

REFLECTION GUIDELINES

Why reflection?

Only part of what you know comes from what you learn directly – things you read, experience or are taught. The rest of what you know comes from thinking about and making connections between all of the things you learned directly.

Reflection is a process more accurately called metacognition – thinking about thinking, assessing the nature and quality of our ideas, beliefs, and so on. Reflecting on our experiences actually causes the neurons built or reinforced during the experience to “fire” again, strengthening and even changing the way we learn from our experiences.

We believe much of the value of the Global Citizen Diploma is found in the process of earning it because it asks that you make meaning from your experiences, consider alternative perspectives, and reinforce the valuable skill of metacognition.

Recording your reflection

By default, a lot of students write their reflections, but as long as you address the guidelines below, **you can reflect and record in whatever way makes the most sense to you** keeping in mind that it must also make sense to an external audience.

If the way you make sense of things is to doodle or draw, do that as a method of reflection. Then scan your images, put them into your portfolio and explain them in writing, audio recording or video, or whatever works.

What to consider / include in your reflection

Students are encouraged to **read the GCD criteria carefully** and be sure to address them when reflecting on learning experiences. Overall, anyone who reviews your post should understand the impact your experience has had on you as a learner, how you are different as a result of the experience, and how you think you will be affected by it going forward.

0. Before an experience (Optional) - we don't always record this thinking, but it's great if we can:

Key words: *goals* *fears* *plan* *purpose*
expectations *hypothesis* *preparation* *intentions*
hopes *anticipation* *research* *identified gaps (in knowledge or experience)*

What did you think would happen? Why did you do it? What did you think you would get out of it?
What were you worried about? Excited about?

1. Experience

Key words: *archive* *curate* *log* *document* *describe*
evidence *data* *prove* *report*

Give a bit of context for what you learned from the experience. What happened? How did it feel? Keep this short (a few sentences) - this is not the meat of the reflection! Provide evidence that proves the learning experience took place and that you participated) photos, video, certificates, etc.

2. After the Experience:

Key words: *processing* *growth* *learning* *surprises* *ethics*
synthesis *connections* *ah-ha's* *comparison* *change of mindset*
expected learning *unexpected learning*

Where are you now? Where did you start? What was the path/process? How did it feel? Why does it matter? Are you different as a result? What will stay with you? How are your strengths, interests, passions connecting or not connecting? How did the experience match your goals or expectations?

3. Inquiry, Extension, Before Starting Again:

Key words: *iterate* *wonder* *curiosity* *extend*
restart *question* *cycle* *tangent*

Are you finished? Will you do it again? Would you do it differently? What new questions do you have (about anything)? What translates/transfers? What do you know now? What do you now realize that you don't know?

Reflect, reuse, recycle

In many cases, you will be asked to reflect on an experience for different contexts. You may reflect on something for class, for CAS in the IB or for university applications. If you have already reflected, it can probably be used with your GCD, too. **You need to be sure that the specific criteria of the GCD are addressed in your reflection**, so you might, in some cases, need to add some extra thoughts or ideas with respect to a specific question or application. But generally, please do reuse or recycle reflection done for other contexts into your GCD. The idea is not to create a lot more work, but to show more of the work you have already done.

Reflection and privacy

It is important to remember as you create records of your reflection in your portfolio, that **you are creating a public record**. While you are entitled to tell your own story, **please respect the privacy of the other people who might play a role in your story. Where possible, refer to teachers, students, community members or professionals by initials, or create aliases for them.**

As you reflect, you may find that what you learn is more personal than you want to share with a global audience. If that is the case, you password-protect your portfolio post and provide the password to reviewers.

Examples and resources

Ask your GCD co-ordinator for an exemplar for any element.

REFLECTION PROMPTS

Here is a gallery of questions you can use to jump-start your reflection. Scan through and choose whatever is most useful to you.

REVIEW

How would you teach what you have learned to a 4th grader?

What are the key words from your learning experience? Retell it without using those words.

Catalogue the sensory experience of your learning: list what you smelled, tasted, heard, felt, saw.

Tell someone what you learned, but do it in another language.

What did you learn?

Why is it important?

How are you different as a result of this experience?

FEEL

How did you feel during the learning experience? When was the last time you felt that way? What was happening?

What was the strongest emotion you experienced during this learning experience? Why do you think you felt that way?

Think of 5 different people you know. How would each of them feel about what you've learned? Explain.

What did you learn?

Why is it important?

How are you different as a result of this experience?

METAPHOR / SIMILE

If the process you have been through were a metaphor for something else, what would it be?

Use a metaphor to describe your learning.

What colour is the understanding you have gained? Why that colour?

What are 7 ways what you learned is like Harry Potter, Star Wars or the Lord of the Rings?

If what you have learned was the key to a clue that solved a crime, what would the crime have been?

What did you learn?

Why is it important?

How are you different as a result of this experience?

CREATE

Take the most important ideas you've learned and encode them. Hide them and the decoder key in the library.

Write down key words from your learning. Arrange them into a poem.

Make a soundtrack/playlist that accompanies your learning experience. Explain your choices.

Retell your learning in a very short story. Make it heroic.

Create a mathematical formula or diagram that represents your learning.

Which fictional character would be interesting to talk to about this? Write your conversation.

What did you learn?

Why is it important?

How are you different as a result of this experience?

CONNECT

What are you studying in another subject that is related to this?

Who else in your life would find this interesting? Why?

How would your learning experience have been different if you'd done it in different country?

How does what you've learned relate to a current event you are aware of?

Can you connect what you have learned here to something else in your own life - a book you've read, a place you've been, someone you know? Explain.

What did you learn?

Why is it important?

How are you different as a result of this experience?

EXTEND

What do you want to know now?

What is the opposite of what you've learned?

In what way could the thing you have learned cause the most harm or do the most good?

Does what you have learned have any moral, religious, or ethical implications? What are they?

How does technology impact what you have learned about? What would be the most useful/destructive tech? What's the least amount of tech necessary? What tech that doesn't yet exist would make it easier?

What did you learn?

Why is it important?

How are you different as a result of this experience?