

# Effective academic practices

LCLM4001 Academic Skills

**ACS**

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## **1. Introduction**

Effective academic practices are essential for personal and intellectual growth, particularly when navigating complex tasks such as note-taking, paraphrasing, and reflection. These skills not only improve academic performance but also enhance one's ability to learn, synthesize information, and develop critical thinking. This text explores the key concepts of note-taking, paraphrasing, and reflective practice, offering insight into how they can be applied to enhance learning and understanding.

## **2. Note-Taking**

Effective note-taking enhances your understanding by clarifying your thoughts, highlighting key points, encouraging selectivity, organizing your ideas, structuring your arguments, aiding memory retention, and fostering connections between concepts.

What I most identified with and will certainly use in my studies is the diagram. In elementary school I already used it, but I didn't follow an order and it ended up confusing me. Organizing the Topic in the center and putting the key words in their proper place will help me remember what I learned more easily.

Placing the main points right after each other allows me to have a better understanding of what I was learning, thus being able to have an overview of what the main topic is telling me.

Giving me the opportunity to put more key words in the diagram as sub points, which helps a lot in building my understanding.

In class, we used a text that had the key word 'Essential Skills' as its central topic, where we had to develop a diagram. This allowed us to learn in practice and be able to better understand how to develop it.

Another type of Note-Taking that caught my attention and I was able to develop and have a good understanding of was the 'Cornel Note', which allowed me to easily organize my notes by dividing them into 3 sections.

the Cue column on the left, a larger Note column on the right and a Summary area at the bottom. In the notes column, I add the main ideas detailing the information during a lecture or reading, paying attention to the key terms and short sentences. In the Cue column, I need to write questions based on the key words and main ideas that I noted down; however, the summary serves to encompass the key words and introduce them into a sentence.

This was another lesson that I was able to put into practice in the classroom using a theme of how to teach employees to work intelligently and quickly. My notes were very clear, allowing me to understand the subject up to this point.

### 3. Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing involves restating a sentence or paragraph in your own words to convey the correct information. It means explaining another person's work without directly quoting them. The core idea is preserved, and proper credit is given to the original author through citations.

During my academic skills course, I learned an ability that will help me a lot in my development in the English language, making me learn to use different words and structures, but keeping the same meaning. This way, I can automatically expand and add new words to my vocabulary.

Along with this new ability comes a responsibility, which is to provide the reference that cannot be forgotten because it is very important to avoid plagiarism. However, you need to follow a pattern and place this reference correctly.

Paraphrasing is essential because a research paper relies on data and evidence gathered from the work of other scientists or researchers. This provides proof of research and lends authority to my writing. However, directly copying these ideas from research articles puts me at risk of plagiarism, which is a serious academic violation.

Through paraphrasing, I can present others' ideas in my own words, based on my understanding, which helps avoid plagiarism.

**Avoid plagiarism** – Paraphrasing allows me to express the concept in my own words, reducing the risk of plagiarism. **Keep my research paper clear and concise** – By paraphrasing, I can focus on the core idea, removing unnecessary quoting from other sources. **Improves readability** – Paraphrasing helps simplify complex sentences, making my paper easier to understand and more readable.

#### 4. Reflection

Reflective practice, in its most basic sense, involves thinking about or reflecting on your actions. It is closely tied to learning from experience, as it involves considering what you did, what the outcome was, and using that reflection to determine what you would do differently in the future.

The Reflective Writing class was very important for me, not only for my academic abilities but also for my life outside of academia, as I was able to look back on my past and reflect on my mistakes and successes, thus planning my future.

Using Reflective Writing in class made it much easier to develop my ideas. Being able to put them on paper by reflecting on the past helped me quickly delve deeper into what I wanted to convey.

One of the most well-known cyclical models of reflection guides you through six stages when exploring an experience: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan.

Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, developed by Graham Gibbs in 1988, provides a structured approach to learning from experiences. This framework is particularly useful for analyzing repeated experiences, enabling you to reflect and plan based on what went well or what didn't. The cycle consists of six stages:

1. **Description** of the experience
2. **Feelings** and thoughts about the experience
3. **Evaluation** of the experience, highlighting both positives and negatives
4. **Analysis** to understand the situation better
5. **Conclusion** on what was learned and what could have been done differently
6. **Action plan** outlining how to handle similar situations in the future or any general changes to consider.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the integration of effective note-taking, paraphrasing, and reflective practice has significantly contributed to my academic journey. Note-taking, particularly through diagrams and the Cornell method, has helped me better organize my thoughts and retain key information. Paraphrasing has expanded my vocabulary and allowed me to present ideas in my own words, while avoiding plagiarism and ensuring academic integrity. Reflective practice, especially using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, has provided me with a structured way to learn from experiences and continuously improve.

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