# Organising yourself, study and assignments



"When I get an assignment, I look at it, put the brief in my bag and forget about it until two weeks before the deadline, then I panic and rush it."

When it comes to assignments and self-directed study, being organised can **take a lot of the stress out**. It will also help improve your grades.

1. When you **first get an assignment**, pop its due date in a planner or calendar.

2. Then look at the word count, and set out a basic plan.

3. First **put the essay into 3 sections**: introduction, conclusion and main body. Each section is worth a percentage of the word count. Typically the introduction is 10%, the conclusion 10%, and the main body, the remaining 80%.

   Here is an **example** of a 1000 word essay:

   a. Introduction 10% = 100 words

   b. Main body 80% = 800 words

   c. Conclusion 10% = 100 words

4. Then **split the main body down further** into the different parts of the discussion. For example:

    a. Introduction 10% = 100 words

    b. Section 1 40% = 400 words

    c. Section 2 40% = 400 words

    d. Conclusion 10% = 100 words

5. You can keep breaking down an assignment until you have covered all the sections you want to.

6. One advantage of doing an essay plan is that it will give you an idea of some of the research you will need to do. For example, looking for research that represents both sides of an argument.

7. With your essay plan done, you can start to think about **planning your time**. Ask yourself how much time you need to research / read the appropriate materials - a week? two weeks?

8. Do you need to factor in time to go to the library? Do you need to ask your lecturer any questions? Do you want to discuss it with some friends?

9. The sooner you can answer these questions, the sooner you can get on with the assignment and get it done, rather than ignore it till it's almost too late.

10. Having a plan will give you the time to seek help should you need it. This will give you **peace of mind** knowing that you're on schedule in getting on with your work as well.

11. **Make a to-do list** of the different things you need to do for that assignment.

12. **Keep track of your references as you find them**. Note them down in the proper format, this will save a lot of time at the end.

13. Try to get your assignments done at least a week before hand in. This will give you the **time to "forget" the assignment** and when you reread it before submitting it, any issues / mistakes will stand out.

14. Never leave submitting an assignment to the last day / minute. **Blackboard and Turn-It-In have a habit of not working on hand-in days**.