

Managing your time better

This was our advert...

Time management is the most common challenge for OU students, who are often juggling other responsibilities alongside their studies. In this workshop we'll teach techniques and frameworks to help you plan your workload more effectively. You'll also have an opportunity to discuss life and study hacks with fellow students in small groups.

First thoughts

Which of the following do you normally use to keep track of things you are doing in every day life?

- Diary
- Wall calendar
- Online calendar
- App for tasks
- Sticky notes
- No specific method – I am good at remembering 😊
- No specific method – I always forget things 😞

We recommend!

- Some form of visible calendar and active reminders
- If possible print out your module calendar and stick it up somewhere obvious so you can see it
- Often in Module > resources or week 0/1
- The online module planner is great but won't actively remind you of anything (dates will show up but you have to look)

Time management resources

- <https://help.open.ac.uk/time-management-skills>
- There are lots of resources available for time management
- Be realistic and balance what you want to achieve
- Balance time available, effort needed and eventual outcome
- Sometimes planning will help save time, other times just getting on will be the most efficient option

Tools available

- Showcase of the different options including activity template for week, hour by hour planner, foursquare priorities, Gantt chart broad allocation per activity
- (if too small remember you can make the slides full size on your own screen)



Activity template

ACTIVITY TEMPLATE

Activities	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Weekly Total*
Work Hours								
Travel								
Family Time								
Socialising								
Housework/ Gardening/ Chores								
Shopping								
Exercise/Health								
Eating								
Sleeping								
Total								
Time Available for Study								

[*] 24 hours each day, 7 days a week - maximum weekly total is 168 hours

The four-square grid

Four-square grid

Write down your tasks within this grid. First do the things that are both urgent AND important!

	Important	Unimportant
Urgent		
Not urgent		

Time management activity

Time Management Activity

Key Sleep get ready at work travelling
Childcare Gym/hobbies household eat/relax

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
6 am							
7 am							
8 am							
9 am							
10 am							
11 am							
12 pm							
1 pm							
2 pm							
3 pm							
4 pm							
5 pm							
6 pm							
7 pm							
8 pm							
9 pm							
10 pm							
11 pm							
12 am							
1 am							
2 am							
3 am							
4 am							
5 am							

Module Gantt chart

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG	AH	AI
	Gantt Chart proforma																																		
Dates	October				November				December				January				February				March				April				May						
	7	14	21	28	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30	7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	
Tasks																																			
read sections 1-3																																			
check TMA guidelines																																			

Poll time

Please indicate which of these you think might be something you would try:

- Weekly activity planner
- Day and hour planner
- Foursquare chart
- Gantt style (time allocation) chart
- Detailed weekly planner

Please use the short answer poll to give any further information about the tools and your thoughts

Setting priorities

How good would you say you are at setting (and keeping to) priorities in general?

- Great
- Good
- OK
- Not so good
- Always get distracted by fun things!

Strategies

- Little and often is better
- Trying to study for 3 hours without a break will be counterproductive and you will probably end up tired and fed up with it all!
- Factor in breaks
- Reward yourself for successful study

Contingency time

- Can you think of anything that might affect your ability to study when and for as long as initially planned?
- Please use the short answer polling pod to give your suggestions

Our ideas

- Illness – yours or dependants
- Extra paid work to do
- Family issues e.g. children's exams, attending school trip...
- Technical issues e.g. broadband down / computer breaks / house flooded...

Foreseeing...



Foreseeing

- Obviously we don't expect you to foresee the future

BUT

- Some things can be planned for and therefore shouldn't disrupt your study plans unexpectedly
- Religious festivals such as Diwali, Christmas, Eid and Hanukkah are not unexpected so you need to plan for them if you will have time off

Be prepared

- It is always better to over plan to begin with than expect everything to magically work and then get stressed

So....

- What can people share from their sessions?
Please use either the chat pod or the
anonymous short answer polling pod

Alternative discussion activity

- There will be 2 specific questions in chat pods for you to explore some of the elements we have discussed further.
- *I manage my time well by....*
- *My main challenge in managing my time is....*
- You are welcome to add your thoughts and we will then pick up some of the themes and talk through them.
- Chat does have names on but the recording will be anonymised so you will appear as 'user number'

When time runs out...

- Look at what is most important and focus on that
- Prioritise the tasks according to what you will gain marks for or need for professional development
- If something unexpected and unavoidable occurs then you may be permitted an extension on a TMA (NOT ICMA / EMA) deadline so talk to your tutor

Take home message

- Time management works best if you prepare well and are realistic about the time you have available and what you can personally get done
- Think about what is important to you and what you hope to achieve
- Short term pain – long term gain

Feedback

We really want to know what you think of the sessions and want to plan more sessions that meet your needs.

To help us do this, please complete the feedback form either during the session or after watching the recording.

Use this link to access the form:

<https://forms.office.com/e/1y4NMuVzPL>

If you have any other feedback please send it to:
studenthub@open.ac.uk

Upcoming September sessions

12-Sep, 11am Neurodiverse community/ neurodivergent students: starting out effectively

14-Sep, 11am Resilience: planning for success

19-Sep, 11am Freshers - Welcome to the OU: Finding your way around

20-Sep, 11am Freshers - Being a great OU learner

21-Sep, 11am Freshers - Access students

22-Sep, 11am Freshers - for student carers

22-Sep, 7pm Freshers - Friday night social

26-Sep, 11am Tuition - making the most of your tutor and tutorials

27-Sep, 11am Improve your academic writing

28-Sep, 11am Exploring Generative AI and its impact on your study journey

<http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/>

Past student hub live online study skills sessions [here](#)

Visit us at <http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/> and subscribe for events as they are announced. Send us feedback at studenthub@open.ac.uk

