



Carey

Baptist
College
Harrisdale

Senior School Study Skills Handbook

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Introduction

Learning how to learn is one of our biggest challenges. No single method of learning guarantees success, but it is a process that we can develop and get better at. Different people learn best in different ways, and part of the journey in the Senior years is to find the strategies that work for us, and those that work best in the different subjects that we take.

To succeed and improve at anything, it is important to have a growth mindset and aim at achieving our personal best by setting targets for ourselves, being resilient and learning from our mistakes. Achieving our personal best means doing everything possible to consistently approach each task in a way that produces the best results. This means:

- Asking the right questions;
- Consulting with the best people;
- Finding the best solutions;
- Learning the best approach;
- Making a plan that will produce the best results;
- Being motivated to produce the best results you are capable of.

Doing your best is **not about comparing yourself against others or even about the grade that you achieve**. There will always be those who do better than you, and those that don't do as well as you. It is about setting your goals, and then striving to achieve them. To judge whether you are doing well, you need to ask yourself – **am I on target?** That is why you need targets. If you have a target, you know when to adjust your aim in order to have the best shot at hitting its centre.

Our performance should be measured against our goals. Suppose my friend and I get an assessment back, and my friend achieves 65%, while I only get 62%. Should I be disappointed? This really depends what my target is. If my friend is aiming for Physiotherapy at Curtin (which needs an ATAR of 90) they require an average of about 70% in their four best subjects. If I am aiming for Business at Curtin (which requires an ATAR of 70), I need an average of 60-62% (depending on scaling and moderation). I am actually on track, while my friend is not.

Take the example of athletes. When an interviewer asks if they are disappointed that they didn't win a medal, they often focus on their personal best time. If they achieve near this, or improve on it, they are delighted. The interviewer is usually only interested in the number of medals. The athlete realises that there are only three of these to go around, and the road to get there is by **continual improvement**.

In 2013, Scientific American released its findings into a study of the most successful studying strategies. The top two strategies were self-testing (i.e. using flash cards, note taking sheets, teaching others); and distributed practice (spreading out study over time and not cramming). A recent study showed that those who focus on grades, rather than how they can improve, don't do as well at the end. This study returned work to three groups. One group were only given a letter grade. The second a letter grade and a comment. The third group just received a comment. The group with the letter grade, and the group with the letter grade and comment did similarly. The reason is probably because we tend to focus on the grade and forget the rest. The group that showed the most improvement was the group with the comment only.

Having effective study strategies is vital, and **for progress to occur, we need to focus on how we can improve, rather than what we have achieved**. If life is only about the achievement of a gold medal, there is usually only one of these to go around, and the rest are considered 'second best'. **Am I on track? Is this the best that I can do? These are great questions to ask ourselves.**

Mr R. Stirling

Mr R. Stirling
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL CURRICULUM

Mrs K. Lacey

Mrs K. Lacey
DEAN OF CURRICULUM

Four Roadblocks to Making Progress

1

Doing a bare minimum; doing only what is required

We need to be aiming for the maximum, not scraping by with the minimum. This means: not leaving things until the last minute; not concentrating on just what we have to do; not just making it on time; not doing the least to get by. We weren't designed this way. Our brain is far more complex and creative than the biggest computer. We are designed for big things.

2

Misunderstanding past experiences

Your past is a very inaccurate predictor of your future. Failure at something does not make you a loser. You learn by your mistakes. It enables you to move forward in a different direction. You can learn from your mistakes, rather than be defined by them.

3

Excuses

"It's not fair; it's not my fault." Excuses are disempowering and stop us moving forward, and learning from our mistakes. Blame works the same way. We will get things wrong. It is what we do next that counts most.

4

Distractions

There will always be distractions, good and bad ones that capture your attention. A distraction is anything that takes your vision away from where it was going (vision is your picture of your future). We have to plan for the long haul, rather than just for tomorrow. We have to be immovable, steadfast, committed, faithful – these are the things that keep us on track. Expressions of opinion, peer pressure, what we might read, being offended – these are the things that get us off track.

Growth Mindsets

Professor Carol Dweck (Stanford University) suggests when it comes to achieving success, more important than believing in your abilities is the belief that you can improve upon your abilities. Your grade is a reflection of your study strategies, not your ability. Developing a growth mindset helps you regard failures and setbacks as just part of a learning process, and gives you the motivation and persistence to master new skills.

What can you try?

Practice "not yet"

Next time you're facing a challenge or find yourself in the middle of failure, try to pause for a moment and notice what that voice inside your head is saying. Is it telling you that you're not enough, and now everyone will know that you're not as smart or capable as they once thought? If yes, show yourself some self-compassion and acknowledge that you're still learning. Instead of "I can't", "I'm no good", or "I failed" try telling yourself the story of "not yet".

Reinterpret criticism

Reinterpret criticism by seeing it as an opportunity to learn from others. Ask for some extra guidance. If you see someone who is doing better than you, ask them for some tips and see if you can learn from them.

Set growth mindset goals

Do one thing each day that stretches you outside your comfort zone simply for the joy of learning. Don't be attached to any result, other than the chance to give something new your very best effort, to learn from what unfolds, and to be willing to own any failures or negative feedback. Celebrate your courage so your brain starts to associate growth mindset actions as rewarding, rather than painful.



Activity NUMBER 1

Develop a Growth Mindset

Rather than seeking out evidence that proves we're not smart, people with a growth mindset focus on process and progress, searching out opportunities to stretch their existing abilities. A fixed mindset focuses on intelligence and leads to a desire to look smart.

Watch the 10 video short clips at: www.thecornerstoneforteachers.com/growth-mindset-videos
What can you learn from these clips?

Strategies which assist Learning

The greater the variety of study methods you use, the more that the brain reinforces what you are learning, and the stronger the neural pathways become. Different strategies will suit different topics and subjects better than others, so a combination of these different strategies work best.

Tips for visually reinforcing learning include:

- Visually represent the information and the relationship between ideas.
- Try to visualise verbal instructions or things that are being read to you.
- Write down key words, ideas or instructions for better retention.
- Use flashcards to reinforce lessons, concepts and new words.
- Draw pictures to help explain new concepts and then explain the pictures.
- Turn your diagrams into posters and put them up on the wall of your room.
- Colour code to group similar ideas together and underscore important concepts.
- Use mind (also called concept) maps as a tool for revision.
- Use charts and graphics.
- Draw diagrams to show relationships.
- Use colour to highlight important information.
- Write summary notes for different topics on different coloured paper.

Tips for aurally reinforcing learning include:

- Study in groups so that you can talk out loud and explain your ideas to other individuals.
- Recite information out loud to remember it. Get someone to check your accuracy.
- Participate in question and answer sessions in class; ask lots of questions.
- Use flashcards and read them out loud to reinforce lessons, concepts and new words.
- Record your notes or spelling and then listen to the recording (e.g. on the way to school).
- Engage in conversational discussion to learn new material.
- Record lectures and lessons in order to play back and listen multiple times as a study technique.
- Check out and watch you-tube clips on the topics you are studying.

Tips for kinesthetically reinforcing learning include:

- Study in groups and incorporate activities that involve building, drawing or acting out.
- Reinforce new material learned by teaching it to your friends or family.
- Chew gum, walk around, or rock in a chair while reading or studying.
- Use flashcards and arrange them in groups to help demonstrate relationships.
- Take frequent breaks by getting up and stretching and walking around to help get your circulation flowing.
- Role play.

Tips for textually reinforcing learning include:

- Interact with the text, and summarise topics into key words or phrases.
- Write an executive summary (i.e. a summary of your notes).
- Re-write the definitions of the main terms in each topic to give you additional opportunities to write down the precise definitions (and make sure you understand them).
- Test yourself by finding quizzes on the internet and make up your own.
- Annotate handouts with your own notes and questions.
- Write lists (e.g. the five causes of ...; the seven results of ... and so on).
- Use mnemonics as a memory tool.
- Use look, cover, write, check to learn material.
- Practice doing exam questions, using a timer.
- Learn some great quotes of by heart that you could use in a variety of your answers.



Keep up to date and regularly assess where you are at.

Ten Keys to add to your 'Personal Best' toolkit



KEY ONE: Preparation and Attitude

Preparation brings confidence. The most successful leaders have been the ones who were thoroughly prepared, and persevered. Basketballer Michael Jordan (winner of six championship rings in the NBA) says ... "Just play. Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships. I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I can accept failure, everyone fails at something. Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen. Obstacles don't have to stop you." President Barack Obama greatly valued preparation as demonstrated by his following trademarks:

1. Obama's speeches were always thoughtful and well-prepared, with the focus on powerful words. "A change is brought about because ordinary people do extraordinary things." He often quoted icons like Lincoln, Martin Luther King and Sam Cooke.



Excellence is about being the best that you can be – NOT about an 'A' grade. It takes sacrifice. Are you willing to pay the price?

2. Barack Obama was a master at the use of metaphors, which he used to strengthen his remarks by vivid imagery. "In the face of our common dangers... in the winter of our hardship... let us brave the icy currents and endure what storms may come."
3. Obama always maintained a standard of respect and dignity for his listeners. He once famously promised America's enemies "... that we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist." Obama was not afraid to stand up to his enemies. He warned them that they are "on the wrong side of history." Courage, delivered in a truthful and direct manner, inspires confidence.
4. Obama over-prepared. Although it was clear in the final days of his presidential campaign that Obama would win, he had prepared both a victory speech and a concession speech. "You can't take anything for granted," he told reporters.



There are no short cuts, or 'magic bullets'.

Consider this ...

Aiming for your 'personal best' is the pursuit of excellence. Having an excellent attitude changes your circumstances. Excellence is a lifestyle, not an event ... going beyond what is required or expected. It is attractive (but can equally bring applause OR criticism). For an Olympic Swimmer, swimming 150km per week is normal. It is about going the extra mile, until the extra mile is no longer the extra mile. This doesn't mean that there will be less difficulties. Challenges will come. You need to get used to being an overcomer; to becoming stronger; to lifting greater weights.

KEY TWO



KEY TWO: Time Management

Your ability to manage your time and stay organised is fundamental to success in all areas of life, as well as in studying. No system of time management, no matter how fancy it is, will ever work if you don't use it consistently. Most people waste an extraordinary amount of time. Even if you add up all the things in your life, and added other 'essential' activities that you could think of, you would find that you would be losing a few hours every day. Two questions should be considered:

1. Do I always get as much study done each week as I set out to do?



2. Could I get more done in the hours that I have put aside to study?



You might like to try the following simple four-step **time management system**:

1. Map out
THE YEAR

2. Map out
EACH WEEK
a) Your ideal week
b) Plan each week

3. Map out
EACH DAY

4. EVALUATE
AND
UPDATE

Requirements:

1. Your school diary;
2. Your assessment schedule;
3. A weekly planner (create your own);
4. A yearly wall planner (Officeworks sells these);
5. A pen and a few highlighters.

1. Map out
THE YEAR

- Using your assessment schedules, mark all the assessment dates that you can, and your exam blocks on your yearly wall planner. Include the subject and nature of the task as well as the weighting percentage.
- Mark each assessment in your diary on the corresponding page, including all relevant information about that task.
- Put a two week reminder on the appropriate page for all your major assessments. Include the subject the assessment is for and the weighting (the percentage it contributes to your total assessment mark).
- With a highlighter, clearly mark all your exam periods on your wall planner.
- With a different highlighter, mark all the holiday periods in your wall planner. **7**



Activity NUMBER 2

Construct a Year Planner

Start by putting in the exam blocks, major assessments, camps, when units in individual subjects start and finish, when revision should start, and when holiday revision classes are on.

	TERM 1	TERM 2	TERM 3	TERM 4
WEEK 1				
WEEK 2				
WEEK 3				
WEEK 4				
WEEK 5				
WEEK 6				
WEEK 7				
WEEK 8				
WEEK 9				
WEEK 10				
HOLIDAYS WEEK 1				
HOLIDAYS WEEK 2				



- Using the weekly schedule, plan what you would consider to be the ideal week. Be sure to include: **school; study; sport; relaxation; social activities; daily routines.** You will need to do the ideal week routine exercise a few different times throughout the year, as demands change. Most likely, you will need to be **allocating more study time in the last month leading up to any exam blocks.**

If you don't reach your weekly study target in any one given week, **make up the time on Saturday.** You should also use the planner for holiday periods. In Year 12 you should be allocating **one week of these holiday break weeks** to study/revision/revision courses.

- Plan each week** – Every weekend, you should sit down and plan the following week. Using your yearly planner and your daily diary, identify the tasks that need to be done for that week. Make sure that you **include study (revision) time each week.** One hour per subject per week might be a good target in terms of the time that should be regularly put aside. Take out your 'ideal week' and a blank weekly planner and begin to map out the coming week. Try to fit the week's tasks into the same time slots that you have allowed for these types of activities in your 'ideal week'. Keep this weekly planner in your diary **and stick to it.** A sample of an 'ideal week' plan might look like this:

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
6am - 7am	SLEEP IN	GET READY	GET READY	GET READY	GET READY
7am - 8am	GET READY	STUDY / REVISE	STUDY/REVISE	STUDY / REVISE	STUDY / REVISE
8am - 9am	TRAVEL & READ	TRAVEL & READ	TRAVEL & READ	TRAVEL & READ	TRAVEL & READ
9am - 10am	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME
10am - 11am	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME
11am - 12pm	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME

12pm - 1pm	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME
1pm - 2pm	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME
2pm - 3pm	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME	SCHOOL TIME
3pm - 4pm	B/BALL TRAIN	TRAVEL & READ	B/BALL GAME	MATHS TUTOR	TRAVEL & READ
4pm - 5pm	TRAVEL & READ	STUDY	TRAVEL & READ	STUDY	STUDY
5pm - 6pm	SPARE TIME	STUDY	SPARE TIME	STUDY	STUDY

6pm - 7pm	DINNER / SPARE				
7pm - 8pm	STUDY	STUDY	STUDY	SHOPS	YOUTH GROUP
8pm - 9pm	STUDY	STUDY	STUDY	SHOPS	YOUTH GROUP
9pm - 10pm	STUDY/REVISE	TV	STUDY	TRAVEL / TV	TRAVEL / TV

Saturday should have a **planned study slot** between 9am and 1pm (or 2pm - 6pm), depending on other activities, with more time devoted if needed. Always keep one day free as a rest day.



Time is an **INVESTMENT**; it needs to be invested purposefully and wisely (i.e. you are investing for a future return).



Activity NUMBER 3

Construct a 5 Weekly Study Timeline

To create a study plan, begin by reflecting on how your time is spent and prioritise what is important. Online study time needs to fit into your schedule. But you should aim to study when you are well rested and mentally alert. Establish some sort of study goal before or at the beginning of each study session. Having a goal boosts motivation, makes you accountable and ensures you keep making progress. Be realistic about what you can accomplish. Allocating very large chunks of time to online study might end up having a demoralising effect.

Study plans need balance. Include rewards (e.g. free time) after you achieve your study goals.

1. Assess your current schedule

A good starting point is to assess how you currently spend your time to help you identify how much time is available for study. You might also find activities that waste time and can be cut.

2. Construct a timetable

To prepare a timetable, start by blocking out times where there are commitments. Then you can start allocating time for important things, including your course. To succeed, you need to set aside a good number of hours for each course for reading, homework, and revision. Your timetable needs to leave room for extra study (in case you need it) and time for yourself.

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

3. Set study goals

You can do this formally or just spend some time thinking about it. Good students set long term and short term goals. A longer term goal (for a course) might be to complete all readings and exercises before entering the exam period. A short term goal might be to work solidly for the next hour before you take a break.

4. Establish good habits

A study plan works best if it is followed consistently. It helps to start well early on and build great habits.

These help carry you through during any periods when you might be busy, tired or just down on motivation.

KEY THREE

KEY THREE: Goal Setting

A goal is something you want to achieve. A short-term goal is something you want to achieve soon. Examples of short-term goals are finishing your homework and doing well on tomorrow's test. A long-term goal is something you want to achieve by a later date. Examples of long-term goals are writing a paper or passing a class. To set appropriate goals, you must know what is important for you to accomplish. Then set specific and clearly stated goals. If you do not have clearly stated goals, your effort will lack direction and focus. Write your goals down so that you have a record of them.



Setting goals is a great start but creating a plan to accomplish the goal is the key to achieving it. To be your best means developing a realistic and well-defined plan to achieve your goals.

Characteristics of appropriate goals

Each goal you set should state **WHAT** you will do and **WHEN** you will accomplish it. Implied in each goal you set is your **WILL** (determination) to do it. For example, a goal for a research paper might be stated as follows: I will (your determination) finish gathering information for my research paper (what you will do) by 20 November (when you will accomplish it).

Your goals should be:

- 1 Within your skills and abilities**
Knowing your strengths and weaknesses will help you set goals you can accomplish.
- 2 Realistic**
Setting a goal to learn the spelling of three new words a day is realistic. Trying to learn the spelling of fifty new words a day is not realistic.
- 3 Flexible**
Sometimes things will not go the way you anticipate and you may need to change your goal. Stay flexible so when you realise a change is necessary, you will be ready.
- 4 Measurable**
It is important to be able to measure your progress towards a goal. It is important to recognise when you have accomplished your goal and need to go no further. Failure to measure your progress toward a goal and recognise its accomplishment will result in effort that is misdirected and wasted.
- 5 Within your control**
Other than when working as part of a group, accomplishment of your goal should not depend on other students. You can control what you do, but you have little or no control over what others do. You may do what you have to do, but if others don't, you will not accomplish your goal. At times your parents, teachers, and counsellors will set goals for you. Be accepting when they do. These are people who know what is important for you and are concerned with your success. They have walked the same journey as you. They can also help you accomplish the goals they set.



Set goals in school that provide you with direction and lead to success. Keep your focus on the goal ... this is the reward for your sacrifices.

Regularly review your goals and keep them in a visible place

You should **have your goals written in big letters (or cut out some pictures if you are a more visual person)** over your study desk, if not on the wall of your bedroom. This will constantly remind you of what you are trying to achieve, and why. If you have given yourself enough reasons why you should achieve your goal, it will show you why you need to sacrifice the time to go back to sitting at your desk, and get on with the task.

Prioritise

What often holds people back is not knowing where to start. Sometimes it is so overwhelming that you just don't do anything at all. If you ever get to that point, ask yourself **what is the most important thing you have to do**, and do that one thing. When you have completed this, stop again and ask the same question and then do that one thing. **Even the tallest mountain is climbed the same way as every other one ... one step at a time.** Break down your tasks, assignments or study sessions into individual steps and simply deal with them one at a time.

Start small and build your way up

There is no need to start with three hours of studying at a time straight away. **Why not increase by 20 minutes each day?** Within two weeks, you will have eased your way up to your target. Just **start your momentum moving in a positive direction.**



Improvement is the stepping stone towards the achievement of your personal best.

It is never too late

Just **get started right away.** Even if you are only one month away from exams, putting in a solid effort for the next month is better than not putting in any effort at all. You have nothing to lose.

Plan your study time (have a schedule)

Having a set time really helps you to stay on track.

Reward your efforts

When you set a small goal, like 'complete all the Human Biology summaries by Friday night', **give yourself a reward if you complete it on time.** It is good fun coming up with the rewards and it gives you something to work towards.



Keep the end in mind. This means knowing what you want the outcome to be and working backwards starting from the top to achieve it. This means having a clear vision in your mind to help you set the proper goals.



Activity NUMBER 4

Goal Setting

1. Personal Goals

Set two personal goals, work out a timeline / plan of how you might go about achieving those goals, and note down what resources you have or will need to achieve your goals.

Goal 1	Timeline/Plan	Resources
--------	---------------	-----------

Goal 2	Timeline/Plan	Resources
--------	---------------	-----------

2. Subject or Study Goals

Set four subject goals (e.g. what scores you are aiming at in particular subjects), work out a timeline / plan of how you might go about achieving those goals, and note down what resources you have or will need to achieve your goals.

Goal 1	Timeline/Plan	Resources
--------	---------------	-----------

Goal 2	Timeline/Plan	Resources
--------	---------------	-----------

Goal 3	Timeline/Plan	Resources
--------	---------------	-----------

Goal 4	Timeline/Plan	Resources
--------	---------------	-----------

3. Career Goals / Options (see following section)

Set two career goals, work out a timeline / plan of how you might go about achieving those goals, and note down what resources you have or will need to achieve your goals.

Goal 1	Timeline/Plan	Resources
--------	---------------	-----------

Goal 2	Timeline/Plan	Resources
--------	---------------	-----------

What are my Career Options?

Read through the following points, and do the research. Start to take steps to find out the things you will need to know. This will lead you to other sources of information and other questions to ask.

Myths about Career Choices



MYTH ONE

Myth 1: You must know now what you are going to do with the rest of your life

- It is impossible to know exactly what you are going to do, although you should have some ideas about what you are interested in.
- You need to know what your options are and what you need to do to pursue those options. It is good to have Plan A, Plan B, Plan C ... and so on.
- If Plan A doesn't work out, then perhaps this is just a door that is being closed. When one door closes, you can focus on other ones that can open up for you. **The initial plan is not always the best plan.**



MYTH TWO

Myth 2: Your decision is final

- Whatever the decision you make, you can always change it. Even after you finish school, it is amazing how quickly you can change your mind. Don't feel like you are locked in. If you know your options well enough, a change of mind can be quite easily accommodated because you'll know what you need to do to pursue that new avenue.



MYTH THREE

Myth 3: University is the only way

- In industries like hospitality and IT, there are other pathways open to students. There are some excellent colleges that offer very good courses, and some will even help you to find a job once you graduate. However, that doesn't mean that University is not the way to go, it is simply not the ONLY way to go. Do your research thoroughly.
- In many professions, University IS the only way, and if you are going up against university graduates for a job, you'll want to have performed very well in your course and have some significant experience.



MYTH FOUR

Myth 4: The ATAR is the only way

- There are other ways of getting to University, if that is what you want to do. An increasing number of students are using the Certificate IV at TAFE as an entry to University.
- Portfolio Entry and the Uni Preparation Course (check out these at ECU – University Preparation Course, and Murdoch – On Track Program) are other pathways, especially if you 'freak out' at the prospect of exams.

The importance of having career goals

You can change your mind, but it is still critical to know what you want and be committed to doing whatever it takes to get there. You need a definite purpose or target, or how do you know if you are on track?

A career aim:

1. Gives you a sense of certainty about the future.
2. Relieves the pressure of thinking about what you are going to do.
3. Allows you to make future plans.
4. Gives you a target score to aim at.

How to research your career options

Read

The following resources can be very helpful:

- The *TISC Guide*, published by the Tertiary Institutions Service Centre each year. Contact TISC on 9347 8000 or visit their website at www.tisc.edu.au for information on where to obtain a copy.
- Information on TAFE courses is found on the web. Visit the two main TAFEs at www.southmetrotafe.wa.edu.au/courses or www.northmetrotafe.wa.edu.au/courses for course information.

Check out each website and download the course information. Circle the jobs and the courses you like the sound of, jot down a couple of sentences to explain why you like them and cross off the ones you don't like. If you do this over breakfast each day, and you spend ten minutes per day crossing, circling and making notes, it won't even take you a month to complete going through all sources of information. If you combine this with follow up phone calls, within only a few weeks you will have figured out what you are interested in, and you'll also know what you need to do to get there. You'll be way ahead of the rest, and can concentrate on doing well.



Seeking outside help and resources can enhance your ability to broaden your thinking and your decision-making skills.

Attend SEVERAL Open Days

Go to all open days at institutions you're interested in. University open days normally occur in the first half of Term 3 each year. Lecture rooms are open for inspection, information tents are set up, talks are given and question sessions are held. Find out as much information as you can, collect all the relevant brochures and speak to as many people as possible.

2019 Dates

Curtin University Open Day	Sunday 21 July
ECU Mt Lawley & WAAPA Open Day	Sunday 11 August
ECU Joondalup Open Day	Sunday 28 July
Murdoch University Open Day	Sunday 28 July
Notre Dame University Open Day	Sunday 11 August
University of WA Open Day	Sunday 4 August

Where can I get Career Information?

Check out the course information in each of the University Prospectus guides. The University guides are published for the start of the Open Days (these usually occur early in Term 3). Investigate the following:

Tertiary Institutions Service Centre	www.tisc.edu.au
South Metropolitan TAFE	www.southmetrotafe.wa.edu.au
North Metropolitan TAFE	www.northmetrotafe.wa.edu.au
Curtin University Future Students Centre Bentley Campus, Kent Street, Bentley, 6102 Phone: 9266 100 or visit www.futurestudents.curtin.edu.au	www.curtin.edu.au
Edith Cowan University Student Recruitment and Careers Office, Mt Lawley Campus 2 Bradford St, Mt Lawley, 6050 Joondalup Campus 270 Joondalup Dr, Joondalup, 6027. Phone: 134 ECU (134 328) or visit www.reachyourpotential.com.au	www.ecu.edu.au
WAAPA	www.waapa.ecu.edu.au
Murdoch University Prospective Students' and Admissions Centre, 90 South St. Murdoch, 6150. Phone: 1300 MURDOCH (1300 687 3624)	www.murdoch.edu.au
Notre Dame University Prospective Students Office, 19 Mouat Street, Fremantle, 6160. Phone: 9433 0555.	www.nd.edu.au
University of W.A. Prospective Student Office Admission Centre, 35 Stirling Highway, Crawley, 6009. Phone: 6488 2477 or visit www.studyat.uwa.edu.au	www.uwa.edu.au

Career sites

A range of self-assessment quizzes can be found on the net. They highlight your interests, abilities and personality, then suggest a range of jobs for you to consider. They won't make the decisions for you, but they are a great starting point. See Mrs Post for assistance.

Setting ATAR Targets (TISCOOnline Website)

This site can be located at www.tisc.edu.au/calculator/atar-calculator.tisc and has an **ATAR Calculator**. Once you click into it, put in your TEA (a score out of 430, made up of the % score of your 4 best ATAR subjects). Put in 2018 as the Year 12 completion date and hit the Calculate key (as 2018 is the latest Year 12 data available). This gives you an ATAR estimated score (which determines your eligibility for University entrance).

Potential ATAR targets

Target	TEA	4 Subject Average	Aim / Course / University
98 (ATAR)	336	84%	Veterinary Science (Murdoch).
97 (ATAR)	324	81%	Curtin Excellence Scholarship (ATAR of 97 and Curtin as first preference); \$15,000.
96 (ATAR)	312	78%	Curtin Excellence Scholarship (ATAR of 96 and Curtin as first preference); \$5,000.
95 (ATAR)	304	76%	Medicine (Curtin).
90 (ATAR)	280	70%	Physiotherapy / Law / Optometry (Curtin); Law (Murdoch).
88 (ATAR)	268	67%	Midwifery (Curtin).
85 (ATAR)	260	65%	Law (ECU – Joondalup).
80 (ATAR)	244	61%	Occupational Therapy / Engineering (Curtin); Engineering (Murdoch); Arts, Biomedical Science, Commerce, Science (UWA) (Min ATAR for UWA).
79 (ATAR)	240	60%	Speech Pathology (Curtin).
70 (ATAR)	220	55%	Nursing / Commerce / Architectural Science / Psychology (Curtin); Business / Education / Sport & Exercise Science (Murdoch); Education (ECU – Mt Lawley) (Min ATAR for Murdoch, Curtin and ECU).

N.B. Scaling and moderation need to be accounted for when estimating target ATAR scores.

SCSA Awards and Exhibitions visit www.scsa.wa.edu.au

AWARDS winners listed in the newspaper	Selection Criteria (2019)
Beazley Medal WACE & VET	Students with top score in WACE and VET.
General Exhibition	General exhibitions are awarded to the top 50 students in each course, based on scaled exam marks.
Subject Exhibition	Awarded to the student who achieves the highest exam mark (subjects >100 students).
Certificate of Excellence	Awarded in each ATAR course (with more than 100 students) to students achieving highest 0.5% in their exam mark.
Certificate of Merit Certificate of Distinction	Awards based on letter grades given by school. An ATAR 'A' grade gains 10 points; an ATAR 'B' gains 9 points; and a General subject 'A' gains 8 points. Certificate of Merit = 150-189; Certificate of Distinction = 190-200 10 x 'A' grades in Year 11 & 12 = 200 points



Activity NUMBER 5

Estimate your ATAR Score

Subject	Semester Mark	Exam Mark	Final Mark
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

Step 1 Estimate your Semester, exam, and final marks in each subject.

Step 2 Choose your best 4 ATAR subjects (i.e. highest marks).

English or Maths do NOT have to be one of your best four. To work out your final score, take 75% of your exam score and add it to 25% of your Semester mark (in Year 12, half your marks come from the ATAR Exam, plus a high proportion of your school marks come from the Semester Exams). Moderation, standardisation and scaling also affects your final marks, but disregard these factors.

Subject	Semester Mark	Exam Mark	Final Mark <i>75% from exam</i>
1			
2			
3			
4			

TEA Score	ATAR Score <i>(based on 2018 data)</i>
340 a 4 subject average of 85%	98.5 top 1.5% of students
320 a 4 subject average of 80%	96.95 top 3.05% of students
300 a 4 subject average of 75%	94.55 top 5.45% of students
280 a 4 subject average of 70%	90.85 top 9.15% of students
260 a 4 subject average of 65%	85.90 top 14.1% of students
240 a 4 subject average of 60%	79.35 top 20.65% of students
220 a 4 subject average of 55%	70.80 top 29.2% of students

Step 3 Add your 4 marks together to make up a score out of 430 (TEA).

Total (out of 430) = TEA	
ATAR Score	

An ATAR score of 80 is needed for a direct pathway into UWA; while 70 is the minimum for a direct pathway into Curtin, Murdoch and ECU. However, there are other pathways which students can investigate (e.g. portfolio entry, or entry via the completion of a Certificate IV).

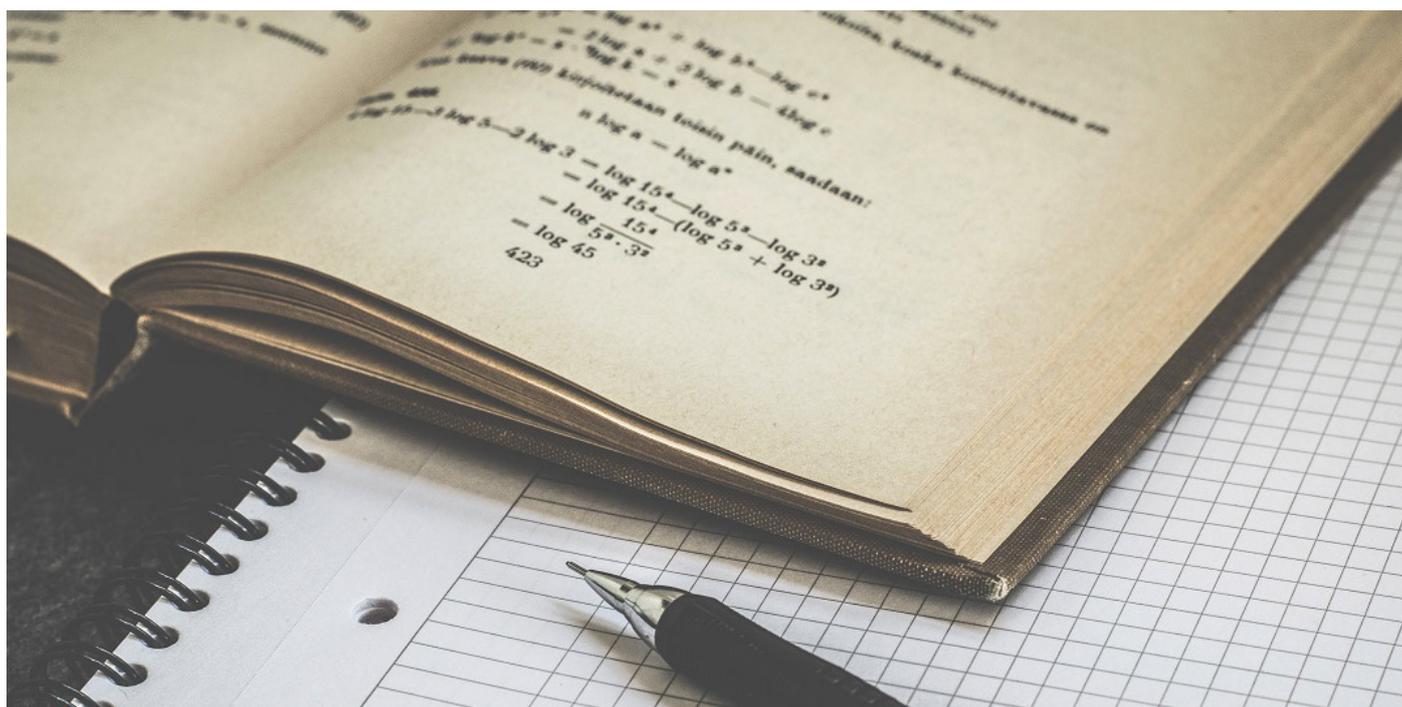
As a general rule, a **Semester/exam mark of 60%** should be considered a minimum target to aim at to achieve an ATAR of 70 (considering moderation/standardising/scaling factors).

Step 4 How close to a SCSA Certificate are you? (see page 17)

Subject	ATAR/General	Letter Grade	Points Awarded
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			



If something is not working, change it.





KEY FOUR: Organisation

The difference between a good result and a great result are the little things.

Here is a list of some of the little things that you can do to maximise your study performance.

Make the most of your Class Time

- 1 Listen and take notes**
Especially when you hear things like:
“You’ll need to know this for your exams” or “This will be in the assessment task” or “This is critical” or “You need to know this”.

It is often in the **in-class discussions that teachers give you hints on what to expect in exams and assessments**. Taking good notes is a three-stage process in which there are certain things you should do **before** class, **during** class, and **after** class. Here are the three stages of note taking and what you should do during each stage.

Get ready to take notes (Before Class)

Review your notes from the previous class session before you come to class. This will help you remember what was covered and get you ready to understand new information your teacher provides. Complete all assigned readings before you come to class. Your teacher will expect that you have done this and will use and build upon this information. Bring all note taking materials with you to class. Have several pens and pencils as well as your notebook.

Take notes (During Class)

Keep your attention focused on what your teacher is saying. Listen for “signal statements” that tell you that what your teacher is about to say is important to write in your notes. Examples of signal statements are “The most important point ...” and “Remember that ...”

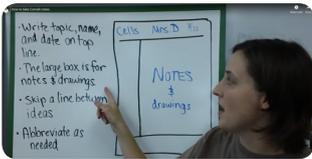
Be sure to include information that your teacher repeats or writes on the board in your notes. Write quickly so that you can include all the important information in your notes. Do this by **writing abbreviated** words such as med for medicine, using symbols such as % for percent, and writing short sentences. Place a ? next to the information in your notes which you are unsure about, and check with your teacher for clarification after class.



Activity NUMBER 6

Cornell Note Taking Sheets

The Cornell note taking system was invented by Walter Pauk (from Cornell University) for taking notes in an organised manner. This method divides a single page in three sections which are titled Key Words (or Questions), Notes (or Main Points/Details), and a Summary Section (limited to four sentences). The Notes section is used for the class discussion and what the teacher teaches students. Besides the notes section, students should leave some extra space between the main points so that other details can easily be filled, such as other important points.



Watch the video at www.timeatlas.com/cornell-note-template and read the material which introduces the system. This website allows you to create your own system or download existing templates. A Carey template is available from the Curriculum Office, on request.



Rewrite your notes (After Class)

Rewrite your notes to make them more complete by changing abbreviated words into whole words, symbols into words, and shortened sentences into longer sentences. Make your notes more accurate by answering any questions you had when writing your notes in class. Use your textbook and reference sources to obtain the information you need to answer your questions. If necessary, ask your teacher or other students for help.

Check your notes

Check with other students to be sure you did not leave out important information. Having good class notes will help you to be better prepared for tests.

Being actively involved

Research indicates that the amount of information you retain after 30 days when you listen is only 10%; when you take notes it goes up to 40-50%; when you're actively involved AND take notes it goes up to 90%.

If you don't understand something, ask.

2 Create an ideal study environment (refer to Key 5)

To be more effective when you study you should:

Have a good attitude

Approach your study from a positive frame of mind. Focus on what you want to achieve and how you'll feel when you have achieved it.

Study in a quiet environment

Music and Study

Research shows that today's music (which beats up to 140 beats per minute) lowers your brain's ability to retain information. So unless the music has a rhythm of 60 beats per minute (e.g. classical baroque) which can actually help study, background music is not advised. Don't study in front of the TV, but try to find a quiet, private place.

Be organised



3 Take study breaks

You should take breaks when you study. Most people can concentrate for about 45 minutes to one hour. That is about the time frame to study and then take a break. Five minutes is a good break time as taking them too often or too long may cause you to lose momentum. If you go on for too long, you will burn out, and feel like your brain is going numb. You need to keep fresh, or you will not take the information in. The same thing can occur when you work too late at night. Try working earlier if you can, or getting up early in the morning to study.



We learn 10% of what we read; 20% of what we hear; 30% of what we see; 50% of what we both see and hear; 70% of what is discussed with others; 80% of what we personally experience; and 95% of what we teach to others (William Glasser).

4

Study for the right amount of time

Set a minimum amount of time you will study each school night and on weekends, but also set a maximum. Here is a plan that would be suitable for Year 12 ATAR students:

Normal school nights

- Monday to Friday: A minimum of three hours and a maximum of four.
- Saturday: Study in your normal school hours and have the night off.
- Sunday: A day of rest

School holidays

- First week: Monday to Saturday: Normal school hours
- Second week: Have a week's break

Be organised enough not to need to do an 'all-nighter'. These usually do more harm than good.

5

Make use of all available resources

Your teachers are your most valuable resource. Teachers know the material, they know the problems and they know the little things that will give you the edge. Always ask for help when you need it. Teachers are committed to helping you achieve your best. Libraries, newspapers and study groups are also valuable resources.

6

Keep up to date

It is very important to keep-up-to-date with all your assignments and with making your summary notes and your executive summaries. Allow time each week or each night to update these sets of notes. Do them as you go because once you get behind, it is very difficult to catch up.

7

Get the big picture

Don't be satisfied with just remembering your texts. Develop an understanding of your work. This understanding will massively improve your exam performance because your answers will flow better.

8

An easy way to begin

Start by reading the syllabus. See your teacher if they haven't already given you one. Examiners use these when constructing ATAR questions.

9

Make use of real life examples

Stay up-to-date with current events and issues, especially for subjects like English, Economics or Geography. Put a plastic sleeve at the start of each subject and save relevant newspaper clippings. Read the newspaper when you can (this is accessible online) and spend 5 minutes scanning it for articles that might be relevant to your subjects.

10

Organise your study notes

There are different ways to store your notes, including the purchase of note books already divided into different sections (available from Officeworks, for example). This can work well, particularly if you are not the most organised person and you lose pieces of paper. You need several of these notebooks (one for each subject). This is a more expensive alternative. Multiple notebooks are also heavier and a little more restrictive, but this is a preferred method used by some students.

The following method is recommended as it is versatile and works best for most students. All your notes should be on loose leaf paper and stored in large two-ring lever-arch folders. If you type your notes and print them, hole punch them and store them in the same way.



Use your environment – display revision sheets, mind maps and revision timetables on the walls of your room.

You should have the following:

- One folder, with dividers for all your subjects. Keep your initial notes, handouts and assignments on all the topics **you are currently working on** at school in this folder. This is the folder that you take to and from school. It is better to have the one folder to reduce the weight of things that you need to carry around with you, and it keeps everything in the one location.



- **One folder per subject at home** with all your previous initial notes in it. Use the dividers to keep them organised in topics, with handouts and returned assignments in topics, and a section for tests and exams. Don't forget to have a look at these prior to your next test or exam. No matter how well or how badly you have done in the past, you can always reinforce the good things you have accomplished in the past, and learn something about how to do things better by looking back over previous papers.
- **One folder per subject at home for your summary notes** and exam preparation. Keep these organised and use file dividers as well. Put a large divider behind your summary notes and store your executive summary here (for the difference between these, refer to 'The Four Step Study Formula' in key nine). Store copies of practice papers and other revision material here, in a designated section.
- Come up with your own system. **The most important thing is that you have a system and that it is clearly and uniformly labelled.** However, the use of folders and dividers **is highly recommended** by past students at both Secondary and University level.

TOP TIP – Learn to effectively use a timer

To keep you on task, set a timer for 5, 10 or even every 30 minutes for the item you are trying to complete.

A timer sets a mental expectation that you can stay, and will stay on your designated task. There are five ways that it can increase your productivity:



- It provides a singular focus – a timer sets the expectation that for this window of time, you are going to work on only one thing. Stay on task until the timer is done. Then, you can do other things.
- It instils discipline – can you stick with a task? For 10 minutes? Or even 5? Make it a challenge, a game if you must. But, don't give up on the task until the timer limit is up.
- It drives productivity – tasks expand to fit the time you give them. If you only allot 20 minutes for that report, you will be amazed how quickly you will assemble things.
- It builds momentum – for tough or unappealing tasks, a timer provides a bite-sized way to get started. You can get started with even 20 minutes of that research project, right? Once you get in motion you will want to continue your progress.
- It blocks interruptions – use your timer to stop interruptions before they get started. Whether it is a ringing phone, text message, or person at your door, it can wait until after your timer. You can say, "I have 15 more minutes on this task. Can you please come back after that?"



Activity NUMBER 7

Study Skills Self-Assessment

To get the most out of your studying, it's important to understand what works for you, and what doesn't. Read each statement in the checklist and determine if it applies to you. If it does, then circle **Y**. If it doesn't, circle **N**. This provides you with a basic self-assessment of your study habits and attitudes, so you can identify areas where you can focus on improving.

1	Y N	I spend more time than necessary studying for what I am learning.
2	Y N	It's common for me to spend hours cramming the night before an exam.
3	Y N	If I dedicate as much time as I want to my social life, I don't have enough time left to focus on my studies, or when I study as much as I need to, I don't have time for my social life.
4	Y N	I often study with the TV or radio turned on.
5	Y N	I struggle to study for long periods of time without becoming distracted or tired.
6	Y N	I usually doodle, daydream, or fall asleep when I go to class.
7	Y N	Often the notes I take during class notes are difficult for me to understand later when I try and review them.
8	Y N	I often end up writing the wrong material into my class notes.
9	Y N	I don't usually review my class notes throughout the semester in preparation for exams.
10	Y N	When I get to the end of a chapter in a textbook, I struggle to remember what I've just been reading.
11	Y N	I struggle to identify what is important in the text.
12	Y N	I frequently can't keep up with my reading assignments, and consequently have to cram the night before a test.
13	Y N	For some reason I miss a lot of points on essay tests even when I feel well prepared and know the material well.
14	Y N	I study a lot for each test, but when I get to the test my mind draws a blank.
15	Y N	I often study in a sort of disorganised, haphazard way only motivated by the threat of the next test.
16	Y N	I frequently end up getting lost in the details of reading and have trouble identifying the main ideas and key concepts.
17	Y N	I don't usually change my reading speed in response to the difficulty level of what I'm reading, or my familiarity with the content.
18	Y N	I often wish that I was able to read faster.
19	Y N	When my teachers set assignments and projects I often feel so overwhelmed that I really struggle to get started.
20	Y N	More often than not I complete my assignments the night before they are due.
21	Y N	I really struggle to organise my thoughts into a logical assignments that makes sense.

If you answered "yes" to two or more questions in any category listed below, get help for those categories. If you have one "yes" or less in one of the categories, you are probably proficient enough that you don't require additional study help, but improvement in all areas is possible.

- Time Scheduling – 1, 2 and 3.
- Exams – 13, 14 and 15.
- Concentration – 4, 5 and 6.
- Reading – 16, 17 and 18.
- Listening and Note Taking – 7, 8 and 9.
- Writing Skills – 19, 20 and 21.
- Reading – 10, 11 and 12.

KEY FIVE

KEY FIVE: A Good Place to Study

You need a good study place to be prepared to study.

You should be able to answer YES to ALL the following questions:

- 1 **Is my study place available to me whenever I need it?**
Your study place does you little good if you cannot use it when you need it. If you are using a study place that you must share with others for any reason, work out a schedule so that you know when you can use it.
- 2 **Is my study place free from interruptions?**
It is important to have uninterrupted study time. You may have to hang a DO NOT DISTURB sign on the door or turn off your mobile phone.
- 3 **Is my study place free from distractions?**
Research shows that most students study best in a quiet environment. If you find that playing a stereo or TV improves your mood, keep the volume low.
- 4 **Does my study place contain all the study materials I need?**
Be sure your study place includes reference sources and supplies such as pens and pencils, paper, ruler, calculator, and whatever else you might need. If you use a computer for your schoolwork, it should be in your study place.
- 5 **Does my study place contain a large enough desk or table?**
While working on an assignment or studying for a test, use a desk or table that is large enough to hold everything you need. Allow enough room for writing and try to avoid clutter.
- 6 **Does my study place have enough storage space?**
You need enough room to store your study materials. Be sure you have enough storage space to allow you to keep your desktop or other work surface clear of unnecessary materials that can get in the way.
- 7 **Does my study place have a comfortable chair?**
A chair that is not comfortable can cause discomfort or pain that will interfere with your studying. A chair that is too comfortable might make you sleepy. Select a chair in which you can sit for long periods while maintaining your attention.
- 8 **Does my study place have enough light?**
The important thing is that you can clearly see what you need to see without any strain or discomfort.
- 9 **Does my study place have a comfortable temperature?**
If your study place is too warm, you might become sleepy. If it is too cold, your thinking may slow down and become unclear. Select a temperature at which your mind and body function best.



KEY SIX: Effective Study habits

- 1 Don't attempt to cram all your studying into one session**
Successful students typically space their work out over shorter periods of time.
- 2 Plan when you're going to study**
Successful students plan specific weekly times when they are going to study and stick to it.
- 3 Study at the same time**
It's important that you create a consistent, daily study routine.
- 4 Each study time should have a specific goal**
You need to know exactly what you need to accomplish during each study session.
- 5 Never procrastinate your planned study session**
It's very easy to put off your study session for all sorts of reasons.
- 6 Start with the most difficult subject first**
As your most difficult assignment or subject will require the most effort and mental energy, you should start with it first.
- 7 Always review your notes before starting an assignment**
Always make sure to take good notes in class.
- 8 Make sure you're not distracted while you're studying**
When you're distracted you (1) lose your train of thought; and (2) you are unable to focus.
- 9 Review your notes, schoolwork and other class materials over the weekend**
Successful students review what they've learned during the week over the weekend. This way they're well prepared to continue learning new concepts that build upon previous coursework.

You can't cram your way to success. Achieving great results comes from hard work, preparation and from sustained hard work. You must start to develop good study habits now, rather than waiting till the last moment before you get serious.

Consider this ...

Demand the best from yourself, because others will demand the best from you. Successful people don't simply give a project hard work. They give it their best work. Don't be afraid to give your best to what seemingly are small jobs. Every time you conquer one it makes you that much stronger. If you do the little jobs well, the big ones will tend to take care of themselves.



Activity NUMBER 8

Do you have good Study Habits?

Answer the following questions by circling the answer that best fits, and add up your score.

	All the Time	Sometimes	Rarely
I have difficulty deciding where to start.	2	1	0
I am disturbed by noises outside.	2	1	0
I leave everything until the last minute.	2	1	0
I do all-nighters for assignments.	2	1	0
I have no study plan.	2	1	0
I avoid study in the holidays.	2	1	0
My notes are mixed up.	2	1	0
I don't do summaries of my class notes.	2	1	0
I don't read all the hand-outs I'm given.	2	1	0
I often forget to do homework.	2	1	0
I study on the bed for comfort.	2	1	0
I study in the lounge room for company.	2	1	0
I am distracted by social media whilst studying.	2	1	0
I have music/TV on when I study.	2	1	0
I never get all my work done when I say I will.	2	1	0
I can't understand my notes.	2	1	0
I put my social life before my study.	2	1	0
I put part-time work before my study.	2	1	0
I daydream when I am at my desk.	2	1	0
I don't see any purpose in studying.	2	1	0
I am not sure when my assignments are due.	2	1	0
I study in big, long sessions.	2	1	0
I'm not sure how to study.	2	1	0
I hate making study notes.	2	1	0
I study, but I can't remember what I study.	2	1	0
Total – add your score for each column.			
Grand Total – add your column totals.			

To find out if your study habits are effective, read the description that matches your score.

Score	Description
0 - 10	You are doing really well! It can never hurt to get a few more tips though.
10 - 20	You are clearly a good student, but there is room for improvement. You would benefit from fine tuning your studying techniques.
20 - 30	Not bad at all. By applying what you can learn about study techniques, you will greatly improve.
30 - 40	There is some work to be done here. You have a fair idea of what is going on, but you are lacking structure and time management skills.
40 - 50	You have some serious work to do. Don't panic though. If you start now, there is time to make a difference. Take your time and work on one area at a time. By learning how to study, you are more likely to be focused when you sit down and do it.



KEY SEVEN

KEY SEVEN: Overcoming Procrastination

What is the killer of effective study habits? It's called procrastination. This is when we put off doing our study and find other things to do. We are all guilty of doing this from time to time. However, excessive procrastination can result in feeling guilty about not doing a task when it should be done. It can also cause anxiety since the task still needs to be done. Further, excessive procrastination can cause poor performance if the task is completed without sufficient time to do it well.

Why do students procrastinate?

- 1 Perfectionism**
A student's standard of performance may be so high for a task that it does not seem possible to meet that standard.
- 2 Fear of Failure**
A student may lack confidence and fear that he/she may be unable to accomplish a task successfully.
- 3 Confusion**
A student may be unsure about how to start a task; how it should be completed; or may lack clear direction.
- 4 Task Difficulty**
A student may lack the skills and abilities needed to accomplish a task or may lack the knowledge about how to study.
- 5 Poor Motivation**
A student may have little or no interest in completing a task because he/she finds the task boring; or lacking in relevance; or may lack the discipline.
- 6 Difficulty Concentrating**
A student may have too many things around that distract him/her from doing a task.
- 7 Task Unpleasantness**
A student may dislike doing what a task requires.
- 8 Lack of Priorities**
A student may have little or no sense about which tasks are most important to do. This can occur by looking at all the tasks as one big challenge, rather than breaking them down into smaller, manageable ones.

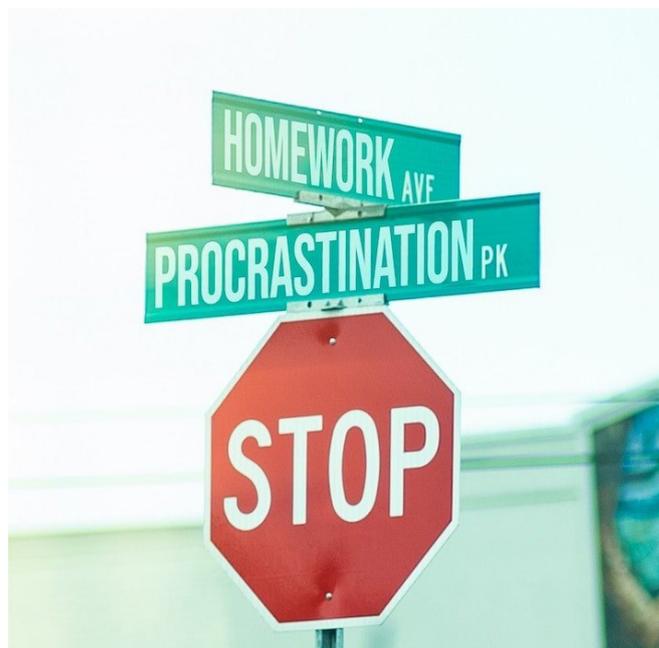
So what most often leads to procrastination?

Disorganization

Disorganisation would be the number one characteristic of unsuccessful people.

Disorganization is apparent in three main areas:

1. Poor time management and a lack of routine.
2. Forgetfulness.
3. Poor study environment.



Activity NUMBER 9

How do I know if I procrastinate excessively?

Circle the answer that describes you the most.

1	I often put off starting a task I find difficult.	Agree	Disagree
2	I often give up on a task as soon as I start to find it difficult.	Agree	Disagree
3	I often wonder why I should be doing a task.	Agree	Disagree
4	I often have difficulty getting started on a task.	Agree	Disagree
5	I often try to do so many tasks at once that I cannot do any of them.	Agree	Disagree
6	I often put off a task in which I have little or no interest.	Agree	Disagree
7	I often try to come up with reasons to do something other than a task I have to do.	Agree	Disagree
8	I often ignore a task when I am not certain about how to start it or complete it.	Agree	Disagree
9	I often start a task but stop before completing it.	Agree	Disagree
10	I often find myself thinking that if I ignore a task, it will go away.	Agree	Disagree
11	I often cannot decide which of a number of tasks I should complete first.	Agree	Disagree
12	I often find my mind wandering to things other than the task on which I am trying to work.	Agree	Disagree

You procrastinate excessively **if you agreed with five or more of the preceding statements**. If procrastination is the opposite of good study habits, then the way to develop good study habits would be to **counteract the causes**.

Constantly remind yourself – that problem won't just disappear. If you don't tackle it now, it most likely will come back stronger.

What can I do about excessive procrastination?

Prioritise the tasks you have to do.

- 1 Commit yourself to completing a task once started.
- 2 Reward yourself whenever you complete a task.
- 3 Work on tasks at the times you work best.
- 4 Break large tasks into small manageable parts.
- 5 Work on tasks as part of a study group.
- 6 Get help from teachers and other students when you find a task difficult.
- 7 Make a schedule of the tasks you have to do and stick to it.
- 8 Eliminate distractions that interfere with working on tasks.
- 9 Set reasonable standards that you can meet for a task.
- 10 Take breaks when working on a task so that you do not wear down.
- 11 Work on difficult and/or unpleasant tasks first.
- 12 Work on a task you find easier after you complete a difficult task.
- 13 Find a good place to work on tasks.
- 14 Start a task for the next 10 minutes.

Develop a 'Do-it-Now' attitude. Above all, **think positively and get going.** Once you are into a task, you will probably find that it is more interesting than you thought it would be and not as difficult as you feared. You will feel increasingly relieved as you work toward its accomplishment and will come to look forward to the feeling of satisfaction you will experience when you have completed the task.



Find a way to get away from the stress of Year 12. Keep a healthy balance, and keep doing the things you love (*former Year 12*).

What is Excellence? Consider this ...

Excellence is an art won by training and perseverance ... We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence is not an act but a habit. (*Aristotle*)

Be a yardstick of quality. Some people aren't used to an environment where excellence is expected. (*Steve Jobs*)

Excellence is the gradual result of always striving to do better. (*Pat Riley*)

If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude. (*Colin Powell*)

Excellence is about doing ordinary things extraordinarily well. (*John Gardner*)

KEY EIGHT

KEY EIGHT: Motivation

If you find that you lack motivation to study, welcome to the club. Just about every student experiences this problem at one time or another. Motivation is important for good studying. When you are motivated, you will find it easy to stay focused over a period of time. When you are not motivated, you will not only find it difficult to stay focused, but you will find it difficult to get started in the first place. Here are some ways to increase your motivation to study:

Reward yourself for studying

For example, after you have completed a successful study session, treat yourself to something you really like (chocolate or a good coffee usually works).

Study with your friends

Don't make it party time, but you can have fun as you do this.

Remind yourself of your long-term goals

The achievement of your goals will most probably require educational success. Educational success requires studying.

Develop interest in what you have to study

This will make studying more enjoyable.

Establish reasonable goals for a study session

You probably won't get very far if you look at your study session as "mission impossible."

Take breaks

When you feel that you need to take a break, try to stop at a point where you are at something that is easy for you. This will make it easier for you to resume studying after your break.

Use a motivational poster

Place the poster where you can see it as you study. The poster should include positive words and a picture depicting success. You can buy one or even make your own. You can also read inspirational stories about people who have achieved success through effort. Check out the stories behind the success of Edison, Lincoln, Churchill, Einstein or Disney found at www.uky.edu/~eushe2/Pajares/OnFailingG.html

Just do it

You will feel a lot better than if you are worried about getting it done.



Activity NUMBER 10

Create a Vision Board

Think about your future goals and find pictures that reflect what you would like to achieve: what career/University; what car; places you'd like to visit; house; clothing/look; anything that inspires or motivates you. Create the posters on your computer, print them and put them up on a board in your room. Have some fun doing this – it can be in whatever form you like best.

Whenever you feel like it's not worth it or you'd rather be doing something else, pause and look at your vision board. They are the reason that perseverance is worth it.





KEY NINE: Study Techniques

Getting up and actually doing the study is the hard part. The best way to get started is to have a plan and just do it. **There are no tricks or formulas; it takes willpower.** However there are ways to remind yourself of why you should study, which can help to strengthen your willpower, as well as ways to reward yourself and keep going. There are a number of books and sites (like www.educationcorner.com) that are a great place to begin, and there are courses which assist you to learn the techniques that suit you. Find out which strategies work best for you.

Active Study

A large number of students mistake reading their textbook or their notes for the act of study. Most of what you read **does NOT** wind its way into your memory. You must do something to successfully plant information into your mind so that you can use it again later. Different techniques apply better to different subjects, but the key is regular use.

Summarise topics

When you get to the end of a major topic in a subject, an important task is to **make a summary of the whole topic**, for two reasons.

1. To make a summary, you will need to think about what the essence of the topic is about. One way of working out what belongs in the summary is to think of the sheet as the **one page of notes** that you could be allowed to bring into the test. Only the **absolute essentials** should be written down.
2. In revising later, you will have much less material to read and remember.

Practise examples

In Science and Maths, it is useful to try **extra examples of problems**. The library should have books where you can find some of these, or your teacher can assist. This allows you to become familiar with the different types of problems and the different ways that questions can be asked, so that you have less chance of getting them wrong.

Make definition and formula cards

In most subjects, there are formal definitions to remember and some subjects also include an array of formulae. It can be useful to put the terms on one side of a card and its definition on the other.

This can also be applied to learning vocabulary in Japanese. The act of making the cards helps you to learn the information, and use the cards later to test yourself. This further improves your knowledge, and can be used by someone else to test you.

Practice drawing diagrams

Students often copy important diagrams and graphs into their notes, and then never draw them again until they front up to an exam. Then they are drawing that diagram for only the second time. Not surprisingly, bits are missed out or incorrectly labelled. This can be overcome by going over the diagrams a few times. It should be done on scrap paper, checked, and thrown away. It is the **practice** of drawing it a few times that is important.

Say things aloud

It can help to **read certain passages out aloud**. It especially helps in learning difficult terms – most notably those that are hard to spell or pronounce. It works because you are using more of your brain, your ears and mouth, rather than just your eyes. You can often hear mistakes more easily, and what you can't clearly explain is often not clearly written.

Go over assessed work

When you get an assignment back, it should be possible for you to identify the elements that did not gain you full marks. Use the marker's comments (if there are any) as a guide to study those aspects where you lost marks.

If you can't tell why you got a certain mark, you should go and talk to the teacher who marked your work. This includes the times when you got a high mark and you're not really sure how you got it. The objective is to make sure that next time you are able

to learn from your previous attempts, so that you can do better. **The worst thing you can do is to get embarrassed and throw away or ignore your previous work.**

Do some active reading

There are occasions where just reading for its own sake is valuable – such as in English or Literature. But mostly your reading should include some action like taking notes, underlining, highlighting (**or all of these**). This way **you are likely to remember far more of what you are reading.**

Step 1 – Initial Notes

1. In-class notes.
2. Homework.
3. Textbook questions.

Initial notes are the first round of personal notes you make. They are the summaries you are asked to do for homework or the textbook questions you are required to answer. They are the notes that you might jot down in class while the teacher is talking or the teacher's notes

put on the board or in a handout. Initial notes must:

1. Be very detailed.
2. Have examples to illustrate the points.
3. Include the date and have clear headings.

A long and detailed set of notes is difficult to study and memorise for tests or exams, so a summary is needed.

Step 2 – Summary Notes

This involves organising and summarising your initial notes, and re-writing the main points from your initial notes in your own words. When summarising you are cutting out less important information and listing the most important information in point form.

The keys to a good set of summary notes are:

1. Notes should be written under topics

(or headings) and then topics within the topics (or sub-headings).

2. Include only relevant information.
3. Headings, sub-headings and using point form helps make the notes easy to read.
4. Maintain the same system throughout all of your notes. Memorising becomes even easier if you simplify your summary notes more.

The 4 Step Study Formula

Step 4 – Memorise

It is important to remember a number of main points under a particular topic. Some students find the rapid repetitive memory technique helpful. This is also called Look, Cover, Write, Check.

1. Take a clean sheet of paper.
2. Review the executive summary.
3. Write down 1 – 5 (depending on the number of points) down the page in several columns.
4. Begin to list the 5 (in this example) main points as quickly as you can on the first set of numbers. Compare against original list and add any points that you might have missed.
5. Covering up the first list, do it again.
6. Continue to do this with all sets of numbers.
7. Repeat again the next day, to see if you can remember all the points.

Step 3 – Executive Summary

This is a summary of your summary notes. It is the set of notes you wish to study from, and should only include the main points.

These will be far easier to remember.

These main headings should trigger the more detailed information that you included in your initial notes and summary notes.

This executive summary should look like an essay plan for an exam question.

Memorisation

To get the best results, the following four steps apply:

- First, you must have an initial set of notes (initial notes);
- Then you must organise and summarise them under headings (summary notes);
- In order to make remembering your summary easier, you must further simplify that summary, including only the main points (executive summary); and
- Finally you must memorise it. Whether you use numbers, graphs, flow charts or acronyms, these four critical steps are needed to prepare for exams.

Acronyms

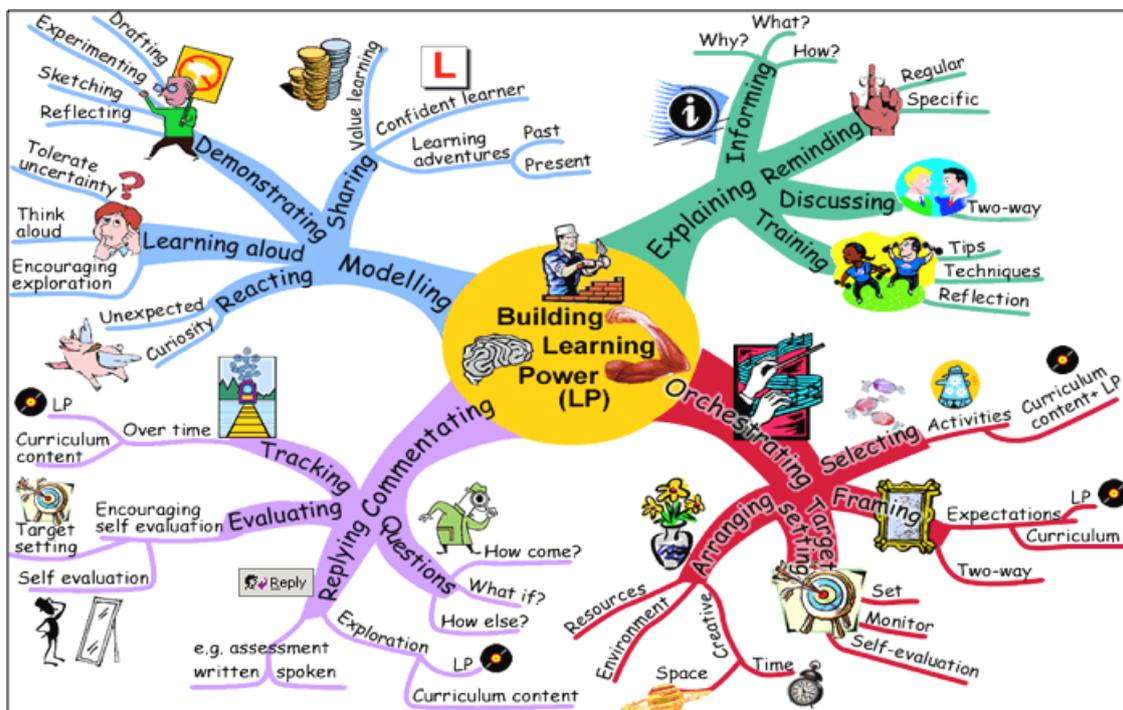
Simplifying the main points into key words becomes very beneficial when using acronyms. Some people find it easier to remember a word made up of the letters which start the key points that they are trying to remember. These letters jog your memory, which can then become the outline of your answer.

- **Identify the key word from each point**
- For example, the five key arguments for deregulation could be: **F**lexibility; **U**nemployment; **S**tandards; **S**uitability; **A**genda.
- **Choose one letter from each word and form a new word**
Juggle the letters around to make a word that is easy to remember. In the example used, the letters are in bold. In this case it was the first letter of each word, which is ideal. The word to remember is **FUSSA**. This reminds us that **F** stands for Flexibility, **U** stands for Unemployment, and so on.
- **Memorise that word**
- **Memorise what each letter stands for**
Use the rapid repetitive memory technique (Step 4 of the 4 Step Study Formula), but replace the numbers with your letters. The word **FUSSA** is the acronym, i.e. the word formed by using the letters of other words.

The most successful students tend to use multiple study techniques. They work out which ones work best for them and combine different techniques all together. Different techniques suit certain subjects.

Mind Maps (sometimes called Concept Maps – Tony Buzan)

These are a more visual method of study. You start with a blank page, put the central topic in the middle of the page, representing it as an image, and extend the main points like tree branches from the centre. The minor points are extended from these, out to the outer parts of the paper. Mind maps enable you to visualise the concept in your mind, and allow you to see the connections between the various points. This method actually duplicates how the brain works. Draw the mind map up as a poster and stick it up in your room.



Audio Notes

This involves you recording your notes and listening to them again later. It is good to record your executive summary in this way and to add examples and relevant statistics. Another advantage of this method is that you can listen to them while you are getting ready for school, or on your way to school, on the bus, etc. By speaking out the notes and listening to them again, you are using **more of your senses to remember the material**; and you are going through your notes more frequently.

It can also be a quick way of jogging your memory just before exams. Voice recordings tend to work better if you speak slowly and very clearly. Stand up while you are speaking and pretend that you're giving a speech on the topic. Say it as though you're teaching it; speak in an enthusiastic tone; and make sure your notes are very well organised.

Study Groups (or Study Partners)

A study group is a group of students who come together to share study notes and ideas. You really **learn something well when you have to teach it to someone else**. They work best when:

1. Members study the same subject (a group for each subject works best).
2. Members should be the same, or higher ability than you.
3. 2-4 people are enough (too many is confusing).

How do study groups work?

1. Each week, every member presents a 10 minute talk on a subject (as though they are teaching it).
2. Set weekly assignments to research real-life examples on current topics.
3. Discuss the topics and texts you are reading.
4. Practice tests and essays and mark each other's work.
5. Invite a teacher to come and sit in.

N.B. Only invite people who are serious. You don't want your study group to become a chat session.



Stay clear of Facebook. According to psychologists, students who use Facebook whilst studying can lower their exam results by 20%. Do yourself a favour, turn off the internet or find a quiet corner to study, away from temptation.

Flash Cards

Flash cards can help you remember information such as the meanings of vocabulary words, mathematical formulas, history facts, and spelling. Flash card strategies include:

Make flash cards as you learn and study

Carry a stack of blank cards with you (3" x 5" size works well). Whenever you come across information you want to remember, write the information on a card. Organize your cards into decks, one for each subject or topic. You can use the flash card template found at www.kitzkikz.com/FlashCard

Use both sides of a card when appropriate

When learning a new vocabulary word, write the word to be learned on the front of the card and a short two or three word definition on the back of the card. For a historical fact, you might write 'George Washington' on the front and 'first U.S. president' on the back. Flip the cards over from time to time. This strengthens recall.

Use flashcards in several different colours

Use colours to help you recall a characteristic about the information. If you are using flash cards to remember vocabulary, use a different colour for words that have different connotations.

Illustrate the cards

Use pictures and diagrams on your cards. The more you work at making a card distinctive and interesting, the easier you will find it to recall the information on the card.

Don't put too much information on any one card

The biggest mistake students' make is putting too much information on a single flash card. Each card should contain just **one piece** of information.

Carry your cards with you

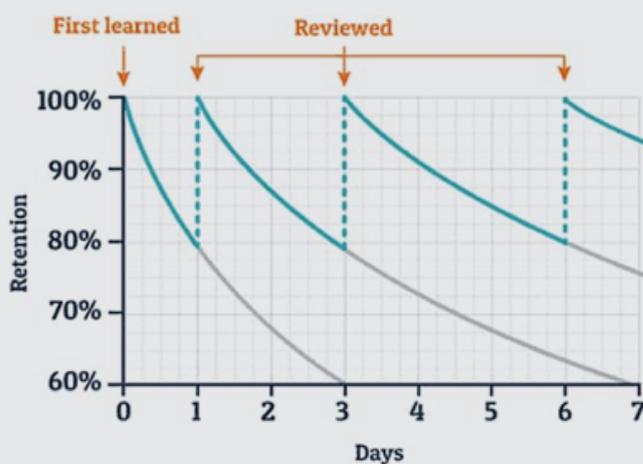
Review your cards whenever you have a chance. Make reviewing your cards a daily habit like brushing your teeth or taking a shower.

Change the order of the cards frequently

Shuffle the cards each time you review them. Questions on a test about the information on your cards may come in any order. If you study the cards in the same order, it will be difficult for you to remember a piece of information when it is not in the order you studied.

The Forgetting Curve (Ebbinghaus)

Typical Forgetting Curve for Newly Learned Information



This curve shows the rate which something is forgotten after its learned. Cramming is an ineffective learning method, but refresher sessions each week allows us to hold onto knowledge. Study flashcards and engaging memory games boost memory and potential.



Activity NUMBER 11

Design a Set of Flash Cards

Flash cards promote studying through active recall. Choose a subject and topic that you want to revise. Have your flash cards and textbook ready. Highlight the most important information. Write the key term or concept on one side of the flash card.

Don't include any of the key information on this side. Write short, concise notes on the other side of the flash card. Make sure your writing is large, clear, and well-spaced. If your writing is small, you will not be able to read it easily and if it's crowded you will have too much to take in at one time. Use shorthand to save space. Break complex concepts into multiple questions.



Associations

Occasionally a fact will have some unusual coincidence attached to it that you can use to make it easier to remember. You can often use this technique to remember spelling. Examples: Mt Fuji is 12365 feet high. If you remember that there is 12 months in the year, and 365 days, the number is easy to remember. **L**awson, **B**laxland and **W**entworth were the first colonists to cross the Blue Mountains. By remembering the cricket term **LBW** (leg before wicket), it jogs your memory for the first letter of the three explorers.

In the 1960s, there was a man with an incredible memory. When asked how he did it, he replied that he could remember all the houses he passed on his way to work. He simply attached each item on a list he wanted to remember to each house that he walked past, and thought of something bizarre that connected the two. When he wanted to remember the list, he just visualised the walk, and when he passed each house, he was able to remember the item he had attached there (the more bizarre the connection, the easier it was to remember).

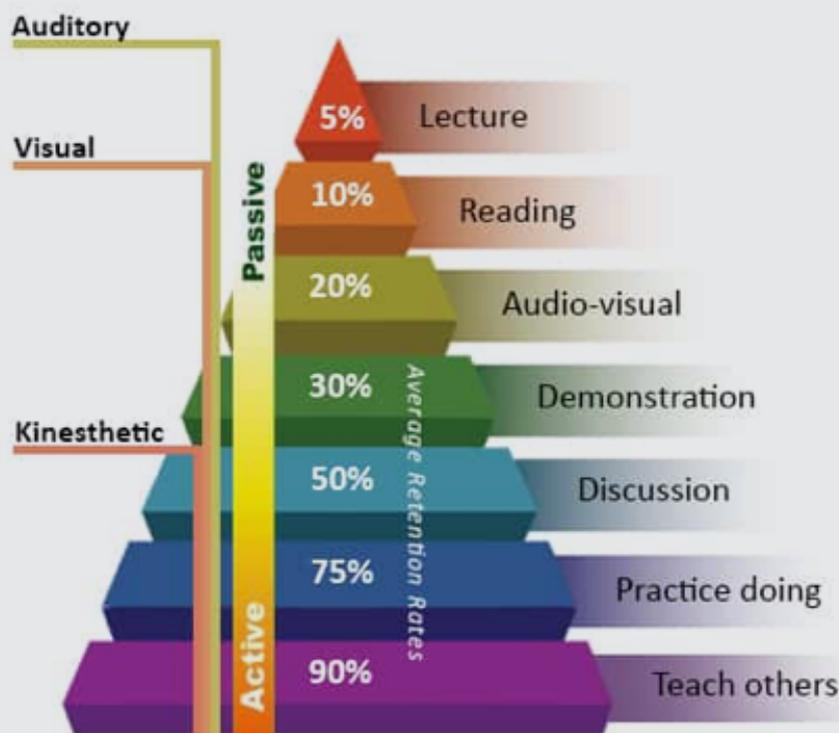
Making Stories

You can link a list of apparently unrelated things by making up a story which includes each item. The story may not have anything much to do with the real meaning of the facts, but it will help you to connect a sequence that is easier to remember. The more vivid and bizarre the story, the better results can be achieved.

Rhyme and Rhythm

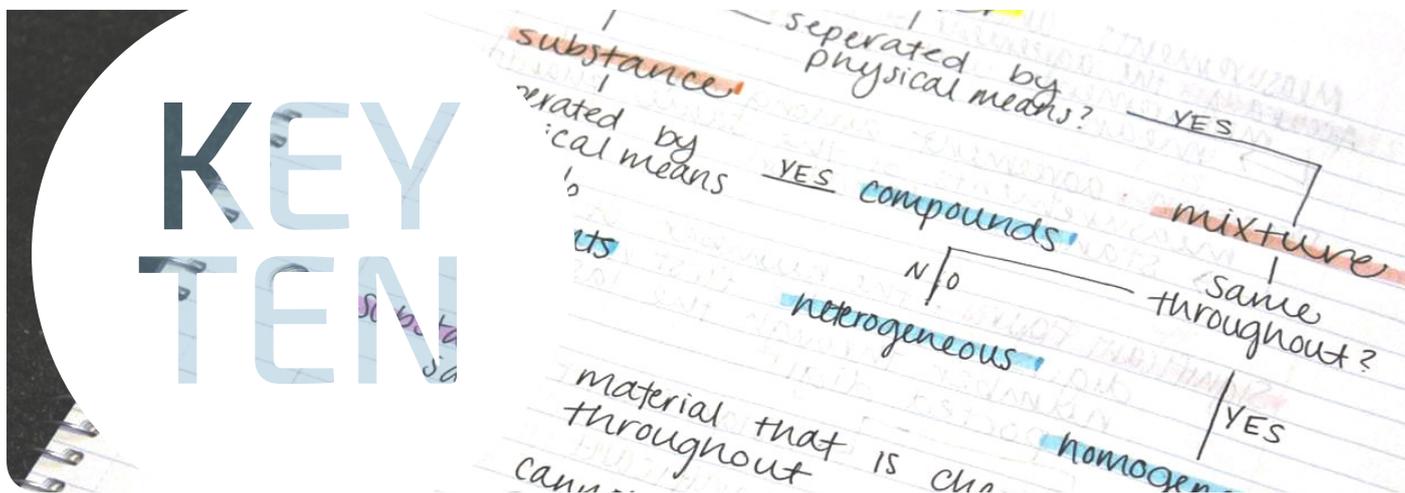
Material presented in a rhyme or phrase with some rhythm goes into the memory more easily. For example, "In fourteen hundred and ninety two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue." This is why songs are easier to remember. Try converting a list into a song or a rap.

The Learning Pyramid



Adapted from the NTL Institute of Applied Behavioral Science Learning Pyramid

The Learning Pyramid suggests that most students only remember about 10% of what they read, but retain nearly 90% of what they learn through teaching others. This model suggests that some methods of study are more effective than others and that varying study methods will lead to deeper learning and longer-term retention.



KEY TEN: Taking Notes

Active listening

Get into the habit of taking notes in class even when the teacher does not instruct you to write something down.

Always have a sheet of paper ready to write down something from what is being taught, discussed or revised.

- Note taking assists you to concentrate in class.
- Note-taking forces you to listen, think about what has been said, then put it into your own words.
- Note-taking makes you an active learner rather than a passive learner.
- Good notes will assist you to recall your work and to review it.

Be prepared and ready to take notes even before the teacher starts. Put a **clear heading and date** on the notes. Use **sub-headings** for sections. Try to isolate key points, ideas and concepts.

Listen for key words. Listen for clues which let you know what is essential to write down (such as, 'the four causes of' or 'to sum up' ...). If certain points or illustrations are emphasised by being written on the board or projected onto the screen, make sure you included these in your notes.

Use abbreviations

Work out a **shorthand system** of symbols and abbreviations for frequently used terms (e.g. 'dev' for development, 'Chn' for Christian). Other commonly used abbreviations include:

↑	= an increase	>	= greater than
↓	= a decrease	<	= less than
→	= causes / leads to / results in	ca	= about
←	= is caused by / is the result of	re	= concerning
↔	= is related to	18C	= 18th Century

Go over your notes

Spend time at home **going back over your notes**. Flesh out some sections which might need more detail. Perhaps underline some key words. Make an executive summary (see Key Nine). Highlighters are good for making the key points stand out. Check what points you didn't understand, so you know what to work on. Try to do some extra reading on things that were unclear or write down questions that you need answers to. Follow these up by referring to texts, the internet, other students or teachers.

A method of note-taking

You should try to develop a method of note taking that enables you to see the main features or points at a glance. One method is to draw a margin on the left, a few centimetres wide. Any major heading is placed in the margin. The sub-headings related to the heading go on the page next to the heading. It can also be of assistance to draw another slightly wider margin on the right, to later use this to construct your executive summary (a summary of your notes). This helps you to quickly find what you might be looking for.

Your notes are intended for your use. Do not worry about legibility and being neat. It is more important to keep them **brief**. Use phrases and words rather than trying to write in full sentences and paragraphs for your notes. Learn to use **dot points and abbreviations** where possible. This is helpful when you are revising for exams, as you are only trying to remember the key points.

Make sure that you include any **formal definitions** mentioned in the lesson. Make them stand out by using a highlighter. Tune in to voice clues. Some teachers will slow down their voice or raise their voice, or indicate when they are saying something which is worth writing down. Make sure that you write down any details of any references or websites mentioned. Check up on these later if you missed the full details.

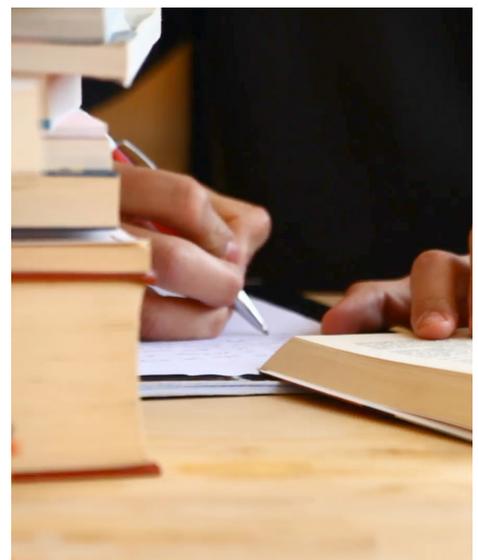


Find out what the teacher wants, do that, and exceed their expectations.

Taking notes from books

Read through an article to get the **big picture first**. What is the aim of the article? What is the chapter about? What does the author have in mind? What approach is taken and what conclusions are reached? Consider the chapter headings, sub-headings etc., to help you get an idea of what a book or article is about. Consider the **introduction and concluding** paragraphs of an article or chapter. A well-written conclusion will round-off and summarize the argument or case being made.

Try to find the **topic sentence** of a paragraph. A good paragraph consists of several sentences all related to one unifying, central point or idea. Usually one sentence will give you the key to what the paragraph is about (this is the topic sentence). It is often the first sentence, but it does not have to be. **Identifying the key sentences** helps in taking notes.



Note taking can be assisted by underlining or highlighting the key points, but it is usually best to combine these with a few margin notes of your own. Often, **it is better to actually write out your own notes** on paper. This helps you to take in what you are writing. Make clear headings, indicate the book or chapter title, page numbers and date that you take the notes. Make sure that you underline key points and make notes from any handout sheets that you might be given.

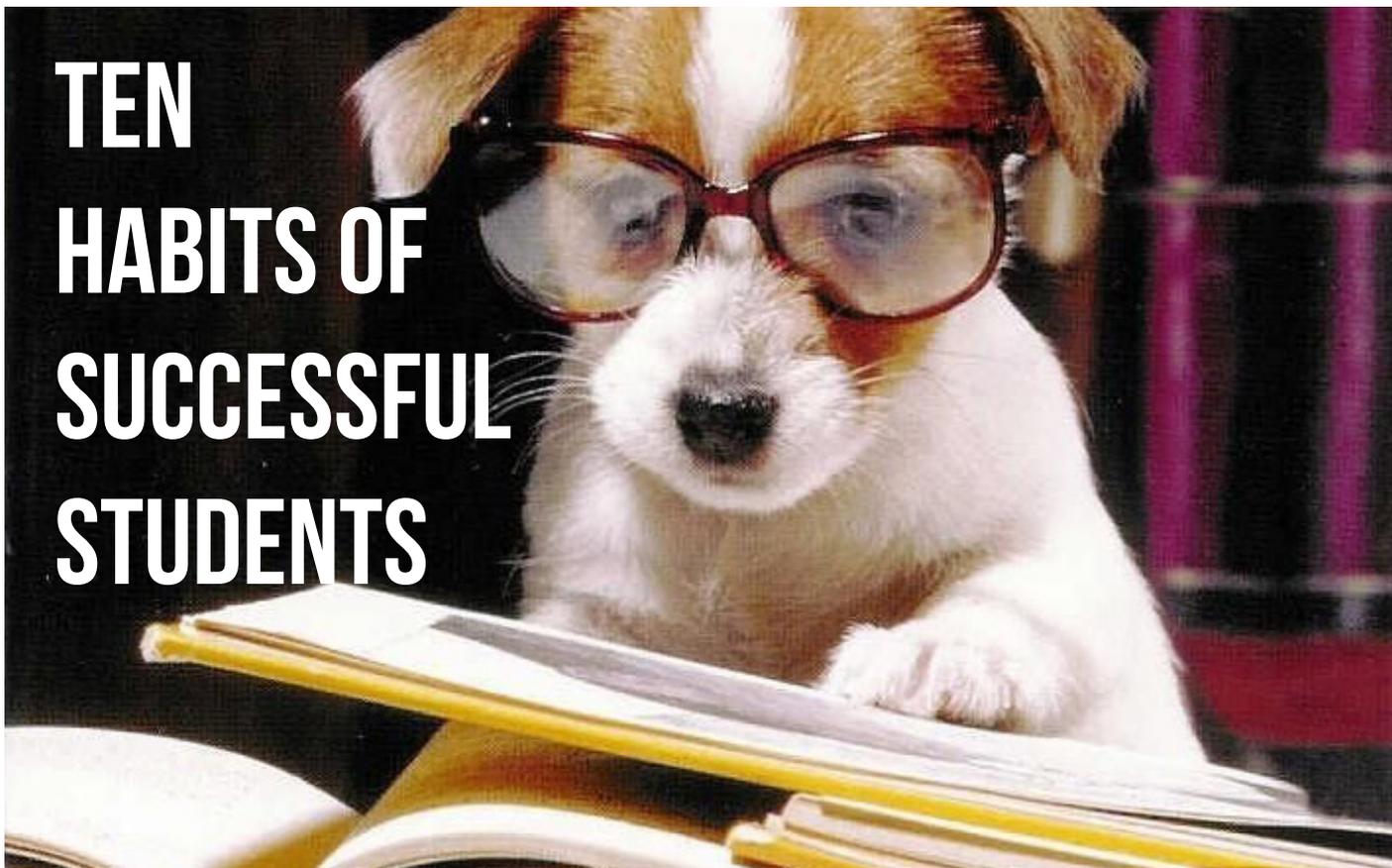
Many students find that when they are studying for exams, it is useful to make summaries of key chapters or articles, even if they have already previously taken notes.

Have plenty of file paper on hand and write down all the key points. This forces you to read with maximum concentration and to think about what you read so that you can put it into your own words. All of this impresses the content into your memory. Read through your notes several times before each exam.



Don't overdo it. You'll be frantic if you try to write down every word that is said. If you focus on getting your notes right, you might miss important points and not understand what is being said.

TEN HABITS OF SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS



Successful students:

- 1 Try not to do too much studying at one time**
Space the work you have to do over shorter periods of time. Taking short breaks will restore your mental energy.
- 2 Plan specific times for studying**
Study time is any time you are doing something related to schoolwork. It can be completing assigned reading, working on a paper or project, or studying for a test.
- 3 Try to study at the same times each day**
Studying at the same times each day establishes a routine that becomes a regular part of your life. When a scheduled study time comes up, you will be mentally prepared to begin studying.
- 4 Set specific goals for your study times**
Goals will help you stay focused and monitor your progress. You must be very clear about what you want to accomplish during your study times.
- 5 Start studying when you have planned**
Start early so that you aren't forced to rush to make up the time you wasted getting started, resulting in careless work and errors.
- 6 Work on the assignment you find most difficult first**
Your most difficult assignment will require the most effort. Start with your most difficult assignment since this is when you have the most mental energy.
- 7 Review your notes before beginning an assignment**
Reviewing your notes can help you make sure you are doing an assignment correctly. Also, your notes may include information that will help you complete an assignment.
- 8 Tell your friends not to call you during their study times**
Two study problems can result from this. First, your work is interrupted. It is not that easy to get back to what you were doing. Second, your friends may talk about things that will distract you from what you need to do. Try turning off your mobile phone during your study times. Call them back once you have finished.
- 9 Call someone when you run into difficulties**
This is a case where "two heads may be better than one."
- 10 Review your schoolwork over the weekend**
Weekends should be a good break but there is also time to do some review. This will help you be ready to go on Monday morning when another school week begins.

WRITTEN ASSESSMENTS

Why do we assess student learning?

Through your assessments your teacher can provide you with feedback that can help you improve your performance. They also generate a score or grade and show how well you are achieving the subject's outcomes.

What are the benefits of assessment?

Assessment:

1. Motivates students;
2. Helps improve student learning;
3. Gives students the opportunity to apply and practice skills and concepts;
4. Provides direction and learning targets;
5. Provides evidence of achievement of learning outcomes;
6. Enables student's work to be graded.

Approaching assessments

Approach them positively. **Start as soon** as you receive your assessment.

Preparation

- **Read all the assessment tasks** you are required to do (it helps to **write notes all over the assessment sheets**).
- After your first lesson, begin your first assessment straight away.
- Check that you understand the **directions and key terms**.
- When your teacher explains the assessment, **take detailed notes** so that when you read them later, it will be clear what you need to do.
- **Ask questions**. If you looked at the assessment earlier, you may be better prepared, and be able to get a hold of the resources that you need.
- **Figure out what you know already**; re-read your class notes and do some basic research and reading.
- Approach your teacher to **sort out any unclear terms or to clarify any issues** related to the content or format or presentation. Do this by identifying specific issues and asking well thought out questions.

Semester planning

- Put your assessment **due dates** for your subjects onto a calendar/wall planner.
- Make a date to complete the first draft of each assessment (well before the assignment is due).
- Look at the 'overall picture' and make adjustments so that you do not have any periods when you will be overloaded.
- Break the semester planner into a **weekly timetable**, which indicates the days and times that you will tackle each subject.
- Reserve **regular revision blocks** for each subject into your weekly planner. An hour before school could be a strategy worth trying.

Research

- Work out the skills and knowledge that you already have.
- Identify the gaps in your skills and knowledge. What skills may you need to develop? **What do you need to find out and where can you find it?**
- Consider the direction of your assignment. **What approach are you going to take?**
- Set **boundaries and limits** for the amount of studying and research in gathering the information.
- Accept that there may be some 'chaos' at first as you develop skills, search for information or generally get started on your approach.
- Consider your time management (and **set down a starting time and date**) particularly if you have a tendency to procrastinate. It is better to do something imperfectly, than to do nothing.



If you are having problems at any stage, talk to your teacher (at an appropriate time) and get help. Persist, even if you still don't get it. Others are probably having the same issues as you are.

Writing your assessment

- Ensure that you have a clear understanding of what you intend to say.
- Be clear about the **purpose** of the writing.
- Make a **plan** for your assignment. Be aware of the conventions of the form of the assessment, e.g. essay, report, case study.
- Consider your **point of view** in relation to the assessment.
- Check your **sources** carefully. Are they credible and reliable? Wikipedia is a good starting point for an initial understanding, but it is not considered a reliable source, and should not be referenced.
- If needed, use a **cover sheet**. Include your name, the subject, teacher and date due.
- Check your teacher's expectations for the **requested writing style**. Do you need to use first person or third person, for example? In most cases, avoid a 'journalistic' style of writing, **or writing the way you may speak. Avoid generalisations, emotive words, colloquial expressions or slang phrases.** Make sure that you write using a proper paragraph structure and check your spelling.
- Write a **draft and edit it**. You may complete more than one draft before you are satisfied that the assignment is finished. Ask yourself the question, **is this the best that you can do?** If the answer is yes, then you have finished. Be sure to **edit your final copy carefully** and check spelling, grammar, punctuation and referencing. Ask someone else to do a final read through and proof.
- Be aware of your reader. Is your writing **interesting, relevant and meaningful?**
- **Have you answered the question, the whole question, and nothing but the question?**
- If you need to prepare a title, make sure that it matches the content of your assessment.
- **If unsure, show your teacher your work 'in progress'.** Check that you are on the right track. Teachers like to see the evidence of **planning, note-taking and drafting.**
- Emphasise the **process not just the product** aspect that teachers need to see as part of learning and assessment.
- Check that you are correctly presenting the **bibliography**. Does the teacher require you to cite all your sources/web pages etc? Do you know the required layout/format? Any sources of information which you use should be listed at the end of your piece of work in the **correct format.**
- Check the presentation requirements (i.e. whether it should be **handwritten or word-processed**). Does the teacher have specific requirements about the font, font size, double spacing, margins, etc.?
- **Do NOT plagiarise.** This is never allowed and will receive a significant penalty.



Studies show that motivation, effort, resilience and personal characteristics (optimism, creativity, confidence), called 'grit', are associated with achievement. Grit = persistence + resilience.

Critical Thinking

Many assessments involve some degree of critical thinking. **Critical thinking** can occur when you are:

- **Planning** and thinking about your task.
- **Identifying and locating** sources of information.
- Deciding on the **relevance** of the information.
- **Applying the information** to the set task.
- Establishing and **expressing your main ideas**.
- Preparing a well-reasoned **argument** appropriate to the task.
- **Putting aside your own assumptions and bias** in the communication of ideas.
- Including the **evidence** collected with your conclusions and relevant examples.
- Organising your information so that it is **clear, logically expressed and convincing**.
- Reviewing your work. Make sure you have **addressed the question comprehensively and correctly**.
- Expressing your material in an **appropriate format**, e.g. essay, report.
- Writing appropriately – **both in style and language**.



Assessment Checklist

- Have you developed a plan for completing all the assignments for the semester?
- Did you closely analyse the assessment tasks, and break them down into their different components and requirements?
- Have you read the set texts, references and taken notes?
- Are you clear about the approach you will take?
- Did you read and **research widely**?
- Have you put in place things like **deadlines** to avoid procrastination?
- Have you made an assessment, essay or report plan?
- Have you decided how much you are going to devote to the various parts of the assessment?
- Have you written a draft and **edited it carefully**?
- Have you had **someone else read through it** to check it?
- Have you addressed the assessment task, and **answered the question**?
- Did you submit the assessment on time and in the **correct format**?
- Have you **kept a copy** of your assessment?
- Go through the assessment carefully, once it is marked, to pick up pointers for next time, **so that you can pick out an area where you can improve**.



Keep distractions to a minimum. Turn off all devices. Studies show that it is better not to listen to music.

Keywords

Note the differences in the keywords when you approach questions.

Compare	Are the things alike (similar) or are there important differences? Which is best? Why?
Contrast	Look for the differences.
Criticise	Use evidence to support your opinion on the value or merit of the theories, facts or views of others.
Define	Give the meaning.
Describe	Write in detail.
Differentiate	Explain the difference.
Discuss	Write about the important aspects of the topic in more detail. Consider the arguments for and against.
Distinguish	Explain the difference.
Evaluate	Judge the importance or success.
Explain	Make clear.
Illustrate	Give examples which make the point clear.
Interpret	Explain the meaning in your own words, referring to the source.
Justify	Give reasons to support an argument or action.
Outline	Choose the most important aspects of the topic.
Relate	Show the connection between things.
State	Write briefly the main points.
Summarize	Bring together the main points.
Trace	Show how something has developed from its origins.



Avoid the last-minute cram. It doesn't work for memory-intensive subjects.



Why use referencing?

Referencing acknowledges other people's work used to create your own work. This can include such things as: an idea, exact words, art work, a diagram, an image or a table that is used in a piece of writing or non-written text. Referencing shows respect for other people's intellectual rights and avoids plagiarism.

What system of referencing should be used?

There are a number of referencing styles available for use. Different institutions/publishers use their own style and/or variation of a referencing system, so slight differences may be observed. There are different forms of referencing in common usage. Different Universities have their own preferences, and even different faculties within the same University use different formats. The most common ones used in W.A. Universities are APA, Chicago and Vancouver. The system recommended at Carey is the APA system of referencing.

The purpose of all referencing systems is to acknowledge the work of others and to enable readers/viewers to find the referenced material. Referencing of new source types, such as emerging technologies, use the same basic principles and are consistent with the referencing style being used.

Failing to correctly reference information in an assignment or piece of research equates to plagiarism. Notes should be made for all research assignments and it is essential to always record the details of the sources that are used for this research. The details of these sources will then be used to make a reference list or bibliography. All entries in this list must be in alphabetical order by author. Remember an author can be an individual, more than one individual, an organisation, company or government institution. The reference list order generally follows the format of author, initials, date, title of book, publisher, city of publication. An example of a reference list (these are sources referred to in your assignment) is:

Reference List

Cotton, K. (2002). Virtual Violence. *The Bulletin*, 28 May, p 62.

Dawson, J. and Johnson, K. (2002). *Referencing Made Easy*. Retrieved October 31, 2005 from <http://www.studyguide.unsw.edu.au/>

Honeywell, N. (1996), Health and Safety in Sport. *Journal of Physical Education*, 12(4), pp. 8-9.

Jacoby, A. (Producer) (2004, September 30). *Enough Rope With Andrew Denton* [Television Broadcast]. Sydney, NSW: ABC.

Smith, R. and Johnson, K. (1997). *Literacy and Language*. New York: Teachers College Press.

All facts and ideas that are not your own must be referenced. Specific ideas and direct quotes that are taken from a specific section of the source must be acknowledged in the text of your writing using the author, date of publication of the source and the year of publication e.g. (Smith, 1997, p. 33). General ideas that are contained throughout the source only require the author's name and year of publication e.g. (Smith, 1997).

Books	Reference List	In-Text Reference
Single Author	Caine, A. (1997) <i>The Theory of Light</i> . London: Mitchell Beazley.	The theory was first created in 1967 (Caine, 1997, p. 53). OR Caine (1997, p. 53) claims that the theory was first created in 1967.
Two Authors	Smith, R. and Johnson, K. (1997). <i>Literacy and Language</i> . New York: Teachers College Press.	Being able to understand and therefore use appropriate terms is essential (Smith and Johnson, 1997, p. 17). OR Smith and Johnson (1997, p. 17) argue that "using correct terminology is essential".
Three to Five Authors	Guerin, W.L., Labor, E., Morgan, L., Reesman, J.C. and Willingham, J.R. (2003). <i>A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature</i> . New York: Oxford University Press,	Guerin, Labor, Morgan, Reesman and Willingham (2003, p.4) ... All authors only need to be used the first time that the book is referred to. After the first time, it would be: Geurin et. al. (2003, p. 4).
Six or More Authors	Rodgers, W.L., Smith, E., Morgan, L., Reesman, J.C., Clarke, T.M. and Willingham, J.R. (1998). <i>A Guide to Modern Literature</i> . New York: Oxford University Press.	(Rodgers et. al., 1998, p. 2)
No Author	<i>On the Road to Success: A Guide to Understanding the Australian Job Market</i> . (2000). Carlton, Vic: Australian Multicultural Foundation.	Use a short title instead of the author's surname. (On the Road to Success, 2000)
Editor	Roche, F. (Ed.). (1993). <i>Encyclopaedia of Animals</i> . Phoenix: Oryx Press.	(Roche, 1993, p. 203)
Article or Chapter in a Book - with an Author	Baxter, M. (1999). Social Class and Health. In C. Carter and B Johnson (Eds.), <i>Equalities and Inequalities in Health</i> (pp. 101 -126). London: Open University Press.	As suggested by Baxter (1999) ...
Article or Chapter in a Book - No Author	The Y2K Problem. (1999). In P. Boyd (Ed.), <i>Technology Today and Tomorrow</i> (p. 35). Buckingham: Open University Press.	(The Y2K Problem, 1999)

In-text referencing indicates where the information you have just written originated, even when you have written it in your own words. Your in-text reference points to the full reference that will appear in your Reference List.

Internet	Reference List	In-Text Reference
World Wide Web An organisation or company can also be an author.	Dawson, J. and Johnson, K. (2002). <i>Referencing Made Easy</i> . Retrieved 31, 2005 from http://www.studyguide.unsw.edu.au/	"It is essential you learn how to reference correctly" (Dawson and Johnson, 2002).
World Wide Web – no author	<i>Plagiarism</i> . (2001). Retrieved November 10, 2005 from http://www.researching/writing.qld.edu.au	(Plagiarism, 2001)

Journal, Magazine, Newspaper	Reference List	In-Text Reference
Article	Honeywell, N. (1996). Health and Safety in Sport. <i>Journal of Physical Education</i> , 12 (4), pp. 8-9.	As illustrated by Honeywell (1996) OR "When high jumping ... (Honeywell, 1996, p. 8).
Article – no author	Reading for Fun (2012). <i>Australian Schools Journal</i> , 1, pp. 12-16.	Reading is a popular activity (Reading for Fun, 2012)
Newspaper	Shaw, M. (1994). Computer Games are ruining the Lives of Children. <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , 10 October, p. 8.	According to Shaw (1994) ...
Magazine	Cotton, K. (2002). Virtual Violence. <i>The Bulletin</i> , 28 May, p. 62.	(Cotton, 2002).

Using Quotes

When using direct quotes in your assignment, include page numbers. If the quote is under 40 words, place double quotation marks around the quote. Example:

It is true that "learning how to teach is as complex as teaching itself" (Marsh, Clarke, & Pittaway, 2014, p. 11).

If the quote is 40 words or longer, start the quote indented on a new line, without double quotation marks. Place the in-text citation after the quote including the page numbers. Example:

Students explained they read dystopian novels because they helped them to see what is necessary

to create a better, fairer world. One student stated that:

Authors take a wrongness in the world and exaggerate it and show what could happen if things continued in that way – and it would be a disservice to the author if you don't try to understand that problem and where it came from and what you could do about it. (Wilhelm, 2015, p. 18)

If there are no page numbers, such as on a website, replace page numbers with paragraph numbers, using the abbreviation 'para.' Example:

"Be sure to address an issue between you and a student or between two students as quickly as possible" (Alber, 2012, para. 11).

Abbreviations used in Reference Lists

ed.	edition	n.d.	No date
Rev. ed.	Revised edition	No.	number (series)
2nd ed.	Second edition	p. (pp.)	page (pages)
Ed. (Eds.)	Editor (Editors)	para.	paragraph
et. al.	and others	Pt.	part
		Vol.	Volume (not used for journals)

Referencing Tips

- 1 Try to establish a routine of recording bibliographic information and page numbers at the time you are using the source. You may not have the opportunity to recheck the details later after you have written your assignment.
- 2 Be consistent. This is one of the most important rules of referencing; make sure you apply the same format consistently throughout.
- 3 To avoid plagiarism, ensure you can distinguish your notes and ideas from the notes you have made from other sources. An easy way to do this is to use a coloured highlighter pen.
- 4 You may find it helpful if you are consulting lots of sources to write reference information on individual index cards and file them alphabetically.
- 5 To reference less conventional sources, follow the referencing format for the source which most resembles the one you are using, and adapt as necessary. If in doubt, speak to your teacher for guidance.
- 6 Check that for each in-text citation in your essay there is a corresponding entry in the reference list, unless it is taken from an unrecoverable source.
- 7 Make sure that you allow yourself plenty of time for doing your references and that you proofread the reference list before you submit your assignment. Unnecessary mistakes can cost you marks, especially at a tertiary level.



In referencing, be consistent. Make sure that you apply the same format consistently throughout.

EXAMINATIONS

Preparing for Exams

- Timetable**
 You should allow plenty of time to study for your exams. Be aware of when your exams are when you are doing your weekly planning and always know what is coming up **at least four weeks in advance. Don't leave it all to the last minute.**
- Memorise**
 You should be memorising your executive summary leading up to the exams. This means you should have done your **executive summary** well before the exam. This includes the main points (i.e. the key words and phrases).
- Past papers and practice essays**
 Past papers and practice essays are valuable in your exam preparation. Not only will they give you a good idea of the types and set-up of the questions that will be asked, they also test your knowledge of the material, get you used to the language used, and get you used to the timing.
- Use the marking criteria**
 If possible, **get a copy of the marking criteria.** Ask your teachers for a rough explanation of what markers expect to see.
- Glossary of terms**
 There are **many different terms used in questions, such as 'explain' or 'evaluate' and each is asking for a different response.** It is essential that you know what each one means. Ask your teachers.
- The night before**
 Studying the night before can be very beneficial. It should be **aimed at memorising your executive summaries, rather than introducing new material.**



Make sure that you systematically cover all the points in the syllabus. It is what examiners are testing you on. Tick off the points when you feel you have covered them.



Activity NUMBER 12

The Nine Best Scientific Study Tips



Watch the video on the 9 Best Scientific Study Tips found at www.prepadviser.com/scientific-study-tips-video/. After you have watched the video, rate each of the study tips, using the following scale: 1 (Not very important); 2 Sometimes Important); 3 (Important); 4 (Very helpful); 5 (Every student should do this). In the third column, tick the strategies that you use.

Study Tips	Ranking	My Habits
Have short study sessions		
Set a routine		
Rereading is wrong		
Set a specific goal		
Teaching mindset		
Practice		
Set a quiet study space		
No music		
No distractions		

During the Exam – Timing.

- **Use all the available time.** Don't daydream. Take advantage of every minute. You have spent all these years at school to get you here. **Don't waste a second.**
- **Stick to your finishing times** for each question. If you run out of time, finish off the answer in point form. Use asterisks and sub-points if you have to.

Style Issues

- Have a clear strategy. Go into the exam knowing how you **plan to approach it**. Stick to your plan.
- **Attempt all questions.** Mark the questions that you can't answer and come back to them. Know the **weighting of each question**. Don't go overtime on a question worth 10 marks at the expense of one worth 20 marks.
- Don't over-answer a question, attempting to score the last one or two marks at the expense of another question. The first few marks are easier to get than the last few.
- **Answer the questions you are most confident about first.** You wouldn't want to be left short of time on a question you're very competent in. Doing this will also build your confidence as the exam goes on.
- **Assume the examiners know nothing** about the subject when you give your answers.
- Don't waste time on really wordy answers. **Short, concise answers are usually best.**
- **Take mini 30-second breaks** at the end of each section. Stretch out your writing hand. This will allow you to clear your head and rest your hand ready for the next question.

Other Issues

- Try to **avoid making spelling mistakes**, especially with the major terms, concepts or names.
- If you get a mental block, take some deep breaths and try again; move on and come back to it later. Ask yourself: **who, what, how, why, when?** Remember that **examiners are not trying to trick you.**

Managing Exam Stress

This kind of stress comes in the days leading up to the exam and on exam day. There are a number of things you can do to minimise exam stress:

- **Light revision**
Avoid introducing new or heavy material. **Spend the time consolidating the main topics and memorising your executive summaries.**
- **Vitamins**
Look after yourself in the lead up to exams. Stress can lower your body's immune system making you susceptible to colds, coughs, headaches. Some people believe in Vitamin C supplements and fish oil tablets (often referred to in health circles as 'brain food'), or multi-vitamins.
- **Sleep**
Under no circumstances should you ever try to do an all-nighter. Research indicates drastic reductions in our ability to function properly when we are fatigued. Attempt to get a good eight hours sleep (nine is better). It is much **more effective to set the alarm early** during your revision timetable, and study early, when you are fresh. This allows you to go through the key topics before the exam. **Avoid** looking at bright screens (stimulating blue light) and using devices two to three hours **before bed.**
- **Eat a light breakfast**
Light does not mean small. You definitely don't want to be hungry during an exam. **Eating light simply means not eating greasy foods.** Avoid takeaway breakfasts that are heavy and fried. These are not brain foods. Perhaps just have some cereal, toast and fresh fruit.
- **Avoid sugar**
Avoid soft drinks and confectionary that is high in sugar. Your sugar levels will spike and your mind will begin to race directly after your 'sugar hit', making it very difficult to concentrate. Then your sugar levels will plummet and you will feel tired – not a good way to be during an exam!

- **Avoid pre-exam complaint sessions**
- Don't join in a conversation with people who like to **compare what little work they have done in preparation for an exam**. Even though they pretend to be proud of it, they are really scared like everyone else.
- **Stay hydrated**
Dehydration causes a massive reduction in the capability of our short-term memory, so have water before an exam and take in a bottle with you. Be careful not to drink too much water before the exam or you might find that you have to visit the toilet several times.
- **Breathe**
Butterflies and anxiety can be overcome by **taking in some deep breaths**. Just stop for 30 seconds and take some deep breaths.

Exam Techniques

What should you do on the day of the exam?

- On the morning of the exam, make sure you **eat something**, but not so much that it makes you sleepy.
- **Wear a watch** in case there is no clock in the exam room.
- Make sure you allow **plenty of time** for things like traffic jams or parking problems, but don't arrive so early that you make yourself nervous.
- Quietly read through your notes. **Avoid talking to others about the exam**. Statements such as "... there's bound to be a question on ..." or "... most people failed this exam last year ..." will add to the panic.

What should you do during the exam?

Normally, you will be given reading time to read the instructions before the exam starts.

Make sure that you know all of the following:

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1 | The number of questions and whether they are arranged in sections. | 4 | Are you asked to answer questions in any particular order? |
| 2 | How many questions in total you must answer, and how many from each section. | 5 | How many marks is each question worth? |
| 3 | Are there any compulsory questions? Clearly mark these. | 6 | What types of questions are there? |
| | | 7 | How are your answers to be recorded? |

Plan your time carefully and accurately and stick to your plan. Work out how much time you should allocate to each section/question. Failure to do this can result in questions being left out or rushed through.

Try to leave time at the end for checking. You will receive no marks for questions you have not attempted. If you do run out of time, write short notes outlining your answers. It will at least give the examiner some idea of your knowledge.



Read each question carefully, and in the second reading, go back over it and underline the key words (but you can't during reading time). Many students have misinterpreted questions or overlooked things due to anxiety at the start of the exam, because they are racing through hoping to find the things they have studied.

Carefully read the Questions

If there is a choice of questions, choose those you are best able to answer.

- Make your decision **quickly**. Tick those that you think you can do. Do the questions you find easiest first as this will give you confidence.
- Make sure your choice of questions **accurately follows** the instructions. For example: “One question from Section A and two from Section B.”
- Ensure that you **number your answers correctly**.

Answer the Questions

1. Essay/Short Answer Questions

- Answer the question, **the whole question, and nothing but the question**. Analyse the question carefully. **Underline the key words**, etc.
- **Make an outline** (include the major arguments, minor points, examples etc). Before you start your answer, make sure you know how it will end.
- Write **clearly and succinctly**.
- Take care with **handwriting, spelling and grammar**.
- Do NOT re-write the question on the answer sheet, but DO remember to write the number of the question you are tackling in the margin.



Write your planned finishing times above all the questions to avoid over-answering one question at the expense of another.

2. Objective Questions (e.g. multiple-choice)

- Check the method of response e.g. **tick, cross, circle the number, blacken a space**. If you fail to do this accurately in a computer marked paper you may not get credit, even if you know the answer.
- Read the question carefully. Do you have to choose the **‘best response’ or the ‘correct response’? Be careful of negatives**. For example, “Which of these is **not** ...” or “All of these **except**”
- Read **ALL the alternatives**, even if you think the first one is correct. There might be a better answer further on. If you don’t know an answer, **eliminate the answers you think are certainly wrong**, and make a calculated guess.
- **Answer ALL questions**, unless the instructions specify that marks will be taken off for incorrect answers (as in the Westpac Competition). Answer all questions as you come to them, even if you are not sure of the answer. If you leave a question you may forget it or not have time to return to it. If you are unsure about an answer, write the answer you think is the most likely, then note its number so that you can check it later.
- If you change your mind about an answer, alter it, but only after careful consideration.

At the end of the Exam

- Make sure that you have **attempted all the questions** you’ve had to do (it is easier to get the first 5 marks for a 20 mark question than to get the last 5, i.e. to go from 15 to 20).
- **Continual checking/proofing can only help. Look for words that are misspelt or illegible.**
- Re-read your written answers for spelling, grammar, tense and sense.
- Avoid discussing your exams with others afterwards. It is too late now and almost always depressing. You have **other exams to prepare for**.

What should you do if things go wrong?

Panic Attacks

Symptoms include accelerated heartbeat, increase in breathing rate, sweating, uncontrollable shaking, and a feeling of anxiety. Prepare yourself so thoroughly that there is little chance of uncertainties creeping in to create panic. Recognise the onset of panic and know what to do. Take long deep slow breathes, breathe in for a count of 6, breathe out for a count of 8. Think positive. You know you're prepared. You know you can pass.

Memory Blocks

Everyone has an occasional memory block. You know the information is in there, but you just can't recall it. Don't panic. Relax. Think back over your notes. Try to remember other facts associated with the point that you are trying to remember. If it doesn't come, leave it and return to the question later. Thorough preparation is the best way to prevent memory blocks; they usually come out of last minute cramming.

Writer's Cramp

Your writing hand aches dreadfully and it feels like you can't continue to write. **Practising writing past exam papers** helps in writing copious quantities quite quickly. This helps build up your hand muscles. During the exam, **take frequent short breaks**, and allow your hand to dangle limply by your side. **Mild shaking, and alternate contracting and relaxing** of your hand also helps, as does not holding your pen tightly.

Physical Fatigue

If you have been working very hard in the lead up to the exams, and extending study time into sleep time, fatigue may well become a problem. Obtain adequate and regular sleep and pay careful attention to your diet. Sufficient daily exercise in the lead up to the exams is important. During the exam, occasionally stretch your arms, neck, back and legs.



NEVER, NEVER, NEVER leave an exam early. There is ALWAYS something more that you can do.



Activity NUMBER 13

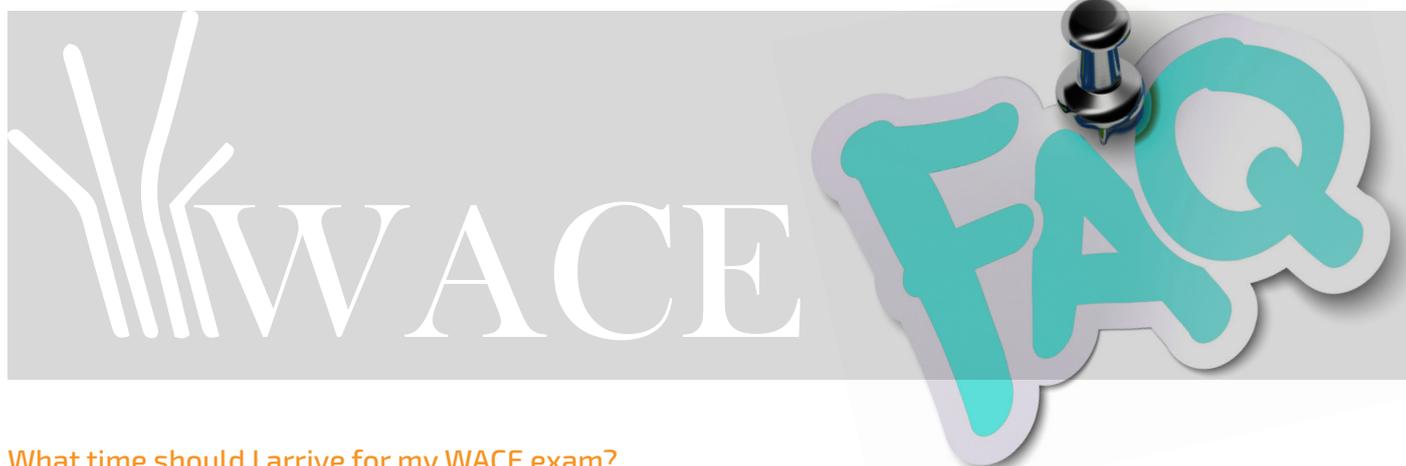
Study Skills Subject Resources

Check out the website www.educationcorner.com/study-skills.html which has a number of General Study Skills Guides, Testing Taking Guides, and Study Skills Resources by subjects in the following areas. Read the subject skills guides in your subjects.

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Economics
- English
- Geography
- History
- Maths
- Physics
- Science



Exam Checklist: Do you have an exam strategy? Have you worked out what time to spend on each part? Do you know what to do if something goes wrong?



What time should I arrive for my WACE exam?

For written exams, you should arrive at the exam centre **45 minutes before** the scheduled start time. For practical exams, you should arrive 30 minutes early.

What if the bus, car or train I'm in breaks down and I'm late for an exam?

You will not be admitted after the first 30 minutes of an exam. But you should report to the exam centre no matter how late you are and ask the exam supervisor to note the time of your arrival. If you were too late to be admitted to the exam or if you think your lateness affected your exam performance, submit a **sickness / misadventure form to SCSA** (available on the SCSA website) with supporting evidence from the transport company.

What happens if I misread the exam timetable and miss an exam?

If you miss an exam because you misread your examination timetable, you are **not** entitled to special consideration. Make a copy of your personal exam timetable and stick it to the fridge. Put the dates into your phone calendar with reminders. Check it with your friends and then get someone else (such as your parents) to check it again. Set a reminder on your phone - on the night before each exam.

What happens if I break my arm a few days before the exams start?

If you suffer an illness or disability just before the exams, you should phone SCSA to see if special arrangements can be made for you to sit your exams. If you injure your writing arm, for example, you could be provided with a scribe. You should not miss an exam session merely because you do not feel able to do your best. If you do not attend an examination session and your sickness / misadventure application is unsuccessful, you will not receive a mark. This will result in a non-genuine attempt classification for that exam and this could affect your achievement of the WACE.

How should I read the exam paper and plan my responses?

If the exam paper has a choice of questions to answer, always read the whole paper before you begin making decisions about which questions to attempt. **Sometimes, it helps to get started with the response you feel most confident about.**

What should I take into an exam?

Mobile phones and MP3/iPods/iPads/laptops/programmable watches are not permitted in the exam room. You **must take your signed personalised examination timetable** and pens (black and blue), pencils, ruler and eraser. **Water is allowed but must be in a clear bottle**, no bigger than 1500ml.

Can I eat during an exam?

Generally, eating is not permitted during an examination. If there are special circumstances, such as a diabetic condition, you may apply to the SCSA to eat food during an examination.

Can I leave an examination early?

You are allowed to leave after one hour but not during the final 15 minutes of the exam. If you need to leave temporarily, you'll be accompanied by a supervisor.



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