

Module: LCLM 4001_Lon Academic Skills

Task 3 – Reflective Report

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Introduction

In this reflective report, I will focus on three key academic skills: note-taking, paraphrasing, and referencing. These skills are especially beneficial for students who want to improve their academic performance (van Blerkom, 2005). Moreover, they are good for professionals too, to enhance their work experience.

So, throughout this learning, I implemented these skills and developed the main points of how they can improve my academic performance. For instance, writing has enabled me to take notes and information better, resulting in an enhanced learning process. Using paraphrasing skills, I have presented the idea of sources in my own words while keeping it real and academically honest. The skills in referencing have helped me with the required knowledge to identify the sources of information, avoid plagiarism, and work out the document's authenticity. I will use Gibb's reflective cycle to reflect and evaluate the development of these skills during the module. I want to show and explain how the acquired skills and methods will help me in my future academic and career plans.

Gibb's Reflective Model

Description

Note-taking is one academic skill that enables students to be more engaged and understand and memorise content (Godfrey, 2023). It assists the students in formulating overviews of specific concepts, knowledge transformation, and study references. Haghverdi et al. (2010) agreed that a better note-taking approach correlates to better academic performance. Note-taking during a lecture or reading helps students make the learning experience more active and constructive at the same time. There is a correlation between effective note-taking strategies and academic achievement. I used note-taking systems like Cornell notes and concept mapping to capture information. Cornell's method helps organise the notes more systematically and gives headings and summaries to help review (Medium, 2015).

Paraphrasing means rewriting a passage with its original meaning intact (Kissner, 2006). In other words, retaining its original meaning but using a different form of words and structure. It is a very helpful skill for academic writing. It helps students combine and present the information without repeating the source. Simply, paraphrasing helps to avoid plagiarism (Gadag and Sagar, 2016). Paraphrasing creates a new version of the original text and re-organises the contents of a text to make another that conveys the intended meaning. Paraphrasing is not only about finding synonyms of words. It also re-arranges the contents of a text and comes up with another text. Paraphrasing is not just about the words, but the content since paraphrasing is more than just word change.

Referencing is a primary component of any academic work with proper accreditation of the original creations of concepts (Neville, 2016). In simpler terms, referencing is about using other people's work and giving them credit. It has a significant function of preserving the credibility of the academic work to enable readers to identify sources of information used in the research process. Accurate citation is important to ensure quality work for scholars. Also, it helps them avoid plagiarism by offering credits to other scholars who may have done similar work (Neville, 2016). In academia, referencing plays a crucial role. When done right, referencing makes it possible for academic work to be credible, not forgetting that it has considered other researchers' works. This is important from the ethical point of view related to such work and the fact that the reader might need proof of the writer's trustworthiness as a scholar. Referencing preserves academic integrity since other people's work is credited appropriately. Throughout the course, referencing skills were important for different tasks and activities.

Feelings

Initially, I felt overwhelmed by the prospect of mastering these academic skills. For example, paraphrasing during assignments was a challenging task. I often found it difficult to remain as close to the material as possible without distorting its meaning. Similarly, I faced a lot of difficulties to learn the Harvard referencing style. Particularly, citing multiple authors from different journal articles, books, conference papers and websites was a real challenge for me. However, over time I started to feel more confident and progressed

through the module. I learned about tools like Mendeley, Zotero and Bibguru. These tools simplified referencing a lot for me. Besides, structured note-taking systems like Cornell notes and mind mapping helped me better organise information. By the end, I felt a sense of achievement and understood that these skills could positively impact my academic performance.

Evaluation

These skills helped me a lot throughout the module. Note-taking methods and concept mapping helped me organise information systematically. I could form clear connections between different concepts in my classes with these techniques. For instance, I used the Cornell method to summarise contents effectively during a lecture and reviewed them later. This process improved my overall understanding of a topic. Similarly, paraphrasing exercises allowed me to successfully present other people's ideas with academic integrity. However, there were some challenges as well. Particularly, I found that paraphrasing longer sections accurately and citing complex sources without errors is quite hard. However, I consistently practised and developed a stronger command over these skills to overcome these challenges through tools.

Analysis

Note-taking is a critical skill that aids students in engaging more actively with their studies and retaining information more effectively (Godfrey, 2023). Systems like the Cornell method can help to create organised summaries (Medium, 2015), while concept mapping facilitates connections between ideas. Effective note-taking correlates with better academic performance (Bailey, 2018). Paraphrasing, on the other hand, is essential in academic writing for combining and presenting information without plagiarism (Kissner, 2006). Learning to rephrase content without distorting its meaning was a significant improvement in my academic skills. Furthermore, referencing is vital for preserving credibility and academic honesty (Weerawardane and Byrne, 2021). Referencing tools ensured my accuracy and minimised my mistakes. Overall, these skills have positively transformed my approach to academic work.

Conclusion

Effective note-taking, paraphrasing content accurately, and citing sources appropriately have significantly improved my academic performance. Although I initially struggled with certain aspects, such as paraphrasing complex material and the Harvard referencing style. I consistently practiced and some tools helped me overcome these challenges. By mastering these skills, I have developed strategies that enhance comprehension and academic integrity, which are essential for my future academic and professional growth.

Action Plan

I plan to continue practising note-taking, paraphrasing, and referencing daily to strengthen these skills further. I will explore additional features of referencing tools to enhance my efficiency. I also realised that receiving and implementing feedback will also be a critical part of this process. Here, my plan is to achieve greater accuracy and professionalism in my academic and research work through the consistent application of these strategies

Conclusion

Note-taking, paraphrasing and referencing skills have improved my performance tremendously in my academic endeavours. I developed successful strategies during the education process by mastering the techniques that enhance comprehensibility, avoiding using other people's work and maintaining the highest academic ethics. As for the future, I intend to keep practising in these areas so that I can create them in the future and use tools and feedback to enhance my writing and research. I want to strengthen these skills with the help of consistent daily practice, studying additional features of the tools, and implementing critiques into practice. This will assist me or let me gain higher accuracy and a professional approach to my studies.

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