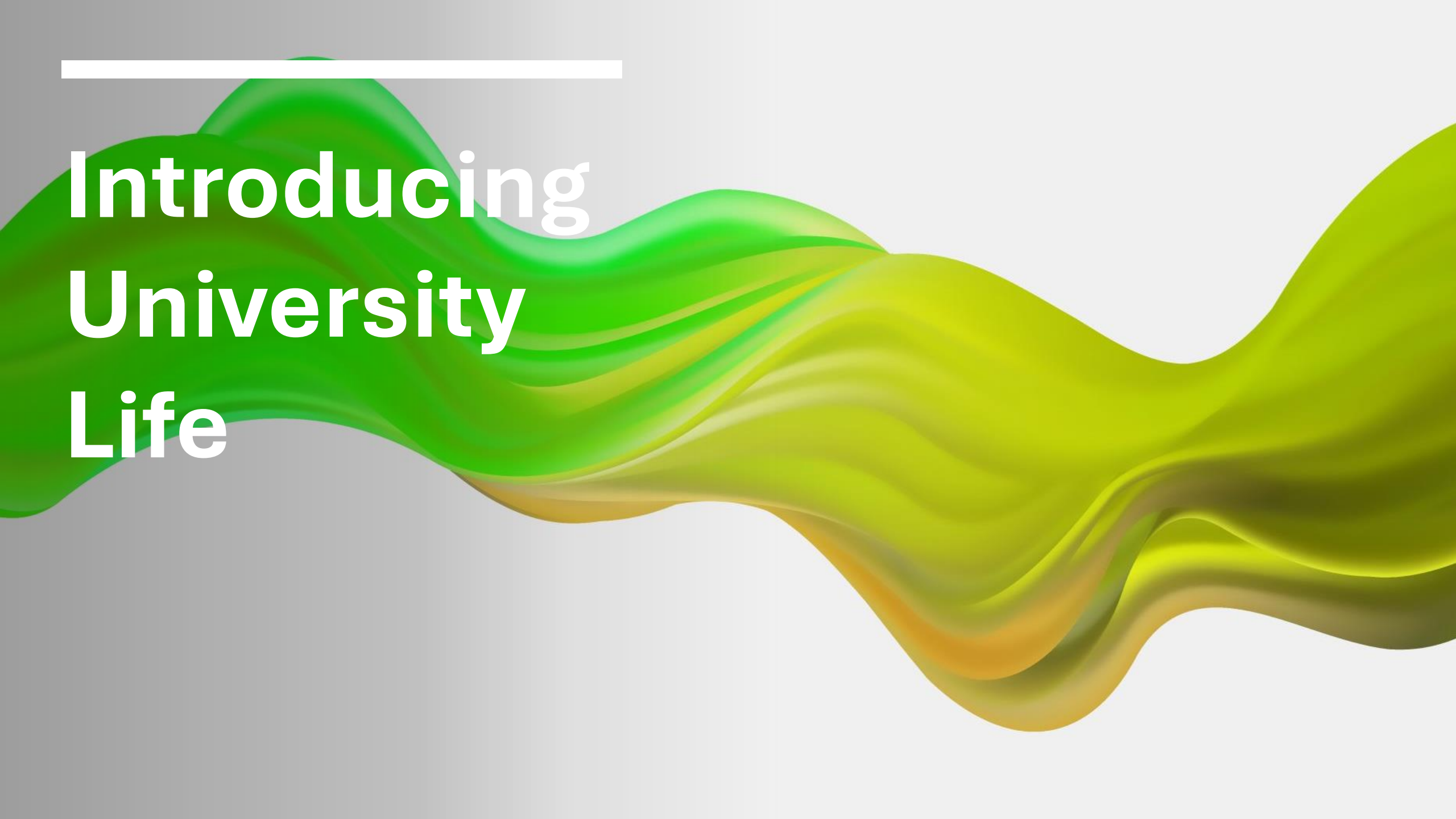

Introducing University Life

The background of the slide features a large, abstract, wavy shape that flows from the left side towards the right. This shape is filled with a gradient of colors, starting with a vibrant green on the left and transitioning through yellow and light green towards the right. The surface of the shape has a subtle, glossy texture with highlights and shadows, giving it a three-dimensional appearance. The overall composition is clean and modern, with the text 'Introducing University Life' prominently displayed in white on the left side, partially overlapping the green part of the wavy shape.

Welcome to Psychology and Counselling at UWTSD!

Aims of this session:

Introduction to the university, the faculty, and the programme.

What to expect from us at university.

What is expected of you.

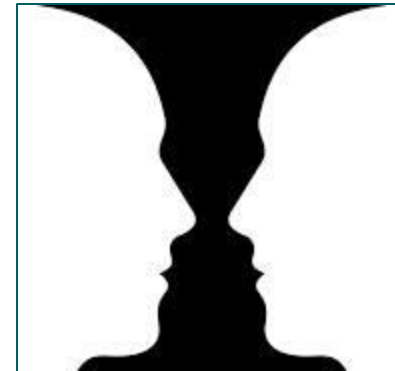
Getting to know you.

Collaboration, discussion and reflection.

Importance of reflection.

Welcome and introductions:

What is Psychology?
What is Counselling?



[18 illusions](#)

What is Psychology?



- [What is psychology? | BPS](#)
- Psychologists think about what's going on in your head.
- Why do you think, behave and feel the way you do?
- How does that affect your memory, the way you communicate and your ability to complete tasks?
- Psychology - the study of the mind and behaviour – tries to get to the bottom of questions like these.
- Psychology applies sound scientific methodology to understand why people act the way that they do. We can then use that knowledge and understanding to address real-world issues.

What do Psychologists do?



- Psychology is everywhere
- Psychology is at work all around you in your everyday life.
- Did you know that the time of factory workers' tea breaks is all down to psychology?
- So too is the reason cash machines give you your card back before your money – and why celebrities are so regularly used in adverts.
- Psychologists inform how we investigate crimes, teach our children and support people with emotional, psychological, behavioural and neurological conditions.
- Psychology is also at work on a much larger scale. Psychologists are playing a role in the fight against climate change and are involved in developing artificial intelligence.

Source: [BPS website 2026](#)

What is Counselling?



- Counselling can take different forms depending on your needs and what type of therapy may be suitable.
- Most therapy takes place in planned, regular sessions which last for around 50 minutes. How often you see your therapist and how many appointments you have will depend on your individual circumstances and will be agreed between you and your therapist.
- You might see a counsellor on your own, as a couple or family, or in a group with people who have similar issues.
- Your therapist will be impartial but understanding. They will listen to you without judgment and help you explore your thoughts and emotions. They may offer information, but they won't tell you what you should think or do.

Source: [bacp website](#) 2026

What is Counselling?



- Therapy provides a safe and confidential space for you to talk to a trained professional about your concerns. Your therapist will help you explore your thoughts, feelings and behaviours so you can develop a better understanding of yourself and of others.
- What you talk about will vary depending on what you want help with and the therapist's approach. It could include:
 - your relationships
 - your childhood
 - your feelings, emotions or thoughts
 - your behaviour
 - past and present life events
 - situations you find difficult

Source: [bacp website](#) 2026

Getting to know you: ice breakers

Pair-and-share activity: introductions

*“What made you curious about
psychology/counselling?”*

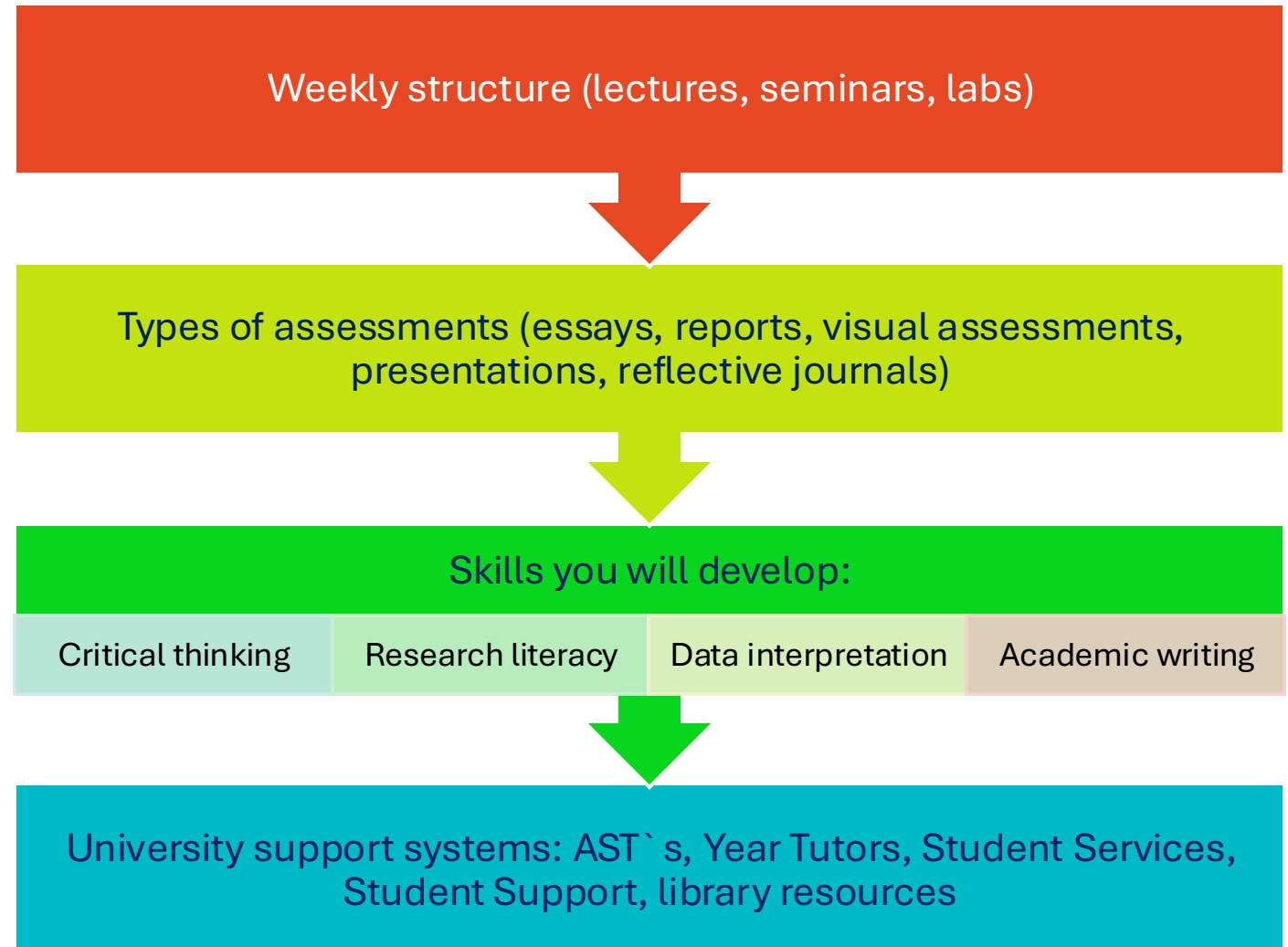
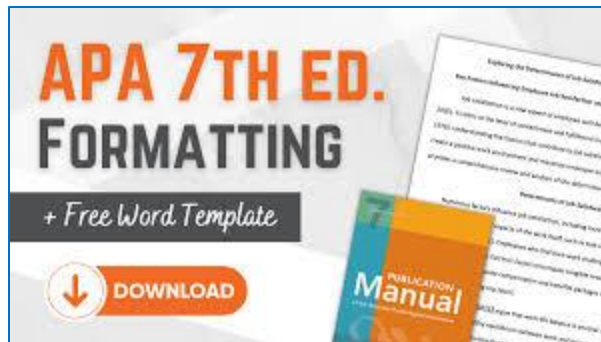
*“What do you hope to learn in
psychology/counselling?”*

*Name one surprising fact about yourself that no
one else in the room knows*

(Psychology thrives on diversity)

What to Expect From This Course

APA writing basics



Student charter:



**Student
Expectations &
Professionalism**



Academic integrity



**Attendance and
participation norms**



**Respectful
discussion**



**Encouraging
curiosity and
questioning**



**Remember –
confusion is normal;
it's part of learning**

Content of this programme:

Semester one

- **Introducing University Life (Karen)**
 - **Psychology and You (Judith)**
- **Academic and Digital Skills (Karen)**



Semester two

- **Understanding People`s Thinking and Behaviour (Judith)**
- **Researching People with Confidence (Karen)**
 - **Skills Beyond the Basics (Karen)**



Content of this module:

ECPS3001 Introducing University Life

- Week 1: Introduction to programme and module/s. Importance of Reflection.
- Week 2: Models of Reflection: Key to success.
- Week 3: Confidence building – finding your feet. [First Reflective Entry Due.](#)
- Week 4: Reading, Writing and Identifying Key Information.
- Week 5: Consolidation Week and Student Expectations/Experiences. [Second Reflective Entry Due.](#)
- Week 6: Preparing for Assessments: Planning and Structuring workload.
- Week 7: Understanding Feedback. Peer marking and Feedforward. [Third Reflective Entry Due.](#)
- Week 8: Coping with Stress and Maintaining a Work-Life Balance.
- Week 9: Making sense of people`s behaviour, reflections of learning. [Fourth Reflective Entry Due.](#)
- Week 10: Overall Reflections of the Module, Expectations of Semester Two and Perceived Needs Moving Forward. [Fifth and Final Reflective Entry Due.](#)

This module: Assessment

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to:
 - understand expectations and requirements of university life;
 - develop confidence and autonomy in relation to university life.

TASK:

- *100% Portfolio (reflective journal entries), four out of five reflective journal entries (max 2,000 words).*

GUIDANCE:

- *For this assignment, you are required to combine four reflective journal entries that will form a single reflective journal to be uploaded onto Moodle (via Turnitin) by the due date. You will have five opportunities to produce a reflection, each focused on a specific element of the module.*

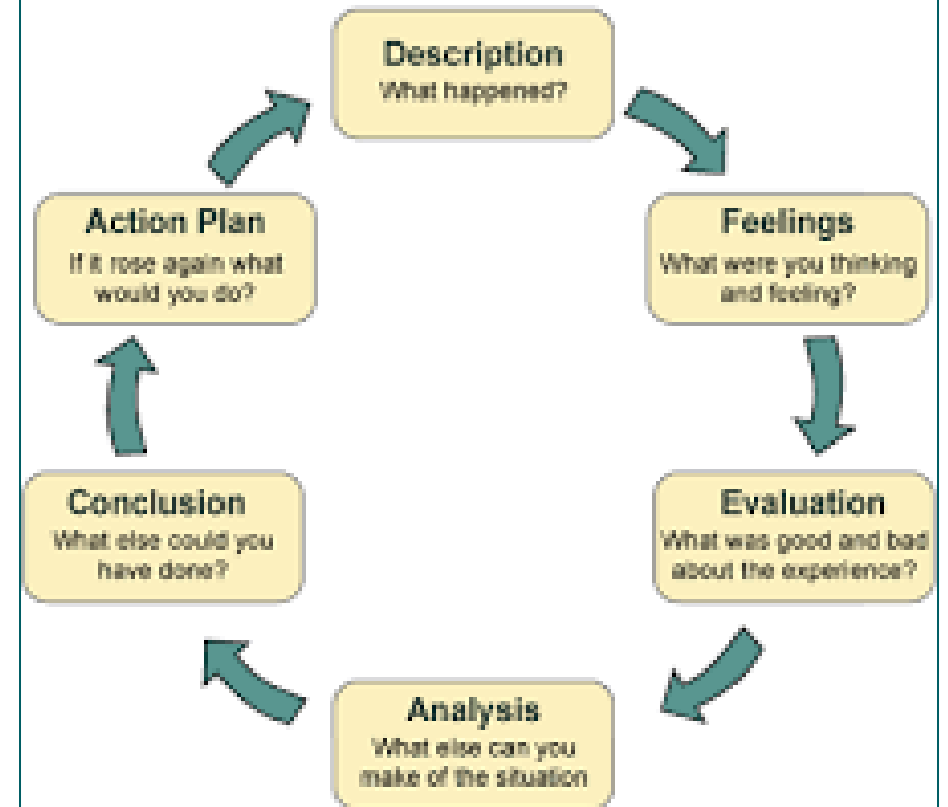


Examples of types of topics for journal entries

- Learning the utility of a reflective model, e.g. Gibbs`.
- The reality of university life.
- Getting to grips with feedback.
- Working with others.
- Confidence and skill building.
- Expectations for semester two.



Gibbs Reflective Cycle



Assessment guidance: Key document GA36



Assessment Proforma and Learning Outcomes

APPENDIX GA36

LEVEL 3 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION



Student name:	Anonymous	Student ID number:	Anonymous
Programme:	BSc (Hons) Psychology including Foundation Year / BSc (Hons) Psychology with Counselling including Foundation Year		
Module:	Introducing University Life		
Module code:	ECPS3003	Contribution to Overall Module Assessment (%):	100%
Lecturer:	Karen Eaton-Thomas	Internal Verifier:	Dr Judith Marshall
Assignment Title:	Portfolio (reflective journal entries)	Word count (or equivalent):	Four out of five reflective elements
Submission deadline:	TBC	Return date of provisional marks & written feedback:	TBC
Submission method:	All written assessments, where practical and possible, must be submitted via Turnitin unless otherwise instructed by the Lecturer. (Please DO NOT put this assessment specification into Turnitin or it will match many similarities with other students' submissions.) Alternative submission method (if applicable): Late submission of the assessment will result in a late penalty mark:		

Module Learning Outcomes (from module syllabus)

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to:

- understand expectations and requirements of university life;
- develop confidence and autonomy in relation to university life.

GENERIC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Level 3 (Foundation Year)

Provision at Level 3 (often forming part of a Foundation Year course) is designed to prepare students for higher education. At the end of Level 3, students will be expected to demonstrate the acquisition of foundation level skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to embark on a higher education programme of study at Level 4. In accordance with the national Qualifications and Credit Framework for Wales (QCFW), this includes the ability to identify and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to complete tasks and address problems that, while well defined, have a measure of complexity. It includes taking responsibility for initiating and completing tasks and procedures as well as exercising autonomy and judgement within limited parameters. It also reflects awareness of different perspectives or approaches within an area of study or work

Level 3	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTORY (Pass)	GOOD (Pass)	VERY GOOD (Merit)	EXCELLENT (Distinction)	EXCEPTIONAL (Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-39%*	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
Engagement with literature (including referencing, academic conventions and academic honesty)	Limited evidence of reading and/or there is reliance on inappropriate sources. Limited engagement with information gained through class contact. Very poor use of referencing.	Poor engagement with literature and little or no evidence of wider reading. Heavily reliant on information gained through class contact. Inconsistent and weak use of referencing.	Evidence of reading, but largely confined to information gained through class contact. Referencing may show inaccuracies and/or inconsistencies.	Engagement with an appropriate range of reading beyond information gained through class contact. Referencing may show minor inaccuracies or inconsistencies	Engagement with a wide range of relevant reading. Sound application of referencing, with no inaccuracies or inconsistencies.	Critical engagement with a wide range of relevant reading. Consistently accurate application of referencing.	Exceptional critical engagement with a very wide range of relevant reading. Consistently accurate application of referencing.
Knowledge and understanding (Introductory factual, procedural and theoretical knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles of the subject(s), for example with significant	Weak and flawed introductory knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles of the subject(s), for example with significant	Work shows limited but fragmentary understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles of the subject(s). There are inaccuracies, the inclusion of	Factual approach showing understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles of the subject(s), resulting in students being largely prepared	Good work showing understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles of the subject(s), resulting in students being prepared for study at Level 4,	Work of solid quality showing competent and	High quality work showing detailed	Exceptionally high quality work showing very

Five generic assessment criteria

The Importance of Reflection

Reflection in psychology and counselling is the intentional process of examining thoughts, feelings, behaviours, and reactions to improve **self-awareness, therapeutic effectiveness, and personal growth**. It is also essential in Education because it strengthens learning and progress.

Reflection in learning is the deliberate process of thinking about what you've learned, how you learned it, and how you can use that learning in the future. It deepens understanding, strengthens self-awareness, and helps learners connect new knowledge with what they already know.

Reflection is more than simply "thinking back." In education, it is a **structured, intentional way of examining experiences** so learners can understand their progress, identify gaps, and plan next steps. Reflective practice is a **dynamic, participatory, and cyclical process** involving several core components.

Why reflection can be challenging

- Students may not have been taught how to reflect critically.
 - Early reflections tend to be descriptive rather than analytical.
 - Students may worry about writing what they think lecturers want to hear.
1. This is why reflection needs to be **taught, scaffolded, and practised.**

Many learners find reflection difficult because:

Models that support reflection:

Gibbs' Reflective Cycle — description → feelings → evaluation → analysis → conclusion → action plan

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle — concrete experience → reflective observation → abstract conceptualisation → active experimentation

What reflection helps learners do:

- Reflection enables learners to:
 - Identify what they know but didn't realise they knew
 - Recognise what they don't know and want to learn
 - Understand how their beliefs and values shape their learning
 - Question assumptions and biases
 - Explore difficult or complex experiences safely

Reflection in learning is a **powerful, evidence-supported tool** that strengthens understanding, self-awareness, and long-term growth. It transforms learning from a passive activity into an active, thoughtful process that prepares students for academic, personal, and professional success.



Models of Reflection (Gibbs, 1988)



Gibbs (1988) created a structured cycle to guide reflective thinking. The model encourages you to revisit an experience, explore your reactions, evaluate what happened, and plan for future improvement.

It includes **six stages**:

1. Description - What happened?

This stage is factual. You set the scene without analysing anything yet. You might include:

- What the situation was
- Who was involved
- What you did
- What the outcome was

Purpose: To give a clear picture of the event so the rest of the reflection has context.

2. Feelings - What were you thinking and feeling?

Here you explore your emotional and cognitive reactions. You might consider:

- How you felt before, during, and after
- What thoughts were going through your mind
- How your emotions influenced your behaviour

Purpose: To recognise how internal states shape your actions and perceptions.

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

This is where you weigh up the positives and negatives. You might ask:

- What went well?
- What didn't go well?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the situation?

Purpose: To identify what helped or hindered the experience.



4. Analysis — Why did it happen that way?

This is the deeper thinking stage. You connect theory to practice. You might explore:

- Why events unfolded as they did
- What psychological or counselling theories help explain the situation
- What patterns or insights emerge
- What you learned about yourself or others

Purpose: To move beyond description and understand the underlying meaning.

5. Conclusion — What have you learned?

This is where you summarise your learning. You might consider:

- What you would do differently next time
- What skills or knowledge you need to develop
- What this experience taught you overall

Purpose: To consolidate your insights.



And finally...

6. Action Plan — What will you do in the future?

This turns reflection into growth. You might plan:

- Specific steps to improve
- Skills you want to practise
- Resources or support you need
- How you will handle similar situations differently

Purpose: To ensure the reflection leads to real change.



Preparation for next week:

Think back to an event that surprised you in the last couple of months and complete the Gibbs (1988) reflective worksheet on Moodle.

Remember:

“Psychology is about understanding people, including yourself.”

See you next week!