

Work-Life Balance

With some accessing their studies digitally from home, it might be more difficult to get a good work-life balance so here are some tips we've found to help with working/studying:

- 1. Find a study space.** Whether that's at your desk in your room, in the kitchen or the lounge, find a space where you can study. It might be difficult because everyone is home most of the time and there isn't much space so if you don't have your own room to work in, set rules with other people using the space. Whether that's a schedule when everyone is working so things are quiet or rules about taking phone calls in a different room, find something that works for you so you can concentrate in your space. Maintain communication about the best use of shared spaces.
- 2. Manage and plan your time.** Make yourself a schedule of when you want to work. It's tempting to start and never stop when working from home or to never get started in the first place. So make a schedule that you think will work for you and try to stick to it. If you aren't an early bird, maybe it's not realistic to say you'll start working every morning at 9 instead maybe you'll want to start at 10 or 11 but set yourself an alarm and get started at a set time. If you find you're not sticking with that, maybe ask a family member or flat mate to keep you accountable. Obviously studying isn't as predictable as working with set working hours, but it might be helpful to limit yourself to only doing your uni work on weekdays or finishing before a certain time.
- 3. Plan what you're going to do.** With multiple platforms to keep track of, utilise your calendar and emails. Make to do lists for what you have to do in one day and in one week. And make sure to make them reasonable! No one can watch 17 lectures in one day. So figure out how much you can get done in a day and write a to do list that you can get done in a day to make it achievable and reward yourself after you've crossed things off by taking a break.
- 4. Use your time efficiently.** Once you've made your schedule, it can sometimes feel like you have to do something because it's on the plan but if you're having an off day, are tired or just can't concentrate, it's probably not the best use of your time to sit there and either do your work half-heartedly or just browse the internet. Also don't push the tasks that need the most concentration to a time when you know you generally aren't concentrated whether that's early in the morning, just after lunch or late at night for you.
- 5. Study actively.** It's tempting to put a recorded lecture and just let it run in the background while you're checking your emails or playing a game on your phone. It's easy to get distracted when everything is online but use the online teaching like you would in-person teaching: put away your phone, pay attention and take notes. This way you'll be done quicker because you don't have to keep pausing or rewinding because you missed something.
- 6. Get dressed.** Even if it's from your pyjamas into the comfiest joggers and loungewear you own, get out of the clothes you slept in so you're mentally ready to do work during the day.

7. **Take breaks.** Once you've gotten started, it might be difficult to stop and take breaks. It's important to take them though. No one works well after staring at a screen for hours on end without ever looking away. So open a window and get some fresh air and get up and move around (even if it's just to make a cup of tea or go to the toilet). If you're feeling particularly motivated, you could do [some desk stretches](#) as well.

8. **Set deadlines for yourself.** With lectures being delivered online and recorded, it's tempting to put them off for 'later you' to deal with but that's not always helpful. Depending on where you are, it might not be possible to watch the lectures when they are happening, but you could try setting a goal of watching all lecture of the week by Friday evening so you stay on top of things.

9. **Reach out to people.** Whether it's to socialise or to ask for help, contact people. Studying from home can be an isolating experience so make sure you talk to people on your degree and your friends and stay in contact. If reaching out seems stressful, have a look at the section about 'Reaching Out' for some tips.

10. **Exercise regularly.** Whatever type of exercise you like, try and do that regularly. Without a commute, you might find yourself barely leaving your home and moving about so whether it's a Youtube workout or a cycle around town, find some type of exercise you'll enjoy and can actually get yourself motivated enough to do.

11. **Simulate your commute.** To help make a psychological transition between work-space and home-space when you are working from home, decide on a walking or cycling route you can take at the start and end of your working day. This commute will mark the start and finish of your working day, ensure regular time outside of your home and a space for reflection, will be a short piece of regular exercise.

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