Manchester Live: Study Skills 14/10/20, automated transcript

19-Oct-2020

---

Okay hi everybody my name is Laura and I work at the University of Manchester in

the Student Recruitment and Widening Participation team. Today we're going to be

looking at study skills and giving you some advice on study skills from the University

of Manchester.

What I'll do first of all is give you a bit of an overview of what we're going to

be covering today. We'll be looking at learning styles and revision, hearing versus

listening, referencing, note-taking, time management and planning and prioritizing.

Before we go into the main presentation I just like to check that you can hear me.

Okay so if you can use your hand button, your raise your hand button, and just press

that to

indicate that you can hear everything okay that would be great.

Lovely, it looks as if we've got plenty of people who can hear so we will continue.

The way this will be structured today is that I'll be giving you some top tips on

study skills with the support of 2 WP fellows or PhD students who study here at the

University of Manchester. I'll let them introduce themselves when it comes to it

but they'll be able to give you some real insight into top tips from their point

of view as

researchers; as well as throughout their undergraduate degree their masters and their

current study. So it will be a mixture of presenters so you're getting different

insights into study skills. The presentation should last around 30 to 40 minutes

and please do use the question function of the software, so feel free to ask questions

throughout the presentation or if there's something in particular you want to know

from a particular individual,

do ask questions and some colleagues will get back to you as soon as they can.

So we'll start off with looking at different approaches to learning and why this

is important. It's important so that you can work with your strengths

so you can identify what those strengths are and understand where they lie and how

you can get the most out of them and apply them to your learning. You can develop

strategies as well and have a think about a particular approach to a particular

style of learning. You can understand how other people learn so when you're working

in a team, when you're working in a pair, you can kind of complement each other and

have an understanding of different learning styles to then

slot in with each other's learning. Also understand areas for improvement, perhaps

the areas where you don't succeed as much and look at how you can improve

and what tactics you can employ. And to also understand and to learn that there's

no right way to learn. It really does vary; it depends on who you are as a person,

what the subject is, what else is going on at that time, there's no right way to approach

this

it's about understanding how we all learn and how we can complement each other.

So what are some of the differences between learning styles. An active way of learning

is learning by doing. It's by actually kind of carrying out something or following

something through. You process information by talking it through

and you might be a really verbal learner, you want to kind of get your thoughts out

of your brain and work with other people to understand what that might mean and

often active Learners enjoy group work and they like having that energy from other

people in the group and like sharing ideas and it's a real ideal way for them to

learn.

A reflective learning is learning by thinking so the need to understand before acting

and really reflecting on what it is you've been asked to learn, how you're going

to approach it and potentially as well some of the pitfalls, so anticipating

that. So there's a real need, there's a real requirement to have thoroughly thought

things through and understand something before acting off it

acting on it so not just jumping in and doing it but understanding some of the context

and the background. And often reflective learners do prefer to work alone. What I

would say though is it really does vary depending on your style, the situation, you

might find that sometimes you're an active learner sometimes you are reflective

learner it really does depend.

So what are some of the styles of learning? So let's compare sequential or global.

So sequential you organize information in a linear orderly fashion, there's a method

to it, there's an approach that's very clear and there's a very clear next step as

well, there's a pattern to it. You learn in logical sequence steps as well, so again

very structured and your work is organized in a systematic way. There's a

method to it, there's a kind of justification almost to how you approach your learning.

Again on a global scale, you organize in a seemingly random way although it might

not always be the case and there's no real need for you for each step to be completely

clear before moving on. So perhaps there's an element of creativity here and because

you don't need to have a particular kind of logical steps to understand or to then

think I'm going to take it to the next level go to the next step you kind of see

how it goes and

as well global learners arrive at a Eureka moment they have a moment of inspiration

or a moment where they've really learnt something and acknowledged something.

There can also be differences between visual and verbal Learners. So visual Learners

like, as it says on the tin, visual presentation of information through diagrams, graphs,

pictures, charts it's something that learners are keen to to adopt so they want to

see information in a way that's easy to understand

and right in front of them. Verbal learners prefer explanations that use words so

they can be written or spoken but much prefer learning that way.

So let's take a look at revision and some top tips on how to deal with revision.

There's lots of different approaches and people use some of these, none of these

all of these, it really is dependent again on you and how you structure your time

and what resources you have available.

I'm going to pick out some of these because I'm sure some of them are things you

do already, but just to expand on a few of these so that we can look at some

in detail. So again depending on what kind of learner you are, you may need to actually

explain ideas to an individual. So at the moment it could be virtually over zoom

get everything out and talk to somebody about what you're thinking what your

strategy is, what an evaluation or a conclusion

to something is and just really verbalize that also using your phone or

any other kind of recording function to get your ideas out and verbalize what you

want to say. Mind maps can be really useful for people who like to see perhaps a

bit of structure to their ideas and look at how things link together as well.

The KWL method is something that can be approached, so at the beginning of a project

or a piece of work that you're doing - what do you know? waht will you want

to learn? and then what have you learnt? So no for what you know already, 'W' for will what

you hope to get out of it and 'L' for learn, so what did you actually get out of it.

So to have that structure in place and follow it through and see the progress that

you've made. Mnemonics can be really useful if you want to try and think of a kind

of pattern to help you memorize something, so learning the planets for example you

come up with a rhyme or some kind of pattern for each letter of the beginning

of a planet to remember the order of the planets.

So they can be really useful if you like, if you're quite creative and

you like remembering, you know helpful patterns to really get a piece of information

in your brain so that you can recall that when you come to an exam.

There's lots of other ways of revising and it is perhaps a good thing to start off

with a particular method and if it's not really working, try a method that's new

even if it's something that you might not think will work, give something else a go

if you're struggling with with one of these methods.

In terms of you as a learner and your learning style, it's important to understand

the difference between hearing and listening as well. So hearing is something that's

accidental; we can hear a fire alarm going off, we can hear the birds singing outside,

its involuntary it's something that happens to us. It's also effortless so we don't

really need to put in any effort to kind of access that part of our brain through

the hearing

and it's inactive. Whereas if you listen to something and you're taking in information

you're focused on that. So for example, in a lecture of you watching a film and it's

something that's voluntary, it's something that you actually choose to focus on as

opposed to it just happening in the background. And there's intention behind it. You

want to most likely listen to that or you certainly think you're going to gain something

from it and therefore that means it's active.

So when you're preparing for exams you're attending lectures online have a think

about what you're doing between hearing and listening are you being active in

that - are you contributing to it? are you focused on that? and taking the information

you need to then go away and digest it.

I'm going to hand over to Adam now and who's one of our PhD students and Adam is

going to talk about his experiences of what I've just discussed, so you get the researchers

point of view, and give you a bit of insight of his own experience.

Thank you Laura. Hello everyone and so my name is Adam I'm a second year PhD student

here at Manchester and I think just by way of saying hello, I kind of work on intellectual

history so that's kind of history but it's more kind of the history of ideas and

kind of how people think about things in previous times. That said though so I'm

now at the point of being in University where I spent a number of years. I've done

what's called a BA undergrad and then a post-grad taught so that's a masters and I carried

on to do a PhD. In all of those so in kind of the undergrad, post grad taught and

now and this, there are differences in how I've learned things and to be honest

there is no one set way of doing any of this so there's lots of different ways you

can learn that's kind of you know, I'm sure you'll kind of be aware of the standard

kind of model of kinesthetics, audio and

visual but in all of those there are different ways of learning and different ways

of approaching a topic that kind of makes sense to you. So how your friend will learn

will probably be different to how you learn and there's no right or wrong way of

picking that up and the other thing I think that's important to say aswell is that it

can change over time as well so certainly when I think back to kind of college, so

kind of my A Level time. I used to focus quite a lot on writing

thing out and at that point that kind of visual way of writing words down and pictures

kind of drawing and doodling stuff was something that qould stick into the back of

my head but as I've kind of gone on, as I kind of worked in different ways and had

to work differently. So particularly when you get to University the things that you

will be asked to do are a lot more independent and a lot more based around kind of

your own exploration of the topic, I found that different learning styles help.

What do I mean by that? So really for me I find things that are hands-on and kind

of interactive, the best way for me to pick up a subject. So I will read a lot but

I will also then kind of think about what I've taken in and try and process it really

by going on walks or something like that or playing football. Those physical things

help me imbed ideas in my head that I've had before but also kind of taking ideas

in other ways as well so podcasts for me are a really good way in that kind of auditory

way of learning. So I will listen to a lot of podcasts that kind of just sit in the

background. I walk around I will you know go do something and they're kind of playing

in the back of my head. Likewise as well we've got kind of visual visual techniques so

I still doodle, I will still draw pictures over things. If you ever get told not to

Doodle, it's areally good way of learning trust me but it also kind

of helps when you come to flesh out your ideas.

So it's not just a case of taking in information but at university, how you express

your ideas is also really important so one of the ways I will do that as my learning

style is to draw out a plan, literally draw a plan of what for example my essay might

say. So there's lots of different things in there and a lots of different settings

in which you might use that but I think the important thing to say is at University

there are differences, it is a kind of difference in how you approach work but those

learning

styles that you pick up throughout your time are really useful and the university

kind of supports you in lots of different ways to think about and play with learning

styles so there's kind of a mixture of styles playing of ideas and really finding

a style that works. Laura.

Thank you very much Adam that was great and I totally agree on the doodle front

as well, it's a great way to learn and no one should tell you otherwise okay let's move

on so we're going to move on to note-taking now. So note-taking is obviously

really important and it's a skill that you will end up honing as you progress through

your education so you may have started already to take

them in lessons but when you get to University it becomes even more important. It's

a lot more autonomous style of learning and you will take part in lectures where

you'll be expected to take notes pretty much throughout the whole session because

a lecture is very much about imparting information and you taking it in and then

during seminars and tutorials that's when you get to really discuss what you've

been taught in a lecture and perhaps digest

the information, talk about it with other people and have an opportunity to to

have it as a two-way dialogue as opposed to just taking in information. So it's important

not just to rely on your memory - some people have fantastic memories and don't need

to make loads of notes but particularly when you're taking in a lot of information

if you can really fine-tune your note-taking skills that will help you when you

look back on those notes and find out what the sessions been about.

So for research, for lectures and for exams it's a really essential skill and the

idea is to get the key ideas to try and perhaps, miss out some of the more of the

preamble but focus on the key ideas and the content from verbal or written information.

So first of all avoid copying large sections, try and paraphrase try and fine-tune

those skills to make information really concise and paraphrase what you read in

big text books or journals. You want to include enough detail so you understand what

the notes are about and what they refer to and you can also use abbreviations whether

that's acronyms for particular topics or

subjects or it could be that you want to use abbreviations for particular words that

are perhaps a little bit too long and you will understand what those abbreviations

are when you come back to look at your notes. The main thing to think about when

you're taking notes is to keep the question or the topic in mind so constantly question

yourself and go back to that initial point that you've been given or what the

purpose of the lecturers or the class that you're in, keep that in mind so that when

you're taking notes it's as relevant as possible and then note down the source details

and Adam and Ioana will talk to you about referencing and the importance

of that a little bit later on. But do make a note of where you're getting this

information from so that you can refer back to it and you can credit it

successfully.

So there's different types of note taking methods and these aren't set in stone

they're not the right way to do something it's just one of many and you will

also have your own ideas as well. So skeleton prose is something that's very common.

Skeleton Prose is something that you probably do almost without thinking, you might

title certain sections, you might use bullet points, you might highlight, or underline

particular pieces of information

but it's a way of noting down as somebody's talking to you or as you're

reading from a from a textbook and it's as I say it's something that you probably

didn't realize was called skeleton prose that you've been doing anyway. We're going

to go into the Cornell note taking system in a little bit in more detail so I'll

leave that for now but that's a specific way of taking notes that might be useful

for you particularly if you've got large chunks of information to try and break

down.

But note-taking can take the form of visual style of learning as well for all those

people who approach learning visually and prefer graphs and mind maps and charts.

So spider grams, mind maps, concept maps, these can be ways of seeing the information

visually breaking down chunks of text as well and mapping out your ideas so that

you're taking the information in, in a way that is suitable for you.

There are strengths and weaknesses to all these all these styles and it's very much down to

you and your style of learning which one you want to adopt. So Cornell notes -

this is a style of organizing your notes in a way that hopefully can break it down

into the key parts of research into the key sections of learning as well. So in the

keywords on the left hand side you write your main ideas,

the key points any dates any people any names that are relevant and have the

sort of factual information, the key bits of information on the left hand side. Then

in the note-taking section you write down what's important here. So rather than using

full sentences some information that can link back to those keywords. So for example

what happened on it and a particular date and what action the people on the left

in the left

some side had to take in a particular event. Then as summary below is as it says

summary of the main ideas that appear above so what have you gained from the the

notes that you take and what have you gained from the information that you've been

given and what you're learning about.

So it's something again that you probably do anyway however you decide to structure

your notes, but can be a good starting point if again you're finding you're perhaps

not taking, note taking you're not taking notes in a way that suitable for you at

the moment and you feel like you've got a lot of information to work through. This

can make taking notes clearer, it can mean that you can see key bits of information

perhaps a bit more easily as well, they're highlighted more.

It can be something new to try as well to practice before you start University.

I'm going to invite Ioana to come and speak to us now and reflect on her experiences.

Thank you Laura. Hi everyone, I'm Ioana, I'm also a PhD student, second year in Manchester.

My research is on stroke therapy and they did my undergrad here as well in Pharmacology

and did a placement. On note taking, I can say that as Adam said, it's quite different

and they are different styles and it doesn't need to be like one specifically,doesn't

mean, you don't need to have just one specific style you can try different things

and see what works for

you best. For instance when I was in college as well I was like handwriting everything

making a lot of diagrams, like drawing a lot of things, but then when I came

to University, the lecturers were like too fast so I couldn't keep up with a handwriting

or like the notes were like to messy and I couldn't like study on them. So then I

also like tried out typing my notes and I would make sure that even if I

type really fast on my phone or on my laptop I would

make sure that at the end of the day I would like leave specific like spaces to

actually draw the diagrams I used to draw. So you can like kind of combine different

styles together and see what works best for like depending on the scenario. And on

spider diagrams that Laura mentioned as well I think they're quite useful specifically

before you plan like an essay or like in an exam scenario so you can like drawdown

like different topics and then for each topic you can like

see if there's like specific like key points with like bullet points that you want

to use and then maybe like sources as well especially if you are writing it like

if you're writing it and checking sources at the same time you can like make sure

you can come back to that and always write it down because you're going to forget

otherwise. And then also I think the spider diagrams help you, like see the bigger

picture and like you can tell like you can see what kind of topics go together

and like put them in a specific order in the essay so I think that worked

really really work for me when I started uni. And in lectures and I don't think that

worked well for me and I think it still does when I go to seminars I go through

like the slides because most of the people send most of the lectures and the slides

beforehand so I go through them for like five minutes just came true have like a

quick look and see what's the main topic because then when it comes to note-taking

I

like remember if something that lecture or like the speaker is talking about if

that comes in like a little later slide because it happened that I was like typing

down really fast and then I change the slide and realize it was actually already

there like the all the information I was writing. So like skimming through the slide

before you're taking any kind of notes on them helps to like stay focused and like

don't go off topic as well. It helps you only take like the main details from the

lecture that you needed rather than writing everything down and not paying attention

to it, like not listening as Laura said earlier but yeah maybe try a lot of different

things like highlighter if that works for you or like just normal pen, typed

or handwritten and try out different things and see what works best or like a combination

of them I think that's from my own experience that's my advice. Laura?

Lovely thank you, and I totally agree. I think some people still prefer to make written

notes and that's absolutely fine whereas obviously a lot of people have tablets

and laptops and prefer to do it that way. As we're saying all along there's no right

way of doing this, we're hopefully going to provide you with some options and you

can decide which one fits in with your learning style thanks very much Ioana.

So we're going to move on to referencing in particular now and focus on this because

this is something that you may not have had experience of doing so far. You may have

started to reference in it in a particular way but we want to talk to you about

referencing in a higher education context. So academic writing requires you to respond

to the ideas and the writing of other people and this will come to no surprise to you

and through your further study that you doing at the moment at school

or sixth form.

So obviously referencing allows readers to find your sources, you can credit it to

the individual that you've got the sources from ,the textbook, the journal, the website

and also it enables you to enables you to justify the points that you're making

in your essay or your piece of work and where you found that information from. So

it is crucial when it comes to referencing to avoid plagiarism and a quick recap

of what plagiarism is, as again I'm sure this has been covered from your teachers

and you've come across it before, but this is presenting ideas or work or particular

words of others as your own. It's using other people's work as your own so it's kind

of claiming that and not submitting it solely as your own work, you're kind of resubmitting

somebody else's work.

Good referencing begins with good note-taking that's why we were really keen to

talk to you about note-taking first of all even though it might be something you

do involuntary you do really without thinking, if you can get your note-taking right

it will then lead to good referencing. So in the body of the text you need to

include the citation and then the author, the year of publication and the page. And

at the end of

the essay, a full bibliography and a reference list. Adam and Ioana will talk

about referencing further later on as well so they can give you a real life example

of of their experience and how they go about approaching it and also the differences

as well, that they found moving into higher education.

So referencing should be systematic, it should be uniform, so it's all the same however

your you're referencing it should be following the same method thorough and consistent.

You want to be able to highlight really clearly where your sources are from and

if somebody needs to know exactly where a particular quotation is from they've got

that information to hand.

So here's a handy flowchart hopefully to give you a few pointers of what you need

to reference and how. So this gives you an idea of what you do need to reference

and what you don't need to reference if it's a direct quotation so site it put it

in quotation marks and include it in your reference list so put it in quotation

marks in the main body of the piece of work or the essay.

If it's a paraphrase, cite it and include it in your reference list. If it's someone

else's Theory or idea cite it and include it in your reference list, but if it's

none of the above you don't need to cite anything that is common knowledge or your

own ideas. So it's really something that can be attached to somebody else and that's

how you can think about whether or not you need to reference it

So going back to plagiarism, it really is crucial that you understand how will you

avoid this and avoid any accusations of plagiarism so the use of any source published

or unpublished without proper acknowledgement or referencing. It can also plagiarism

can come about with carelessness when referencing and poor note taking and also

copy and pasting ideas but perhaps not attributing that to anyone.

So we've got some advice on referencing to ensure that you avoid any accusations

of plagiarism.

So a quick note taking recap. Notes are useful for understanding what you've read

and jotting down any questions or ideas and avoiding plagiarism. The important things

to include are facts and figures, direct quotations, paraphrases and your source details.

And then note taking is linked to referencing one follows the other and they benefit

each other as well.

So Adam can you talk a little bit more please about your experiences and experiences

of referencing and where you went for information and particularly how you found

that transition from further study at college or sixth form to higher education.

Cheers Laura. Referencing then, I think one of the things kind of start

off by saying is I kind of so when I started my BA i was at Liverpool. I've moved around

I've been in a couple of universities now so Liverpool, Cambridge, Manchester and in

all of those the way in which you format, basically the way in which you reference might

change

but the actual referencing themselves the references you will use will be the same

so it is a common and standard feature of the University. So whichever University

you go to you will have to get your head around referencing. And there are lots of

different ways in which you can reference you can use in-text references, footnotes

end notes, bibliographies at the end, they're very common ways of referencing. But the style

in which you reference may vary as well so one of the first things I think I'd say

and one the first

is it kind of hit me really about University was understanding there are different

styles of referencing they have lots of different acronyms that are things like,

MHRA, APA, MLA, Chicago, etc etc carry on you don't need to necessarily about the acronym

or the kind of differences in those, just say there are differences by each discipline.

So history, for example, I'm a Historian , uses a particular type of referencing

we use NHRA, the Modern, Humanities, Research Association

and that is different to how, for example, you might approach referencing as a scientist.

So as a chemist, the type of referencing you might use will be different. So I think

first of all just to say there are commonalities whichever University you go to

you will have to use referencing but when you get to University the references you

use might be different from say, friends in different subjects, or even actually friends

on the same course as you. So I mentioned when I

first went to University I did my undergraduate degree in history with politics. Now politics

sits as more of a social science and history which kind of sits in the humanities.

So that meant I had to get my head around two different styles of referencing since

the first one which was Chicago in history, and then when I got to politics turning

my head to Harvard. Now there are lots of different things that come with that but

the essential in both of those was referencing where I got ideas

from. As Laura's kind of mentioned already, note-taking is the key bit to referencing

that comes down the track but when you, as I found this out to my pain, when you find

an absolutely killer quote, I mean it's going to set your argument make it perfect

and you don't put the right now in page number it can take a long time to go back

through really frustrating, particularly if you're up against the deadline (we'll talk

about time management and a little bit) but if you're up against the deadline and

you need to quickly remember where you cited something from, having good

taking skills helps with the reference thing at the end because it is essential

that you show where you've got your ideas from. Now one of the other things I kind

of worried about was knowing which bits to cite and which bits not to. We've mentioned

you don't need to kind of site commonly known ideas you know an apply groes from

a tree, you wouldn't need to cite that for example. But actually at University, learning

what you do need to cite is important and it's one of those skills I think you kind

of develop and pick up

the more you reference. So understanding that in making your argument, in writing

your essay, there are different things that will stand out that other people have

written other people have talked about and that is really the heart of referencing

making sure you give appropriate kind of recognition, you recognize who's written

previous things that have informed your idea. So it's not to say your idea needs

to be referenced you don't need to go through and kind of bullet point where

your idea comes from, but you do need to show where you've got the components that

idea came from so you kind of go through and kind of compliment and cite where you've

got your sources. And that really is the heart of referencing - acknowledging where

you've got something from as a way of showing where your ideas where your ideas

go to. Like I said, the key thing for me I think is to recognize that note taking

feedss into referencing; referencing

helps you to avoid plagiarism which at University is kind of the big scary thing that

you want to try and avoid it because it's kind of curtains in some ways. But there

are also different ways you can kind of approach referencing and lots of different

styles which are kind of unpacked and explored in your kind of first few weeks at

University depending on the subject. Laura.

Fantastic, thanks Adam, and just to elaborate on that point as well as a made at the

end. Often in your first year you will be given some kind of manual or online resource

and it will tell you and give you guidance and step-by-step guidance on how to reference.

As Adam said, it could vary between your courses because there's a sort of a

standard way that academics like to approach referencing but there will be clear

guidelines and it will be something

that you will start to do out of habit but it just takes a while particularly if

there's a lot of information to record but you're not just sort of left adrift and

with referencing you're given the guidance. And it can be something that you refer

back to as well throughout your time at University.

Okay so time management, we'll go on to now and this is something that again some

of this is real common sense but just to look at how this links in to study skills

and how you can improve your approach to learning as well with good time management.

So quite obvious things here that I'm sure you're all aware of but time management

will improve your grades and it limits stress.

It can enable you to be more efficient and also get that balance between work and

play so the work that you're doing but also the time that you spend outside

of studying which is equally important for your well-being and ensure you've

got that balance right.

So we are all I'm guilty of perhaps not taking the right approach with time management

and taking on too much or leaving things to the last minute and this isn't anything

that's sort of unsurprising or unique to you this is something that we all deal

with at different stages in our life for very different reasons. But some reasons

why time management can fail the real need to be a perfectionist and to have everything

just so

and perhaps putting them unrealistic expectations on yourself or other

people and perhaps putting up a schedule or putting together as get a schedule after

you've already fallen behind so things are a little bit out of kilter. And then also

that last-minute cramming without thinking about the time that's actually needed

to do a good job and to kind of represent yourself well as well and do yourself justice.

So some advice, create a life or study schedule. I do think it's important to have

a life schedule if you are feeling things are getting a bit on top of you and do

factor in that time for non-work, that time for socializing that time for relaxing.

I know when I was at University several years ago now, I split up my day in terms

of morning, afternoon and evening and particularly when it was leading up to exam

time, I tried as much

as possible to give myself one third of the day off. So I would potentially revise

and work morning and afternoon if I just wanted the evening free, if I had plans

in the evening. I may have wanted a lie in one day so did afternoon and evening and that

worked for me, at times it didn't always work out that neatly but it certainly made

me think about the how precious that time is as well to relax and to balance

that studying time. Prioritize what's important. I think it can be really

easy sometimes to keep having reminders delayed so I know I've got pieces of work

that I sometimes know I need to do but perhaps I don't want to do, and I'll just

push it to one side and do something else that's not as important because it's a

bit easier. Ultimately I'm making things harder for myself further along down the

line so it's kind of changing that mindset and understanding that

once you've got that piece of work done it can be put in a box you don't have to

think about it. Be flexible so do remember that you may not stick to it a particular

plan and you may not just work particular parts of the day, there might be times where

you need to go over to another part of the day but be realistic as well about what

you can feasibly do and fit in to particular week or day. Do

allow time for that key research and planning that really does help with any pieces

of work or essays that you have to do if you factor in that time and don't just

launch into it you're more likely to get panicked and worry that you don't know

what you're doing if you just go straight into it without that planning time.

Relaxation and exercise time is crucial and I think even more so this year we've

sort of all realized the importance of being outdoors when we can and and being

able to exercise

if we can. And constantly review and reassess your schedule as well, it's not a

set in stone item, it's not something that is non movable, it's something that

you can work around. You may change as you progress through your education and you

might take on different learning styles or figure out a different way of doing something

and that's fine just move it around if you need to.

So I wanted to highlight a time management cycle that can be quite useful if you're

thinking about how to approach studying. So first of all setting goals. What is it

that you want to achieve and also as we talked about before how realistic are these

and being kind to yourself as well when you're setting these. Tracking your time

as well so keeping tabs on where you are up to in that goal setting and what you

have left to achieve but also what you've done.

Making a plan and trying to stick to that plan. And then following on from that self-monitoring,

so constantly kind of checking in with yourself and seeing how you're doing and

watching your progress. And making those necessary adjustments as well - yes it's important

to stick to a plan but things come up you might find new pieces of research that

you want to incorporate, you might have discovered a particular quotation that works

really well or you've got

an outcome of an experiment that perhaps takes your paper or your essay in

a different direction. So again that need for flexibility as well.

So what are your career goals or what are your goals first of all. Is it to perhaps

work towards a particular career or is it to think about time management in the

sense of exams or a particular piece of work an essay. So set your goals according

to it a timespan and then divide them into manageable pieces. I think thinking about

them in one go can be quite alarming and it can be quite panic-inducing

so think try and break them down into manageable pieces.

So this is a way of structuring your time just to start one moment I think we've

got it disturbance on the line is anybody unmuted themselves any of the organizers?

Great thank you. And so with time management, you can look at splitting sort of tasks

up into different categories and you can have a think about what to prioritize and

what what can be left and as I say this does take a bit of willpower as well and

perhaps a change in habits because it can be very easy to prioritize stuff we want

to do compared to stuff that actually needs to get done.

So you can see that in that top left hand corner you've got important and urgent

which really are your priorities, the things to address immediately. So that could

be upcoming exams, deadlines, attending classes or any required reading that you're

supposed to be doing. And so ideally they would be the tasks that would that be no

delay and you'd get cracking with those. You can see in

number two, these are important and included in this is non study time as well but

they're not as urgent. So reviewing notes and seminar readings, study skills, support,

leisure time, well-being, so they are still important but they're not as urgent. they

need to be factored in but it's not as urgent as some of the upcoming deadlines

or exams that you have.

And then in number 3 box number three not important, important but urgent - it could

be more sort of life things like things related to your living situation, your accommodation,

ensuring that you've got food, ]replying to messages from friends, and emails from

your tutor. So they

are important to an extent and they then maybe quite pressing because it could

be a request from a friend that's quite urgent but they do fall a little bit below

the box one there which is what needs to be addressed immediately. And then finally -

not important and not urgent organizing stationary, watching any films, playing games,

refreshing your social media. They should be a last priority

but arguably they also kind of intertwine with some of the other more important

tasks. They can be a bit of a breath of fresh air and a bit of a way that you switch off

after something really important like an exam you might then want to go on social

media just to try and switch your brain off from studying. So it's really easy

to prioritize some of the stuff that should be your last priority and again you're

not alone in doing this. If you're feeling that tasks are

a bit too much, it's a bit overwhelming something along these lines could be a really

useful way of thinking right, what do I need to get on what and do, what do I keep

putting off, what actually is urgent and what's not urgent and what's important and

not important.

So in terms of tracking your time. You could log your hours you could see how you've

used your time throughout the day and it'll help manage your time well. Tracking

time also determines how you use your time and when you're the most effective. I

was never very good at working in the evenings at University, I wasn't a particularly

early riser but I certainly found it easier to concentrate and focus during the

day. I struggled when it got to nighttime, I think I felt

my brain sort of switched off and I wasn't as focused. But this really does vary

depending on who you are and the kind of learner you are. Tracking your time highlights

your habits as well and it can highlight the positive and the negative habits so

that you can build on those. You can also track your time just per day and have

you know page per day, you could attempt to track it so that you can compare

how you've worked or how you've approached time management day to day and it can

provide a really good summary of a working week or a working month if that's how

you choose to do it.

If you're going to make a plan, ideally use one diary for everything just means that

you are also prioritizing the time you need to switch off as well. Put a distinct

end to your tasks and try and stick to it. It will really help you feel like you've

come a drawn a line under it. You can also put the same types of tasks together so

if you like color coding and that kind of thing it could be library research, computer

work, writing, anything that's kind of study based

put in one color and then you can do your leisure time as well. There's

obviously monthly and weekly planners so if you're a planner if you like thinking

ahead and know what's coming up that could be really useful. But most importantly

and I think particularly at the moment with lots going on both and for the country

but also you personally in terms of your education, be kind to yourself we don't

always take everything off our list when we want to

that doesn't mean you're not going to get it done, it just means you have to move

things around and focus on planning. So think it's really crucial not to be too

hard on yourself if you don't stick to everything and by the you know by the minute

and that flexibility is going to be really important for you to feel like you've

done a good enough job, you've submitted a piece of work, or you've taken part in

an exam that you're that you're happy with and you know you've done the best you

can and also you've

prioritized your well-being and things that you know help you relax as well.

Ioana if you can jump in here please and give us your experiences of how you

manage your time effectively, any strategies that you want to share and also that

transition between further education to higher education. Sure. I think the first

part that I wanted to really highlight is the importance of taking breaks and

actually planning the breaks. So if you're the type of person that like really enjoys

writing out like full details

to plan for the day, make sure you do plan breaks and breaks for just have for like

fun activities, for exercising, for like anything and what's really really important

is if you like you're running late on things that you've planned for the rest of

the day never but into the break time because it can like really lead to like

burn out and like being overtired at the end so always respect the break time. That's

one thing I've learned the most important thing I've learned throughout time.

Before I didn't use to plan much when I was in college because I was like training

so I knew exactly when the times were in the afternoon but then when I came to University

they were like so many things you like you could do, you could do like lectures, studying,

reading and I always wanted to make sure that I have that break time that was talking

about. So I started doing like using a diary. So I have like a passion planner that

I really really enjoy and I just write everything

down. Like I'm a perfectionist as Laura mentioned and it's quite a daunting thing

to be when you're trying to plan but yeah so I always like plan everything

really well, I'll try to stick to it, try to cross them out and it gives that satisfaction;

however since their pandemic because like the motivation and productivity levels

are like really really low for everyone I've like realize that I can't achieve as

much per day as I used to before especially if I'm trying

work from home. I think it's quite important to be flexible when it comes to

that. Like some days are better than others, some days are more productive, some days

I can't like finish everything so what I do is I use the squares method as well

that Laura showed wo=ith like important and urgent. So I plan each day certain things

from that important and urgent like but really really minimum amounts so that

I make sure I can finish all those per day and then if I have like free time at

the end I take from the other squares things that I

could do from like urgent but not important in like the other two squares.

So always make sure that if, for instance, at the end of the week so I plan weekly,

so if at the end of the week I have not managed to accomplish all the things I said

I'd do I have also like square in the corner saying like things that can be done next

week. So I made sure I put some things in there so it gives the satisfaction of actually

feeling the planner even though you have not actually done the activities so it's

quite interesting

just seeing how you play with that to make sure that you're still flexible with

it. Also when you're working for a deadline I found it really really useful for instance

if it's an essay or like a written piece of work to say that I'm going to do this

amount of words per day. It can just be ideas thrown into a word, it can be reading

the source and writing down notes on it but I count the words at the end of each

day and like try and keep myself accountable on like a notebook or in an Excel

spreadsheet. And then I tried to like make up for the days that I write less and

I think that helps a lot to not have to come at the end with right before the deadline,

so each day I say I do like very little like 200 words or like 500 Words depending

on how much time I have before the deadline, and I tried to stick to it even if later

I have to come back and I might actually not use any of the things I've written.

I think it's quite a good habit to write and read constantly like always time in

the day to read things even if you read

like two or three pages and make notes on them that's already a lot because it helps

to not have to like read all of that so like 50 pages in one day right before the

exam. So it helps a lot to like keep yourself accountable and do little like every

few days, like I don't know two days a week, three days a week whatever works best

for you. Also what I've discovered recently with my friend is a buddy system. So every

Sunday I have either a virtual coffee

or a coffee with a friend and we talk about, we show our planners, we both have

like written planners and we show what we've done for the week and like we keep

each other accountable, we motivate and for a week that are like going wrong and

not managing to achieve things, we just like say like 'oh it's okay'. Like we just encourage

each other to do better and I think it helped me a lot seeing that everyone like

not like he has things that he's not fully accomplished for the week and it like

some weeks are really productive so that makes me

want to do more as well. It's quite good and then we plan together for the next

week in like some days we can just discuss it if it's too much, too little and it

really really helps having that buddy system in place. We, as I said we use planners,

also I've used Google Calendar because it's quite useful and I on my Google

Calendar I even planned like lunchtime, breakfast and things like that so like I

made sure that everything's like enough time for like resting, meals, exercising

also like time to see friends and like the time in between for instance you

have to cycle to uni and like I factor in even if I don't put it in like cycling

to your knee I just leave gaps to make sure that I factor in everything and I don't

ask too much for myself each day is really really important. So yeah I think remember

to like, if you do like planning remember to plan but also plan breaks and to make

sure you're like flexible with it.

Thank you Laura. Fantastic thank you Ioana that's great and definitely meal

times are always always worth factoring in so that you've got some fuel.

Okay thank you ever so much for your input for your listening ears as well I wanted

to highlight a couple of things before we finished. The University of Manchester

has a My learning Essentials website which has lots of top tips on a lot of the

things that we've talked about already, including referencing.

saying so 'citing it right' is an introduction to referencing which I think will really

complement a lot of what Adam and Ioana have said today and give you an insight

into higher education and referencing at this level so that you prepared before

you go. But that's on top of lots of other study skills advice which I'd really recommend

that you go and have a look. We've also got other webinars coming up, so if you visit

the Manchester Live pages where you found this webinar you can see what webinars

we have scheduled

over the next few months. We run one a week, at least, and so do feel free

to join us for webinars on a range of different topics such as applying to University,

Writing a personal statement, and choosing a course, and then finally we have a service

called Unibuddy which is a fantastic way of getting informal advice from a current

student at the University. So Unibuddy supports peer-to-peer learning and it's

an opportunity for you to ask questions about a range of different subjects

so it could be about a course that you're interested in, accommodation, student finance

student life, and we have lots of you Unibuddies, lots of our current students ready

and waiting to speak to you and answer your questions. So I'll leave it there for

now thank you for your attention - do feel free to ask any questions if you have any.

I won't stop the broadcast just yet and all the best with any revision and exams

that you have coming up next year.