

Academic Skills

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Reflective Writing on My Learning in the Academic Skills Module

The Academic Skills module has been a significant aspect in my life because I learned what the university level of study would entail. At the start of the module, I was not well-informed about academic writing conventions, methods of references, and proper learning strategies. The lectures, classroom work, and assessment enabled me to build a more effective understanding of how to approach academic work in a more meaningful way, gradually. Taking a retrospective look of how I have learned during the module enables me to know the gains that I have achieved and the aspects that I need to work on.

The lesson about the significance of academic honesty and referencing was one of the most valuable things provided during this module. I have not comprehensively understood the importance of proper referencing in academic writing before researching on this module. I came to know that it is important to refer not only to be able to define the concepts of other authors but to prevent plagiarism and show the interest in academic literature. Cottrell (2019) claims that referencing is an important aspect of academic writing since they enable the writer to prove the argument with credible evidence and show that they know how to research. The Harvard referencing style helped me understand how to apply it better through discussing the classes and the examples given by the lecturer. Firstly, I was confused with the reference part especially when making in-text citing and the reference list format. Nevertheless, having practised these skills in the classroom and read examples, I felt more confident in my ability to use the Harvard system properly.

The other significant skill that I have learned during this module was paraphrasing and taking notes. This was especially applicable in Task 2 in which we had to make notes of a piece of writing and paraphrase some sentences. Initially, I had a problem with paraphrasing as I tended to use the original words of the source too frequently. The feedback and practice helped me to understand that good paraphrasing involves getting the meaning of the original text after which I can convey that knowledge using my own words. This process enabled me to enhance my understanding level besides enabling me to clearly articulate ideas. It is regarded that paraphrasing is a crucial academic skill since in such a way, students can combine the information provided by other sources and keep their unique voices in

writing (Neville, 2020). Having done this exercise, I observed that I had gained a lot of confidence in summarising and explaining information.

The academic skills quiz in Task 1 also served to consolidate my knowledge of the most important concepts of the module. The quiz measured issues like time management, academic misconduct, referencing, and information evaluation. The preparation of this quiz also made me go through lecture material and think about what I had learned over the past few weeks. The value of good time management in studying my academics was one of the most crucial lessons I learnt during the course of this task. Students have to handle numerous tasks and assignments, readings, and deadlines. I have also acquired that one can be a better planner and create a study schedule to minimize stress and become more productive through class discussions. These are relevant strategies of ensuring a steady academic achievement and a balance between various tasks.

The module also made me consider my **individual learning habits** and areas that I need to work on in addition to specific academic skills. Indicatively, I noticed that I tend to lean on last-minute preparation at times when fulfilling tasks. This habit may influence the quality of my job and may cause pressure near the deadlines. The module has enabled me to be more conscious of the need to start assignments early, do adequate research, and revise my work before submitting it. Acquiring these habits will result in me working out more well-structured and organised academic work in the future.

The other learning experience that was important in this module was the feedback that was provided by the lecturer. The feedback enabled me to know my strengths in addition to the areas in my work that I need to work on. As an illustration, the lecturer pointed out that my ideas were mostly well expressed but I had to pay more attention to structure and clarity when presenting my ideas. This feedback allowed me to realise that writing an academic paper involves a great deal of planning and sequencing of the ideas discussed in it. With the help of the reception and the recommendations I had followed, I was able to enhance the quality of my writing in the course of time.

Moreover, the module also taught me that **critical thinking and working with academic resources** are important. Rather than merely stating information, I also

learned that academic writing normally involves analysing concepts and stating how they apply to the subject of discussion. This teaching method stimulates the further learning process and assists students in building more powerful arguments in their tasks. Another way of enhancing the credibility of written work is through interaction with the academic literature since it shows that the writer has taken into account the opinions of other scholars.

In general, the Academic Skills module has been positively influencing my academic growth. I have better understood referencing, paraphrasing, taking notes, and time management, all of which are required in the study of a university. Though there remains more to be done in terms of my writing structure and research skills, I am more confident in my skills to approach academic assignments in a systematic and an organised manner. The reflection on my learning experience has also made me realise the need to continuously improve and evaluate myself. Through the skills and strategies acquired during this module, I think I will be in a better position to address the academic needs of future coursework.

References

Cottrell, S. (2019). *The study skills handbook*. 5th ed. London: Red Globe Press.

Neville, C. (2020). *The complete guide to referencing and avoiding plagiarism*. 4th ed. London: Routledge.

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