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Reflective report

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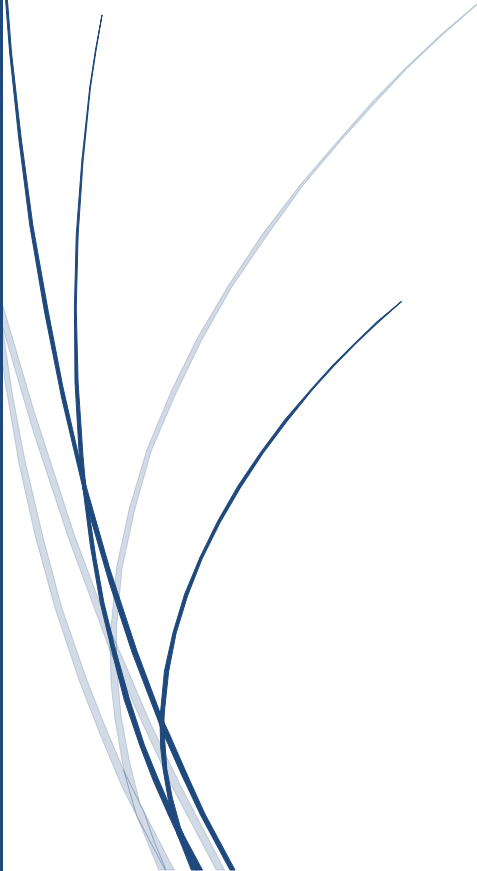


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1. Introduction

In the following reflective report, I will discuss my experience with this module and how it helped me develop my academic skills, showing the progress and improvement that occurred in my educational journey. This reflective report is focused on the strengths, weaknesses, and transformational moments encountered while enhancing these critical skills through introspection and analysis. I will use Gibb's Reflective Cycle to evaluate and reflect on my academic abilities based on those I achieved during this module, resulting in deeper insights and informed action for both academic and personal growth. This report is concentrated on three academic skills: academic writing skills, note-taking skills, and research skills, along with my experience over time.

2. Gibb's Reflective Cycle

One of the most significant cyclical models of reflection is Gibb's Reflective Cycle (1988), which is divided into six sections based on exploring an experience: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan. Graham Gibbs was the founder of Gibb's Reflective Cycle in 1988 to provide a framework for learning from experiences. It offers a structure for analysing experiences and, because of its cyclical nature, functions especially well with recurrent experiences, enabling you to make plans and learn from things that went either successfully or badly (The Edinburgh University, 2020).

Gibb's Reflective Cycle covers six stages:

- **Description:** It's important to explain the background of your academic pursuits, including the tasks, difficulties, and situations you have faced.
- **Feelings:** Examine the feelings and emotions you've encountered in the given academic circumstances.
- **Evaluation:** Evaluate critically how well your academic abilities work in different contexts. What was effective? What could've been done better?
- **Analysis:** Evaluate more closely the factors behind your feelings, ideas, and behaviours.
- **Conclusion:** List the key points from your reflection. What have you discovered about your strengths and weaknesses in the context of academic skills?
- **Action plan:** Using your reflection as a guide, provide specific actions and tactics to improve your academic performance. Think about how you can use what you have just learned in your upcoming academic studies (University of Cumbria, 2020).

3. The reflective report

3.1. Academic writing skills

Academic writing skills represents the ability to successfully express ideas, arguments, and research findings in an academic setting. The expression of ideas in academic writing must be clear and accurate. It's important for writers to avoid ambiguity, vagueness, and excessive complication in their writing. Critical analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of knowledge are necessary for academic writing (Fitzmaurice and O'Farrell, 2013).

- **Description**

Learning something new is challenging at first, but not impossible. In my experience, it was quite difficult to understand the concept of academic writing skills. I tried at first to become familiar with everything that this concept includes because academic writing is very complex and has a lot of styles, such as descriptive, critical, and analytical.

- **Feelings**

In general, I am a very sensitive and overthinking person, and that's why I asked myself several questions, such as: Will I be able to handle this module? Will I gain this skill? I tried to forget these weaknesses and rely on my knowledge, because my grammar is quite good, and I am acquiring English at an intermediate to advanced level.

- **Evaluation**

It was a good experience through this process of learning a new skill. In the meantime, I became more confident about my writing, and I have been trying to avoid grammar mistakes and be more precise and clearer in my reports and essays. With the help of my teacher, I managed to gain new knowledge about academic writing and understand better why this skill was so important during our academic journey.

- **Analysis**

What mattered a lot in my way of succeeding in improving my writing skills was practicing itself. Academic writing skills helped me to enhance originality, to use my critical and analytical thinking and research aptitude and to improve my communication abilities. With a lot of practice in class, I learned to use academic writing skills in such a way to simplify my work and extract the most important and pertinent information from a subject or concept.

- **Conclusion**

Writing academically is the most important approach for conveying the most important and relevant information in a productive and effective manner. Even though it wasn't easy for me at first, I'm very glad that I am now able to write more correctly, use a clear structure for my essays, and meet the requirements for this writing ability. But to advance and become much better in the future, I still need to fix some minor errors and be more focused on this writing process, but in an academic way.

- **Action plan**

In the upcoming months, I plan to write my essays and projects for the next modules in an academic style, paying close attention to the quality of the content and utilizing a clear, adequate, and organized structure that captures the essence of the topic or concept chosen. This will help me, in the future, to advance and improve my academic writing even more.

3.2. Note-taking skills

Note-taking skills represent the capacity to collect and arrange information during readings, lectures, meetings, or any other type of information exchange is an essential requirement for taking good notes swiftly and effectively. People can utilize note-taking as a beneficial skill in their academic career and at employment. To become a better note-taker and to know what information to put in your notes, it's necessary to practice a lot to perfect your note-taking abilities (Indeed, 2023).

- **Description**

In my opinion, note-taking skills represent the best way to take notes, organize information, and highlight the key points of a topic or concept to make your work easier. There are numerous note types, such as diagrams, mind maps, linear notes, tabular notes, and highlighting, that are appropriate for all situations, allowing you to choose your own note-taking method.

- **Feelings**

I had experience organizing the information that we covered in class during my high school years, so I was not unfamiliar with taking notes. The methods that I have used for my notes are linear notes and highlighting. It was easier for me to keep my notes organised in this way to learn the main points of a topic quickly and efficiently. I was confident about my note-taking skills, and I was curious to learn in class about other note types so I could use them for my future notes.

- **Evaluation**

I really enjoyed learning new methods of note-taking skills and practicing them in the class with the help of our teacher. Even though I had considered using the methods I've known since high school, I think they will be helpful for my notes in the future. Using diagrams and tabular notes was a little challenging at first but using them in class gave me more trust and I achieved a new skill for my academic journey.

- **Analysis**

As with any other skills, taking notes develops with practice. Note-taking skills helped me to organize and have a clear structure for my notes, utilizing the methods that I've learned during my classes. It was a good experience for me learning about note-taking skills and use them for my future notes and tests. In this academic journey, taking notes correctly is crucial to succeed further.

- **Conclusion**

Note-taking skills are essential for improving your comprehension and memory of information as well as for achieving success in your personal, professional, and academic lives. I'm cheerful that now I can use the note-taking methods correctly for my notes and meet the standards for this skill, even though it was a bit difficult at first. But to improve and progress significantly in the future, I still need to correct some mistakes and differentiate the various note-taking styles.

- **Action plan**

In the upcoming months, I intend to use the new taking note skills that I've learned in class for my future modules to improve my note's quality content, provide a clear structure, and capture the key points of a topic. This will make it easier for me to learn new information in the future and help me become even better at taking notes.

3.3. Research skills

In everyday life, the methods we use for research will differ based on the subject matter, the reason for the investigation, the depth of our curiosity, and the availability of information. Several research techniques are used in academic studies based on the discipline, source materials, or assignment. It's necessary for an academic journey to demonstrate a deeper understanding of the topic and consult more reputable sources. In practice, this means that you perform activities like reading, searching, experimenting, and critical evaluation (Cottrell, 2019).

- **Description**

Research skills represent the capacity to efficiently collect, examine, evaluate, and use information to find answers and resolve issues. This skill is one of the most important for my academic journey because it is essential for our reports and essays as students to be done in an academic manner, and we need to have quality information from truthfulness and reliable sources.

- **Feelings**

At first, I thought that it would be easy to understand this concept, but I found out that research skills need to be analysed deeper and pay attention to a lot of details when you try to search for trustworthy sources for your essays. Over time, I became more confident in my research skills through a lot of practice in class.

- **Evaluation**

It was a good experience for me to learn more about research skills, gain new information to create quality content for my assignments, and make sure that I follow more criteria when I am looking to search for information through online sources or books.

- **Analysis**

I found the CRAAP test I've learned in the classroom to be extremely useful when it comes to finding new information for my assignments. With a lot of practice, I have become more selective regarding the content I choose for my writing. Now I'm looking for some key points very important to research skills, such as the currency of the information, the relevance of the information for my needs, the source of the information, the reliability of the content, and the reason the information exists.

- **Conclusion**

Research skills are essential to advance and improve the quality of my assignments. I am very glad that now I can understand better the concept of research skills and can use them correctly to organize and structure my information and result in a well-done assignment. To become more successful in using research skills, I still need to practice more to get even better in the future.

- **Action plan**

For my upcoming modules, I plan to use the research skills that I've learned in class to enhance the quality of the content in my assignments. These research skills are very important to organise my information and capture the most important and reliable sources to succeed in my academic journey. Thanks to these research skills, I can advance and improve myself even more.

4. Conclusion

As I conclude my reflective report on academic skills, the process of self-evaluation has been insightful and powerful. I put all my experiences and feelings through this reflective report to identify my strengths and weaknesses as a final step to help me improve myself, become confident in my skills, and use them further in an academic manner. Thanks to Gibb's Reflective Cycle, I managed to analyse all my experiences in the process of learning new skills and improve myself to succeed as a student. These skills that I have discussed in this reflective report, such as academic writing skills, note-taking skills, and research skills, helped me identify the necessary competencies that make me feel more competent and confident, boosting my self-esteem.

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