

## Tips for writing a Reflective Account

You may want to start by thinking of some real examples and then ask yourself some reflective questions to help you to prepare what to write. Some examples of useful reflective questions are below. You might have others and you would not necessarily use them all. A key word in reflection is 'why?' Whenever you make a statement (for example, "*I found 'X' surprising...*") ask yourself why you think or feel that way.

### Reflective questions you may wish to ask yourself

- What happened? What did you observe?
- What was your role?
- What issue is being addressed or population is being served?
- What were your initial expectations?
- What are you most proud of?
- Did you learn a new skill or clarify an interest? What else have you learnt?
- How can you apply this learning?
- Did you hear or feel anything that surprised you?
- How is your experience different from what you expected?
- What impacts the way you view the situation or experience?
- What did you like or dislike about the experience?
- What did you learn about the people or the community?
- What are the pressing needs or issues in this community? How are you addressing them?
- What has been an eye opening experience?
- What specific skills have you used?
- Has your view of the population with whom you have been working changed? How?
- How has the environment and social conditions affected the people at your site?
- What did you do that seemed to be effective?
- What would you do differently or the same next time? Why?
- Where did you meet success, and who might benefit most from what you've learned along the way? How can you share this with them?
- What are your next steps? Which of those steps will come easiest and which will be challenging? What can you do now to navigate the road ahead with the most success?
- What seems to be the root causes of the issue addressed?
- What other work is currently happening to address the issue?
- What would you like to learn more about, related to this project or issue?
- What information can you share with your peers?

## An example Reflective Account

This is a fictional Reflective Account developed by Karen Gunnell, Chair of the UKCPA Education & Development Group and Teaching Fellow in Pharmacy Practice at Keele University.

This may help you when considering what to write for your Revalidation submission. The example centres around an academic pharmacist; however the principles could be used in any sector. The blue boxes explain how the text meets the GPhC's requirements for revalidation.

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### My work setting and main roles

My practice is as an academic pharmacist based at a UK university. My main roles include teaching and assessment on the undergraduate MPharm degree course and the postgraduate clinical pharmacy diploma. I provide feedback and support to students and develop teaching materials and assessments for both courses. I am also line manager to a registered technician who teaches on the undergraduate course.

This paragraph outlines where the pharmacist works and the nature of their practice.

### The users of my service

The users of my services are undergraduate and postgraduate students and their tutors or employers. The quality of my interaction with these service users will have an indirect effect on patient care. This is because the information I provide to my service users will be used by them to improve the standard of care provided. The assessments I design and administer allow me to ensure a minimal competence in my service users.

This paragraph reflects on who uses the pharmacist's services. In this case the pharmacist does not have direct patient access, so they have reflected on how they indirectly impact on patient care.

### Reflecting on the GPhC Standards for Pharmacy Professionals

The GPhC Standards for Pharmacy Professionals I am reflecting on are:

- **Standard 4:** Pharmacy professionals must maintain, develop and use their professional knowledge and skills
- **Standard 7:** Pharmacy professionals must respect and maintain a person's confidentiality and privacy

Here the pharmacist has considered which standards they are reflecting on. The GPhC will inform you of the standards you should reflect on. You should reflect on at least one.

There are a number of ways that I have met these standards:

1. I have completed my employer's Information Governance eLearning package
2. I have read the Information Commissioner document *Preparing for the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – 12 steps to take now*
3. I have discussed GDPR with my line reportee
4. I have completed a CPD record on GDPR and information governance
5. I have changed my practice to ensure that students' marks are not held on cloud based software
6. I have ensured that personal tutee meetings are held in a private room (not in my shared office), so that they are not overheard.

These bullets show examples of how the pharmacist has met the standards. The GPhC requires a minimum of one example, however we recommend providing more.

The learning activities undertaken (Examples 1 and 2) and completing a CPD record (Example 4) show how I have met GPhC Standard 4. I have shown that I am **carrying out a range of CPD activities relevant to my practice** and by recording my CPD I have shown that I **record my development activities to demonstrate that my knowledge and skills are up to date**.

I found this learning interesting and relevant to my practice as it is important that I keep student information confidential. I expected there to be a lot of new rules for me to comply with but I was surprised that I am doing a lot of it already. This surprised me because I often think that information governance is more complicated than it actually is. I think that by utilising a number of different learning methods I was able to cover the subject in as much depth as is needed and it helped me to have greater clarity on the topic. By having greater clarity, I am much more likely to be able to disseminate this information effectively to my students and line reportees. This will in turn help them maintain information governance.

In this paragraph the pharmacist has reflected on how they have met the GPhC Standard 4. They have asked themselves 'why' and have picked out parts of the standard to show how they specifically meet the standard (these are **in bold**). They have cross referenced their reflections with the examples provided to make it easier for the reviewer to understand.

Examples 3, 5 and 6 demonstrate how I have met GPhC Standard 7. Example 5 demonstrates how I **understand the importance of managing information responsibly and securely, and apply this to my practice**. Although it is easier to keep information on cloud based software because it can be easily accessed by colleagues who need it; it also is vulnerable to external access by people who have no need of the information. This would mean my service users' confidentiality and privacy may be violated. As a pharmacist professional it is more important to maintain the standards for pharmacist professionals

than to do what is easiest for me. My service users would have less confidence in me as a professional if I allowed their data to be at risk. If they had less confidence in me then this may create barriers between us, which means that they are less likely to take on board the information I provide.

Example 6 shows how I have **taken steps to reflect upon my environment and to maintain a person's privacy**. I believe that this is important for two reasons: firstly, I have a shared office, so I need to consider what information is discussed when other people are around; secondly, the information provided by my service users is highly confidential. This has proven to be effective as service users are willing to talk to me and see me as a professional who cares about them.

Example 3 shows that I am **taking steps to ensure that everyone in the team understands the need to maintain a person's privacy and confidentiality**. This experience was successful as my line reportee was not aware of the changes to GDPR. I was able to share my learning and they have put it into practice. This was very fulfilling as I could demonstrate that I was acting as a professional and an effective line manager. My next steps will be to check in with my line reportee to ensure that information governance is maintained because it is important to ensure that the standards are maintained continuously, not just as a one off.

In these paragraphs the pharmacist has reflected on how they have met GPhC Standard 7.

They have asked themselves 'why' and have picked out parts of the standard to show how they specifically meet the standard (these are **in bold**).

They have cross referenced their reflections with the examples provided to make it easier for the reviewer to understand.