

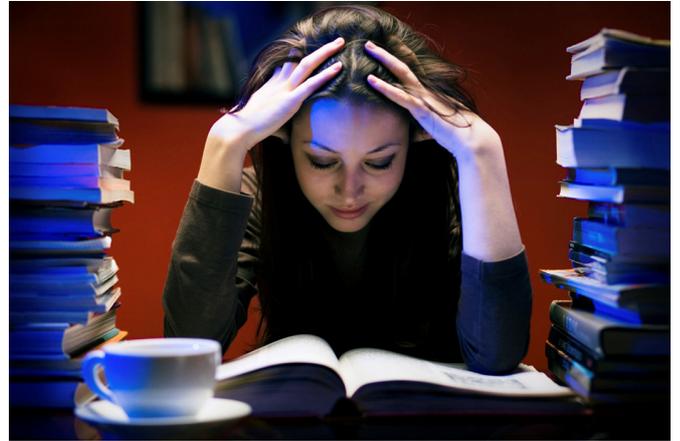
succeed@solent

→ an online guide to getting better grades

How to succeed@time management

This leaflet gives you tips and strategies that will help you better manage the time you spend studying (and not studying) – making the work you do much more effective. Use these techniques if you really want to learn and get better grades in all your studies.

Remember that you can get lots of study tips and resources from succeed@solent on myCourse.



Why? and How?

Time is limited. Studying is just one of the things to be fitted into your life.... You will make more efficient use of your time if you **PLAN AHEAD**. Always plan as far ahead as you reasonably can, at least a term/semester ahead but preferably by a year. Lengthening your time perspective will identify potential pressure points where assignments overlap. By identifying these critical points in time, you can pace yourself and avoid the right-at-the-very-last-minute existence many students get locked into.

To make a realistic and effective timetable you need a certain degree of self-knowledge. It serves no purpose to make grandiose plans of work that you will never be able to fulfil. Similarly, trying and plan every hour of your life would be pedantic and unworkable.

Long-term Plans

Decide what you need to do each year/term/week:

- **List goals** - these can then be broken down into measurable components. You will then be able to allocate the appropriate resources to complete them on time.
- **Set priorities** - using your list of goals, prioritise each objective on a scale of relative importance i.e. must, should or maybe complete.

Weekly Timetables

Draw up a detailed timetable:

- Divide your study time into approx one-hour sessions with short breaks in between. Add longer breaks where you need them.
- Aim to study when you work well (Mornings? Evenings?)
- Plan to do difficult topics first. This avoids having them `hanging over` you. It also prevents you putting them off and running out of time.
- Leave time for recreation and relaxation.
- Be realistic. You need a schedule you can stick to. It is better to under-estimate what you will do and achieve it than to be over-ambitious and then feel that you are not coping.

Advantages of having a detailed schedule:

- It provides a structure for your studies.
- It provides short term goals.
- By allocating time to topics in advance there is little risk of leaving out something vital.
- You do not need to spend valuable study time deciding what to do.
- You can enjoy your recreation time knowing that your studying is under control.
- You will waste less time and study more purposefully than you would do otherwise.

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Email: succeed@solent.ac.uk

Web: mycourse.solent.ac.uk/succeed

Suggestions to Help you Study Efficiently and Effectively

- Include recreational periods in your study plan. You need to keep healthy and maintain a balanced view of life.
- Allow time for the necessary mundane chores too - housework, shopping, etc. Your schedule must be realistic.
- Except in real emergencies, do not miss study sessions aiming to make up for them later. You will probably run out of time and the work will not get done at all!
- Aim to study at times that you know you work well. Work curves suggest that morning output is higher than afternoon, and certainly schools, colleges, and universities put their most demanding work into the mornings where possible. Therefore, it is worth making every effort to see that your morning hours are not frittered away; get all those other little jobs out of the way the night before so you can make an early start on your more important tasks.
- Consider working in the library rather than in your room. The advantages include: fewer distractions, more readily available reference material and a more conducive atmosphere.
- Consider working with friends ... or forming a study group. This will give you someone to bounce ideas off if you get stuck or maybe just a different perspective that will help you clarify your own ideas.



Effective Study 'Units'

Studying should be an **ACTIVE PROCESS** if it is to be effective. It is virtually useless to sit for long periods just reading. Very little information is retained this way.

Lectures and tutorials rarely exceed one hour, and for very good reason: few people can concentrate, with any degree of effectiveness, for longer without taking a break.

Therefore, it would seem reasonable, for most topics, to allocate **one-hour study slots** to your timetable. However, if you have a large task such as writing an essay, it may be uneconomic to work on it for only an hour at a time. Time is required to assemble your materials, and your thoughts and to "warm-up" to the task. Usually, therefore, if you have an experiment to report on or an essay to write, it is best to complete it at a single session, once you have assembled all the necessary materials, if it can be completed in say 2 to 3 hours. If not, then aim to complete one section/chapter per session.

The Amount of Study Required

With regard to the total amount of study time you should allocate, it might be useful to know roughly how much work most students need to do to keep up with their course work.

The average total study time is about 30-40 hours per week:

- Arts students generally have 10-15 contact hours per week, and spend about 20-25 hours on private study - reading, writing essays, etc.
- Science students spend 20-25 hours in the classroom or laboratory and generally do no more than 10-15 hours of private study.

Further help

In succeed@solent you will find the following to help you manage your study:

[How to succeed@reading effectively](#)
[How to succeed@attending lectures](#)
[How to succeed@taking notes](#)
[How to succeed@revising](#)

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