

Exam Number:	1C
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At the beginning of the Edinburgh Award, you chose three skills that you particularly wanted to strengthen. During the Award you’ve also looked at how you can increase the impact you have on others.

This process of strengthening skills and increasing your impact is central to the Edinburgh Award. In this submission, provide a written account that shows you have been purposeful and reflective in working on your skills and impact.

Your submission will be reviewed by students across the Award who are not involved in the same activity as you so please ensure your reflections can be understood by anyone.

If needed, further guidance, example submissions and the criteria on which submissions are judged are available at: www.employability.ed.ac.uk/Student/EdinburghAward/ACJ

***Note:** As part of the Edinburgh Award, your submissions will be reviewed by other students and staff, and may be used elsewhere (in part or in whole) – your name will never be attached and only the content you enter will be used.*

Instructions

There are four boxes below, one for each of the three skills you wanted to strengthen and one for impact you have had. In each box write about 200 words describing **what progress you have made** (if any), **what steps** you have taken to try to improve this skill and **what you have learned** from your experiences.

Don’t worry if you haven’t made as much progress as you would have liked; your description can include what has limited your progress and if there are different approaches you would take in the future. For example, you may have found that you initially overestimated your ability in one of the skills – that’s OK.

Write so that your text makes sense to someone who has had no connection with your activity.

Skill One:	Communication
<p>Since joining this program, I have been more conscious in my efforts to improve my communication skills. The most important thing I have learned is that communication is a two-way street. It's not just about being well-articulated, but also about listening . Therefore, aside from working on expressing my intentions more effectively (e.g. I still choose my words carefully, but I've tried not to overthink things too much), I have also worked on improving my listening skills.</p> <p>In my PALS sessions, I found that listening allowed me to better help students by preventing wrong assumptions about what they want and/or need from the sessions. For instance, a student may come to a session and say that they struggle with writing essays, but after listening to what they have to say I may find out that they actually need help with taking notes and critically reading the course material.</p> <p>I have also used this skill in other areas of my life. For instance, in my student society I am the first point of contact for members of my academic family. By knowing how to listen and speak with confidence, I can effectively communicate their thoughts and feelings to the committee.</p>	

Skill Two:	Organisation
<p>My organisational skills have improved the most from this experience. I picked up some great tips from the PALS workshops - both from the organisers and other attendees. For example, I learned how to efficiently prepare the necessary materials for my PALS sessions, how to structure those sessions properly, and how to prepare for any unexpected challenges. In addition, running sessions greatly improved my ability to think on my feet - I can form strategies and plans and adapt to new situations quickly. This has made such a huge difference in my academic career. I'm better prepared for lectures and tutorials, and I can plan out my study schedule so that I don't get overwhelmed.</p> <p>Overall, the PALS program has given me a valuable opportunity to hone my organisations skills. I intend on applying everything I've learned to other aspects of my life and also to all my future endeavours. I hope to keep improving this skill so that I can become a valuable asset when I eventually enter the workplace.</p>	

Skill Three:	Leadership
<p>The improvement of my leadership skill ties in a lot with the positive development of my organisational skills. Being better prepared and able to think on my feet has given me a lot of confidence, and so I'm able to be more assertive and authoritative.</p> <p>I feel that this skill has been crucial to running my sessions. Being confident - and therefore comfortable - in a leader role has allowed me to take a much more facilitative approach to running sessions. Once I've assigned tasks, I don't feel the need to micro-manage. Instead, I can observe from a distance and let them exercise their own creative judgement. At the same time, I can still be there to answer questions and offer help when it is needed.</p> <p>At the moment, I am exercising this skill in my student society as the head of my academic family. In addition, running events for my society allows me to practice being assertive and speaking with authority. I plan on further improving my leadership skills by continuing to seek out leadership roles. Once again, I hope to develop this skill so that I can take it with me to the workplace.</p>	

Impact on others

Overall, working on the aforementioned skills has been of great benefit to myself and to the people that I work with. I feel that I have much more to offer and can contribute more. I have been able to contribute to PALS sessions by helping draw up session plans. I am also less afraid to volunteer for things, and due to working on my leadership skills I feel more in control of sessions.

The impact of this whole process can also be seen in other aspects of my life. In my student societies, I have been more efficient at organising events more efficiently using my newly-found delegating abilities. I can speak up with confidence and I feel that I am better at expressing my ideas and suggestions.

All in all, my involvement with PALS has touched on more than the skills that I mentioned. Planning sessions has improved my creativity, I've become more resourceful, and I've become a more competent student and individual. However, my work is not done; I will continue to work on improving the aforementioned skills and more. In doing so, I can face any future task as a fully competent and efficient worker.