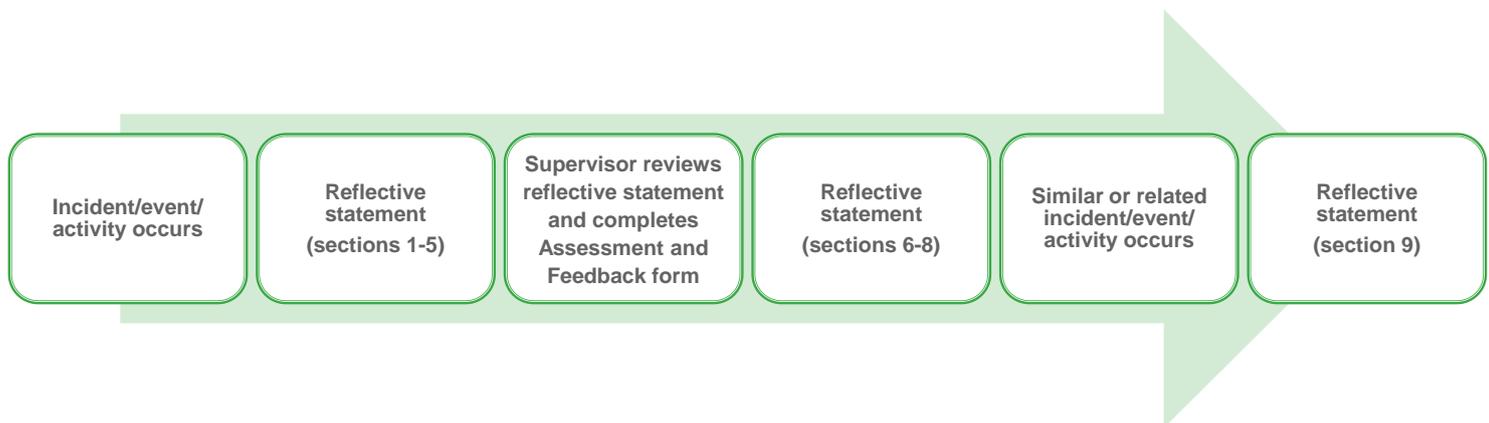


Quick reference guide for interns: In-training assessment (ITA) reflective statement

Developing and writing a reflective statement

As soon as practicable following the activity, event, or incident, you should complete the details of the activity, event or incident and the feelings, thoughts and emotions experienced at the time. If time is limited, it is better to make some notes at the time, and then return to the report later to put them into a more coherent and orderly account that is personally meaningful. Interns should not try to complete the report during a busy period in the workplace, but in a place where there are few distractions. It may be useful to carry a notebook in which to record initial recall of the activity, event, or incident, together with thoughts and feelings; alternatively, you may choose to record these thoughts on a device such as a mobile phone.

Figure 1: Steps for completing a reflective statement



Section 1 is a short descriptive summary of the facts of the activity, event, or incident without reflection upon the meaning. Interns should simply describe what happened. Time is of the essence. If you do not have time to complete the template immediately after the incident, it would be ideal to make some brief notes (for example in a notebook or on a mobile phone) to prompt later reflection. You should aim to complete the first 5 sections of the template on the same day as the incident or event occurs. Some examples include error; near-miss; error detection; clinical intervention; interaction with patient/care/other HCP; observation of others; other critical incident. This is by no means a comprehensive list.

Section 2 is the start of the reflective process where you should identify how the activity, event or incident made you think and feel. Some key questions that might form the basis for this aspect include:

- what thoughts did I have during the activity, event, or incident?
- how did I feel during the activity, event or incident and did my feelings change as it proceeded – was I (for example):
 - surprised
 - upset
 - pleased
 - excited
 - confused
 - frustrated
 - intimidated
 - interested
 - confident
 - hesitant
 - worried
 - feeling any other emotion?

Once the details of the activity, event or incident and the initial response have been recorded, you should spend some time thinking about **Section 3**, and putting together a response to the critical issues that were identified and what you have learned. Some key questions that might form the basis for this aspect could include:

- what went well
- what did not go as well as it could have done
- what factors facilitated a good outcome?
- what barriers were present which hindered a good outcome
- what risks were identified and addressed well
- what risks were not considered or addressed in advance?
- what aspects of the process led to potential problems being avoided?
- if/where the process broke down
- if/what impact a lack of knowledge had on the outcome
- how communication issues facilitated or hindered a good outcome
- what are the key things I learned?

Sections 4 and 5 are intended to prompt you to identify how learning from the experience will change future actions, and if any additional learning or practice is needed to help develop knowledge or skills. Once you have completed the first 5 sections, a discussion should be initiated with your supervisor. The process encourages a full and frank discussion between you and your supervisor, so this discussion should take place in a quiet area where neither person is likely to be distracted or interrupted. It may form part of the regular weekly meeting if so desired. It may only take a few minutes, but this will depend on the specific circumstances and may take longer. The supervisor does not need to complete the form other than by signing once it is complete. However, your supervisor should complete the *Assessment and feedback* form at this time, and jointly create a development plan with you to where enhancement of the reflective skills is desirable.

Sections 6 to 8 provide a structure for recording the process and outcomes of this discussion. The primary purpose of reflection is to reinforce and consolidate the learning associated with an activity, event, or incident, and to consider how such an activity, event or incident might be handled or approached differently in future. Consequently, a critical component of the process involves follow-up.

Section 9 can be used to close the loop by outlining a subsequent event where the learning which arose from the reflection was put into practice.

Section 10 is available for any additional notes. It should be noted that the experiences which lead to reflection are likely to relate to other performance outcomes. **Section 10** can be used for noting these outcomes and acting as a record of their demonstration.

It should be noted that the template is designed to help to structure the reflective process. Where you are comfortable and confident with an alternative approach to reflection which is consistent with this template, this alternative approach may be used.