

LCLM4001 Academic Skills

Reflective Report:

How Learning in this module has
helped me develop my
Academic Skills

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1. Introduction

Success in our academic journey does not solely depend on an individual's level of intelligence and independence but also an integration of academic skills that have the ability to empower learners to be more productive and improve their academic performance. Academic skills in this sense and particularly those that I was lucky to interact with this module include paraphrasing, academic writing and referencing. As York et al (2019) explain, having a grasp of academic skills enhance effective application not only in academic performance and success but also on personal and professional growth and development basis. This essay is therefore a reflection on how the learning in this module has helped in developing my academic skills using the Gibb's reflective cycle.

2. Description

When I reflect on my academic journey, I'm reminded of my growth as well as challenges that I have encountered. Through class activities such as debate and presentations, I learned that academic writing skills essentially encompasses key skills such as structure and organisation in communication, clarity, critical thinking and effective listening among others. Just as Silvia (2018) asserts, academic writing skills allows one to engage in critical thinking and problem solving by evaluating evidence, questioning and dissecting assumptions to demonstrate a deeper understanding of subject's matter. When doing assignments such as individual essays and term paper, I learned an important aspect of academic writing skills which included editing proofreading. As Baresh (2022) explains, reviewing one's writing is an essential skill in academic writing as it enhances grammatical accuracy, coherence and clarity such that the work done doesn't only became easily readable but also meets the academic standards threshold.

The referencing skills involves acknowledgement and appreciating other people's ideas and thoughts that you have incorporated to your work. According to Law et al (2018) referencing involves citing sources of information that have been used in any work using appropriate and recognised format. As I would later learn in this module, referencing key skill in avoiding plagiarism which is a serious academic misconduct. By referencing your work, you are basically demonstrating your ethical ability in recognising and giving credit to original content owners hence demonstrating intellectual integrity, a vital virtue in academics (Lamb et al, 2018). As our lecturer would repeatedly emphasise, work that has been referenced properly

using the different formats such as MLA, APA, Chicago and Harvard among others adds credibility and verifiability and a deeper understanding on the content or material being discussed or utilized. Further, in my experience in this module and the many class activities we did including presentations, I learned that referencing contributes to knowledge fill-up and complements the existing knowledge hence having a wider and broader academic context and understand.

Another academic skill that I found to be interesting as I learned this module was paraphrasing which in essence involves using one's own understanding and words to express someone else's ideas of thought without changing or altering the original meaning. As I would later learn through class activities such as doing essays based on published books and articles, paraphrasing is a critical academic tool that allows one to integrate a wide range of ideas from sources from other people in your own words hence avoiding plagiarism and demonstrating a deeper understanding of the content. However, just as Lamb et al (2017) states, in order to effectively paraphrase any material, there is need to have a deeper sense of understanding, which in turn will allow you to dissect the content in your own words. Class activities such as discussions on the module sources allowed me to integrate various sources into the discussions hence developing a cohesive argument from various perspectives. Additionally, to be an effective paraphraser, one need to be a critical thinker as this will allow him or her to analyze, evaluate and interpret content from various sources in terms of their relevance, consequences and contribution to your own work.

3. Feelings

Being part of this module was a unique, empowering and enlightening experience for me as I not only got to interact with these academic skills but also got to apply them in my academic assignments hence improving my performance and productivity. As the module was being introduced, I must admit that I was a bit uncertain, but I gradually assured myself with full enthusiasm and optimism in ensuring I don't back down despite the challenges I may face. As I dug deeper into interacting and understanding the concept and the benefits of academic skills, I begun to gradually appreciate the module especially the simple approach that the lecturer used to disseminate information and content on the class materials. With each skill I learned and comprehended, I developed a sense of confidence, empowerment and accomplishment.

4. Evaluation

This module has given me an opportunity to evaluate the academic skills that I have learned by identifying my strengths as well as my weaknesses for necessary improvement. This module helped me understand that in order to excel in my academics, I need to ensure my work and essay are well organized and structured for purposes of clarity and coherence. I acknowledge that I ensure that my work is well reviewed, proof-read and referenced with credible and reliable sources to support my arguments and perspectives. However, I need to work more on my critical analysis to effectively evaluate and analyze information and arguments.

By effectively rephrasing ideas and sources from different materials, I have been able to ensure that I maintain originality of the main content demonstrating my deeper understanding of class materials. Through paraphrasing, I have been able to avoid plagiarism and seemingly integrate different sources of information in my writing with minimal complexities. However, I need to work on ensuring that while I paraphrase, I still maintain accuracy and precision in ensuring that the main idea is maintained. To improve my referencing skills, I need to ensure that I engage the double checking process to ensure that all my references are credible and accurate as well as stay updated on the changes on proper referencing and citation format.

5. Analysis

It is without a doubt that academic journey is filled with ups and downs. My highlights for this module were getting the opportunity to learn the different academic skills that I know will help me improve my performance. The polite, practical and super friendly lecturer in this module was another plus as there was no dull moment in the class. However, among the many challenges I faced was developing constructive and cohesive arguments in my writing. Despite this, I ensured to seek further guidance from my lecturer in addition to engaging in thorough research to comprehend effective writing strategies. I also need to work on my critical thinking abilities in order to sharpen my perspectives and arguments. I must also admit that even though these challenges hindered me in different ways, they were an opportunity to not only recognize them but work on them in order to improve my overall academic performance.

6. Conclusion

Reflecting on this module and the academic skills that I interacted with not only increases my learning awareness and improved academic performance but also promoting my metacognitive development and effective goal setting and tracking my progress overtime. Through this module, I was able to comprehend the benefits of academic writing skills particularly in improving my productivity and performance in my academics. Additionally, I believe the paraphrasing skill is essential in enhancing a deeper understanding of content allowing one to develop critical, researched and well-reasoned arguments and perspectives. The reflection also helped in identifying my weak areas and make the necessary improvements. For instance, to improve my paraphrasing skills, I need to work on expounding my vocabulary to effectively express my ideas through practice and consistency.

7. References

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