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Module Code: (LCLM4001_LON)

Module Title: Academic Skills

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Assessment 3

Reflective report

Date 19/08/24

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to reflect on the development of three key academic skills: The skills include the skills an academic writer has, skills in finding information, and skills in reflecting on what one has learned during the program. In academic development, one must practice reflection because it enables the evaluation of learning processes and the subsequent enhancement of these processes (Bassot, 2016). To structure this reflection, I have opted for Reflective Cycle also known as Gibbs' Model. Gibbs' model is widely recognized for its comprehensive approach, allowing for a detailed examination of experiences through six stages: It can be explained as the use of a model that is referred to as Gatehouse's (Gibbs, 1988) model and consists of six steps: Description, Feelings, Evaluation, Analysis, Conclusion, and Action Plan. This model is particularly effective in enhancing knowledge retention since apart from requiring the students to go through what is learned, they are also asked to consider a certain emotion and improvement that they could make in the future (Moon, 2004). Through the help of this model, I will make sure that I explain how these academic skills were attained along with examples from class work and assignments. This reflective process is effective for reviewing and developing strengths and weaknesses and therefore improving my academic knowledge and practice in the future.

2. Reflections

2.1 Academic Writing Skills

Experience and Description:

I first used academic writing during my undergraduate thesis project; this is a time when one is forced to address scholarly sources, proper organization of the argument, as well as the proper mastering of academic conventions. At first, the process was challenging as the concepts of clarity, objectivity, and rigor are not easily personalized. But the more I got in, the more I discovered the subtleties of the academic writing style. Developing my thesis not only helped me improve my skills but also planted the seed of achievement into my veins, it challenged and enabled me to think wisely and at the same time write in a packed manner.

Evaluation:

I kept thinking about how this experience was incredibly useful. That the training was continuous helped me sharpen my language proficiency, organization skills, and reasoning given the exercises in logic. Some of the difficulties, such as fussiness leading to the creation of a list of rules against writer's block or keeping formal language, were insightful to learn and apply and feedback from supervisors about the relevance of those skills was positive as well. Despite the hardships of the process of planning, revising, and seeking the partners' opinions, the overall experience seemed to be of great value for the improvement of my writing skills.

Analysis:

This was due to factors such as prior learning that was familiar with the writing style of academics, the relation of writings to the field of study, the and relation of this competency to other competencies learned in school. The thesis was not a new concept to me because earlier report writing and essay assignments were building blocks to what a thesis involved but it required much more in my view. Since clarity is of paramount importance in the academic environment and frequently in my sphere of activity, the relevance of academic writing made skill development particularly important. Also, it is necessary to mention that connections between academic writing and such skills as critical thinking, research, and analysis affected the experience. This iterative method of writing, feedback, and editing helped the integration of the skills into one practical academic skill.

Action Taken:

To build up this habit, I divided my work in writing this thesis into sections with a timeline, though I wrote it consecutively without stopping midway. When it comes to drafting, concern was primarily on getting as many ideas as possible on paper, without having to pay much attention to the quality of the sketches. Criticisms and comments from the supervisors and peers were different from each other and allowed for changes that made the text clearer and more academically acceptable. I also engaged in writing guides and workshops to enhance my writing skills to another level. Altogether, these actions improved my probability of achieving my academic writing competencies.

Future Action:

I want to write more often and engage in projects that will enable me to write to publish my works, thus having to follow higher academic standards. Writing workshops and seeking advice from other academics will also be conducted by me. If I continue reading scholarly articles regularly, I will stay in touch with the acceptability rules. Such actions will help one perform well in the communication of ideas in academic and professional settings.

2.2 Research Skills (Finding Information)

Experience and Description:

Of all the skills I learned in my graduate studies, the skills on how to gather information were most useful in my work on the thesis. The process relied on academic databases, journals, and scholarly resources to arrive at the results. At first, the amount of data was rather large, and screening it to select reliable and laconic sources took a lot of time. Nevertheless, as the number of approaches and tools encountered while familiarizing myself with research increased, the work became much easier. I can honestly state that this experience boosted my approaches to reading scholarly works to a greater extent.

Evaluation:

This experience was very beneficial because the skills can be used for research purposes in any given field. Trials such as specific databases, and recognizing between reliable data and fake news were not a problem anymore and became more of a learning experience. Thus, the experiences helped me learn how to be more critical in my choice of the source and the information used in the process of research. Sometimes, I was able to accomplish a task, for example, identifying important sources for my thesis statement, which made the acquisition of these skills all the more worthwhile.

Analysis:

It occurred this way because I was unaware of the research tools, the applicability of these skills in my academic work, and the relation of these skills to critical thinking and information literacy. Some of the difficulties I had at the beginning were ignorance of the existence and the working of academic databases and an excessive amount of info. However, as I got to know these tools, the exercises became easier to accomplish throughout the daily lessons. The relevance of the learning to skills pertinent to the learning process and particularly the research skills that enabled the development of well-supported arguments made this experience particularly memorable.

Action Taken:

For ways to improve my research skills, I ensured that I acquainted myself with the search engines JSTOR & Google Scholar and the search filters used in getting relevant search results. I also came up with methods of assessing the credibility of sources such as; evaluating the author of the information and the quality of the publication. Another important task was to organize the information, through the use of reference management software. Directorate and supervisor input helped strengthen 'how to go about it' as well as other research procedures enhancing my capability to search for and evaluate authoritative information.

Future Action:

In the future, I will make it a point to keep myself abreast with the newer instruments and methodologies and to look for co-research activities wherein I can learn from others. To maintain reliable usage of information, I will go on practicing critical evaluation of the sources. All these actions will help in enhancing the research skills and facility to be able to do intensive and efficient research irrespective of the field.

2.3 Reflection Skills

Experience and Description:

Especially during a module, where reflection is one of the core elements of the program, skills in the use of reflection were essential. Indeed, this writing was unusual, because, for the first time in my life, I tried to conduct a structured reflection. Keeping a reflective Journal, concerning my thoughts, feelings, and learning initially made me uncomfortable because I had to assess things that were personal to me. But as I proceeded I realized the usefulness of getting to know my

learning style and my weaknesses better. This encounter and interaction was very rigid and informative; it was a tool that had helped in personal and academic improvement.

Evaluation:

Reflection activities were very beneficial as they enabled me to assess experiences of my learning in one way or the other that needed improvements. Reflecting made me see how different skills and knowledge are related, hence avoiding a fragmented way of learning. Tasks, which would normally be seen as just inconvenience, like ensuring consistency, became learning issues. It produced successes, such as the realization that I could learn about my learning, and enhanced the value of reflection, thus making the experience priceless.

Analysis:

These are the preconceptions that emerged from below the surface of the iceberg: the absence of prior experiences in reflective practice; the importance of reflection in the context of personal development both in academic and professional settings; the connection between reflection and critical thinking and personal awareness. Part of the reason was my resistance to the overly bureaucratic process, although this was partially due to my ignorance of the matter. Still, as time went by, the experience became even more enlightening and helped me to notice my strengths and weaknesses and to get a great overall view of how I learn.

Action Taken:

To enhance my reflection skills, I was engaged in maintaining a reflective journal which I used to note down my thoughts and learning outcomes. I used a reflective model like Gibbs's model of reflection on events so that the reflections were guided and I asked for feedback from my supervisors that supplied suitable feedback for development. All these actions helped in exercising the reflection skills and thus helped in enhancing them.

Future Action:

As for the future improvement of my reflection skills, I would like to keep a schedule of the reflection, as well as try to have reflective conversations with my peers or mentors more often. When considering other models that are used to approach reflection, it will be possible to identify other ways of making sense of the process. These actions will guarantee that I will learn from my experiences to consider this when undertaking other activities.

3. Conclusion

The experience of reflections regarding the development of academic writing, research, and reflection skills for academic learning has been very valuable. The difficulties encountered in writing academic essays concerning argumentation and general organization made a more ordered approach to planning and writing. Better research skills make it possible to assess sources and apply them adequately in work to support the argument and avoid cases where sources appear to support a particular point when they do not. I have found that the use of reflection has been very beneficial in helping me make some effective choices regarding my studies as well as my future career. These experiences have not only helped me in my present academic performance but also helped me shape my actions whenever I am in an academic setting or even as a professional. Critical thinking and reasoning skills together with skills in exegesis, research, and writing that I have learned will remain permanent abilities. They will help me to meet future tasks with confidence and flexibility to make valuable contributions to my academic discipline and workplace. Just like any other virtue, more practice and especially prudent review of these skills shall define my future progress.

4. References

Gibbs, G. (1988). *Learning by Doing: A Guide to Teaching and Learning Methods*. Oxford Polytechnic: Further Education Unit.

Bassot, B. (2016). *The Reflective Practice Guide: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Critical Reflection*. Routledge.

Moon, J. A. (2004). *A Handbook of Reflective and Experiential Learning: Theory and Practice*. Routledge.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1: Research Skills (Finding Information)

Description: This appendix includes screenshots of the research log I maintained while working on an assignment. The log details the sources I found using databases like JSTOR and Google Scholar, and the critical evaluation of these sources based on their credibility and relevance.

Evidence:

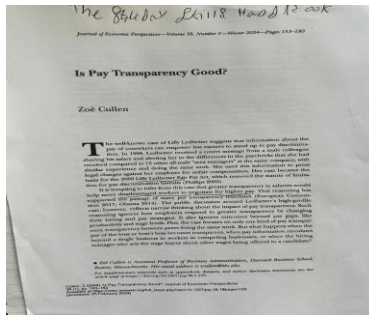


Image 2.1: Research Log - This image shows the research log I used to track sources, including notes on the credibility of each source and how it would be used in the assignment.