

Student number:2503246

Module code: ECEY4009

Word count: 3,000

I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

Part 1: PDP

Objective	Actions (How will I achieve this objective/ what needs to be done?)	Resources (What support and resources are needed to achieve this objective?)	Target Date for achieving objective	Success criteria (How will I know I have achieved this goal, how will I review this?)
Resit my maths GCSE	Find a tutor to help me practise. Also set up a schedule so I have a set time to revise for this.	The resources I would use would come from textbooks/ past papers/ online videos and websites.	July 2027	I will know I have achieved this goal when I have my results back from the exam board and have passed. I will review this goal by constantly making sure I am still on target and taking in any feedback given to me.
Work on using reflective practise techniques which will help me become a better practitioner	Begin implementing reflective practice in my work by regularly self-assessing and evaluating my performance. It's also important to set goals.	There is plenty of support available this could be from other colleagues and having them give you feedback, or utilising resources. Such as reading books on reflective practise to enhance your knowledge, going to lectures and sessions related to this will also help.	September 2026	This is something that can always be worked therefore it's hard to know when I would have achieved this goal. However, by getting feedback off my peers I can review what I have already put into place and set new goals to help me develop even further.
Develop my understanding of being a professional practitioner	I will achieve this by putting what I've learned into action when in work and using the skills I have been taught.	Reading relevant articles will increase my knowledge. Also, ensuring to go to my lectures and take notes, and making use of the university library to find relevant books.	Immediately	I will know I have achieved this goal when I have done plenty of research and am putting all my new knowledge into practise. Feedback off other members of staff is crucial.

Personal reflection:

The first objective I chose was to re sit my maths GCSE, this is personal to me as it's something I really want to achieve to help build my confidence. It will also help me develop my career even further as I will need to pass my maths exam before I can continue to do my teaching degree in the future. I have set the date July 2027 as I would like to begin my teaching degree as soon as I finish early years. I also chose reflective practise as I believe this is a skill that is essential to be a professional practitioner and something I feel I need to work on to develop my skills even further. Lastly, was developing my understanding of being a professional practitioner, this is

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something I can begin doing straight away to help me develop in my job role.

Therefore, I thought it was an important thing to add into my PDP. All of these will help me become a better professional practitioner and help me thrive in work to give the children the best care. Word Count – 533

Design a briefing paper that explores the importance of reflective practice within the early years and analyses different reflective models.

What is reflection and reflective practice?

Reflection is the process in which you look back to analyse and think about the experience, looking at what decisions, feelings, and behaviours there were. By reflecting on this you can learn and understand what went right and wrong to make changes for next time. HCPC, (2021), states that everyone learns in different ways and one person may learn by using reflective practice to reflect on the positives. Whereas somebody else might find it easier to reflect on the more challenging aspects, this shows that it's best to reflect in ways that suit you most to get the biggest benefits.

Why is reflective practice important to EY practice?

Reflective practice is important to EY practice because it helps with professional growth and helps people to become better practitioners. Toole, L. (2023), says that reflective practice is important in early years practice because you can learn more about how children learn and grow by reflecting on your interactions with them. This information can then be used to plan more effective activities for the children's learning. Birthto5matters (2021), explains that reflective practice also helps practitioners to increase their confidence and be more proactive, this will improve the quality of the education and care that is offered to the children.

The theory of reflective practice:

Reflective practice is a process in which educators critically evaluate their own teaching, this could be through;

- Actions
- Experiences
- Analyse
- Self-evaluate

These are all things that need to be done to develop professionally and positively impact on learning. The theory of reflective practice emphasises how important reflection is, it allows educators to adapt and improve their approaches and identify strengths and weaknesses to know what areas need changing.

Reflective practice can take different forms in education, for example;

- Self – reflection
- Discussions

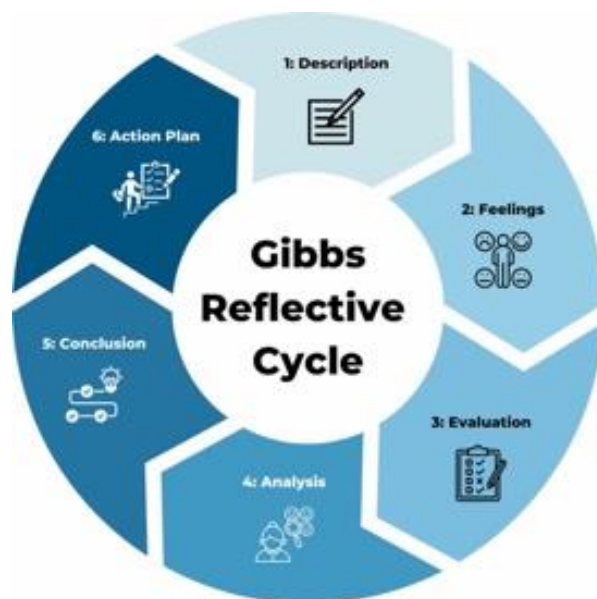
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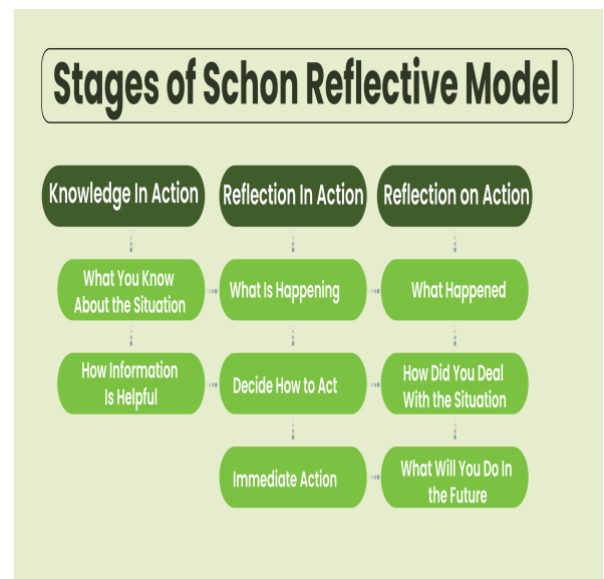
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- Reviews

All these approaches help develop critical thinking and help educators become the best versions of themselves and is an essential tool for professional development and developing professional skills. The use of reflective practice in education is highly encouraged and is becoming a compulsory part of professional reviews. (Machost, H and Stains, M).



Source: (TSW TRAINING, 2013.).



Source: (Global assignment help, 2025.)

Analysis of models – compare/contrast/pros/cons:

The 2 models I have chosen to compare are the Gibbs reflective cycle (1988) and the Schön's reflective model (1983). My reason for choosing these models is because they offer 2 different approaches to reflection that are relevant in teaching and early years education.

Gibbs Reflective Cycle (1988)

University Of Derby, (2024) states that Gibbs reflective cycle is a framework that encourages reflection and is made up of six stages that guides you through each stage of reflecting on experiences.

The 6 different stages are;

- Description
- Feelings
- Evaluation
- Analysis
- Conclusion
- Action Plan

Gibbs Reflective Cycle is a great tool to use as professional practitioners, especially in early years. This model supports critical thinking and helps practitioners recognise their mistakes and learn from them to improve for next

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time. Practitioners could use Gibbs Reflective Cycle if they've had a tough circle time, to reflect on what may have caused the children to become disengaged. They could then use reflection to look at how they could make circle time more interesting for next time. Gibbs reflective cycle also works well with professional standards such as UNCRC, EYFS, and other multi agency work which will be spoken about more soon. It is a perfect strategy for beginners who are just starting out with reflection and reflective practice and can be used for a lot of different situations. However, Gibbs Reflective Cycle can become too complex and time consuming when trying to do it in the moment.

Schön Reflective Model (1983)

According to Care learning, (2024) Schön's Reflective Model shows two types of reflective models, one being reflecting in action this happens during the event, and the other is reflection on action which happens after the event. Both reflective styles are essential for effective professional practice. Schön's model also encourages critical thinking and continuous learning by showing how reflection helps develop a practitioner's skills. A practitioner could use Schön's Reflective Model during a PE class, changing the game on the spot if children are losing interest. The cons of this model are that if you are a beginner this approach can be a lot more challenging as there's less structure to it. Care learning, (2024) also explains that balancing the speed of decision-making whilst trying to reflect in action can be difficult and requires practice and skill.

Similarities

Gibbs Reflective Cycle and Schön's Reflective Model are both popular and highly used approaches that support reflective practice. Both models do have a lot of similarities.

- One key similarity being that they both encourage critical thinking, this is because they aim to get practitioners to analyse and dig deeper into their actions and what went well/wrong rather than just briefly describing what happened. This method will help practitioners identify the strengths and weakness and think about how to improve for future practise.
- They also both focus on the importance of learning from experiences, they encourage practitioners to reflect on the situation to develop their understanding and knowledge of what went on, and how they could do better next time. Both models show that reflection is vital for professional development.

Differences

There are a few differences between both models:

- The main one being the structure, Gibbs Reflective Cycle is a well - structured six-stage process that's clear and easy to follow. Whereas the

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Schön Reflective Model has less structure to it and seems to be harder to follow. Unlike Gibbs this process has two stages which are reflection in action and then reflection on action.

- Gibbs Reflective Cycle focuses on reflection after the event and how to do better for next time rather than reflecting in the moment. Gibbs Reflective Cycle is best suited to people who are just starting out and learning about reflection and reflective practice due to its structure. However, Schön's is aimed more towards professionals who are looking to develop their reflection skills and learn to reflect in the moment not just after the event has taken place.

Conclusion

In conclusion, reflective practice is essential in early years and education, and both the Gibbs Reflective Cycle and the Schön's Reflective Model are valuable tools to use that are beneficial for reflection. Although both are different, they each share the same end goal which is to help you become a professional practitioner.

Word Count – 1112

Recognise and analyse the significance of different aspects of professional practise and why these are important in meeting the individual and inclusive needs of children

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- including professional values, communication, multiagency work, observations, planning and the UNCRC.

Professional practice refers to how professionals choose to conduct themselves in the workplace. It's also about using the skills and knowledge learnt in work to be the best professional possible, it's important to continuously be learning this could be by looking at new courses and training to keep up to date with the newest policies, frameworks, and guidelines. These could be courses such as safeguarding training, ALN training, etc. Perez, R (2021), says that every professional person has their own set of knowledge, skills, and ethical standards that help show them what responsibilities they must apply and what they have learnt. Professional practice is especially important in early years settings as practitioners play a big role in the children's development, wellbeing, and learning. Early years education is a constant evolving sector therefore practitioners need to remain aware of all the new research about best practise, and changes in the legislations, which can again be done by going on regular courses and training days.

There are many values that should be important to a professional practitioner some of these would be competence, accountability, and integrity. Having these values ensure a practitioner acts in the child's best interest even in challenging situations, which contributes to safeguarding too. University of Bradford. (2020), say that the five professional values for a professional practitioner are acting in an appropriate manner and dressing correctly, showing accountability for their actions, showing a professional image, and delivering work outcomes that are in line with the quality standards. Values are extremely important for a professional practitioner as it ensures their work is always purposeful and meaningful. These values help practitioners maintain their professional status and ensure their actions have a positive impact on others. Also, practitioners should always have respect, empathy, fairness, and equality, if these values aren't shown it can have a significant impact on the children. Some children may feel excluded, misunderstood, or even unsafe, therefore it's crucial that practitioners uphold these values.

Having good communication and building strong relationships is essential in professional practice. The most important relationship an early year's educator should begin building is with the children, this helps children feel safe, valued, and confident. Building strong relationships will help foster a sense of trust for the children and will allow them to flourish in the setting. (Department of Education, (2022).) It is also crucial that positive relationships are formed with parents and families, this can be done by having good and effective communication. This will ensure that families feel as though they are a part of their children's educational journey and that they are involved in decision making, children's progress, and their children's overall educational journey. Aside from building strong relationships with children and guardians it is equally essential to communicate effectively with colleagues, to ensure all staff working with a child have the same level of understanding of their needs to ensure routine is the same no matter which member

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of staff is with them. Ensuring you keep effective communication between all colleagues can be done by scheduling regular staff meetings or having daily handovers and catch ups to share information. Working well as a team will benefit the children as it makes their day run smoothly with minimum changes, as everyone is on the same page.

Another essential aspect of being a professional practitioner is having relevant and appropriate knowledge and understanding specific to your job role. For example, as an early year's practitioner it's vital that you have the correct knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and how you should safeguard the children. Professionals should be able to see the signs of abuse, neglect, and changes in the child's behaviour. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) states that all children should be having their basic needs met which include things like nutrition, air, shelter, and clothing. (Cherry, K (2024).) Practitioners should be able to spot if these needs are being met and know the right procedures to take, which could be addressing your concerns to the designated safeguarding lead, contacting social services, or if a child is in immediate danger calling 999. Taking appropriate action is vital to protect the child from any further harm and for the children to receive the support they desperately need. Practitioners need to ensure that all their safeguarding procedures are in line with the EYFS framework. If a practitioner is unsure on the correct action to take, then there is help and guidance available on the safeguarding Wales website.

Partnerships and multi-agency working are important to a professional practitioner because as said above having positive and effective partnerships with parents and careers help practitioners get a better understanding of a child's background and personal needs. This will help them to know the child better to be able to help them more and make changes to the setting etc to meet the child's needs. Working together with other professionals such as speech and language therapists, health visitors, and social workers ensures the child is getting the best support possible that is tailored to them and always has their best interest. Working together will likely result in early interventions as everybody is communicating effectively to decide what actions need to be taken, which can significantly change the possible outcome for the child. Multi – agency working is always advised as things can be done much quicker, for example if a practitioner has concerns about a child's speech, they can refer them to the speech and language therapist to assess this. They can then work together to decide what strategies work best and what needs to be implemented into the setting to help the child.

The observation and planning work are key for professional practitioners especially in education, as they need to observe, assess, plan, implement, and review on a regular basis. By doing this, practitioners can gather relevant information about what a child likes/dislikes, their interests, what developmental stage they are at, and their needs. Practitioners can then use this information to plan activities and lessons that are suitable for all the children so that all the children are engaged and enjoy the activities. By reflecting and observing on what is working well and what is

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not practitioners can adjust the plan to create inclusive and engaging environments for every child.

UNCRC – The United Nations Convention on The Rights of Children, plays the biggest role in becoming a professional practitioner. There are four main principles within the UNCRC, (non-discrimination, best interests of the child, right to life, survival, and development, and the right to have views heard). These principles all inform professional practise, this is because all practitioners have a duty to ensure all children are treated equally, no matter what their religion, race, and abilities. Practitioners should also be listening to the children and allowing them to have their own voices and opinions. As well as being responsible for the children's holistic development and always having their best interests in mind. As a professional it's your duty to make sure the UNCRC principles are being applied in the workplace, to ensure that practise is learner led, and all children are treated equally. By upholding children's rights, it is creating an environment where children feel safe, valued, and respected. Although the UNCRC doesn't only apply to practitioners working with children, every adult has an obligation to ensure that the rights of the children they interact with are being respected and upheld, BBC Bitesize (no date).

In conclusion, professional practice in the early years sector is built up of knowledge, values, and continuous development. However, professional practice requires constant reflection, training, and development. Practitioners need to reflect regularly to ensure that all learning and activities are still relevant and working to ensure children are benefiting the most out of their learning experiences. By staying informed, working with multi agencies, and committing to child – centred care, practitioners can have a long-lasting positive impact on every child's learning and development. This will also help practitioners create an inclusive, and supportive environment that will foster every child's wellbeing and future potential.

Word Count: 1,378

Total Word Count: 3,023

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Module code: ECEY4009
Word count: 3,000

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