



Scheduling your time

Assess your workload and commitments

Before diving into planning your time for study, it's important to do a stocktake of:

1. your regular habits when it comes to getting things done (Activity 1); see '[The Power of Habit](#)' [book] by Charles Duhigg.
2. all the components of your life (study time, class time, travel time, sleep time, exercise or sport time, recreation/free time, family time, and work time) (Activity 2).

By identifying the behaviours that interfere with your productivity as well as the activities that make up your daily life, you'll be able to allocate sufficient time to achieve balance and maximise your study time. Find out more by watching '[How to break habits](#)' (video, 3:37) by Charles Duhigg.



Activity 1: Personal study productivity

Personal study is the time you spend outside of class time (i.e. scheduled lectures, tutorials, seminars, practicals, labs, etc.) working on content, activities, homework and assignments for each unit you take. What this actually looks like varies across disciplines. A history student might transform lecture notes by adding annotations, icons and important dates to a geographical map. A business student might transform lecture notes with statistics into a graph or diagram to highlight important features. A nursing student might transform important vocabulary and concepts from lecture notes into flashcards to revise for 5 minutes each day. Before you start planning how to utilise the study time you do have available in your week, let's explore your general inclinations and habits.

Step 1: Think about your typical study day or week (i.e. what do you do, where, for how long, etc.)

Step 2: Complete this productivity habits self-assessment:

Habit	✓ or ✗
I have a proper workplace in which to do my study/uni work	
I keep my work environment neat, clean, and orderly	
I use an organised system to sort and plan my work before starting	
I use management tools such as a daily planner to keep myself on track	
I always work from a 'To Do' list prepared in advance of beginning a task	
Once I begin a task, I work steadily until it is complete	
I handle each particular task only once	
I always put things away after I am finished with them	
I have an organised filing system that enables me to retrieve information quickly when I need it	
I do most important work during my 'prime time'	
I seek help when needed and draw on resources available to ensure I work efficiently	
Others who know me would describe me as efficient, effective and organised	
I work according to my schedule and plans, avoiding rushing around	
I am usually calm and capable of making decisions	
I am good at staying on task towards completion	
I typically feel like the work I have to do is also the work I want to do	

Step 3: Look at the 'X' marks you have made in the table above. How can you change these habits?



Activity 2: Weekly and semester planning

Step 1: Download the Western Sydney University Weekly and Semester Planners via the [Counselling Service](#) webpage.

You could also use an interactive scheduling tool such as the [daily schedule from Study Guides and Strategies](#) or an Office 365 Calendar attached to your student email account.

Step 2: On the weekly planner, mark in your regular, repeated commitments (e.g. class time, exercise/ sport time, work time, travel time, meal time, sleep time, break/relaxation time, etc.). How many hours do you have left per day and per week? Is there enough unallocated time to study for each unit you take?

Hot Tip

The workload for units (typically 10 credit points) is usually 1 hour per credit point:

10 credit points = 10 hours study per week
= 3 hours class time (lecture, tutorial, etc.) per week
= 7 hours personal study (individual, group, etc.) per week

Step 3: On the session planner, mark in:

1. your irregular personal commitments (e.g. friend's wedding, family vacation, socialising, etc.) in the last row of the table
2. your assignment due dates for each unit you are enrolled in.

Are there any direct clashes between your personal commitments and assignment due dates (i.e. same week)? Are there any indirect clashes (i.e. a week or two before)? If there are clashes, what will you do to ensure you can still submit your assignment on time?

Try the [Library Study Smart Assignment Calculator](#) – enter your due dates and it produces a step-by-step guide to help you plan your assignment from start to finish.



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