

Academic skills reflection

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REFLECTIVE REPORT

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LCLM4001_LON
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1. Introduction

This report outlines my reflections on the Academic Skills module, focusing on how time management, note-taking, and academic writing have influenced my learning and professional growth. Working in food production, I initially questioned the connection between these skills and my job. Through practice, I found that many of the strategies were transferable, helping me improve both my studies and my ability to manage challenges at work. The module required me to embrace new learning techniques while building on what I already knew. This report evaluates my progress, highlighting areas of difficulty and showing how these skills can be adapted across different contexts.

2. Description of Experiences

The first week focused on time management, which revealed gaps in how I planned my schedule. I often underestimated task durations, leading to rushed work and increased stress. Using planners helped me manage deadlines better, though balancing work shifts with university tasks remained challenging. Week two introduced the Cornell note-taking method. Initially, it felt rigid compared to my usual shorthand approach. During a group project on food safety regulations, however, I realized its value for organizing shared information and making notes accessible to others.

Week four centered on academic writing, where I struggled with structuring paragraphs and transitions. At first, these rules seemed overly restrictive. However, an assignment comparing food industry standards helped me recognize how clarity in structure improved communication. This familiarity with the topic aided me in presenting ideas logically. Classroom discussions on linking sentences also helped refine my writing, showing that small adjustments improved the overall flow. Reflecting on these experiences, I've learned that academic skills are flexible and can be adapted to meet different professional and academic needs.

3. Analysis and Personal Reflection

Time Management

The module highlighted why I often felt overwhelmed my tasks lacked realistic timeframes. While my job has set hours, university deadlines required me to plan

better. Incorporating a digital calendar with reminders reduced last-minute stress and improved my productivity. However, unexpected work shifts continued to disrupt my study plans. To counter this, I've started adding buffer time to assignments, which has helped me meet deadlines more consistently. This strategy has also encouraged me to prioritize tasks effectively, balancing urgent responsibilities with longer-term goals.

Note-Taking

I initially resisted the Cornell method, preferring my usual system of quick, visual notes with arrows and abbreviations. A group task on food safety regulations revealed the drawbacks of this approach it was hard for others to follow my ideas. Adapting the Cornell method by retaining the summary section but integrating my shorthand proved successful. My notes became clearer and more structured for collaborative purposes while remaining practical for personal revision. This experience showed me that effective note-taking isn't about rigid formats it's about finding methods that work for different contexts.

Academic Writing

Writing posed the greatest challenge but also offered the most growth. At work, I'm accustomed to direct instructions, focusing on precision. Academic writing required me to connect ideas more fluidly, which felt unfamiliar at first. Feedback highlighted strengths in my paragraphs but pointed out weak transitions. Practicing linking phrases such as "however" and "on the other hand" helped my writing flow more smoothly. The comparative assignment on food production standards was particularly impactful, as it allowed me to apply my industry knowledge within an academic framework. This demonstrated how clear writing can improve both academic communication and professional documentation.

Connections Between Work and Study

One major takeaway from the module was recognizing how skills from my job intersect with academic learning. For instance, attention to detail in quality checks helped me identify errors in my essays. Teamwork at work enhanced my ability to collaborate during group projects. Even referencing reminded me of tracking

ingredients in production both require accuracy and thorough documentation. These parallels have made my learning journey more relatable and applicable across different settings.

Challenges and Growth:

Balancing work and study has proven to be a significant challenge, but it has also been an opportunity for growth. I've learned to prioritize tasks more effectively and to adapt when unforeseen circumstances arise, such as sudden changes in my work schedule. Flexibility has become a cornerstone of my approach when one method doesn't work, I now feel confident experimenting with alternatives to suit my needs. This adaptability has improved both my academic performance and my ability to handle challenges at work.

Additionally, I've gained confidence in my capacity to learn and grow, which has shifted my perspective on obstacles. Instead of viewing difficulties as roadblocks, I now approach them as chances to improve and develop further. Whether it's mastering new skills at university or solving complex problems in my job, these experiences have equipped me with practical tools and a resilient mindset for ongoing success.

4. Conclusion

Through this module, I've gained practical academic skills that extend beyond the classroom. Improved time management and writing techniques have positively impacted my ability to handle challenges in both my studies and my job. The most valuable insight has been learning that skills can be adapted to suit different contexts. Despite ongoing struggles with balancing work and study, I now approach tasks systematically and confidently. These lessons have provided a foundation for continued growth, emphasizing flexibility and lifelong learning. As I progress in my career and education, I will keep building on these strategies to refine my abilities further.

¹ Bailey, S. (2018) *Academic writing: a handbook for international students*. 5th edn. London: Routledge.

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² Covey, S.R. (2020) *The 7 habits of highly effective people*. 4th edn. New York: Simon & Schuster.

¹ Gibbs, G. (1988) *Learning by doing: a guide to teaching and learning methods*. Oxford: Further Education Unit.

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