

Completed Example – Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle

(Referencing Example)

1. Description – What happened?

- The experience I am focusing on is learning how to reference using the university’s Harvard style.
- This happened in Week 3 during my Academic Skills workshop.
- The tutor showed us how to use in-text citations and how to build a reference list.
- My task was to read a short article and write a paragraph that included two references.
- I struggled to understand how to format the in-text citations and what order to put the references in.

2. Feelings – What were you thinking and feeling?

Before the experience:

- I felt nervous because I had never used Harvard referencing before.
- I worried that I would get it wrong and look silly.

During the experience:

- I felt confused when looking at the rules.
- I started to feel a bit frustrated because there were so many details to remember.

After the experience:

- I felt relieved that I had completed the task.
- I also felt a little embarrassed because other students seemed more confident.
- However, I did feel proud that I had tried something new.

3. Evaluation – What was good and bad about the experience?

Positive aspects (what went well?):

- The tutor explained the steps clearly.
- The worksheet helped me follow the structure.
- I managed to reference at least one source correctly.

Challenges or difficulties:

- I found the punctuation rules confusing.
- I kept mixing up the order of author, date, and title.
- I felt slow compared to other students.

Impact on my transition to university:

- It made me realise that academic writing has new rules I was not used to.
- It also showed me that I need to develop stronger study habits.

4. Analysis – What meaning can you make of the experience?

- This experience helped me understand that referencing is an important academic skill because it shows where ideas come from.
- I realised that my confusion came from not practicing enough before the lesson.
- I learned that using skills guides from the library would have helped me feel more prepared.
- I also realised that referencing is part of becoming an independent learner, which is new at university.
- The experience showed me that digital tools—like CiteThemRight and the Library Referencing Guide—can support my learning if I use them properly.

5. Conclusion – What could you have done differently?

- I could have watched the university's referencing videos before the workshop.
- I could have asked more questions instead of keeping quiet.
- I could have practiced referencing with simpler sources first.

- I also realised I need to spend more time reading instructions carefully.

6. Action Plan – What will you do next?

Short-term actions:

- Use the online Harvard Referencing Guide when writing assignments.
- Practise referencing one source every week until I feel confident.
- Ask my tutor for feedback on my reference list.

Long-term actions:

- Attend a library referencing workshop next term.
- Use digital referencing tools to check my work before submission.
- Keep improving my academic writing by reviewing feedback.

Support/resources I will use:

- University library website
- Skills workshops
- Tutor feedback
- Moodle resources
- CiteThemRight online