Good time management is essential to success at university. Study involves lots of due dates and competing deadlines, and unless you plan ahead, you’ll find it difficult to meet them. Planning your time allows you to spread your work over a Semester, avoid a ‘traffic jam’ of work, and cope with study stress. Work out what needs to be done and when. Work out how to use your available time as efficiently as possible.

Plan ahead and prioritise

The first step to good time management is to plan ahead—weeks, months and entire semesters. Develop short and long term time management plans to organise your study as effectively as possible. Planning ahead saves time, worry and energy.

The next step is to prioritise your tasks - decide which tasks are most important and should be completed first.

Tips to make time management easier

- **Don’t put off small tasks.** Completing them straight away encourages you to begin tackling larger tasks.
- **Try ‘chunking’ a long/ difficult task into sections.** This allows you to approach a large task as a series of manageable parts.
- **Don’t try to write a whole assignment in one sitting.** Write it section by section.
- **If you have writer’s block, try writing something—anything—down.** You will most likely change whatever you write later, but making a start is important.

- **Work out your optimum study conditions.** Identifying when, and under what circumstances, you work best will make you a more efficient and effective student.
  - Do you prefer to work early in the morning or late at night?
  - Do you prefer working on one assignment exclusively, or several at the same time?
  - Do you need complete silence to concentrate, or do you find a background buzz more conducive to effective study?
Be honest with yourself - don't plan to wake early and study at 5 am if you're not a morning person, and don't plan to study after dinner if you always fall asleep by 8.30 pm.

- **Remember that it’s your study** and the **time you spend on it is up to you**. If you find yourself losing direction, sit back and think of why you are doing your degree; remembering your goals can put things into perspective.

See next: **Long and short term planning**