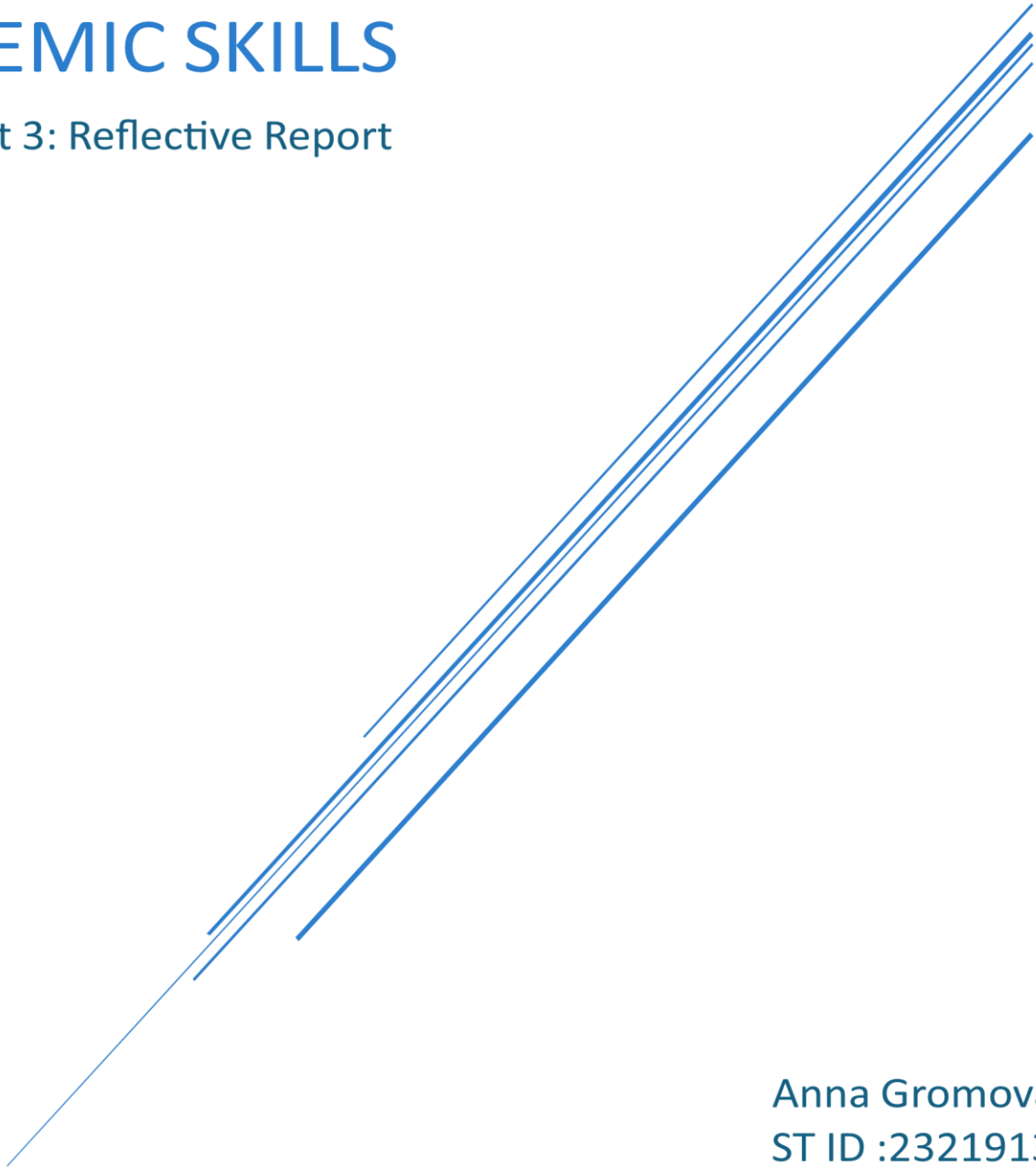




ACADEMIC SKILLS

Assignment 3: Reflective Report



Anna Gromova

ST ID :2321913

Lecturer name: Peter Allen

Module Code: LCLM4001

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Introduction

Academic skills are essential for success in one's educational journey and beyond since they equip one with valuable abilities that benefit them throughout life. Taking notes is important in and beyond school as it will enable one to process information deeply and retain it for extended periods.

Furthermore, paraphrasing is also essential since it enables one to avoid plagiarism by stating information in their own words.

Research skills are also essential in and beyond academics as they allow one to develop new ideas, identify research gaps and challenge them, and have a deeper understanding of the topic.

This report reflects the academic skills I have learned throughout this module, their importance, the challenges I have encountered, their relationship to my experience, and hopes for the future and future action on the skills. These include note-taking, research and referencing skills.

Note – taking

Note-taking entails recording important information concisely and organized for future reference (Thomas, 2021). It is an essential skill in academics, business meetings, personal organization, and brainstorming sessions, among other contexts. The main methods in notetaking include taking linear notes, outlining, annotation, Cornell method, mind mapping, and visual notes. Linear notes follow the presented information flow and are often written in bullet points or sentences. Outlining entails organizing information in headings, subheadings, and indentations to represent the relationship between ideas. Annotation includes engaging more deeply with the material by adding comments, reflections, and questions to existing texts, and the Cornell method entails dividing one's page into segments for cues, notes, and summary to encourage active engagement, review, and organization.

Moreover, mind mapping is a visual technique that entails a central idea surrounded by related topics. Visual notes, including creating diagrams, sketches, and symbols of the information that one can recall easily. Notetaking was not a new skill since I have used it throughout my academic life.

However, the module helped me dive deeper into the different note-taking methods, which helped me understand them more deeply. For instance, in week 8, we completed an academic skills exercise in class that included notetaking. This allowed me to view the skill as information representation and a channel for critical thinking and creativity. It creates engagement through active information processing, questioning the material, and connecting different ideas (Jansen et al., 2017). I also discovered the Cornell notetaking method through the module. This skill has been helpful since it

encourages me to review my notes. I divide the sections of my page in an organized manner and add color, enabling me to revisit the page and revise. I also find it easier to recall information that way since it creates an image in my mind that I can remember easily. It will also be helpful in the future since I will apply it to business meetings and personal reflections. Through note-taking, I learned that visuals are the best way to remember information. I found visual notes to be very useful, engaging, and enjoyable. I have come to understand that using mind mapping techniques helps me remember information better.

Research Skills

Research skills entail actively locating information, organizing it, and using it to address questions, solve problems, and make informed decisions (Allison et al., 2016). Universities teach students about the research method, which includes understanding researchers' attitudes and behaviors to uphold ethics in research. Students learn how to develop effective research strategies to achieve their objectives successfully. The focus is on conducting proper research, maintaining ethical standards like avoiding data manipulation, and nurturing students to become respected figures in the scientific community, capable of producing high-quality research. (Syamsul,A . Basyaruddin, Yuhdi,A, 2020)

We practiced secondary research in this module but learned all the research methods. Mostly, we were analyzing a specific topic based on existing information. Learning research skills was intense as I learned many new things about research. For instance, learning about research methods like sampling was exciting. I am eager to apply these skills in the future. I also found the data collection methods, like conducting interviews, exciting and would like to apply them in the future. Practically, the classwork papers we did were based on investigating a topic through secondary research materials like textbooks and journal articles. At first, the information was overwhelming. However, moving forward, the process would become interesting as I continued to learn more about the research topic.

Through further reading, I discovered different search strategies, such as correctly using search engines and databases and employing advanced search operators to narrow down results and find specific information. These skills will be essential in my career life and beyond as one requires research to keep up with the market trends and emerging information based on one's field. One challenge I encountered, however, was source evaluation.

In research, evaluating the validity of sources was also tricky. There is a lot of information online; therefore, determining the sources' credibility is essential.

The CRAAP Test, developed by librarians at California State University - Chico, is a valuable tool for evaluating the reliability of a web resource or any other source. It provides a set of questions to help you decide if a source is suitable for use in academic research. The test covers Authority, Relevance, Purpose, Accuracy, and Currency (Renirie, 2023). However, the CRAAP method of source evaluation came in handy. It entails determining the currency of the source, the relevance, authority, accuracy, and purpose. Sources should be current since topics and theories change with time. For example, businesses in the modern landscape are shifting from traditional theories of operation due to technological evolution and other aspects. The sources should also be relevant to the research topic and objectives. It is also essential to check the author's qualifications and experience in the research topic. Their organization should also be reputable. Moreover, one should evaluate the accuracy of the source, which entails the reliability and correctness of the information.

At the end of the module, however, I felt more confident about using the academic skills in my educational and career life.

Referencing Skills

Referencing entails accurately and consistently citing sources used in academic and professional writing according to a particular referencing style. The main styles include Harvard referencing, American Psychological Association (APA) referencing, Modern Language Association (MLA) referencing, Chicago referencing, and Vancouver referencing style (Neville, 2016). Proper referencing ensures academic integrity by allowing acknowledgment of different writers in one's writing to avoid legal consequences brought about by plagiarism (Fazilatfar et al., 2018). It also enhances the credibility and persuasiveness of one's argument through evidence support. Referencing also allows readers to easily verify one's information since they can use references to locate and verify the information sources cited in a document. This enhances transparency, trustworthiness, and accountability in scholarly and professional communication.

Referencing was a new skill that I learned through the module. I liked it because it was exciting to understand and apply, and it was new to me. For instance, in week 5, we did a 30-minute quiz that required the application of referencing skills. The most surprising thing about referencing was the level of detail needed. It's not just mentioning the author and the publication year. It often involves specific formatting rules for different sources, including page numbers and editions. The referencing style also affects the formatting of the paper. For instance, while in MLA style, one is required to write their details on the top left corner, in APA, one writes their details on a separate cover page, beginning with

the topic at the center of the page followed by student, instructor, and course details at the bottom (Neville, 2016). As a new skill, it was challenging, especially when referencing videos and podcasts. The different referencing methods were challenging to remember. I intend to practice more on referencing as this will be essential for my academic and career life

Conclusion

The report above reflects the academic skills I learned in this module, including notetaking, research, and referencing. I learned a new note-taking method that entails dividing the page into different sections for easy memory. I also realized that I remember 6 information better when I record it in diagrams. It was also interesting to learn the different research skills. In the future, I look forward to applying my skills in primary research. Learning how to reference was also exciting, and I was surprised to discover the depth of detail required in referencing. While I found it challenging as a new skill, I intend to do more practice to perfect it alongside notetaking and research.

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