



NAME: PATRICIA BEATRIZ MARIN ARTIGAS

STUDENT NUMBER: 2113585

MODULE: ACADEMIC AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

MODULE CODE: BMSW4001_LON

LECTURER: ANITA NAN

ASSIGNMENT TITLE: ACE Practical Portfolio

TABLE OF CONTENT

ABSTRACT:	1
INTRODUCTION:	1
TIME MANAGEMENT:	2
ACADEMIC WRITING:	2
COVER LETTER WRITING:	3
PUBLIC SPEAKING AND GIVING PRESENTATION:	4
CONCLUSION:	4
REFERENCES:	5
APENDIX:	6

ABSTRACT:

This report contains a review of my learning in Academic and Employability Skills module, and how topics as Time Management, Academic Writing, Cover Letter Writing, and Public Speaking and Giving Presentation have helped me to improve my knowledge, and understanding how to develop a better use of my effort during my working hours and my study hours. Being able to do a correct use of them It is something that has helped me to get more opportunities in the workplace.

INTRODUCTION:

There are many ways to learn professional skills, and education is one of the best ways to get: knowledge, abilities, proficiency, etc.

In every job it is paramount to keep on learning, for that reason I started my studies in Higher Education skills for the workplace “Health and Social Care”. Modules like Academic and Employability Skills could guide me to transform my weaknesses into strengths and help me to get my objective of becoming a child welfare social worker. However, into the module there are more helpful sections depending on each individual and career chosen, in my case Academic writing, Time management and cover letter writing, being the most important learning tools to acquire the necessary knowledge for my future professional career. On the other hand, oral presentations are a great challenge for me, since English it is my second language, therefore, public speaking is another import learning tool for myself in this module.

TIME MANAGEMENT:

I could say that time management is a fundamental tool to take advantage of managing study or work hours in a more efficient way, during this module I have learnt how to manage my time during my study's hours, my working hours, and even my personal life, using the below three basic principles:

Avoiding time wasting; I have learnt to separate my personal life from my professional life during my study hours, avoiding checking social media during my breaks, or even letting my contacts know what my study hours are, so I was not interrupted during them and that they could only call me in case of emergencies.

Focusing on the objective appropriately; I know how to recognize what is the most important thing in my daily routine, I create daily my to do list, and I start doing my tasks in order to avoid mixing them by prioritising each one.

Using energy efficiently; during this module, also I have learnt that the human being has a natural body clock, that indicates the hours of highest performance. I have learnt how to work more efficiently during those hours, avoiding unnecessary strains to my body and mind, basically working smarter not longer.

After leaning these basic principles, and as a perfectionist person that I consider myself, I have learnt another important concept in time management. What is important in a job well done on time without the need to be perfect, in the book *First steps towards effective time management*, Forsyth, P. (2013) used the phrase "they didn't want it good, they wanted it on Wednesday" as a clear example, is not to focus on perfection but delivering on time. Another important concept that academic and employability skills have taught me about time management, it is knowing how to delegate part of the work to other people, since is impossible to do everything by myself. For example, when working as a team or between colleagues, it is important to find a middle ground. It is not about refusing to perform tasks all the time, since it can break the balance of the team, however it is not about accepting everything that arises at the moment, since I could end up doing more than my fare share. In the case of working with a boss, it is necessary to make him understand that I am not willing to carry out tasks outside of my responsibility, simply because his position allows him to give orders, or because he wants the tasks to be done instantly. Forsyth, P (2013).

ACADEMIC WRITING:

Writing an academic report is, in my case, one of the most difficult parts of each module due to English not being my first language, as I am not fluent yet. Obviously, the type of writing in the reports or in the power point slides must be more formal. This is something more

complicated in my case since I am lacking experience on academic writing, as I only used this type of writing to send emails on my workplace. Fortunately, academic writing was very helpful during my classes at the beginning of the term, teaching me a better grammar, sentence structure, and how to create paragraphs in academic style, something necessary to create my reports during the course, and essential in my current and future jobs.

On the other hand, having attended English workshops through the support offered by the University to non-native students, and the constant work I have done during the research for information to work on my assessments, have helped me hugely to improve my writing skills and to acquire more vocabulary. Therefore, I do completely agree with the reflection made by Day, T (2018) in section 12.1 “cycles of learning” where he explains that writing an assessment for a degree program, it is not only about writing the required number of words in the correct way to get a good grade, it is also about learning and reflecting on what I did well or badly, and what I could improve next time, since academic writing is the way to express oneself and converse with other people non-verbally, and in most workplaces is one of the most used tools to share information between professionals, shape decisions to be carried out, and a long etc, either in an usual way on paper or digitally. I am aware that in just ten weeks that this term has lasted, it is not long enough to improve my level of writing in English, however I will carry on working on it as till now. Although it is soon to say, both myself and my colleagues at work has noticed my improvement, and a big evolution when it came to writing emails and reports at the workplace, so I can say that personally academic writing it is one of the most important subjects of this course.

COVER LETTER WRITING:

Professionals use to include a covering letter as an introduction of the CV, basically to show the recruiter their skills and knowledges. Before starting my studies in higher education, I never included a cover letter with my CV when I applied for a job, but now after dealing with this topic in class, I understand that it is something that makes a difference if the appropriate guidelines are followed. Obviously cover letter writing is not a tool that is used every day at work unless it is a job related to human resources, however it is essential when it comes to getting access to an interview or it can even mark a difference when it comes to get that desire job. As a personal experience, I was able to verify it two weeks ago during a job interview, when the employer told me about the qualities that she had read in the cover letter that I included along with my resume, which I am sure helped me to project a better image of myself, and to make a difference from other applicants.

As I learnt in class, when I wrote my cover letter I included several aspects of my skills, focussing on the needs required on the job which I did apply for. In this case, I applied for a

position in a school as a school assistant, so I highlighted my previous experiencing working alongside a professional dietitian. This school pays a special attention to kid's nutritional meals, not allowing unhealthy foods during the school lunch hours. I mentioned this due to my findings on how this school empathise healthy eating, I spent a few hours searching for those important topics for them and linked it to my previous experiences and skills on my cover letter. Also, I avoid irrelevant details during my cover letter writing, I did not write any negative comments about previous jobs, and I showed total disposition for work, following the advice of Leigh, J. (2013 p 79).

Thanks to all those topics learnt in class I was successfully hired for this position, and I do believe the cover letter was a unique selling point in my interview process.

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND GIVING PRESENTATION:

Speaking in public has always been one of my weaknesses, although in private I am a very talkative person, I have never had good communication skills when speaking in public, not even in my own native language, so the individual presentation for Academic and employability skills module was a great challenge for me. However, after long days of hard work preparing my power point slides, I prepared too some notes relating to the topic "My intended career in child welfare social worker". I memorized the content of my slides and my notes and, at the beginning, when I tried to practice in front of my partner, I used to get frozen and I was not able to make a fluent speech. Due to that, I started watching videos with the intention of not failing in my presentation and become more fluent when presenting. I had to overcome my panic, little by little I was able to do it better and better, so on the day of the presentation I was able to give my speech in a fluid way. I know I could have done it better so after my presentation I took notes of it so I could work on myself for future presentations. In general I managed to gain confidence in myself and I have been able to recognize some faults in order to continue improving on myself. My face to face attendance to classes has also been a plus point when it comes to losing the fear of speaking in public, since it has helped me to overcome all the barriers at once, and in my opinion the fact of being in person in front of colleagues and of the lecturer, it is a double pressure that if I do not overcome now it will cost me more work to overcome in future jobs, specially related to social care worker, due to the public exposure that this type of worker has to exercise for any procedure that must be carried out in the workplace.

CONCLUSION:

In this module I have learnt how to use different tools such as Time management, helping me to make better use of my study and working hours, Academic writing by learning how to prepare better academic reports, cover letters or even making power point slides,

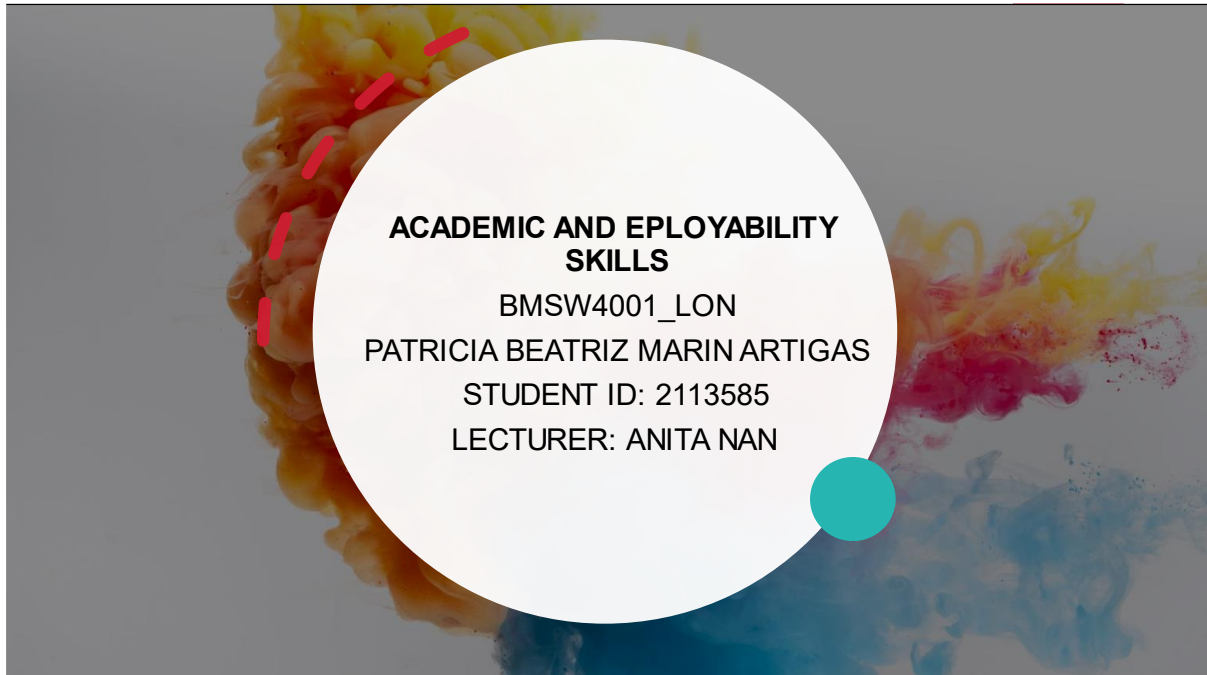
furthermore, I have developed better interpersonal and inter-professional skills, understanding what my weaknesses were in order to improve them, and of course, it helped me to create a personal development plan, necessary to continue advancing and improving my skills. Finally, the academic support from the university during the workshops has been pleasantly beneficial to me, considering that I lacked computer knowledge, and with the disadvantage that English is not my first language. The feedbacks from the lecturers during the classes and workshops has been crucial when it comes to identifying my mistakes, in order to avoid them in the future at my workplace. Also, I would like to mention apart from the topics of this module, how beneficial it is to have an oral exam in the form of a presentation, since it helps improve the interaction between students and lecturers and the fact of losing fear of public speaking.

REFERENCES:

Day, T. (2018) *Success in Academic Writing*. 2nd Ed. [e-book version]. Available from: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/trinity/detail.action?docID=6235050&pg-origsite=primo> (Accessed: 20 December 2021).

Forsyth, P. (2013) *Successful Time Management*. 3rd Ed. [e-book version]. Available from: <https://www.proquest.com/publication/2043289?OpenUrlRefId=info:xri/sid:primo&accountid=130472&parentSessionId=dio0UVr00B2Rq0TJEhZzT%2BpsSwT%2BNY%2Ftmms2n6gAuml%3D#> (Accessed: 16 December 2021).

Leigh, J. (2013) *How to Write: Successful CVs and Job Applications*. 2nd Ed. [e-book version]. Available from: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/trinity/detail.action?pg-origsite=primo&docID=1591444> (Accessed: 21 December 2021).



OVERVIEW:

- My intended career in child welfare social worker.
- Time management.
- SWOT analysis.
- Personal development plan.
- Conclusion.
- References.



MY INTENDED CAREER IN CHILD WELFARE SOCIAL WORKER



➤ NECESSARY SKILLS:

- **Academic writing** to create reports of issues, behaviour, needs etc, about children and families.
- **Communication skills** to manage interviews with families, assisting to court to give evidences . (Barker,2013)
- **Decision making skills** to make right decisions during the selection processes. (Diaz,2020)
- **Interpersonal skills** Collaborating to create bridges between families and children.
- **Inter-professional skills** workers must do a competent work with co-workers.



-Time Management is the most important skill to use time efficiently in every job

1. Creating a daily routine (planning daily working hours to improve the results)
2. Prioritizing the most important things (It is better to do one thing well than many badly)
3. Organizing a schedule including daily tasks (creating a to do list to work more efficiently)
4. Avoiding to waste time in no important things (separating work tasks from personal duties)
5. Understanding what the objective is (focusing in the most important goal to reduce efforts)

(Van Fleet, D.2021)



SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths:

- Inter-professional skills (capability to work in a team)
- Interpersonal skills (empathic and patient)
- Decision making skills (good determination)
- Time management skills (good organization)
- Ability to keep a healthy balance between professional & personal life

Weaknesses:

- Need to improve academic writing
- Fear of talking in public
- Need to improve digital skills

Opportunities:

- Possibility of working for the government and private companies
- Opportunity to work and help people at the same time

Threats:

- Risk of failing a public presentation
- Risk to present problems working with new technologies



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

• Improve academic writing during this course

- Attending workshops, reading books and preparing reports.

• Improve public speaking during this term

- Watching videos, practicing public presentations, using languages exchange apps.

• Improve digital skills in a few weeks

- Attending workshops, collaborating with colleagues in groups presentations.

CONCLUSION

Child welfare social worker requires physical and mental abilities

Identifying weaknesses and continuing learning every day

Communication, Writing and Time management are essential in a social worker career

REFERENCES:

Barker, A. (2013) *Improve your Communication Skills. 3th Ed.* [e-book version]. Available from: https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/Improve_Your_Communication_Skills/vDBxwEACAAJ?hl=en (Accessed: 13 November 2021)

Diaz, C. (2020) *Decision Making in Child and Family Social Work: Perspective on Children's Participation.* [online]. Available from: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/trinity/detail.action?docID=6226189#> (Accessed: 26 November 2021)

Van Fleet, D. (2021) *Quality Time: Productivity Through Time Management* [Online]. available from: https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/Quality_Time/KI3kzQEACAAJ?hl=en (Accessed: 5 November 2021)