

Moving reflection online



The year that was...

Reflective practice is at the core of Action Research and globally it is widely used in university studies. However, we can not assume that researchers, students or teachers know how to practice reflection. We do know that it is a practice that can be scaffolded and learned (Harvey, Coulson & McMaugh, 2016).

In 2020, a group of Australian academics and HEA fellows, known as a learning circle, launched a new (and free) Reflection for Learning Scholarly Practice [Guide](#).

The practice guide has been designed for educators who are interested in supporting reflective practice for their students' learning and for their own learning and career development. The Reflection for Learning activities are grouped by category to scaffold you from familiar cognitive and text-based approaches, through to practices that are more sensory and creative. The inherent recognition is that reflective practice is a somatic, whole-of-body practice (Harvey, Baumann & Fredericks, 2019).

Workshop and classroom participants regularly rate the creative approaches as the best option for their learning and professional needs (Harvey & Vlachopoulos, 2020). Each activity is underpinned by a succinct reference to the research evidence of how it supports learning. Short and simple instructions on how to facilitate the activity, what materials are needed and how much time to allow are provided.

With the many time constraints in the academy, a criterion for most of the activities presented in the guide was that they be both engaging and short in duration to allow for easier embedding in the curriculum.

This year

The many reflective activities in the guide were practised and developed in face-to-face, synchronous learning environments. A pandemic meant our universities had to swiftly respond to working in a new environment of lockdown. As educators we had the responsibility of leading a rapid reimagining of learning and teaching, supporting students and academics as they swiftly became fully online learners and teachers.

As part of this reimagining, the Reflection for Learning Circle academics, the authors of the guide, began experimenting with practising the reflection activities in their online classes. And they worked! To share how to incorporate reflective practices in an online learning environment we decided to video capture some of these activities, simply using Zoom, and make the videos available on a YouTube [channel](#).

New videos for 2021 include:

Counting breaths

The countdown

Five finger breathing

Food for thought

Give your brain a break

Imagine a teacup

Images as reflective prompts
Invisible whiteboard
Melting
Mindfulness hand awareness
Minute paper
Noticing five things
Reflection as exploration
Seeking clarity
Ten-second Count
Team breath
Reflection as exploration
Silence

A call to reflect online

Are you researching, learning or teaching online? Reflective practices support learning (Harvey, Coulson & McMaugh, 2016) and they can be used in any research or learning environment, including online. Download the practice [guide](#) and view a [video](#) of a new practice you have not used before. Trial one of the reflection activities in one of your online sessions. Ask your colleagues for their feedback. Which is your favourite online reflective practice activity?

References

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