

Reflection:

Why do I need to do it?

Reflection is an integral part of the CPD process. If you are listing an activity on your CPD record as being part of your Professional Development, it makes sense to record *how* this activity has contributed.

Studies have shown that people who reflect on their learning retain more information and are more efficient at applying it to improve their performance. Reflection is especially important if you want to get the best results from planned development activities.

What should it look like?

We are not looking for lengthy reflective statements such as may be expected in academia. When commenting on Training Courses, Events and Seminars, it may be helpful to detail the key things you learned and how you can put them into practice:

"I am now aware of the issues surrounding legacy use of asbestos in the workplace. I am better aware of the health issues around working with asbestos and will consider the possibility of encountering it in the course of future projects. I am now also aware of what steps I should take should asbestos become an issue at work."

"As well as learning about how the requirements detailed in UK-SPEC are important to my career in Engineering, I also had good opportunities to network with colleagues at a similar stage of their careers. A worthwhile course and good Professional Contacts made"

Work Experience may have a different focus:

"Apart from the technical aspects of laying railway tracks, I was also made aware of Financial and Customer Service impacts should work over-run. I will give greater consideration to planning and timings in the future"

As may Volunteering:

"Interviewed and advised 6 candidates. As usual, all were different in their background, competences displayed, their requirements and their expectations. The diversity keeps me on my toes"

Is it always necessary?

Detailed Reflection may not be necessary or appropriate for every CPD Activity but should be considered every time and a brief note made to clarify why detailed reflection was not deemed worthwhile. Running events as a Volunteer, for example, may have elements of routine about them but it could be worth detailing the value of the events on the first occurrence which can be referred back to subsequently. Whatever the CPD Activity, try to at least show your thought process on Reflection:

"This was a mandatory course on matters I deal with daily in my work role. I won't be changing anything I'm doing but my knowledge of the subject has been refreshed and reinforced"

Remember, if you can find nothing at all to reflect upon regarding an activity, you may wish to consider if it was worth listing as part of your CPD.

What happens if my Reflection Statements are not up to standard?

Good Reflection Statements help us gauge the value of your CPD Activities and will be useful to you when you look back on your year, or your career. An absence of Reflection does not amount to a "Fail", however. They are only one aspect of the CPD process, in which the Activities themselves are of greatest importance. We do hope, nevertheless, that you will see the value of considered Reflection and, if your CPD Return is being reviewed, attention will be drawn to absence of Reflection and appropriate advice given, looking to improve your Returns in future years.

Remember that Reflection is personal to you as an individual. Your Reflection Statements will never be said by Reviewers to be "Wrong".