Introduction

Time is one of the most important resources you have. You are in control of your own learning and pace and will need to understand how to manage your time well to make enough room for your online modules and your other responsibilities.

Why do students studying online need time management?

It is easy not to take online learning seriously.

- With face-to-face classroom learning you have a specific place you have to be at a specific time.
- However, with online learning it is essential that you set aside time on your own to study and go through the lessons.
- This requires that you are disciplined and understand how to use your time throughout the day.

The basic concepts of time management are easy to understand but difficult to put into practice consistently.

- You have to be consistent in your use of time.
- Persistence will force you to use your time as you had planned rather than going back to old habits.
- You need to have a strong commitment to learn time management principles. If you are willing to practice it continually it will become second-nature to you.
- Use your success and completion of your online learning to motivate you forward because accomplishments in learning can be a very strong motivator.

Time management strategies for online learning that will help you improve your productivity

- **Plan:** To stay on top of your deadlines you should begin with a good planner or study schedule and add all the due dates for each module. Add notes in your schedule to begin work on main assignments a few weeks before the due date; scheduling study time into your schedule each week will help to ensure that the work gets done on a regular basis.
- **Track and Prioritise**: Notice how you spent your time on a given day. Taking note is tracking your activities which can do wonders for assisting you understand and prioritise your schedule each day. After assessing your schedule over the course of the week, it may become apparent that you have more time for you studies than you used to think. Or you may find that you have to re-prioritise and give up other functions like being on social media all the time in order to allow for adequate study time.
- **Designate a home-study space:** Organise your workspace in order to help you establish a routine to follow each day, when logging in to your virtual classroom, from home. Set aside a particular space at home that serves as your study room. This physical space will help you mentally check into your virtual classroom more fully than simply logging in from anywhere in the house. You want to avoid checking in from the couch for example, in case you fall prey to a Netflix or ShowMax-watching binge.
- **Establish a routine:** Establish a specific routine will help you get into the study mode. The goal is to train your mind into associating a certain location and routine

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with study time. These associations will assist to maximise the amount you are able to learn and achieve during your study time.

- **Check in daily:** Check in with your classmates and lecturer as often as possible, via email and chatrooms in order to stay connected, ask questions, and share your thoughts.

What to avoid during online learning

- **Distractions:** At home, you may be distracted by family members, household tasks or television. You also may find it hard to concentrate because of background noise. As an online learner you should set up work spaces that will encourage focus and diminish distractions.
- **Multitasking:** You may toggle between various websites – some of which may not be related to the task at hand – while listening to streaming music and thinking about clever status update is not able to appropriately focus on studies. You should focus on successfully and effectively completing a single task at a time to maximise productivity while learning online.

Summary

Students sometimes misconstrue that online classes require less time and effort than traditional courses. As an online student you will have to schedule time each day to read assignments, complete quizzes and engage in class discussions and projects. Group activities may also add to the time commitment in some modules. You need to manage your time in order to reach your goals, to study enough and not fall behind on your tasks. Time management will help you to avoid stress while juggling everything. If you are diligent to learn this skill will help you reap the benefits in your online learning by making you more efficient and less stressed.

Reference list

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