

People who are new to reflective writing often find it helpful to have a structure for their writing. This can help them to make a start and will often then be discarded as writing reflectively becomes easier. Knott and Scragg (2013) offer a useful structure for writing a reflective journal, which can be helpful for people who are faced with the question, 'So what do I need to write?' Their structure is based on three stages, each with accompanying questions for clarity, which should encourage a deeper reflective approach.

### **Stage 1 – Reflection**

Here the authors suggest that you focus on an issue or a concern that you have in relation to your practice. Like Bolton (2010), they advise that this is done freely and spontaneously in order to capture your thoughts.

### **Stage 2 – Analysis**

This is the most complex of the stages and involves responding to the following key questions:

- What is happening here?
- What assumptions am I making?
- What does this show about my underlying beliefs about myself and my practice? What are some of the alternative ways of looking at this (for example, from someone else's perspective)? This particular aspect is similar to Bolton's (2010) Stage 5.

### **Stage 3 – Action**

As this suggests, the focus here is on the action you take following the analysis. Again the authors suggest considering some key questions:

- What action can I take?
- How can I learn from what has happened?
- How would I respond if this situation occurred again?
- What does this experience tell me about my beliefs about myself and my practice?