1) Time management
A major part of planning your studies is time management. This can be broken down in different ways. Some or all of these you may find useful.

Before we get on to that lets consider why time management is important. By planning your time well (doing coursework at steadily throughout the year) you will produce your assignments to the best of your abilities getting the best grades you can. In a competitive jobs market this will put you in the best position.

1a) Planning your time to meet deadlines

During your course you will have deadlines for assessed work and examinations. To get the best grades it is advisable to give yourself plenty of time to prepare for this. You are likely to identify the next assignment due as a study priority. Planning will help you start thinking about other assignments too. At the start of the year it is helpful to have a plan of assignment priorities for the rest of the year.

One way to help you with this is thinking about the elements needed for an assignment

Assignment elements

- Clarify what the assignment is asking you to do
- Planning and doing your research
- Organising the information you have found
- Writing drafts
- Finish assignment including complete referencing and proof reading

1b) Breaking tasks down

A large task can seem daunting. By breaking it down it can make it easier to plan. It is useful to avoid vague tasks. For example reading something about a topic is a lot less focused than a task of read the relevant chapter from three recommended textbooks. The more focus a task is the more useful it will be. To monitor your progress a “to do list” is helpful. You can cross off what you have completed so you know you are moving on with the task. You may even find it helpful to have a weekly study plan.
1c) Study at the time of day that works best for you

Some people work better in the mornings others prefer to study into the night. Consider what works best for you and do the tasks that need most concentration then. It is important to remember that you work best when you have time to relax. This is another reason why studying for two days solidly before an assignment deadline is not advisable.

1d) Monitoring what you spend time on

Sometimes you may feel you do not have enough hours in the day to get your studying done. If this is the case you may find it useful to record the activities you do over a few days. You then can reprioritise what you do in a day. You could even try to get a friend or relative to help with some of the domestic tasks for a while.

2) Appropriate study environment

It is important that you find a place to study that works for you. You need to consider the location. You may want a dedicated study space. It needs to be a nice place with good light. Ideally it should have limited distractions. You need to have space to store stationery and other items like books you are reading for your course.

The information in this document is a summary of information in the following books.


LRC support includes

Hub LRC study skills books. They are located on level 4. In addition there are e-books and advice available via our website http://www.don.ac.uk/lrc