

Study Tips

Counselling Service Tip Sheet



Here are some basic tips to help you study effectively, manage your time and avoid unnecessary stress.

1. Use a Semester Planner

A Semester Planner can help you to manage your time more effectively. It allows you to identify your peak study load times so you can allocate plenty of time to

get all your assignments done.

2. Use a Weekly Planner

A Weekly Planner allows you to keep track of your different responsibilities and schedule your time appropriately to meet those responsibilities, including your study.

3. Try to think of your study like a job

This takes the emotion out of your study. There are times when you won't feel like going to work but you will go anyway because it is a responsibility and a commitment and something you have chosen to do. Take the same approach to study. It's a commitment and a responsibility, and something that

has to be done... it just doesn't pay very well yet!!

4. Set some goals

Think about where you are going and what you want to achieve. Identify your short, medium and long term goals related to your study and your life in general.

5. Think about where you study best and try to study in the same place if you can.

This establishes a paired association for study. If it's at home, set up an area that's just for study. If possible make it somewhere that is away from everyone else and away from distractions such as the phone (including your mobile), computer, TV, fridge etc. If it's at the library, try to go to the same desk or area each time.

6. Establish a routine for your study hours.

Try, as much as possible, to study at the same time each day or each week. Regular study times and a regular study location will help you to settle down to study more quickly.

7. Pick your times.

Studying when you are tired is not efficient. Make sure you pay attention to your lifestyle, commitments and stress, and schedule appropriate study time when you are most likely to produce your best work.

8. Avoid studying in bed.

This can lead to poor sleep or falling asleep when you want to be studying.

9. Aim for concentrated blocks of study.

A few hours at a time with small scheduled breaks in between is ideal. Larger breaks can be time wasting and result in distraction or losing interest in the assignment. Try to schedule frequent times where you can work on a particular piece of assessment.

10. Break it down.

If you have set aside a large block of time for study it might help to break it down into one hour blocks which might include:

- a. 5 minutes of planning time. Think about what you want to achieve over that hour (e.g. read and understand the first two sections of chapter 1)
- b. 40 minutes of concentrated work
- c. 5 minutes reviewing what you've just done. Incorporating regular review times will help you consolidate the information you've just read and/or enable you to make sure that you are on the right track.
- d. 10 minutes break. Taking regular breaks will help you to stay fresh and alert and increases the effectiveness of your study.

Most people find it difficult to concentrate effectively for more than 40-50 minutes at a time. Remember that three hours of sitting at a desk looking at a text book does not

necessarily equal three hours of useful study. Try to aim for quality of study as well as quantity.

11. Aim for balance.

Maintaining a balance in your life is essential to wellbeing, and allows you to remain productive and achieve good results. Try to make sure that you are scheduling relaxation or down time as well as study time.

12. Think about your thinking.

How you think about things plays a big part in how you feel about them. If you think something (e.g. a class presentation, exam) is going to be awful or you won't do well, you will feel anxious about it. Be a good coach to yourself and say things that are going to help you get through it (e.g. "I can do this. I'll be ok.") - it helps!!

References

More information is available from:

- Counselling Tip Sheet: Balancing Life and University
- Counselling Tip Sheet: Tips for Successful Time Management
- Counselling Tip Sheet: Managing Stress
- Counselling Tip Sheet: Avoiding Burnout

Acknowledgements

Editors: Peta Morris and Mel Johnston

Please note that this tip-sheet provides information and guidance only - it is not a substitute for professional counselling and support.

CRICOS IPC 00279B

ECU Counselling Service

Reception: Mount Lawley: Building 8, Room 109

Joondalup: Building 34, Room 245

Telephone: 9370 6706

Email: counselling@ecu.edu.au