

Time Management

Getting Organised

- Keep books, notes and resources in a safe and tidy place. If your notes are not in order, take some time to organise them into a logical order which will help when it comes to completing assignments or revising for exams.
- Keep your files tidy, both the paper variety and those stored online.
- Use mind maps for note-taking in lectures and seminars. These will take less time to write and will be easier to understand once you revisit them (rather than writing what your tutors say word for word). Mind maps can also be used for planning your assignment.
- Bookmark important sites or those you know you will need to refer to in assignments. Create a 'favourites' folder for each new assignment. This will make compiling your reference list so much easier.

Prioritising Your Tasks

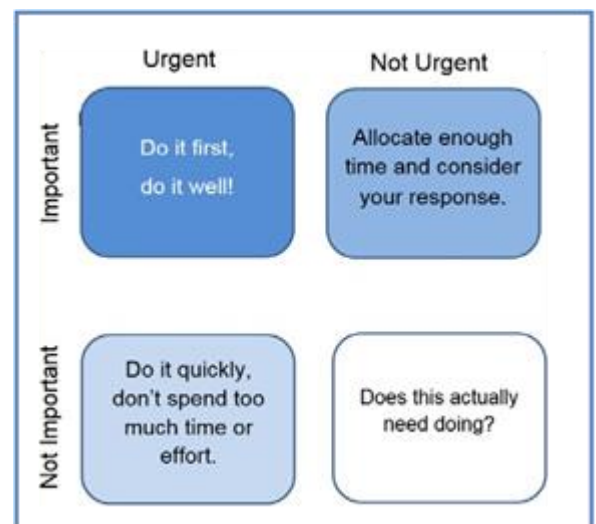
Using the Priority Graph Template, think of tasks you need to complete over the next couple of weeks. In which box would you place them on the priority graph? The diagram below gives an idea as to where they may best fit.

Not all tasks need to be completed quickly or with fine detail. The key to prioritising your tasks is to work out what needs completing when and how much time/effort will be needed to complete the task adequately.

Tasks that fall within the Urgent and Important box should always be completed first.

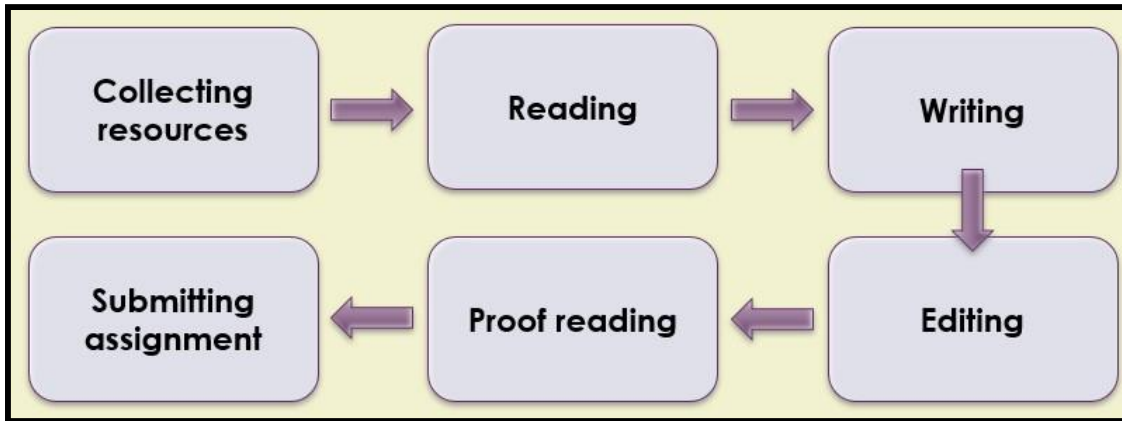
We can fool ourselves into thinking we are completing tasks that need doing, when they may simply be easy gains that we can tick off quickly. This can be a form of procrastination, as the most difficult tasks that may take longer would be better dealt with first.

(Priority Graph also known as the Eisenhower Matrix)



Large tasks can be daunting. By breaking them into smaller, more manageable chunks, you can organise your studies, understand what needs completing and by when.

Task: Completing an assignment:



The tasks above could be broken down further into even smaller chunks.

Once all tasks have been listed, you can organise and prioritise them as 'now', 'soon' or 'later' and allocate dates for each section to be completed by.

Always work backwards from a deadline date when allocating time for each task and compile your plan in a logical order.

It is easier to review your progress if you have a list of tasks to complete. This allows you to allocate more time to a task if needed.

Being able to tick tasks off your list provides you with a sense of success after each step is completed and helps keep you motivated.

Top Tips

- ✓ Think about when you prefer to work. Are you a morning person or a night owl?
- ✓ Be prepared. What resources will you need?
- ✓ Make a plan. This could be; Daily, Weekly, Semesterly, or Yearly.
- ✓ Colour code your plan. E.g., red = university, green = work, blue = social.
- ✓ Use your plan! Make it visible and flexible to adapt.
- ✓ Take regular breaks. No-one can work non-stop!
- ✓ Avoid taking on too many commitments, learn to politely say 'no'.
- ✓ Create 'to-do' lists each day. Regularly assess what still needs doing and by when.
- ✓ Set yourself an achievable goal for each study session.
- ✓ Note down any problems or questions that arise as you study and address them afterwards.
- ✓ Have a long-term goal. Seeing the bigger picture can keep you focused on smaller tasks.

Apart from making a study plan, there are other things you can consider which will help you prioritise your time better.