

## Handling Special Characters

When text is cut and pasted into the reflection response boxes, it may include unseen coding to render special characters, such as smart (curly as opposed to straight) double or single quotes, em dash (long dash character instead of a double hyphen), ellipsis (three periods inserted as a single character instead of three typed periods), etc.

When the reflection is saved, the browser converts any special characters to strange symbols. With each additional save, the strange symbols are doubled. This is a known problem with internet-based applications and is a result of browsers rendering text from one application (i.e., a Microsoft Word document) to another (i.e., the online reflection form).

If you choose to cut and paste your text for reflection submission, here are some options we suggest to avoid experiencing difficulty with special characters.

1. After pasting text, but before you move out of the reflection box, manually replace all quotations, apostrophes, dashes, etc. Save. After you save, check for strange symbols that may appear in the event you missed replacing a special character. Replace any strange symbols by typing in the appropriate characters.
2. If you are working in Microsoft Word, you can edit your text before cutting and pasting. First, go to **Tools/AutoCorrect Options/AutoFormat As You Type** and deselect all options. Then use the **Find and Replace** feature under **Edit** to replace quotations, apostrophes, dashes, etc. with new quotations, apostrophes, dashes, etc.
3. You can also move your text into an external text editor, such as Notepad or UltraEdit, to replace the unwanted characters before pasting into the reflection response box. Use the text editor's Search and Replace feature to replace all quotations, apostrophes, dashes, etc. with new quotations, apostrophes, dashes, etc.