Guidance Note on Scholarly Activity

For staff and supervisors

Table of Contents

What is scholarly activity in learning and teaching?

Scholarly activity has a long and established history in learning and teaching.[1, 2] In the context of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HES Framework), the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) states that 'scholarship' refers to those activities concerned with gaining new or improved understanding, or appreciation and insights into a field of knowledge, or engaging with and keeping up to date with advances in the field (3). At all times, the focus of scholarly activity is on advances in knowledge and practice in **learning and teaching**.

Scholarly activity occurs on a continuum. At one end of the scholarly activity continuum, **scholarly teaching** can involve educators:

- reflecting on student feedback, learning analytics, and other data to inform improvements,
- undertaking discussions with colleagues to get ideas on learning and teaching,
- engaging in calibration, benchmarking, or peer review activities,
- using the learning and teaching literature to inform improvements.

At the other end of the continuum, the **scholarship of learning and teaching (SOTL)** is oriented at generating knowledge that is produced in a form that allows others to access and build upon. It is often subject to peer review and critique.[3] SOTL commonly involves educators:

- designing and implementing learning and teaching research/evaluation projects, and
- communicating the findings and outcomes of their SOTL projects through presentations, publications, and other dissemination methods.

Why is scholarly activity important?

At the individual level, engaging in scholarly activities helps staff broaden their knowledge. It also assists staying up to date with new advances in learning and teaching within a discipline, and in higher education, more broadly. Scholarly activity also helps with advancing higher education practice and career development and advancement.

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[1] Hutchings, P., & Shulman, L. (1999). The scholarship of teaching new elaborations, new developments. Change, 31(5), 11-15.
[2] The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). (2022). Guidance Note: Scholarship. Version 3.0.
[3] Tight M. (2018) Tracking the scholarship of teaching and learning, Policy Reviews in Higher Education, 2(1), 61-78.

As a higher education provider, Charles Sturt University is required to report scholarly activity to TEQSA who require demonstration of a systematic approach to organising and practicing scholarship across the University.

Consequently, engaging in scholarly activity is a key expectation of Charles Sturt University academic staff as articulated in the current Charles Sturt University Enterprise Agreement, A Guide to Evidence in Promotion, and Teaching Capabilities Framework and Self-Assessment Tool. The new Enterprise Agreement 2023-2025 which has been approved by the Fair Work Commission (and comes into effect on 6 March 2024) sets out workload allocation for scholarly activity (see below). This further strengthens the importance of scholarly activity to individuals and the University. The new EA states:

- Teaching and Research/ Creative, Charles Sturt Academic Fellow, teaching and professional, Scholarly Teaching Fellow, and Research Focused - 5% of teaching allocation dedicated to scholarly activity,
- Teaching Focussed staff - 10% of teaching allocation dedicated to scholarly activity.

TEQSA types of scholarly activities and associated artefacts

The Charles Sturt Scholarly Environment Model is a way of expressing the different forms of scholarly activities and the outputs that TEQSA might expect to see as evidence. The types of scholarship in this Model are outlined below and the model is outlined in Appendix 1. At the time of setting a scholarly goal within the Employee Development and Review Scheme (EDRS) system, staff need to select a *type of scholarship* as outlined in the Scholarly Environment Model and described in the table below.

1. Professional and scholarly communities
2. Peer reviewed publications
3. Non-peer reviewed publications
4. Self/Institutional scholarship
5. Advanced scholarship

The table below outlines different types of scholarly activities mapped to the Scholarly Environment Model and the artefacts/outputs associated with each. These artefacts/outputs provide the 'evidence' for scholarly activity. The list is not exhaustive nor prescriptive. There may be other activities or artefacts/outputs that are relevant and appropriate in different disciplines or contexts.

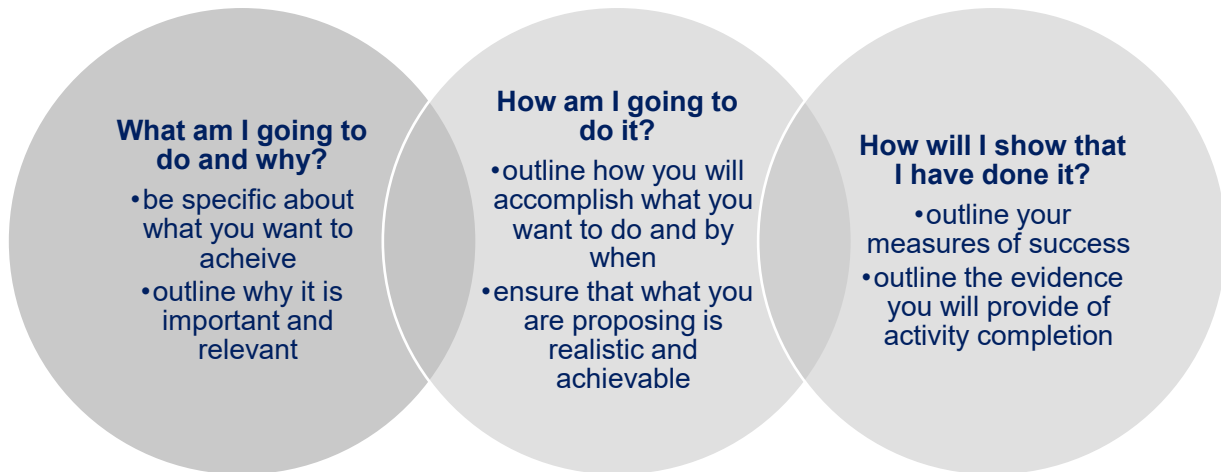| Charles Sturt Scholarly Environment Model	Examples of scholarly activities	Examples of artefacts/outputs
Self/institutional scholarship	Planning/designing/delivering effective teaching in alignment with institutional expectations and quality standards	Curriculum materials, assessment materials (e.g., marking guides, rubrics) curriculum plans or proposals, subject outlines, subject sites, teaching resources, learning analytics data, data from Subject Experience Surveys, improving Learning Management System subject sites
Self/institutional scholarship	Engaging in university projects to improve the quality of learning	Evidence of being an early adopter or participating in pilots e.g., Bright Space, AI Bootcamp,
Self/institutional scholarship	Acting upon evidence (e.g., SuES, learning analytics, other) to improve the quality of the learning experience for students	Written/audio/video reflections, improvement plans or proposals, revised curriculum materials, QUASAR reports; student feedback, peer observation report
Self/institutional scholarship	Participating in review, calibration, or benchmarking activities (in learning and teaching)	Calibration or benchmarking reports/feedback/reflections
Self/institutional scholarship	Engaging in peer review of teaching and/or leadership	Peer review report, response to peer review
Self/institutional scholarship	Integrating scholarship of learning and teaching into teaching practice and curriculum development	Annotated bibliography, literature review, evidence informed curriculum models/materials/tools, grant and/or award applications
Professional and scholarly communities	Engaging community/industry in learning and teaching	Consultation report, industry/community event/panel report, professional standards/codes of practice/guidelines,
Professional and	Participation in and/or	External feedback from others, self-

scholarly communities	leadership of networks and communities (e.g., member of peer review panel, committee or board, community of practice), undertaking editorial roles or reviewer roles, Engaging in mentorship roles	reflections on impact of contribution; feedback/testimonials/references from others regarding contributions/impact
Peer reviewed or non-peer reviewed publications and presentations	Designing, implementing, and reporting on a scholarly project	Conference presentation/symposium, blog, podcast Journal article, chapter, book, report
Advanced Scholarship	Applying for professional recognition in learning and teaching	Internal or external teaching award, fellowship, teaching grant application
Advanced scholarship	Undertaking teaching related professional development, higher degree by research focused on learning and teaching, scholarly secondment/fellowship	Tertiary qualification related to learning and teaching; PhD; evidence of fellowship/secondment; evidence of participation in continuing professional development

Planning and setting goals for scholarly activity

Setting scholarly goals within the annual Employee Development and Review Scheme (EDRS) cycle is an important part of planning scholarly activity. Staff can use the three questions below to guide their planning and goal setting and use the template outlined in Appendix 2 to help with the development of a scholarly activity plan. Staff are encouraged to set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely) goals. A key consideration is how the proposed scholarly activity aligns with and supports School/Faculty/University strategic priorities or School or Faculty operational plans.

The role of supervisors is ensuring that the scholarly goals set by staff clearly address the guiding

question below and are strategically aligned to School/Faculty/University strategic priorities or School or Faculty operational plans.

What am I going to do and why?
- be specific about what you want to acheive
- outline why it is important and relevant

How am I going to do it?
- outline how you will accomplish what you want to do and by when
- ensure that what you are proposing is realistic and achievable

How will I show that I have done it?
- outline your measures of success
- outline the evidence you will provide of activity completion

Examples

Three examples have been provided to highlight the diversity of scholarly activity. The examples below are not exhaustive nor prescriptive. Other activities can be included (based on staff and supervisor discussion) as relevant and appropriate to each learning and teaching discipline or context.

What I'm going to do and why

Explore student engagement based on Student Experience Survey feedback that students feel disengaged in my online subject. Addressing this will help with student retention and success, and student retention is a key strategic priority for the university.

How I'm going to do it

- Keep a journal documenting my observations of patterns of student engagement, and/or
- Explore learning analytics from my subject to understand patterns of engagement, and/or
- Discuss with a colleague about what they do to engage students online, and/or
- Review case studies available online on enhancing student engagement, and/or
- Attend a learning and teaching conference such as CSEdX to gather new ideas.

How I'll show I've done it

- Reflections on Student Experience Survey data in QUASAR system, and/or
- Annotated list of case studies, and/or
- Report on analysis of learning analytics, and/or
- Reflections on attending CSEdX conference, and/or
- Engagement improvement plan for subject.

What I'm going to do and why

Explore opportunities to embed authentic assessment into my second-year health subject based on feedback received during the course review and accreditation process. Authentic assessment supports learning and engagement, helps prepare students for the world of work, and enhances academic integrity.

How I'm going to do it

- Analyse the subject outlines in other subjects within my school to identify examples of authentic assessments, and/or
- Undertake a mini review of papers on work integrated learning in my discipline, and/or
- Present the findings of my review and subject outline analysis at my teaching team meeting, and/or
- Draft an authentic assessment task and get feedback from a colleague, and/or
- Implement the assessment task and gather student feedback, and/or
- Engage with the Charles Sturt University Teaching Academy professional development activities on scholarship of learning and teaching, and/or
- Develop proposal/application for a scholarly grant/project.

How I'll show I've done it

- A report and presentation on the findings of literature review and subject outline analysis, and/or
- Authentic assessment artefact and marking rubric, and/or
- An implementation and evaluation report on how the assessment task was implemented and the outcomes of it, and/or
- A tip-sheet or guidance document, and/or

> • Scholarly teaching and learning project/grant outline/proposal.

What I'm going to do and why

Integrating work integrated learning (WIL) into my third-year business subject based on student feedback about their lack of job preparation. Employability is a core element of the Charles Sturt Education Strategy Vision.

How I'm going to do it

- Access a list of industry partners who support WIL placements in my School, and/or
- Select and contact several industry partners and discuss the contemporary nature of their work, and/or
- Map subject content with the current practices undertaken in industry, and/or
- Design two new learning activities that replicate industry practice, and/or
- Participate in the Charles Sturt University Work Integrated Learning (WIL) community of practice, and/or
- Trial the learning activities, and/or
- Invite feedback from students and selected industry partner, and/or
- Refine and adapt the learning activities as needed.

How I'll show I've done it

- A brief report on the areas covered in the industry partner discussions, and/or
- Curriculum mapping document, and/or
- Learning activity artefact, and/or
- Implementation and evaluation report, and/or
- Showcase my approach at learning and teaching forum.

Reporting scholarly activity

At Charles Sturt University, staff are required to:

1. submit their scholarly artefact/output into the Charles Sturt Research Outputs Repository (CRO), and
2. complete a scholarly reflection in CRO (at the completion of each EDRS cycle) and link that

to a scholarly artefact/output in CRO.

Information about how to add scholarly artefacts into CRO can be found in the:

- Scholarly Activity Library Guide: https://libguides.csu.edu.au/c.php?g=893368&p=6757705
- Division of Learning and Teaching video resources: https://www.csu.edu.au/division/learning-teaching/professional-learning/scholarly-activities/collecting-and-reporting

Scholarly reflections need to cover the following three points:

1. The nature of the scholarly activity (the 'what') - what was done, what did it look like, what was my role in it,
2. The importance and impact of the scholarly activity (the 'why' and the 'so what') – why is the scholarly activity important and impactful in relation to improving student learning, developing one's own teaching practice, or influencing the teaching practices of others,
3. The implications of engaging in the scholarly activity (the 'now what') – what are future implications in terms of how one will continue to evaluate, monitor, adapt, and refine ones' scholarly engagement and activity in order to further improve student learning, develop one's own teaching practice, or influence the teaching practices of others.

Approving scholarly activity

Heads of School or their delegates are responsible for quality assuring and approving scholarly reflections in CRO (prior to the completion of each EDRS cycle). As outlined above, these reflections need to cover three interrelated elements. All Heads of School and Associate Heads also have access to the Scholarly Reflections Dashboard in CRO for their School, available at: https://researchoutput.csu.edu.au/admin/workspace.xhtml

See Appendix 3 for guidance on how to approve scholarly reflections in CRO.

Resources

- Division of Learning and Teaching:
  - Scholarly Activities: https://www.csu.edu.au/division/learning-teaching/professional-learning/scholarly-activities
  - How to report scholarly activity in CRO: https://www.csu.edu.au/division/learning-teaching/professional-learning/scholarly-activities/collecting-and-reporting

- Scholarly Activity Library Guide: https://libguides.csu.edu.au/c.php?g=893368&p=6757705
- Library Guide on Scholarship of Teaching & Learning: https://libguides.csu.edu.au/c.php?g=931940&p=6736507

Appendix 1 – Scholarly Environment Model

Scholarly Environment Model (SEM)
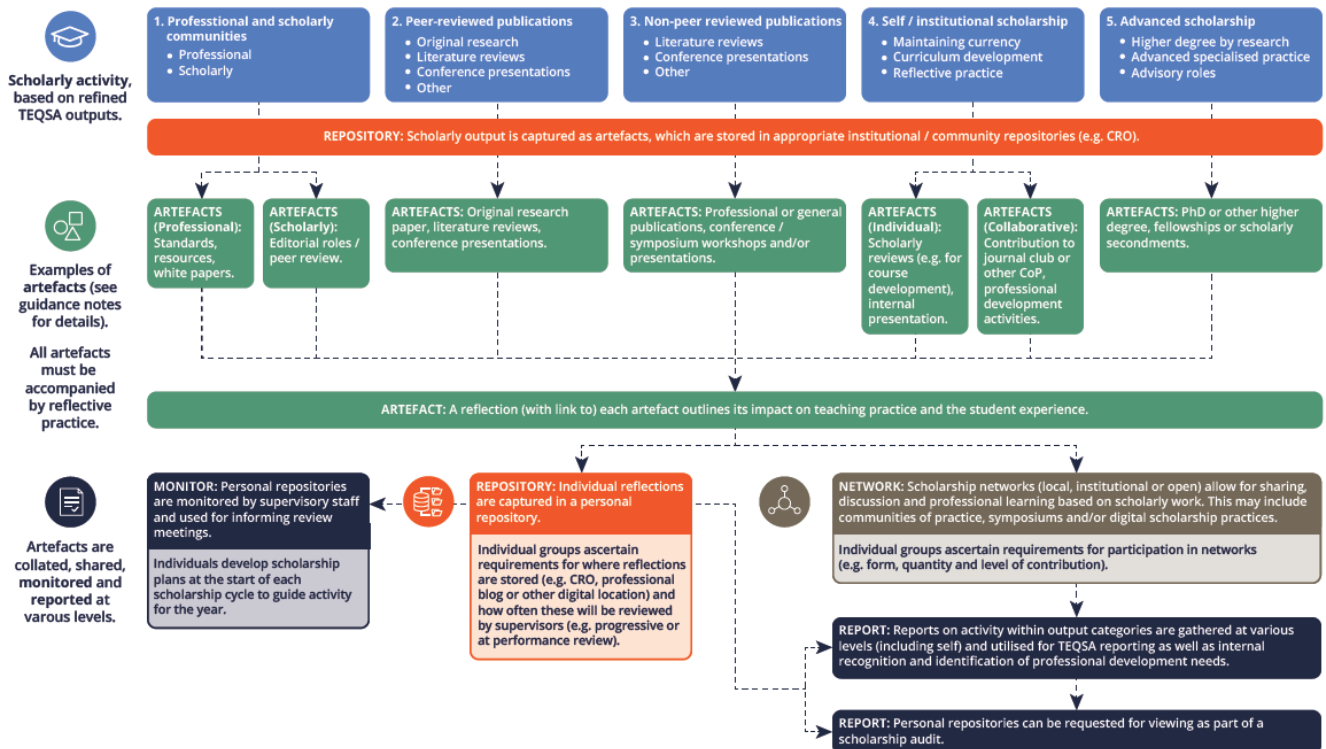
Appendix 2 – Scholarly activity planning template

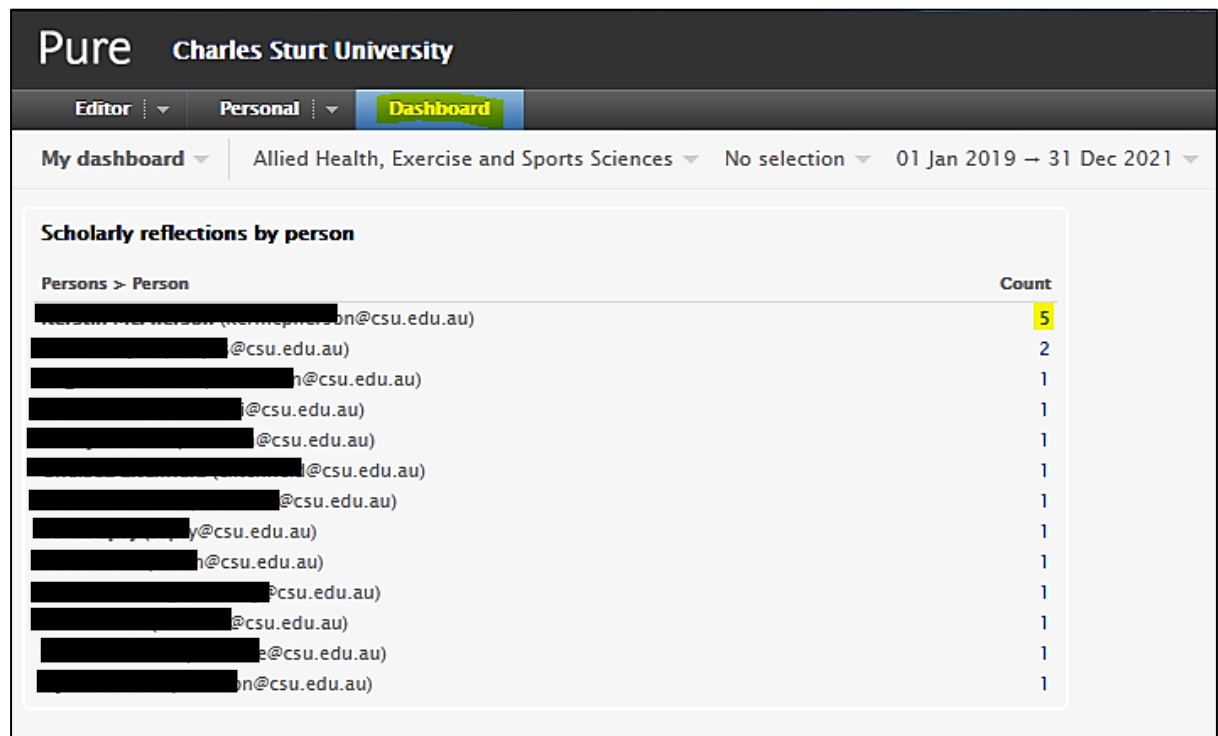| Guiding question	
What am I going to do and why?	
How will I do it?	
How will I evidence that I have done it?	

Appendix 3 – Approving scholarly reflections in CRO

Scholarly reflections in CRO

To view the scholarly reflections that have been added to CRO for your school, first log into CRO at: https://researchoutput.csu.edu.au/admin/workspace.xhtml
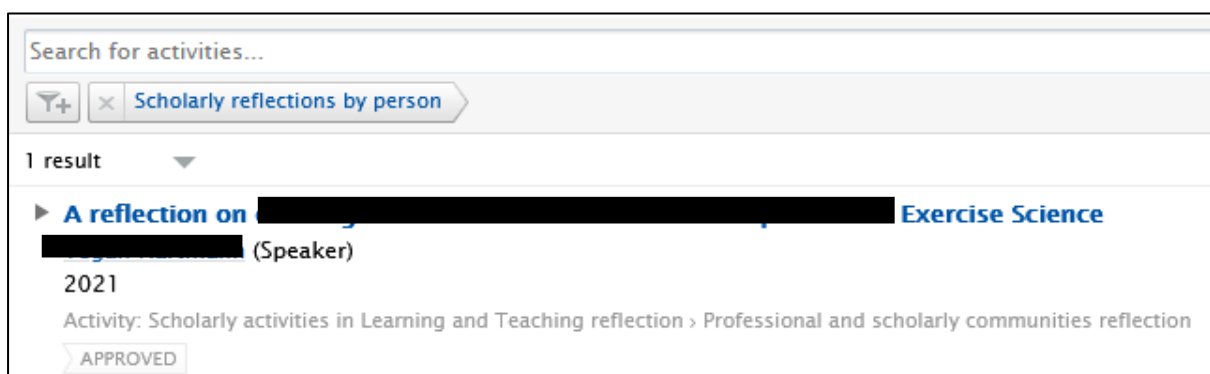
Go to the "Dashboard" tab and you will see a list of staff in your school who have entered reflections:

Click on the number next to their name and you will be taken to a list containing their reflection(s) – some staff may have entered multiple, as you can see one in the above list has 5 but most at this stage will just have 1:
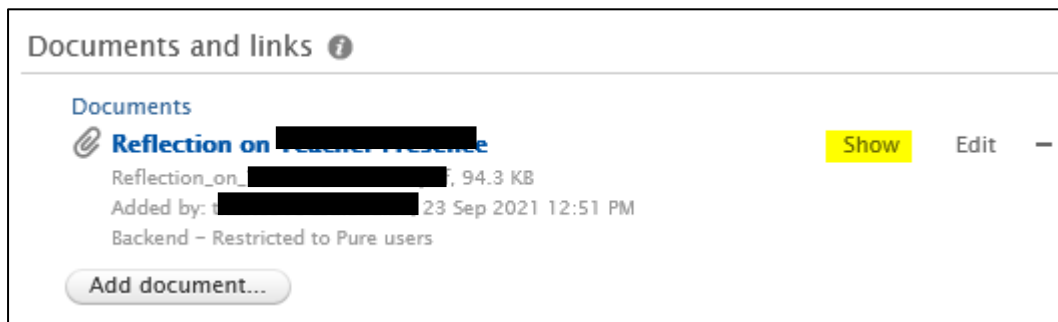
Click on the title of the reflection you wish to open and a new window will appear, containing the reflection information:
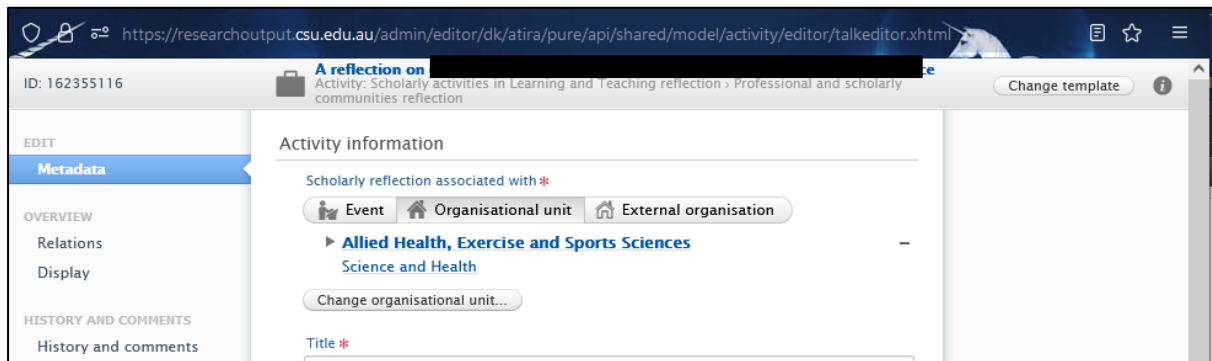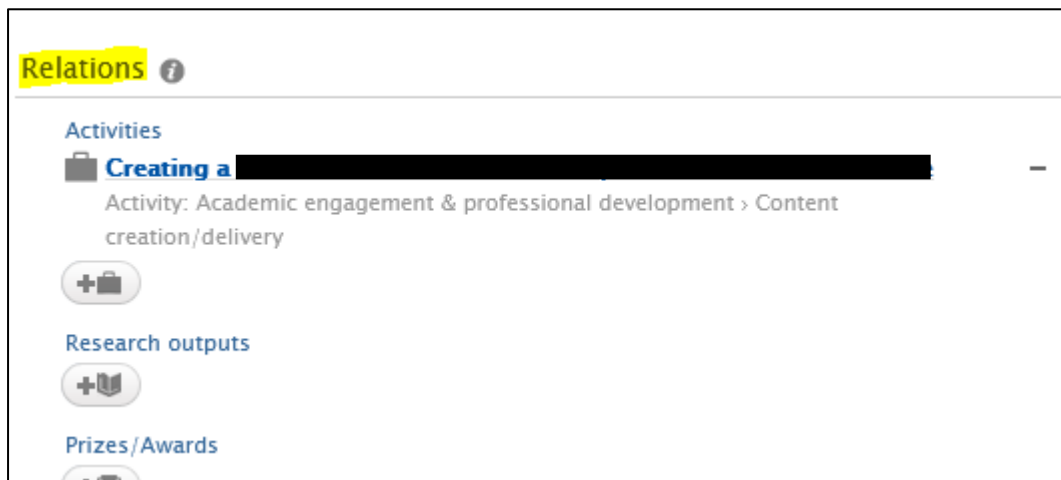

You can then view the reflection, either in the Description box, if it has been written here:

Or under Documents and links, by clicking on the "Show" button:

You can view the associated artefact (if one has been created and linked correctly) under Relations, by clicking on the title and then the "Open" text, which will open the associated record:

Once you have reviewed the reflection and the associated artefact, you can add a keyword to indicate whether it is Approved, or requires Follow-up:

Select either "Approved" or "Follow-up required" as appropriate:

The selected keyword will appear as below:

You can then save the record using the big blue "Save" at the bottom of the window:

Note that the Status at the bottom next to the Save button is a Research Services workflow field and you do not need to change it. Reflections that have had the "Approved" keyword applied will drop out of the dashboard list, enabling you to view only reflections that have not yet been reviewed, or require follow-up.

If you add a follow-up keyword and the staff member has then addressed your feedback/corrected their reflection record, you can remove the "Follow up required" keyword by clicking on the minus button, and then follow the same process as above to add the "Approved" keyword:

If you are having any issues with this process you can send an email to cro@csu.edu.au and a member of the team will assist you.