



Study Strategies

YEAR 12 AND BEYOND

Realising your study potential is about studying smarter. In this workbook, you will learn and practice strategies to:

- **modify your study habits**
- **monitor your progress**
- **take control of your own learning.**



Taking Control of your Study

Study strategies: Year 12 and beyond

MY STUDY PROFILE

Get yourself thinking about your study strengths and preferences with this quiz.

No.	Question	Answer
1	I think I can learn most things if I try.	Yes/No
2	I'm honest with myself about how well I'm doing.	Yes/No
3	When I sit down to study I usually have a plan of what I want to achieve.	Yes/No
4	I usually know when my assignments/ tasks are due.	Yes/No
5	I can usually manage stress and keep myself calm.	Yes/No
6	I can bounce back from setbacks.	Yes/No
7	I like to listen to music when I study.	Yes/No
8	I prefer to do most of my study: a) late at night b) early in the morning before school c) any time that doesn't interfere with sport/music/dance/etc.	_____
9	I learn most when I study a) alone b) with classmates c) with a tutor/ in class.	_____
10	I remember things best by a) writing notes and/or keeping printed information b) saying them aloud or repeating words and key points in my head c) doing and practising the activity or imagining doing it.	_____
11	The place where I most like to study is a) library/student common room b) outside c) my room at home d) kitchen/dining table	_____
12	Two study strategies that work for me are: a) _____ b) _____	

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BEING AN INDEPENDENT LEARNER

Maybe you've never thought about study before – it's just something you have to do, right?

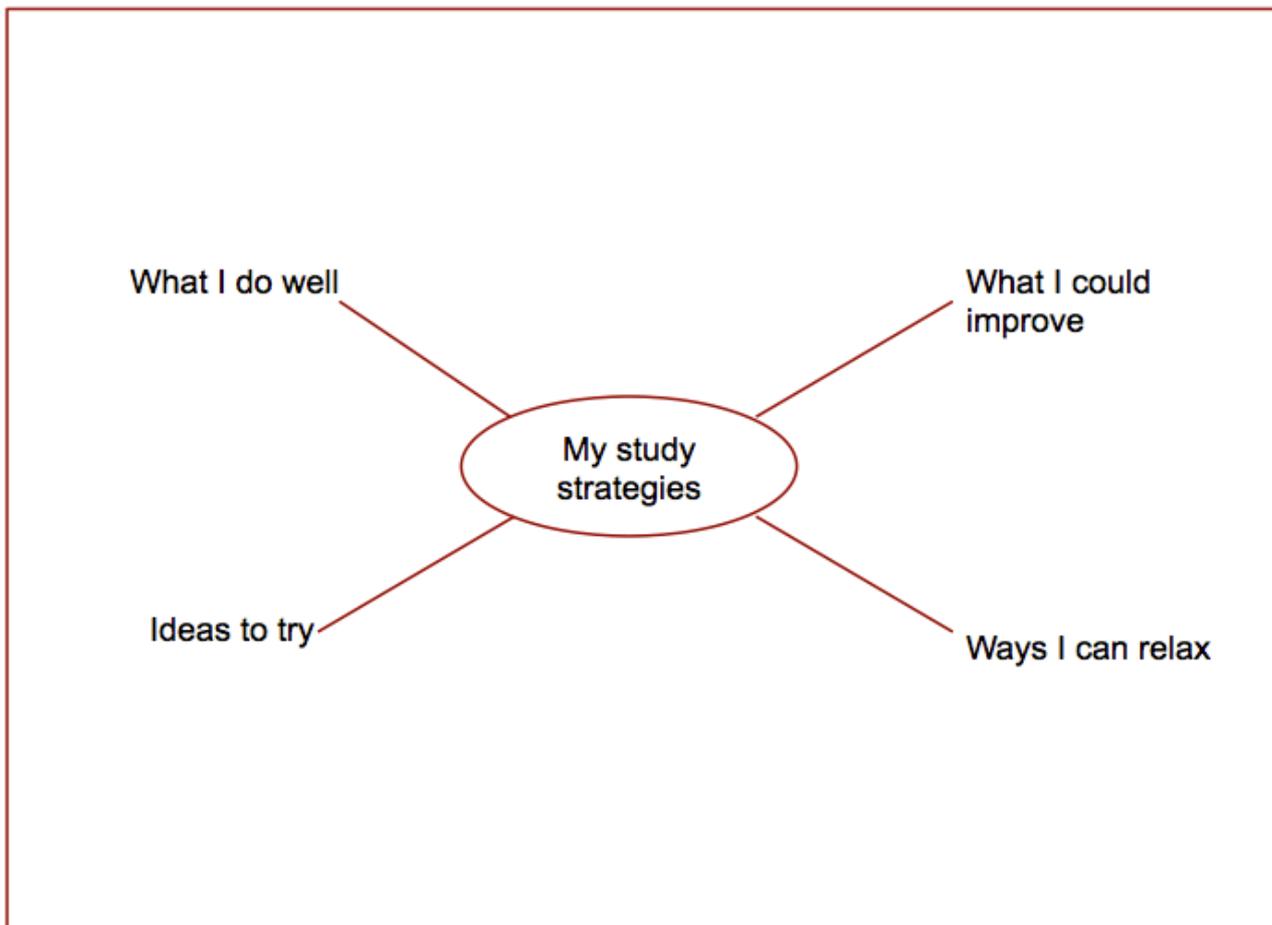
As you move into your final years at high school, and later go to university, you'll take a much larger role in managing your own learning. What does this mean? It will be up to you to notice how your learning is going, and try different strategies to make yourself a more effective learner.

The strategies presented in this workbook might already be familiar to you, or they might be new to you. Whatever the case, take time reflect on the study strategies you're currently using, and to get ideas for some new ones.

This workbook includes activities to help you reflect, plus tips and strategies for more effective study. You'll also find some templates you can copy and use in your studies.

Following the workshop, you can use the space below as a way of summarising what ideas and strategies you found useful. In later months you can use this page to review your study strategies and to check how you are going.

As you read through this workbook, fill out this diagram with ideas about applying these strategies to your own study:



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“ Learning is not a spectator sport.”*

*Chickering & Ehrmann (1996)

TOPIC 1. ACTIVE LEARNING

Experience shows that people learn much more effectively when using active learning strategies. Think about your own learning habits. Under what conditions do you find learning stimulating and enjoyable? Like most students, you might reply that this occurs when you are engaged with the topic and are doing something active with it. But how do we learn actively even when listening and reading?

Tips for active learning

- Think about what you are learning – how does it relate to what you have learnt before?
- Learn collaboratively – discuss the material with others
- Participate in classes – ask questions, join in discussions, take notes
- Transform information – take notes, summarise, map arguments, discuss, teach someone else



Here are some active learning activities. Which ones could you use in your study?

- Summarise a chapter after reading
- Write your own exam questions.
- Teach what you have learnt to a friend or family member.
- Diagram or draw your ideas or the ideas from a text.
- Make a list of questions before you start reading.
- Discuss your ideas with others.
- Study in a group and write quizzes for each other.
- Other _____

The *Scan, Skim, Slurp* and *Summarise* method for active reading

- **Scan:** read title, table of contents, introduction and conclusion. Look at maps or charts.
- **Skim:** read headings, and/or first sentences in each paragraph
- **Slurp:** read the whole text, taking notes or drawing a mind map as you read.
- **Summarise:** what were the main points? If this were in an exam, what would the questions be?

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MIND MAPS

Directions:

Start from the central idea.
Draw spokes or lines to show the secondary ideas, then draw lines from the secondary ideas to show the third level sub-ideas.

Use colours, different thickness of lines, and different shapes to differentiate your ideas.

Strategies for maximising your memory

- Chunking or grouping information into categories
- Repeating the intake of information – rereading
- Using the scan, skim, slurp and summarise technique in reading
- Using mnemonics
- Diagram or draw information
- When listening, take notes and discuss the ideas afterwards
- Relate what you are learning to what you already know, or to your own life and environment

Reflection: what strategies could I use?

Think of your own study practice. What techniques could you use to actively engage with your study topics – and remember them better?

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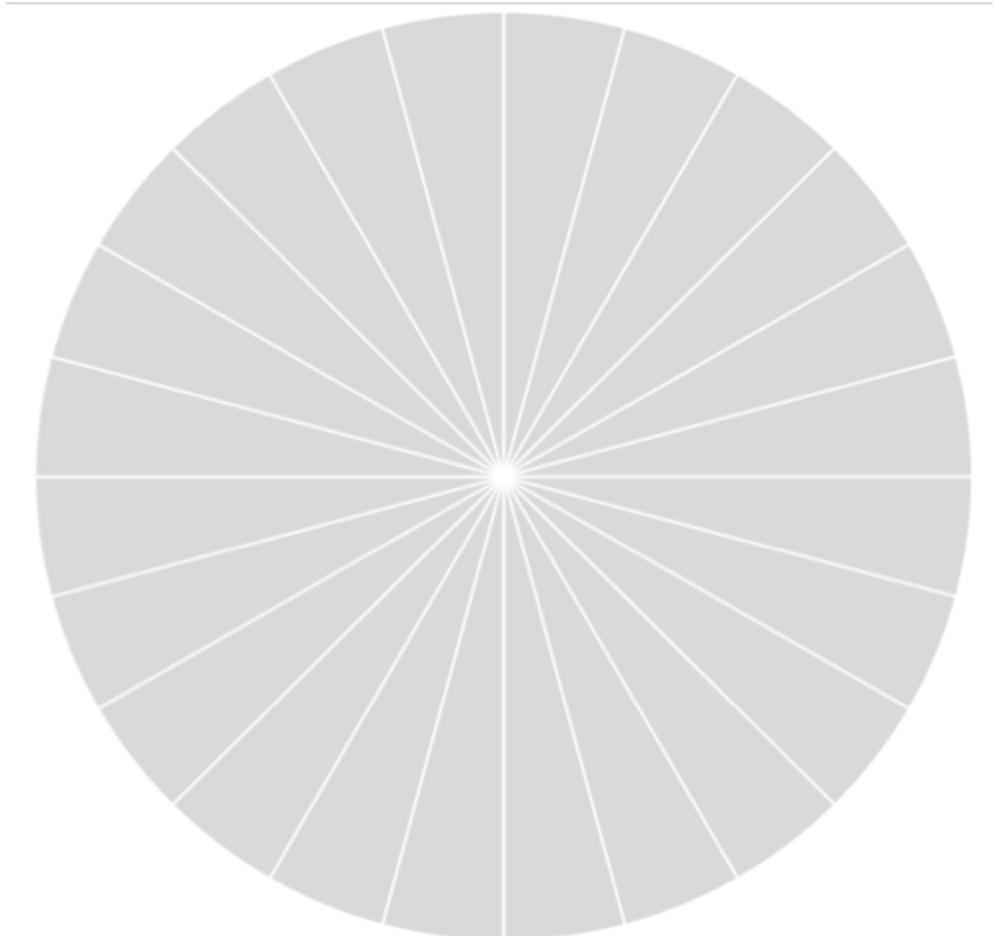
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TOPIC 2. MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TIME



The circle below is divided into 24 sections- one for each hour of the day. How much time do you spend on each activity?

- | Activity |
|---------------------------------|
| • sleeping |
| • eating |
| • transport |
| • school |
| • exercise/
training |
| • social media/
infotainment |
| • homework |
| • part time job |
| • social |
| • ??? |



Adapted from: Cottrell, S. (2013). *The Study Skills Handbook*, (4th edn). UK: Palgrave.

REFLECTION

Were you surprised at any of these numbers? If you used your time differently, could you be more productive?

Making the most of your time

- Pick your times - schedule bigger / harder tasks for when you are most alert or energised.
- Schedule regular short study blocks (no more than 50 mins) to work on your task.
- Give yourself breaks – PLAY. Everyone needs some downtime to recharge.
- End your day with a To-do list. This saves time and helps you start your day with a focus.
- Be time-aware: it encourages you to be more efficient.

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Here are some reasons that people procrastinate. Do any of these apply to you?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Perfectionism | <input type="checkbox"/> Not motivated / not interested |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Afraid of failing / lack of self confidence | <input type="checkbox"/> Find it easier to work under pressure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not knowing where to start | <input type="checkbox"/> Laziness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling overwhelmed / panicked | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Too busy (part time job, training) | |

Tips for avoiding procrastination

- The best way to get started is to begin (even if it's not perfect).
- Get started as soon as you are given a task.
- Break the task down into bite-sized activities and smaller achievable tasks.
- Schedule the most difficult tasks first.
- Avoid multi-tasking: switch off social media so you're not distracted.
- Remember: *someday* is not a day of the week!
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



Using the template, write down a SMART goal for one study task you have.

Feature	My SMART activity
Specific What? Give details of what you plan to do	
Measurable How much? Include details of length, quantity, etc.	
Achievable Is it possible? Is the goal within reach? Is it something you can possibly achieve?	
Relevant Is it useful? Will the activity help you achieve your goal?	
Time based How long? Have you set a deadline?	

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RELAXATION SKILLS (TIPS AND INFORMATION)

BY CAMPUS WELLBEING:

We all know what it's like to be stressed. We feel edgy, irritable, under pressure. Things that we would normally handle may become too much and we might even start to experience symptoms such as headache, sleep disturbance and poor concentration.

Whatever the causes of stress- family or relationship problems, balancing work and study, managing time, to name just a few- there are some simple techniques we can use to manage stress in our lives. Listed below are some of these techniques. Try them for yourself, see which ones are helpful. Add any of your own proven techniques to the list;

- Keep healthy sleeping and eating patterns as regularly as possible to build up your physical and mental strength. Get at least 7 hours sleep at night, try to go to bed and wake up at the same time most days.
- Incorporate some regular physical activity and or exercise to combat stress and get the endorphins working for you. Find what works for you: walking with an iPod, jogging, gym visits, playing a sport, swimming, Yoga, hiking.
- Give yourself 'time out' at least once each day, especially on those days when you are feeling stressed.
- Turn off your phone and avoid other distractions till you feel more in control.
- When you feel overwhelmed, make lists and prioritise tasks. Give yourself a realistic timeline to get things done. Not everything has to be done today.
- Give yourself a treat or mental pat on the back every time you earn it; like hand in an assignment, complete a task.
- Be aware of your thinking style. Be conscious of the messages you give yourself daily and the effect they have on your wellbeing. Attempt to replace the unhealthy messages with helpful ones.
- Practice "The Relaxation Response" daily: Sit quietly in a comfortable position. Close your eyes. Allow your muscles to relax deeply, beginning at your feet and working up to your

face. Keep them relaxed. Breathe naturally through your nose. Say the word 'one' silently to yourself as you breathe in and out, 'one' in..., 'one' out... do for at least 5- ten minutes.

- When you relax, you can also learn to create in your mind your own special place of relaxation perhaps a beach with waves gently lapping on the shore, perhaps a peaceful garden or a mountain retreat- wherever it might be that your mind can transport you to so you can relax. Affirmations that work for you can be uplifting. Write them and keep them in a visual place like your diary or on your wall where you study.
- Make reasonable time to socialise and to keep up healthy relationships. Stress can be isolating, so make time for those who help you to feel good and stay connected to yourself.
- Don't forget that simple things can help too, like listening to some relaxing music, taking a warm bath at the end of a long day or reading a good book (non-study-related) for a while.

FURTHER READING:

Beyondblue www.beyondblue.org.au
Fact Sheet 6: Reducing Stress.

Black Dog Institute
www.blackdoginstitute.org.au
Fact Sheets: Quick relaxation techniques; Ten hints to avoid harmful stress.

NSW Mental Health Association
www.mentalhealth.asn.au
Fact Sheet: Recognising and Managing Stress.

University of Melbourne Counselling Service
www.services.unimelb.edu.au
Tip Sheet: Managing Stress.

University of Adelaide Counselling Centre
www.adelaide.edu.au
Developing a Lifestyle That Reduces Stress and Worry.

University of New England Counselling Service
www.une.edu.au
Fact Sheet: Managing Life Stresses.

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HOW TO OVERCOME EXAM STRESS

BY CAMPUS WELLBEING

Exam time can be a really stressful time of year. But there are a few things you can do, that will help you manage your stress and do your best in the exams.

BEFORE THE EXAM

MAKE A PLAN

"It's important to get yourself organised," says Ben Wilkes of the University's Counselling Service. "Sit down and make a list of the things you have to do to get ready for your exams." Once you have your list, decide what needs to be done first. Prioritising your work makes it much easier to manage, but be realistic. "Don't overload yourself from day one, or you'll always be fighting to catch up. Make a plan you know you can achieve. You'll feel great when you meet your own goals."

STUDY WHEN YOU PERFORM BEST

"Some people perform best in the morning and others are more effective at night. Think about when you get the most out of your studies and plan your time around it" says Ben. "And try to avoid too many distractions. Turn your phone off, log out of Facebook and concentrate on revising. It will pay off in the long run."

SET YOURSELF GOALS AND REWARDS

You are working hard: you deserve a treat! Work on one thing at a time and finish it before you move on to the next task. "Before you start anything, decide on a reward for completing it. Maybe it's a snack, or a DVD, or twenty minutes on Facebook. When you finish, enjoy your reward, decide what you will do for your next treat and then get back to your studies."

LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

Eat regularly and try to have a balanced diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables. Avoid burning out by taking regular breaks every couple of hours or so and doing something different. Catch up with friends and family, walk the dog, or just relax for half an hour, but try to keep yourself active by scheduling in some exercise every day. A walk around the block does wonders for your concentration.

REST

It's just as important as revision so make sure you get plenty of sleep. "Try to go to bed at the same time every night and get into a routine," says Ben. "You could also cut down on caffeine, alcohol and other drugs to help you get a proper night's sleep."

BE PREPARED

If you aren't sure about something, ask someone. Talk to your friends, lecturers and tutors. Make sure you know what you should be revising and

what to expect when you go into the exam. The night before, pack up everything you need for the following day, and double-check the start time, date and venue. Once you are ready, get a good night's rest.

ON THE DAY ARRIVE EARLY, BUT NOT TOO EARLY

Hanging around before an exam will only build the pressure. Stay calm and focused, and keep your distance from others who are stressing out. And don't forget to bring some water with you to take into the exam with you.

STRESS IS NORMAL

"You are bound to feel a little overwhelmed during an exam - it is usually an indicator of your motivation to do well!" says Ben. "Acknowledge that it's part of the process and you will be fine." Take a couple of long deep breaths at the start of the exam and read the paper thoroughly before you start your answers. Make sure you understand what you have to do before you begin.

REMEMBER YOU HAVE PLENTY OF TIME

If you can't concentrate or you find your mind wandering, take a couple of minutes to compose yourself. Take a couple of deep breaths, have a drink of water and find your focus again before carrying on. "A good way of regaining composure is to spend some time controlling your muscles. Clench your fist and then concentrate on releasing your tension through your hand. Remind yourself how you can control small things and the rest will come naturally."

STAY POSITIVE

The hardest things to overcome are our own negative thoughts, especially around exam time. It's easy for them to creep into our heads, especially when we are under pressure. Before you know it they're the only voices we can hear in our heads. We often exaggerate the bad things, and these can quickly turn into irrational fears: "It's too hard", "I'm going to mess it up", "I'm a failure". Sound familiar? Remember you got where you are because you worked hard and learned well. Exams are just a chance to show how good you are. If you find your inner gremlin whispering doubts in your ear, give yourself calm, rational reassurances: "I've done plenty of tests before", "I'll do my best", "I'm just anxious: it will pass". Anticipation is usually worse than the event. You'll be fine - just keep calm and do your best. Good luck!

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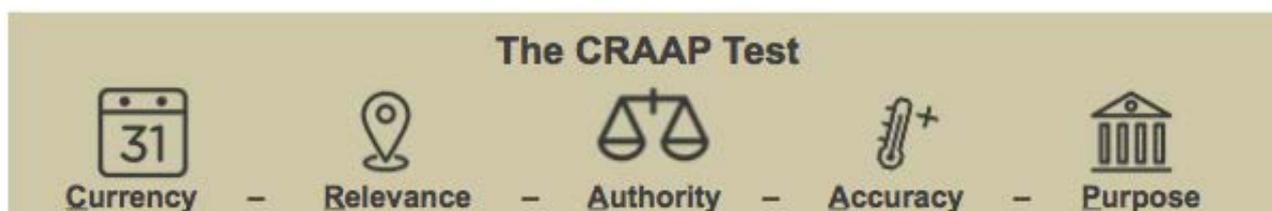
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SHOULD I USE IT?

BY MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Information found on the Internet can come from any source and may not necessarily be assessed or reviewed before it is published. Therefore, you should evaluate any data found for authority and validity before you use it.

Use the CRAAP test¹ to evaluate information that you find on the Internet:



Currency

- Are there dates on the page to indicate when the page was written and last updated?
- Are there any other indications that the material is kept current?
- Is past material archived and easy to access?

Relevance

- Does it contain useful information?
- Is the information suitable for your topic?
- Is adequate detail given?
- How different is the web coverage from coverage in other sources

Authority

- Does a statement of ownership appear on the document?
- Does the site provide contact details - at least a name and email address?
- Is it the official site of a company or organisation? Is there a copyright statement for the owner?
- What type of organisation does the URL domain name indicate for the site?
- What country does the site come from?

Accuracy

- Can you verify the factual information provided?
- Are sources given?
- Are links to other sources given to verify its claims?

Purpose

- What is the motivation for publishing the information?
- Is bias evident? Is it politically motivated?
- Is advertising clearly differentiated from information content?

¹ The CRAAP test was originally developed by Meriam Library, California State University (2010).
https://www.csuchico.edu/lins/handouts/eval_websites.pdf

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TOPIC 3: SETTING UP YOUR HABITS AND SPACES FOR STUDY



Write down two different places where you study:

1. _____ 2. _____

Draw ONE of them in the box below:

My study zone check		My study zone action plan	
<p>In my study zone,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> The only things are those I need for study.<input type="checkbox"/> There's space to set out my books/ notes.<input type="checkbox"/> I have the tools I need close by (calculator, pen, pencil...).<input type="checkbox"/> There's enough light to read comfortably.<input type="checkbox"/> Nobody interrupts me.		<p>Do I need to change study zones? ___ Yes / No</p> <p>What can I do to improve my study zone?</p>	
My comfort preferences		Comfort action plan	
<p>When I study, I prefer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> _____ standing / sitting / lying<input type="checkbox"/> _____ silence / background noise / music<input type="checkbox"/> _____ studying inside / outside<input type="checkbox"/> _____ studying in a public place / alone<input type="checkbox"/> taking my shoes off _____ Yes / No		<p>Am I comfortable when I study? ____ Yes / No</p> <p>Ways to get more comfortable when I study:</p>	

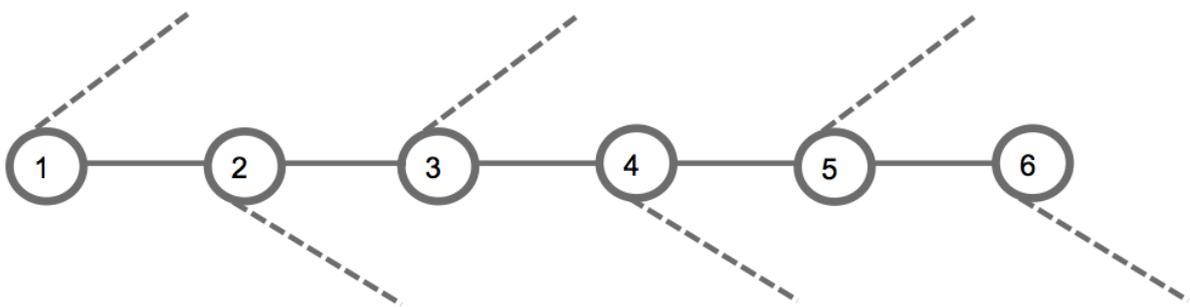
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HABITS THAT HELP ME STUDY (TICK THE ONES THAT APPLY TO YOU)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Studying at the same time daily | <input type="checkbox"/> Turning off my phone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Closing the door | <input type="checkbox"/> Having something in my free hand |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Setting out my gear | <input type="checkbox"/> Clicking my pen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Setting a pomodoro timer | <input type="checkbox"/> Going for a walk after |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having a drink/ food | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having a study playlist | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doing an easy task first | |

My current study routine (a sequence of activities to get me started when I study)



REFLECTION

Is my current study routine effective?

How could I improve it to help me settle into my study?



Macquarie University is a vibrant hub of intellectual thinkers, all working towards a brighter future for our communities and our planet.

A PLACE OF INSPIRATION

Macquarie is uniquely located in the heart of Australia's largest high-tech precinct, a thriving locale which is predicted to double in size in the next 20 years to become the fourth largest CBD in Australia.

Our campus spans 126 hectares, with open green space that gives our community the freedom to think and grow. We are home to fantastic facilities with excellent transport links to the city and suburbs, supported by an on-campus train station.

RENOWNED FOR EXCELLENCE

We are ranked among the top two per cent of universities in the world, and with a 5-star QS rating, we are renowned for producing graduates that are among the most sought after professionals in the world.

A PROUD TRADITION OF DISCOVERY

Our enviable research efforts are brought to life by renowned researchers whose audacious solutions to issues of global significance are benefiting the world we live in.

BUILDING SUCCESSFUL GRADUATES

Our pioneering approach to teaching and learning is built around a connected learning community: our students are considered partners and co-creators in their learning experience.

FIND OUT MORE

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