

Student Name: Jaures Mahi

Student ID: 241747

Module Code: LCLM4001

Module: Academic Skills

Lecturer: Thamas

Reflective Study Report on Digital and Academic Skills

1. Reflecting Using Gibbs' Cycle (1988)

a) Description

Throughout my academic journey, I realized the increasing significance of digital skills for achieving academic success. This included conducting research through online databases, digital notetaking, and utilizing various software tools for assignments and presentations. Initially, I faced challenges in managing multiple resources and keeping track of information effectively. Alongside digital skills, I also struggled with academic writing, time management, and critical thinking. Specifically, I found it difficult to structure essays properly, use correct referencing, and manage my time effectively, which caused me to feel overwhelmed.

To address these challenges, I proactively sought to improve my skills. I attended workshops on digital literacy and academic writing, which provided valuable strategies on utilizing online databases and organizing research effectively. I also explored online platforms to enhance my writing techniques, citation skills, and presentation methods. Additionally, I sought feedback from tutors to gain insights on how I could improve my argumentation and critical analysis. Over time, these efforts allowed me to enhance my academic performance, increase my organization and efficiency, and boost my confidence in completing academic tasks.

b) Feelings

Initially, I felt overwhelmed by the rapid advancements in digital tools and the high expectations surrounding academic writing. The sheer volume of online resources for research seemed daunting, and I struggled with managing the different platforms and databases. Additionally, academic writing, particularly structuring essays, correctly applying referencing styles, and critically analysing sources, seemed like a major hurdle. I often felt lost, unsure of where to begin, and frustrated with my inability to adapt to new technologies like referencing software and citation tools.

These feelings of frustration and self-doubt were further amplified by the complexity of academic assignments. Balancing multiple tasks, meeting deadlines, and prioritizing my workload was challenging, leading to a sense of inadequacy. As I struggled to organize my work, I often felt like I wasn't making progress fast enough, causing additional stress. However, as time passed and I dedicated myself to overcoming these challenges, I started to experience a shift in my emotional response.

By attending workshops, engaging with digital resources, and receiving constructive feedback from tutors, I began to feel more in control of my work. My confidence grew as I started to utilize digital tools more effectively, allowing me to embrace the resources that once intimidated me. I started to view feedback not as criticism, but as a guide for improvement, which helped me develop resilience and a positive mindset toward my academic tasks.

c) Evaluation

Positives:

- I gained proficiency in Microsoft Office, Google Scholar, and referencing tools like Zotero and Cite Them Right.
- I improved time management by using digital planners and task management apps, such as Trello and Notion.
- My research and critical thinking skills significantly improved, allowing me to analyse academic sources more effectively.

Negatives:

- Initially, I lacked awareness of academic integrity policies related to plagiarism and citation practices.
- I struggled with distractions when using digital tools for studying, impacting my focus and productivity.

d) Analysis

Based on Kolb's **Experiential Learning Cycle (1984)**, my experience provides an insight into the learning process:

- **Concrete Experience:** I struggled with navigating digital tools and faced challenges in academic writing, particularly around time management and structuring essays.
- **Reflective Observation:** I recognized that these challenges stemmed from inefficient study methods and underutilization of available digital resources. My academic skills were hindered by an over-reliance on manual notetaking and a lack of familiarity with digital platforms.
- **Abstract Conceptualization:** I then sought out online tutorials, attended academic writing workshops, and explored time management techniques to improve my skills. I realized that using digital tools effectively could streamline my workflow, and I understood the importance of being proactive in seeking feedback.
- **Active Experimentation:** I began applying structured note-taking methods (such as the Cornell Method in OneNote), using referencing software to manage citations, and

experimenting with focused study sessions using the Pomodoro technique. These actions helped me apply my newfound knowledge and gain confidence in my academic work.

e) Action Plan

- **Continue enhancing my digital literacy:** Enrol in online courses focused on advanced research techniques, data analysis, and utilizing new digital tools for academic work.
- **Develop better focus strategies:** Use website blockers to minimize distractions while studying and practice mindfulness techniques to improve concentration.
- **Seek further academic feedback:** Continue refining my academic writing by exploring AI-assisted writing tools and seeking more tutor feedback for continuous improvement.

f) Conclusion

Reflecting on my journey, I have significantly enhanced my academic and digital skills. I have become more efficient in research, writing, and digital organization, which has positively impacted my academic performance. The improvement in using digital tools and managing my time more effectively has contributed to a better structure in my assignments and a clearer thought process in academic writing. However, I also recognize that both digital technology and academic standards are constantly evolving. To stay current, it is crucial for me to continue learning and adapting to new tools and techniques. Through **Gibbs' Reflective Cycle** and **Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle**, I have evaluated my progress in digital and academic skills. Reflection has enabled me to identify areas of strength and areas for further growth. I have recognized the importance of adaptability and continuous learning, both academically and professionally. By implementing my action plan, I aim to improve my academic performance, refine my skills, and enhance my ability to navigate future challenges. Reflection will remain central to my lifelong learning journey, ensuring I stay adaptable and prepared for evolving academic and career demands.

Reference List:

Kolb, D.A., 1984. *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. [Accessed 30 March 2025]

Gibbs, G., 1988. *Learning by doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods*. Oxford: Further Education Unit. [Accessed 30 March 2025]