



Embedding reflective practice at learning setting level

The reflective process-

The reflective process runs on a termly basis (but could be utilised more frequently if deemed appropriate). It consists of two meetings with an intervening period of action.

Meeting 1: introduces a 'theme' and associated case study to initiate reflection and is supported by the 'reflective framework' which provides focal points for reflection which are in turn supported by a series of key questions. Reflection from meeting 1 generates a series of planned actions for educators to implement in practice.

Meeting 2: provides an opportunity to reflect further on what actions were implemented, what changes occurred, what can be learned etc. This in turn leads to further action planning based on insights gained.

It is important to note that the reflective process seeks to foster learning which in turn informs action. For learning to take place, participants must feel invested and secure in the process. To this end, it is important that participants' contributions feel valued and respected.

Working through the reflective process:

The reflective process has been designed to support focused action-oriented reflection. A list of themes to provide focus for the meeting has been provided as part of the outline process. However, it is envisaged that when the process becomes more familiar and established groups will identify their own themes for reflective meetings. However, we have introduced a series of themes relevant to the task of establishing effective hubs.

Facilitating reflection

Facilitating reflection requires a range of skills and abilities. Beyond holding the boundaries of: **Time** (allowing adequate time and space to work through the process), **Task**, clarify and encouraging the group to focus on the task at hand, **Territory**, hosting the session in an appropriate space whether face to face or online.

The key skill of the facilitator is to create a space where participants feel able to speak and be heard. This will inevitably involve some degree of encouragement and support. However, ultimately the reflective process must be seen as worthwhile and productive for the participants themselves, if they are to engage fully. On the part of the facilitator this will require patience, the ability to listen and promote listening. The ability to reflect back to participants what is being said and understood and where necessary, intervene to restore the process.

Facilitator role:

The role of the facilitator is to support the reflective process within the reflective meetings. Two main ways the facilitators can do this is via asking exploratory questions and encouraging commitment to action.

Examples of exploratory questions include:

- What has been our experience?
- What factors have been important in shaping our experience? e.g, **environment, resources, approaches, relationships and outcomes**
- What have we done to assist the situation?
- What remains challenging?
- What do we need to improve this situation etc?

Reflection into action

An important element of this process is moving through the reflective cycle and the facilitator has a key role to play here within the meeting. Ensure adequate time is given to identifying and planning for action. By the end of each meeting the participants should be leaving with a renewed plan of action.

Principles for supporting reflection on practice:

Encourage educators to:

1. **Be learner focused:** The primary focus of your support should be learner focused. It is easy and understandable in difficult circumstances to become distracted by a wide range of issues. Placing learners and their needs at the centre of your reflections helps clarify the focus of the conversations and subsequent action.
2. **Be solution-focused in your responses:** It is important to focus on solutions to identified issues or problems, rather than dwell too long on the problem itself. Once the problem is understood, you can move on to identifying actionable solutions.
3. **Be realistic:** Unrealistic expectations can be unhelpful. Work with the educators to identify realistic expectations. Unrealistic expectations will result in over concentration on problems and issues.
4. **Share learning and good practice beyond your learning setting itself.** The SAGE community has a great potential to share its learning across its operation and beyond. Please encourage and support this. This can be done via posters, video, case study, newsletter.