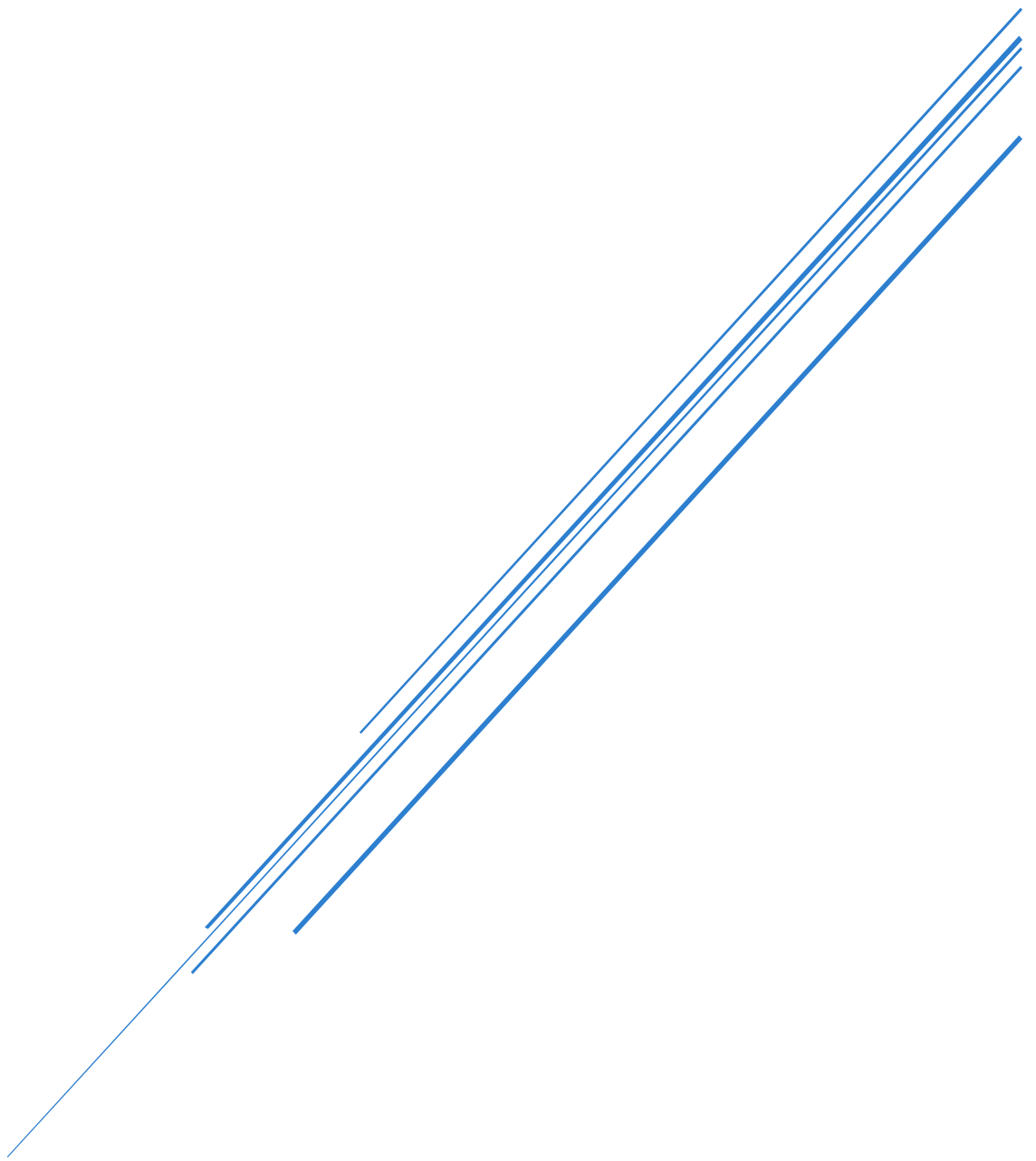


REFLECTIVE REPORT

Module Code and Title: Academic Skills (LCLM4001_LON)



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Introduction

This report takes a close look at the Academic Skills module, breaking it down week by week, and exploring my journey from learning about time management to mastering reflective writing. Each week presented unique challenges and learning experiences that enriched both my intellectual and personal growth. When I faced difficulties with the tasks, I relied on resilience, a trait I believe will benefit me in the long run. I expect that mastering these skills will pay off not only in my second year of university but also in my future career and personal endeavours, helping me navigate various challenges with confidence and competence.

Description of Experiences

Effective academic practices start with solid time management. In Week 1, I learned about time management techniques, mainly through planners and digital tools. I often use a mix of paper and digital planners to stay organized. Despite these tools, I sometimes struggle to adhere to deadlines and can be undisciplined.

During Week 2, we focused on notetaking and understanding assignments. Learning methods like the Cornell note-taking system significantly improved my ability to extract key information. I remember using this method during a class on sustainable development; the two-party system made complex material more digestible. This technique also helped me dissect assignments for clearer writing.

Week 3 was intense, concentrating on research techniques and mastering Harvard referencing. I explored academic databases like Google Scholar, which expanded my ability to find credible sources. Initially, referencing felt overwhelming, but practice made it manageable. I vividly recall struggling with bibliography formatting; I excelled in content but missed small details that mattered. This was a valuable wake-up call.

In Week 4, we focused on academic writing and paragraph construction, helping me refine essay structure. I worked on a comparative analysis assignment that tested my ability to craft coherent paragraphs. While my writing improved, feedback indicated the need for smoother transitions between ideas.

Week 5 introduced paraphrasing, a vital skill for rewriting concepts in my own words. I practiced by summarizing lengthy academic articles into bite-sized notes. This week also featured our first assessment quiz, which highlighted my progress while revealing gaps in my knowledge, particularly in citation accuracy.

Analysis and Personal Reflection

As a non-native English speaker, this module challenged me in three key areas: note-taking, research, and academic writing. I learned structured note-taking instead of scribbling randomly. Research felt overwhelming initially, but I mastered source evaluation and citations. Writing week exposed my clunky transitions, but practice helped me find a clearer academic voice. Though frustrating at times, each small improvement built my confidence. The process taught me that progress matters more than perfection, especially when working in a second language.

Week 2: Note-Taking

At first, the Cornell method felt like trying to fit my messy, fast lecture notes into a strict template. It didn't feel natural. But I stuck with it, and during a media ethics class, something clicked. Breaking the page into sections main ideas, details, and a summary made my notes useful later. Instead of flipping through pages of scribbles, I could find key points fast. Still, when readings were super dense, I'd either write too much or oversimplify. I'm learning that good notes aren't about copying everything just what matters.

Week 3: Research

I thought I knew how to research until I encountered academic databases. The sheer volume of articles and filters was overwhelming at first. The real test came with my first literature review, where I struggled to distinguish primary from secondary

sources. I initially confused an original study with another scholar's analysis, prompting my professor's blunt feedback: "Check your sources twice." Referencing was another hurdle who knew commas and italics mattered so much. By the end, I was meticulously double-checking everything, though citing fewer common sources still makes me nervous.

This experience taught me that academic research demands precision and patience. Mistakes are part of the learning process, but careful attention to detail makes all the difference. Now, I approach sources with more caution—and a lot more respect for proper citation.

Week 4: Writing

I've always been a decent writer, but structuring academic essays was initially a challenge. I learned that strong paragraphs require clear topic sentences and solid evidence to support claims. However, my biggest weakness was transitions—my professor's feedback, "*Your ideas are good, but they don't flow,*" was a wake-up call.

To improve, I practiced using transitional phrases like "*On the other hand...*" and "*This connects to...*" to create smoother connections between ideas.

While this helped, I sometimes overcorrected, making my writing sound overly formal. Striking the right balance between clarity and academic tone remains a work in progress. These weeks have taught me that improvement isn't about perfection but consistent, small steps. My notes are more organized, my research is sharper, and my writing flows better. Yet, I still second-guess myself, especially under tight deadlines. The key lesson? Strong academic skills develop through practice, and stumbling along the way is part of the process.

Conclusion

The Academic Skills module has been a transformative experience, equipping me with essential tools for success in university and beyond. From mastering time management to refining academic writing techniques, each lesson has contributed to my growth as a student. While challenges like citation accuracy and essay transitions

remain, they provide opportunities for improvement. Reflecting on my journey has highlighted the importance of resilience, self-awareness, and continuous learning. As I move forward, I am confident in my ability to apply these skills to new challenges and further enhance my academic and personal development. References

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