

Academic Skills Centre
Academic Literacies

Studying at University: Planning your first year in Dentistry

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Session Outline



- Introduction to independent learning
- Time management strategies
- Goal setting and tracking progress
- Study skills necessary for success
- Effective note-taking techniques
- Active listening
- Conclusion and next steps



Group discussion

WHAT DO YOU think are the characteristics of an independent learner?



What do you think it means to be an ‘independent learner’?

Making informed choices

Taking responsibility

Being motivated

Being confident

Self-reflection

Prioritising tasks

Planning your time

Setting yourself goals

Looking after your physical and mental well-being

Keeping records of what you’ve done

It does not mean working alone

It does not mean NOT asking for help

Use the services available to you:

Your lecturers/tutors

Your learning advisors/mentors

Library staff

- **Academic Skills and Liaison Librarian**
- **Senior Academic Skills Adviser**
- **Royal Literary Fellows**

‘Independent study is a process, a method and a philosophy of education: in which a student acquires knowledge by his or her own efforts and develops the ability for inquiry and critical evaluation;

(Candy, 1991)



What is independent learning?

Independent learning is the ability to take responsibility for your own learning.



Why is it important?

Independent learning helps students to become more effective learners, better prepared for future studies and careers.



How does it work?

Developing independent learning skills involves taking an active approach to learning and seeking out resources to help support your studies.

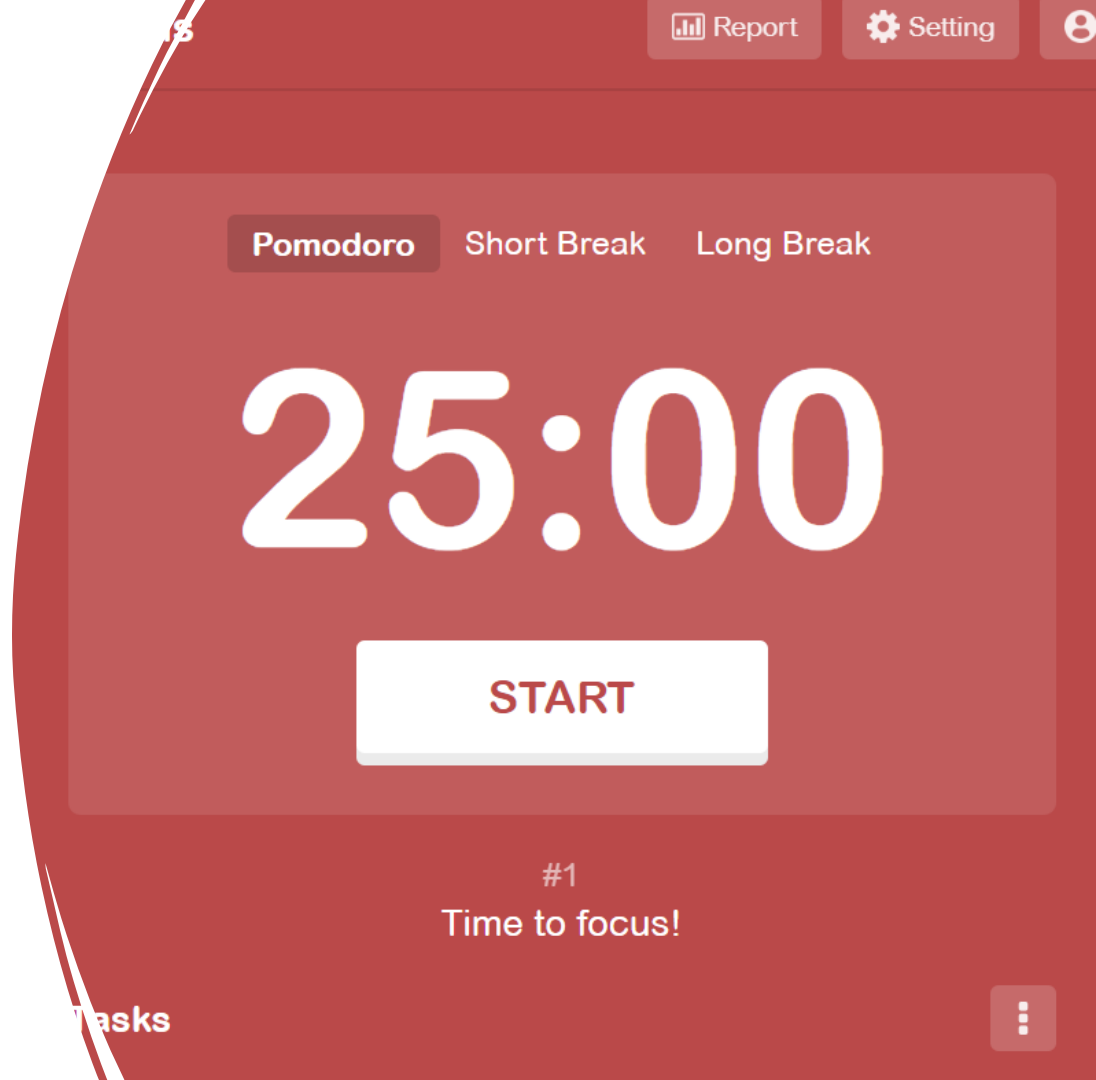
What advice would you give to a new student about managing their time? Discuss



Time Management Strategies



-
- <https://pomofocus.io/>



Goal Setting and Tracking Progress



Setting goals

How to set SMART goals to help guide your learning and achieve success.



Tracking progress

Ways to track your progress so you can stay motivated and adjust your goals as needed.



Celebrate success

Take the time to celebrate your accomplishments and reflect on what you've learned.

Smart goals

SPECIFIC

Who and what?

What do I want to accomplish?

- I want to graduate

Long term goals

How will I know when I have achieved my goal?

- I will graduate.

Is this goal realistic?

- Yes, if I work hard, study effectively, have support from my friends, family, and staff, I can do it.

**I will graduate
in 5 years**

Why is this goal important?

- I can't become a dentist unless I graduate

When can I achieve this goal?

- I can achieve this goal in 5 years

Smart goals



Short term goals

I will take notes in each class and review them at the end of each school day to help me retain the information.

Create a SMART goal...

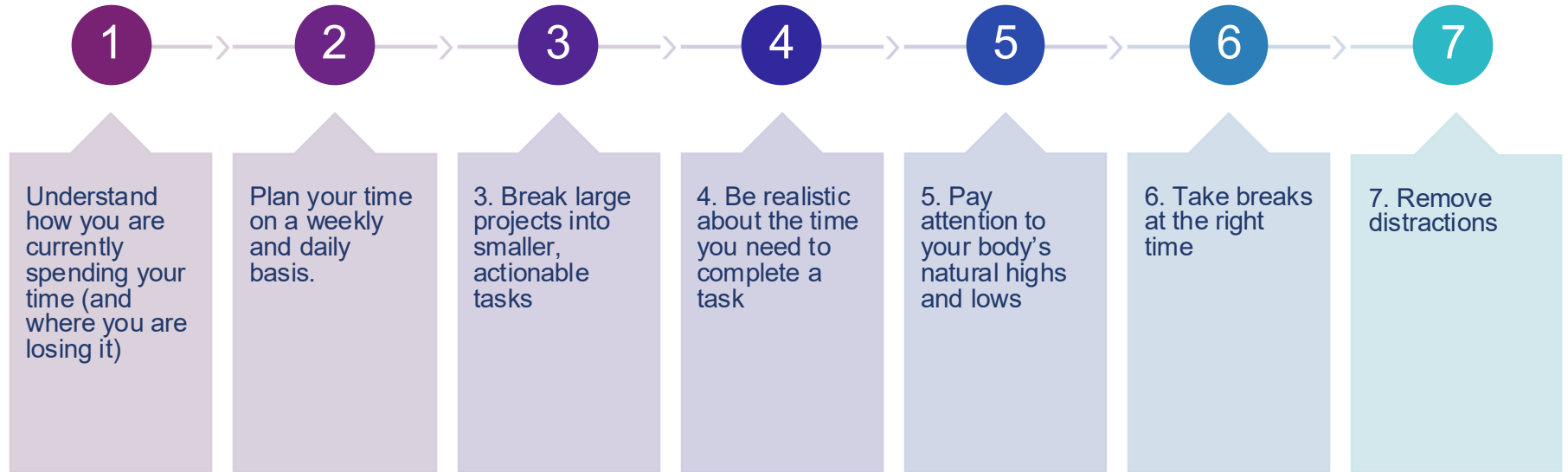


- ...for this week
- ...for this term



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Time management



Study Skills Necessary for Success

Active reading strategies

Reading and note-taking techniques to help you better understand and retain information.

Research skills

How to find and evaluate information, and how to avoid plagiarism.

Academic writing skills

How to structure your writing, use appropriate language, and avoid common mistakes.

Collaboration skills

How to work effectively in groups, and how to communicate your ideas with others.

Academic reading and other resources

- Reading lists
 - Essential
 - Recommended
 - Optional
- Text books
- Journals
- Websites
- Information from professional bodies
- Videos



Note-making

What advice would you give to a new student about preparing for lectures? Discuss



When do you make notes?



Before

Prepare by finding out what you need to know and what the purpose of the reading or lecture is.



During

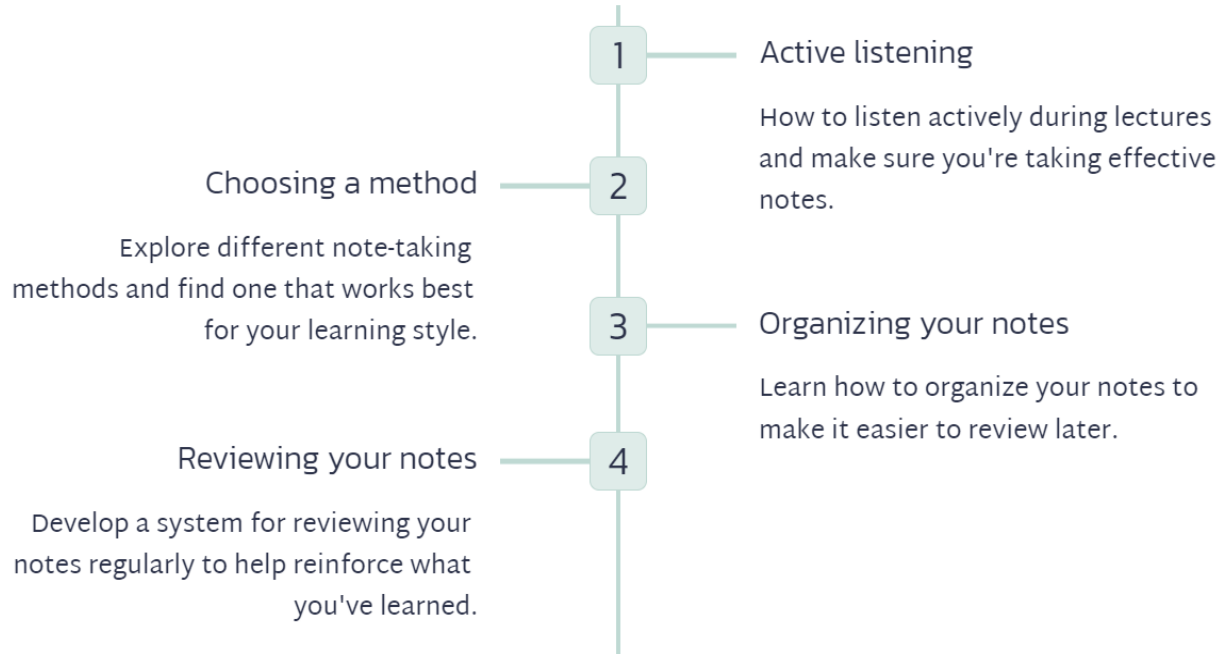
Note down main ideas and keywords. Find techniques that work for you.



After

Reflect and review and then organise your notes.

Effective Note-taking Techniques



How do you listen actively?



Focus on what is being said. Give the speaker your undivided attention. Clear your mind of anything else.



Don't prejudge or assume you already know the material. You want to understand what the person is saying.



Ask the speaker to expand or clarify. If you are unsure you understand, ask questions; don't assume.



Listen for **verbal cues** and watch for **nonverbal cues**.

To participate actively in a lecture:

Be
prepared

Position
yourself for
success

Don't wait

Write your
questions
down

Ask Specific
questions

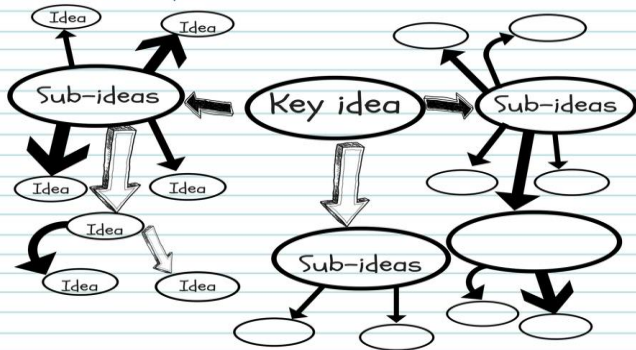
What active note-taking techniques do you know?



Note-taking techniques

- The Cornell method
- Mind-mapping
- Outline method
- Charting
- The sentence method

Mind map



Outline Method

Heading:

1. Main Topics

a. Sub Topics

- Points under the subtopic
- More points
- Yet more

b. Sub Topics 2

2. Another Main Topic

a. With one Sub Topic

3. ETC

MAKE SURE THAT YOUR NOTES ARE WELL CATERGORISED AND ORGANISED.

USE INDENTATION TO KEEP THINGS CLEAR.

DEVELOP YOUR OWN SYSTEM AND STICK TO IT.

The Cornell Method

Before	
Questions, key words, definitions	Note-making area
	During
After	
Summary:	After

Cornell Notes

Name _____
Date _____
Class _____
Period _____

- Main Idea
- Key Question (after notes are completed)
- Key words & ideas
- Important dates/people/places
- Repeated/Stressed Info
- Ideas/brainstorming written on board / overhead projector
- Info from textbook/stories
- Diagrams & Pictures
- Formulas

Summary of your notes in your own words

Charting

How?	ADVANTAGES:	DISADVANTAGES:	WHEN TO USE IT?
Set up your paper in columns and label appropriate headings.	Helps pull out most relevant information	Can be a hard system to use during a lecture	If you'll be tested on facts and relationships
Headings could be categories covered in the lecture	Reduces amount of writing	Not a lot of room to write	If content is heavy and presented quickly
Insert information (words, phrases, main ideas, etc.) into appropriate	Provides easy review for memorising facts and studying comparisons and	Need to know the content that will be covered beforehand.	If you want to get an overview of the whole lecture on one

Sentences

In the sentence method of note-taking, simply write items in normal sentences. Continue to take notes, entering each item as an ordinary sentence.

Start a new line to begin entering a new idea.

This method works nicely for copying down lots of facts quickly. It's just a set of sentences – that makes it easier to jot down all the ideas.

It's nice to review these notes after a class. Consider reorganizing notes into a more useful form at that point.

Note taking tips

Always use your own words – translating points into your own words helps with information retention and understanding.

Use white space to your advantage by separating major points or emphasising sections.

Don't try and use as little space as possible – spread out, even if you only have one main point per page.

Develop your own type of shorthand to abbreviate your word/sentences. An example of this will be writing MB instead of Māori Business.

It can also be a good idea to maintain a glossary as part of your note taking for words that are important, or words you don't understand and intend to look up.

Feedback

When do you think
you'll receive
feedback?

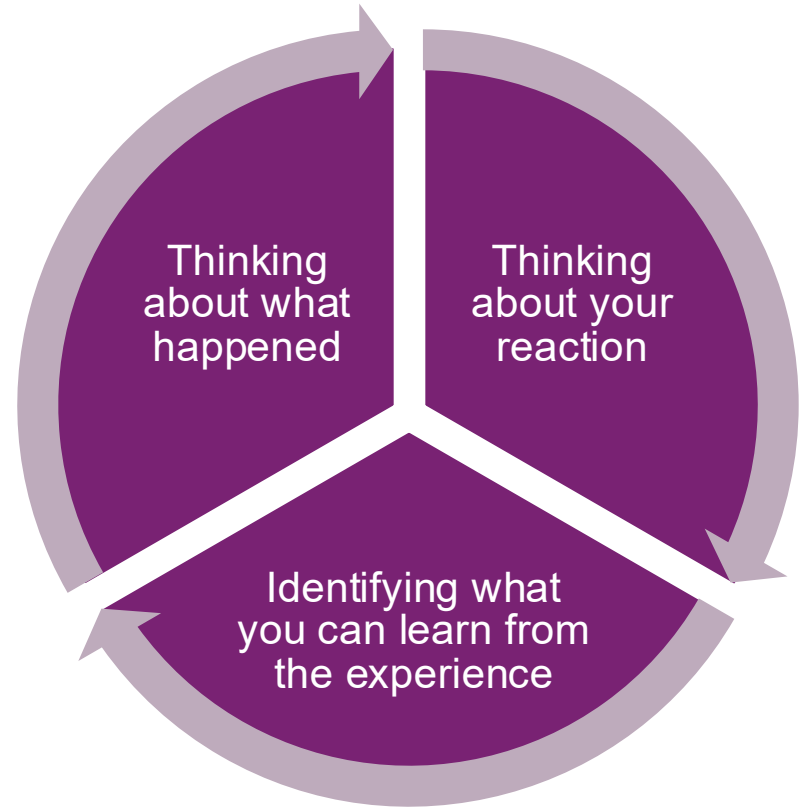


Feedback

- Formal – voice not, written, grades
- Informal – in seminars, lectures, to groups, individually
- Peer feedback – people on your course, those who you ask to sense check your work
- Self-feedback – you become your own marker and match your work to grading criteria



Being a reflective learner



References

- Candy, P. (1991) Self-direction for lifelong learning: a comprehensive guide to theory and practice. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Support available from the Academic Skills Centre

- Workshops
- One-to-ones
- [Academic Skills QMPlus pages](#)
- PASS
- Studiosity – online feedback service

Support available from Queen Mary

- Disability and Dyslexia Service
 - Advice and counselling (sexual assault support officer)
 - Wellbeing
-

Questions

Thank you



Queen Mary
University of London