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Task 3 – Reflective Report

LCLM 4001 – Academic Skills

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Introduction

My objective in writing this reflective report is to share my experiences and insights from the Academic Skills (ACS) program. As a first-year CertHE Business Skills for the Workplace student, I was very driven to study, although I have little knowledge about the functioning of higher education in the UK. This program has facilitated the acquisition of essential skills such as time management, note-taking, essay writing, and critical thinking. I will analyse my experiences from classroom activities, Task 1, Task 2, and weekly sessions, highlighting my strengths, places for improvement, and the influence this module has had on my academic and personal development.

Description of Experiences

I immediately understood that higher education in the UK would markedly vary from my previous experiences. In Week 1, we discussed the significance of effective time management and engaged in activities to establish the optimal learning environment. I discussed my own experience as a Ukrainian professional employed in London while my studies. This helped me see the significance of effectively organising my time to fulfil both my professional and academic responsibilities.

During Week 2, we acquired skills in notetaking using several techniques, including idea maps, linear notes, and Cornell notes. I engaged in notetaking from a BBC audio on motivation during a classroom exercise. I concluded that documenting all my thoughts was unwise. Rephrasing concepts in my own terms enhanced my focus and comprehension.

The in-class assessment for Task 1 assessed our comprehension of the material covered in the program to date. Task 2 was a practical practice requiring us to take notes, rephrase phrases, and compose paragraphs simultaneously. This was challenging but rewarding, as I saw significant improvement in my ability to organise my ideas. Discussing paraphrasing and evading plagiarism in class enhanced my understanding of academic integrity.

Analysis and Personal Reflection

Throughout the whole of the module, one of my most notable qualities has been the degree to which I have been engaged in the activities and how eager I have been to participate in them. During the group discussion conducted during the first week on the topic of the "perfect learning environment," I confidently shared my ideas and listened to those of my classmates. My ability to collaborate with others to acquire knowledge improved because of this. My ability to communicate effectively has improved because of my willingness to both provide and receive criticism constructively.

I also discovered that I was adept at learning new things quickly and using different strategies. As an example, before taking this class, my notes were too detailed and disorganised. When I first became aware of the Cornell method, I immediately began arranging my notes into several categories, such as main concepts, cues, and summaries. Studying became much more beneficial as a result of this, in addition to saving time. When I was working on Task 2, I found that using this method helped me generate a more logical paragraph since my notes were straightforward and got right to the point.

On the other hand, I discovered things that may be the best. The first thing I need to do is work on improving my time management skills, even if they are already better than they were before. As a result of my failure to anticipate the amount of independent study that would be required of me in the first few weeks, the process of getting ready for Task 1 was more challenging than it should have been. After that, I started using a weekly calendar to schedule certain times for studying, and I've been doing that ever since. Two, I need to improve my ability to paraphrase what others have said. When I was paraphrasing, there were moments when I tried to keep too close to the original wording, which might have resulted in plagiarism that I did not want to do. To improve my writing skills, I plan to practise by reading short academic materials, closing the book, and then rephrasing the ideas into my own words.

This has had a significant impact on my development as a person. Having completed this subject, I now have a stronger belief that I will be successful in college. I am more confident that I can utilise other sources without having to worry about being accused of plagiarism, for instance, since I have learnt how to use the Harvard reference system. In addition, the knowledge I gained about working memory during Week 2 helped me comprehend why breaking down information into smaller chunks is beneficial to my ability to recall it. The fact that I now review my notes shortly after class and once more at the end of the week has led to an improvement in my ability to recall information.

In addition to this, I saw that my capacity for critical thinking had increased. As part of the critical thinking lesson that I took during Week 9, I discovered that rather than just accepting what sources say at face value, I should investigate the dependability and bias of the sources. I have already adjusted the way I approach things in other classes because of this way of thinking. Before making a choice, I now make it a point to carefully consider the perspectives of other people.

When it comes to my employment, abilities like as taking notes, paraphrasing, and arranging reports are very helpful from a professional standpoint. For example, I recently had to provide a description of a training session for my colleagues, and to do so in a way that was both straightforward and effective, I employed a table-based note-taking method that I had taught in Week 2.



Strengths - Participating in classroom dialogues. - Capable of swiftly adjusting to novel learning methodologies. - Effective methods for creating ordered and practical notes.	Weaknesses - Time management need improvement. - You must enhance your paraphrasing skills. - It is essential to maintain consistent independent study habits.
Opportunities - Increased confidence in academic tasks. - Enhanced capability for information processing and retention. - Enhanced capacity for critical thinking. - Competencies applicable to the position.	Threats - Poor time management may result in falling behind. - Excessive similarity to the source text may result in allegations of plagiarism. - Achieving equilibrium among professional, academic, and personal responsibilities.

Conclusion

The Academic Skills module has significantly transformed my life throughout my first year of university. It has equipped me with essential skills for effective study, like time management, note-taking, paraphrasing, and critical thinking. I have identified areas requiring more improvement, although I have also recognised certain attributes that would facilitate my academic success. This course has not only enabled me to meet university requirements but has also equipped me with skills applicable to my job. This has been a significant milestone in my development as a confident, independent learner.

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