We all reflect on a daily basis. In its simplest form, reflection is sub-conscious where we naturally think about a situation that has occurred – what happened, how you felt about it, and what was good/bad about it?

To truly benefit from reflection, we need to think about it a little deeper, consider why things happened and how we can learn from the experience to improve in the future.

**What is reflection?**

Reflection is personal and usually not intended for others to read so you can be as honest as you like. It’s an opportunity to explore previously unexamined thoughts and ideas and to express thoughts and observations about things that are otherwise difficult to articulate. It’s an important skill that will be invaluable to you in future employment; reflecting on events that happen in the workplace, whether good or bad, will help you to become more effective at your role and help you to make the most of your personal review meetings.

When reflecting, you interpret and analyse what happened, how you felt and how you acted during the experience; you should ask yourself how successful you found the experience, what do you think the perspective of others is, and what would you do differently next time.

Reflection plays a key role in your personal development and is simply the name of the process where you look back and think about an experience. By writing down your experiences, ideas, attitudes and feelings you will be able to make sense of them, and learn from your own behaviour; you’ll find connections between various experiences and come to understand more about your strengths, weaknesses and personal learning style.

**How will I benefit from writing reflections?**

- **SELF AWARENESS** - able to identify your strengths and weaknesses.
- You’ll understand in what situations that you work most effectively and learn more about how best to deal with challenging situations based on your experiences.
- **Develop PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS**
- You’ll realise where there are gaps in your skills set – where do you need further self-development?
- By identifying the best action to take, you’ll apply what you learn to other situations
- **Improve what didn’t go well / learn from mistakes**
- You’ll find it easier to answer questions and articulate your skills and achievements in job interviews!
- **You’ll understand your learning style and gain new insights and ideas.**
- **You’ll build your confidence – reviewing old reflections will help you realise how far you’ve got.**
How are reflections a part of the BEA/HEAR?

My Core Development Programme:
As part of the My Core Development Programme, you can complete Core Reflection templates based on any skill or experience that you have had that was employability-enhancing. If you are working towards the BEA, you need to complete the following:

- **BEA 100** = 3 core reflections (C101-3)
- **BEA 150** = 4 core reflections (C101-4)
- **BEA 200** = 6 core reflections (C101-6)

Alternative reflective templates are also available as part of the My Activity Log Programme.

Curriculum Reflection:
As part of the Co-curricular programme, you have the opportunity to complete reflections on your academic work. You can choose an aspect, module or academic year to reflect upon. It doesn’t matter what your degree subject is, you can reflect on all sorts of different activities such as an assignment, a group project, laboratory work, a field trip, or a placement that you have completed as part of an academic module. Remember that if you have to reflect on the placement as part of your module as well, the reflection you submit to the BEA must be a fresh piece of work and focuses on a different aspect of your placement.

Job Interview Reflection:
Job interviews, whether they are for a part-time job, an internship, a volunteering opportunity, or a graduate role, are perfect opportunities to help you develop and demonstrate your employability. Even if you’re not successful, you’ll always benefit from the experience of having sat in front of that interview panel. Reflecting on the experience will help you to identify how and why the interview went well/poorly.

Domestic Reflection:
There are many ways that you could be developing valuable employability skills through your personal experiences. These experiences may be caring for a friend or family member, being a parent, or experience difficult personal circumstances whilst you are studying. It’s difficult to have appropriate evidence for these experiences in order to log them, so you can reflect on the experience instead.

Supporting Evidence Reflection:
My Employability Hub requires you to submit evidence for all the activities that you log. Sometimes, you may not have solid proof that you have completed an activity (for example, you may just have an invitation email, or a photograph of you taking part in an activity). Completing the Supporting Evidence Reflection means that you can still get the recognition for your activity.

Historical Reflection:
You can only include activities that you have completed during your time as a registered student. We understand that your experiences and achievements prior to starting at Bangor University are also important to you, so here’s your chance to reflect on these and on how they have helped to develop your employability.

Guest Lecture Reflection:
Attending guest lectures is a great way to broaden and enhance your knowledge of a subject, whether it is your degree subject, or something new. If you attend a guest lecture or seminar, but don’t have evidence of your attendance, you can complete the Guest Lecture Reflection.

How to complete my reflection template?

The experience that you will need to reflect on varies depending on the reflection template that you have chosen.

For the Core Reflection templates you will reflect on the ‘experience’ of developing a certain skill or quality. You will need to choose the specific skill/quality that you wish to reflect upon from your skills mapping activity (C003).

When you have completed your reflection you will need to upload it to My Employability Hub. Your reflection will not be assessed, but a member of the Careers and Employability Service team will verify that you have completed the reflection to a sufficient effort level!

You must ensure that you fill each box in the template provided – a few short sentences/words in each box will not be accepted and you will be asked to re-visit your reflection, elaborate on what you’ve already written, and re-submit.

The reflection model that is used is based on the Gibbs Reflective Model (1998).

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We do not learn from experience...we learn from reflecting upon experience

John Dewey
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See below guidance on how to approach each section on the Core Reflection template.

Skill/Quality:
Which skill or quality are you reflecting upon? (You may choose to discuss multiple skills or qualities together if relevant)
Choose a skill or quality from your focus skills in the Skills Mapping and Planning exercise (C003).

Description:
Describe the activities/experiences where you have developed the skill/quality – explain in detail how you have attained/ enhanced it.
Describe what happened during experiences when you developed this skill/quality. They may have been situations at work, university or even a social situation (you can also reflect on things that happened before you came to University). Make sure that you note down all the facts about what happened, including any relevant background information – be concise but thorough. Don’t make judgements or mention your thoughts or feelings about the experience yet, you are asked to do this later in the reflection.

Feelings:
What were your thoughts and feelings whilst developing this skill/quality?
How did you interpret the thoughts of others involved in the activity/experience?
How did you feel before/during/after the experiences? Did your feelings affect how you reacted to what happened? What did they think of this experience, or in a completely different context?

Analysis/Reasoning:
Why do you think things happened in the way that they did? Does this help you to understand/make sense of what happened?
When analysing the experience, try to identify what really happened and why? Did any external factors affect the situation? Bring in ideas from outside the experience to help you put the events into context. Compare it to similar experiences you’ve had in the past, did you do things differently, and do you think that was the right thing to do? Is this your opportunity to really think about the reasons that things happened the way that they did, and to make practical judgements about these that will help you to improve your skills in the future.

Conclusions:
How could you use the skill/quality in future scenarios (either in a future instance of this experience, or in a completely different context)?
How could you further develop it and what might you do differently?
This is essentially your conclusion - you should sum up all that you have learned from your reflection in this section. Is there anything else that you could have done? What are you going to do differently in this type of situation next time? If the situations were difficult, how can you avoid the same happening again? Or how can you further improve if things went well? How will you use this skill in the future? What steps are you going to take on the basis of what you have learnt?

Evaluation:
What was good, bad, expected or unexpected?
In this section you need to consider how you think things went - what went well and what didn’t go so well? Did you expect the experience to be the way it was, if not how was it different?

Personal Action Plan:
Set yourself a practical and realistic goal to work towards to further develop this skill/quality. (You may refer to your progress in meeting this goal in a future reflection if you wish or discuss it with your personal tutor, a member of the BEA team, or a Careers Adviser)
Your goal can be as small or large as you feel is appropriate – here are some suggestions:
• reflect on your progress in developing this skill again in the BEA at a later date
• discuss this through with your manager or personal tutor
• attend a workshop to help you develop the skill
• ensure that you follow the recommendations that you identified above if the situation arises again
• find new activities or experiences to help you to develop the skill

One simply siphons the excess thoughts from one’s mind, pours them into the basin, and examines them at one’s leisure. It becomes easier to spot patterns and links, you understand, when they are in this form