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Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Academic and Employability Skills (BMHP4001_LON)

Assessment Component 2

ACE Practical Portfolio

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Word count: 2201

Learner declaration

This assignment is my own original work. No part of this work has been copied from any other source or person except where due acknowledgement is made, and no part of the work has been previously submitted for assessment at this or any other institution.
I have read the Student Academic Integrity Policy and understand its implications.

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Introduction

This is an academic report based on Gibb's Reflective model (1988) where I am reflecting on my learning in Academic and Employability Skills module. In the reflective report, I discuss majorly three topics of the module including; Referencing, Time management, and Online learning experience. Following Gibb's reflective Model (Gibbs, 1988), this report discusses what happened, when it happened and where it happened through the **Description**; my reaction about the topics discussed, and the module as a whole through the **Feelings**; what research says and what could be done better through the **Evaluation**. Finally, I conclude the report by discussing my **Action Plan** by showing what could be done to improve on what went wrong.

Gibbs' Reflective cycle

Gibbs' Reflective cycle (1988) cited in Jasper (2013) teaches us to learn by doing where we critically keep reflecting on what happened, the impact and the action plan. This is why I am using this model to reflect about my learning because I will be able to explain what happened and how I feel about it.

Description

I am currently attending school at University of Wales Trinity Saint David doing a Certificate in Higher education skills for the workplace (health and social care). This is like a dream come true because in my early stages of growth, I struggled in many aspects to get basic needs including proper education due to my poor background back in Africa. Because of poverty, raising school fees for my education was not easy

that is why I studied in stages characterized by absenteeism. However, with the help of neighbors, relatives, and other well-wishers, I managed to attain some level of education even though I did not reach University level.

I thank God for granting me a chance to come to England where I have been offered a chance to attain higher level of education through Student Finance Government Program. I applied for a Certificate in Higher education skills for the workplace (health and social care) through this program and it was offered to me effective June 2021. Since I always wanted to become a nurse as I grew up, I strongly believe that this course is a foundation for me to pursue my career as a nurse and manager in health care. My relatives and friends are also doing a great job to encourage me to continue with job so as to achieve my career.

So far, the course is moving on well because the learning is so far successful, and assignments were issued to test our learning. The topics so far covered under this course include; Time management, Academic writing, Paraphrasing, Summarizing, Referencing, Reflection, CV writing, cover letter writing, online learning experiences, and public speaking. The tutors and lecturers are doing their job of teaching very well so far in addition to being understanding.

Referencing

According to Neville (2009), referencing refers to the act of giving credit and acknowledging someone's ideas or words used in academic writing. Under this topic, the tutor taught that it is important to respect other authors especially when their source like; books, journal articles, websites among others are used. The tutor pointed out that referencing goes hand in hand with Citing. As a class, we learnt that quotations should be used when author's exact words used in academic writing. For example, "Thou Shalt not Kill", extracted from the Holy Bible Exodus 20:13. This gives credit to the writer of the words used. (Hart and Friesner, 2004). The tutor also taught about types of referencing like in-text referring which is referred to as a citation. For example, Malaria is biggest cause of death in Africa. (WHO, 2014). A corresponding entry of this reference is made in the reference list following a specified format. The formats include; American Psychological Association (APA), Modern Language Association (MLA), Chicago, Harvard format. For this course, Harvard type of referencing is preferred. For example, World Health Organization (2014). Malaria the greatest killer of infants in Africa. Annual report on African

Health. Geneva. Pp. 30. The tutor encouraged us to read more about the importance of referencing and get familiar with the topic.

Time management

Time management is defined as the ability to have a properly planning and effective use of time available to completes tasks in time. (Dimitrova and Mancheva-Ali, 2018) The tutor said that it is important to understand this topic because it will be applied in all aspects of life for a better career growth and development. We learnt time management techniques like; ABC Analysis, Eisenhower Analysis, Pareto Analysis, and Getting things done method. The tutor warned us to always keep time at work, for school, and for other aspects because “Time is money, and cannot be regained once lost”. The tutor insisted that time management is one of the employability skills required for any job and it has many negative consequences once not understood. In addition, the tutor taught us simple time keeping methods like; prioritizing tasks, taking regular breaks, having a daily timetable, and staying focused on the tasks at hand to avoid distractions.

Online learning experience

From the time I joined university, learning has been entirely online through the computer. This is because of the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic which led to the closure of schools, public libraries that would have necessitated physical classes at University. Learning materials are being accessed online by logging in into the students’ module where teacher post learning materials for corresponding topics. Lectures are also conducted online through MS Teams. Also, assignments are received and submitted electronically without physically going to the University. I think this is why presentations from students are done online through MS Teams and power point.

Feelings

I feel extremely happy and blessed for having received this course, and I strongly believe it is foundation for my career. I am thankful to the government for offering me an opportunity to attend school again which is a dream come true for me. I am strongly confident that I will use this course to achieve my career in the field of nursing. I am happy that amidst the pandemic, I am still able to attend school in the comfort of my home.

However, I feel bad that I am not able to go to University physically because I feel I

would understand better if I see the lecturer physically. I got used to a school environment from my prior education back in Africa. I feel bad that I do not have any friends from the university because we do not go there to meet and interact. Maybe I would have a bigger network of people if we were meeting at school.

Referencing as a topic is new topic to me because this is the first time I have learnt and applied it. Previously, it was not a requirement for me to reference whenever I am doing my exams back in Africa. It was entirely reading, memorizing and answering exams without attaching acknowledging the source of the information. In fact, I did not know what it means until I started learning it. I feel it is a good idea to reference because it backs up ideas that are already existing. I appreciate referencing as a topic because it is evidence that research is being carried out. In the attempt to reference my academic writings, I end up reading many sources like books and journals, hence improving my research and digital skills.

Even though I am still struggling with referencing especially in the reference list, I feel it is necessary. I am still confused, and wondering why the lecturers of different module want students to use Harvard Referencing Format in particular.

Time keeping as a topic has been helpful for me because I have registered a great improvement in my time management skills. I strongly confirm that it is now part of strengths because I can complete all my tasks in time without getting stressed. At first, I would find difficulties balancing family, work, and personal time but now it is easy for me. I am happy to report that among the techniques taught in class, I have recently adopted to ABCD Analysis technique where all my tasks are arranged on a daily basis according to urgency, need, and importance as suggested by Aithal, Shailashree & Kumar, 2018.

My online learning experience is so far very good. This is because I can attend school from home without passing through trouble of using the train, moving long distance, and without worrying about having issues with fellow students. I am happy about online learning because it has encouraged me to do research and adopt to self-study program. I can access information online easily by simply logging in into the module and get all reading material.

On the other hand, I am very disappointed with other students who come late for online classes because they interrupt the learning process. Instead of the lecturer

focusing on the lecture going on, they instead get distracted by these late comers who keep asking questions that have already been discussed in their absence.

Slow network and cutting off of Wi-Fi has made online learning experience unpleasant because sometimes I find myself missing out on important information.

Evaluation

According to Mathers, Mitchell and Hunn (2012), attaining an education health and social care is very important because it facilitates skills development of the skills, it makes a student a leader, provides better job opportunities as well as improving health and social care service delivery. Therefore, I am also confident that I made a right decision to do this course. This is because of the modules that come along with course like "Academic and Employability skills". I know this course is a foundation for me to become a professional nurse because I am already getting knowledge on many topics in the course.

Neville (2009) noted that obtaining referencing skills is a great skill especially during research because it is the core of research. Referencing shows the reader how the arguments are related and connected to other authors as well as backing up already existing ideas. (Hart and Friesner, 2004). This is a reason why I am struggling and laboring to understand how to reference very well because I realized it is very necessary for my academic writings and research. In fact, I can confirm that I have ready variety of sources so far while learning how to reference.

According to Ayodele and Ige (2012) time management should be a complete topic in higher intuitions because it is a lifetime skill that is needed in all fields no matter the job. Every organized person should have their simple ways of managing and ensuring that tasks are completed in time. This applies for students and those at work. This is the reason why I am strongly happy for learning this topic. In addition to ABCD Analysis technique, I have adopted other methods of time keeping like; taking breaks at work to read my messages and make calls, I have a written time for daily activities in order to help me keep time.

Even though online learning comes with so many challenges, it is the best way to conduct education due to the COVID-19 pandemic and is strongly advised by the UK government to all the institutions of learning. (Dhawan, 2020). The challenges of online learning do not supersede the benefits and therefore all institutions of

learning should adopt it under the “new normal”. (Dhawan, 2020). The self-study learning approach is very effective for both students and the institution because it is cost and time saving. (Santy and Smith, 2017). I am doing my best to accept the challenges of online learning and continue to enjoy it.

Conclusion and Action Plan

I do not regret applying for Certificate in Higher education skills for the workplace (health and social care) because it is directly related with my passion of becoming a nurse. There could be better course but I preferred this because I needed a foundation for a degree in the same field. I can understand why we study online and no need to think about attending school physically because the objective is to attain the certificate from the university not to visit the university. I have not seen any of marks from class yet and therefore, I cannot assess my performance but I strongly believe the performance will be excellent since I am doing a lot of reading about the topics discussed in class. I believe so because online learning is helping me to read and complete my assignments.

Since I already got an opportunity to continue my studies at University. I plan to invest a lot of time in this course by reading, researching and consulting lecturers to ensure I finish it in time and pass extremely well. I also intent to use my Certificate in Higher education skills for the workplace (health and social care) to obtain a supervisory/managerial role in a care home where I am currently working.

I am planning to go for the degree in health and social care as a way of pushing for my career of becoming a professional nurse since my passion is to work with, and help people who are troubled by disease, disability, and illness.

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