Assessing WIL outcomes through reflective practice

Follow-up from the 2012 ACEN Research Symposium
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Recognition of widespread use of reflective practice as an assessment strategy for WIL – and question about the appropriateness of using reflective practice as an assessment tool

Group of 6 academics from 4 countries agreed to do the following:

Develop a shared framework that identifies higher order principles of reflective practice

- Why undertake reflective practice for assessment?
- What literature supports the use of reflective practice for assessment?
- What techniques/tools can be used for reflective practice?

In doing this recognise the need to cater to diverse needs and contexts of students, staff and disciplines.

Later aspects of the study will include:

- Benchmarking – elements of good reflective practice with specific reference to the relevance and uniqueness to WIL
Why undertake reflective practice for assessment?

- Personalises learning experience
- Allows recognition of failure
- Enriches multi-disciplinary perspective
- Supports creativity and innovation
- Nurtures employability capabilities
- Facilitates skill transition
- Promotes life-long learning
- Complements experiential learning
What literature supports the use of reflective practice for assessment?

As practitioners, we are working with an assumption that reflection supports student learning.

In the literature there exists extensive:
• documentation
  • anecdotal evidence
    • student satisfaction or self-reporting and
    • small case-based studies

Empirical evidence for the efficacy of the relationship between reflective practice and learning outcomes is limited.

While it is common to assess (raw) student reflections – there are many issues and challenges with this practice, e.g. the veracity of this assessment (see Moon, 2004; Stewart & Richardson, 2000).
What techniques/tools can be used for reflective practice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research/evidence based</th>
<th>Problem-solving</th>
<th>Reflection about practice</th>
<th>Analysis of argument</th>
<th>Creative/idea generation</th>
<th>‘A lived activity’</th>
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Increasing level of structure
What techniques/tools can be used for reflective practice?

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<th>Similar to scientific process</th>
<th>Solution orientation</th>
<th>Incident analysis – stepped process</th>
<th>Interpret, analyse, infer, explain</th>
<th>Knowledge and imagination</th>
<th>Phases rather than steps Higher order thinking</th>
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Adapted from Hoskyn and Slater, 2008
Three models of critical reflection showing an example of two frameworks that provides guidance for reflecting within each model.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Model of critical reflection</th>
<th>Framework based on each model</th>
<th>General comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dewey’s model of reflective learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge can be constructed through active reflection on past and present experiences. Pragmatic approach.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gibb’s model</td>
<td></td>
<td>A cyclic generic framework. A general and nonspecific approach to reflection. Novices may find it too vague requiring further guidance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephenson framework</td>
<td></td>
<td>A detailed set of cue questions. Focuses on consequences of actions and examines practice knowledge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Habermas’s model of critical reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td>Based on 3 areas of knowledge: technical, practical and emancipatory. Critical theory approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor’s framework</td>
<td></td>
<td>Describes activities associated with 3 types of reflection: technical, practical and emancipatory. Highly structured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim’s framework</td>
<td></td>
<td>Called critical reflective enquiry. Three phases of reflection: descriptive, reflective, critical/emancipatory. Processes and products applied to each phase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolb’s model of reflexive learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Attempts to integrate thinking and practice. Experiential learning approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolfe’s framework</td>
<td></td>
<td>Expanded Borton’s framework. Added questions to each step. Turned the last step back to form reflexive cycle.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Adapted from Rolfe et al. (2009)
Current research projects

- *Moving beyond the diary* – innovative practice and documentation of reflection (Marina)

- *Reflection and learning* – four country study of the correlation between reflection and learning outcomes (Marina)

- *Assessing the impact of WIL on student work readiness* (National OLT project – Sonia)

- *The overall aim is to explore critical reflection in sport and recreation cooperative education* (Patricia Lucas)

- *Student perspectives of critical thinking approaches* (Research with small group of students – Katharine)
References


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