



The ACEDA Team

# REFLECTIVE WRITING 1: INTRODUCTION TO REFLECTIVE MODELS

- If you are having difficulties seeing the screen or hearing, sign out and back in again.
- Please mute your microphone when joining the session.
- You can unmute yourself when necessary.

**Please note, these workshops are interactive!**  
Please turn on your camera when the session starts.  
Message the lecturer if you are unable to unmute your microphone during the session.

**Session will start at:**

**XXXX**



# Aims and Objectives

The ACE Team

Understand the importance of reflective writing at university

Improve your awareness of two reflective models

Learn how to apply the Critical Thinking Checklist to a reflective paragraph

**By the end of the lesson you will be able to:**

Use different models to write critically analytical reflective assignments.



# Reflective Practice

Task

## 1. What is reflection?

Please put your answers in the chat!

# QA What is Reflection?

Answer

Reflection is “**one of the ways that professionals learn from an experience in order to understand and develop their practice**”

(Jasper, 2013, p. 2)

“We do not learn from experience, **we learn from reflecting on experience.**”

(Dewey, 1933, p. 78)

## Task

**1. What are the benefits of practicing reflection?**

**A. In the workplace**

**B. In your degree apprenticeship**

In breakout rooms, discuss your responses.

# QA The Benefits of Reflective Practice

Answer

## Examples:

The practice of reflection enables us to gain clarity and **better understand our experiences**, discovering the process of learning and self-improvement.

Through reflection, we also develop a questioning, **critical approach** to professional and academic practice – **identifying areas of strengths and weakness**. This learning can be employed to generate original insights and **inform future decision-making**.

When reflecting academically, we engage with challenging theories, models, concepts; they encourage us to **interrogate our assumptions, behaviours, and motives** in the workplace and beyond. As we explore alternative perspectives, we **develop self-awareness** and freedom of thought.



# Reflective Models



## QA Why Adopt a Reflective Model?

### Tip

When tasked with a reflective assignment, it can be difficult to know what to do or where to begin!

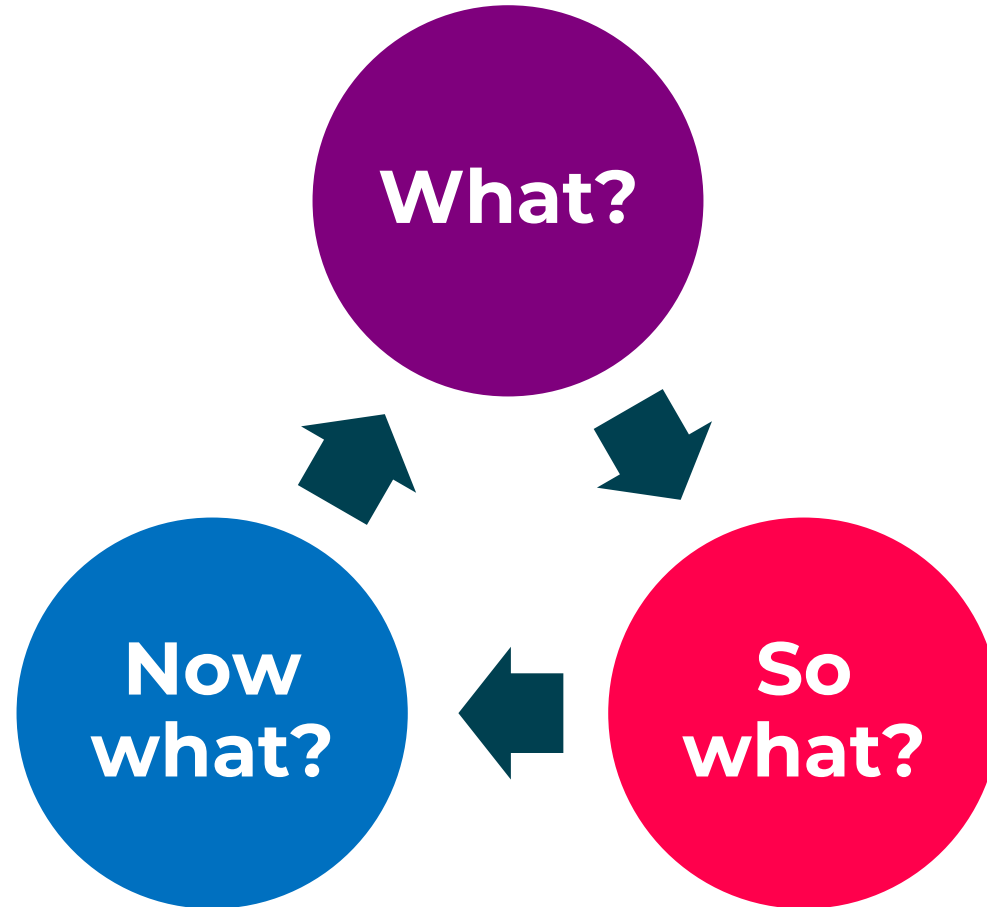
The following models may therefore be used a **template for the process of reflection**. This is because they assist in the systematic deconstruction of experiences, **helping to ensure that you ask meaningful questions** at each stage.

**Task**

- 1. Name the three stages of Driscoll's reflective cycle.**

Please unmute or put your answers in the chat!

# QA Driscoll (1994)



# QA 1. What? Stage

Screenshot

Briefly describe one experience / situation / incident you will be reflecting on.

- What happened?
- What exactly did you do?
- What did other people do who were involved in this?

Tip

Be concise! Only give us the essential background details that we need to know in order to understand your later analysis.



# 1. What? Describe the Experience

The ACE Team

Task

**How could we improve this paragraph? Refer to the 'What?' stage outline on the previous slide.**

Creating a dynamic and capable team is of crucial importance in the modern business environment. Many challenges can be experienced in trying to foster a cohesive and inclusive team atmosphere. At Company X, the needs of preserving the status quo were placed above innovative and novel approaches which might have benefitted the team in the long run. At Company Y, the management were reluctant to allow lower-level employees to suggest solutions to pressing issues. At Company Z, likewise, there is no forum for employees to share ideas which could improve team performance.

# QA 1. What? Stage: Example

## Possible Answer

Briefly describe one experience / situation / incident you will be reflecting on.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>What happened?</b></li></ul>                                      | <p>Having experienced issues with creating engaged and dynamic teams in both my current and previous roles, I decided to propose an initiative in May 2024.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>What exactly did <u>you</u> do?</b></li></ul>                     | <p>I proposed to my manager to introduce a weekly employee forum whereby ideas could be shared, and best practice discussed across the business.</p>            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>What did other people do who were involved in this?</b></li></ul> | <p>My manager accepted my proposal and colleagues were enthusiastic about participating.</p>  |

## QA 2. So What? Stage

Screenshot

**Critically analyse the significance of your experience.**

- **Why was this important?**
- **How do you feel about this?**
- **What did you learn about yourself from this?**
- **How can you use academic theory to make sense of this?**

**Tip**

You are expected to make use of academic evidence for the 'So what?' and 'Now what?' stages!

## QA 2. So What? Critically Analyse the Experience

Task

How could we improve this paragraph? Refer to the 'So what?' stage outline on the previous slide.

Many authors have discussed the importance for team cohesion of employees feeling able to 'speak truth to power'. My weekly forum initiative let people do this and I felt good as a result. It is important for me to do things like this for the sake of my career.



## QA 2. So What? Stage: Example

### Possible Answer

Critically analyse the significance of your experience.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Why was this important?</b></li> </ul>                                | <p>Initiating and working on projects independently is <b>crucial for my career development</b>. This instance allowed me to make connections across my organisation, <b>expanding my professional network...</b></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How do you feel about this?</b></li> </ul>                            |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What did you learn about yourself from this?</b></li> </ul>           |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How can you use academic theory to make sense of this?</b></li> </ul> |   |

## QA 2. So What? Stage: Example

### Possible Answer

Critically analyse the significance of your experience.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Why was this important?</b></li> </ul>                                | <p>Initiating and working on projects independently is <b>crucial for my career development</b>. This instance allowed me to make connections across my organisation, <b>expanding my professional network...</b></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How do you feel about this?</b></li> </ul>                            | <p>I felt <b>proud</b> and <b>encouraged</b> by the high level of participation from colleagues, <b>invigorated</b> by their constructive suggestions, and...</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What did you learn about yourself from this?</b></li> </ul>           |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How can you use academic theory to make sense of this?</b></li> </ul> |   |



## 2. So What? Stage: Example

### Possible Answer

Critically analyse the significance of your experience.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Why was this important?</b></li> </ul>                                | <p>Initiating and working on projects independently is <b>crucial for my career development</b>. This instance allowed me to make connections across my organisation, <b>expanding my professional network...</b></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How do you feel about this?</b></li> </ul>                            | <p>I felt <b>proud</b> and <b>encouraged</b> by the high level of participation from colleagues, <b>invigorated</b> by their constructive suggestions, and...</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What did you learn about yourself from this?</b></li> </ul>           | <p>I discovered <b>my ability to instigate change</b>, work with others across various teams, and...</p>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How can you use academic theory to make sense of this?</b></li> </ul> |   |

## QA 2. So What? Stage: Example

### Possible Answer

Critically analyse the significance of your experience.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Why was this important?</b></li> </ul>                                | <p>Initiating and working on projects independently is <b>crucial for my career development</b>. This instance allowed me to make connections across my organisation, <b>expanding my professional network...</b></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How do you feel about this?</b></li> </ul>                            | <p>I felt <b>proud</b> and <b>encouraged</b> by the high level of participation from colleagues, <b>invigorated</b> by their constructive suggestions, and...</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What did you learn about yourself from this?</b></li> </ul>           | <p>I discovered <b>my ability to instigate change</b>, work with others across various teams, and...</p>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How can you use academic theory to make sense of this?</b></li> </ul> | <p>-Reference theories on team cohesiveness, diversity and inclusion, employee engagement and wellbeing, etc.</p>   |

## QA 3. Now What? Stage

Screenshot

Explain how the experience will inform your future practice.

- How has this experience influenced your thinking or behaviour?
- What will you do in a similar situation in future?
- How could you achieve a better outcome next time?
- What could you do to better prepare yourself for this?

Tip

You are expected to make use of academic evidence for the 'So what?' and 'Now what?' stages!



# 3. Now What? Stage

**Task**

**In breakout rooms, plan a ‘Now what?’ paragraph which builds on the previous examples regarding team cohesiveness. You can use the outline from the previous slide to bullet-point your response.**

# QA 3. Now What? Stage: Example

## Possible Answer

Explain how the experience will inform your future practice.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>How has this experience influenced your thinking or behaviour?</b></li></ul> | This experience has reinforced my knowledge / confidence in...  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>What will you do in a similar situation in future?</b></li></ul>             | Having established connections across the organisation, I will...   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>How could you achieve a better outcome next time?</b></li></ul>              | Following the feedback I received from colleagues regarding the employee forum, I intend to...                  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>What could you do to better prepare yourself for this?</b></li></ul>         | However, further research on team cohesiveness / diversity and inclusion / employee wellbeing is required to... |



# Choosing a Reflective Model

## Tip

There are many different models to choose from and although they differ in approach, they include comparable stages; the **key differences between them are the number and complexity of these stages** (Cambridge University, 2021).

If your assignment brief does not stipulate which should be adopted, **clearly and succinctly explain your choice** of reflective model.





# Driscoll's Model

## Advantages

Straightforward to use

Stages are easily remembered, titled after a prompting question

## Disadvantages

Simplicity of questions may encourage superficial rather than critical reflection

Models such as Gibbs' include additional stages



# Gibbs' Reflective Cycle

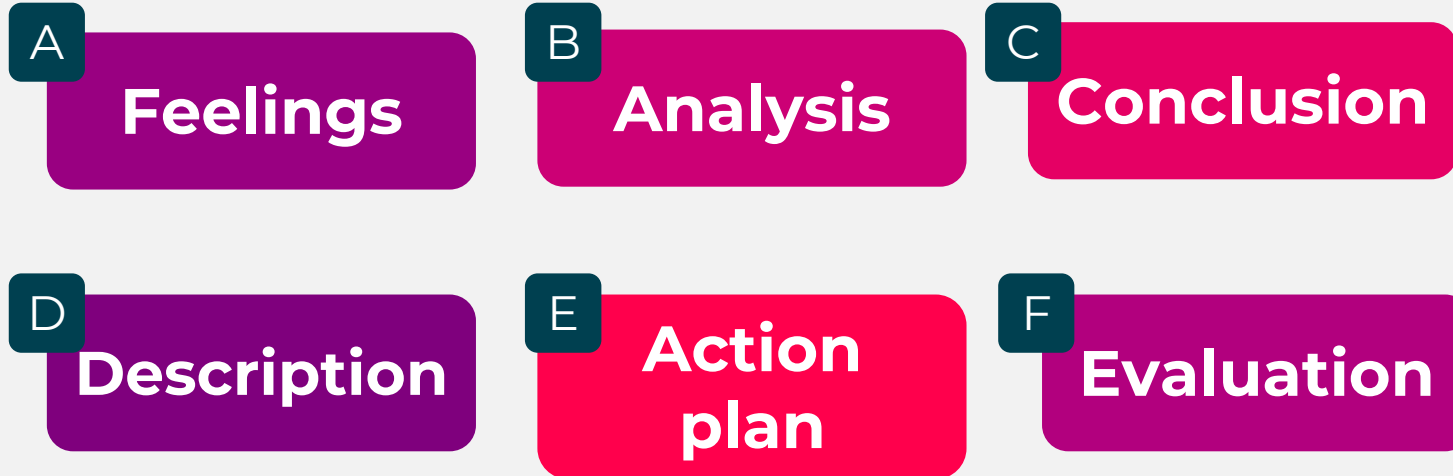




# Gibbs' Reflective Cycle

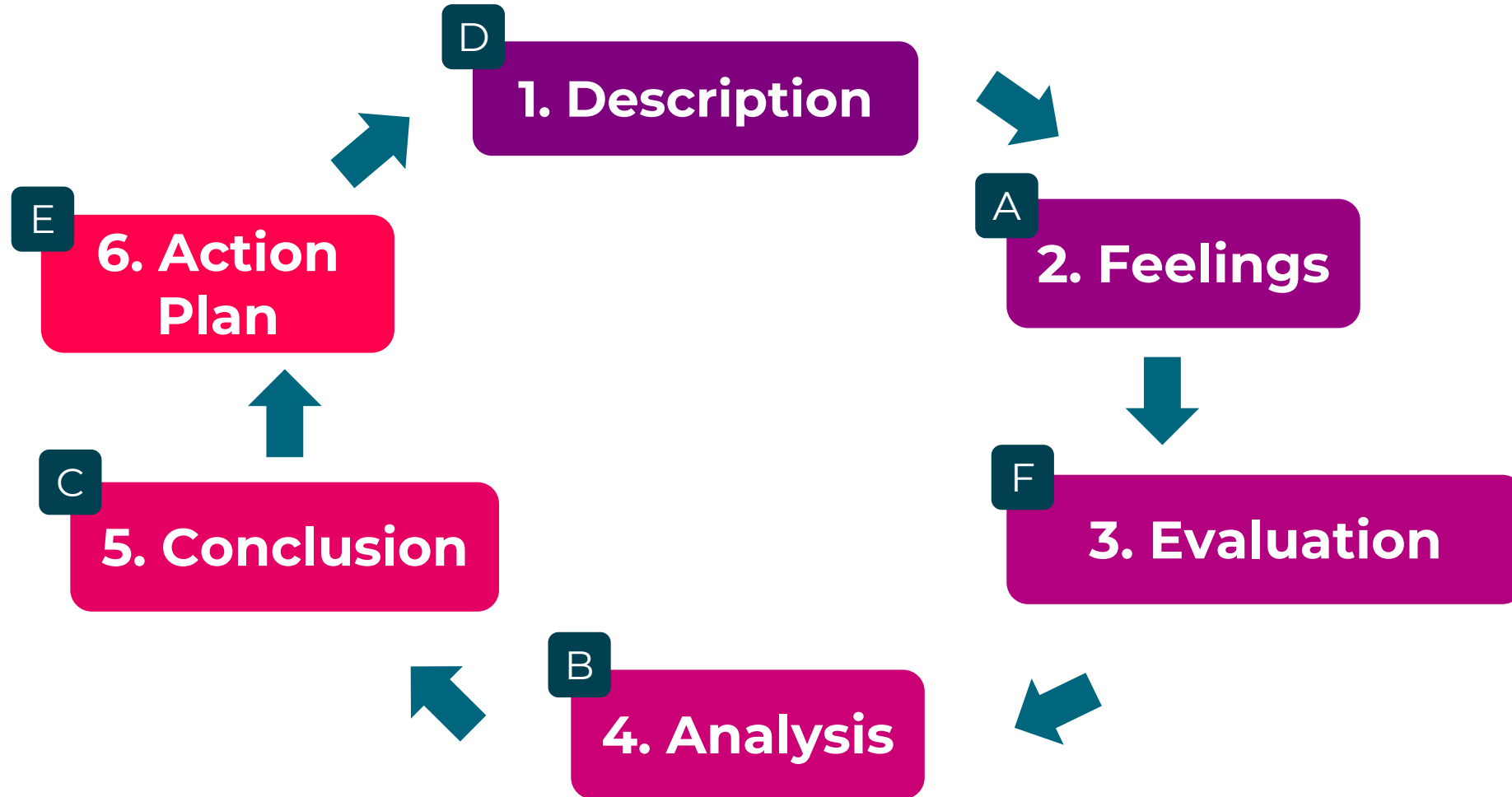
Task

Which comes first? Please number the sections 1-6 to form Gibbs' Reflective Cycle.





# Gibbs' Reflective Cycle **Answer**





# Gibbs' Reflective Cycle

The ACE Team

**Match each stage of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle to a question!**

**1. Description**

**2. Feelings**

**3. Evaluation**

**4. Analysis**

**5. Conclusion**

**6. Action plan**

**a**

If it arose again, what would you do?

**b**

What happened?

**c**

What sense can you make of the situation?

**d**

What were you thinking and feeling?

**e**

What was good / bad about the experience?

**f**

What else could you have done?

Answer

**1. Description**

**2. Feelings**

**3. Evaluation**

**4. Analysis**

**5. Conclusion**

**6. Action plan**

**b**

What happened?

**d**

What were you thinking and feeling?

**e**

What was good / bad about the experience?

**c**

What sense can you make of the situation?

**f**

What else could you have done?

**a**

If it arose again, what would you do?



# Reflecting Critically

**Tip**

No matter which model you choose, you must **engage with relevant scholarly theories** to...

- Examine preconceptions
- Assess current organisational procedures
- Identify triggers and causes
- Solve logistical problems

The objective is not to provide a summary of our experiences in the workplace, but to **critically reflect** on them – **developing your professional skillset and proposing recommendations for improvement.**

(Adapted from University of Waterloo, 2023)



# Gibbs' Reflective Cycle: Analysis

The ACE Team

Task

**How could we make this example 'Analysis' section more critical?**

I realised that I had not fully understood the academic expectations of my assignment, in terms of the depth of response required and aspects such as using theory, referencing and moving beyond description to evaluation. Perhaps I was over-confident in my assumption that I could make sense of the brief without outside support. In addition, I may have either not given enough thought to time management (Smith, 2015), or been unrealistic in my estimation of how long the writing process would take.

Please unmute or write your answers in the chat!





# Critical Thinking Checklist

Answer

You can use the ACE Critical Thinking Checklist to assess the **criticality of your work!**

Have I presented an argument?	
Have I justified my argument?	
Have I explained its significance?	
Is my argument convincing?	
Have I connected my ideas with appropriate signalling language?	
Are my ideas supported with evidence?	
Have I engaged critically with scholarly resources, evaluating the validity, coherence, and usefulness of their arguments?	
Have I considered the strengths and limitations of their positions?	
Have I engaged in comparative analysis, exploring relevant disparities, contradictions, or alternatives proposed by the wider academic community?	
Have I effectively refuted their findings and / or explained why they should be regarded as less important or contextually relevant?	



# Gibbs' Reflective Cycle: Action Plan

The ACE Team

Task

**Use the full ACE Critical Thinking Checklist to discuss how we could make the following 'Action Plan' section more critical.**

For my next module, I will start working on the assignment much earlier and employ better time management strategies when planning my writing schedule in order to benefit from formative comments. Perhaps with ACE tutorial support, I will try to deepen my understanding of academic expectations for my course and how I can improve my writing in the areas identified by the marker.

When breakout rooms start, you will have 5 minutes.



# Gibbs' Model

## Advantages

Prompts consideration of positive and negative aspects of the situation

Six clear stages including 'Feelings' – useful for experiences with a strong interpersonal dimension

## Disadvantages

Less user-friendly than Driscoll's model

The (false) implication that all stages require equal treatment in writing



## Driscoll vs. Gibbs

- 1) Having explored two models, do you find one more appealing than the other? If so, which one? Why?
- 2) If you are familiar with other models, to what extent did they differ?

Please unmute or write your answers in the chat!



# Review

- 1. 'What?' is the first stage of Gibbs' reflective cycle**



# Review

- 1. 'What?' is the first stage of Gibbs' reflective cycle**





# Review

**2. Reflective paragraphs should contain academic theory unless otherwise stated**



# Review

**2. Reflective paragraphs should contain academic theory unless otherwise stated**







## Review

**3. You can pick and choose your favourite bits from different reflective models without justification**

**3. You can pick and choose your favourite bits from different reflective models without justification**



# References

Dewey, J. (1933) *How we think: A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Boston: Heath & Co.

Driscoll, J. (2007) *Practising Clinical Supervision: A Reflective Approach*. London: Bailliere Tindall.

Gibbs, G. (1988) *Learning by Doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods*. Oxford: Oxford Polytechnic.

Jasper, Melanie (2003) *Beginning Reflective Practice*. Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes.

Porter, J. (2017) 'Why you should make time for self-reflection (Even if you hate doing it)'. *Harvard Business Review*. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2017/03/why-you-should-make-time-for-self-reflection-even-if-you-hate-doing-it> (Accessed: 9 June 2024).

University of Hull (2022) *Overview of reflective writing*. Available at: <https://libguides.hull.ac.uk/reflectivewriting/vsummary> (Accessed: 23 June 2024).

University of Waterloo (2023) *Critical Reflection*. Available at: <https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-and-communication-centre/critical-reflection> (Accessed: 24 June 2024).



## You may also like...

The ACE Team

### ACE Resources

- Critical Analysis – available on your VLE
- Advanced Reflective Analysis – available on your VLE

### External Resource

- University of Hull's overview of reflective writing:  
<https://libguides.hull.ac.uk/reflectivewriting/vsummary>



# Academic Concern?

The ACE Team

## Step 1

Look on the ACE page for resources (3 formats)

[ACE Page](#)

## Step 2

Check the upcoming workshops

[Book a Workshop](#)

## Step 3

If you are still unclear, book in a tutorial

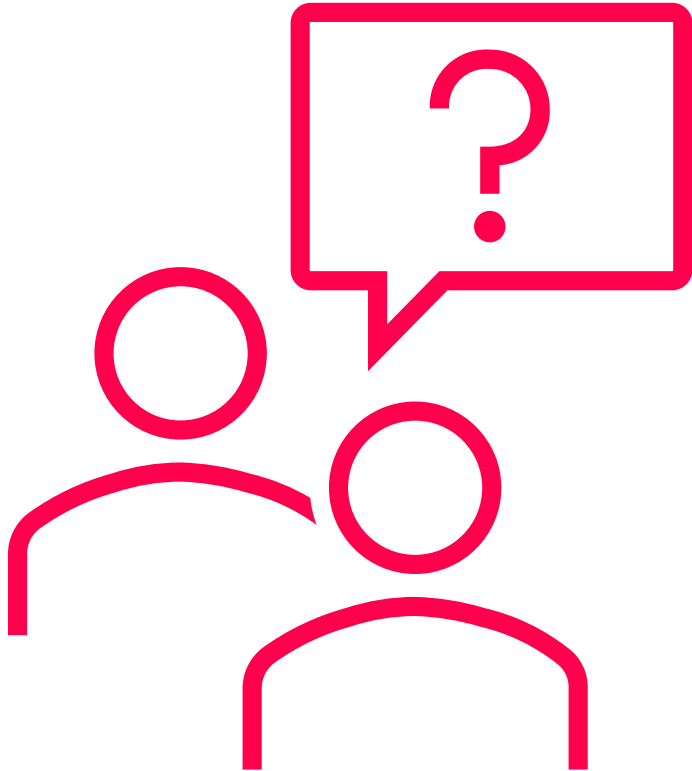
[Book a Tutorial](#)

Thank you for attending today's ACE workshop.  
We would be grateful if you could take 2 minutes  
to complete our **feedback form**.

[ACE Team Feedback Form](#)

QA

# Any Questions?



**Thank You!**