

MOIN'S REFLECTIVE REPORT

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Module Code: LCLM4001

Module: Academic Skills

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to reflect on my personal experiences in Academic Skills throughout my university course, focusing on key skills I have developed and refined over the course of my learning journey. I will explore how I improved my ability to summarise complex information, enhanced my time management skills, and adopted productivity techniques such as the Pomodoro Technique and the Eisenhower Matrix. These experiences have not only helped me to manage my academic workload more effectively but also contributed significantly to my personal and professional growth. The skills I gained are transferable beyond the classroom and will continue to benefit me in future academic work and career pursuits. [See Appendix 1]

2. Description of Experiences

One of the first challenges I encountered during the module was managing large volumes of information from lectures, readings and discussions. Initially, I struggled to keep track of key points, which made revision and assignment preparation more difficult. However, through guided practice, feedback and with the help of my peers I had learned to summarise content by more effectively identifying main ideas, condensing notes, and using my own words to make material easier to recall.

Time management emerged as another crucial area for development. Faced with deadlines and competing priorities, I realised that simply “working harder” was not sustainable. I began experimenting with structured approaches, including the Pomodoro Technique, which involved working in focused 25-minute intervals followed by short breaks. This method helped me to maintain concentration while reducing burnout.

I also implemented the Eisenhower Matrix, which helped me categorise tasks by urgency and importance. By identifying what truly needed my immediate attention, I avoided spending excessive time on low-priority tasks. Over time, these strategies not only improved my academic productivity but also gave me a sense of control over my workload, reducing stress and increasing my confidence in meeting deadlines.

3. Reflection - Evaluation and Analysis

Looking back on my experience in this module, I can identify both strengths and areas where I had initially struggled. Learning to summarise effectively was one of the most valuable skills I had developed. Early in the term, I tended to take overly detailed notes, writing down almost everything without filtering for relevance. This not only consumed a lot of time but also made reviewing my notes a difficult task. Through practice, I learned to focus on key points, main arguments, and supporting evidence by underlining key information, making notes of them, and then using my notes to summarise and then organise information visually. This shift allowed me to process material more efficiently, making it easier to recall during assignments and discussions.

Time management was another skill that evolved significantly. Initially, I underestimated the time needed for certain tasks, which led to last-minute rushes and unnecessary stress. The introduction of structured methods, particularly the Pomodoro Technique, was transformative. By breaking my work into 25-minute focused intervals with 5-minute breaks, I found I could keep my attention for longer periods and reduce procrastination- something I tend to struggle with quite a bit. It also helped me to recognise patterns in my concentration levels, allowing me to schedule demanding tasks during my peak productivity hours.

The Eisenhower Matrix became a practical decision-making tool for prioritising work. Early on I often felt overwhelmed by the sheer number of tasks on my to-do list, treating all of them as equally urgent. This method taught me to distinguish between tasks that were urgent and important, those that were important but not urgent, and those that could be delegated or postponed. Applying this framework reduced the mental clutter and helped me to use my time more strategically.

There were moments when these techniques did not work perfectly. For example, during weeks with deadlines, I sometimes over-relied on the Pomodoro Technique, breaking my focus too frequently while I was in a flow state. I learned to be flexible, sometimes extending work intervals when I was fully engaged. Similarly, the Eisenhower Matrix required honest self-assessment. Initially, I tended to overclassify tasks as “urgent” due to anxiety about deadlines. Over time, I became more realistic in my categorisation, which improved the system’s effectiveness.

These experiences have taught me how important it is to be able to adapt. While structured methods are highly beneficial, they should be used correctly and must be able to fit the task at hand, as well as my personal working style and the time I have available. I have also realised how valuable reflecting on my own work was to identify what was working and what was not.

The overall effect of these skills has been positive. I am now more confident in managing multiple responsibilities without feeling constantly under pressure. The ability to summarise effectively has made me a more active learner, and better time management has increased my overall productivity while leaving space for rest and self-care. These are skills that extend beyond the academic setting, and in a professional context they will surely help me to manage projects, meet deadlines, and communicate information clearly.

I think most importantly, I have developed a stronger sense of self-awareness regarding how I work best. This module has not only given me academic tools to work with, it has also encouraged me to think critically about my own habits, priorities, and strategies for personal growth. I believe that this module has been crucial in helping me to understand how certain tasks could be completed effectively and efficiently with minimal stress and less time wasted, and I also believe it will continue to be so in the future.

4. Conclusion

Overall, this module has very much been a pivotal stage in my learning journey, equipping me with practical skills in summarising, time management, and prioritisation. The use of structured methods such as the Pomodoro Technique and Eisenhower Matrix has enhanced my productivity whilst reducing stress, enabling me to approach academic work with much better confidence and control. Beyond the academic benefits, these strategies have strengthened my adaptability and self-awareness; qualities that will serve me well in both professional and personal contexts. The experiences from this module have not only improved my efficiency but it has also shaped my approach to lifelong learning.

5. References

<https://asana.com/resources/eisenhower-matrix> "The Eisenhower Matrix: How to prioritize your to-do list" (Accessed 11.08.2025)

<https://www.todoist.com/productivity-methods/pomodoro-technique> "The Pomodoro Technique" (Accessed 11.08.2025)

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Page from notebook on Pomodoro and Eisenhower Techniques.

