**BUS3003NFC**

**ACADEMIC SKILLS PRACTICE**

**PORTFOLIO OF TASKS**

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# Introduction

The assignment has included a skills audit to reveal the strengths and weaknesses of a student in academic writing. The skills to be developed effectively are recognised and an action plan is created accordingly. The action plan is found to be beneficial for the student in improvising the weaknesses. A concise concept about academic integrity and the benefits of implementing it to develop ethical behaviour is discussed in the assignment. Various relevant sources are recognised by efficiently categorising them into journal articles, websites and books for the purpose of providing a clear concept of referencing. Time management is explained with the development of a weekly schedule which includes all the kind of activities. A reflection is provided in the assignment based on skills developed using Gibb’s reflective cycle. The methods of note taking are also explained to provide a brief concept of their advantages and disadvantages.

# Task 1: “Introduction to Academic Study Skills”

## Skills Audit

Student name: XYZ Class: BUS3003NFC

| **Skills related to Academic study** | **High skill** | **Moderate skill** | **Needs training** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Finding relevant resources*** | **✔** |  |  |
| ***Effective note-taking ability*** |  | **✔** |  |
| ***Academic writing knowledge*** |  | **✔** |  |
| ***Time management*** |  |  | **✔** |
| ***Management of stress*** |  |  | **✔** |
| ***Referencing knowledge*** |  | **✔** |  |
| ***Active listening ability*** | **✔** |  |  |
| ***Critical thinking ability*** |  | **✔** |  |
| ***Communication skills*** |  |  | **✔** |
| ***Decision-making ability*** |  | **✔** |  |
| ***Digital skills*** | **✔** |  |  |

**Table 1: “Skills Audit”**

(Source: Created by Author)

## Strengths and areas of improvement

***Strengths***

* ***Finding relevant resources:*** The completion of my graduate degree at Arden University has instigated my ability to find resources based on their relevance. I have obtained the knowledge of identifying resources based on the grade of relevance on the topic of academic writing.
* ***Active listening ability***: I have the ability to listen actively to the lectures provided by the lecturers. It has helped me to understand and effectively gain knowledge of my learning materials.
* ***Digital skills***: I am highly skilled in digital use in the conduction of my academic work. This skill has aided in effectively using internet technology for my writing purpose (Zhao *et al*. 2021). I am able efficiently to search for resources from digital platforms.

***Area of Improvement***

* ***Time management***: I find it difficult to manage time effectively which resulted in the delayed submission of assignments. Poor skill of time management has marked a hindrance in the progress of academic writing (Adams and Blair, 2019). I am required to develop my time management skill for improving my academic work.
* ***Stress management***: I am unable to efficiently manage my stress during times of uncertainty. Uncertain situations have resulted in arousing panic which has affected my academic performance. I thereby need training and development session to enable stress management.
* ***Communication skills***: I have failed to communicate with my classmates and tutors efficiently due to my introverted characteristics. Poor communication skill has disrupted my resource-searching ability and writing process (Ali, 2019). I require developmental training for improving my communication skill.

## Action plan

| **Goals** | **Action** | **Resources** | **Time** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Improvement of time management | * Make proper planning and a list of work. * Creation of a priority list based on outcomes. * Effective scheduling of the tasks. * The setting of SMART goals. * The setting of deadlines for every task. | * Calendar management * Planning diaries. * Time frames | 4 months |
| Improved ability to manage stress | * Follow a proper sleep cycle. * Maintaining healthy eating habits. * Daily performance of meditation and yoga. * Building a support network with friends and tutors. | * Healthy dietary food. * Consulting yoga experts. * Improved social interaction with friends and tutors during unforeseen times. | 5 months |
| Development of communication skills | * Convey ideas verbally by delivering an innovative presentation. * Active participation in academic events. * Preparation of notes prior to delivering a speech during presentations. | * Classmates * Social events * Watching presentation videos | 3 months |

**Table 2: “Action Plan”**

(Source: Self-created)

The action plan includes improvement of time management as one of the goals of improvement. This can be achieved with the preparation of effective planning of a list of work. This also requires setting deadlines and scheduling every task. Planning dairies and calendar management are a few resources required. The development process will take about 5 months time. Improvement in stress management can be achieved by maintaining a sleep cycle and having healthy dietary habits. The skill development will aid in improving the skill of referencing and academic writing. Daily yoga and a supportive social network also help manage stress. Duration of 4 months is required for the improvement procedure. Communication skill development is gained by delivering presentations and conveying ideas verbally. It will help in developing proficiency in public speaking ability. 3 months duration is needed for the development of communication skills.

# Task 2: “Academic Integrity and Referencing”

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity has a way of revealing the act of trust, respect, honesty, responsibility and fairness in academic work. It primarily highlights the ethical conduct of a student inside the classroom when interacting with classmates and tutors. It helps in the creation of a community that is dedicated to exchanging ideas and learning (Holden *et al*. 2021). Students are engaged in academic integrity for correcting their unethical behaviour such as “***use of unauthorised materials***”, “***plagiarism***” and “***falsification***”. It also helps in combating the issue of “***e-dishonesty***” among students which enhances integrity in an online environment. Therefore, academic integrity helps students improve their academic performance in writing following ethical behaviours.

Three examples of achieving academic integrity at “***Arden University***” are:

* ***Avoid plagiarism***: Plagiarism is considered unethical behaviour for a student in academic writing. Avoidance of plagiarism is achieved with honesty and diligence has resulted in developing positive behaviour in writing. Seeking advice and help from tutors improves writing ability with avoidance of plagiarism (Arden.ac.uk, 2023). This results in the prevention of misleading queries and falsification due to plagiarised materials.
* ***Use and citation of relevant resources***: The use of relevant sources is important for creating meaningful and updated academic writing. Relevant citation of resources helps in achieving helpful feedback on assessments thereby providing guidance for supporting and improving writing and referencing skills (Arden.ac.uk, 2023). Learning outcomes of the course are achieved through supported resources such as academic journals.
* ***Performing ethical academic research***: It is important to explore and learn about the topic of assessment to perform effective academic research. Ethical research can be highly achieved by the students of Arden University using the topic collections from “***Arden Library***”.

## Referencing

***Source 1***

| **Source** | **Who** | **When** | **What** | **Where** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Journal***: “The impact of COVID-19 on small businesses’ performance and innovation” | Ronen Harel | 2021 | The effect of the pandemic of COVID-19 on the revenue flow in small businesses functioning in industrial sectors. | Global Business Review |

**Table 3: “Source 1”**

(Source: Self-developed)

The study has helped in providing knowledge regarding the COVID-19 impact on the changing activities of small businesses. The engagement of business in the promotion of innovation at the time of the pandemic for revenue generation is explained.

***Source 2***

| **Source** | **Who** | **When** | **What** | **Where** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Book***: “Fundamentals of psychology” | Michael W. Eysenck | 2014 | Various types of psychological approaches are introduced. | Psychology Press |

**Table 4: “Source 2”**

(Source: Self-developed)

The book has revealed the concept of psychology and its various kinds. Evolutions observed in psychology are explained in the book which has also provided information regarding the issues existing. Historical evidence on various psychological approaches is provided which has provided information about the issues of related to psychology.

***Source 3***

| **Source** | **Who** | **When** | **What** | **Where** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Book***: “Leadership and management in healthcare” | Neil Goppe and Jo Galloway | 2017 | Skills of management and leadership among social and healthcare professionals required to develop in a healthcare career. | Leadership and Management in Healthcare |

**Table 5: “Source 3”**

(Source: Self-developed)

The book has highlighted the skills required for effective healthcare practices among health professionals. It has helped in gaining knowledge in executing quality care to people and developing professional skills in healthcare. Skill development among leaders in healthcare is emphasised in the book for providing quality care on health and society.

***Source 4***

| **Source** | **Who** | **When** | **What** | **Where** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Website***: “UK inflation: Food costs push price rises to new 40-year high” | Noor Nanji | 2022 | Soaring cost of food has pushed inflation in the UK in double digits with prices continuing to rise at a fast rate for the first time in 40 years. | BBC News |

**Table 6: “Source 4”**

(Source: Self-developed)

The website is useful for obtaining information regarding inflation prevailing in the United Kingdom. Relevant data has been obtained regarding the rise in food prices and its impacts on the economy of the country.

# Task 3: “Time Management and Annotated Bibliography”

## Time Management

| **Time** | **Sunday** | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** | **Saturday** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 8 - 9 am | Break fast | Break fast | Break fast | Break fast | Break fast | Break fast | Break fast |
| 9 -10 am |  | Going to University | Going to University | Going to University | Going to University | Going to University |  |
| 10 - 12 pm | House chores | Attend University classes | Attend University classes | Attend University classes | Attend University classes | Attend University classes |  |
| 12 - 1 pm | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch |
| 1 - 4 pm | Study | Attend University classes | Attend University classes | Attend University classes | Attend University classes | Attend University classes |  |
| 4 - 5 pm | Listen to music |  |  | Family get together |  |  | Meeting friends |
| 5 - 8 pm | Study | Study | Study | Study | Study | Study | Study |
| 8 - 10 pm |  | Conduct assignments |  | Conduct assignments |  | Conduct assignments |  |
| 10 - 11 pm | Dinner | Dinner | Dinner | Dinner | Dinner | Dinner | Dinner |
| 11 - 8 am | Sleep | Sleep | Sleep | Sleep | Sleep | Sleep | Sleep |

**Table 7: “Time Management”**

(Source: Self-developed)

The table depicts the management of time based on development of a weekly schedule. It is observed that the hours of the day start from 8 am in the morning and complete at 11 pm at night. Time management is effectively performed with the development of a schedule plan. The meal hours are scheduled to fixed timings to avoid any irregularity in eating habits. For an instance, the time for breakfast is fixed to 8 to 9 am in the morning. Daily lunch and dinner hours are scheduled to be 12 to 1 pm and 10 to 11 pm respectively. Recreational activities such as “listening to music”, “family get together” and “meeting with friends” are scheduled at 4 to 5 pm in the evening on Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday respectively. A fixed sleep schedule is also provided.

## Annotated Bibliography

**“Guerrero-Dib, J.G., Portales, L. and Heredia-Escorza, Y., (2020). Impact of academic integrity on workplace ethical behaviour. International Journal for Educational Integrity, 16(1), pp.1-18.”**

The article has the effect of academic integrity as ethical behaviour among students and its implementation in the workplace. Academic integrity is deemed to be an essential part of teaching and learning. It focuses on the achievement of high standards in terms of learning and excellence. In the context of a university, academic integrity shows twofold objectives such as the development of an ethical perspective and the achievement of skills for effectively performing specific professions. Ethical behaviour and academic integrity are considered to be interconnected (Guerrero-Dib *et al*. 2020). The primary purpose of academic integrity is to instigate ethical behaviour among students and prevent them from misconduct. It reflects on the “***act of dishonesty***” of a student in various environments which negatively impacts academic performance. Unethical acts of students are prevented with the development of professional skills and reflection on honest activities. Therefore, academic integrity is beneficial for preventing severe consequences of dishonesty and cheating which are responsible for committing academic breaches.

**“Awasthi, S., (2019). Plagiarism and academic misconduct: A systematic review. DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology, 39(2), pp. 94-100.”**

The study has presented the concept of plagiarism in academic writing among students in higher education. It is marked as severe academic misconduct from “***2009 to 2018***”. The study has highlighted the factors influencing the act of plagiarism and various plagiarism types. Plagiarism is prevented for avoiding unethical academic writing through misconduct like cheating. Today plagiarism is considered one of the common problems in the world of academics. The importance of the use of “***anti-plagiarism software***” is understood for developing good quality academic writing (Awasthi, 2019). Libraries have played an important role in spreading awareness about plagiarism among users through training programmes. There is a requirement to implement vigilant approaches for tackling the problem of plagiarism. It is also necessary to handle other kinds of unethical practices in academic writing. Therefore, the study has focused on the concept of plagiarism and other acts of misconduct in the academic writing process.

**“Rosman, M.R.M., Rosli, N.N.I.N., Mohd, A.I., Shukry, N.M.R. and Alimin, N.A.B., (2022), January. Referencing Paradigm in the New Norm: What Do Students Want?. In MIC 2021: Proceedings of the First Multidiscipline International Conference, MIC 2021, October 30 2021, Jakarta, Indonesia (p. 371). European Alliance for Innovation.”**

The study has revealed that referencing is the ability to efficiently management of literature sources which enables backwards and forward searching of journals and articles. It helps in obtaining easy access to the content of literature thereby fostering discussion and ensuring publication integrity. Different citation styles such as “***APA (American Psychological Association)***”, “***Chicago***” and “***MLA***” are mentioned. Various techniques are applied for obtaining relevant information regarding academic writing. Effective identification of techniques, tools and styles can promote efficient searching of information for the purpose of referencing (Rosman *et al*. 2022). The article has also informed that technology has played a crucial role in finding necessary references in accordance with the preference of users. It is important for students to include relevant references for the inclusion of information which provides meaningful knowledge to readers. Studies and academic literature contented with original information of research bodies reveal positive and ethical activities of students in terms of the collection of information. Therefore, it is important for students to enhance their knowledge of searching relevant sources and improve the use of references for academic writing purposes.

# Task 4: “Reflective Writing and Academic Writing”

## Reflective Writing

### Gibb’s reflective cycle

***Description***: I have found my skills regarding academic writing which have revealed potentiality. The grade of skills identified highlights the areas of skill development. I have focused on improving my writing skills through the improvement of the primary skills required.

***Feelings***: I have felt that there are a few skills that are lacking which has obstructed my writing process. The inferior feeling of poor skill development has resulted in the development of a skill development plan (Adeani *et al*. 2020). I have encouraged myself through various planned activities to enhance my academic writing power and the skills associated with it.

***Evaluation***: I found it difficult to understand the activities related to skill development. The positive impact of gaining knowledge about my weak skills has resulted in enhancing my writing ability.

***Analysis***: I have analysed that it is very challenging to improve my skills and implement them efficiently in academic writing. I have realised that there is a need to follow guidelines for improving various skills and learning.

***Conclusion***: I could have participated in various skills development programmes. The programmes would help in a clear understanding of weak skills and provide effective guidance in the development process (Adeani *et al*. 2020).

***Action plan***: The repetition of poor development of skills will require engaging in programs of skill development. The scheduled session will help me focus on my skill improvement within duration of 6 months.

## Academic Writing and Note-Taking

### Note taking and its Benefits

“***Note taking***” is meant as a practice of keeping records of information from various platforms and sources. As stated by (Morehead *et al*. 2019), note-taking helps create a better understanding of the concept of the information. Note taking requires different skills such as retention, active listening and comprehension of sources. One of the benefits of note-taking is that it keeps a student alert about recent information. Another advantage is that it organises and emphasises important information. Therefore, note taking plays a crucial role in the creation of condensed records which keeps in turn develops alert characteristics among students.

### Two note taking methods and their advantages and disadvantages

***Cornell note taking***: Cornell note taking has provided a systematic process of accumulating information. It helps in the effective organisation of notes without recopying. The advantage of Cornell note taking is that note reviews and records are organised in an easy format (Amhout *et al*. 2023). The disadvantage of Cornell note taking is that the section is susceptible to appearing disorganised.

***Mind-map note taking***: Mind-map note taking follows the principle of noting down information by centralising the topic. The informative points are worked outwards which flows and connects with one another. One of the advantages of mind map note-taking is that it helps in creative thinking and making connections between points (Wang, 2019). A disadvantage of mind map note taking is that it is a time-consuming method and is prone to become messy.

## Cornell note taking method

The method of Cornell note taking includes the creation of three sections namely “***Note-Taking Area***”, “***Cue Column***” and “***Summaries***”. The note taking area is used for recording the lectures based on information. The information recorded is considered to be meaningful and relevant. The cue column is used concisely to jot down the important points of information. The points will review, recite and reflect the important points (Siegel, 2023). The summarising section briefly sums up the entire notes in a few sentences. The method has helped in the easy note taking process for a student by creating concise summarisation and reduction of points for reviewing. Therefore, Cornell's note taking method includes the five Rs such as “***Record***”, “***Reduce***”, “***Recite***”, “***Reflect***” and “***Review***”.

# Conclusion

The above information has highlighted the skills that act as strengths in academic writing for a student. The areas of development are effectively identified which included communication skills, stress management skills and time management skills. An action plan is developed for the effective improvement of skills to improvise academic writing. The concept of academic integrity has revealed the importance of ethical behaviour among students in the writing procedure. Recognised examples of achieving academic integrity by students at Arden University are avoiding plagiarism, performing ethical academic research, and the relevant use of citations and references. Four relevant sources of information have been identified namely books, websites and journal articles which have highlighted important information based on the topic of writing. A weekly schedule for time management is created along with providing annotated bibliography explaining concepts of plagiarism, academic integrity and referencing. Finally, reflection is provided using Gibb’s reflective cycle in addition to providing knowledge about note taking such as “***mind map***” and “***Cornell***”.

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## Task 2

**Source 1**

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**Source 2**

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## Task 3

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## Task 4

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