What is a CAS reflection?

Reflection is the process by which you can metamorphosize an experience into learning.

Reflection helps you to see what you have achieved.

Reflection makes links between your experiences and the future.

Reflection gives you feedback and helps you to generate your own questions.

Reflection should help you to gain a better understanding of yourself, and of others.

It is a required part of the programme but it shouldn’t be too arduous! You can reflect in any way which suits you…

If you like writing, then record your thoughts in the journal section.

If you love taking photographs, then take and upload photos - but try to also add a comment.

If you are into vlogging, then create, edit and upload a video.

Perhaps you are a good talker - then record an audio reflection.

If you do some other style of offline reflection, just make a note about it or photograph/scan it to add to your portfolio.

The focus of your reflection should be **affective**. Try to move beyond just giving a commentary of what your experiences and actions were. Talk about how you felt and how the experience will change you in the future.

A useful structure to follow might be:

* Describe what happened: retell your memorable moments, identify what was important or influential, what went well or was difficult, obstacles and successes.
* Express feelings: how do you feel about your experiences?
* Generate ideas: Re-examine the choices you made and actions you took.
* Ask questions: What questions do you have about people, processes or issues as a result of your experiences?

You could also reflect on which of the Learning Outcomes you think you are achieving, **and why**.

Reflection is very personal, but it doesn’t have to be totally individual. You could undertake group reflection exercises or meet with a peer or an adult in order to reflect. Your CAS meetings can be an important stage in your reflection when you draw out learning that you have gained from your experiences.

An example of a group reflection could be a volleyball team meeting to review their performance in a tournament. With a whiteboard, they discuss and record what went well, what didn’t, and why? They then brainstorm the things they need to improve upon and come up with a plan for their next few training sessions. One person photographs the whiteboard and shares the picture for all to upload as evidence. Another talks over training plans with the coach and adapts them to include the team’s findings. This is good use of the CAS Stages.

Reflection does not **only** happen at the end of a process. Stopping to think before, during and after an experience can really add value to it for you.

Evidence is different to reflection. Evidence is just information that corroborates you have done what you are claiming. A photo is evidence; a photo with commentary explaining how you felt about it is reflection.

It is good practice to keep adding evidence and reflections little and often to your CAS Portfolio. However, the **quality** of your reflection is more important than a number of brief reflections. Don’t let recording your evidence and reflection take away from the value of your experiences: it should add to them.