

Academic Skills LCLM4001
Reflective Report on past modules academic skills using Driscoll reflective model
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1. Introduction

throughout the past module, I have learnt some critical academic skills that have helped me significantly during the past few weeks to grow as a student and as a person. I will be using all these skills further down my education. The three skills I will be talking about are: note taking, research skills and academic writing skills as they have been the ones I have improved in most and will be most useful. Using Driscoll's reflective model, in this report I will reflect on these skills by addressing the three what's, what (what did I learn?), so what (what does that matter?) and now what (how I will apply and improve these skills in the future?)

Note taking was a skill I was not confident in when I first started this module and saw how basic of an approach I used to have when writing information down. I used to often struggle to organize my notes effectively and that made it especially challenging when going back over my notes to revise or when I went back to try remember something, however by trying out new methods like Cornell method and mind mapping, I have learnt how to find and organize key information in a simpler way. This skill has helped me be able to go back and review essential parts of my work and helped in my studies.

We also focused on research skills during the module. Initially it was difficult for me to locate credible sources for my work and overall looking for valuable information, during the module I have developed the ability to find high quality reliable material for my whatever I need to research by being shown websites like Google scholar and being provided with the online library. Also, the CRAAP test helped plenty.

Finally my academic writing skills have outstandingly improved by showing me how to structure my work as well as the difference between student academic writing and expert academic writing and when they should be used alongside how to be used.

In this reflection I will explore the development of these skills and how they had and will have an impact on my academic journey and how they will continue to help me in the future.

2. Skill 1: Note taking Skills

What?

Through the module, I focused on improving my note taking skills. At the start of the module, I was really struggling to keep up during the lessons and often found myself only being able to write down half then losing track or not being able to take down enough of the information provided, missing key points in both cases. To solve this, I was introduced to different note taking techniques, such as mind mapping and Cornell notes. This helped me focus on the material provided more effectively. Cornell method divides the page into sections for key points, details, and summaries, while mind mapping helps me visualize connections between concepts. By practicing these techniques, I became better at recording the essential information without overloading myself with unnecessary details and am now able to fully complete my notes.

So what?

Note taking has a significant impact on the ability to remember and process information. By organizing my notes in a more structured manner, I can revise and go back over my work more efficiently and understand what I wrote down on a deeper level in my lessons, as I can recall the relationships between the different topics. Additionally, by summarizing information using the Cornell method, I found it easier to understand and retain knowledge, improving my ability to participate in the discussions and that boosted my overall performance academically.

Now what?

Moving forward, my goal is to refine my note taking skills even further by consistently using the Cornell method and mind mapping whenever possible and always try to improve where I can. I also plan to review my notes regularly and by combining these strategies, I hope to fully perfect my note taking skills and help my academic success in the upcoming modules.

3. Skill 2: Research skills

What?

Another crucial skill I developed during this module was research. Again, at the beginning of the module I was very unsure of how to find credible sources. That led to me often relying on a general internet search, which provided information that was irrelevant or lacked any academic credibility therefore it not being valid. This made it challenging as it left gaps in my understanding of key topics and that heavily impacted on my knowledge. To address this, I would frequently use the library that was provided in the university. We also got introduced to Google scholar which helped a great deal when it came to trying to research, giving credible sources allowing me to refine my searches and find more relevant results.

So what?

The quality and depth of my work has significantly increased due to my research skills upgrading since the start; by learning to locate credible sources, I can now get my work done much faster and with much more valid detail. Developing the research skills I have has given me greater confidence in approaching complex academic tasks, as I now feel more prepared to find, evaluate and integrate information effectively. This prepares me for more advanced research in future studies.

Now what?

Looking ahead, I plan to continue building on the research skills I have developed in this module. I also want to look into the CRAAP test (Currency, Relevance, Authority, Accuracy, Purpose), as we briefly went over it in class and I felt like it was very helpful but I would have to look into it more in my own time and with practice I feel like it could become one of my new main research methods.

4. Skill 3: Academic writing skills

What?

Lastly I worked on improving my Academic writing skills, which I found to be the most difficult yet most rewarding out of the three skills. When I started, I struggled organizing my work in ways that made sense and kept my ideas floating. I would often go blank and experience mental block when writing and feel as though I had extremely poor knowledge of academic words. I also found it challenging to use evidence effectively, either I would include too much and add too many unnecessary things to my work or not enough to support it. To improve I have tried out new techniques, like making a detailed outline to plan my projects better.

So what?

By making a plan ahead of time I feel more confident starting my work, as I know what I am writing because I spent extra time on my introduction to make sure my main points were clear and carried through each paragraph. I also focused on using evidence more carefully. I have noticed how much easier it is to do any work and even my grades have improved, but more importantly, I am much happier when submitting my work.

Now what?

To continue improving, I want to keep building on these skills. I plan to spend even more time outlining my projects and work so I can go into it feeling as prepared as possible, it never hurts being over prepared. I also want to improve how I analyze and incorporate sources, making sure my writing reflects deeper. Another goal is to spend more time revising and editing, focusing on small details like spelling mistakes or grammar to make my work more polished. (Blakeslee, 2004)

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the academic skills I have learnt over the past module are note taking, academic writing and research have significantly contributed to my growth as a student and overall person. By improving my note taking skills I can now organize and recall information more effectively. My academic writing skills have enabled me to produce clearer work, and my research skills have allowed me to find credible sources much easier. Moving forward I will continue to build on these skills by regularly practicing and look for feedback to ensure continuous improvement. These skills will not only help me academically but also prepare me for challenges in the future.

5. References

Blakeslee, S., 2004. The CRAAP Test. *LOEX Quarterly*, [online] 31(3), pp.6-7. Available at: <https://commons.emich.edu/loexquarterly/vol31/iss3/4> [Accessed 12 Nov. 2024].

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