



## How to keep a learning journal

The modules in the Certificate in Theology from Moore College can be assessed in two different ways: either by examination or by coursework. If you have chosen the coursework option, you will be expected to keep a learning journal. But what is a learning journal?

### Definition of a learning journal

A learning journal is a record of your studies. It is a little bit like a diary but the focus is very much on the subject that you are studying rather than all the other things that might be going on in your life.

### The purpose of a learning journal

There are two reasons why we ask students to keep a journal:

- a) It helps you structure and record your studies in a way that promotes reflection on the topic and the learning process... hopefully that means you learn more effectively.
- b) It helps us see how you have engaged with the course and that makes it easier for us to comment on your assignments in ways that are helpful.

### Format of a learning journal

There are many acceptable formats but probably the easiest way to present your learning journal is in chart form like this:

Date	Time	Task	Notes

Each time you do some studying, whether that is reading the study guide, doing some background reading, answering the exercises in the study guide, working on an assignment or just thinking about your module, you note down the date, time, what you have done and any comments you want to make.

Keeping a learning journal shouldn't restrict your studies in any way. You can still work through the module and exercises in whatever way works best for you. The key is to be recording your study as you go.

### Content of a learning journal

The first 3 columns of your learning journal are purely factual – you note the day, the time and what you have done. The 4th column, however, allows you to write more freely – it is where you can reflect on your

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◀ learning in various ways. In this column you should:

- Write a short summary of the chapter you have just studied (approximately half a page)
- Summarise your answers to the exercises that are set in the study guide
- Jot down things that you don't understand
- Reflect on the positives and the negatives of the learning experience
- Think about how your studies are being useful to your life and ministry

Your journal entries may vary from week to week but please note that a summary of each chapter will be expected as will regular reflection on the learning process. Your notes only need to be brief but do try to give us a flavour of what you are doing each time you sit down to study.

### Does a learning journal need to be typed?

Your learning journal needs to be legible! It is certainly preferable to submit it in a typed form but if you do not have easy access to a computer then a clear, handwritten journal is acceptable.

### Isn't this all a lot of hard work?

We hope not! To get the best out of your studies you need to be keeping notes

and doing some reflection anyway, the journaling is basically a structured way of ensuring this happens.

### Is it really OK to be chatty in an assignment?

A learning journal is a place where your personality should shine through. If you are a person who generally likes to be formal then your learning journal should be formal but if you are more of a chatty, informal person then feel free to write in a way that suits you. It would be unwise to become flippant but a relaxed style is fine in this piece of coursework. Do please remember however that other forms of assessment should be presented in a suitably academic style.

### Are learning journals assessed?

Your learning journal will be read when you hand it in and it will be commented upon. It is a compulsory part of your learning. However, it is not given a grade and does not form part of your final mark.

### Any questions?

If you have any further questions, feel free to contact the OBI offices on [0845 225 0885](tel:08452250885) or [admin@openbible-institute.org](mailto:admin@openbible-institute.org) ▶

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### ◀ So what will the journal look like in practice?

You can be quite creative if you want to be but your learning journal might end up looking something like this:

Date	Time	Task	Notes
18th Sept	7-9pm	Read unit 1 of Romans module and made notes	Here is my summary of unit 1:  I've never spotted the link between Romans and Habakkuk before – very excited, must read commentary to find out more
20th Sept	10-10.20pm	Read Tyndale commentary on Romans 1:17	Understand the link with Habakkuk much better now.
21st Sept	7-8pm	Worked through unit 1 exercises	Here's my outline of the structure of Romans:  And here are my notes on the review questions:
22nd Sept	6.30am	Read New Bible Dictionary articles on faith, obedience and works	Mental note – must wake up before doing background reading in future, evenings work better for me! Still, articles were useful. Must remember the following points for my assignments:
23rd Sept	8pm	Reflection	Was able to share my understanding of the link between Romans and Habakkuk with my home group this week – they were all as excited as me!

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