Reflective Writing

There are different ways to structure reflective writing; refer to your unit outline to identify any faculty guidelines.

What is it? What is the purpose of reflective writing?
Reflective assignments typically prompt you to trace your own learning journey through a unit or topic. Reflective writing asks you to consider connections: between the theoretical aspects of your course and your own experiences in practical situations, and between what you already know or have experienced and what you are in the process of learning.

How do I start?
Reflection involves taking a pause to examine your own thoughts, beliefs, values, attitudes and assumptions, which form the foundation of your understanding.

Some guiding questions for reflective thinking include:

- What was my role in the event?
- And why did I adopt that role?
- How do I interpret what I experienced or observed?
- What theories or ideas can I apply to it?
- What were my thoughts during that time? And why?
- What were my feelings?
- And why did it happen?
- What happened during that experience?
- And why did I feel that way?
- How can I learn from this experience?
Different reflective writing approaches:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The 4Rs Model of Reflective Thinking</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Reporting</strong> (and responding)</td>
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<td>2. <strong>Relating</strong></td>
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<td>3. <strong>Reasoning</strong></td>
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<td>4. <strong>Reconstructing</strong></td>
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Adapted from: http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au/write/4Rs-for-students-page1-v1.5.pdf

Final points to remember:

- The event or experience *in itself* is not the main focus of reflective writing. What is more important is your reaction to it, and how it has shaped your thinking and learning.
- Your lecturer is likely to be looking for how well you can analyse and reflect on events in order to learn from them, and how well you are able to relate your study of theories to real life situations and practices.

Handy links:

**Reflective Writing, University of Manchester:**
http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/studyskills/essentials/reflective_learning/reflective_writing.html

**Reflective Writing, University of Reading:**
https://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/studyadvice/StudyResources/Practicebasedlearning/sta-reflectivewriting.aspx