

**“Academic Skills Report”**

**Serghei Croitor**

**2429079**

**LCLM4001**

**Academic Skills**

**Sam D'Elia.**

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1. Introduction Academic skills are essential for achieving success in higher education and subsequently in professional careers. These competencies enable students to comprehend intricate academic content, articulate ideas effectively, conduct thorough research, manage their time efficiently, and engage in critical thinking regarding various topics. In the absence of robust academic skills, students may struggle to fulfil the requirements of university courses, submit assignments punctually, and fully participate in their educational experiences. This report will reflect on my journey in developing vital academic skills throughout my university education. It will outline particular challenges and achievements I faced, provide a personal evaluation of my learning process, and propose strategies for further enhancement of these crucial skills moving forward.

## **2. Description of Experiences**

Throughout my university experience, I quickly came to understand that academic skills should not be taken lightly. Initially, I faced difficulties in various facets of academic life, especially in academic writing, critical thinking, and time management.

### **Academic Writing**

One of the primary obstacles I encountered was academic writing. Having been accustomed to informal writing styles, transitioning to a formal and structured academic format proved challenging. My early assignments frequently returned with feedback highlighting unclear arguments, poor structure, and inadequate referencing. For instance, in my inaugural essay, although I presented compelling arguments, I neglected to cite my sources correctly, leading to a diminished grade and a caution regarding plagiarism. This incident underscored the importance of academic writing, which

encompasses not only the articulation of ideas but also necessitates clear organization, evidence-based reasoning, and accurate citation.

### **Critical Thinking**

The development of critical thinking was an essential skill I needed to cultivate. During my high school education, the focus was primarily on memorizing facts and regurgitating them during examinations. In contrast, university demanded that I engage in questioning concepts, analyse various perspectives, and derive my own insights. In both seminars and written assignments, it became clear that merely summarizing content was insufficient; I was required to assess sources, recognize biases, and construct arguments grounded in evidence and logical reasoning.

### **Time Management**

Effective time management emerged as a considerable obstacle. Initially, the task of juggling academic responsibilities, part-time employment, and personal commitments felt daunting. Frequently, I postponed assignments until the eleventh hour, leading to hasty submissions and avoidable anxiety. Neglecting minor deadlines, such as weekly readings or seminar preparations, gradually accumulated and hindered my comprehension of the course content.

### **Research Skills**

My research skills were an additional domain in which I possessed minimal experience. Locating trustworthy academic sources proved to be more challenging than I had anticipated. Initially, I depended significantly on Google searches; however, I subsequently recognized the value of utilizing academic databases such as JSTOR and Google Scholar. Grasping the methods for assessing the reliability of sources and incorporating them into my own work was an essential advancement in enhancing my academic performance.

### **3) Analysis and Personal Reflection**

Upon reflecting on my academic journey to date, I recognize considerable development alongside aspects that necessitate continuous enhancement.

Every experience has imparted valuable lessons regarding not only my academic abilities but also my personal habits and mindset.

### **Improvement in Academic Writing**

Upon receiving comprehensive feedback on my initial assignments, I proactively sought to enhance my academic writing skills. I participated in writing workshops provided by the university, where I acquired knowledge on effectively structuring essays, formulating coherent arguments, and accurately applying referencing styles such as APA. Additionally, I began to scrutinize academic articles more thoroughly, focusing on the methodologies employed by professional researchers in constructing and articulating their arguments. A significant adjustment I implemented was the development of detailed essay outlines prior to writing, which facilitated the organization of my thoughts, ensured adherence to the topic, and fostered the creation of more robust and logical arguments. Over time, my writing capabilities improved, and this progress was reflected in my academic grades.

### **Development of Critical Thinking**

The enhancement of my critical thinking abilities was a gradual journey. Initially, I struggled to challenge authoritative sources; however, consistent practice and support from my instructors facilitated my growth. Engaging in classroom discussions proved especially beneficial, as it compelled me to delve deeper into various subjects and substantiate my viewpoints with evidence. Furthermore, I began to implement critical thinking skills beyond the academic environment—analysing news articles, social media content, and everyday dialogues—which progressively fortified my analytical capabilities. Presently, I possess greater confidence in scrutinizing information, identifying biases, and developing my own conclusions grounded in evidence.

### **Progress in Time Management**

Through my experience with time management, I recognized that inadequate planning significantly contributed to my stress levels. To mitigate this issue, I began utilizing planners and digital calendars to decompose assignments into

smaller, more manageable tasks, each with its own specific deadline. For instance, rather than viewing 'Write essay' as a singular, daunting objective, I would establish smaller, actionable goals such as 'Research sources,' 'Draft introduction,' and 'Finalize first draft,' assigning distinct deadlines to each. This approach not only helped me circumvent the frantic rush often associated with impending deadlines but also rendered substantial assignments more approachable. Additionally, I acquired the skill of prioritizing tasks based on their significance and urgency, thereby optimizing my limited time more effectively.

### **Strengthening Research Skills**

Enhancing my research capabilities required acquiring the skills to effectively access and utilize academic resources. Guidance from librarians and online tutorials enabled me to conduct efficient searches using appropriate keywords, assess the reliability of sources, and employ referencing tools for citation organization. I came to understand that robust research not only strengthens writing but also conserves time, as beginning with credible sources minimizes the risk of engaging with unreliable information. Consequently, I now possess greater confidence in collecting evidence to substantiate my arguments and seamlessly incorporating it into my writing.

### **Personal Growth**

The process of cultivating academic skills has concurrently facilitated personal development. I have become increasingly organized, critical, and self-assured in my capabilities. Rather than dreading errors, I now perceive them as valuable opportunities for learning and enhancement. Furthermore, I acknowledge that academic skills are not acquired in a single instance and then disregarded; they necessitate ongoing practice and refinement. Each new assignment, project, or academic challenge presents an opportunity to advance these skills.

### **4) Conclusion**

Academic competencies encompass more than mere technical skills; they serve as vital instruments for effective thinking, learning, and achieving

success both in higher education and in life thereafter. My experiences have taught me that cultivating skills in academic writing, critical analysis, time management, and research requires significant time, dedication, and a readiness to learn from one's errors. Despite encountering numerous obstacles at the outset of my university experience, engaging in reflective practices, seeking assistance, and maintaining consistent practice enabled me to make substantial advancements. Looking ahead, I intend to continue my development by actively pursuing feedback, establishing specific objectives, managing my time efficiently, and employing critical thinking not only in academic endeavours but also in daily situations. Academic skills represent a lifelong commitment; by persistently enhancing and honing these abilities, I am equipping myself for success not only in academia but also in my professional and personal development.