PErsonal writing targets REFLECTION

Viola Halt

Academic Writing

Instructor: Professor Sophia Butt

Date of submission: 15/11/2023

**Declaration**

By completing this cover sheet and declaration, I confirm that this assignment is my own work, is not copied from the work (published or unpublished) of any other person, and has not previously been submitted for assessment either at Aalto University, or another educational establishment. Any direct or indirect uses of material (e.g.: text, visuals, ideas…) from other sources have been fully acknowledged and cited according to the conventions of the Harvard Referencing System.

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| First Name & Surname | Viola Halt | ID no. |  |
| Instructor Name | Prof. Sophia Butt | Date | 30.10.2023 |
| 1. Your Strengths & Weaknesses  Throughout my academic career there has been a routine focus on less formal genres of writing which has placed emphasis on my creative writing, vocabulary and formatting skills rather than the use of citations and sophisticated sources. Hence my strengths surround the use of language, coherence of work and organization. A form of expertise has been established in the analysis of works of literature, specifically the way other authors can use lexis to attain a specific goal which I believe has improved my use of vocabulary. Finally, my skills in works that require multiple perspectives are refined due to the essays written in classes of “theory of knowledge” where students were required to consider the meaning of words and possible counter arguments in. On the other hand, my dislike and tendency to avoid academic writing has resulted in a weakness of referencing, especially as tools such as “cite this for me” have become not only more accessible but also faster. These tools caused an inconsistency between Chicago references in my Extended essay (a final exam of the International Baccalaureate) where mistakes in order of data and punctuation harmed the flow of writing. Furthermore, the process of creating a research question that is both achievable in the given time but has potential for many subheadings has been a shortcoming of mine within my previous academic writing experiences. Creative writing often requires a more expressive approach that takes importance over the usual ‘quality over quantity’ ideal concluding to my work being drawn out and unconcise. | | | |
| 2. Group Work  Although group work can bring a range of ideas and expertise to a task which leads to improvement in the group’s overall ability, often writing can suffer from the lack of coherence; an aspect that many students learned during the essay writing in the course “Global business environment” where groups of 5 students collaborated on a globalization essay together. The variety of academic backgrounds, personal writing styles and previously used templates or essay writing guidelines harmed the overall quality of work. Of course, there are methods to avoid certain aspects of different writing styles with a ‘chief editor’. Additionally, the inequality in workload can harm motivation within the group, for example if a chief editor is chosen to ensure quality, this individual would most likely have to work more. In the optimal situation, all participants would have high academic writing skills so that the final editor only need to change lexis and conjunctions to minimize the final editing time. Finally repetition of ideas and key words is common when there is a lack of communication, to ensure that all work is original the essay should be read in its entirety by all members. | | | |
| **3. Expectations & Targets**  I anticipate strengthening my writing process through the fast pace of the course. As many different essays will be written in a short time frame, students will need to adapt their thinking and research skills to quickly format essays into subheadings. Additionally, I hope to find new sources for scholarly articles that are easily accessible and reliable.  My personal writing goals are:   1. Discover and perfect a fast-paced process from a general essay question to a niche research question and subheadings. 2. Memorize the Harvard citation format to eliminate the use of online software. 3. Express ideas and data concisely, limiting the use of words to maximize meaning and content. | | | |

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| 1. Reflecting   I have made noticeable progress on all the targets previously set. Despite leaving target two (memorizing the Harvard citation styles) uncompleted, I have discovered that the citation style was much more complicated than I had originally anticipated. The three skills that I developed evidently are referencing, use of lexis and use of punctuation. I no longer rely on citation machines and have enhanced my use of lexis, especially during groups projects where I was able to learn from my peer’s vocabulary. Finally, the detailed lesson on the use of punctuation clarified certain rules that embellished my writing. Specifically, the different ways the comma is used transformed punctuation from intuitive to a regulation. I thoroughly enjoyed writing the editorial despite the large change in genre and writing style from previous tasks as the style held more connection with the reader. I feel least confident about the AR, mainly due to the group working aspect in which sections had to be divided and there was a large amount of pressure to write coherently between sections. Due to the nature of the topic of waste management, I feel that I did not write to the best of my ability as there was large amount of repetition within the topic. In general, working in a small team of three improved my writings abilities and was an inherently positive experience. This team has had little interaction previously and this task was therefore a bonding experience. Aside from small conflicts about the topic of the report and work distribution, all team members completed their given areas and there was a friendly atmosphere for support and guidance. | | | |
| 1. Reviewing   Several repeat errors were made, especially in the first three tasks submitted. Some of these include the use of punctuation, word choice errors and mistakes in format such as the use of numerals instead of words. It appears that I was more prone to word choice errors in the timed essay task where I had no access to a dictionary, which is expected as I often search for new vocabulary but rely on other tools to ensure that the meaning applies in different contexts. I believe that I have made progress in the use of punctuation, although my recent tasks still had punctuation errors, such as the use of a semi colon instead of a comma in lists, the mistakes are less severe. Additionally, I have learned the consequence of time management, specifically how unanticipated situations often occur in the few hours before submission, hence leaving a buffer zone before the deadline is crucial to reduce personal stress levels. | | | |
| 1. **Acting – Future Goals**   During the course I often found myself putting less effort in editing a draft, perhaps due to the effort that had been put to the draft itself taking longer than anticipated. Hence, in the future I would create specific deadlines to write a rough first draft that would be edited separately after a period of rest. This would not only make the writing process faster, but I believe would result in a higher quality of work. Additionally, I would search for more peers to review my work (if the guidelines of the task allow for peer review) as the writer themselves can often miss clear mistakes. I would manage my time differently by having an extra day before the deadline to do the final reviews and changes to improve lexis, something I believe is most efficient when there has been an increased amount of time since the last draft has been written. In teamwork, our team managed time efficiently and members were respectful of each other and hence finished their section before the deadline. However, I would split the timing of the workload differently, working in smaller sections that would be reviewed by peers in between to support coherent writing. To meet my future targets, I will begin to use time management apps such as "Evernote” and process work though websites such as Ludwig and Grammarly to detect final mistakes before submitting an assignment. | | | |