Self-assess your time

IAD INSTITUTE FOR ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

If your plans are realistic, you are more likely to achieve them, helping you to feel confident and motivated in your abilities and learning.

Knowing what needs to be done, when it needs to be done by and how long it will actually take you will help you make more useful plans.

Record what you actually do

- Try using the record sheet on the next page to find out where your time is going.
- You can also use a spreadsheet or a week planner to note what you did compared to what you planned to do.

Be honest and realistic

Often we over estimate how much can be done.

New and/or difficult topics need extra time to understand them.

It is difficult to concentrate hard for long periods of time. Think about how you can break up and vary what you do.

To be able to work well it is essential you plan time to relax. Plan some time with family and friends. Plan to do something you enjoy, like a sport or hobby. Time off will help you study more effectively.

Good intentions can go astray

In the example below, the plan was to spend the morning reading for an essay over a period of four hours. In reality almost half of the time available was lost to unplanned breaks of different kinds. It is difficult to study intensively for four hours.

	Intention	**Actual** use of Time
Morning (4 hours)	Reading for assignment (240 minutes)	Facebook (30 minutes) Twitter (20 minutes) Coffee and biscuits (30 minutes) Phone call (20 minutes) Chat to flat mates (15 minutes)
Time spent on task	125 minutes studying	*115 minutes lost*

Making changes

- Think about when and where you work best.
- Reduce distractions – be unavailable (in person, on social media, by email, by phone).
- Be specific – set manageable goals and break your studying up into smaller tasks.
- Structure - start on time and use a timer.
- Plan short 5-minute breaks between tasks.
- Look forward to and earn a longer break.

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Period	Day one			Day two		
	Intention (start/finish)	Actual use of time (start/finish)	What to change	Intention (start/finish)	Actual use of time (start/finish)	What to change
Morning						
Afternoon						
Evening						