

I will be reflecting on my time in university so far using the 'Gibbs' reflective cycle'. (Gibbs,1988) 'The Gibbs' reflective cycle helps you 'reflect on the six stages while exploring an experience with description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action plan.'

My time in university so far has been very challenging. As I have not long left college I was worried that I was not ready for university, especially as I did not finish my full A level qualification. I have always been very nervous to start university as I have never known what to expect when it comes to the work load or the lectures. I had this perception that you had to have the highest marks to be even looked at in an application for uni, which I have never really achieved academically. I have only been able to achieve well in subjects that I have been interested in, and that's why I was very excited to start this law and legal practice course, as this is an area I wish to explore now and in the near future, for a career.

My feelings about starting the course were very mixed. Again, I didn't feel ready to start as I felt I did not have the academic ability to get through the course. But so far, I have proven to myself that I am capable of completing the provided work. My worry of not being ready to start has completely changed, and I have realised that anyone has the capability to achieve what they wish, even if you have not come from an academic or educational system. Another worry I had was from the start of the course when we had the first team's call. Most people on my course are a lot older than me, and it made me doubt myself and wonder if I was not mature enough to be on the course. It did make me question again if I was ready, but there will always be different age gaps in every field of work, and maybe age will have an advantage.

Starting to do online work was a big fear of mine. I have never really been technical when it comes to any work, I have always written on paper to complete previous work. But starting university has changed that for me. We have been provided with a variety of tools to use whilst studying online. For example, using microsoft word for mind maps and assignment writing, powerpoint to complete powerpoints and the internet to learn how to Harvard reference. (www.microsoft.com) Our lectures have provided us with step by step guides to complete all assignments, which have been very structured, making it easier for us to complete assignments at a good standard. It did seem very daunting writing the first assignments, especially when it came to punctuation and grammar, but we were advised with a website called grammarly, by our lectures which help correct any mistakes within writing. (app.grammarly.com) This tool helped so much, and has given me more confidence in my writing and has taught me common mistakes I make within writing. Each lecture has also been uploaded on to Moodle, where we can access previous lectures to always have the opportunity to look back on work. ([Moodle - Open-source learning platform | Moodle.org](http://Moodle-Open-source-learning-platform|Moodle.org)) This is very beneficial for me as I find it easier to take in information from the uploaded lectures, as I find it hard to study whilst on the call with all students. I have found online work more difficult than being taught in person. I feel online lectures are less engaging and again I find it hard to take in information during calls, as there are many disruptions with students online. Pre-recorded lectures have been a big help!

I have understood how important all the tools and resources are to help me to be able to complete any assignments or exams. I have also learnt how vital it is to complete all work given on time, as this gives us an

insight on the workload of higher education and the expectations required. I need to take advantage of all tools and resources given as this is what is preparing me to be able to succeed in higher education and in the field I wish to take in the near future.

To conclude, university has been a big change for me, but it has been a change for the best! I have upgraded my knowledge, technical skills and ability to write assignments, which I thought would be impossible. University has also shown my strengths and weaknesses. I feel my strengths have been my knowledge on certain subject areas. As I had previously studied A level criminology, I learnt a lot of similar information, which has been an advantage. Another strength is that I already knew how to use Microsoft Word to make mind maps, again from studying in college. Knowing how to create a mind map made the mind map assignment quite easy for me to complete. A weakness I have seen within myself is not leaving myself enough time to complete assignments. I have realised how vital it is to allow yourself time to correctly complete work. Another weakness is my inability to concentrate on the call with other students. This is something I am continuing to work on, each week to find online lessons more effective.

If I was to start university all over again I would not be so worried about my previous academic history and just feel more confident within myself. I would also take into consideration that online lessons are not best suited for me and that face-to-face would work better. I would also structure my work more effectively to help learn subject areas, using sites that we have been provided with .eg. Microsoft Word. Lastly, I would set dates to complete each assignment as I would be able to complete my assignments at a better standard, and not have to rush to complete them.