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Reflective Report: Certificate of Higher Education in Business Skills for the Workplace

This report reflects on my academic development during the Academic Skills module (LCLM 4001) focusing on activities such as the academic skills quiz (Task one) the application of Academic Skills Exercise (Task two) and classroom experiences. These tasks introduced me to critical concepts including paraphrasing, time management, and referencing. Engaging with these skills was essential in preparing me for university-level learning ([Cottrell, 2019](#); [Bailey, 2018](#)) as I reflect on these experiences, I aim to highlight how they have shaped my understanding of academic practice and contributed to my confidence as a student ([Moon, 2013](#)).

Description of experiences:

During the module I participated in several practical and theoretical activities designed to build my academic foundation. Task 1, a timed academic quiz, evaluated my understanding of referencing, academic integrity, and study skills. Although I initially struggled with some referencing formats, I gained a clearer grasp through revision and class feedback ([Pears and Shields, 2019](#); [Neville, 2016](#)). this task revealed areas where I needed improvement but also built my confidence in topics I had already understood.

Task 2 required me to apply academic conventions practically, including paraphrasing a short passage and writing a paragraph. It helped me realise that paraphrasing goes

beyond word 'substitution,' it requires genuine understanding of the material ([Bailey, 2018](#); [Gillett, 2025](#)).

My first draft was too close to the original text, but after reviewing class resources and peer comments, I improved.

Classroom discussions enhanced learning experiences during a peer- editing activity. I got valuable feedback on my writing structure and tone, which I used to refine my work ([Race, 2020](#); [Schön, 1983](#)). The module also introduced me to different note-taking strategies. I explored Cornell notes, which I found especially useful due to my visual learning style ([Fleming, 2001](#); [Cottrell, 2019](#)).

Analysis and Personal Reflection

Reflecting on Task 1, I realised that I had underestimated the importance of proper referencing and citation. Although I knew plagiarism was wrong, I wasn't fully aware of how easy it is to plagiarise unintentionally without accurate referencing ([Neville, 2016](#); [Pears and Shields, 2019](#)). The quiz helped me identify weaknesses in distinguishing between direct quotes, paraphrased material, and common knowledge. This experience encouraged me to study the Harvard referencing system in more detail and start using tools like referencing guides (CiteThemRight) and reference managers (Zotero) ([Gillett, 2020](#); [Open University, 2021](#)).

Task 2 challenged my writing and critical thinking skills. At first, I struggled to paraphrase effectively, often mimicking sentence structures from the source. After reviewing learning materials and examples in Bailey's Handbook (2018), I gained a better understanding of academic voice and interpretation. Schön's (1983) theory of reflection supports this kind of experiential learning, and I now appreciate how feedback helps shape academic growth. Feedback also played a key role in this process. Through repeated attempts, I improved the structure of my paragraph, using topic sentences, supporting evidence, and a concluding line, something I had not done confidently before ([Race, 2020](#); [Cottrell, 2019](#)).

One of my personal strengths throughout the module was my active engagement in classroom discussions. I was not afraid to ask questions or contribute ideas, which helped reinforce my learning. According to (Moon, 2013), reflection becomes more meaningful when it's socially constructed, I found that peer collaboration accelerated my learning. For example, during a peer review session, a classmate highlighted that my writing was clear but lacked formal language. After this, I revised my phrasing using more academic sentence structures, which made my work more professional and cohesive (Gillett, 2020; Maclellan, 2017).

However, I identified time management as a key area for improvement. I often left tasks until the last minute, especially for task 2, which meant I didn't have enough time for proofreading or revision. This added pressure and affected my ability to reflect on feedback. Since then, I've started using weekly planners and time management techniques to structure my workload more effectively and reduce last-minute stress (Cottrell, 2019).

I also learned about my learning style through class discussions and reading on the VARK model (Fleming, 2001). I discovered that I am a visual learner, and that tools like colour-coded notes, diagrams, and mind maps help me process information more effectively. By using the Cornell method, I was able to break down information into manageable parts, which improved my ability to review and revise before assessments (Bailey, 2018; Race, 2020).

Another area of development was my ability to reflect critically. Before this module, I hadn't realised the value of evaluating my own learning. Now I see myself as an active learner (Moon, 2013; Schön, 1983), someone who takes responsibility for their own growth, an essential trait for both university and the workplace.

Conclusion

In summary, the Academic Skills module has helped me improve both academically and personally. Through activities like Task 1, and Task 2, and classroom engagement, I've enhanced my understanding of referencing, paraphrasing, and time management.

I've also learned more about how I learn best and how to use that to my advantage. While I still have areas to work on, particularly time management, I now feel more confident approaching university-level assignments. The module has encouraged me to take initiative, reflect on my progress, and apply these strategies across my future learning (Cottrell, 2019; Moon, 2013).

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