

Techniques for managing your time

At university, good time management can have a significantly positive effect on your grades. Managing your time well will enable you to prioritise and have quality focus-time to work on your assessments. Consider the below techniques that could help you plan your time more effectively and juggle your many responsibilities.

Creating a personal schedule

A personal schedule will help you to plan blocks of time that you can put aside for all your responsibilities. Some students prefer working with a physical schedule that they can print and keep in their workspace, while others prefer using digital tools, like the Outlook Calendar, to manage their time. Your schedule should not only reflect your work or studying responsibilities, but also your 'downtime' with family and friends.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6am	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise	Free time	Free time	Free time
7am	Preparing for the day	Preparing for the day	Preparing for the day	Preparing for the day	Preparing for the day	Free time	Study time
8am	Commute	Commute	Commute	Commute	Commute	Family time	Study time
9am	Work	Classes	Work	Classes	Work	Family time	Study time
10am	Work	Classes	Work	Classes	Work	Family time	Study time
11am	Work	Classes	Work	Classes	Work	Family time	Free time
12pm	Work	Classes	Work	Classes	Work	Grocery shopping	Free time
1pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
2pm	Work	Study time	Work	Study time	Work	Housework	Family time
3pm	Work	Study time	Work	Study time	Work	Housework	Family time
4pm	Work	Study time	Work	Study time	Work	Housework	Family time

5pm	Commute	Commute	Commute	Commute	Commute	Family time	Family time
6pm	Family time	Family time	Family time	Family time	Family time	Family time	Family time
7pm	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
8pm	Study time	Study time	Study time	Study time	Study time	Free time	Study time
9pm	Study time	Study time	Study time	Study time	Study time	Free time	Study time
10pm	Free time	Free time	Free time	Free time	Free time	Free time	Free time
11pm	Free time	Free time	Free time	Free time	Free time	Free time	Free time

Prioritising tasks

At times, you will find yourself facing a long list of responsibilities, which can become overwhelming. One way of stopping yourself feeling overwhelmed is by prioritising your tasks. A well-known matrix for prioritising tasks is called the ‘Eisenhower Matrix,’ which suggests that you organise your tasks into four categories: Urgent, Not Urgent, Delegate, and Delete.

Important	Urgent (do these tasks now) - Download assessment brief - Find deadline for assessment	Not urgent (do these tasks another day) - Develop IT skills – MS Word - Book appointment with AST to understand feedback
	Delegate (ask someone for help with these tasks) Grocery shopping	Delete (these tasks are not necessary right now) Browse locations for holiday next year

Pomodoro method

For many students, it can seem very difficult to find quality time to focus on assessments. If you find yourself struggling to put aside entire days or even consecutive hours to work on your assessments, you may want to try

the Pomodoro Method. This time management technique can help you gain some focused time – even if you only have 30 minutes to work with. Follow this process for the Pomodoro Method:

- Working in blocks of 30 minutes, identify one specific task you would like to complete in the first 30 minutes. This can be a very small part of your assessment. For example, you may want to find three relevant textbooks in the Library.
- Open the timer app on your phone. Start a timer for 25 minutes and put your phone out of hand's reach.
- Use the 25 minutes to work on the task you have set yourself. Because it is only 25 minutes, you will find that the time goes very quickly.
- When the timer chimes, stop it and set a new timer for a 5-minute break (if you intend to continue working).
- After your break, repeat the process with a new task and 25-minute timer.

This method is very effective for helping you to concentrate for short bursts of time. It will also help you feel that you are making progress, as you can complete a number of small tasks in a relatively short time.

Where can I get help with time management?

If you need help accessing understanding how you can better manage your time, get in touch with the Academic Skills Team (AcademicSkills@arden.ac.uk) or book a one-to-one appointment with an Academic Skills Tutor via the Learning Success Hub website (<https://learningsuccess.arden.ac.uk/>).

Need help with this topic?

Click or scan this code to book an Academic Skills Tutor appointment.

