

INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT

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1.Introduction

In this individual assignment, which is a reflective report I will reflect and explain what I have learned on my first semester in University of Wales Trinity Saint David. All of the lectures were online so far, because of Coronavirus. I am going to explain in details what I have learned in these three topics I have chosen describing my feelings, my thoughts what I liked about these lectures and what I did not quite like. I am going to use a reflective method called Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle. Also I will show the positive and negative aspects about online learning using references.

2.Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle 1984

The learning cycles, that David Kolb used in his model published involves four stages:

- Concrete Experience (doing or having an experience)
- Reflective Observation (reviewing or reflecting on the experience)
- Abstract Conceptualisation (concluding or learning from the experience)
- Active Experimentation (trying out or planning what a person has learned)

The first stage of his model is Concrete Experience, which is if the learner has a previous or existing experience in this field and for instance you can meet new people at university and

become friends and that is a new experience for you. The second stage is Reflective Observation, which explains the learner's reflection on personal basis. The third stage is Abstract Conceptualisation meaning the learner forms a new idea or modify their current abstract ideas of the field. The last stage of his model is Active Experimentation, which is the best part of this method, because the learner applies what they have learned in this field and trying it out.

I am going to put this out more easily, basically the questions a person can ask themselves so they can use this model easily are: What happened? What was my personal experience out of this? Why did this happen and is there any research that can help my understanding and knowledge? What will I do if it happens again and how will I apply it to the world and on my personal life?

The reason why Kolb's theory is important and why I have chosen this exact model of reflective writing is because it highlights the important things and the components in the learning cycle, which makes it easier for me to work with. It allows me to reflect on what happened during my experience and also apply it in my every day life.

3. Topics I have chosen

The first topic I have chosen for this reflective report is Time Management and Organising Study meaning if I allocate my time properly so I can have enough sleep, work out, study and go out. It is important for me to balance my family life, my relationships and university.

Before studying in this university I did not have the useful experience of managing my time right and being organised. I actually had a lack of organisation. When I started studying at this university my first lecture was Time Management. When I first listened to my lecturer talking in dept about it at first I was feeling like attending university is a waste of time, because I thought that I already knew this, but when I got back to the power point presentation and read more about it I decided to research more about time management and apply it in my every day life. I am in Bulgaria right now with my grandparents and that is why me and my friends meet at five pm every single day. When I told them that every Tuesday I could not go out at five pm because my lecture finishes at eight pm and I do revision at least until nine pm so I can reflect on what I have learned on this day, they were really mad at me, because they could stay out until ten pm, as they are under eighteen years old. We argued and did not talk to each other for a week and I was feeling really sad about that. What I decided to do is go back to my time management lecture and see what I can learn from there and use it so I can go out with them and still focus on my studies, because studies are really important for me and I want to succeed in life. I read on my Time Management lecture that for me a list of the things I have to do today can be really helpful and I decided to apply it to my every day life. Every day before I go to bed I create a list of things, something like a journal and I write down what I have to do the next day, for instance shopping for food at 6pm or visiting a friend at 3pm. I decided to talk to my friends about my time management and explaining to them that I need to focus on my studies and other important things for me such as my family and boyfriend. So we agreed to meet only 4 days a weeks, so I can have my Monday and Tuesday to study, Wednesday to spend time by myself or with my boyfriend and then Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays and Fridays being with them at this certain time, which is five pm and Sundays for my grandparents and myself. I must say I really liked this lecture and really learned how to allocate my time properly so I can still have time to myself.

The second topic I have chosen to reflect on is CV writing. To be really honest I know all about CV writing, because I work ever since I was 16 years old. I first started working in Germany as a waitress so I know how to structure an appropriate CV and how to convince someone at hiring me, because I apply for the jobs I think I have the appropriate skills for them, like a good communication and self confidence. At this university the lecturer made us create our own new CV or use our current CV. I decided to create a new CV and apply the skills I have learned from the lecture for example how to appropriately structure it so it catches the eye of the employer and look presentable. The CV I have done in class and my previous CV I had were pretty similar so I was really confident in myself and decided to apply for a babysitter's job, because I really love to entertain children and I think I possess the skills of knowing how to deal with their mood swings, how to communicate appropriately with them and also possess leadership skills. I have worked as a babysitter before and I know how challenging it could be and creating the CV with the help of my lecturer and their advice has been really helpful for me. What I did not quite like about CV writing is that at first there was no help for the people who were struggling with writing it, because some of the other students have never worked before in their life and had to write down about their previous jobs and they did not have any jobs or any experience so it did not look quite professional, the lecturer helped them only after their CV was structured, which I dislike.

The last topic I have chosen is my online learning experience at University of Wales Trinity Saint David. Before I came to this University I studied Health and Social Care at Manchester College. Our last school year was online, so I am really used to that. Coronavirus has affected our lives significantly, but the positive side here is that before coronavirus I was not so motivated to focus in classes and wake up early, I was always a night owl, not an early bird. I really struggled to attend classes and be productive in the mornings, because I always had an early start in college, which was 9:00 am. When I applied for this university I was really worried that I had to travel every week to London, because I am originally from Manchester. That indicates that every Sunday I had to pack for two days- Monday and Tuesday, because those are the days that I must attend classes. When the university announced that the classes are going to be online for this first semester February until the end of April I was so relieved, because then I would not travel to London and stress myself out about trains, hotels, university etc. My online experience has been great so far – I made a lot of friends, which I communicate with every single day. I also like my schedule, even if I wake up early on Mondays, I sleep until 12:00 pm the next day. It is very exciting for me as I learn new skills, that I could use in the future and the Bachelorette Diploma I will acquire would help me open up my own business when I get older. Some of the great advantages of online learning is that I could stay at home and focus on my lectures more, as I am not distracted by other people and if someone is talking on Microsoft Teams, I can ask the lecturer to mute them. In person I could not mute individuals or make them shut up. My attendance ever since college has significantly improved, because I actually enjoy staying at home and attend my lectures from my own bed. Another great thing is that if I do not understand something I could go to Moodle and check it one more time and do a research about it and then I could probably understand it. But there are a lot of disadvantages to online learning too. For instance I sometimes have the inability to focus on the screen for a long time, as I am blind and I wear glasses all the time. I can also be easily distracted by social media such as Instagram, Facebook, Tiktok etc., because there is no one with me that could say "Do not use your phone" and I sometimes can not control myself. Something that has happened to me is that my Wifi provider shuts my internet down whenever they want and it logs me off the online lectures and I get really mad and upset sometimes that I have to write emails to my tutors and explain to them that it is not my fault that I am not attending the lectures. I sometimes feel sense of isolation as well, because I am a social butterfly and I like to meet new people and spend time with them and to talk to them face to face. Sometimes it is very sad to see their faces on the screen and not in person.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion using Kolb's model has been really helpful for me to write this report , because I explained my feelings in details without holding back. I have learned a lot of new skills this semester such as time management and how to use my time efficiently so I can have enough time to sleep, study, go out and meet people and having time to myself as well. This semester I felt really motivated and great to do well in this university and I hope the next semester is as motivating and positive as this one.

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