

Business Skills Midterm Thesis

Academic Writing

- Report title: Reflective Report on Academic Skills Development
- Module Code: LCLM 4001_Lon
- Module Title: Business Skills
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Reflective Report on Academic Skills Development

Introduction:

The development of academic skills is integral to achieving success in my studies at the University of Welsh Trinity St. Davis, London. As a student in the Academic module, I have focused on refining several key academic skills. This report reflects on the development of three essential skills: Academic Writing Skills, Information Finding/Research Skills, and Summarizing Skills. To structure this reflection, I will use Gibb's Reflective Cycle, a framework that guides reflective practice by encouraging structured analysis through six stages: Description, Feelings, Evaluation, Analysis, Conclusion, and Action Plan. This approach will help illustrate the growth I have experienced and highlight areas for further improvement. I will also describe the support I have received through my university academic skills classes and library resources.

Gibb Reflective Cycle Overview:

Gibb's Reflective Cycle is a widely recognized model for reflective practice, offering a structured approach to learning from experiences. The cycle involves six key stages:

1. **Description** – Outlining the task or experience.
2. **Feelings** – Reflecting on emotional responses to the task.
3. **Evaluation** – Assessing what went well and what could be improved.
4. **Analysis** – Analysing the experience and identifying key learnings.
5. **Conclusion** – Drawing conclusions from the reflection.
6. **Action Plan** – Developing strategies for future improvement.

Through this reflective cycle, I will explore how each skill—academic writing, research, and summarizing—has evolved throughout my studies, as well as the valuable support I have gained from the university’s academic resources.

List

The list of explanations, by category, is as follows:

1. Reflection on Academic Writing Skills
2. Reflection on Information Finding/Research Skills
3. Reflection on Summarizing Skills
4. Conclusion
5. References

1. Reflection on Academic Writing Skills

Description:

Throughout my studies, academic writing has been a key component of my coursework, which includes assignments such as essays, reports, and case studies. Initially, I struggled with organizing my ideas and adhering to academic conventions, such as

maintaining a formal tone and correctly citing sources. To address these challenges, I first tried to review Academic Writing Workshops book. Despite my Lecturer Ms. Sylvia's advice, this resource was not readily available to me. Instead, I used the resources of the university library, including guides to structuring essays, using correct citation styles, and writing clearly and coherently in some local newspapers. An article on November 7, 2024, although, in my opinion, nonsensical in content, had the exact writing structure I was seeking.

Feelings:

Early in my academic journey, I felt overwhelmed by the expectations of academic writing. Producing well-structured papers that maintained a formal tone and academic standards was challenging. However, after taking academic writing classes, reviewing various newspaper articles, practicing my own writing, and using the library's citation tools, I became more confident in organizing my thoughts and presenting them clearly. Understanding the importance of structure and referencing made the process less daunting.

Evaluation:

The passion for writing that I have had since childhood provided a solid foundation for developing academic writing skills in college. Through college classes, I have learned valuable techniques such as structuring essays, presenting arguments, and integrating evidence from reliable sources. The college library has been instrumental in improving my referencing skills. Citation style guides, such as Harvard's, have been helpful, ensuring accurate citations and avoiding plagiarism. Despite these improvements, maintaining a consistent academic tone in business assignments remains a challenge.

Analysis:

Reflecting on my experiences, I realize academic writing involves technical abilities—like correct citation and formatting—and intellectual skills, such as logical structuring, critical analysis, and clarity of expression. The library's resources, including citation management, were invaluable for organizing sources. Breaking down writing into stages—researching, outlining, drafting, and revising—improved the quality of my work and made the process more manageable.

Conclusion:

Through in-class exercises, reviewing teacher-introduced sources, and library resources, I have significantly improved my academic writing skills. I am now more confident in structuring my work logically, presenting arguments clearly, and adhering to citation practices. However, maintaining a consistent academic tone across assignments remains an area for improvement.

Action Plan:

To enhance my academic writing skills further, I plan to attend additional writing workshops, particularly those focused on business writing. I will continue using the library's citation tools and practice writing regularly to build fluency and refine my style.

2. Reflection on Information Finding/Research Skills

Description:

Effective research is crucial for academic success, especially in business studies, where reliable data and evidence are integral. Initially, I struggled to find relevant and credible sources, facing difficulties navigating academic databases and assessing source credibility. To overcome this, I utilized class-introduced videos and materials, enhancing my research skills. This approach enabled me to better use the university library resources, categorizing and summarizing needed information. Sporadic strategies, such as referring to JSTOR, Google Scholar, and Scopus, also helped assess the quality of the university's library resources.

Feelings:

Initially, I felt frustrated and overwhelmed by the vast amount of information and the challenge of identifying relevant and credible sources. Refining searches effectively was difficult. However, attending the library's research skills sessions helped me become more comfortable using advanced search techniques, such as Boolean operators, and filtering results based on publication date and author credentials. This gave me greater control over the research process.

Evaluation:

Library research training in class was incredibly helpful. The Lecturer taught us how to navigate academic databases and use advanced search techniques to find relevant articles. I also learned to assess source credibility by examining publication outlets, author qualifications, and methodologies. While I've improved at finding quality sources, evaluating non-academic sources, such as grey literature or industry reports, remains a challenge.

Analysis:

Research involves critically evaluating sources and synthesizing gathered information. Library research skills refined my search strategies and improved my understanding of

source quality and relevance. Citation management tools helped organize and cite sources efficiently, saving time and reducing errors. As a result, I now feel more confident conducting thorough and credible research.

Conclusion:

My research skills have improved significantly, and I can now find relevant academic sources more efficiently. I am more confident in evaluating source credibility, especially through academic databases. However, evaluating non-traditional academic outlets remains an area for growth.

Action Plan:

To enhance my research skills further, I will continue practicing advanced search techniques and improve evaluating grey literature. I will explore additional reference management tools to organize sources more effectively.

3. Reflection on Summarizing Skills

Description:

Summarizing academic material is critical for tasks such as literature reviews, abstracts, and synthesizing information. Initially, I struggled to condense lengthy material into concise summaries while preserving key messages. Library resources on effective reading and summarizing techniques guided me in extracting essential information from academic texts.

Feelings:

I initially felt challenged by summarizing complex material without oversimplifying. Capturing main ideas while preserving original meaning was difficult. However, practicing summarizing and applying the Lecturer's techniques for active reading and note-taking boosted my confidence in summarizing accurately and concisely.

Evaluation:

The Lecturer's guides on summarizing and academic reading were invaluable. I learned to actively engage with texts by highlighting key points, taking notes, and identifying central arguments or findings. While my summarizing skills have improved, summarizing highly technical or dense material remains challenging.

Analysis:

Summarizing requires critical thinking to identify the most important information in a text. Lecturer resources helped develop systematic summarizing approaches, such as focusing on main arguments, avoiding redundancy, and condensing ideas into simple language. Class practice improved my efficiency in understanding and condensing academic material, enhancing comprehension and retention.

Conclusion:

My summarizing skills have improved significantly. I am more capable of producing concise and accurate summaries of academic texts, synthesizing key ideas, and presenting them clearly.

Action Plan:

To further improve summarizing skills, I will practice summarizing complex academic materials and experiment with techniques like creating mind maps or outlines to find the most effective methods for condensing information.

4- Conclusion:

In conclusion, my academic skills—academic writing, research, and summarizing—have developed significantly through the university's resources, Lecturer guides, class practices, and citation tools. Gibb's Reflective Cycle has enabled me to critically evaluate progress and identify areas for growth. I feel more confident in writing clearly and coherently, conducting thorough research, and summarizing complex material effectively. Moving forward, I plan to continue practicing and developing these skills to ensure academic success.

18/12/2024

Amir M Avesta

References

"Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students" by Stephen Bailey

Description: This comprehensive guide covers various aspects of academic writing, including essay structure, formal tone, and citation practices.

"The Study Skills Handbook" by Stella Cottrell

Description: This resource offers guidance on developing effective study habits, including research, and summarizing skills, essential for academic success.

"Research Skills for Students" by Brian Allison and Phil Race

Description: This book provides insights into efficient information-finding strategies and critical evaluation of sources, enhancing your research capabilities.

"Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Retelling: Skills for Better Reading, Writing, and Test Taking" by Emily Kissner

Description: This resource focuses on techniques for effectively summarizing and paraphrasing academic materials, aiding in the development of concise writing skills.