

Manage your time for part-time success

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Finding the time (and budget) to study is a great challenge for most people and often means that reaching their full personal and business potential have to take a back seat.



How do you manage your time?

Learning to manage your time effectively is an important life skill and is especially important when you are taking up part-time study. Everyone has various aspects of life to balance: work, family, personal life and studies.

Ineffective time management means that not only do you get less done but can also lead to stress and anxiety, common problems when trying to juggle the demands of a busy life. Improving your time management skills can alleviate many of the triggers for negative stress and can help you to achieve a healthier work/life balance.

Effective time management will enable you to work your way systematically through your studies.

Time management for study is not just about managing the quantity of your study time though – it is also about being aware of your personal limitations, knowing when to work and when to stop. This can be very helpful to ensure that you stay motivated and committed to your study.

What about work/life balance?

Studying does not take place in a vacuum but needs to be organised around your other fixed commitments. It may help to involve your colleagues, family and friends in the planning process to ensure their understanding, cooperation and support. For example, creating a study timetable that you can share with others will help them to feel included and will also serve as a reminder to them that there will be times when you should not be disturbed.

Achieve your goals

Goal setting is the key to successful time management and, when used in conjunction with your personal study timetable, will help to guide you through your studies in a focused way. Goals will give direction to your personal learning and development and will also enable you to track your progress, while boosting your confidence and morale.

Make sure that your goals follow the S.M.A.R.T. principle:

- **Specific:** Make your goals clear and precise: exactly what do you want to accomplish?
- **Measurable:** How are you progressing with your goal and how will you know when the goal is achieved?
- **Attainable:** Your goals need to be realistic and obtainable; you set yourself up for failure if you set unrealistic goals that you cannot achieve.
- **Relevant:** Make sure that your goals are actually relevant – avoid spending time trying to achieve something that you don't need to.
- **Time-scaled:** Set timeframes or deadlines for achieving your goals. Do make allowances for the fact that timescales may well change as you progress: as you become more practised at setting goals your timings will become more realistic.

Need some inspiration?

Julian Ing and Thabo Maketekete both completed part-time honours degrees in Psychology through Wits Plus and achieved sought-after places in Clinical Psychology Master's programmes. [Listen](#) what they have to say about the importance of setting and achieving goals.

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