

Academic skills report - assignment 2

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Section 1

Presentation skills & personal reflection

The overview of the presentation was designed to introduce personal background, interests and characteristics. The presentation includes key aspects, childhood, hobbies, childhood and personality traits along with general personal information. The aim was to communicate information clearly while engaging an audience through concise content and well structured slides.



Figure 1-childhood slide

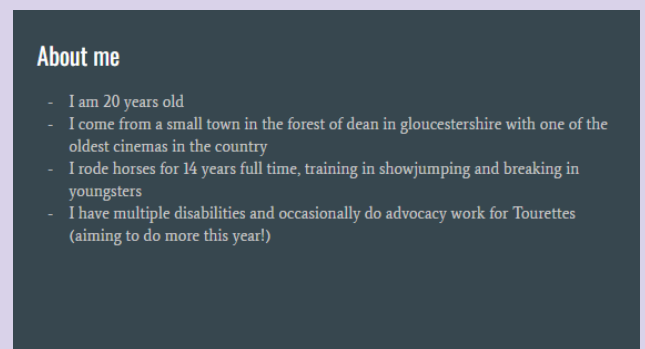


figure 2-about me slide

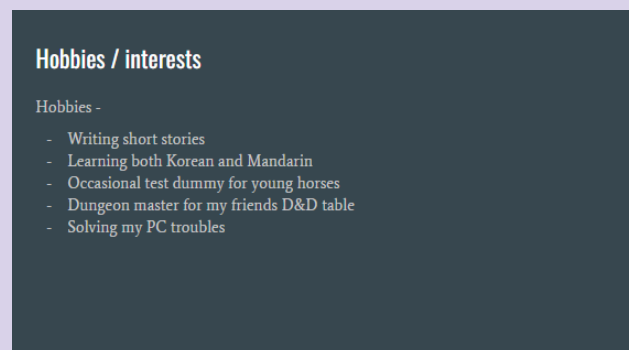


Figure 3 - hobbies & interest slide

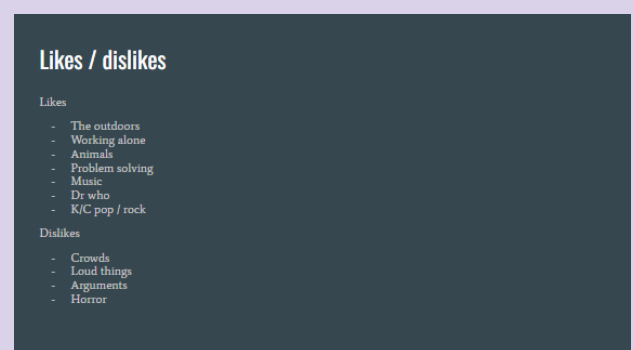


figure 4 - likes / dislikes slide

These slides demonstrate the use of structured essays to read information, bullet points and simple visual designs to convey key details efficiently.

Key learning points

The process of producing and delivering a powerpoint showed several important points into effective communication and techniques used during presentations. The materials from the

lecture content highlights that presentations should be about engaging and communicating effectively with an audience, while also sharing clear and concise informations.

Preparation importance

Preparation was highlighted as a key factor in successful presentations. The main points were that it is essential too [7]

- Plan the content of the presentation carefully and ensure its logical throughout
- Limit the information as to what can be delivered clearly within a timely manner (or within time constraints if given)
- Rehearse before presenting to ensure confidence
- Ensure the slides are a supporting factor alongside the spoken content

A highlighted concept in the class materials was “by failing to plan you are preparing to fail” [1]. this concept reinforces the need of thorough planning.

Design & structure

Slide design can be used to help or enhance audience understanding. Key principles learned in class were.

- Keeping the presentation slides simple, ensuring there's not overcrowding with information
- Using consistent fonts and formatting through the slides.
- Making sure headings are clear and there is a logical progression of topics
- Add visuals where it makes sense and is appropriate to maintain the audience's engagement

Using the guideline of approx one slide a minute helps to maintain the pacing and prevents overloading the audience with information.

Delivery & communication skills

In class it was highlighted that the presentation delivery is just as important as the content of the presentation, the key points were

- Maintaining eye contact with the audience
- Speaking clearly and not too fast or slow.
- Avoiding reading directly from the slides
- Utilising your body language to engage the audience (using hands, facial expressions etc)

There was also a note that a good proportion of communication is non verbal, this emphasised the importance in confidence and physical presence during the delivery of the presentation.

[2]

Engaging the audience

Audience engagement is essential for a successful presentation, the way this can be achieved is by

- Asking questions and encouraging interactions
- Using examples to help illustrate key points
- Keeping presentations concise and relevant
- Structuring content with a clear introduction and conclusion, also making sure the body of the presentation is clear with the topic flow.

Improvement areas

Even though the presentation was effective in communication basic information there are several areas that can be improved on in future.

Visual design

The slides contained clear information, relying heavily on text containing no visuals. Future improvements can include

- Adding images, icons ect to support the information and help engage the audiences interest.
- Improving the layout design to make the slides more visually engaging
- Use contrasting colours to enhance the readability.

Delivery confidence

Delivery confidence should be improved as there was some reliance on the slides and speech was unclear in places. the skills can be developed by

- Increasing practice, setting rehearsal times within the timelimit
- Focus on reducing reliance on notes
- Slowing down speech speed to improve clarity and audience understanding

Audience interaction

The presentation could be improved to increase audience interaction by adding interactive elements like

- Asking or taking questions during the presentation
- Encouraging audience participation
- Using storytelling techniques to make the content included more engaging.

Time management and pacing

The presentation was delivered slightly over the time limit given, improved time management would ensure

- Each slide is given appropriate attention
- The presentation stays within the given time frame
- That no slides are rushed or overlooked.

Summary

In conclusion, creating and delivering the initial powerpoint helped to provide a clear insight into effective presentation techniques. Important skills like preparation, slide design, communication style and audience engagement were developed but further improvements can be made in other key areas such as, design, delivery confidence, audience interaction and presenting time management. Implementing these changes will create a more professional and effective presentation in the future.

Section 2

Self evaluation

Self evaluation is an essential academic skill to enable people to reflect on their own strengths, weaknesses and preferred learning styles. Through a structured reflection it is possible to identify areas for improvement and can help to develop strategies for personal and academic progression.

In the section below self evaluation exercises have been done including a personality test and learning style analysis. The findings were used to identify key strengths and weaknesses followed by the development of action plans based on the SMART objectives,

Self evaluation results - MBTI

A personality assessment was done and the results identified the personality type as INFP, (introverted, intuitive, feeling, perceiving). Research into this personality type was conducted using Truity [\[3\]](#) [\[5\]](#).

INFP individuals are mainly described as

- Thoughtful and reflective
- Creative and imaginative
- Strong in personal values and empathy
- Prefer solo working environments
- Motivated by meanings instead of routine

The weaknesses that are most commonly associated with INFP people is

- Difficulty with time management
- Tendency to avoid structure and strict deadlines
- Overthinking and self doubt
- Challenges in showing ideas confidently within groups

These characteristics align closely with own observed personal behaviours, especially when it comes to organisation and presentation confidence.

Learning style evaluations

Using the information gathered from the reflections, learning experiences and the personality test the preferred learning styles were identified

- Visual learning - information is more easily understood when shown through diagrams, slides and other structured layouts
- Independent learning - working alone helps with focus and creativity
- Practical learning - learning through doing the skill

It was seen that traditional heavy lecture learning environments may be less effective compared to more hands on learning methods

Strengths identified

These strengths were identified during the evaluation. These strengths provide a solid foundation for success, particularly for course work.

- Strong analytical and logical thinking skills
- Creativity especially in writing and storytelling
- Ability to work well alone and independently while staying focused
- Commitment to tasks once engaged
- Problem solving skills , especially in technical areas

Weaknesses identified

There were two main areas identified for improvement

1. Time management and organisation
2. Confidence in presentations and public speaking

These weaknesses were chosen as they have the most direct impact on academic performance and future employability.

Time management and organisation

Objective

Improving time management and organisational skills in order to meet deadlines consistently and reduce last minute work

SMART plan

The SMART technique is used to help set clear goal setting requirement. Setting specific , measurable , attainable, relevant and timely (SMART) goals help to create a clear plan to follow, allowing clarity to stay motivated and making it easier to understand how to structure study time, assignments and activities.[\[4\]](#)

Specific

- A weekly study schedule will be created and followed, using a digital calendar / planning apps or a physical planner

Measurable

- Atleast 90% of assignments will be started atleast one week before the deadline

Achievable

- Study sessions one to two hours per day will be scheduled, making the plan realistic and manageable

Relevant

- Improved time management will reduce stress and improve academic performance overall

Timely

- This plan will be implemented over a six week period

Success criteria

The success of these goals and plan will be measured by

- Increased confidence when speaking
- Reduced reliance on notes and slides when presenting
- Positive feedback from teachers/peers and self evaluation

Summary

Finally the self evaluation process has highlighted strengths and weaknesses. The identification of an INFP personality type provided insight into behaviour, especially in relation to creativity and organisational skills.

Two key weaknesses, time management and presenting confidence were addressed in the SMART action plan created. This plan provides a clear pathway for improvement and includes measurable goals to evaluate success.

Implementing these strategies academic and personal progression can be done in a well done easy to stick to plan.

Section 3

Action plans

Planning is a key skill in academic, professional and personal life that helps in ensuring tasks are completed efficiently and within deadlines. Action plans and other time management tools like GANTT charts are useful to help break down large goals and projects to be broken into manageable stages.

An action plan like a SMART plan identifies the individual tasks required to complete a goal while a GANTT chart gives a visual timeline showing when each task should be completed.

Personal goal planning

The selected personal goal is improving Mandarin language skills.

This goal was chosen as language learning supports personal development, communication skills and cultural understanding along with aligning with personal interests.

Action plan

Step number	Action needed	purpose
1	Research mandarin resources	Look for effective apps, websites and books
2	Create weekly timetable	Establish a consistent habit
3	Learn basic vocab daily	Build a foundation of vocab
4	Practice pronunciation using audio resources	Improve speaking accuracy and clarity
5	Watch beginner level videos in mandarin with english subtitles	Develop listening skills
6	Use language learning apps daily	Reinforce learning
7	Practice writing simple sentences	Improve grammar structure
8	Speak with native speakers online where possible (using hellotalk)	Develops confidence and fluency
9	Do weekly progress reviews	Identify strengths and weaknesses
10	Take beginner level mandarin assessments	Measure improvement

Figure 5 - action plan table 1

GANTT chart

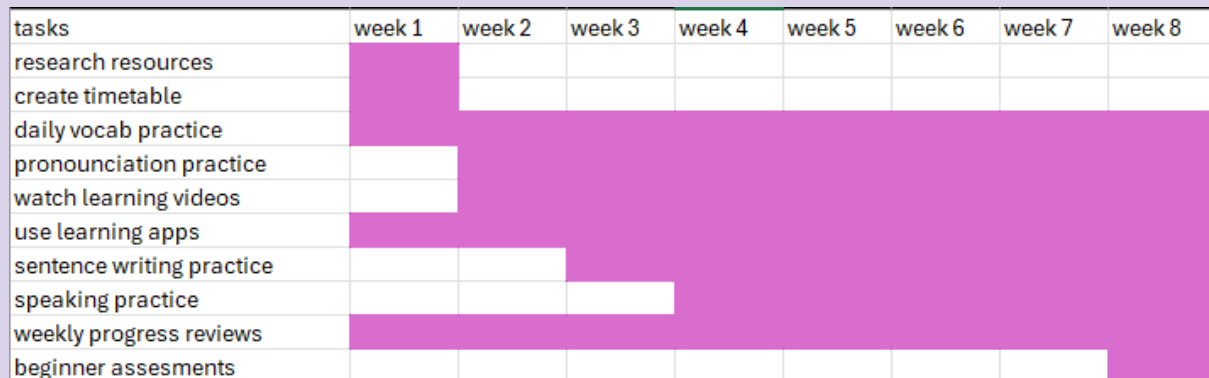


Figure 6 - GANT chart 1

Assignment planning

The selected assignment for planning is Academic skills report 2. This assignment requires research and reflection alongside planning, referencing and document formatting, due to the size of the report careful planning is necessary to ensure each section is completed well.

Step	Action needed	purpose
1	Read assignment brief entirely and carefully	Understand requirements
2	Identify sections in report	Plan structure
3	Gather research materials and sources	support content in report
4	Create template of report and formatting	Ensure professionalism
5	Complete section 1	Present reflection
6	Complete section 2	Self eval and SMART plan
7	Complete section 3	Action plans and gantt charts
8	Complete section 4	Final report section
9	Add references and bibliography	Ensure report meets academic standard
10	Proofread and edit	Improve grammar and

		consistency
11	Submit assignment before deadline	Ensure timely submission

Figure 7 - action plan 2

GANTT chart

tasks	week 1	week 2	week 3	week 4
read assignment brief				
plan report structure				
gather research and findings				
create formatting / template				
complete section 1				
complete section 2				
complete section 3				
complete section 4				
add referencing				
proofreading and editing				
submit assignment				

Figure 8 - GANTT chart 2

Benefits of using GANTT charts and action plans

The use of action plans and GANTT charts have multiple advantages like

- Improved organisation and time management
- Clear identification of task priorities
- Easier tracking of progress
- Reduced chances of mistakes
- Better workload distribution over time

These are used across the board in both academic and professional project management as they are easy to understand and provide structure and clarity to large tasks / goals.

Summary

Overall action plans are effective tools for managing both personal and academic tasks / goals. They help to break down the large tasks into smaller stages where goals are made more achievable and easier to monitor progression.

The personal language learning goal demonstrated how structured planning can support long term self development. While the assignment plan showed how academic tasks can be organised efficiently. Using timelines and scheduling also supports improved time management and productivity.

Productivity tools

Productivity tools are important and extremely useful for productivity, time management in both academic and personal environments. Digital tools like calendars, spreadsheets and file

management systems help to organise and breakdown tasks, manage deadlines and presenting data.

Digital calendar and scheduling

Some tasks that should and most commonly fit onto a digital calender include

- Assignment deadlines
- Study sessions
- Work schedules
- Personal appointments
- Revision planning

Using digital reminders improves time management and helps to maintain consistency when managing alot of responsibility.

Figure 8 - iphone calender screenshot add in here ...

File / data organising

Maintaining an organised file / sorting structure for work is important for productivity and efficient access to information. A structured portfolio / folder system stops files from becoming disorganised and lessens time searching for key documents. Effective organisation also reduces risk of important files getting lost or deleted.

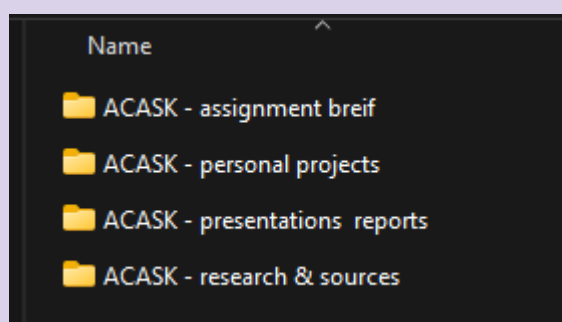


Figure 9 - folder organisation for academic skills class

Spreadsheet skills

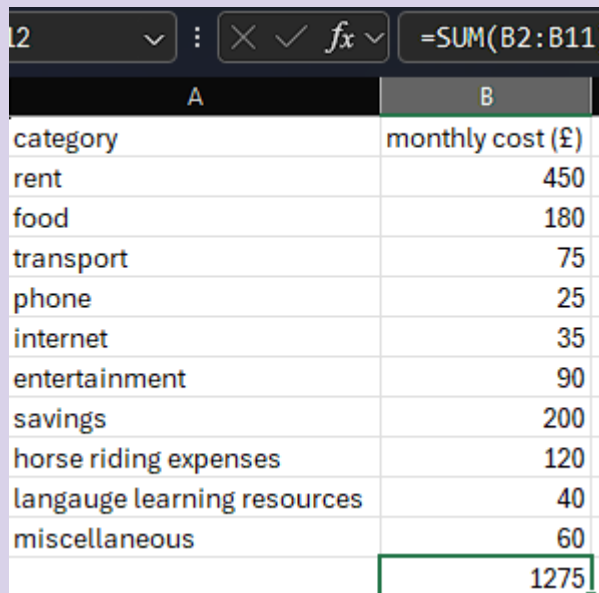
Spreadsheet software (like excel and google sheets) are widley used to organise, calculate and analyse numerical data. Spreadsheets improve and help to ensure accuracy by using formula and automattic calculations

Below is an example monthly budget made to demonstrate spreadsheet skills.

catagory	Monthly cost (£)
rent	450

food	180
transport	75
phone	25
internet	35
entertainment	90
Savings	200
Horse riding expenses	120
Language learning resources	40
Miscellaneous	60

Total monthly expenses formula used was =sum(B2:B11)



The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with two columns: 'category' (A) and 'monthly cost (£)' (B). The data is as follows:

category	monthly cost (£)
rent	450
food	180
transport	75
phone	25
internet	35
entertainment	90
savings	200
horse riding expenses	120
language learning resources	40
miscellaneous	60
	1275

The formula bar at the top shows the formula =SUM(B2:B11) being entered into cell B12.

This formula adds all monthly expenses listed together, improving efficiency and reducing human errors (as long as the formula is correct).

Data presentation

Data visualising tools are useful for presenting information clearly and at a professional level. Graphs and charts make number information easier to understand and interpret.

Bar graphs

Figure 10 - Bar graph example for monthly spending here

Advantages of bar graphs

- Easy comparison of values
- Clear visual representation of differences between values
- Useful and easy for identifying trends and patterns

Pie charts

A pie chart was created to show the percentages distribution of monthly expenses

Figure 11 - add pie chart of monthly budget here

Advantages of pie charts

- Effective for showing proportions of a budget
- Easy visual interpreting
- Useful when comparing percentage distributions

Benefits of productivity tools

Productivity tools can bring several advantages like

- Improved organising and planning
- More efficient time management
- Easier data analysis and calculation
- Professional presentation of info
- Reduced likelihood of missing deadlines / losing files

These tools are extremely useful almost essential for academic study and also highly valuable in professional environments

Summary

In conclusion productivity tools like calendars, spreadsheets and organisational systems can significantly improve efficiency and time management when used well. Spreadsheet software allows numerical data to be calculated accurately using formulas. While graphs and charts provide professional methods of presenting information in a visual way.

Using these tools supports improved academic performance and develops transferable skills that are still highly relevant within employment / project environments.

References

[1] "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail," *Philosiblog*, Mar. 4, 2013. [Online]. Available: <https://philosiblog.com/2013/03/04/by-failing-to-prepare-you-are-preparing-to-fail/>

[2] American Management Association, "Nonverbal communication skills that affect presentations," *AMA*. [Online]. Available: <https://www.amanet.org/articles/nonverbal-communication-skills-that-affect-presentations/>

[3] Truity, "INFP Personality Type." [Online]. Available:

<https://www.truity.com/blog/personality-type/infp>

[4] University of Derby, "SMART goals," *Develop at Derby*. [Online]. Available:

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[5] 16Personalities, "Free personality test." [Online]. Available:

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[6] E. Kazimierska, *Presenting Lecture Slides*, Academic Skills Module Lecture Notes (used throughout)

[7] J. van Emden, L. Becker and A. Becker, *Presentation Skills for Students*. London, U.K.: Bloomsbury Academic, 2025. [Online]. Available:

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