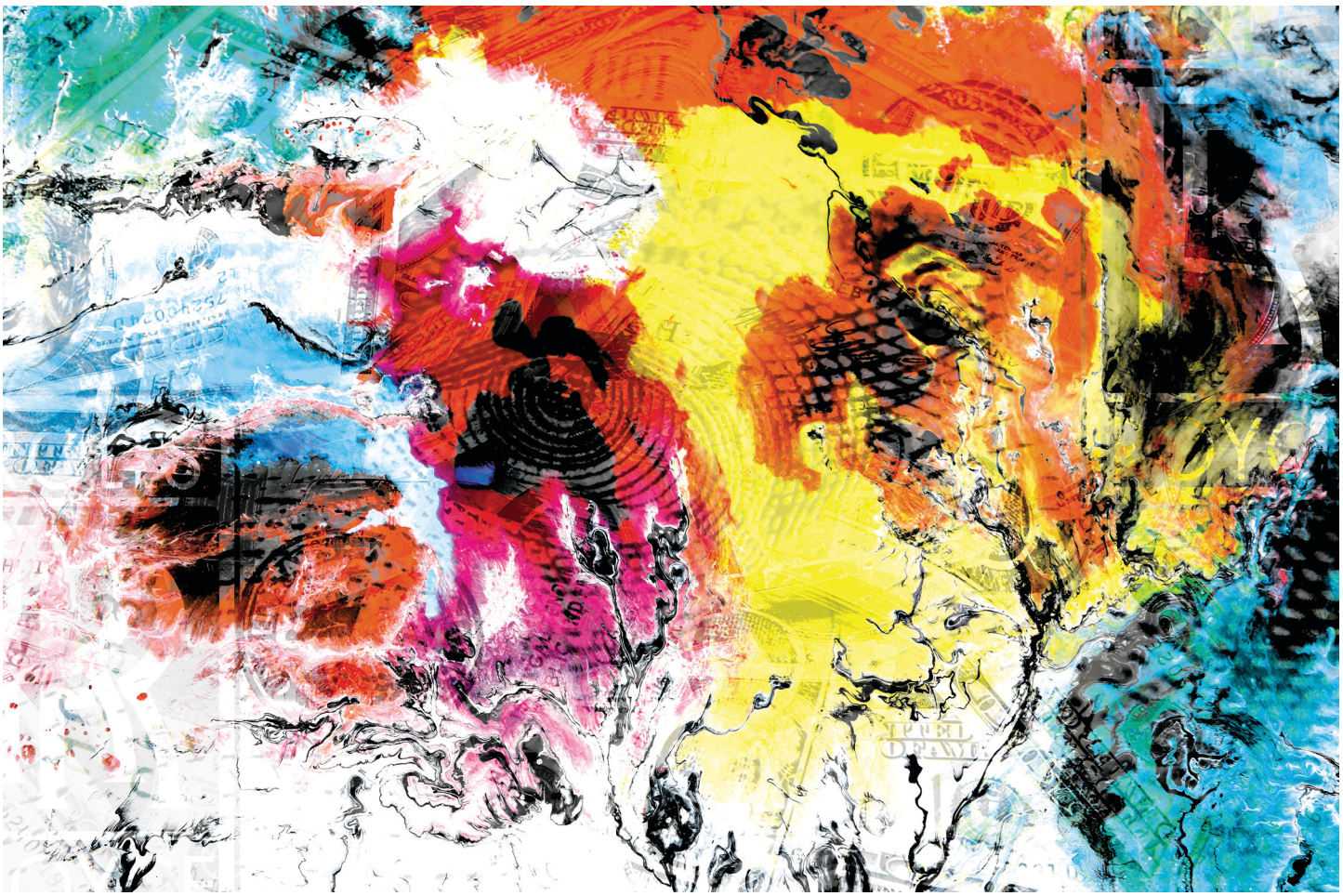
OpenLearn

The Open University

Nursing and Midwifery Council revalidation support



This item contains selected online content. It is for use alongside, not as a replacement for the module website, which is the primary study format and contains activities and resources that cannot be replicated in the printed versions.

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Introduction

Welcome to ‘Preparing for NMC revalidation’, a short course to enable you to prepare to complete your revalidation requirements in advance of completing your forms online for your reflective conversation. [Editor: Expand here]

Please note: there are a range of links throughout the course. When opening the links, right-click and open them in a new tab or window so that you can quickly refer back to the course.

NMC revalidation requirements

The NMC code is built around four key principles: **prioritise people, practise effectively, preserve safety, and promote professionalism and trust** and the revalidation process is underpinned by these principles. Your **reflective** accounts based on the code encourages you to critically examine how your practice aligns with professional standards.

The NMC have designed the revalidation process to:

- raise awareness of the Code and professional standards expected of you
- provide you with the opportunity to reflect on the role of the Code in your practice as a nurse, midwife or nursing associate and demonstrate that you are ‘living’ these standards
- encourage you to stay up to date in your professional practice by developing new skills and understanding the changing needs of the public and fellow healthcare professionals
- encourage a culture of sharing, reflection and improvement
- encourage you to engage in professional networks and discussions about your practice
- strengthen public confidence in the nursing and midwifery professions.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Revalidation requires nurses, midwives and nursing associates to undertake 35 hours of CPD activities. The learning gained through CPD should support practitioners in meeting the standards and expectations outlined in the Code, ensuring knowledge and skills remain current and evidence based.

There are a range of NMC Revalidation Resources available to you for revalidation purposes, this short free course is designed to help you with two aspects of your revalidation process:

- undertaking a range of free online courses to count towards your CPD hours required for revalidation
- developing your five reflective accounts.

Learning outcomes

After studying this course, you should be able to:

- acknowledge the range of free online courses available to you that can be used to meet the CPD requirements for NMC revalidation
- understand the variety of reflective models relevant for use in preparing your NMC revalidation forms.

1 CPD activity

Having prepared your five reflective accounts, another aspect of your preparation for revalidation is to undertake 35 hours of continuous professional development, which is the focus of the next section of this short course. You can also use your CPD learning for your reflective accounts.

The Open University's free learning platform of online courses OpenLearn provides courses across 9 subject areas. You will find over 230 courses in the category Health, Sport and Psychology. When deciding where to start you may find our new Nursing Hub a good resource for courses to meet your CPD needs for NMC revalidation. The Hub has 73 items, including 49 free courses. [Editor: Shall we remove this as I imagine these numbers change a lot if we are actively adding to it?]

You can find the Nursing collections hub here:
Nursing collections hub | OpenLearn - Open University

With so much choice it may be difficult to decide where to start, so we have set out in the two tables below a range of courses that in total meet the requirements for CPD for revalidation. You will find the title of the course along with a link to it, as well as the level of duration of the course and a suggestion as to what aspect of the NMC code that the course relates to, so that you can choose which course meets your needs.

When accessing the courses in the table below you will leave this course, so remember to return to the course to follow on to the second section, which provides support on using the knowledge gained from the course in developing your five reflective accounts for your revalidation preparation. Alternatively, when opening any URL links in the course, right-click and open them in a new tab or window so that you can quickly refer back to the course.

Table 1 an example of five free online courses totalling 37 hours CPD

	OpenLearn course (CPD)	Level / duration	Relevance to NMC code
1	*An introduction to data and information in health and social care*	Level 1 / 12 hours	Preserve safety
2	*What do we mean by digital health and social care?*	Level 1 / 4 hours	Promote professionalism and trust
3	*Accessibility and inclusion in digital health*	Level 1 / 4 hours	Promote professionalism and trust
4	*Practice supervision and assessment in nursing*	Level 2 / 10 hours	Practise effectively
5	*The caring manager in health and social care*	Level 2 / 7 hours	Prioritise people
			37 hours

Table 2 an example of six free online courses totalling 37 hours CPD

	OpenLearn course (CPD)	Level / duration	Relevance to NMC code
1	*Introducing healthcare improvement*	Level 3 / 3 hours	Prioritise people
2	*Lead and manage change in health and social care*	Level 3 / 7 hours	Promote professionalism and trust
3	*Managing and managing people*	Level 3 / 8 hours	Practise effectively
4	*An introduction to digital simulation in healthcare*	Level 1 / 4 hours	Preserve safety
5	*Mental health in society*	Level 1 / 8 hours	Practise effectively
6	*Supporting children and young people's wellbeing*	Level 2 / 7 hours	Prioritise people
			37 hours

All OpenLearn courses provide a **free Statement of Participation**, which can be downloaded and retained as evidence of CPD. Some also offer digital badges. More information on this can be found here: [Editor: We might not want all of these links, but thought I would add a few options for you to choose from!]

- Accredited CPD Courses for Career Growth
- Get started with OpenLearn
- Badges come to OpenLearn
- How to make the best of your digital badge

The next section in this course focuses on reflection so that you can use your new learning from OpenLearn to reflect on and draft your five written reflective accounts on your CPD in preparation for your revalidation.

2 Benefits and impact of reflection

Reflection has been used in nursing for over 40 years (Mahon and O'Neill 2020) which is aligned with nursing becoming a graduate profession. Hwang and Jun (2025) found that nurses' reflection on their own nursing practice can be an effective strategy to improve nursing performance, which fits with providing evidence through reflective accounts for your NMC revalidation submission.



Looking back over your last three years of practice how do you decide what to reflect on? Originally reflection tended to focus on learning points that were rooted in difficult moments, such as when something unexpected happened or a challenging experience. More recent thinking promotes learning through reflection on when things go well. This can be called appreciative inquiry [Editor: (Ref Copperfield here) - please supply] where reflection is used to learn from a positive experience.

3 Defining reflective practice

[Editor:
From: Learning to teach: becoming a reflective practitioner: 2.1 Defining reflective practice | OpenLearn - Open University - do we need this any more? Shall I remove?]

The term ‘reflective practice’ derives from the work of Dewey and Schon. Dewey (1910, p.6) wrote that reflective practice refers to ‘*the active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it*’. This means that you will have a questioning approach; you will consider why things are as they are, and how they might be.

Dewey went on to say that being reflective ‘enables us to direct our actions with foresight … It enables us to know what we are about when we act’. This is extremely important in teaching. What you do in the classroom and how you behave should have been carefully planned, informed by theory and experience and be purposeful.

Schon (1983) presents a slightly different view. He regards reflection as having two aspects: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action refers to the quick thinking and reaction that occur as you are doing, for example in practice you may working with a student, and you can see the they look puzzled. Your reflection-in-action allows you to see this, consider why it is happening, and respond by doing it differently. This could involve reframing your explanation or approaching the topic from a different perspective.

Reflection-on-action is what occurs after the event when you consider the situation again. You may think more deeply about why the student did not understand, what caused the situation, what options were open to you, why you chose one option and not another. Your responses will depend on your existing level of knowledge and experience, your understanding of theories and your values.

Reflective practice is widely considered to be an important activity for professional development. There is a huge amount of literature exploring and debating reflection and reflective practice in education. There are some key features of reflection that are widely accepted:[Editor: - does this need some more text here?]

4 Models of reflection

There are many different models of reflection as a quick search online will demonstrate. Using models, or at least being aware of their similarities and differences, can help you to deconstruct experiences, ensure you are accessing the deeper level reflective questions and issues, and ultimately provide a way to structure your learning from situations.

One of the early developers of reflection in nursing is Borton (1970) who developed a simple reflective framework which includes three questions:

- **What?** (what happened?)
- **So what?** (why does it matter / what have I learned?)
- **Now what?** (what will I do differently in future?)

Borton's work was then further developed to enable guided reflection by Rolfe et al (2001) as well as Driscoll (2007).

Rolfe, Freshwater and Jasper (2001) propose that critical reflection is more than simply thinking about practice; it is a structured process through which nurses critically analyse experiences, challenge assumptions, integrate theory with practice, and develop professionally. The overall benefit is improved patient care through increased self-awareness, critical thinking, accountability, and continuous learning.

Three simple questions:

- What?
- So what?
- Now what?

[Editor: *(Linking text needed here)* - please supply]

Driscoll's model (2007)

Also based on:

- What?
- So what?
- Now what?

[Editor: but with more prompting questions. … need to include the prompting questions….. please supply]

Gibbs' reflective cycle (1988)

A popular model to use for preparing for revalidation is Gibb's reflective cycle because it provides a clear structure:

1. Description
2. Feelings
3. Evaluation
4. Analysis
5. Conclusion
6. Action Plan

[Editor: Sofia I would like to add in an activity here, with flip to reveal the answer….. Is that possible? - We have a few options here, any of these we can do https://h5p.org/content-types-and-applications please supply the text and I can work up some ideas]

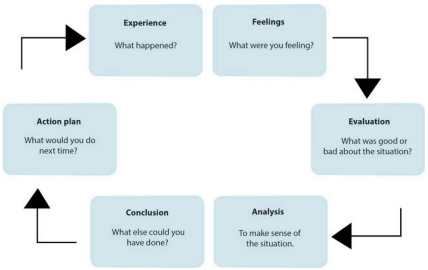


Figure 1 Gibb's reflective cycle (Adapted from Dye, 2011)

Gibb's model acknowledges that your personal feelings influence the situation and how you have begun to reflect on it. It builds on Boud's model by breaking down reflection into evaluation of the events and analysis and there is a clear link between the learning that has happened from the experience and future practice.

However, despite the further break down, it can be argued that this model could still result in fairly superficial reflection as it doesn't refer to critical thinking / analysis or reflection. It doesn't take into consideration assumptions that you may hold about the experience, the need to look objectively at different perspectives, and there doesn't seem to be an explicit suggestion that the learning will result in a change of assumptions, perspectives or practice. You could legitimately respond to the question 'What would you do next time?' by answering that you would do the same, but does that constitute deep level reflection?

5 Boud’s triangular representation

Many models are cyclical in nature, representing the idea that reflection leads to learning, but this learning is never completed or able to be transferred without reflecting on it further in different contexts. The most straight forward reflective model could be seen to be Boud’s triangular representation, Figure 2.

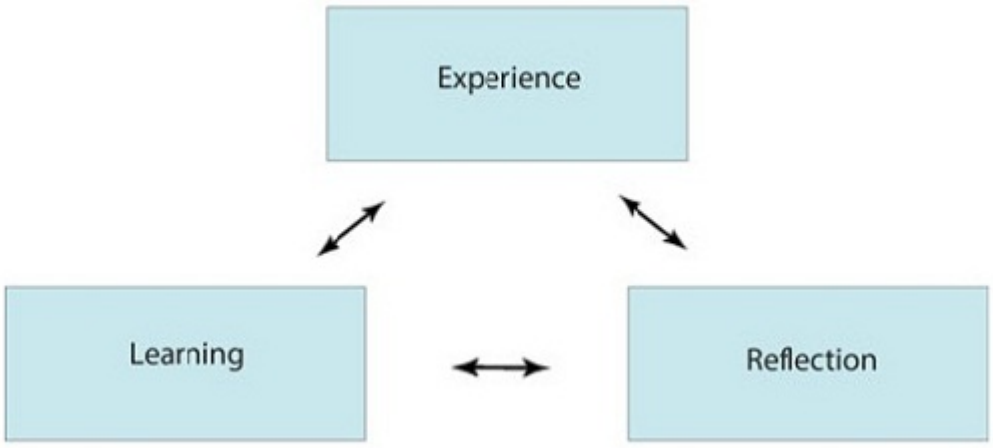


Figure 2 Boud’s triangular representation

This model, although capturing the essentials (that experience and reflection lead to learning), has limitations. It doesn’t guide us as to what reflection might consist of, or how the learning might translate back into experience. Aligning key reflective questions to this model, see Figure 3, may help.

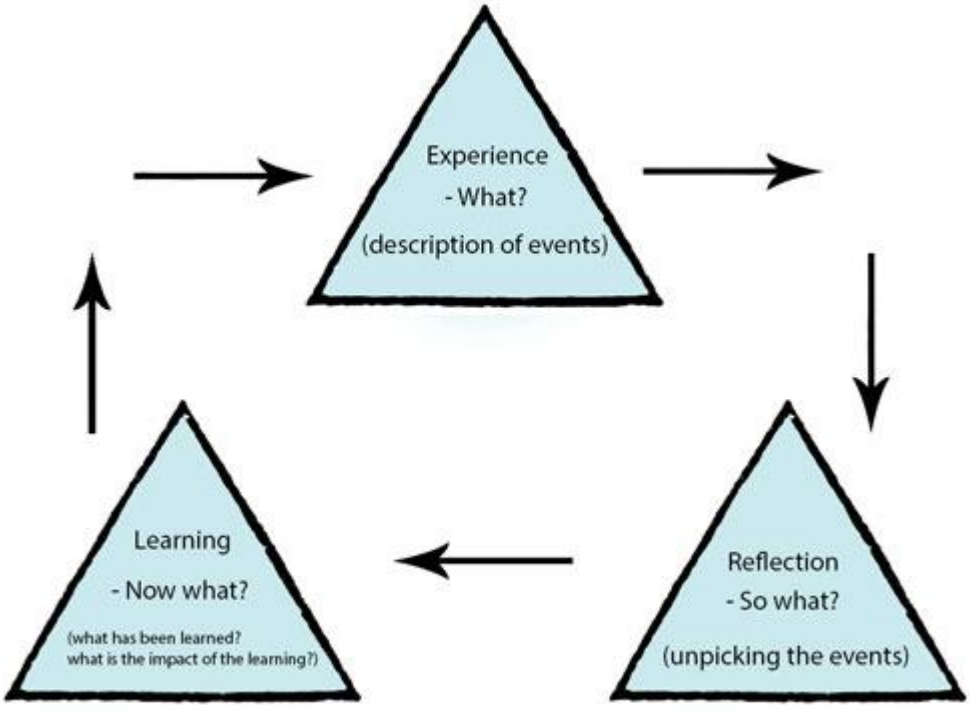


Figure 3 What does reflection consist of?

In summary below is a table setting out the development over time of a range of reflective models:

- Dewey (1933)
- Borton (1970)
- Boud et al (1958)
- Schön (1983, 1987)
- Johns (1994)
- Gibbs (1988)
- Rolfe et al. (2001)
- Driscoll (2007)

So, which reflective model to use for your reflective accounts?

To ensure your preparation for revalidation aligns with the NMC revalidation template we suggest Boud’s reflective model. The following table uses Boud’s model. You can complete the table by making notes in it or recording your full reflection and download it in preparation for your revalidation. You can record your five reflective accounts using the tables below, saving each so that you have five records of reflection when you are ready to complete your revalidation submission form.

- Reflective account 1
- Reflective account 2
- Reflective account 3
- Reflective account 4
- Reflective account 5

Conclusion

You have come to the end of this short OpenLearn course, focused on two key aspects of preparing for NMC revalidation. You should now have accessed a range of free courses to meet the CPD requirements. You should also have used the CPD as a source of reflection for your five reflective accounts, which you recorded and downloaded in preparation to complete your NMC revalidation documents.

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Acknowledgements

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