Managing your time
Tips for managing your time

Managing time efficiently can be the key to your success or failure at university. As a general rule, you are expected to dedicate around 20 hours a week to each unit. If you are studying 2 units, you need to put in 40 hours, as much time as you would for a full-time job.

As well as attending workshops and tutorials, you are expected to read widely and complete assessments which will usually require research. Add to this preparation for and revision after workshops and tutorials, and you will find you have a lot of work to do!

It is especially important that you organise sufficient time for your study and use this time effectively.

Follow these tips:

- Be realistic about the amount of time you have available to dedicate to study. Consider your best times for study.
- Use a term planner to map out when your assessments are due and when you need to make a start on them. Go to the Quick Guide *Term Planner - Assessments* to download a planner and learn how to use one.
- Use a weekly planner to map out your daily commitments and stick to it! This will help you to devote equal time to all units each week and complete each of the tasks you are required to do. You may find the *Weekly Planner - Study* Quick Guide useful, or you may prefer to use a diary for this or even your email calendar. Choose whatever works best for you.
- Write out your goals. It is often important to remind yourself about why you are studying! Remember goals can be long-term and/or short-term.
- Make a copy of your unit objectives. This will help to remind you of the knowledge and skills you are acquiring, as well as keep you on track for your assessments.

Commence working straight away. Don't think there is time to ease yourself into study.

Using a weekly planner

Using a weekly planner helps you get into a study routine and fit in all the tasks and activities you need to do each week. It provides a reminder about when you are supposed to move to study mode!
Believe it or not, this can give you the motivation to get yourself started. It shows you, and others, what your commitments are and when you are free to relax!

Tips for constructing a weekly planner so that it works for you!

- Set a realistic starting and finishing time for your days. This means that you need to think about what kind of person you are, e.g. Are you a morning or a night person?
- Pencil in all of your fixed commitments including workshops, tutorials, work, travel, meals and meal preparation time, family commitments and leisure time. Be realistic about the time these tasks take. Consider adding in household chores like cleaning as something to be done between study sessions to provide physical and mental breaks.
- Pencil in your potential study times. The aim is to calculate how much time you have for study. Then divide this time between the number of units you are studying (remember the ideal amount you should dedicate to each unit is 20 hours a week). Allocate equal time for each subject. Think about the best way to utilise the odd hour here and there between workshops and tutorials, but be realistic!
- Aim to complete a specific task in each study time e.g. 'doing readings' or 'research for assessment', remember to try and allocate time before and after each tutorial for preparation and revision.

- Decide when and where it is best to work on specific tasks – consider when and where you work best (mornings? nights? at uni? at home? in the library?).
- Place your weekly planner where everyone in your home can see it so they are aware of your commitments.

The *Getting Started at SCU Term and Weekly Planner Quick Guides* are available in both PDF and Word format so you can easily plan your assessments and study time using these templates.

Teaching staff are continually developing resources to assist their students. Making these resources available as Open Education Resources (OER) is a component of academic scholarship.

Tips for using your time as well as you can

- Be prepared! Read your Unit Outline as soon as you receive it. Know what is expected of you. Plan for your assessments using a planner.
- Decide when it is best to do what tasks.
- Decide where you work best, e.g. at home or at university in the library?
- Decide how you learn best, e.g. is it by hearing, seeing patterns? and work accordingly.
- Make lists of tasks to be done. Use these to plan, prioritise and organise study sessions.
- Break large tasks into smaller, more manageable steps.
- Use all of the above to fill in your weekly planner and stick to it!
- Reward yourself when you have achieved a set number of tasks.
- Use class and tutorial time to ask questions and to clarify what is expected in tasks.
- Tape the 'must view' TV shows to watch when you are too tired for study.
- Seek assistance early.

Check the *SCU Learning Zone* for more related Quick Guides.