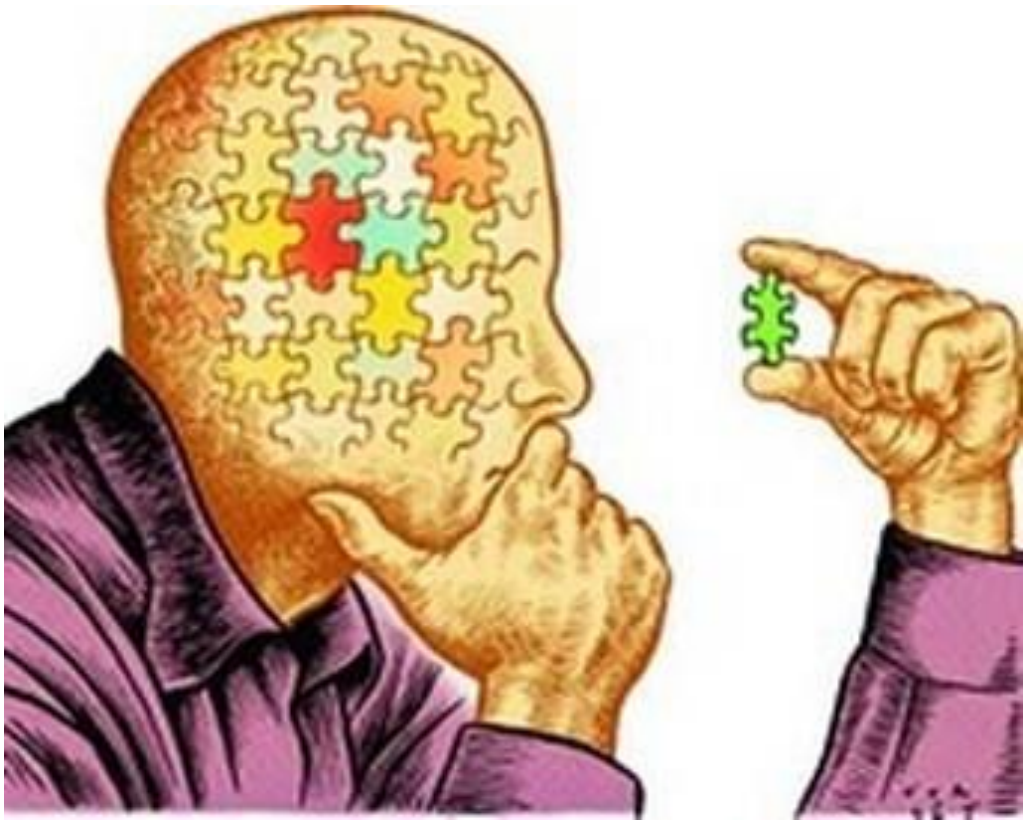
FIT5057
REFLECTIVE REPORT



S1 2020

FIT5057 – Final Assignment 3 Brief

This assignment prepares you for adopting a reflective approach in practicing project management in your future employment and university projects. You will learn about reflective thinking through this final assignment.

FIT5057
Reflective Report

FIT5057 – FINAL ASSIGNMENT 3

1.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This assignment helps you to understand the value of reflective thinking in project management. In a nutshell, reflective thinking is a self-development skill that involves you thinking about your past actions and the impacts on others and yourself, to engage in a process of continuous learning that increment improves you and your skills in project management. Reflective thinking opens up leadership opportunities and sustains one's prowess to be successful to be top industry leaders or simply high performers who can operate at levels the rest of society cannot do.

Unit Learning Outcomes	Applicable?	Explanation
1. Analyse and evaluate the role of the modern project manager in the context of IT projects	X	This assignment helps you to understand what is reflective-thinking and how to engage the techniques of reflective thinking, to bring together PM theories and practice. Reflective thinking is a powerful self-directed continuous "learning for improvement" strategy that will continuously expand and deepen your PM knowledge and skills during and after every project you have been and will be involved in.
2. Interpret and critique a variety of project management methodologies offered by various professional bodies including that provided by the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK)	X	You will need to recount the key concepts and methods of the PM knowledge areas you have learnt, have basic critical[1] abilities and thinking with self-distancing awareness, in order to understand how theories and practice play out in every experience episode. Every reflection adds another layer of experience based PM knowledge and skills enhancement, collectively cultivating your PM wisdom.

[1] Critical abilities are critical thinking, analytical literacy (analytical reading and comprehension, precise and analytical writing), and evidence-based research skills, which you were introduced to when doing Assignment 1 and Assignment 2A.

3. Describe and apply the available strategies, techniques and decision tools used by project managers to manage modern IT projects based on PMBOK methodology.	X	The quality of learning for improvement will depend on how well you have understood the PMBOK™'s PM knowledge areas, SDLC methodologies and PM strategies, techniques and decision supporting tools, and case studies (all documented in your lecture resources) and put this knowledge into practice via your near live case study in your Assignment 2A.

Table 1: Project Management Unit Learning Outcomes

The ability to think reflectively prepares you to be a reflective practitioner of PM, always capable of improving your proficiency in PM every time you engage with projects.

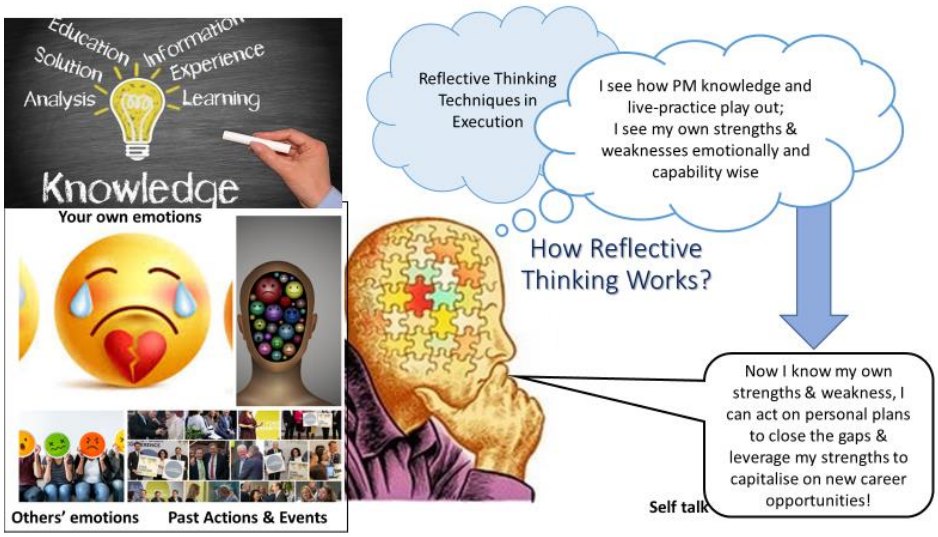
What is Reflective Thinking?

Top leaders and high performers master the craft of reflective thinking. A reflective person looks back on past actions and events, taking stock of emotions, experiences, actions, and responses; using that information to evaluate their professional and personal behavioral patterns and capabilities to identify opportunities for self-improvement. It removes the ego as it requires one to be brave and admit one's weaknesses and also acknowledging one's strengths, both suited for continuous improvement.

Through reflective thinking, one can look back at what, how, who, when and why things happened. The thinking process involves:

1. Recalling and paying attention to the practical applications of theories and behaviors in past emotions, experiences, actions and events;
2. Applying different spectrums of critical thinking that analyses the past to identify one's strengths and weaknesses;
3. Engaging in inferential thinking that enables you to identify and work on self-development actions.

Reflective PM practitioners, including educationists and researchers, can always self-learn effectively from their own experiences and rely less on formal learning and training to be knowledgeable and skillful in their professions.



Learning reflective thinking is guided by understanding and using a single or mix of reflective models (theories) that help frame how you can analyse your own thoughts of past experiences and identify self-directed improvement activity. Knowing such models or theories is not just an academic exercise but is transformed into pragmatic methods of reflective thinking.

So, what are these reflective thinking models or methods?

REFLECTIVE THINKING MODELS

Reflective thinking models help you in the systematic deconstruction of your experiences. Before you deconstruct your experiences, you need to define your reflective questions. These questions are framed by the basic what, who, when, where, why and how. For example, question such as (University of Hull, 2020):

- *What prior knowledge did I have?*
- *How did I act during the event?*
- *What did I learn from the event that I did not know before?*
- *What links can I make between my experience and other events/ideas from my studies or workplace?*
- *How can I use the knowledge I have gained from this event/experience in the future?*
- *Are there other interpretations of the event? Do I need to consider them?*
- *What are the implications of what happened?*
- *If I distance myself from the event and observe my reactions to it, does it change my perspective?*
- *Based on what I have learned, how should I act in future?*
- *What other information do I need in order to understand the implications of the event?*
- *What is the best way to go forward?*
- *Looking back, would I have done things differently? If so, what and why? If not, why not?*

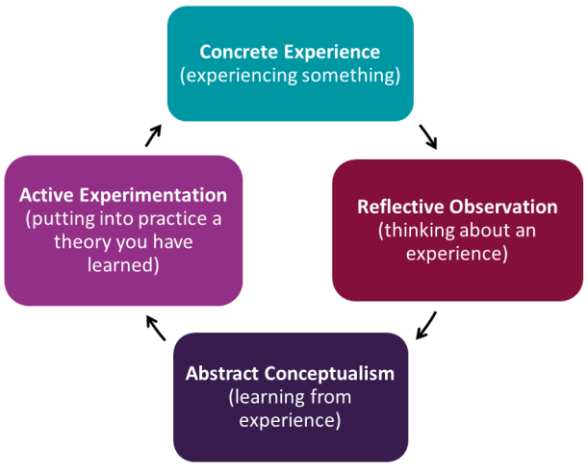
These questions are linked to what you want to know about your own capabilities as they are now and what areas of improvement you want to action. The questions are your personal checklist of knowing and acting, fuelled by your desire and will to learn or otherwise and not let ego create bias in your personal thinking.

The challenge is how to draw out the answers to these questions from past experience, such as your FIT5057 unit learning, or a more granular area of it, such as your assignment 2A experience.

There are several commonly used reflective thinking frameworks (University of Hull, 2020):

1. Kolb's Learning Cycle
2. Gibbs' Reflective Cycle
3. Schon's Framework
4. Rolfe et al's Framework
5. ERA framework.

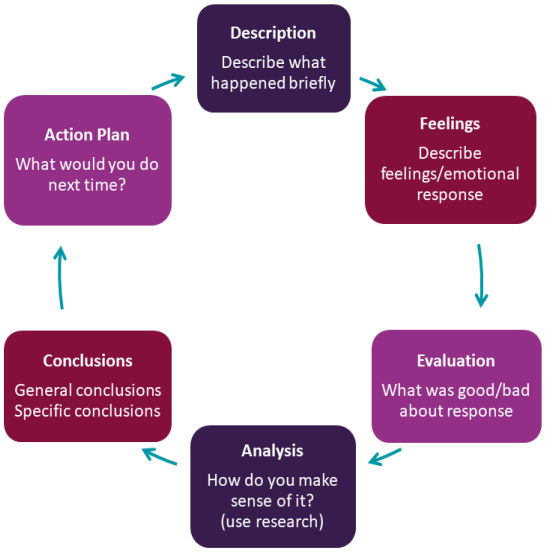
Kolb's Learning Cycle (University of Hull, 2020)



"Effective learning is seen when a person progresses through a cycle of four stages: of (1) having a concrete experience followed by (2) observation of and reflection on that experience which leads to (3) the formation of abstract concepts (analysis) and generalizations (conclusions) which are then (4) used to test hypothesis in future situations, resulting in new experiences" (McLeod (2013) in University of Hull, 2020).

Most of you would have started with Active Experimentation. If you had worked in projects, you would have some preliminary abstract conceptualization of Project Management work from your past experiences. If you have been doing all your workbook exercises, you would have established a more concrete experience in your Assignment 2A project work, giving a much deeper and richer memory recall for reflections.

Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (University of Hull, 2020)



Gibbs provides a genre (writing structure pattern) for deconstructing your recount of past experience that describes:

- A recount of what happened (the key events)
- Your feelings/emotional response to events and other people you interacted with
- Your evaluation of what was good or bad in your perceptions of your own and other responses arising during the events
- Your analysis - views that make sense in explaining what are the drivers that motivated you and others to behave in the manners you earlier identified

- And leading to a logical conclusion and identifying a self-improvement action plan as an appropriate next step.

Monash has developed a resource based on Gibbs' model:

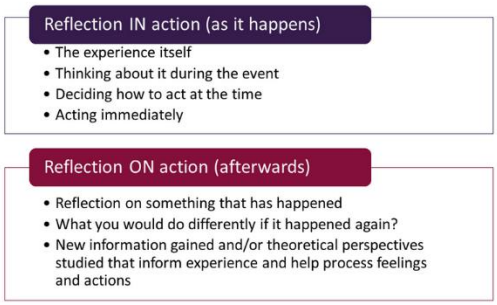
https://www.monash.edu/rlo/assignment-samples/information-technology/reflective-writing-in-it

Reflective Writing in IT:

"Many students find reflective writing difficult. In IT as well as other faculties, students often write **descriptions** of their experiences, rather than reflections on how the experiences were, how they felt, what they learnt, and how they might do better next time or in the workplace. Genuine reflection requires you to **analyse** your descriptions of experiences or observations. Analysis communicates what you have **learned** from your reflections.

This resource explains what reflective writing is, what aspects a written reflection should cover, the kind of language commonly used when reflecting, and some tips on how to complete reflective assignments effectively. Several examples of written reflections are provided to demonstrate the above."

Schon's Model (University of Hull, 2020)

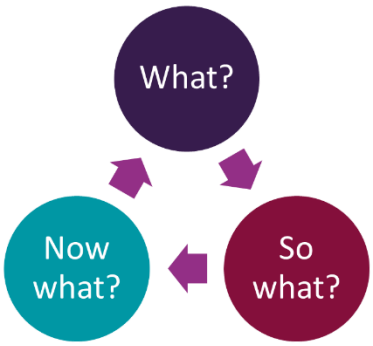


This model motivates you to reflect during and after an experience episode. It requires you to be proactive and aware that you want to use a current situation as a reflective learning experience or a given, part of your reflective practice work style.

If you have already been reflecting on your learning experiences during this unit and making a series of reflective journals, you could consider using Schon's framework.

This framework is potentially an advanced reflective thinking, reflective practitioner approach, because one is using reflection to enable learning and inform further action after the experience. The reflective thinking can identify existing theories to explain the experience and build new theories from analysing this interplay of existing theories.

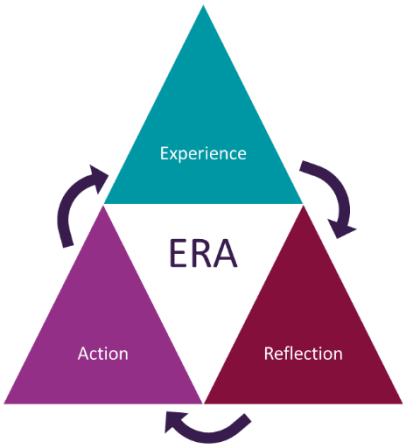
Rolfe et al Model (University of Hull, 2020)



This is a simple, yet pragmatic model, often used by nurses in their profession. By responding to what, so what, now what questions you are able to outline an experience, relate the experience to wider knowledge and identify implications for your practice.

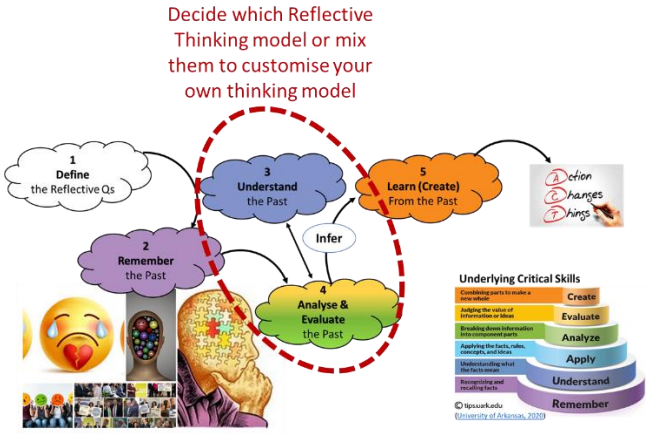
It works well for reflecting on a specific event, not for generalisation of events you have experienced.

Experience, Reflection Action (ERA) Model (University of Hull, 2020)



This model feeds learning through reflection and to be applied forward into future experiences. As it creates reflections from experience in a well-structured and yet simplistic manner, it is recommended for first time reflective thinking learners.

Choosing Your Reflective Thinking Model



Now that you understand the commonly used reflective thinking models, decide which one works best for you, or you can create your own version by selecting attributes of these models.

Whichever model you choose or design, make sure it works for you in enabling you to:

1. learn from your experiences, including seeing how theories can explain your experiences.
2. identify realistic and doable self-improvement action plans to follow-up.

More importantly, commit resolve to follow through your action plan. All that thinking without actions and results are then wasted.

Once you acknowledge your own strengths and weaknesses, then the next step is applying ***inferential thinking***, ie deep and unconscious brain thinking, metaphorically like automatic algorithmic processing, as your brain cells fire up intensively and interconnected with each other like a live network of interconnecting mini-computers, processing your years of collected implicit knowledge, which influences the scope and quality of your formal and experience based learnings.

Inferential Thinking

Inferential thinking can be considered like a conclusion inferring technique. Typically, from your evidence based analysis findings, you 'draw out' the logical conclusion (Lumen, 2020). The underlying abstract thinking process in your headspace, is called metacognition. Metacognition is the ability of your brain to recognise bigger picture patterns from your brain's information processing. In that brain processing, the accuracy of the information, which is your analysis findings, is important. When you do not understand how you came to your analysis findings and also do not understand the underlying contexts clearly, then your brain will just process value information and spit out a conclusion statement that is wishy washy. When assessed, you received feedback, saying your conclusion does not logically connect with your analysis findings or body discussions. Inferential thinking is your deep brain processing ability.

Gauging where this cognitive ability is at (weak, moderate or strong) is important, because being aware of this capability is the first step for self-improvement planning. Some of us spend great effort and time studying hard and still find it hard to fully comprehend the meanings of information. When doing assignments, we are not sure:

- what topics to choose or keyword to research;
- which research information pieces to select,
- how to use research findings in an analytical manner in our writing
- when to stop covering a certain topic
- if our answer sounds right.

Conversely, we may be overly sure or confident of our abilities and get really surprised and sometimes annoyed when we receive poor assignment outcomes. These are signs that your metacognition ability needs addressing. When you let ego come into your thinking, it is easy to deny this cognitive issue and blame the learning challenges elsewhere.

Researchers have found that inferential abilities are linked to reading comprehension (Soto, Gutiérrez de Blume, Jacovina, McNamara, Benson, Bernardo Riffo & Richard Kruk, 2019). When this literacy skill is lacking, your brain has not been adequately trained to contextualise (give meaning to) the text, visual, audio or feeling information you read or experience, never mind storing it in your knowledge memory. Reading and comprehension is an information pattern processing skill, not totally reliant on memorizing and recalling grammar, punctuation and spelling rules, but also knowing language construction techniques and how to research to recall such knowledge if unsure or forgotten.

Researchers recommend that one can improve their metacognition abilities, though "*thinking about thinking*". This meta thinking approach is executed in two phases (Malamed, 2019):

1. **Knowledge of cognition** phase – the aim is knowing what you know (and do not know) when you are thinking. This brain processing phase has three work breakdown tasks: knowing the factors that influence one's own performance; knowing different types of learning strategies to use; knowing what strategy or strategies work/s for specific situations.
2. **Regulation of cognition** phase – the aim is consciously and continuously planning and managing your thinking development. This brain processing phase involves setting goals and learning strategy

planning; monitoring and controlling the execution of chosen learning strategies; and regularly evaluating the situational effectiveness of the chosen learning strategies.

Here are some other useful tips from Malamed (2019), to help improve your metacognition ability in reading and comprehending the communicated meanings:

- *"Knowing the limits of your own memory for a particular task and creating a means of external support.*
- *Self-monitoring your learning strategy, such as concept mapping, and then adapting the strategy if it is not effective.*
- *Noticing whether you comprehend something you just read and then modifying your approach if you did not comprehend it.*
- *Choosing to skim subheadings of unimportant information to get to the information you need.*
- *Repeatedly rehearsing a skill in order to gain proficiency.*
- *Periodically doing self-tests to see how well you learned something".*

Monash University also has:

1. self-directed learning resources to help you improve your reading skills – which can be found in https://www.monash.edu/rlo/study-skills/reading-and-note-taking/effective-reading-strategies and
2. drop-in services in https://www.monash.edu/library/skills/resources/we-will-support-you/drop-in .

You can also contact the FIT learning skills advisors to assist in the matter - Bei-En Zou and Mario Sos.

ASSIGNMENT BRIEF

Now that you understand:

- What reflective thinking is;
- How it deconstructs your past experiences into lifelong learning for continuous improvement;
- The different models of reflective thinking; and
- The underpinnings of critical and inferential thinking skills in reflective thinking;

You are about to embark on the journey of becoming a reflective project manager.

> **Becoming a proficient project manager needs commitment to reflective practice.**

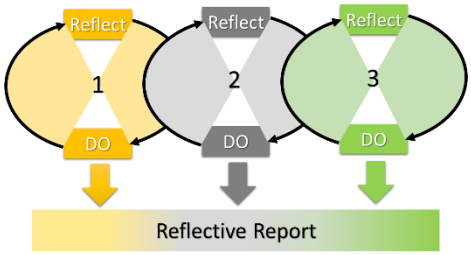
The assignment will require you, through executing 2 learning tasks, to reflect and document these thoughts to prepare your final assignment. The reflective process, as a whole, will require you to understand and apply:

1. Reflective questioning
2. Choose or design your reflective thinking approach
3. Critical thinking
4. Apply inferential thinking, ie conclude an improvement plan.

3 Actioning Reflective Thinking & Writing Your Reflection Report

You need to separate out executing reflective thinking and writing your reflection report. Both activity streams involve writing:

1. You reflect on each assignment experience and write your thoughts on the processes and outcomes
2. You use the reflections to write the second part of Assignment 3, the Action Plan, in a coherent and easy to read writing structure that demonstrates your overall reflections, including responses to given questions.



PRELIMINARY WORK

Identify your reflective thinking framework. You may choose one of the discussed models or mix these models to customize your own. Think about whether you want to use one common framework across episodes, or specific one for each episode. Set out your model and explain why you chose or designed it.

TASK 1

Reflective Q1 – What are my key developments through reflecting on my learning?

Using one of the models above, reflect on your learning from Assignment 1 and 2 by answering the following questions:

1. ~~What did we do?~~
    - Describe the Individual approach in Assignment 1 and compare it with the group work in Assignment 2
    - What are your three key learning areas from these assignments? Explain why they are.
2. Reflect on your experience in completing Assignment 1 and 2 and answer the following reflective questions:
    - ~~What worked well and what did not and why~~;
    - ~~What effect did I have? What have I learned about myself in these situations?~~
    - ~~What are my key learning areas, both personal and professional?~~
    - What is my personal development action plan and timeline?

TASK 2

Reflective Q2 – What are the weaknesses in the framework developed in Assignment 2 and what cybersecurity policy would you put in place?

1. Review the readings from Assignment 1 and 2 related to cybersecurity and the attached references related to cybersecurity policy.
   (a) "Cybersecurity In Australia - New Changes." Mondaq Business Briefing, 11 Apr. 2017. Gale General OneFile, https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A489100003/ITOF?u=monash&sid=ITOF&xid=055a056f

   (b) D. Blum, Rational Cybersecurity for Business, https/::doi.org:10.1007:978-1-4842-5952-8_3

2. Review what you have written in the Assignment 2A Project Plan and explain how the framework that you have proposed might have cybersecurity weaknesses. Be specific about where and why these weaknesses occur.
3. Develop a draft cybersecurity policy for the framework which should feature:
    - A governance model, either a diagram or a table, setting out levels of responsibility (Hint: look at the people management area of your report);
    - A list of the policy documents, their owners and clearance levels;
    - A diagram that sets out the security relationship between your framework and the agencies and organisations that have contact with it.

4. Reflect on this activity and what you have learnt from doing it. Use the questions from Part 2 in Task 1 to help you identify your key learning areas that you would improve.
5. Share these learning gaps and identify what improvement actions you can consider taking.

Task 3

1. Include both the tasks in your final report of 10-12 pages including Reference List and excluding cover sheet and table of contents.
2. Your report should include your responses to Task 1 and Task 2 and your reflective analysis of your learning; you should also include your learning improvement plan and learning gap analysis.
3. Proof read your report, check there is Table of Contents, reference criteria have been met, cover sheet has your student ID and name, class day and time, tutor's name before you submit.

REPORT TEMPLATE

Introduction (10%)

- ~~State the specific learning purpose of the assignment~~ and a scope-outline of its discussions
- ~~State each of the 2 given meta-question and all its sub-questions that guide your reflective thinking~~

Reflective Thinking Model (10%)

~~Describe the theoretical concepts of reflective thinking model/s you have chosen to use.~~

~~Visualize how you apply the reflective thinking model,~~ and provide a summarized written explanation to the diagram.

Reflective Thinking Outcomes

Task 1: (30%)

~~**INTRODUCTION/OBJECTIVE:** State Task 1's objective based on the meta-question~~

~~**REFLECTION DISCUSSIONS:** Share your reflective thoughts in a well organised structure. You may use more heading structures and make sure your paragraphs are constructed and linked appropriate to separate distinct discussions of your thoughts and answers to your reflective questions~~

~~**CONCLUSION/REFLECTIONS EVALUATION:** Discuss whether your reflective thoughts have answered Task 1's given question~~

~~**IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS LIST:** List the appropriate actions you can take for future improvements (you can number the actions)~~

Task 2: (30%)

~~**INTRODUCTION/OBJECTIVE:** State Task 2 objective based on the meta-question~~

REVIEW and REFLECTION of FRAMEWORK: Analysis of the framework you have planned and the potential weaknesses in it

PROPSED POLICY: Discussion and diagram of your proposed solution to the identified weaknesses

CONCLUSION/REFLECTIONS EVALUATION: Reflection on whether you have answered the questions and your learning plan.

Conclusion (10%)

Summary highlights of reflective discussions

The closing concluding statement linked to the learning purpose you indicated in the Introduction.

Next Step Recommendation.

References (5%)

At least 6 references, 50% peer reviewed

<**Overall Writing Syntax & Semantics Quality** – 5%>