

PERSONAL CASE STUDY

Version 1.0
MA/MSc Games
GAM701

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Introduction

"We do not learn from experience; we learn from reflecting on experience."

— John Dewey

"The reflective practitioner allows himself to experience surprise, puzzlement, or confusion in a situation which he finds uncertain or unique. He reflects on the phenomenon before him, and on the prior understandings which have been implicit in his behaviour. He carries out an experiment which serves to generate both a new understanding of the phenomenon and a change in the situation."

— Donald Schon

The key theme of this module is practice and reflection. No matter which direction, creatively and technically speaking, you choose to pursue, you should aspire to become a reflective practitioner. Such effort will not only empower you to move forward as the creative and technical landscape changes, but also to discover and pioneer new opportunities.

With the module's first workshops as points of reference, you now have an opportunity to engage in reflection more deeply. Analyse the challenges you face in there and explore the many possible trajectories that could define your future development practice. Note down those you feel are most appropriate and present them in a video: your personal case study.

This assignment is formed of two main parts:

- (A) **Write** a report on continuing personal and professional development that focuses and reflects upon:
 - i. **key skills** that define your practice;
 - ii. **challenges** and **limitations** you have found in your skillset;
 - iii. **foresee** tangible plans to improve and overcome your identified limitations.
- (B) **Maintain** a Critical Reflective Journal (CRJ) throughout the module in which you:
 - i. **reflect** on your work on a weekly basis;
 - ii. **keep track** of your learning, challenges and further lines of interest.
- (C) **Record** a short video that:
 - i. **summarises** your experience as a reflective practitioner;
 - ii. **highlights** the main challenges, and ways to overcome them in the future.

Assignment Setup

This assignment embeds your insights as a reflective practitioner throughout the module, as well as potentially drawing bridges with other modules or topics you find relevant to your practice.

Submission must be done as a **single compressed ZIP file** containing the required items for each part of the assignment.

Part A

In this assignment, you will critically reflect on your learning and app development practice across the whole study block. This involves identifying the key weaknesses that influenced the quality of your work and then, from this, developing a plan for continuing professional development.

Such reflection and planning is an extremely important part of developing skills

in creative app development. Research shows that deliberate practice is very effective at nurturing expertise in software engineering. Everyone properly adopting a CPD-orientated approach will eventually succeed, despite the challenging nature of programming and the further complexities associated with developing software in a creative context.

Write a **2700-word report** to:

- (a) Identify at least five key skills that you consider challenges / obstacles;
- (b) Briefly justify the relevance and importance of each of these skills, with respect to creative;
- (c) Assess your application of each of these skills, describing how they affected the quality of your work;
- (d) Suggest how to overcome each of these challenges / obstacles, with reference to SMART actions.

Please submit your work in .PDF format.

You can ask for immediate **informal feedback** from your **tutor** during both meetings and workshop sessions.

The word count is a limit, and not a target. Aim to write up to 500-words for each skill, around 100- words for the introduction, and around 100-words for the conclusion.

Part B

Critical reflective writing is an opportunity for self-exploration, and an opportunity for you to attain self-understanding through the analysis of your personal characteristics and experiences. You are expected to write a blog entry each week where you reflect on your creative app development practice.

Your journal is a place for you to:

- (a) Practise writing in analytical and evaluative styles rather than a descriptive style;
- (b) Analyse the concepts you develop through your ongoing deliberate practice;
- (c) Examine how you've applied your research and directed learning to your practice-based projects;
- (d) Look backward to see what you have accomplished so far;
- (e) Project forward to desirable goals you might obtain in the future.

To complete this assignment, you are expected to **set up a blog** (using either Wordpress, or GitHub Pages) and complete a **short journal entry each week**, from Week 1 up to the submission deadline.

You can ask to receive **informal feedback** from your **tutor** at any point throughout the study block.

Please note you are not required to include holidays, but you are welcome to do so if you choose to engage in creative and / or technical practice during such periods.

Part C

To complete this assignment, you are expected to record a **video of no more than five minutes**. Upload a video file using one of the common formats (.MP4, .MKV, etc.), or upload a link to YouTube, or a file upload service.

This video should be a reflection space for you to:

- (a) Describe what you have accomplished so far, focusing on key skills required by your profile and specialisms.

- (b) Structure your thoughts and reflections, focusing on lessons learned from the workshops and seminar sessions.
- (c) Outline key areas of practice you aim to develop across the rest of the module.
- (d) Propose directions for further research and self-exploration that will support such development.
- (e) Explains how you intend to take your project forward across the module.

You will be assessed on the **quality of your reflections**, and not your video editing skills.

Additional Guidance

Unlike many other modules, in which the learning process is based on assimilating external content, this module aims to booster your learning and skills the other way around; namely, by focusing on your own way of working. Reflective practice is, therefore, the beginning and the end of this module. Whatever the field of expertise you choose to work on, you will be faced with opportunities and challenges that will ask you to think differently about the way you use your tools, and which will require not only to know which approaches to use, but also to understand and justify why those approaches were chosen to tackle a particular problem.

As such, and even though some small-scale artefacts will be created in the numerous workshops, the real goal of this module, and thus the final artefact, is a work of reflection and introspection into your work and practice. Therefore, those small-scale artefacts are not the destination, but rather the journey that will foster your reflection and that will allow you to engage in an analysis of your own tools, techniques and approaches.

Try to reflect holistically by drawing examples of challenges / obstacles from a range of different domains: the affective domain, such as your ability to identify and manage different mental states and emotions; the interpersonal domain, such as your ability to communicate and organise activity with peers; the dispositional domain, such as your ability to manage time effectively and remain disciplined; the cognitive domain, such as your conceptual knowledge of programming languages and / or frameworks; and the procedural domain, such as your abilities to apply computing concepts and problem solving skills. The more specific and granular the challenges / obstacles you highlight, the easier it will be to define actions to improve. There should be a clear link between the action, and the skill the action aims to improve. Also recall that the term 'SMART action' refers to a specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound action.

FAQ

- **What is the deadline for this assignment?**

Falmouth University policy states that deadlines must only be specified on the MyFalmouth system.

- **What should I do to seek help?**

You can email your tutor for informal clarifications.

Additional Resources

- Fook, J. et al. 2007. Practising critical reflection: a resource handbook. Open University Press.
- Ericsson, K.A. et al. 1993. The role of deliberate practice in the acquisition of expert performance. *Psychological Review*. 100, 3 (1993), 363–406.
- Boud, D. 2001. Using journal writing to enhance reflective practice. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*. 2001, 90 (2001).
- Babb, J. et al. 2014. Embedding Reflection and Learning into Agile Software Development. *IEEE Software*. 31, 4 (Jul. 2014), 51–57. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.1109/MS.2014.54>.
- Ericsson, K.A. and Credo Reference (Firm) 2006. The Cambridge handbook of expertise and expert performance. Cambridge University Press.
- Measey, P. and Radtac 2015. Agile Foundations: principles, practices and frameworks. BCS.
- Principles behind the Agile Manifesto: <http://agilemanifesto.org/principles.html>.
- Hatch, M. 2014. The maker movement manifesto: rules for innovation in the new world of crafters, hackers, and tinkerers. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Wilkinson, K. et al. 2013. The art of tinkering: meet 150+ makers working at the intersection of art, science & technology. Weldon Owen.

Marking Rubric

All submissions and assessment criteria for this assignment are individual.

Criterion	Weight	Fail (0-49%)	Pass (50-59%)	Merit (60-69%)	Distinction (70-100%)
INDUSTRY: Evaluate the pertinent legal, social, ethical, and professional issues associated with live development contexts.	30%	The student demonstrates little or no understanding of the legal, social, ethical and professional issues associated with live development contexts.	The student demonstrates some ability to evaluate the legal, social, ethical and professional issues associated with live development contexts, but this is not always consistently applied.	The student demonstrates ability to critically evaluate the legal, social, ethical and professional issues associated with live development contexts.	The student demonstrates ability to critically evaluate the legal, social, ethical and professional issues associated with live development contexts, leading to new contextual insight.
ANALYSIS: Critically reflect upon and evaluate working methods and solutions.	70%	The student demonstrates little or no ability to critically reflect upon and evaluate working methods and solutions effectively and efficiently.	The student demonstrates some ability to critically reflect upon and evaluate working methods and solutions effectively and efficiently.	The student demonstrates ability to reflect upon and evaluate working methods and solutions effectively and efficiently. Critical reflection is communicated confidently in a range of formats and contexts.	The student demonstrates ability to reflect upon and evaluate working methods and solutions effectively and efficiently. Critical reflection is communicated confidently in a range of formats and contexts, articulating ideas fluently and eloquently.