

COMPONENT 2- Individual Report

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Academic Skills

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Part 1: Essay

Introduction

A university student's path involves more than just learning new things and getting a degree. It is a phase of transformation that moulds people into competent graduates with a wide range of skills who are prepared to succeed in the working world. Moreover, students must acquire a variety of abilities that go beyond topical knowledge to accomplish this. Teamwork and essay planning are two key ideas that support a student's performance at the “**University of Wales Trinity Saint David**” (UWTSD). However, **teamwork** enables students to actively contribute to group tasks and successfully negotiate the difficulties of working with varied teams, preparing them for the constantly shifting and collaborative character of the workplace. Notwithstanding, **essay planning** is a methodical approach to educational writing that entails gathering information, organising ideas, and developing a coherent structure for arguing a point. Planning an essay well helps students think critically, organise their ideas logically, conduct in-depth research, and write coherently.

Discussion of Concepts

Team Working

Understanding teamwork's definition, foundational theories, and frameworks, as well as how it affects student performance, is crucial for a successful graduate. For being specific, teamwork is the cooperative efforts of people with complementary skills who work together to achieve a common objective. In an educational environment, teamwork extends beyond group projects to a variety of student activities, such as extracurriculars, groups of researchers, and student organisations (Drachsler and Greller, 2019). Let's explore the idea of teamwork in more detail.

Key Theories and Frameworks:

“Bruce Tuckman's model of group growth” is a significant theory that clarifies the dynamics of teamwork. Teams normally go through four stages, according to Tuckman: setting up, storming, establishing standards, and performing. Members of the team are getting to know one another and comprehending the team's objectives throughout the forming period. Conflicts may occur as people assert their views and thoughts during the storming period. The team may evolve and have a deeper knowledge of one another because of this conflict. Members start to build shared norms, values, and guidelines for collaboration during the norming stage. The team finally obtains an excellent degree of cohesion and efficacy in attaining its goals during

the performing stage. Moreover, **Belbin's team roles** are an important framework for teamwork. Individuals have varied preferences and strengths when it comes to working in a team, according to Belbin (Bell and Volckmann, 2019). Nine team responsibilities were established for him, including manager, shaper, group worker, and plant. Every position on the team contributes special skills and talents. Having a clear understanding of these responsibilities can enable team members to play to their strengths and build a cohesive and effective team.

Importance of Team Working:

Working as a team is crucial for successful graduation courses, especially in the technologically advanced era. Teamwork and cooperation are highly prized abilities in the workplace. Employers are looking for people who can work well in diverse teams since doing so boosts creativity, productivity, and problem-solving skills. Students have a greater capacity to lend a hand effectively to their future professions by learning teamwork skills while attending university. Additionally, good communication is promoted by teamwork. Individuals on a team must communicate their views clearly, listen carefully to others, and offer helpful criticism (Duffy *et al.* 2019). These communication abilities are applicable and useful in a variety of professional contexts. Furthermore, another quality that teamwork fosters is creativity. When people from various backgrounds interact, a wide variety of viewpoints and ideas are generated. This variety inspires innovation and enables creative responses to challenging issues. For being specific, a crucial ability that teamwork improves is problem-solving. Working together gives you the chance to tackle problems from many perspectives, which results in more thorough problem-solving. People are encouraged to think critically, analyse problems, and consider alternative answers.

Impact on a Student's Performance:

Teamwork has a lot of advantages for a student's performance in a university setting. University courses frequently include group projects that provide students the chance to put their subject knowledge to use, exchange ideas, and benefit from their peers' experiences. Students improve their interpersonal skills and get a deeper knowledge of difficult problems by working in groups. They get knowledge about how to understand various points of view, settle disputes, and create teamwork methods. Besides that, working in a team also improves leadership abilities. In a team, members can assume leadership roles, assign responsibilities, and inspire

one another to accomplish common objectives. Through these opportunities, students develop their leadership skills and get ready for jobs that will need them to manage teams and projects. On the other hand, participating in extracurricular activities like student organisations or athletic teams provides additional opportunities for teamwork. These events give students the chance to work together outside of the classroom while also establishing connections and a sense of community inside the university. Participating in team-based tournaments or events can also increase confidence, improve teamwork abilities, and give a platform to highlight individual and group accomplishments. In other words, academic research teams also place a high value on collaboration (Santos, 2019). Students working on research projects cooperate with professors or other students to plan experiments, collect data, and make inferences. Working in groups for research improves research abilities while also fostering good communication, teamwork, and the capacity to achieve a common objective.

Therefore, with the help of the above discussion, it is quite transparent that, a successful graduate from UWTSD must understand the notion of teamwork because it entails the cooperative efforts of persons with complementary abilities working towards a shared objective. Students learn effective communication, creativity, problem-solving, and leadership skills through teamwork, all of which are highly valued in the workplace. Students get the chance to put their subject knowledge to use, learn from their peers, and understand different viewpoints through participating in collaborative assignments, extracurricular excursions, and research teams (Tuckman, 2019). Additionally, it encourages a healthy learning atmosphere and a sense of community. Working in teams improves the entire educational experience, fosters the development of professional networks, and gets students ready for the teamwork they will encounter in their future employment.

Essay Planning

Essay planning represents a vital idea that is essential to a student's academic performance. It requires gathering information, conducting research, and laying up a precise plan for an efficient essay. Effective essay planning guarantees that students can create compelling cases, back up their claims with evidence, and complete the assignment's criteria. Hence it needs to be investigated what essay planning is, how to do it, and how it affects student success. Furthermore, understanding the essay subject and its requirements in detail is the first step in planning an essay (Belbin, 2019). The essay's scope must be decided after thorough consideration of the prompt, key phrase identification, and key terms. This first stage assists in

creating a distinct focus and guarantees that the article will be pertinent and coherent throughout.

Notwithstanding, an effective essay planning method is to write an outline. The primary concepts, supporting arguments, and subtopics are arranged using an outline as a road map. It offers a logical framework for writing and makes sure the essay flows naturally from one idea to the next. Before beginning the writing process, students can assess the general consistency and cohesiveness of their arguments using an outline. For being specific, planning for a paper includes doing extensive research. To strengthen their arguments and gain a deeper comprehension of the subject, students must collect pertinent and reliable materials. Students who conduct research can generate well-informed opinions, engage with many viewpoints, and improve the overall calibre of their essays. In addition, another critical component of essay preparation is time management (Gulliver and Ghinea, 2020). Each step of writing management, including studies, describing, drafting, revising, and editing, must be given enough time by the student. Students that manage their time properly will have plenty of time to hone their concepts, get feedback, and write a polished final essay.

On the other hand, a student's academic progress is influenced by effective essay planning in several different ways. First, it develops critical thinking abilities. Students are urged to carefully arrange their essays so that they have a consistent and logical framework as well as the ability to assess the arguments' merits and flaws. The capacity to think critically is highly regarded in academic contexts and equips pupils with difficulties they may face in the future with their employment. Essay planning enhances a student's writing's coherence and organisation (Grant and Ashford, 2019). Students can effectively communicate their views by describing the essential points and providing evidence in a systematic and organised way. This structure makes the essay easier to read and enables readers to understand the student's approach to thinking.

In addition, students who organise their essays are better able to fulfil the assignment's objectives and expectations. Students can make certain that their piece of writing addresses the precise instructions offered by the instructor by carefully analysing the prompt and comprehending the assessment criteria. This degree of academic competence and attention to detail can have a favourable effect on the final grade. Moreover, essay planning is stressed as a crucial ability for academic success within the setting of UWTSD. Pre-writing exercises including brainstorming, outlining, and preliminary research are advised for students. To assist students in creating efficient essay planning processes, the institution may offer materials, workshops, or writing centres. Moreover, it can be opined that effective essay planning fosters

vital abilities that go beyond the educational environment and is crucial for academic achievement. The improvement of research abilities is one of the main advantages of essay planning (Sitzmann and Yeo, 2019). Students gain the ability to find and evaluate pertinent sources, critically evaluate material, and incorporate evidence into the arguments they present by completing extensive research through the planning phase. The capacity to gather and analyse information is essential for making informed judgements in a variety of professional situations, making these research abilities transportable and valuable in those settings.

Hence, it can be finally stated that planning an essay is a crucial idea that affects a student's academic achievement and potential professional development. It promotes creativity and originality in the presentation of ideas while cultivating abilities to conduct research, time management skills, skilled writing, and critical thinking ability (Kirschner and Neelan, 2020). The UWTSD understands the value of essay preparation and provides students with the tools and assistance they need to succeed in this area. Students can improve their academic achievement and develop vital skills that will help them during their careers by polishing their essay-planning abilities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, effective teamwork and paper planning are two fundamental principles that allow learners at UWTSD to graduate with honours. Working in a team fosters clear communication, encourages creativity, improves problem-solving skills, and promotes the exchange of various viewpoints. It gives students the necessary tools for working in various teams and prepares them for the collaborative style of the professional world. Students can develop these abilities and foster a healthy learning atmosphere by means of group projects, other extracurricular endeavours, and research teams. Furthermore, for being specific, planning an essay is essential to a student's academic performance. It entails planning a good essay's structure, gathering information, and completing research. Effective essay planning increases organisation and coherence, fosters critical thinking, and guarantees that students complete their projects in accordance with the guidelines. Additionally, it fosters transferable skills like research, managing one's time, and honed writing abilities while reducing the stress and anxiety related to writing responsibilities.

Besides that, both teamwork and essay planning have an important effect on the student's future career growth outside of the academic context. Employers appreciate employees with good interaction, critical thinking, and organisational skills highly, and these concepts help develop these abilities. Students can show their dedication to their own development as well as their professional development and improve their chances of future career success by actively participating in team-working activities and using efficient essay preparation tactics. Teamwork and essay planning are the foundations of achievement for UWTSD pupils, giving them the skills, they need to succeed beyond graduation and leave a lasting impression in their chosen fields.

Part 2: Reflection

I will talk about my academic writing module learning experience in this reflection using the **Gibbs Reflective Model**. There are six phases in the Gibbs Reflective Model: the description, the feelings, the evaluation, the analysis, the conclusion, and the action plan. I will give examples to show my learning process and the realisations I make at each stage.

Description:

I learned about a variety of academic writing topics during the educational writing module, including paper structure, research methodologies, and citation styles. We were given homework that asked us to examine academic papers critically, formulate arguments, and write well-organized essays. I actively engaged in class discussions, asked my instructor for feedback, and set aside time separate from class to hone my writing abilities.

Feelings:

I initially experienced a mix of excitement and trepidation while approaching the academic writing assignment. While I was excited to develop my writing abilities, I was also apprehensive about whether I would be able to live up to the high standards of academic writing. I occasionally became frustrated trying to understand difficult ideas and communicate my thoughts clearly. However, I also had a sense of fulfilment when I got good comments on my written tasks, which inspired me to improve my writing skills even more.

Evaluation:

After some thought, I've discovered both strengths and faults in the work I produced for the academic writing module. My capacity to do in-depth research and compile pertinent references to bolster my arguments is one of my strong points. I deliberately sought out academic books, journals, and websites to have a thorough understanding of the subject. Additionally, I have become more analytical, which has helped me analyse the advantages and disadvantages of certain positions. Furthermore, I occasionally find it difficult to adequately structure my essays, which is one of my limitations. I've occasionally struggled to keep my ideas coherent and ensure that they flow logically throughout my writing. The correct

incorporation of in-text references and conformity to the UWTSD Harvard Writing Style are some areas that could use improvement.

Analysis:

I have thought about the elements that affect my writing performance to assess my strengths and limitations. My capacity to access and assess a variety of sources underpins my ability to do insightful research and analyse data. Prior academic experiences where in-depth research and evaluation were also stressed helped to hone this skill. However, my difficulties with essay organisation and citing may be the result of a lack of earlier introduction to and experience with academic writing practises. Additionally, I've come to understand how important time management is to the writing process. In several cases, I miscalculated the amount of time needed for study, writing, and revision, which resulted in last-minute scrambling and decreased the level of quality of my work.

Conclusion:

The academic writing programme has been a worthwhile educational experience overall. I have improved my research and thinking skills, gained insight into the significance of essay format, and deepened my awareness of academic writing traditions. I was able to identify my strengths and limitations thanks to the curriculum, which inspired me to work on developing my writing skills.

Action Plan:

I have decided on concrete steps that I will employ going forward to improve my academic writing abilities. First and foremost, I want to spend more time planning and structuring my essays. This will enable me to ensure a logical progression of ideas and establish a solid framework before starting the writing process. Secondly, I will aggressively seek out comments from my teachers and fellow students to gather knowledge and viewpoints on how I may enhance my writing. This criticism will give me helpful pointers and enable me to solve any persistent deficiencies, such as essay organisation and reference. Setting attainable deadlines for every phase of my writing process will also help me improve my time management abilities. Besides that, my writing abilities have greatly improved because of the academic writing programme. I have thought back on my learning experience and pinpointed areas for development using the Gibbs Reflective Model. I am aware of how important effective preparation, research, essay framework, and reference are when writing for academic purposes.

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I am determined to carry out my action plan going forward, getting criticism, and continually improving my academic writing skills to turn into a more competent and assured writer.

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