



Course: CERT HE Skills for the Workplace,

Health & Social Care

Module: Academic and Employability Skills

BMSW4001_LON

Lecturer: Matthew Suff

**‘My reflections on selected topics covered in
the module Academic and Employability skills’**

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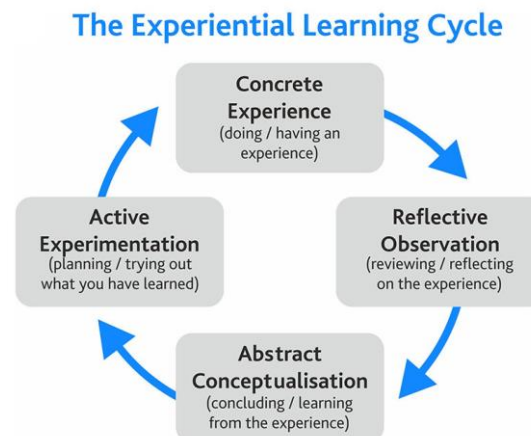
1. Introduction

This report discusses my personal goals and professional aspirations to become a Psychologist, analyzing and reflecting through my personal experience since I entered the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, London campus, enrolled as a student of the Cert HE Skills for the Workplace Health & Social Care. In this report, I will explain my past experiences and what I learned in this first period of my studies, mainly in the Academic and Employability skills module. Understanding how to apply what I learned in the subject module helped me to improve my skills like interpersonal communication and ability to understand people, intelligence and emotional management, time management, academic writing, and reflection and critical analysis. All of these skills will help me to achieve the desired career as a Psychology for Social Work, and to perform professional duties with excellence. Since I arrived in London three years ago, I have been planning on how to improve my English language skills and also all of those professional abilities mentioned above. After learning about Workplace Health & Social Care course, I understood that this could be the first step towards achieving my personal goals. So, in the face of the great challenge of expressing myself and writing an academic report in English, and after learning the subjects of the Academic and Employability skills module, I am very excited and optimistic with my progress, and also feel more confident and able to develop the ability to learn the necessary professional skills which will meet my expectation.

2. My reflections on selected topics covered in the module Academic and Employability skills

Reflecting on the Academic and Employability skills module, I can state that there were some particularly important topics to me like Time Management and Organising Study, Academic Writing, Referencing, and Public Speech, which were paramount to write this report, and also because it was essential to give me skills to choose and recognize the best possible reflection model to apply on this same report. Kobs (1984), for example, are researched by several authors, assessing learning styles across multiple courses. Sobral (2005), assumes that the relevance of Kolb's study is notorious not only for being one of the first researchers to formulate a complete study and model but also for being able to segregate into groups and characterize the different ways of learning of individuals.

Therefore, the construction of the entire dialogue through this report is inspired by Kolb's studies and perspective, so that we can evaluate the narratives based on the 4 aspects defined by him, in such a way as to be possible exploit an order in my thoughts about the reconsiderations, allowing me to follow my process and understand my progression.



2.1 Time management and Organising study

After learning about time management and organizing studies I realized that this is not just a mandatory approach in relation to writing my academic essays but also how to organize my personal life in general as well. Good time management skills allowed me to be more productive, developing all activities more centred, focused, time-framed, and, in this way, committing to the deadlines with no hassle and stress-free (Entrepreneur Handbook, 2018). We enter then in an attempt to understand why the quality of life should be something to be thought about.

The first theories on quality of life began to be published between the 1950s and the 1970s. At that time, there was still no talk of precariousness or flexibilization of work, but a strong behaviourist Organizational Psychology was in vogue based on the idea that efficiency is trained, that health at work is resistance to fatigue and the psycho technical perspective that health should be a prerequisite for selection for work (Marcelo, 2009). The aim was to find ways to manage people to maximize profits and align employee potentiality with business objectives. During this period, Organizational Psychology sought to show that quality of life programs developed in companies would generate better physical and mental health for workers and that this would bring productivity gains. In other words, it is possible to understand

that work, study and personal life have become objects of consumption and desire. This does not change the fact that there are no psychological conflicts that lead to serious pathologies. Not discarding the fact that as Cury (2015) points out that "we are currently an anxious society that consumes unrestrainedly", which allows us to look with more understanding at the need of organization and activities to maintain the order of affairs, being recognized with more lucidity and less psychological suffering.

Thus, through this observation and reflection, it is possible to understand that Times management has been the most adequate tool that we can control better our lives, tasks and responsibilities without being mentally affected. This also allows us to comply with what was proposed at the academic, professional or personal level.

2.2 Academic writing

Authors such as Gilles Deleuze (1997, p.11) stated that "writing is always a case of becoming, always unfinished, always in the process of being done", or that we should write to "invent a missing people" (idem, p.14), or that we must "operate as foreigners in our language" (idem, p.16), they referred very properly to literary writing. Its purpose was precisely to detach formal writing from literary writing, even if the definition of a concept, in philosophy or the enunciation of a proposition, in science is the passage of affects and percepts to the materiality of language (Deleuze; Guattari, 1992). Starting my learning at the university in the UK and the following reasoning accordance to the Kolbs cycle, it was possible to me to observe very heterogeneous characteristics in the University such as social class, gender, personal goals and expectations, educational trajectory, age group, work situation and others.

Therefore, it is also noted that institutions have been preparing themselves through social inclusion, technological innovation and new educational spaces. It was generally known to me that academic writing in higher education causes changes in students life such as personal, cognitive, professional, effective, cultural and social levels, as it allows the development of new skills for a professional qualification, making the student more prepared for the workplace and academic life in general. It is learned from such experience that Academic writing ceases to be academic if it is detached from the regimes of truth that support it. The expedient of representation, even though it always demands to be questioned, is essential when it comes to philosophy and science. Deleuze and Foucault, in the famous debate "Intellectuals and power", tirelessly repeat that a theory is a toolbox, that is, it must serve, it must work (Foucault, 1993b, p.71). It must, therefore, reflect the rigour, critical perspective, constant concern with objectivity and clarity that are an inherent part of research and academic writing. Thus, the idea applies that academic writing should not be merely a string of terms that mean something.

A text does not have to be an academic mimicry exercise, but rather an analytical and argumentative exercise that allows the author to speak for himself. In other words, speaking in the first person, in this case, has nothing to do with making writing a confessional or a narcissistic stage, but equipment of enunciations, considerations, postulates and arguments that, in the final analysis, update a negotiation with the reader. Therefore, we can apply this learning not just in the academic domain, but also in the work environment, in the thinking and critical analysis, in the learning to understand individual differences and challenges, in the improving the ability to solve problems and in the relationships with other professionals and patients or clients.

2.3 Referencing

According to my own experience living at the university and also absorbing what was presented to me based on Kolb studies, it was possible to think that academic writing and professional trajectory are subjects that we can align with the issue of any study. In this view, when writing any academic work using renowned references, it will contribute to the construction of academic knowledge, based on all of the past references that acts as a way to support our critical thoughts. Thus, we can observe how Literature has shown that the years that students attend higher education are accompanied by an extensive and integrated set of changes. This set of changes will result in the diversity of experiences that make up this educational process, whether academic or non-academic activities, mandatory or non-mandatory (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). The academic environment has been important to our development as it offers the opportunity to share ideas and experiences and meet people (Astin, 1993; Bowen, 1977; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). It is also up to us students to make this change happen as our involvement with these opportunities expands. In this case, development or change will not be a mere consequence of the university's impact on us but will depend on our involvement with the resources offered by the institution (Astin, 1993).

However, the above reflection brings about a new idea that the use of references in the construction of academic writing does not make us lose the originality of the theme, and does not make us write in a shallow way. The truth is that references should be used as a way to find a trustworthy point that leads us to confront ideas, thoughts and science, consequentially building a dialogue that will provide the construction of new knowledge and theories. This

active experience acquired through academic studies and references (even from other worldviews) only try to form in universities a more complete, competent and diverse professional person, ready to explore and to seek knowledge, in the most varied territories, therefore expanding the possibilities of an academic career. Knowing other realities and constituting our formation of the world from other different views will help out to build a more empathetic professional, with redoubled attention to agendas that are becoming more and more relevant in our society, especially for a social worker.

2.4 Public speech

I am originally from Brazil and, by living within the unbridled inequality society that plagues the country, even with vast wealth throughout its territory, I am aware of the mental and psychological health issues of those around me, caused by its inequality. Therefore, I became interested in the most diverse ways of developing knowledge in favour of building a fairer and more equitable society. According to the Gini index (2020), observing various data about the growing social inequality worldwide, and also the personal knowledge acquired over time, I developed a desire to get involved with social inequality, especially targeting to work with children who are the most affected due to high levels of inequality. My aspiration is to study Psychology, in an attempt to help people develop better mental health and, like this, build a better society. Moreover, after completing the current university course, my plan is to work on social projects, NGOs, third sector institutions, and any type of institution that aims to reduce social inequality around the globe.

One of the most important issues when helping people move up social classes is financial stabilization. As stated in the book *The Psychology of Money* by Housel (2020), "the relationship with money and how to invest it, depends on personal history to encourage people to work for the change in personal and economic conditions imposed by inequalities in large cities". On this view, my intent is to use the knowledge that will be acquired along the ongoing university course, together with my previous working experiences as a pedagogical tutor, sales marketing and financial worker, which will be my foundation to make difference in the social inequality area. I am planning to encourage people to work for the change in their personal mindset and also economic conditions imposed by inequalities in large cities around the world. Through the lessons that I learned during the classes of this module, I understand that is very possible to effectively apply the teachings and knowledge to reach my predetermined goals. Throughout my present experience of living and working in England, together with the opportunity of studying at the University of Wales, I believe that my studies will contribute positively to the whole society. I am confident that I can further develop and apply my

knowledge to fulfil my desire to culminate in doing positive work for society, using my academic and practical skills to improve the quality of life of those in vulnerable situations.

3. Conclusion

As explained in the report above my intention is to become a Psychologist, aiming to help people with their mental health issues and their social condition. The Academic and Employability skills module was a milestone in my future career, as it delivered to me a crucial understanding of interpersonal communication, the ability to understand people, intelligence and emotional management, academic writing, time management, public speech and academic critical analysis. With all of these tools, I am feeling confident that I can develop excellent work, with the knowledge that is mandatory in this field.

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