

Reflection on Study Skills

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Reflection on Study Skills

ACDB4010 Study Skills

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Section 1: Presentation

The students were required to present themselves to the class. This section outlines the content of the presentation, key points learnt when producing, and reflections on improvements for future presentations.

1.1 Overview of Self

The presenter had three main areas in the presentation. These were 'Quick "fun" facts', 'Life of Ellen' and a short interactive game of 'Two truths and a lie'.

The presenter started with 'Quick "fun" facts' shown in Figure 1. On this slide, they outlined their favourite things, such as alpacas, Coca Cola and the colour orange. The "Life of Ellen" section followed this, summarising their career history, education and hobbies such as music, Lego and making things. See Figures 2 and 3. The presenter then concluded with the game of Two Truths and a lie centred around their life with the questions shown in Figure 4. The presenter asked fellow students to raise their hands at their suspected lie and then revealed the answer. Most students guessed correctly, with the lie being, 'I have made a set prop for a Netflix film'.

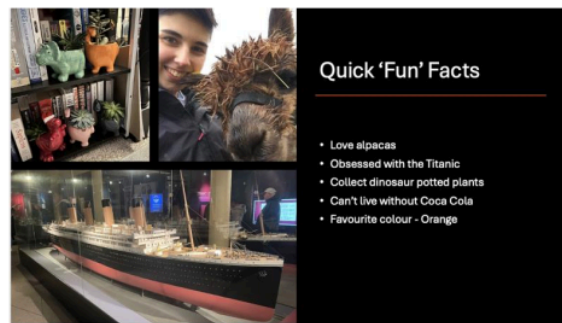


Figure 1 - PowerPoint slide 2 of the 'Ellen James' presentation

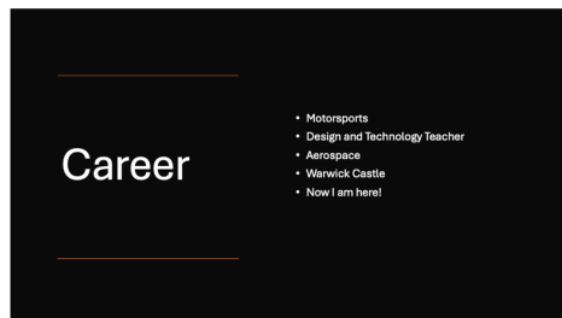


Figure 2 - PowerPoint slide 5 of the 'Ellen James' presentation

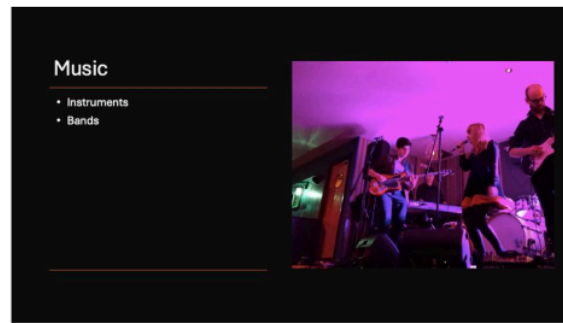


Figure 3 - PowerPoint slide 7 of the 'Ellen James presentation

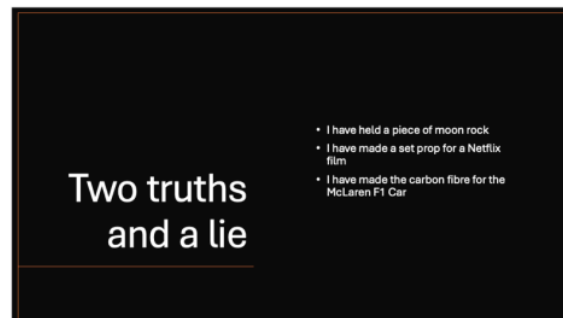


Figure 4 - Powerpoint slide 10 of the 'Ellen James' presentation

1.2 Key Points for Producing and Delivering a Successful Presentation

The College of New Jersey depicts top tips for designing PowerPoint presentations, with number 1 being creating a simple design that contains font and colour consistency [1]. Lesley Pugsley also agrees that the key to delivering an effective presentation is creating a good, simple design with clear fonts that are easily read by the audience [2]. The student, as seen in Figures 1-4, had a black and orange theme on each slide, creating a visual consistency throughout the presentation. Their use of the same font with clear slide titles and bullet points enforces a simple design throughout. The student considered simple slide designs when producing their presentation; this resulted in the audience being able to read and digest each slide. The slides being simple and not overrun with information allowed the student to audibly relay the information, prompting from the slides, whilst the audience could also understand the general topic of the slides from the easy-to-read and concise text.

Research into effective teaching methods showed that giving a detail-orientated verbal lecture was one of the least effective methods for student learning [3]. It concluded that actively involving an audience/student in a lecture significantly increased the learning experience and retention [3]. Activities such as questions, problem-solving and directed listening have proved to increase the memory of lecture subjects compared to passive lecture participants[4]. Having this audience participation also has the advantage of increasing the audience's continual attention to the subject [4]. In the student's presentation, they included a final activity of 'two truths and a lie' (Figure 4). By doing this, the knowledge learnt from the presentation was tested and further aided the audience's retention of the information. By using a form of directed listening, the audience's attention was further aided or

regained, therefore enhancing the learning experience and making it generally more enjoyable. Conclusively, this makes it a more positive presentation experience for the audience.

In Indeed's eight steps to delivering a presentation, it is outlined that practising your delivery is vital to appearing and feeling more confident [5]. To convey an effective presentation that gets the point across, the presenter needs to have focus, not be dependent on reading off slides or notes and not contain long pauses [4]. Rehearsal is vital to help with the familiarity of the slides and information, timings and adaptability needed on the fly [4]. The presentation by the student was subjected to a five-minute time limit, meaning timekeeping was crucial. This was achieved by rehearsing the presentation under these time constraints and making sure the student could adhere to it in a calm, unrushed and coherent manner. The results of this rehearsing meant that these time conditions were met by the student. Rehearsal of the presentation allowed the student to not read off the slides, engage the audience and talk confidently about the subject via slide prompts. This allowed the audience to be engaged in the presentation and have more confidence in the presenter.

1.3 Reflections on Enhancing Future Presentations

To enhance future presentations, more eye contact could have been used to engage the audience. Although the student had a relaxed and confident persona, the lack of eye contact with the audience reduced the presenter's ability to react to audience needs, i.e. observing reduced interest or audience members with questions. Lack of eye contact can impact the way you appear to the audience and their reaction to the presentation [4]. Eye contact can not only help the audience feel engaged but also show that you are too [6]. Therefore, this must be maintained throughout the presentation. The student will endeavour to practice and use aiding techniques outlined by Virtual Speech [7], such as selecting one friendly person in different sections of the audience to connect with and focusing less on the slide information, allowing them to engage more [7].

As part of the presentation activity, students had to give a peer assessment of each other's presentations, outlining areas that performed well and areas needing development. One peer assessment of the student highlighted the frequent use of filler words. See Appendix A. They thought the frequent use of the word 'um' was too repetitive and would improve the overall appearance of confidence if avoided. The student will improve this next time by practising in general conversation to exclude the word, training it out of their vocabulary, and improving the subject and slide knowledge through rehearsal to stop the need for thinking time.

Section 2: Skills Evaluation

In this section, the student will identify skills required for successful learning in a higher education environment. Similarly, the section will highlight certain transferable skills looked for by prospective employers in interviews and why this is important. Following this, the student will outline tests completed to analyse their skills and personality type, discovering strengths and weaknesses with reflection on the results.

2.1 Skills Required in a Higher Education Environment

The ability to cite sources (reference) is an essential skill for higher education. Using citations in your work allows the reader to peer-check academic papers and check the accuracy of the information [8]. If this is not done properly, the sources could be misinterpreted with no means of correction. It also could cause the writer to breach their higher education policies and commit plagiarism. Drawing on material of good quality enables the writer to develop their thinking and support their case [9]. Citing sources is essential to a student's success in higher education as it allows them to become part of credible academic discussions.

Alongside this, having good written academic writing skills is vital to maintaining an academic career. Studies have shown that although the issue is complex and based on a variety of factors, poor essay-writing skills and note-taking have been major players in student withdrawal rates [10]. Assignments at a higher education level are meant to challenge students, and if practised successfully, academic writing will enhance a student's vocabulary and general writing skills [9]. This results in a productive cycle of giving more to the academic community and enhancing the student's career.

Ineffective note-making impacts the student's capacity to recall accurate information, wastes time, and can result in the loss of key material covered [9]. This can subsequently result in inaccurate academic writing due to confused source material or less time available for assignments after deciphering illegible notes. Good note-making skills positively affect attainment in higher education by ensuring key lecture content is retained and concisely accessed.

Smale and Fowlie state that academic skills are not the only reason for success in higher education, personal skills play a big part in getting good grades too [11]. For example, you must have good organisation to properly plan and hand in your assignment on time. Handing in a piece of excellent academic writing amounts to nothing if it is not completed or handed in.

Critical thinking is an excellent personal skill needed in the higher education environment. Critical thinking allows students to make their own judgements and, therefore, challenge other ideas [12]. Critical thinking, such as thinking objectively and critically about academic writing and contributing in classes, is essential to successful studies [12]. Without it, you could be seen as not effectively contributing to the academic community or not providing a strong case to back up a point of view in a report. Higher education lecturers and assessors look for critical analysis in assignments to demonstrate that you are evaluating issues. Therefore, it is imperative that critical thinking is applied to many aspects of the higher education experience to gain success.

2.2 Transferable Skills Employers Look for in Job Candidates

Blades and Gibb state that gaining employability skills could be seen as a first stage to attaining long-term work [13]. Many students enter higher education in the hopes that it will enhance their employability. These skills are not always job-specific and could be personal, social or digital,⁴ for example [14]. Higher education often offers a way of developing these employability skills via their courses due to many of these skills being transferable [15]. For example, group work will allow students to develop leadership, conflict management and time-management skills [15]. These skills can be easily applied in a work setting in a similar situation.

A study conducted by the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) highlighted that most employers aren't expecting young people fresh out of higher education to be job-ready but do expect them to have good employability, literacy and number skills [16]. Employability skills such as problem-solving, time management and teamwork were seen as important as previous qualifications [16]. Therefore, it is fundamental that these skills are learnt before attempting employment to gain continual success.

One transferable skill looked for in a job candidate is digital skills. Digital skills could be anything from using IT effectively – operating a computer, using basic IT systems - to being competent with advanced software such as SAP systems, CAD software or MATLAB. This can be seen in the Engineering Technician job advert in Appendix B. The Engineering Technician job advert Appendix B states a required skill for the applicant is “Proficiency in IT systems, including SAP, for logging maintenance, ordering parts, and analysing diagnostic data.”. Therefore, requiring the applicant to have advanced digital skills and prior knowledge of SAP systems, for example. In the modern working world, IT proficiency is becoming a must. Luckily, it is a transferable skill that can be learnt in the higher education environment, such as when studying for degrees [14].

Having a soft skill such as communication is fundamental in nearly every professional environment. Communication enables employees to collaborate effectively and build relationships. This ensures clarity and productivity within the workplace. Employers value employees who can communicate effectively with colleagues, clients, and stakeholders, ultimately developing mutual understanding and minimising errors. A LinkedIn Talent Blog Trends found that communication is among the most in-demand soft skills by employers [17]. An America Succeeds report on soft skills agrees that 91% of hiring managers consider soft skills crucial for successful hires [18]. Communication is again one of the top sought-after out of the soft skills. Moreover, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) job outlook report 2016 showed that 201 employers ranked communication skills as the most important of candidate skills [19]. Communication skills are crucial as they enhance collaboration, mitigate misunderstandings, and contribute to a productive workplace. Employees with strong communication skills are better at adapting to different work environments, making them highly valued by employers.

Problem-solving skills are essential transferable skills because they allow employees to navigate challenges, identify new ideas, and contribute to the overall efficiency and success of an organisation. Employers often seek individuals who can think critically, analyse complex situations, and think up innovative solutions to maintain workflow and achieve business goals. The World Economic Forum's *Future of Jobs Report 2020* lists complex problem-solving as one of the top skills needed for the future workforce [20]. Problem-solving skills allow employees to tackle challenges effectively, boosting organisational innovation. By having a workforce skilled at finding solutions, employers promote sustainability and adaptability in the workplace.

Teamwork and collaboration are vital in workplaces where projects often require input from various departments and individuals. Employers value employees who can work together in teams to achieve shared goals. Additionally, Monster's *The Future of Work 2021: Global Hiring Outlook* showed that employers rank teamwork as a top skill when hiring [21]. Collaborative working improves productivity, creativity, and morale. Teamwork and collaboration are integral to achieving organisational goals efficiently. Employees who excel in these areas help create a cooperative culture, drive innovation, and enhance overall productivity, making them invaluable assets to their employers.

2.3 Self Evaluation

Fleming and Mills outlined a theory that there are four different learning styles:

Visual

Audial

Reading and Writing

Kinesthetic [22]

More recently, researchers have concluded that there could be more than the four discussed by Fleming and Mills or that a student could be a mixture of the learning styles [23]. This suggests that students think and learn in a variety of ways. Accommodating these different types will impact a student's academic achievements [24]. Studies have shown that using a Visual, Audio or Kinesthetic learning technique improves a student's writing ability and, therefore, helps the student with assignments and exams [25]. Having a disharmony between learning and teaching styles has also been shown to cause students to underperform academically [26].

The student conducted a learning style test on themselves. This test found that the student was a 'multimodal' learner with a preference for kinesthetic and visual learning. See Appendix C. To check the validity of this, the student also conducted another learning style test to check the outcome. In this second test, the outcome was the student is a kinesthetic learner, therefore agreeing with the first learning style test. See Appendix D.

The Myers and Briggs Type Indicator [27] was conducted on high school and university students and developed lots of information on how personality affects learning [28]. Being aware of your personality type can also be used to learn about your various strengths and weaknesses and, therefore, enable you to recognise potential stages of your personal growth [28]. To find their potential strengths and weaknesses according to personality type, the student conducted the Myers and Briggs Type Indicator via a website called 16personalities.com. The full test results can be seen in Appendix E.

The student found out that their personality type is INTJ-A, also called Architect. This personality type has an analytical mind, a strategic mindset and is always planning several steps ahead. They are more introverted, intuitive, and very assertive. It outlines the student's career strengths are independent and analytical thinking and efficiency. In contrast, career weaknesses might be having too high standards, having a potentially harsh and direct communication style, and being too independent. The personal growth analysis repeats these themes. The student is likely to excel at long-term planning and having objective self-analysis whilst struggling with analysis paralysis caused by perfectionism. Some suitable career suggestions are careers in science, technology or business strategy. Architects will be able to utilise their strategic thinking and problem-solving in these fields. However, the preference of working independently could hinder potential career progression.

The High 5 test is a similar psychological personality test which highlights your five top strengths. The test centres around positive psychology, shifting away from weaknesses and negativity to strengths and positive traits. The test results themselves will be in four strength groups: doing, feeling, thinking and motivating. The strengths are sub-groups within those four groups. The student undertook the 120-question test, and the full results are shown in APPENDIX F. The test results outlined that the student was predominately more a doing and thinking person, with their five top strengths being:

Strategist (Thinking)

Thinker (Thinking)

Problem solver (Doing)

Commander (Motivating)

Chameleon (Feeling)

The Chameleon strength indicates that the student is motivated by constantly changing environments. Whereas the commander strength is demonstrative of an individual who enjoys leading and is not afraid of conflict.

The results from the three separate self-evaluation tests are easily comparable, support each other's results and provide no contradiction. The INTJ-A (architect) personality type holds clear parallels to the results from the High 5 Test. Both tests recognise the student's strengths in strategic thinking and problem-solving. Although problem-solving isn't directly indicated by the Myers and Briggs test, it does highlight analytical thinking and efficiency, which are essential for resolving issues. Both tests similarly depict an individual proficient at leadership roles.

The kinesthetic learning style identified by the Fleming and Mills test is similarly agreeable with the independence found in the INTJ-A personality type. A kinesthetic learner will develop skills by completing a task themselves and analysing the results. It does not require a 'teacher' and, therefore, is suitable for an independent person.

Results from the learning style tests (APPENDIX C and D) indicated a preference for visual and kinesthetic learning, which fitted well with the student's learning history. Recent examples showing this, such as learning to lay laminate flooring and wire house electrics, involved first watching visual examples on YouTube and then practically and kinesthetically following the steps. The learning style test, therefore, has allowed the student to interpret previous examples of their learning with a deeper understanding.

The student believes the personality type outlined by the Myers and Briggs Type Indicator is a true representation of their personality. Strengths in analytical and strategic thinking have previously aided the student in the management of semi-professional bands, in group sports such as rugby and in managing home improvement projects. The potential career weaknesses are also appropriate to the student. The student has previously been conscious of needing to adapt their direct communication style to the needs of others.

The Myers and Briggs Type test and the High 5 test agree that the student is a natural leader, being described as a commander and highly assertive. In group projects, the student has often naturally opted for a leadership role. In musical endeavours, the student voluntarily led business aspects of the bands, such as managing gig bookings.

Finally, the 'Chameleon' description of the High 5 test has aided the student in understanding their history of searching for jobs with variety and accumulating a wide variety of hobby types.

From the self-evaluation, the student must be conscious that their independence and perfectionism could hinder group work. The student will, therefore, implement collaboration early and widely in their higher education career by organising group revision sessions. Although they will strive to meet the university's guidance for high grades, they will also ensure that they consult their team members' perceptions of standards in group work. This will ensure that the student's perfectionism does not hinder the efficiency of group tasks.

2.4 Short- and Long-Term Goals

Personal development planning is the act of planning and reviewing an individual's personal development [11]. Learning this in higher education is a key transferable skill for employability due to workplaces often integrating Professional Development plans and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) throughout the employees' work lives [11]. This is often to continually update knowledge and skill competencies in a changing world and stay a competent professional [11]. Also, Having motivation for higher education and knowing what you want to achieve and why is vital for long-term success [11].

Recognising your strengths and weaknesses is key to planning your personal development [11]. Once you have done this and identified areas of development, you can use SMART goals to achieve them. SMART targets are goals that are:

S – pecific

M - easurable

A – chievable

R – elevant

T – imed

[11]

Having loose targets such as 'being less nervous about university' are not SMART and are less likely to be achieved [11]. SMART goals are generally seen to be a valuable tool in the workplace and higher education environments. Therefore, to improve your skills and achieve your goals, using SMART goals is a good tool to use to succeed. Outlined below are four short- and long-term SMART goals based on skills improvement with action plans to support their success.

2.4.1 Short Term SMART Goals with Action Plans

2.4.1.1 Pass all first-year exams and assignments to at least a 2:1 grade

S – Pass all first-year exams and assignments to at least a 2:1 grade.

M – will get results from each assignment and exam.

A – have completed a degree before achieving this grade.

R – Will increase general motivation for degree and increase overall degree performance.

T – Complete by July 2025.

Action Plan:

1. Independent study for at least 3 hours daily to hit the independent study hours quota and focus on challenging subjects.
2. Attend all classes and ask questions if necessary.
3. Track progress by completing past exam papers, e.g.
4. Discuss topics with peers.
5. Use library resources whenever needed.

Outcome: Achieve 60% + in all subject exams and modules by the end of the year.

2.4.1.2 Exercise for at least 3 hours a week to get back to 65kg within a month

S – Exercise for at least 3 hours a week to get back to 65kg within a month.

M – Weight is measurable, and you can track exercise sessions using fitness apps.

A – Have gym and sports club memberships and have the motivation for it.

R – Was this weight a year ago. Promotes important healthy living.

T – Until weight is accomplished. Complete within a month.

Action Plan:

1. Create a weekly workout plan such as - exercise for 1 hour on 3 days. E.g. 1 hour of Cardio on Monday, 1 hour of strength training on Wednesday and 1 hour of Squash on Saturday.
2. Track progress by logging weight weekly and monitoring physical activity on fitness apps.
3. Adopt a balanced and healthy diet to complement the exercise and lose weight easier.
4. Reward for sticking to weekly plan.

Outcome: Reach 65kg by January 2025 by being consistent with exercise and diet.

2.4.2 Long Term SMART Goals

2.4.2.1 Save £10000 during the duration of the 5-year apprentice to buy a house

S – Save £10000 during the duration of the 5-year apprentice to buy a house.

M – Monitor savings through a bank account.

A – Use budgeting spreadsheets to predict savings on current rates, etc and therefore adapt.

R – Will be able to complete a lifelong dream and a sense of accomplishment.

T – Complete by September 2029.

Action Plan:

1. Set monthly saving goals. E.g. Depositing £167 a month into a savings account.
2. Budget monthly income and track expenses.
3. Take on a second income to boost income and potential savings if needed.
4. Be smart and invest savings in a high-interest account.
5. Evaluate savings every 6 months and adapt plans if need be. E.g. save more if income increases.

Outcome: Save £10000 in 5 years to buy a house by consistently saving and budgeting.

2.4.2.2 Graduate with my degree with first-class honours in 5 years

S – Graduate from my degree with a 1st in 5 years.

M – Can monitor grades throughout the year.

A – Attending university and taking time to do independent studying.

R – Need the degree for career progression and satisfying employers.

T – Complete by September 2029.

Action plan:

1. Plan assignments and hand them in ahead of deadlines.
2. Maintain grades of 70% on all coursework and exams.
3. Seek support if needed and regularly meet with tutors for guidance and support.
4. Participate in relevant extra-curricular activities to enhance subject knowledge.
5. Use exam and study techniques to study efficiently and gain grades needed in exams.
6. Track grades after every module, identifying any areas of improvement.

Outcome: Achieve first-class honours in 5 years by hitting targets and gaining subject knowledge.

Section 3: Application

3.1 Looking After Your Data

Backing up data is crucial in protecting your data from potential data loss disasters or potential malicious threats. As a student, this means that you won't lose assignment work or class notes, for example, or just generally lose important information. This would also be a transferable skill, and as a professional, you would not want to lose important project work or, in the defence sector, particularly, save your work to somewhere that could be copied and stolen, resulting in potential job loss from this carelessness. Technology is also not fail-safe. You could have corrupt files or factors which could result in data loss from human error, such as data being lost or stolen, accidental deletion or obtaining viruses on the computer or hard drive in use.

It is, therefore, imperative to back up your data to another source or multiple sources, which are physical and digital. This could be in the form of a paper copy or using physical folders, saved onto a laptop, using an external hard drive/USB stick or using a cloud system.

The 3-2-1 backup rule means you will save at least three copies of data, keeping 2 of these copies stored at separate locations and at least 1 of these off-site, so for example, if the workplace or educational institution (on-site) had a disaster, the information can still be accessed, and all is not lost. This is something the student implements in the storage of their university work. Evidence of this can be seen in the e-portfolio below. The student saves three copies of their university work/e-portfolio, one on their personal computer desktop arranged into appropriate folders, the same portfolio is saved on the cloud

system OneDrive, which is connected to the student's email address, and finally, every piece of the student's written work and notes are saved either as a written hard copy or onto an external hard drive. This means the student has three copies of their data either on a cloud system, computer drive or hard drive/hard copies, which allows the student to access their work and e-portfolio even if the cloud system goes down or a hard drive corrupts, for example.

3.2 Time Management and Organisation

To enhance your learning and therefore achieve in higher education, you must: be able to have good organisation, be able to enhance your productivity and reduce stress levels.

One way of doing this is being able to improve your performance in examinations and therefore being less stressed generally and improving your skills. To do this, you can do these techniques:

Create a healthy positive thinking state where you plan for success - You can evaluate your motivations, learn to relax by doing meditation and deal with anxiety problems by seeking help or talking with trusted people [11].

Organise and prepare before your examinations – You can put exam dates and times into calendars with reminders, double checking the information is correct. Refresh yourself on the examination process so you know what to do and what to expect [11].

Plan a reward for after the exam – Give yourself motivation to get to the finish line and focus on that rather than stressing over the exam.

Stress is a big part of people's lives in general, as well as in academia and professional environments. Letting stress control you will harm your performance and your health. Some ways of controlling stress are:

Breathing techniques and meditation.

Doing more exercise – This will burn off extra adrenaline whilst also releasing endorphins, which help with mental health and a general sense of well-being.

Getting good restful sleep.

Improving your diet to get nutrients and sufficient fuel to help with concentration and improve your physical and mental well-being.

Studying effectively and therefore adopting helpful study techniques is good for increased productivity and organisation. Most people lack a good ability to recall information when needed [11]. One way of doing this is by using mind mapping for notetaking and exam preparation. This is where you have a subject in the centre and expand outwards, creating branches and using keywords for different relevant information [11]. This enables the brain to make connections and connect triggers to keywords associated with that topic [11]. This technique can be seen in Figure 5. One similar technique is 'Brain dumping', which involves writing down as much information you can recall on a page in whatever format you want and, once done, checking in notes for missed information and filling in gaps. You can then repeat this process as many times as you want over a certain time frame until you easily recall all the information needed for the exam [29]. This is a technique the student is planning on taking when revising for upcoming exams to increase productivity.



Figure 5 - Mind Map example [30]

When adopting a new study technique, the student intends to use study techniques that are useful for the type of learner they are (shown in Section 2.3). By doing this, it means that the student will benefit, and it is more likely to be helpful in their productivity and organisation.

From this, the student learnt the different techniques a kinesthetic learner can use to improve their learning and plans to put these into action to enhance their academic success within their degree. Kinesthetic learners learn by doing and enjoy tactile experiences where they are moving and getting hands-on [31]. Therefore, some techniques the student plans on using are:

Having a group session which includes game like studying where the students ask questions and give answers or recite knowledge from memory based on flashcards. This will activate the students' minds and can include shooting paper balls into a bin to add more activity to the studying.

The student plans to record themselves acting out notes, adding physical activity to the task, which means the student can also watch the videos back, further helping the student with their second learning style being visual.

Kinesthetic learners like to move and be active to engage themselves, something simple like moving around or bouncing a tennis ball on the ground whilst you answer questions. These activities will help the student stay focused on the task.

As well as student-specific learning techniques, there are also general study techniques which the student plans on using while studying. The SQ3R technique aims at making the student understand what they are reading whilst they are reading it and enables them to understand it first time [32]. The five steps of the SQ3R technique are:

Survey – Skim reading the text to gain an initial meaning of the text and looking at graphs and images.

Question – Producing questions from the text based on the initial read.

Read – Read the texts with the view of searching for the answers to the questions thought up.

Recite – Rehearse the answers to the questions whilst reading and making notes on the answers to those questions.

Review – Review the text and question answers to check for any outstanding questions on the text and continue to recite the written answers.

The student often struggles to understand the text that they are reading, so conducting this method will allow the student to take time reviewing texts and come out with a better understanding. Resulting in better-written assignments and better underlying knowledge.

One method the student has already started doing in their notes is using a colour-coded method. The student has highlighted important sentences or phrases in relevant textbooks using green for key points, yellow for exam/assignment relevant information and blue for important information. The student has also written notes in different colours based on different topics, sticking to those colours when transferring to flashcard revision notes or using the brain-dumping method explained above.

Finally, a method the student has conducted to help with the organisation throughout their academic journey so far is to keep an up-to-date personal and academic diary. This allows the student to know when everything is due and, subsequently, have good time-keeping skills. In the student's diary, see Figure 6 the student uses again a colour-coded method, making university activities yellow to stand out and be easily seen. The student puts deadlines, exam dates and times and university block dates into their calendar to make it easily accessible and includes reminders, sometimes days before, to ensure a deadline, for example, is met. In their academic calendar, the individual day itinerary is shown, which again helps with organisation and takes away the stress of knowing where to be and when. See Figure 7.

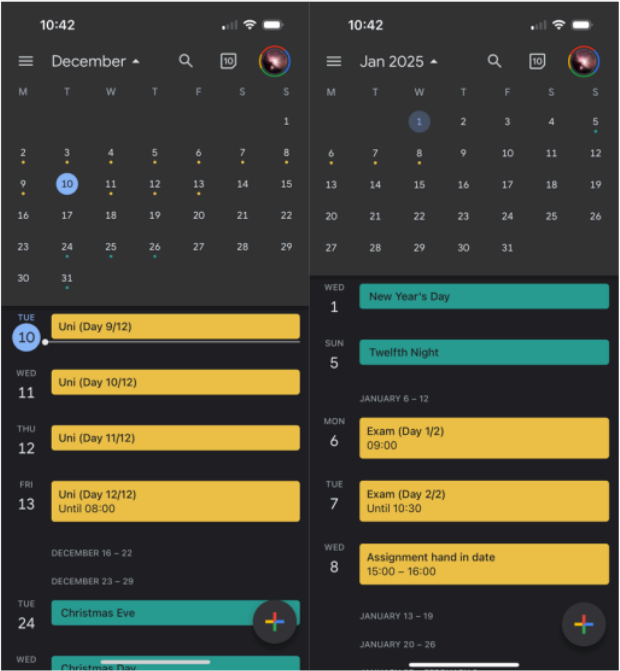


Figure 6 – Students' Diary for December and January 24/25

DECEMBER 2024						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
25 Cancelec Glascoed	26	27	28	29	30	1
2 Study Sk IQ108 (IC)	3 Study Sk IQ307 (IC)	4 Mathemi IQ002 (IC)	5 Mathemi FF002 (FI)	6 Mathemi IQ001 (IC)	7	8
Mathemi IQ108 (IC)	Study Sk IQ110 (IC)	Mathemi IQ101 (IC)	Study Sk FF002 (FI)			
	Mathemi FF004 (FI)					
9 Study Sk IQ108 (IC)	10 Study Sk IQ307 (IC)	11 Mathemi IQ002 (IC)	12 Mathemi FF002 (FI)	13 Mathemi IQ001 (IC)	14	15
Mathemi IQ108 (IC)	Ellen Jar UWTSO, I	Mathemi IQ101 (IC)	Study Sk FF002 (FI)			
	Mathemi FF004 (FI)					
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

Figure 7 - Students' Academic Diary for December 24

3.2.1 E-Portfolio

The student has used folders organised on OneDrive to save the outline of their E-Portfolio named 'OME Engineering Degree'. This is broken down further by prospective years in the degree using a colour-coded method that will be used throughout that module in physical folders, etc. Figure 10 displays different modules within the 'Year 1' folder, also using a colour-coded method. Within the 'Study Skills' module folder, the student has shown in Figure 11 the files and further folders needed for that module. In Figures 12-15, you can see a similar layout and ordering system saved as a backup on the students' local computer desktop, also keeping to the colour-coded system. The student chose this system due to the clarity of the folders and using the colour-coded method discussed later in this assignment in Section 3.2. This gives recognition to each module, and when taking notes and revising in the future, assigning the same colour as the folder will help with memory recall and can allow for quick access to the correct information needed.

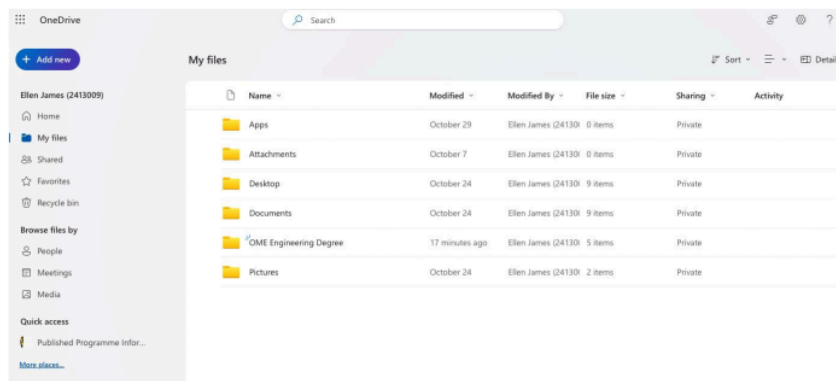


Figure 8 - OneDrive OME folder

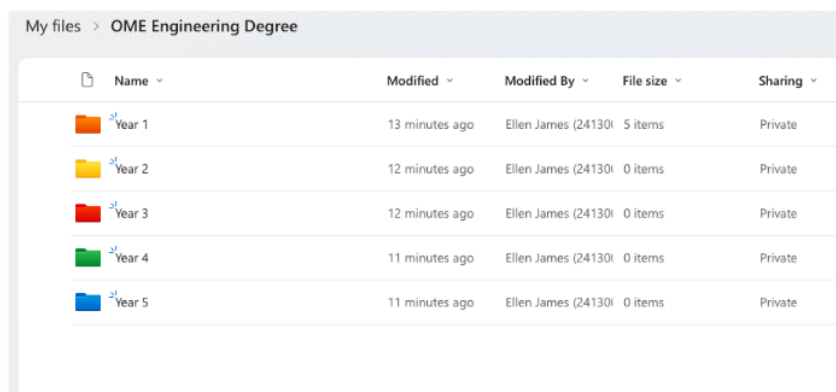


Figure 9 - Year folders within the OME folder on OneDrive

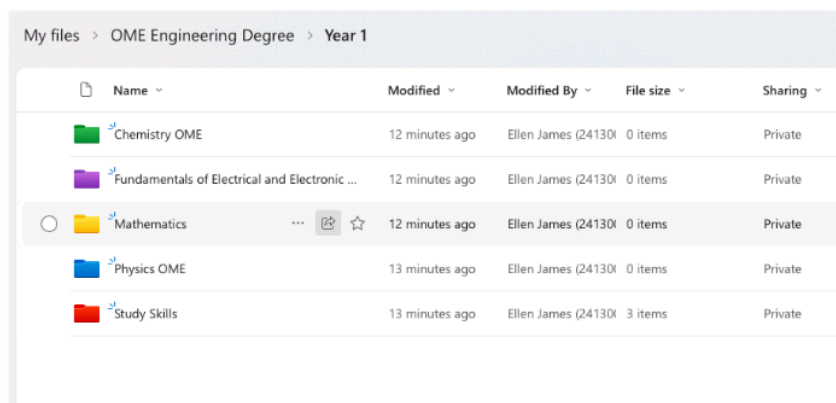


Figure 10 - Module folders within Year 1 folder on OneDrive

My files > OME Engineering Degree > Year 1 > Study Skills

Name	Modified	Modified By	File size	Sharing
Appendices	About a minute...	Ellen James (24130)	0 items	Private
Assignment Figures	About a minute...	Ellen James (24130)	0 items	Private
Study Skills Assignment Brief.docx	5 days ago	Ellen James (24130)	69.1 KB	Private

Figure 11 - Folders and files within Study Skills folder on OneDrive

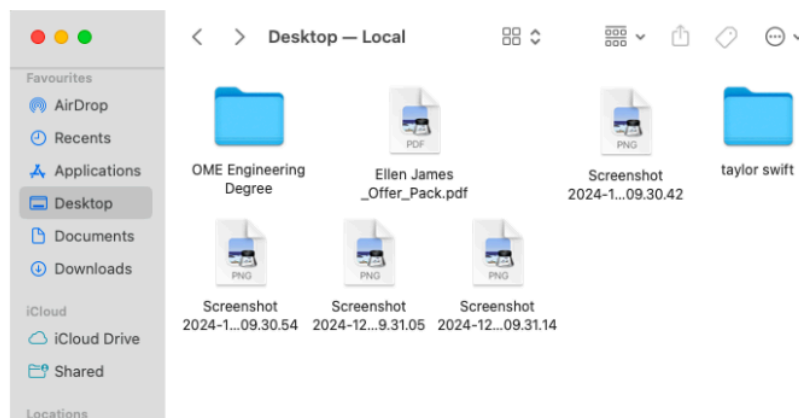


Figure 12 - Duplicate OME folder on local student desktop

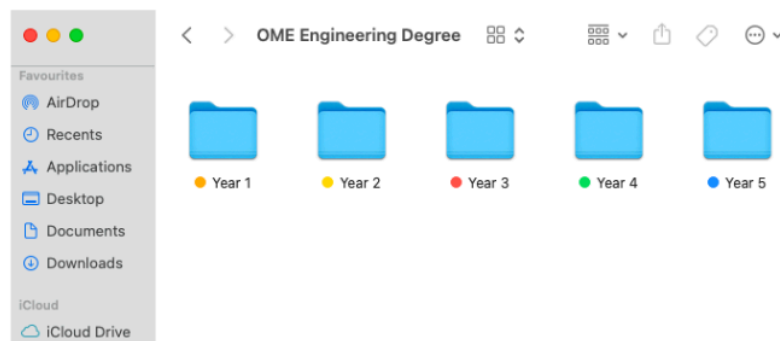


Figure 13 - Duplicate Year folders on local student desktop

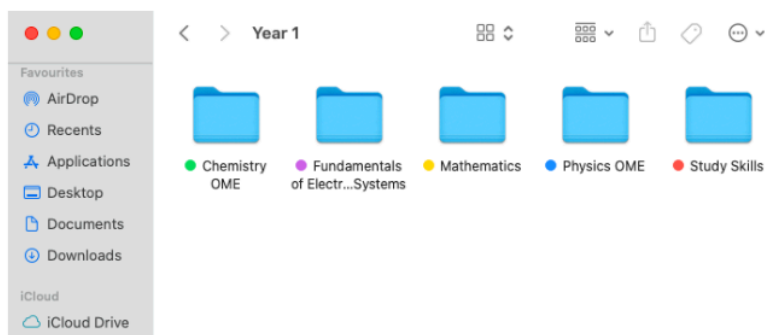


Figure 14 - Duplicate module folders within Year 1 on local student desktop

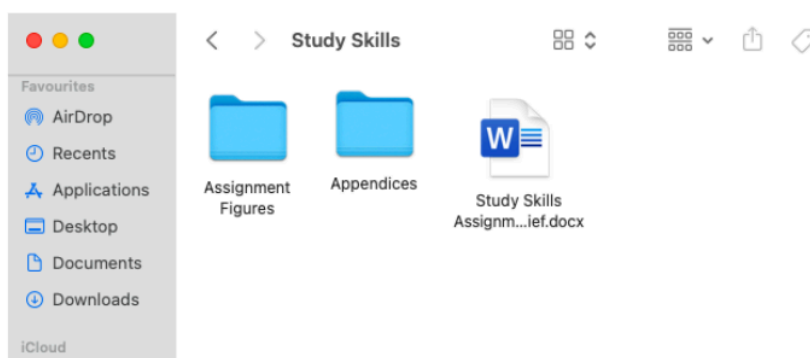


Figure 15 - Duplicate folders and files within Study Skills folder on local student desktop

3.3 Independent Study: Literature Review – ‘Torpex – A powerful underwater explosive’

During World War two (WWII), the explosive RDX and its product Composition B ramped up in production, resulting in Holston Ordnance Works, a manufacturer of RDX and Composition B in the USA, becoming the largest manufacturer in the world. The USA supplied 90% of their RDX to the US Armed Forces, and the other 10% went to the British forces. It is noted that part of the Allies’ victory was owed to the RDX-filled depth charges and blockbuster bombs destroying Nazi U-boats. In 1942 the RAF Coastal Command attributed their success in the Battle of the Atlantic to destroying the Nazi U-boats with Torpex-filled airborne depth charges. Introduced into service by them the same year. Torpex is short for TORpedo Explosive, which comprises 42% RDX, 40% TNT and 18% Aluminium powder. Torpex has been dubbed the most effective underwater explosive during WWII, with the US Navy also using it to great effect in torpedo warheads, and the Hedgehog antisubmarine device also contained torpex in some of their projectiles. [33]

Torpex was developed by Prime Minister Winston Churchill’s scientific advisor due to the growing demand for TNT and its consequential depleting stock. After the Battle of the Atlantic displayed that Torpex was very efficient and a more powerful explosive compared to RDX and Composition B, Torpex

was put into production, filling hundreds of 12,000pound, 5000pound and 4000pound bombs. Despite its initial application being an underwater bomb, the potentiality of it being an air-delivered bomb also became a topic of successful experiments and then applications, despite limited availability due to different factors such as supply challenges of RDX. Torpex-filled bombs ended up being used to great success in WWII due to their selective use in critical operations and their enhanced efficiency. Some such uses include: Destroying strategic targets such as the German super-battleship Tirpitz, the sistership to the Bismarck in 1944, Torpex-filled bombs were used in the damn buster raids in Ruhr Valley in 1943 and destroying key German infrastructure such as U-boat pens and railway bridges using the Torpex filled 22,000 pound “Grand Slam” bomb. [33]

During the Battle of the Atlantic, the threat of the German U-boats on the Atlantic coast of France to the Allied supply lines became ever-concerning. This was initially met with the ‘virtually useless’ 100-pound antisubmarine bomb dubbed so after HMS Snapper accidentally took on friendly fire to the conning tower and luckily only suffered four lightbulbs breaking. This resulted in a new Torpex depth charge, which significantly increased the effectiveness of the depth charges due to its explosive power and subsequently increased their U-boat sinking rate. Torpex managed to almost single-handedly reduce the threat of German U-boats by these Torpex-loaded antisubmarine depth charges and equipping aircraft with Torpex aerial depth charges. [34]

Despite Torpex being an excellent replacement for RDX and producing a TNT equivalent to 1650 pounds from 1100 pounds of Torpex, it did have its issues. Accidental detonation from bullets and shrapnel often occurred, and it was quite brittle. Torpex was later discovered to be the cause of a few unexplained explosions in Naval Depots and storage facilities in America, causing building destruction and many people injured or dead[33]. At first, it was believed that the accidents were due to poor munition handling, but after further investigation, it was found the torpedoes were emitting hydrogen gas, therefore only requiring a spark to cause detonation. After these investigations, a solution for hydrogen production was found by researchers at the Bureau of Ordnance by mixing beeswax into the explosive. Subsequently, this caused a beeswax shortage in America, and a substitute made from petroleum was then produced. The beeswax/petroleum reduced shock sensitivity, but adding calcium carbonate was also shown to minimise gas production. Further speculation with no concrete proof from researchers surfaced about missing in action US submarines having suffered hydrogen explosions from Torpex rather than from presumed enemy fire.

By the 1950s, Torpex was phased out in favour of newer explosives like H6 and PBX due to improved safety, stability, and effectiveness in modern munitions. Today, it is considered obsolete, although legacy munitions containing Torpex may still exist.

Section 4: Conclusion and Evaluation

Completing the study skills module and producing the current assignment has highlighted the benefit of self-understanding before approaching study. In Section 2.3, the personality and learning style tests indicated that the student would most benefit from visual and kinesthetic learning. This understanding has allowed the student to subsequently plan revision techniques which will be most suitable for them. In section 3.2, the student planned study techniques, including gamifying study, incorporating movement and creating visual aids. These techniques are all in keeping with how to aid retention and engagement in a kinesthetic and visual learner. This module enabled the student to develop a deeper understanding of self and practically implement this in the study techniques used.

Similarly, the self-evaluation included in the module allowed the student to build expectations of where they would naturally excel and where they may need to adapt to the academic environment. In

personality tests, the student was identified as being naturally independent and a leader. They can, therefore, expect to excel in independent study and leading peers in group work. On the other hand, the student is now aware of their tendency to be overly direct and a perfectionist. These traits could potentially cause conflict in group work. This prior awareness will allow the student to adapt their communication style to be more tactful when collaborating and ensure they aim for realistic standards in group work.

The module and writing of this assignment have demonstrated the importance of self-reflection following tasks. Section 1.3 required the student to reflect on the performance of their presentation. This self-reflection module showed how weaknesses can be broken down into achievable development plans. The student identified increasing eye contact as a goal for future presentations and identified a technique for selecting friendly audience members in different areas. On reflection, the student has, therefore, turned an issue into a manageable plan for improvement. The student has not always prioritised reflection after tasks in previous employment due to the pace of working life. After seeing the benefit of reflection, the student will set aside time for this in future academic and employment-related tasks.

The practice given to creating SMART goals in the module will ensure more effective goal setting in future tasks. The student found producing specific, measurable and timed goals to be highly effective. For instance, the student's exercise goal in 2.4.1.2 was highly specific and measurable due to its choice of three hours of exercise a week and tracking via fitness apps. The student enjoys the clarity of knowing when the weekly task has been completed and has been able to easily track their progress. This has resulted in higher motivation and adherence to the task. The positive experience of this habit in the module will ensure the student applies the principle widely.

The study skills module has shown the importance of practically applying content from lectures. For instance, the 3-2-1 backup rule and the structure of a literature review were both areas covered in lecture content during the study skills module. Although discussing these topics in the lecture was of benefit to the student, the practical implementation required in sections 3.1 and 3.3. has solidified learning for the student.

Finally, the student acknowledges that many of the skills identified for success in higher education and employment are necessary for both environments. This includes problem-solving, communication, digital skills, critical thinking, meeting deadlines and writing skills, outlined in sections 2.1 and 2.2. As a result, the student feels that the current structure of their apprenticeship of working and studying has a mutually beneficial relationship where learning in one can positively feed the other.

As a learner who has always had difficulty working out meaning from complex texts, the student found the five steps of the SQ3R technique compelling due to its focus on breaking down the reading task into steps. In future studies, the student will prioritise researching and practising a range of reading techniques to find the most suitable for them.

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Section 5: Appendices

Appendix A

Peer Assessment for the Students Presentation

Student Self Evaluation Form			
Student name:	Ellen James	Student P number:	
Programme:	OME	Year of programme	1
Assignment Title:	Study Skills		

This section repeats in brief the common assessment criteria detailed on previous pages. The extent to which these are demonstrated by you determines your mark. Using these criteria, tick the box that best indicates the level of achievement you feel you have achieved with regard to each of them.

Common Assessment Criteria Applied	Level of Achievement						
	REFER		3 rd	2:2	2:1	1 st	1 st
	OUTRIGHT FAIL	UNSATISFACTORY	SATISFACTORY	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT	EXCEPTIONAL
1. Research-informed Literature	0-29% ☐	30-39% ☐	40-49% ☐	50-59% ☐	60-69% ☐	70-79% ☒	80-100% ☐
2. Knowledge and Understanding of Subject	0-29% ☐	30-39% ☐	40-49% ☐	50-59% ☐	60-69% ☐	70-79% ☒	80-100% ☐
3. Analysis	0-29% ☐	30-39% ☐	40-49% ☐	50-59% ☐	60-69% ☐	70-79% ☒	80-100% ☐
4. Practical Application and Deployment	0-29% ☐	30-39% ☐	40-49% ☐	50-59% ☐	60-69% ☐	70-79% ☐	80-100% ☒
5. Skills for Professional Practice	0-29% ☐	30-39% ☐	40-49% ☐	50-59% ☐	60-69% ☐	70-79% ☒	80-100% ☐

PLEASE COMMENT ON AREAS IN WHICH YOU FEEL THAT YOU HAVE PERFORMED WELL	PLEASE COMMENT ON AREAS YOU FEEL THAT YOU NEED TO DEVELOP
Very vibrant, fun to listen to, and informative. Really grabbed <u>myself</u> as the audience to want to discuss more on the topics presented. Great interaction with the audience.	Use of the word 'Umm' as a thinking word (Don't worry everyone does this, just something to improve on).

Student's Name	James Burton	Date	02/12/2024
Student's Signature			

Appendix B

Engineering Technician Job Advert

 Metro Assoc. 5.0★

Engineering Technician 3286870

Plymouth, England



 Easy Apply

Job ID: 3286870

Our **Award-Winning Client**, a leader in the medical technology sector, operates nationally and has received numerous accolades for its innovative contributions to healthcare. They are seeking an Engineering Technician to provide on-shift engineering support at their high-performance production site. This role ensures minimal downtime and maximum output by addressing complex equipment breakdowns and contributing to continuous improvement initiatives.

This is an **onsite day-shift position** (11 AM - 11 PM, 3 days on and 3 days off) with a **32% shift premium** added to the competitive salary package.

Role Responsibilities:

- Provide hands-on technical support to resolve complex machinery issues, ensuring seamless production operations.
- Act as a process and equipment expert, offering guidance and knowledge sharing to enhance team skills.
- Mentor and train Production Technicians, helping them improve fault diagnosis and technology application.
- Utilize tools like PCs, HMI screens, and MES for equipment diagnostics and effective fault management.
- Drive cost reduction, productivity, quality, and safety improvements by identifying enhancements to existing equipment.
- Support installation and start-up activities for new equipment in collaboration with Project and Process Teams.
- Lead small-scale process improvement projects, coordinating with teams such as Toolroom, Quality, and Validation.

Required Skills and Certifications:

- **Level 3 qualification in Mechanical or Electrical Engineering, or equivalent experience.**
- Proven experience in **high-volume assembly and manufacturing environments.**
- Proficiency in IT systems, including SAP, for logging maintenance, ordering parts, and analyzing diagnostic data.
- Strong problem-solving skills with expertise in fault-finding and technical troubleshooting.
- Background in **hydraulics, pneumatics, robotics, electrical, and servo systems** is highly desirable.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to mentor and patiently assist less experienced colleagues.

Benefits:

- Matched **Pension Scheme** with contributions up to 10%.
- **Private Medical Insurance** for comprehensive health coverage.
- Critical illness and **life assurance plans.**
- Access to an **Employee Assistance Program** for mental, physical, and financial well-being.
- Share save scheme with up to £150/month matched contributions.
- Flexible benefits such as a **Cycle-to-Work scheme.**
- Subsidized meals through the company canteen.
- Free on-site parking for employees.
- Reward and recognition program linked to Health & Safety and Continuous Improvement achievements.
- 24 days of annual leave, increasing to 25 days after five years of service.

Candidate Profile:

- **Experience Level:** 2-5 years in manufacturing or engineering roles.
- **Seniority Level:** Associate.
- **Education Requirement:** Vocational or equivalent Level 3 qualification.
- **Management Experience:** Not required.
- **Willingness to Travel:** None.

Job ID: 3286870

Note: Resumes will be maintained in strict confidentiality until such time as we engage in a detailed discussion regarding a specific opportunity, and both parties mutually agree to proceed. We consistently receive new opportunities every day. Should your professional background closely align with the specific requirements of our client, we will promptly reach out to you to initiate further exploration of potential opportunities.

Job Type: Full-time

Pay: Up to £36,000.00 per year

Benefits:

- Life Insurance

Schedule:

- Day shift

Application question(s):

- What locations in the USA or states are you interested in?
- 3286870 What type of compensation is desired for a new position?

Experience:

- Recent high-volume assembly and manufacturing: 5 years [required]
- Recent IT systems, including SAP: 1 year [required]
- Recent Fault-finding and technical troubleshooting: 1 year [required]
- Recent hydraulics, pneumatics, robotics: 1 year [preferred]
- Recent electrical, and servo systems: 1 year [preferred]
- Engineering Technician recently: 5 years [required]

Licence/Certification:

- Level 3 qualification, Mechanical or Electrical Engineering [required]

Appendix C

Fleming and Mills Type Quiz Displaying the Student's Learner Type

Your Results

Your learning preference: Multimodal (VARK)

People with your preference like:
different formats, graphs, diagrams, maps,
interesting layouts, space, listening,
discussing, talking, questioning, notes,
handouts, print, text, practical exercises,
experiences, examples, case studies, trial
and error, things that are *real*, ...

Your scores were:

- Visual 8
- Aural 5
- Read/Write 4
- Kinesthetic 11

Use the following helpsheets for strategies
that apply to your VARK preference:

Appendix D

Second Learner Type Test Results Conducted by Student



YOU ARE A KINESTHETIC LEARNER

Kinesthetic or tactile learners retain information better through touch or physical movement. Kinesthetic learners prefer to be more “hands-on” when it comes to studying or remembering information. They are more likely to remember something that they have done (for example, something they have created), rather than something they just saw or heard.

What kinesthetic learners can do to learn better:

- Use case studies and real-life applications to help get a better understanding of concepts.
 - Create flashcards and arrange them in groups to show relationships between ideas.
 - Complete previous exam papers and green light tests on the AAT Lifelong Learning Portal.
-

Appendix E

Myers and Briggs Indicator Type Test Results Conducted on 16personalities.com by the Student

Your personality type is:

Architect

INTJ-A



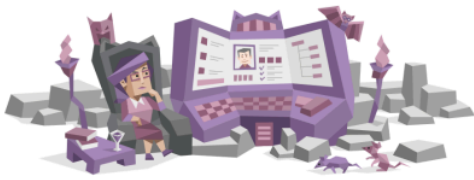
1. Personality Traits

Thought constitutes the greatness of man. Man is a reed, the feeblest thing in nature, but he is a thinking reed.

Blaise Pascal

As an INTJ (Architect), you possess a rare combination of vision and pragmatism. Your analytical mind constantly seeks to understand the world around you, driven by an insatiable curiosity and a desire to improve systems and ideas. You approach life with a strategic mindset, always looking several steps ahead and planning for various contingencies.

Your independent nature is one of your defining characteristics. You value your autonomy and often prefer to work alone, trusting your own judgment and abilities above all else. This self-reliance, combined with your intellectual prowess, allows you to tackle complex problems with confidence and innovation.



1 Personality Traits

79% **Introverted**

Extroverted Introverted

61% **Intuitive**

Intuitive Observant

68% **Thinking**

Thinking Feeling

56% **Judging**

Judging Prospecting

88% **Assertive**

Assertive Turbulent

Tactics

56% Judging



You're likely organized, decisive, and thorough, valuing structure and planning over spontaneity.

Would you like an email copy of your results? [Email results](#)

While your rational approach to life serves you well in many situations, it can sometimes create challenges in your personal relationships. You may find emotional expressions and social niceties puzzling or unnecessary, preferring direct communication and logical discussions. This tendency can make you appear aloof or detached to others, even when you care deeply.

Your pursuit of knowledge and improvement is relentless. You have high standards for yourself and others, always striving for efficiency and effectiveness in all areas of life. This drive for perfection can be both a strength and a weakness, pushing you to achieve great things but also potentially leading to stress and burnout if not managed carefully.

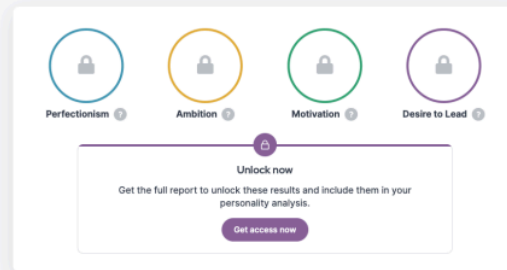
2 Your Career Path



In your professional life, you thrive on intellectual challenges and the opportunity to implement your innovative ideas. You excel in roles that allow you to utilize your strategic thinking and problem-solving skills, often gravitating towards fields like science, technology, or business strategy. Your ability to see the big picture while also attending to crucial details makes you a valuable asset in any organization.

However, your preference for working independently and your dislike for office politics can sometimes hinder your career progression. Learning to navigate social dynamics and communicate your ideas effectively to others is crucial for your professional growth. Your unique insights are most valuable when they can be implemented, which often requires collaboration and buy-in from others.

Influential Traits



Your Strengths

- Strategic Vision**
You excel at seeing the big picture and planning for the long-term.
- Analytical Thinking**
Your ability to dissect complex problems sets you apart in any field.
- Independent Thinker**
You thrive when given autonomy to develop and implement your ideas.
- Efficiency**
Your drive for competence leads to streamlined processes and innovative solutions.

Your Weaknesses

- High Standards**
Your high standards can sometimes slow progress and frustrate colleagues.
- Aversion to Routine**
You may struggle with mundane tasks, potentially overlooking important details.
- Direct Communication Style**
Your direct style might be perceived as harsh, especially by more sensitive colleagues.
- Too Independent**
Your preference for working alone can hinder collaboration and team dynamics.

3 Your Personal Growth



Your path to personal growth is paved with intellectual pursuits and self-reflection. You're constantly seeking to expand your knowledge and improve your skills, driven by an internal desire for mastery. This quest for self-improvement often leads you to explore diverse subjects and challenge your own assumptions, fostering a rich inner life.

Yet, true personal growth for you also involves developing your emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills. While it may feel uncomfortable at first, learning to recognize and express your emotions, as well as understanding those of others, can greatly enhance your relationships and overall life satisfaction. Balancing your logical approach with emotional awareness is key to becoming a well-rounded individual.

Influential Traits

Resilience 7

Confidence 7

Grit 7

Sense of Control 7

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Your Strengths

- Seeking Growth**
Your constant quest for knowledge fuels personal growth.
- Objective Self-Analysis**
You excel at objectively analyzing your own thoughts and behaviors.
- Long-Term Planning**
Your ability to set and pursue ambitious goals propels your personal development.
- Intellectual Curiosity**
Your thirst for knowledge keeps you engaged and growing throughout life.

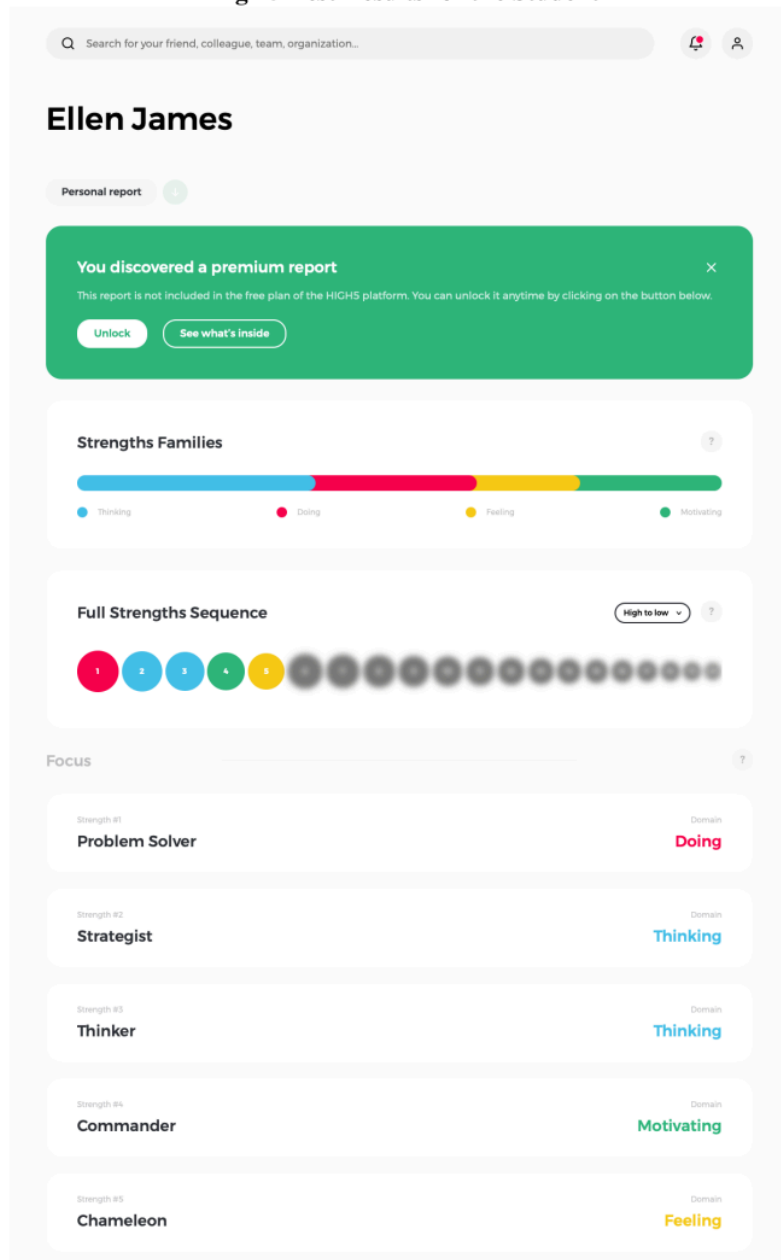
Your Weaknesses

- Overlooking Emotional Intelligence**
You may overlook the importance of emotional intelligence in your growth journey.
- Analysis Paralysis**
Your tendency to analyze can sometimes prevent you from taking action.
- Perfectionism**
Your high standards might lead to unnecessary stress and self-criticism.
- Need for Control**
Your need for certainty can limit your ability to adapt and grow in uncertain situations.

Personalized Recommendations

Appendix F

High 5 Test Results for the Student



Reflection on Study Skills

GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

GENERAL COMMENTS

96/100

Generic Assessment Criteria	Marks available	Marks awarded
1. Engagement with Literature Skills		
Torpex literature review is detailed and informative. Clear evidence of reading beyond what is provided on moodle. IEEE referencing is used correctly and consistently throughout. Properly formatted reference list provided. Excellent number of references for this level of work, well done. A good balance between peer reviewed sources and contemporary and relevant non peer reviewed sources.	20	20
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills		
Important presentation skills identified. Key skills for education and employment success identified and described in detail. Good understanding of SMART goals and backing up data. Literature review	20	20

is clear and concise showing a good understanding of the source material.		
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills		
Presentation performance has been critically evaluated with future improvements suggested based on peer review feedback. Clear consideration shown when selecting the key skills for education and employment success. Detailed analysis of personality and learning style test results provided. Summaries are very detailed and suitably reflective.	20	20
4. Practical Application Skills		
Powerpoint presentation uses a simple but effective design with good visual aids throughout. Good volume and pace, open body language, excellent interaction with audience. Well timed. Detailed strategy for implementing the 3-2-1 rule of backing up data. Practical suggestions made for improving time management and organisation. Good evidence of starting an e-Portfolio provided. No evidence of PDP.	20	18
5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice		
Report has a clear layout and excellent flow. Table of content with numbered sections allows for easy navigation of the document. All figures are numbered, captioned and included in a		18

list of figures, good. Appendices have been included as individual entries and titled in the table of content to allow for easy navigation. Good use of the third person and scientific writing style adopted. Some minor formatting errors, mostly in the appendices, where the heading and body are on different pages. This happens less obviously in the main body of the text as well. Consider using section/page breaks in future to avoid this.	20	
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