

Study Skills

The term 'Study Skills' is often used interchangeably with many other terms which all describe the same thing - a person's ability to study effectively, and their ability to acquire knowledge. At University, you need many skills to succeed, ranging from personal skills such as the ability to communicate with your peers and tutors, to technical skills such as using word processors and the internet.²

The most important points about studying:

You have to WANT it

You have to want to do well; your grade affects your future;

Think holistically

Be aware of what you have to do in context to your life to achieve well;

Ownership and responsibility

You are in charge of yourself; no one else is doing your work for you, ultimate responsibility on how well you do, is down to you.



The pillars of sustaining study skills

- Knowing what you need to know;
- Knowing what you know and don't know;
- Figuring out how you need to study;
- Managing your time, structure and flow of information in a coherent way;
- Actually applying what you learn about study skills and about how *you* work as a student.

² <http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/studyskills/general/>

When?

- Study when you are not tired;
- Think in terms of number of efficient hours, rather the number of hours;
- Do not procrastinate;
- Plan ahead; for example, do mind-maps or checklists for each subject/topic and make sure you know what you have left to study;
- Plan ahead; make a time schedule from start of mocks. Fill in all the deadlines for coursework, etc. Plan around this. Make personal (or group, remember public commitment) deadlines for drafts. After mocks make a new plan for your exam revision;
- Make sure you see and know what you don't know. This helps you manage your time tremendously;
- Prioritise for year 13.

How?

- Organize your life and get straight down to work in each study session;
- Create a check list of other things you must do – what can wait?

Why?

- Find motivation to studying – long term purpose;
- Thus you need to know yourselves: what are your goals? Adjust your level of studying to this;
- Enthusiasm and enjoyment are key to motivation. Try to make studying fun. Reward good efforts with things you like;
- A group of friends can do this together. Publicly stated goals always trump privately stated goals;
- Read more of what you like and enjoy (there is nothing wrong in indulging in a subject you particularly like). Find your subject, use this as a drive, a motivation, to learn and study other not so fun things;
- Alternate between stuff you do know, and what you don't know. Answering questions correctly is a form of reward;
- Keeping perspective, remember your goals.



Where?

- Work in a quiet place;
- Avoid distraction – computer, TV, telephone and family and friends;
- Don't ever study in bed or in your relaxing space! This creates strong associations to work and concentration in a space you are supposed to associate to rest;
- Leave the space when taking a break.

What?

- Read the syllabus
- Use old exams (the IC has copies of these)