What is The Reflective Workbook?

The Reflective Workbook created in Pebblepad supports the academic development of PhD students. Each student’s Pebblepad space provides them with a private place to record activities, ideas, and achievements and to engage in reflection about their learning and development. All the entries created by the students in Pebblepad are confidential, but can be shared with their supervisor through a workbook which reflects their training in Advanced Social Research.

The workbook which has been created to record the training and development of students as they go through their PhD with Advanced Social Research. The workbook is divided into four sections:

- Doctoral Training in Discipline,
- Doctoral Training in Pathway,
- Advanced Methods Training and
- Professional Skills for Research Leadership.

There’s a template which has been specially designed to help students reflect upon the events and experiences of their PhD, be it a conference you have attended, a training course you’ve undertaken, or a role you’ve taken on at the University.

As you complete and tag records of your experiences, they will start to appear in the Activity Log of your workbook. This way you and your supervisor can see the range of events and experiences which you build up during your PhD. Within the portfolio there is a space for supervisors to provide feedback to students which will be done every six months, in line with the review of the student’s Training Needs Analysis (TNA).

Each student can use their Pebblepad space for their own personal reflections too, but the assets created for the workbook are viewed as a whole by your supervisor. The workbook is submitted at the same time as your PhD as evidence that you have completed University requirements around the Doctoral Development Programme. It’s a great place to upload photos that you take during your research, collect your thoughts and experiences as your thesis develops, and create a record of the whole experience of your PhD.

What should you include in the Reflective workbook?

The workbook is made up of reflections on activities or events that represent a significant element of learning for the student: this could relate to targets set within a TNA meeting, but also more broadly to their personal development, or something
they think is important for the development of their PhD. Students are expected to develop analytical reflections with rich content that shows that learning has been gained. It is also expected to demonstrate a deep understanding about the relationship between past experience and future practice.

For all students, the workshop should provide a useful record of their personal development over the course of the PhD. For those who are completing the Reflective Portfolio for their departmental-based Doctoral Training in … module, individual reflections on your learning provide useful ‘raw materials’ for this assessment. This assessment requires you to write about your development every six months: you can cut, paste and edit materials from your Pebblepad reflective workbook to develop this writing (Note: this does not count as self-plagiarism!).

When writing a reflection consider the following

1. Use the first person “I” e.g. ‘I have recently completed a six-week online course to improve my French, and which was one of the goals set out in my TNA. The content was really good but I wish there had been more opportunities for me to practice!”

2. Think about the following questions:
   - What happened?
   - How did you feel?
   - What did you learn from the experience?
   - How can you apply what you have learnt?

3. Avoid non-analytic reflections which only provide a description, without a critical evaluation of the events or experiences e.g. ‘I did a course in French. It took six hours. It was online.’

Key information that could be included in a reflection:

Introduction
- Give information about the event you attended and if it is possible give evidence: Who, what, when, why and how.

Body of the reflection
- Analyse the event, if possible consider the experience from different perspectives.
- Re-examine the event and explain how do you feel about it now and how does it contribute to your learning development. Give examples to support this.
● How does the experience relate to goals set within your Training Needs Analysis, to other learning, or to the development of your PhD?

Conclusion
● Explain in a specific way how the experience of attending this particular event has impacted on you, consider changes or improvement you might make and how you will apply what you have learned.
● Give examples of possible applications.
Instructions for using the PebblePad Workbook

PebblePad is accessed by:
- Logging into MUSE
- Going to ‘My Services’
- Going to ‘View all Services’
- Click on ‘PebblePad’.

This will open a screen as below:

There are two areas you will need to access, your Assets and Resources, both of which are accessible under your name in the left of the screen.

In your Resources you will find blank forms for you to fill in. This includes two resources for this module. These are:

- **Training Reflection** - This is a single form you can fill in as many times as you want, where you will log your training events.
- **Reflective Workbook** - This is a form with several pages, where you will collate your reflections and submit these to your supervisor.

Your Assets contain materials you have created in PebblePad.
Filling in the Training Reflection

To fill in the Training Reflection, go to your Resources as above, and click on the title of the Training Reflection. This will open a blank form to fill in.

Give it a filename in the ‘Save as…’ field (this should be something that will be meaningful to you and your supervisor), and fill out the fields in the reflection.

At the bottom of the page is an area where you can add files you think would be useful to evidence your reflections.

Please attach any useful evidence in the form of files (e.g. documents, photographs etc.) below.

Click on the red ‘rosette’, and click ‘Add an Asset’ to add any files you need. These can be in any format, but have a file size limit of 250mb.

When finishing, click the ‘Information’ icon at the top right of the screen. A window will open for you to do two tasks.
Under ‘Tags’, tag the reflection with one or more of the following tags (typed into the box):

- Pathway
- Discipline
- Research methods
- Professional skills

This will automatically ‘file’ your reflection in the correct part(s) of your Workbook. *Note once tagged, the Reflection will be visible to your supervisor in your Workbook. If you do not want them to be able to see the Reflection immediately, add the tags at a later date.*

The next step is to log the hours of this activity.

Click ‘Add Hours’, type in the hours and minutes you have spent on this activity, and click ‘Confirm’.

Finally click ‘Save’ in the top left of the screen.

*Remember - once saved your Reflection will be found in your Assets, and can be edited at any point. To start a new one, take the blank form from your Resources.*
Filling in the Reflective Workbook

The Reflective Workbook is also found in your Resources, as above. You will only ever be able to take one copy of this.

The first time you open the Workbook you will be asked to Auto-submit. This will allow your supervisor to see your progress. *The submitted Workbook will be updated with all subsequent changes and does not have to be re-submitted at any point.*

The Workbook has been designed to automatically include your tagged Training Reflections, and give an indication of number of hours logged against that section. Each section (listed across the top) has two pages - the **Introduction** gives guidance on what to include, and the **Activity Log** is where your Reflections will be collated. There is also a **FAQ** with common support questions.

The first time you go to each Activity Log, you will need to switch on the search criteria. This will automatically bring in Reflections you have tagged with the relevant terms for each section, and tally the target hours for these. *Note switching on the criteria for each Activity Log only needs doing once.*
Once you have made any changes, ensure you click the 'Save' button in the top left of the screen.