

GENERAL STUDY SKILLS

Introduction

What do we mean by 'Study Skills'?

Skills required to learn and achieve.

The essential elements of
your chosen profession

A degree or
diploma

We have covered a number of skills including:

writing;

arithmetic/algebraic skills;

experimental/measurement skills

problem solving and examination skills

This session covers the more 'intangible' and personal aspects of study with which we must all come to terms if we are **really serious** about learning / achieving

The words in bold above are important!

**IF YOU ARE NOT REALLY COMMITTED
TO LEARNING AND ACHIEVING YOU
WILL NOT DO EITHER VERY WELL!**

NO GAINS WITHOUT PAINS !

* EFFECTIVE LEARNING :- when
how
where
what

* LECTURES :- benefits
note-taking
listening
responding
remembering

* TUTORIAL WORK :- benefits
planning for
getting help

* REAL LEARNING :-
understanding as opposed to knowing
real insight as opposed to following the recipe
lateral as opposed to narrow

Reminder: Study Skills notes from the Library

Effective Learning

We're talking here now about the work needed to come to grips with new concepts, material, ideas and techniques.

ie the discipline of studying, reading, finding out, practicing, doing tutorial examples, writing up labs and assignments, revising for exams etc.

What is your approach?

Does it fit any of the following?

The next most urgent task approach.

**The last minute rush approach?
(Otherwise known as the panic approach)**

**The 'wait till my mate's done it' approach.
(Otherwise known as the 'corporate effort' approach)**

**The 'when the mountain of work is immense I'll do it'
approach?**

The casual, 'let them think I'm cool' approach?

All of the above are examples of an undisciplined unplanned approach which only the very clever can get away with !

A thought out, planned approach is likely to be much more successful

Some pointers to planning: -

Make up for yourself a weekly plan.

For the most part keep to the plan, but keep it flexible too!

Build in periods of leisure, relaxation
(you won't feel guilty about it then!)

Keep a termly or sessional diary in which you plan longer tasks and note deadlines for assignments, coursework, labs etc.

Make sure your friends know about your plan.
Endeavour to synchronise leisure slots!

Plan to suit **yourself**.

Plan to fit in with your natural biorhythms .

Weekly schedule

Time slot	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
0900-1000							
1000-1100							
1100-1200							
1200-1300							
1300-1400							
1400-1500							
1500-1600							
1600-1700							
1700-1800							
1800-1900							
1900-2000							
2000-2100							
2100-2200							
2200-2300							
2300-2400							
2400-0100							
0100-0200							
0200-0300							

Helps and Hindrances to Effective Learning

WRITE DOWN TWO THINGS WHICH YOU FIND :-

(a) Effectively prevents you from getting down to real work and study.

(b) Are virtually essential for you to get down to real work and study.

IN GENERAL THERE ARE NO 'TRICKS' or 'FORMULAE' WHICH MAKE LEARNING / ACHIEVING EASY

However, it is possible to become AWARE OF and do something about the things which help/hinder learning

Best performance is often because of: -

- * a healthy positive self image
- * belief in yourself
- * praise/reward following success
- * a balanced disciplined approach

Learning Experiences

Write down your best and worst learning experience.

Making the Most of Lectures

Learning is usually a partnership ! The lecturer should present clearly and logically, and point the way to further

What is the purpose of lectures ?

Introduction & presentation

Explanation

Illustration (examples)

Justification (why)

Inspiration !

Definition : whereby the lecturer's notes become your notes without going through the heads of either!

Active listening:-Listen for key points

Jot down ideas of your own;

Jot down questions ;

Attempt to answer any questions posed:
(at least mentally)

Ask questions of the lecturer

Note-taking: Legible, fast writing is needed.

Use your own 'short-hand';

Write your own comments and notes in your own words;

BE SELECTIVE - Don't just copy down what's on OHP's or the white board;

Especially try to LINK your notes with brief explanations;

Re-read your notes. Fill in gaps, amend or re-write as soon as possible after the lecture (when recall is still fresh).

Write down one thing you want from a lecture:

Tutorials & Tutorial Examples

Neglect of these will cost you !

Tutorials give you the chance to 'talk back' !

Knowing HOW to do something is NOT
the same as actually being able to do it.

Tutorials and doing examples give you the chance to make mistakes 'safely'.

That's not necessarily
the same as avoiding embarrassment!

Most of us don't like being embarrassed, but....

THOSE WHO MAKE NO MISTAKES MAKE NOTHING

Use tutorials and tutorial examples to make your mistakes and never mind the embarrassment. It's better to make your mistakes in tutorials than in EXAMS, and it's certainly better to make them now than when you enter employment !

Most of us learn more from our
mistakes than our successes.

PLAN YOUR TUTORIAL WORK

IF YOU GET STUCK, GET HELP.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU NOT EMBARRASS YOU

Real Learning

Ultimately you and only you are responsible for your own learning and achievement.

Your lecturers (at best !) will try to encourage and interest you in their subject

However, there are bound to some subjects you 'take to' and others you will find distinctly 'dry'.

Avoid the temptation to concentrate only on the subjects you enjoy. A balance is required, and you may change your mind as you acquire expertise!

Your learning and achievement on this course will be deeply influenced by your attitude:

Real in-depth understanding comes through a combination of :-

enthusiasm

a desire to acquire mastery

a desire to improve yourself and your skills

experience

New ideas and solutions to engineering problems stem from **lateral** thinking. Try and find time to read broadly.

EFFECTIVELY PREVENTING STUDY

Other people (children, friends, visitors etc.)

████████████████████

Physical or emotional tiredness

████████████████████

Loud or noisy environment

████████████

Good TV programmes

████████████

Domestic or money worries

████████████

Hunger or thirst

████████████

Boredom or depression

██████████

Lack of interest etc

██████████

Illness

██████████

Good weather

██████████

Hobby or sport involvement

██████████

The bright lights beckoning

██████████

Cold room

██████████

Beer / hangover

██████████

Dull room

Having a good view to look at

Part time job

Away from own room or home

Help not available

Long difficult assignments

'Pressure'

Wife in bad mood

VIRTUALLY ESSENTIAL FOR STUDY

Music



Peace and quietness



Working with others



Work due in



Enjoyment / interest in the work



Being fresh, alert & relaxed



Being on on my own



Ready availability of information



Desire to succeed



Being warm and comfortable



Need for a qualification

Bright work environment

Fear of failure

Nothing better to do

Planning

A challenge/ mastery

Food, snacks, coffee etc

Understanding the task

Chores done

Bad weather

Some background noise

Exercise/sport

No distractions

Guilt

WANTED FROM A LECTURE

CLEAR LOGICAL DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION

████████████████████

UNDERSTANDABLE

████████

INTERESTING / ANIMATED

████████

HANDOUT SUMMARY

██████

THOROUGH AND NOT TOO FAST

████

BEING TALKED 'WITH' OR 'TO' RATHER THAN 'AT'

████

READABLE NOTES (on OHP and board)

USE OF PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATIONS

INDICATION OF WHAT MUST/SHOULD/COULD
BE KNOWN AND UNDERSTOOD

BROAD APPROACH - to maintain interest

SENSE OF HUMOUR

ONLY ONE LECTURER AT A TIME

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

<p>GOOD</p> <p>Led to Enhanced self-image Achievement Fun Discovery</p>	<p>BAD</p> <p>Led to Frustration Non-achievement Discouragement Poor communication</p>
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