**Reflective practice** is “a deliberate pause to assume an open perspective, to allow for higher level thinking processes. Practitioners use these processes for examining beliefs, goals, and practices, to gain new or deeper understandings that lead to actions that improve learning for students” (York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere, & Montie, 2001, p.6).

A good teacher must be a reflective practitioner. To make sense of and learn from your experience during practicum, you need to ask yourself the following questions when you do your reflections (adapted from York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere, & Montie, 2001; Richardson, 2002):

1. What happened? (What did I do? What did others do?)
2. Why? (Why did I think things happened this way? Why did I choose to act the way I did?)
3. So what? (What have I learned from this? How might this change my future thinking, behaviour and interactions?)
4. Now what? (What do I want to remember to think about in a similar situation? How do I want to act?)

A detailed write-up is found in the next 2 pages (extracted from the TE21 report, p. 72-73).

PGDE (Pri/JC) student teachers are encouraged to use the reflective practice framework for Focused Conversations 2 (originally referred to as the Professional Learning Inquiry Sessions), as well as for lesson reflection.
Approach 6: Reflective Teaching Model

While the importance of reflection is not new to education, the techniques of reflective practice are relatively recent. To help teachers improve their teaching craft and strengthen the theory-practice nexus, a comprehensive model for reflective teaching which may be useful for teachers is illustrated in Figure 7. The model illustrates the interaction between the teacher’s dispositions (being), practice (doing), and professional knowledge (knowing). As such it indicates how personal-professional knowledge is built. At the heart of the model is a 4-stage cyclical process which facilitates reflection in action and on action. These four stages are:

- **Observing** (What happened?): e.g. What did I do/say? What did others do/say?
- **Reflecting** (Why?): e.g. Why did I think things happened this way? Why did I choose to act the way I did? Why did I choose to adopt this mode of instruction?
- **Planning** (So what?): e.g. How might this change my thinking behaviour or interactions with others? What might I do differently?
- **Acting** (Now what?): e.g. What do I want to remember to think about in a similar situation? How do I want to act?

(Adapted from Langer, Colton, & Goff, 2003, and York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere & Monti, 2001)
The shared area (filtering system) between the reflective cycle and the professional knowledge base illustrates the prior beliefs, attitudes, values and assumptions that student teachers have, that “filter” or impact on their teaching experiences and knowledge-bases. This cycle is developmental and continuous, with no beginning or end, as each stage is based on the previous one and serves as the impetus for the next. It can occur at different levels of sophistication. Van Manen, proposes three major hierarchical levels at which reflection may take place:

- **Technical Reflection** is the most basic level of reflection. It focuses on what works in the classroom. At this level, teachers are concerned with applying knowledge to achieve instrumental outcomes, and actions taken are evaluated on the basis of their success or failure in the classroom.

- **Practical Reflection** is the next level of reflection. It focuses on the learning experience of the student. It goes beyond technical-rationality into investigating, questioning and clarifying the end objectives and the assumptions behind teaching activities designed to achieve those objectives.

- **Critical Reflection** is the highest level of reflection. It focuses on what knowledge is of value and to whom. At this level, teachers are not simply concerned about the goals, the activities and the assumptions behind them but they reflect upon the larger context of education and question their practices critically, particularly in connection with ethical and moral issues.

It is expected that our teachers will exhibit technical rather than critical reflective skills in the beginning, but the usefulness of this model is that it offers scaffolding techniques that supervising or co-operating teachers would find useful in guiding the reflection of ITP students or beginning teachers. As teachers become more confident, they can use this model on their own. While the Reflective Teaching Model should not be seen as prescriptive, it will nonetheless provide a common framework to help teachers consolidate their experiences and guide them in systematically reflecting on their practices. SCMs will be exposed to the model which can be used during PLIS. The model will also be incorporated into the new portfolio assessment approach for NIE’s TE programmes.