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Today I am going to write a reflective essay based on my experiences as a student at university taking an academic skills course and how this course is going to help me in the future and what I have learned so far also which skill I am struggling with and what skills I learned to manage very easily. Academic skills are numerous, and I find some of them to be quite hard to understand and use in a professional context. Referencing is the skill I struggled with and hope to learn very well this year i am anxious to start next semester and continue our academic skills classes and do my best to improve my referencing skills.

I used to believe that academic skills and writing would not be hard for me at university. However, i have found out that it is extremely hard to understand all types of academic skills one must learn to be able to write professionally. When using academic writing we must use certain guidelines as stated by **(Paltridge 2004)** to make sure our reports, essays and many other papers. are properly formatted and written according to the academic writing guidelines. I discovered that references and referencing are extremely important parts of writing. I was not aware that we always must reference our work. I did not know that referencing is used to give credit to other authors and to prove did we have done our research and use it as evidence to support our claims. In my opinion, most people do not understand referencing unless they have studied academic skills. I used to think when we write a report it is simple writing in the right format, and I was not aware of the importance of referencing our work which

according to (**Santini 2018**) is imperative that the authors give credit to their sources to have credibility and avoid plagiarism.

Plagiarism is unacceptable in the academic world as it is illegal according to (**Syed 2009**) to use other authors' work without references to their published paper. By using references, we avoid plagiarism and can borrow from someone else's work and prove that we did our research before writing the paper, which I was not aware of but now that i understand this, I see the importance of references and citations. I was thinking about my first impression of academic skills believing it will not be complicated and hard to understand, now after few months of classes i am convinced that my academic skills were poor in the least.

One month ago, our lecturer asked us about the importance of referencing and why do we need to do it, as i mentioned before i was completely unaware of the importance of referencing and why do we need to do understand it is a must in writing any papers. I remember writing a report in class as an exercise and not adding any references. This is because i wrongly believed that references are not needed every time we need to write any papers. After finishing that report our teacher mentioned to me that the paper is not believable as it does not contain any evidence, proof to sustain my words, i am ashamed to admit that i could not understand what he was trying to say by proof or evidence until of course we reached the week in our class where we were taught references and referencing.

To my surprise and shame, I was made aware of the fact that no one can write an academic paper without using references and text citations. I learned that these two are quite different as the reference must be written always at the bottom of the page when we finish and must be written in full detail including everything about that paper, website journal or book you used to support your words. However, citing in text i find it to be much simpler because all we must write is the author's last name and the year of publication

in parentheses. In my opinion referencing is a difficult skill to learn fast because we can reference many things not just journals and books, we can reference almost everything we can even reference TV shows or programs which i could not believe when our teacher taught us this, also radio can also be referenced , i believe any source of knowledge can be referenced and in my opinion this help us complete our papers with more ease as we can use so many different sources of information online or other sources I am happy that now i have some knowledge about referencing and how to write them as i felt really ashamed of not having any knowledge of their importance in professional writing. However, i am still learning how to write other types of references, for example referencing websites, TV programs and radio shows. I am confident that i will be able to learn all referencing styles soon and really hope to be able soon to write any reference without mistakes or having to use help tools for referencing. We covered most types of reference in our class, however i am sorry to say that i am still struggling with writing a simple journal paper reference, but at least now i have the knowledge of the importance of writing them and some low knowledge how to write them even if using online tools is still a very big difference from before I started the class as I did not know anything about referencing. That has changed now that i have learned the basics and reasons for referencing and i am confident that soon i will master the skill of referencing and the many other skills taught in academic skills courses.

**Santini, A. (2018) *The importance of referencing* University of Medicine and Pharmacy
Targu Mures, Romania**

**Neville, C. 2012 *Referencing: Principles, Practice and Problems* 2012, University of
Bradford, Bradford Uk**

Syed, S. (2009) *International journal of teaching and learning in higher education*, 2009