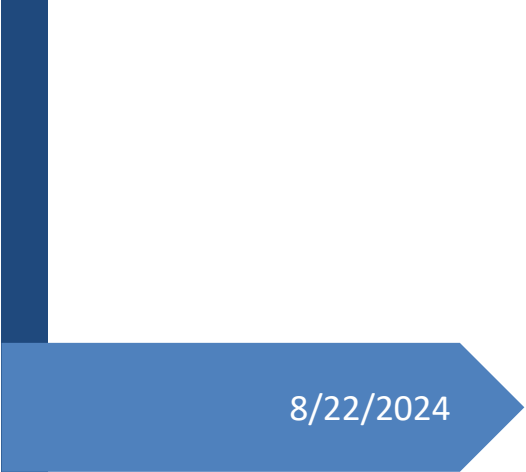
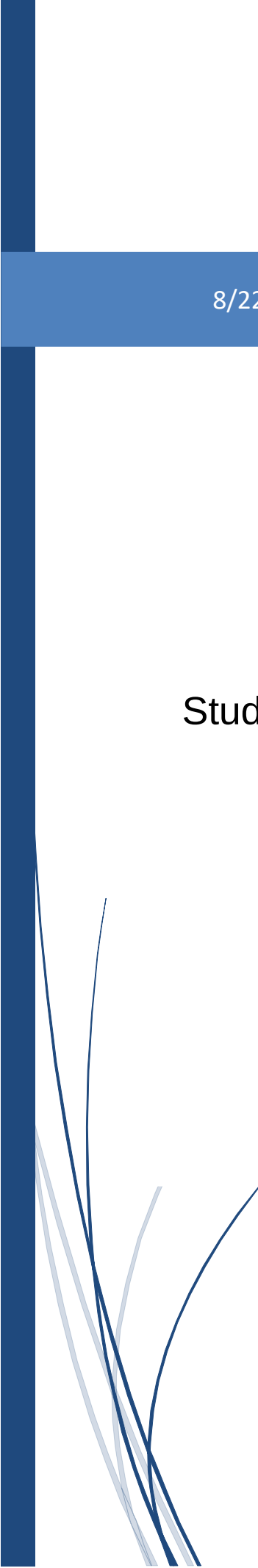




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Final report on Academic Skills

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Contents

Introduction.....	3
1. Academic Writing.....	4
1.1 Summarising Skill.....	5
1.2 Referencing Skills.....	6
Conclusion.....	7
Reference.....	8
Appendices.....	9
Figure A1	9
Figure A2.....	10

Introduction

This report explores three core academic skills: note-taking, summarising, and citing. These skills are critical to conducting effective research as they enable synthesis of information, clarity in communication, and upholding academic integrity. Through a reflective approach, I have conducted a thorough analysis examining relevant literature, empirical data, and personal experiences.

This analysis is framed using Kolb's (1984) reflective model, which emphasizes a cyclical process of experiential learning. By applying this model, I aim to critically assess and improve my mastery of these skills. The model's focus on concrete experience and active experimentation aligns well with the practical demands of academic research, making it an ideal framework to foster personal growth and meaningful reflection. This report not only assesses my current competency in these areas, but also identifies strategies for continued improvement in my academic practice.

1. Academic Writing

During this module, I had the opportunity to reflect deeply on my academic skills, especially in relation to note-taking. Through Kolb's (1984) reflective model, I analyzed my experience and how this has contributed to my academic development.

- **Concrete Experience:** From the beginning of the course, I faced a significant challenge in relation to note-taking. The methodology for writing notes in my new academic environment compared to my home country of El Salvador was different. This discrepancy, coupled with the overwhelming amount of information, made my note-taking techniques inadequate. I felt disoriented and overwhelmed, especially when dealing with the language barrier, as English is not my native language.

Another experience I had was during a note-taking activity where we listened to a BBC podcast. It involved taking detailed notes on the content of the podcast, then reviewing our notes with the teacher. It was a practical opportunity to apply and evaluate our note-taking skills.

- **Reflective Observation:** I received specific feedback from my professor, who pointed out key areas where I needed to improve. At that point, I understood that my notes were not as clear as I thought, and that the language barrier affected my ability to understand and organize information effectively. This initial observation discouraged me, but upon reflection, I understood that these difficulties were an opportunity to improve my academic skills.
- **Abstract Conceptualization:** The feedback led me to recognize that knowing the topic is not enough to write a good essay. It is essential to know how to organize and communicate ideas effectively. According to Kolb's model, this process of reflection and conceptualization is crucial to transforming experience into learning. In this case, I understood that detailed planning and a clear structure are essential for academic writing. Theoretically, this aligns with best practices in writing essays and reports, where clarity and cohesion are determinants for effective communication.
- **Active Experimentation:** To address these areas of improvement, I decided to implement changes in my approach to note-taking and writing. I began planning in greater detail, using outlines to organize my ideas before writing. This strategy helped me ensure that each argument was well supported and improved cohesion between paragraphs. I also spent more time revising to ensure clarity and coherence in my writing. The results of these changes were positive: my essays began to have a clearer structure and I received better feedback from my teachers. This gave me greater confidence in my ability to express my ideas effectively.

1.1 Summarising Skill

- **Experience:** During the academic skills course at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, I had to practice summarizing information. When we were given a variety of articles and texts to read and Summarising I remember feeling a little stressed because summarising was something new to me and I wasn't sure how to capture the main ideas effectively.
- **Feelings:** At first, I found it challenging. I was worried about missing important details or not explaining things clearly. However, as I continued to practice, I began to feel more confident. It was rewarding to see how summarizing could help me better understand and remember information.
- **Evaluation:** Using Kolb's model to reflect on summarising skills was very helpful. Reflecting on my work allowed me to see how my summaries improved over time. At first, my summaries were too detailed and long, but with practice, I learned to focus on the most important points and make my summaries more concise and clear.
- **Analysis:** Reflecting on my summarising process showed me that summarising is not just about condensing the text, but about understanding the main ideas and communicating them effectively. I realized that summarising helps me organize my thoughts and capture the essence of what I read. This skill is valuable for studying and writing assignments because it improves my ability to process and present information.
- **Actions taken:** To develop my summarising skills, I began using techniques such as highlighting key points and taking notes as I read. I practiced summarising in my own words and compared my summaries to the original text to make sure they were accurate. I also used feedback from my tutors to refine my summaries.
- **Future steps:** In the future, I will continue to practice summarizing regularly to continue improving. I plan to use summarizing as a tool to better understand and retain information from my readings. I will also look for opportunities to get feedback and adjust my summarising techniques as needed.

Overall, reflecting and practicing summarizing skills through Kolb's model has been very beneficial to my learning. It has helped me become more efficient at processing information and communicating it clearly.

1.2 Referencing Skills

During the academic skills course I focused on learning about referencing skills. At first, it was a challenge for me because English is not my first language. I felt overwhelmed by the different referencing styles and rules.

- **Feelings and evaluation:** At first, I felt anxious because I was familiar with the referencing systems used in academic writing but I was not sure if they were the same ones I used before in my country since APA style referencing is used a lot there which I did not really see in this course. However, as the course progressed, I began to understand more about how to properly cite sources and create bibliographies in English. It was gratifying to see my improvement and gain confidence in my referencing skills and especially because the teacher was very patient and explained correctly how to be able to do my work well and answer well the first exam he gave us in which we cited a lot of examples of references during the first exam of 30 questions.
- **Analysis:** The course was very useful. Understanding referencing is crucial because it helps prevent plagiarism and gives credit to the original authors. The confusion I felt at first was due to my lack of experience with academic writing in English, but the structured lessons and practical exercises clarified these concepts.
- **Actions:** Taken To improve my referencing skills, I created a study plan. I practiced completing exercises and used referencing guides provided by the university.
- **Future Actions:** Moving forward, I will continue to practice referencing in my assignments. I plan to continue using resources available at the university, such as online guides and library help. I will also check my references regularly to ensure I maintain accuracy in my work. (See Appendix, Figures A1 and A2 for additional examples of my class work)

Conclusion

Reflecting on my experience through Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model has significantly shaped my approach to academic and professional tasks. Mastering referencing skills has instilled in me a heightened awareness of academic integrity and meticulousness in my work. This has fostered a more disciplined approach to research and writing. Developing summarizing skills has enhanced my ability to communicate complex information clearly and succinctly, improving my efficiency in both academic and professional settings. Academic writing has further refined my ability to construct coherent and persuasive arguments, essential for effective communication and critical analysis.

These skills not only elevate my current academic performance, but also prepare me for future challenges. As a student, I am now equipped to produce more rigorous and ethically sound work. Professionally, these competencies will contribute to clearer communication and more effective problem-solving. In broader life contexts, the accuracy and clarity gained will support continued personal and professional growth. Overall, the knowledge gained from this experience will continue to influence and improve my approach to learning, work and personal development.

Reference

1. University of Hull. "Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle." *LibGuides*, University of Hull, n.d., <https://libguides.hull.ac.uk/reflectivewriting/kolb>. Accessed 22 Aug. 2024.
2. "Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory." *Simply Psychology*, Simply Psychology, n.d., <https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html>. Accessed 22 Aug. 2024.

Appendices

Figure A1

Carmen Fabiola

4. How would the following source be cited in your text, and formatted in your list of references?

A website by National Health Service about Acupuncture. Found at this address:
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/acupuncture/>
 Published in February 2023, and you accessed it last week (pick a date).

In text: (NHS, 2023)

In reference list:
 NHS. (2023) acupuncture
 available at
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/acupuncture/>
 (accessed 24.06.2024)

5. How would the following source be cited in your text, and formatted in your list of references?

An article by UNSW Sydney with a title How to Cite a Website and Online/Electronic Resources, written in 2023, found at <https://www.student.unsw.edu.au/how-do-i-cite-electronic-sources>. You accessed it today.

In text: (unsw, 2023)

In reference list:
 unsw. (2023) how to cite a website and online/electronic resource
 available at
<https://www.student.unsw.edu.au/how-do-i-cite-electronic-sources>
 (accessed 01.07.2024)

6. What would be the correct in-text citation for the book shown below?

Title: The Study Skills Book.
Authors: Kathleen McMillan and Jonathan Weyers.
Edition: Fourth edition.
Pages: 1 online resource (470 pages)
Publication Date: 2021.
Publisher: Pearson Education Limited
Place of Publication: Harlow

A) (McMillan and Weyers, 2021)
 B) (McMillan et al., 2021)
 C) (Kathleen and Jonathan, 2021)
 D) (The Study Skills Book, 2021)

2

Figure A2

HARVARD REFERENCING WORKSHOP for CertHE Business

1. What would be the correct in-text citation for the book shown below?
Title: Study skills for foundation degrees
Author: Dorothy Bedford and Elizabeth Wilson
Edition: Third edition.
Publication Date: 2020.
Publisher: Routledge
Place of Publication: Abingdon, Oxon ; New York ; Abingdon, Oxon ; New York

A) (Bedford et al., 2020)
 B) (Dorothy et al., 2020)
 C) (Bedford and Wilson, 2020) ^p
 D) (Study skills for foundation degrees, 2020)

2. In the box, write the full Harvard reference for the article details shown below.
 An online article written by Amber Rolfe in 2021 with the title How to: Write a CV.
 The link to the article is: <https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/how-to-write-a-cv/> and you accessed it yesterday.

Rolfe A. (2021) How to write a cv
 Available at:
<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/how-to-write-a-cv/>
 (accessed : 30.06.2024).

3. How would the following source be cited in your text, and formatted in your list of references?
 A book written by David Olusoga, in 2016, entitled Black and British: a forgotten history. Published by Macmillan in London.

In text: (Olusoga 2016)
 In reference list:
 Olusoga D. (2016) Black and British: a forgotten history
 London: Macmillan.

1