

Teaching students how to journal

Meeting exit folio requirements in Short Course syllabuses

Overview

The QCAA offers three Short Course senior syllabuses: Literacy, Numeracy and Career Education. While each course is designed to meet a specific curriculum need for individual students, they all have a common assessment instrument: the learning journal. The purpose of this document is to ensure all students can meet the exit folio requirements regardless of the course undertaken.

The purpose of journalling

As part of their Short Course assessment, students are required to maintain a learning journal that contains a range and balance of entries and activities that represent a selection of reflections on contexts and processes (sociocultural, cognitive and metacognitive) encountered during each topic.

It is a purposeful collection of work and writings that help define students' efforts and achievements in the core skill of learning. The learning journal can be used to document a variety of information, ideas, thoughts, learning strategies and working processes, and should contain decisions made and reasons or justifications for these decisions.

A learning journal is reflective, and informs further learning or future experiences. It enables students to identify their growth throughout a subject or experience, and to set goals and develop metacognitive skills.

Developing journalling skills

To develop students' journalling skills, teachers can:

- provide learning journal samples
- provide an environment where students feel comfortable reflecting on their responses, reactions and feelings about learning
- use mock examples of learning journal activities
- walk through a guided question journal sample, explaining the purpose of each section
- create activities for students that enable them to decide whether the required task is anecdotal or reflective in nature.

Journalling is not just note-taking

Note-taking provides a record of learning at a *point in time*. It can be used to organise revision and review learning before assessment, and helps students interact with knowledge multiple times.

Journalling is a reflecting process that occurs *before*, *during* and *after* the learning experience. The premise behind keeping a journal is that you cannot improve or change something you are not aware of in the first place.

Journalling in the curriculum

Within the Short Course syllabuses, the criterion of *learning* is underpinned by the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF). The skill of learning, or being a learner, can be achieved when students demonstrate an ability to:

- plan, implement and adjust processes as required to achieve learning outcomes and begin to seek new challenges
- experiment with new learning strategies in familiar contexts and apply some strategies in less familiar contexts.

The use of a learning journal gives students the opportunity to demonstrate these abilities and reflect on their effectiveness. In turn, they will develop their sense of self-efficacy, which plays a major role in the way they approach their goals, tasks and challenges.

Learning journal examples

Two QCAA-created learning journal examples are provided on the following pages, but there are many different ways to effectively journal. It is important that students demonstrate their learning through a method that works best for them.

Learning journal example: note-taking and sense-making strategy

This QCAA-created example uses reflective thinking to outline troublesome areas, successful understandings and some future direction within learning. It demonstrates a successful use of the note-taking and sense-making strategy for journaling.

Monday 22nd Jan

Learning objective:
How to convert between fractions, decimals & percentages

TEACHER EXAMPLES

- ① $5\% = \frac{5}{100} \left(\frac{1}{20}\right) = 0.05$
- ② $13\% = \frac{13}{100} = 0.13$
- ③ $\frac{40}{100} = 0.4 = 40\%$
- ④ $\frac{4}{5} = 0.8 = 80\%$
- ⑤ $0.47 = \frac{47}{100} = 47\%$

*** Rules to remember**

F → D (Divide numerator by the denominator)
D → P (Multiply by 100)
P → D (Divide by 100)

To find % of an amount
*** Amount × %**

To increase an amount by %
*** Amount × (100% + %)**

Example Question 1
Matt has a weekly income of \$825. If he spends $\frac{1}{5}$ on food, how much money is spent on food?

Example Question 2
Joelene plans to increase her car loan repayments by 5% per week. If she currently pays \$118 per week what amount will the new weekly repayments be?

Why did this become $\frac{1}{20}$? - Ask miss steel how to do this

This doesn't make sense

$\frac{40}{100} = 0.4$ $\cdot \frac{4}{5} = 0.04$?
(How is the answer 0.8) 😞

Remember that the numerator is Near the top & denominator is Down the bottom

I couldn't understand how to do this question. Do I use the rule amount × %? But there is a fraction...
✓✓ got this right

Learning journal example: guided questions strategy

This QCAA-created example responds to questions to reflect on learning, difficulties, goals and how to achieve them. These guided questions provide a more scaffolded alternative to a free-form journal. This example demonstrates a successful use of the guided-questions strategy for journaling.

What was the purpose of today's lesson?

Today we learned how to convert between decimals, Percentages and fractions, and how to solve real-life questions.

How did you feel about today's lesson?

I felt uncomfortable when we had to answer the worded Problem questions. It felt like I was the only one who couldn't. It was much easier when we just had simpler exercises.

What was the most important thing you learned today?

The most important thing I learned was not to rely on just using Percentages, decimals or fractions. Mr. Smith showed us catalogues with stuff like "30% off" or buy 1, get another for $\frac{1}{4}$ of the price. So it is important to know the conversions for real-life.

What do you want to learn more about?

I want to learn more about how to convert from fractions to decimals as I made a mistake but don't know why.
 I got this one right $\frac{40}{100} = 0.4$ ✓ ... But $\frac{4}{5} = 0.8$?? I would have thought $\frac{4}{5} = 0.8$

What was the most confusing part of today's lesson?

Definitely the worded Problems!!! I think it was because of the way it was written and the information given didn't match with the question.

What can I do to overcome my confusion?

I need to ask Mr. Smith for help - or if he is busy I could ask Sarah or Matt as they are A students. I could also ask Mr. Smith for help during break time or before school.

What will I do the same/different next lesson and why?

I don't like putting my hand up in class but I will try next lesson. I will keep sitting away from my friends who distract me because I really want to pass this course. I will also try to answer all of questions rather than giving up on the worded problems so Mr. Smith can help me with my mistakes in my steps and I can see where I went wrong...-THEN I CAN PASS 😊