



ANZCA and FPM CPD Program

Critical reflection guideline

Individual activity

Category 1
Practice evaluation
Reviewing
performance

Purpose

This guideline assists CPD participants complete the critical reflection activity.

Activity description

Critical reflection is the process of analysing, reconsidering, and questioning your own experiences within a broad context to improve practice. Reflective practice is a “deliberate way of thinking about experiences: to learn from mistakes, to identify skills and strengths, and to develop options and actions for change and future success, promoting a lifelong practice of learning and development”.¹

Related documents

1. [Critical reflection CPD verification form](#)
2. [Critical reflection - practice reflection template](#)

How to complete this activity

Approach

Critical reflection is conducted using the following steps:

1. **Determine the topic** for your critical reflection.
2. **Identify resources** to assist your reflection.

These depend on the topic, and may for example include relevant codes of conduct, professional standards, your notes from a conference or workshop, feedback received from others (e.g., trainees, students or feedback as part of a CPD activity), or a college library guide (e.g., for health and wellbeing, leadership, communication).

Note that resources may be used to support your critical reflection. Time spent reading these resources is recorded as a Category 2 Knowledge & skills CPD activity. Using the steps and models in this guideline to critically reflect on the knowledge and skills you have gained is part of this Critical reflection activity.

3. **Set aside time** that will be uninterrupted (at least an hour is suggested) and find a quiet space in which to undertake the reflection.
4. **Work through a series of questions** (see below).
5. **Develop a plan for practice change or a personal wellbeing plan** (see below).
6. **Keep a diary or log** of reflections for your own records. You do not need to upload this log to your CPD portfolio; please upload the *Critical reflection CPD verification form*.

Choosing what to reflect on

Whilst critical reflection can be applied to almost any work situation (**Practice reflection**) and to your own health and wellbeing (**Own health and wellbeing reflection**), the key is that this reflection is about critically reviewing the topic to develop a plan for any necessary change.

It is particularly helpful to undertake critical reflection where you know a change is coming, for example where you will be taking on a new role, changing an aspect of your practice (e.g., location) or where you have acquired new knowledge and skills that you plan to integrate into your practice.

The topic for reflection may be:

<p>An event or experience where you were aware of concern (either your own or that of others)</p>	<p>This could be an error, a near miss, a communication breakdown, a difficult conversation or a situation of conflict. This may be a one-off situation or a longitudinal one with a particular colleague or group.</p>
<p>Another CPD activity</p>	<p>For example, you may reflect on a conference, skills workshop or other learning experience, so that you can plan to integrate what you have learnt into your practice.</p> <p>You may also choose to undertake a formal interim reflection on your annual CPD plan (outside the mandatory annual CPD planning process e.g., mid-year) by completing a Critical Reflection activity.</p>
<p>An aspect of one of your work roles</p>	<p>There are endless possible topics, although they must be relevant to your scope of practice. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching, assessment and other educational roles; planning career transitions (e.g., becoming a specialist, moving into private practice, planning retirement) • Development of leadership skills • Contributing as a committee, board or expert advisory group member or chair • Clinical governance activities • Analysing and measuring healthcare outcomes • Consulting, partnering and codesigning with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Māori and Pasifika (e.g., for clinical pathways, diversity and inclusion strategies, educational development, research) • Creating safe environments for equity groups such as patients and communities with disabilities, those who identify as LBGTIAQ+ or who are culturally and linguistically diverse; providing culturally safe practice (noting that cultural safety is defined by those receiving care) • Guideline, policy, pathway or procedure development • Your own research activities and supporting research of others.

Questions to use as prompts for critical reflection

The following tables include a generic model for critical reflection on your practice (often initiated by an event or experience) and three options for critical reflection on own health and wellbeing. A key component of each model and thus of your critical reflection is an action plan - What have you identified that needs to change?

1. Practice reflection

The Gibbs reflective cycle in the table below is useful for reflecting on an event or experience. It can be modified slightly when reflecting on another CPD activity or an aspect of a work role.

Use the [Critical reflection - practice reflection template](#) to record your reflection and plans. You may keep this for your personal records but please do not upload it to the ANZCA and FPM CPD portfolio.

Phase	Cue questions
Description of the event	What happened? What did you do? Where did it happen? Who was involved? What was the context?
Feelings	What were you thinking and feeling? Describe your internal thoughts and feelings, before during and after the event
Evaluation	What was good and bad about the experience? Were there things that were difficult? Interesting? Surprising? Upsetting? Provide some judgement about the event and its possible consequences.
Analysis	What sense can you make of the situation? How do past experiences compare to this? How does theory or evidence fit with this? How did your involvement affect the outcome?
Conclusion	What else could you have done? What insights, thoughts or conclusions about you role within this event can you now take away? What have you learnt for the future?
Action plan	What would you do if a similar situation arose again? What are some indicators that would help you recognise a similar event? What are some changes you would make? Who could assist you with further guidance on your reflections?

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2. Own health and wellbeing reflection

The following table includes three tools that can be used to critically reflect on your current state of health and wellbeing. These all include specific questions and suggestions for developing a personal wellbeing plan.

Tool	Description
Self-reflection and wellbeing tip sheet (Relationships Australia, Victoria)³	This is a 2-page fillable PDF document with prompts (questions), along with tips and resources for deciding next steps to support your wellbeing.
Five ways to wellbeing at work: personal wellbeing plan (Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand, mauri tū, mauri ora)⁴	This is a 12-page worksheet addressing five evidence-based ways to improve wellbeing, at work and in your personal life. It supports you to develop a personal wellbeing plan and includes Aotearoa New Zealand resources. It's part of a broader toolkit that can be used by leaders and managers to support the wellbeing of their work teams.

Tool	Description
Explore your way to wellbeing: Whāia Te Ara Hauora, Whitiōra (Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand, mauri tū, mauri ora) ⁵¹	This is a reflection worksheet based on Te Whare Tapa Whā, a model developed by Māori health advocate and researcher Sir Mason Durie to provide a Māori perspective on wellbeing.

Wellbeing support resources

The ANZCA [Wellbeing SIG LibGuide](#) includes a collection of selected professional networks and support resources related to the wellbeing of doctors. Resource reading can be recorded as Knowledge and skills. Time spent critically reflecting on your current approach to own health and wellbeing and making a personal wellbeing plan is recorded under Practice evaluation – reviewing performance: *Critical reflection*.

Using a different tool

The models/tools above are suggestions. Other models for reflection are available. CPD participants may choose any model that suits them, provided it includes:

1. A structure (usually formulated as questions) for reflecting on your current practice or own health and wellbeing.
2. A process for developing a practice or personal wellbeing plan for future changes.

ANZCA and FPM CPD portfolio recording

Participants record this activity under:

Category 1 Practice evaluation – reviewing performance: *Critical reflection*, with the *Critical reflection CPD verification form* uploaded as evidence.

References

1. DunnGalvin A et al. Applied reflective practice in medicine and anaesthesiology. *Brit J Anaesth* 2019;122:536-41. doi 10.1016/j.bja.2019.02.006.
2. Leeds Beckett University. Skills for Learning – Models for structured reflection. Example 2 – Gibbs reflective cycle [internet]. Leeds, United Kingdom, 2015. Accessed from <https://web.archive.org/web/20161119095626/http://skillsforlearning.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/preview/content/models/03.shtml>. Based on Gibbs G (1998). *Learning by doing: a guide to teaching and learning methods*. Further Education Unit. Oxford Polytechnic: Oxford.
3. Relationships Australia, Victoria. Self-reflection and wellbeing tip sheet. Undated. At <https://www.relationshipsvictoria.org.au/media/crydxvb0/self-reflection-and-wellbeing-tip-sheet-22054-fillable.pdf>. Accessed 5 September 2023.
4. Mental Health Foundation New Zealand, mauri tū, mauri ora. Personal wellbeing plan fact sheet: about the five ways of wellbeing. 2023. Available at <https://mentalhealth.org.nz/workplaces/working-well-guide-and-resources/enhancing-mental-wellbeing>. Accessed 5 September 2023.
5. Mental Health Foundation New Zealand, mauri tū, mauri ora. Explore your way to wellbeing: Whāia Te Ara Hauora, Whitiōra. 2019. At <https://mhaw.nz/assets/MHAW-2019/Individual-explore-pack.pdf>. Accessed 5 September 2023.

Change control register

Version	Author/s	Reviewed by	Approved by	Approval date	Sections modified
1	J Bridgman J Sutherland L Roberts With resources suggested by J Sinclair	P Cumpston D Devonshire A Kattula P Macintyre A Merry A Ross	CPD Committee	October 4 2023	Created