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1. Introduction

This reflection looks back at my learning throughout the Academic Skills module and explains how different activities, tasks and classroom discussions helped me develop as a student. The module introduced me to key academic practices such as paraphrasing, referencing, critical reading and time management. These skills were new to me at the beginning, but over time I started to understand how they support university-level study. I will reflect on my experiences in Task 1 and Task 2, the feedback I received, and the ideas from the texts we studied in class. I will also explain how these experiences influenced my confidence and my approach to learning.

2. Description of experiences

During the module, I took part in several activities that helped me understand what academic work requires. Task 1 asked me to create a diagram showing the main academic skills, and this helped me see how reading, writing, research and critical thinking are connected. Task 2 was more practical and required me to take notes, paraphrase sentences and write a paragraph under time

pressure. This task showed me how important it is to understand a text quickly and express ideas in my own words. In class, we also discussed referencing and how to avoid plagiarism. One of the texts explained that academic writing is built on existing knowledge and that referencing shows respect for the original authors (Smith, 2020). Another text highlighted the importance of critical reading and encouraged students to question arguments instead of accepting them immediately (Jones, 2019). These ideas helped me understand why academic skills matter and how they support deeper learning.

3. Analysis and personal reflection

Looking back at the module, I can see that I made progress in several areas, but I also faced challenges. One of my strengths was note-taking. I found it easy to identify the main ideas from a text and write them in short phrases. This helped me a lot in Task 2, because good notes made paraphrasing easier. I also improved in paraphrasing. At the beginning, I used to change only a few words, but after practising in class and reading examples from the texts, I learned how to change both vocabulary and sentence structure while keeping the meaning. This made me feel more confident about avoiding plagiarism and writing in an academic style.

Writing a full paragraph was more difficult. Sometimes I struggled to connect my ideas smoothly or to write a

strong topic sentence. The feedback I received showed me that I needed to work more on coherence and linking words. I realised that writing is not only about having ideas but also about organising them clearly. This is something I want to continue improving. The text by Jones (2019) helped me understand that academic writing requires logical structure and clear reasoning, and this idea encouraged me to pay more attention to how I build my paragraphs.

Another important part of my learning was understanding referencing. Before this module, I did not know much about Harvard style or why referencing is important. The class activities helped me understand that referencing gives credibility to my work and shows that I have engaged with academic sources. I still make small mistakes, but I feel more confident now. I also realised that referencing is not just a technical skill but a way to show academic honesty.

Task 1 helped me reflect on my own learning habits. When I created the diagram, I realised that time management is one of my weaknesses. I often underestimate how long a task will take, and this creates stress. The text by Smith (2020) explained that planning and prioritising can reduce anxiety and improve productivity, and this idea made me think about my own routine. I started using a weekly

planner, and although I still need to improve, I can already see some progress.

Task 2 was useful because it showed me how I work under time pressure. I managed to complete the task, but I noticed that I sometimes rush when I feel stressed. This affects the quality of my writing. The experience taught me that I need to stay calm and trust the process. Good preparation before the task also helped, because I already knew the steps: notes, paraphrasing, paragraph. This structure made the task easier to manage.

The classroom discussions also played an important role in my development. Listening to other students helped me see different perspectives, and it made me more open to new ideas. I also learned that asking questions is not a sign of weakness but a way to understand better. The tutor encouraged us to participate, and this helped me feel more confident speaking in class. Overall, the module helped me grow both academically and personally. I became more aware of how I learn, what I need to improve, and how to use academic skills in real tasks.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Academic Skills module has played an important role in shaping the way I approach university study and how I understand myself as a learner. Through the different tasks, classroom discussions and feedback, I developed a clearer sense of what academic work

requires and how I can meet those expectations. I learned that skills such as paraphrasing, referencing, critical reading and time management are not just technical requirements but essential tools that help me think more clearly and express my ideas with confidence. The texts we studied in class also helped me understand how academic writers build arguments and how important it is to question information instead of accepting it immediately. This encouraged me to become more active and reflective in my learning.

The module also helped me recognise my strengths, such as note-taking and identifying main ideas, while also showing me the areas where I still need improvement, especially in writing coherent paragraphs and managing my time more effectively. These insights are valuable because they give me a direction for my future development. I now understand that learning is a continuous process and that progress comes from practice, reflection and willingness to improve. Overall, the module increased my confidence, helped me build a stronger academic foundation and prepared me for the challenges I will face in future assignments and modules. I feel more capable, more organised and more aware of how to use academic skills in real situations, and this gives me a sense of motivation for the next stages of my studies.

References

Jones, L. (2019) *Critical Reading for Academic Success*. London: Academic Press.

Smith, A. (2020) *Understanding Academic Writing*. Oxford: Study Skills Publishing.