionally,] [Furthermore,] [Most importantly,] 	} I have learned that...
--	--------------------------

I have	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> significantly slightly 	} { developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> my skills in... my understanding of... my knowledge of... my ability to...
However, I have not [sufficiently]	} { improved		

This means that...
This makes me feel...

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This knowledge This understanding This skill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> { is { could be { will be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> { essential { important { useful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> { to me as a learner [because...] { to me as a practitioner [because...]
--	---	--	---

Because I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> did not... have not yet... am not yet certain about... am not yet confident about... do not yet know... do not yet understand... 	I will now need to...
-----------	---	-----------------------

As a next step, I need to...



- **Personal style:**
 - Use 'I' and 'we'
 - Phrases to talk about yourself and others
 - Simple sentence structures
- **Use standard English:**
 - Use formal and standard vocabulary
 - Write in full sentences
 - Signposting and linking phrases



More support...

Live online sessions on **LEARN**

+ videos, factsheets, quizzes and more!

✓ **Module **LUA010 English Language Support****

✓ **Module **LUA001 Study Skills****



How was this session for you? Please give me your feedback: go to the ***LEARN module LLZ001*** and answer **4 simple questions** in the **Academic support – feedback form.**



Be critical: it's anonymous
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

Thank you!

Martin Hyams
M.Hyams2@lboro.ac.uk



Loughborough
University
London



- Brookfield, S.D. 1990. Using critical incidents to explore learners' assumptions. In pages 177-193 of J. Mezirow (Ed). *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood*. Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Fransisco.
- Driscoll, J. (2007) *Practising Clinical Supervision: A Reflective Approach for Healthcare Professionals*. 2nd ed. Philadelphia: Elsevier
- Gibbs, G. (1988) *Learning by Doing: A Guide to Teaching And Learning Methods*. Oxford: Further Education Unit, Oxford Polytechnic
- Jasper, M. (2003) *Beginning Reflective Practice*. Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes Ltd
- Kenny, N. (2010) What is Critical Reflection Centre for Open Learning and Educational Support
- Kolb, D. A. (1984) *Experiential learning: experience as a source of learning and development*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall

- Moon, J. A. (2004) *A Handbook of Reflective and Experiential Learning: Theory and Practice*. Oxon: Routledge Falmer
- Ryan, M. (2011) Improving reflective writing in higher education: a social semiotic perspective, *Teaching in Higher Education* Vol. 16, No. 1
- Schön, D. (1983) *The reflective practitioner*. New York: Basic Books
- Trevitt, C. (2007) *What is Critically Reflective Teaching* Oxford Learning Institute, University of Oxford
- Watton, P., Collings, J., Moon, J. (2001) *Reflective Writing*. exeter.ac.uk. Retrieved 7 June 2016 from <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/fch/work-experience/reflective-writing-guidance.pdf>