

Keeping a reflective diary

You may find it helpful to keep a reflective diary to help you reflect on your experiences at work.

This is your own personal record. You do not need to share your reflective diary with your mentor or anyone else (unless you wish to). Therefore you can express yourself freely and write down impressions or thoughts which are not fully worked out yet.

Keeping a reflective diary will help you to make sense of situations and experiences at work so you can learn from them more easily. It will also be useful when you come to prepare the reflective evidence for assessment towards a qualification, such as an SVQ or the PLQ (Social Services). Extracts from your journal can be used as evidence.

There are various ways in which you can organise and write your diary. The following are two suggested ways.

Format 1 – Reflections on specific events which occurred during the week

1. **Topic** – main focus of this diary entry
2. **Sequence of events** – a short list of what happened
3. **Highlight one or two notable events** – select one or two situations that happened which were significant during the week, and describe in detail what happened.
4. **Analysis of the event** – This is the time for you to interpret what happened, and what you learned from the event.

Format 2 – Reflections on general thoughts, ideas and feelings which occurred during the week

Think about the following questions and write down your responses:

1. What things have I done at work this week that I think I went well?
2. What things have I done at work this week that I think did not go so well?
3. What are the thoughts and feelings I have had this week about my work?
4. What one important thing have I learned this week?