

SELF –DIRECTED LEARNING

Learning online allows you to work through material at your own pace and set your own schedule from any location. However, it comes with a unique set of challenges. It will be up to you to be self-disciplined and you have to be proactive in engaging with other students and staff.

Familiarise yourself

- Learn where to find things on LMS.
- Check how each unit is being run. Do not assume that all unit coordinators do the same thing. Some give grades for using the online discussion boards, some have frequently asked questions listed on LMS and others are only available on certain days. Read all instructions carefully.
- Read your unit outlines in detail and note all deadlines and expectations. Check the weight of each assessment.

Create your weekly routine

Studying 9am to 5pm with a lunch break can help to form a routine. But find the time that works best for you. If you are a morning person start at 6am, or if you work better in the evening then adjust the timing.

- 1) Check unit outlines for weekly topics.
- 2) Watch lectures online.
- 3) Do readings and/or any other homework required.
- 4) Participate in online discussions.
- 5) Work on current assessment.
- 6) Revise notes from the week.
- 7) Plan the following week.

(Order may vary based on unit instructions.)

TIP

Setting a timer on your phone can help you to maintain concentration and stay on schedule. Use it also for the breaks.

TIP

You do not always need large study blocks to achieve your work. For example, you can use 30 minutes in between other activities to do a reading or revise notes.

Prepare for assessments

- Identify the learning outcomes.
- Read the instructions and the marking rubrics.
- Plan different stages of your assessment by breaking it into smaller tasks.
- After completing each stage, tick it off.



Manage your time

- Use a calendar or diary to plan out weekly and daily tasks. This will help you achieve the big goals. Make sure you set aside 10 hours a week, per unit for study.
- Reward yourself for working hard by taking small breaks (walking or having a snack) to rejuvenate.

TIP

You can lock yourself out of apps on your phone to avoid distractions. Also set your phone as 'do not disturb'.

TIP

Test whether you like white noise, music or silence when studying. You can buy noise cancelling headphones if required.

Watch your lectures

- When watching a lecture online, ensure you are fully focused.
- Pause the videos as needed to take notes.
- You can also slow down the pace of the video if required.

Be sure to stay up to date with lectures and content each week. Do not let them pile up.

Create your process

Every study session you should take the following steps:

- 1) Remove digital distractions by closing irrelevant browsers and apps.
- 2) Tell anyone around you that you need to have focused study time.
- 3) Turn on a timer to remind you to take breaks and stay on track.

You should also develop a folder system for notes and readings. Remember to reference as you go.

TIP

Isolation can be difficult, but it can also be an opportunity to maintain focus. Remember to avoid any home distractions and try to join in online communication with staff and students.



Reflect on your learning

- Reflect on what you learnt each week. *What is something new you learnt? What are you unsure about? What do you need help with?*
- Reflect on your learning habits. Have you had any distractions? Should you adjust your schedule?
- Reflect on the feedback from your lecturers and tutors. *Do you understand the feedback? How can you apply the comments made? How can you improve?*

TIP

Asking questions is the best way to learn. Never be scared to speak to UWA staff.

TIP

If you ever get behind, adjust your timeline and seek help from UWA staff.

Like this Survival Guide? Why not check out more of our guides...

Study Smarter, Get the Most from Lectures, Mind Mapping and Note Taking. Also read our *Managing Time and Stress* series.

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Any suggestions?

We would love to hear from you. Email us at studysmarter@uwa.edu.au

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