Reflection Framework for Educators

Finding a way to integrate reflection into experiential learning can be challenging, especially if you don't know where to start. The following framework is a tool to designed to help you evaluate existing reflective practices and provide inspiration for designing new ones!

Within the context of this framework, 'reflective practice' refers to any reflection work being conducted in conjunction with experiential learning, by way of a single activity (i.e. a reflective journal assignment) or as embedded content delivered throughout a course or experience. For the purpose of this tool, 'learner' refers to an individual meant to participate in the reflective practice, and 'facilitator' refers to those designing and/or guiding reflection.

The framework is divided into three sections: 'Content', which focusses on what learners are asked to do; 'Method', which focusses on how facilitators ask the learners to reflect; and some additional Universal Considerations for reflective practice.

- The **Content** section is divided into Basic, Intermediate, and Capstone levels of reflection. For an activity to achieve strong reflective practice, all the criteria in the Basic category must be met. We believe strong reflective practice should be the minimum, as is allows learners to experience some of the benefits of reflection. Criteria at the Intermediate and Capstone levels represent increasing depth. It is suggested that Basic reflections may be most appropriate for learners new to reflection or learners in 1000-level courses, Intermediate level reflection for 2000/3000-level courses, and Capstone for 4000-level courses or learners who are familiar with reflection.
- For the **Method** section, the Base Requirements must be met for strong reflective practice, while the additional criteria help to further increase the quality of reflection.
- The **Universal Considerations** section contains questions relating to different factors that should be considered when developing reflective practice at any level.

When using this framework, keep in mind your desired goals for the reflective practice. Beyond the minimum criteria in the Basic/Base columns, the additional criteria you choose to include will vary based on what you are hoping to achieve and the experience/knowledge level of the learners. Consistent with teaching practice at U of G, all reflective practices should incorporate best practices in Universal Design for Learning, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

This framework is based on a Literature Review of Reflections in Experiential Learning and the REFLECT Rubric. A survey tool based off this framework is being developed as an interactive way of receiving feedback and design ideas for reflective practice.

If you have any feedback or questions or about this framework, please contact the Experiential Learning Development and Recognition Team (experience@uoguelph.ca).

Happy Reflecting!

Content (What is the learner asked to reflect on?)

	Basic (1000 Level) *Strong reflection meets all the criteria in this column.*	Intermediate (2000/3000 Level) *In addition to Basic criteria…*	Capstone (4000 Level) *In addition to Basic and Intermediate criteria…*
Description and Analysis	The learner is asked to <u>describe</u> the experience being reflected on with <u>some degree of interpretation and analysis.</u> The learner is also asked to consider <u>the future implications</u> of the experience and/or learnings for their personal growth. *Note: At this level, analysis is not very deep, but allows learners to consider their experience beyond a description alone.*	Learners are asked to consider <u>what went well</u> for them during the experience and <u>what did not</u>. Learners are also asked to consider their <u>emotions</u> during the experience and the <u>resulting impact</u> on the experience and/or their behaviour.	Learners are asked to consider <u>alternate perspectives</u> and <u>challenge their pre-existing assumptions</u>. *Note: This level is equivalent to 'critical reflection', where more in-depth reflection is expected.*
Connections	Learners are asked to make connections between their personal/academic background and the experience.	If applicable, learners are also asked to consider their experience within a context beyond personal growth and learning (e.g., connection between their experience and the surrounding community).	Learners are asked to connect reflection to personal and/or program learning goals/outcomes. If applicable, learners are also asked make connections with multiple contexts beyond personal growth and learning (e.g., community goals and outcomes).

Method (How does the facilitator ask the learner to reflect?)

	Base Requirement *Strong reflection meets all the criteria in this column.*	Additional Options to Strengthen Reflection, Beyond Base Requirement
Training	Provide learners with an overview of how to participate in the reflective practice and, if applicable, how it will be evaluated and by whom.	Provide support for learners to better understand how to achieve the level of reflection depth required for the reflective practice, by way of examples, resources, and/or training.
	Explain to learners the purpose of the reflection activity, with respect to the learner's current experience level and expected growth.	Explain to learners the purpose of the reflection activity, with respect to the course/program objectives and/or the surrounding community or environment.
Timing	Provide learners with at least one opportunity to reflect. *Note: Thought should be given to ensuring the length of the reflective practice is appropriate for the expectations of the course or experience.*	Provide learners with multiple opportunities to reflect throughout the course or experience. *Note: Having a plan for continuous reflection may be more impactful than dedicating significant time to a single occurrence of a reflective practice because learners will have an opportunity to integrate their learning throughout the experience.*
Guidance	Actively guide the reflective practice and/or provide guidelines and reflection prompts.	
Format	Provide learners with at least one structured format for reflection (e.g., group discussion, journal, video, etc.).	Provide learners with multiple formats for expressing and engaging with the reflective practice (e.g., writing, video, portfolios, etc.), for a single assignment, and/or embedded content throughout the span of the course or experience.

Universal Considerations for Reflective Practice

	Points for Consideration
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	• Do your reflection questions avoid cultural, ethnic, socio-economic, and identity-based bias? • Does your reflective practice accommodate the accessibility needs of all learners? (This includes the development of equivalent, alternate formats) • Does your reflective practice include measures to protect learners from harmful or disturbing content and ideas as much as possible?
Universal Design Learning Guidelines	• Do you supply different ways for learners to engage with your reflective practice to meet different learner expressions?

Evaluation	• Do you want to offer a grade or Pass/Fail?
	    o *Pass/Fail may be most appropriate for courses/experiences where reflection is being introduced for the first time or where you want to ensure that students answer truthfully and not to the rubric.*
	    o *Graded may be most appropriate for courses where reflection is common throughout the program and assessment rubrics exist.*
	    o *It must also be noted that graded reflections may not promote honesty, especially when learners are asked to delve into their emotions.*

Feedback and Collaboration	• Do you want learners to work together?
	    o *Collaborative peer activities, such as group discussions or collective problem solving, can be a good way to exchange ideas, consider alternate perspectives, increase learning, and enhance communication skills. However, while beneficial, this may not be possible for all reflective practice.*
	• Will the facilitator be providing feedback on reflections?
	    o *Some degree of feedback from facilitators is recommended to improve learning.*