**What is a reflective learning diary?**

**https://www.ocnlondon.org.uk/news/comment/how-to-produce-a-reflective-learning-diary.aspx**

Reflective learning diaries - sometimes called ‘learning journals’ or ‘learning logs’ – are personal records about a person’s experiences of learning. They may simply **list the things learned in a day, or over a longer period, with comments on why they are important.**  Or they may include **personal feelings about learning something new**, **overcoming barriers**, or perhaps **“light bulb” moments**.

**What are they for?**

The main purpose of a reflective learning diary is to **consolidate and extend learning** **through reflection**.  It can often be used to provide evidence of that learning to show that a learner has met particular assessment criteria.

It’s really important to be aware of **privacy and confidentiality**. You should use a code or **pseudonym  in place of your name** in the diary. If the learner has included very personal information about themselves it’s important to make them aware before they submit work for assessment  that they can edit out inappropriate information.

**What form should the diary take?**

It needs a structure. It could be a written chronologically (with dates), or as case notes, or it could be a reflective video diary. Try to write  **logical and well organized** texts.

Make sure you know what’s appropriate and what’s relevant to include. Also **be alert** to issues of **personal disclosure and confidentiality**.

**What about length?**

The number of words might be just around 50 words an entry.

**What starter questions would be useful, in relation to the learning experience?**

* Which achievement are you most proud of?
* What was the thing that surprised you the most?
* What did you find most challenging?
* What did you enjoy the most?
* What skills have you learned?
* What skills would you most like to improve?
* Describe your experience of working in a team?
* What things have you learned that you didn’t know before?
* If you were to pick out just one thing that you have learned, what would it be?
* What have you learned about yourself from this experience?

**Are there any examples?**

Here are two examples of the kind of information that could be included in a learning diary.

*The thing I found most challenging on the course was giving presentations as it’s something that I haven’t done in the past. I was very nervous to begin with but my tutor showed me how to structure the presentation and engage with the audience.        I learned a lot from that exercise and feel more confident about giving presentations in future.*

*It was very hard initially to remain neutral when the client expressed very strong political views. In a social situation I might have challenged this, but it was important not to show my own feelings and find a way of dealing with very pointed questions.*

Some people are natural diary writers; others hate it.

**Are there any do’s and don’ts?**

DO write in full sentences, not just notes.

DO check spelling and punctuation – or get someone else to proof read for them.

DON’T include names of people or organisations. It’s important to maintain confidentiality.

DO remember your diary will be looked at by the teacher, so any inappropriate or personal comments that you wouldn’t want to share with a stranger should be left out.