Study techniques to help you avoid plagiarism

[Gina Dunn, Students' Union Vice President of Education,]:

Hi, I'm Gina Dunn, Vice President of Education for the Students' Union. We asked Cardiff University student mentors for their tips on time management and meeting deadlines and here's their really useful advice.

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So, when you have a deadline to meet, you should start making a schedule as soon as possible. Work backwards from the deadline to give yourself as much time as possible to deal with any unforeseen delays.

For larger pieces of work, try breaking the task into smaller chunks with individual deadlines. This not only helps the task feel more manageable but enables you to set yourself realistic goals.

You could also add alerts to your calendar to remind you of your key deadlines.

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Once you've set your schedule, keep yourself on track with a weekly plan or 'to do' list. Listing your tasks can help you clear your head and focus on what needs to be done.

You could use a whiteboard, post-it notes or your calendar or diary - whatever works best for you.

Make sure you prioritize your tasks too. Decide which tasks are the highest priority and try to tackle them first.

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When you need to study, make sure your environment is right for you; make yourself comfortable and minimise any distractions.

Try to figure out what times of day you work best and aim to schedule the more challenging tasks at those times.

If you have trouble concentrating, or just can't get started, try the Pomodoro technique: set yourself one task to work on for 25 minutes, without distraction. And then give yourself a 5-minute break. You can even use a timer to keep yourself on track.

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When you’re working, try to keep your notes and files organized. Set up dedicated folders to store notes, drafts and references. If you use clear file names and regularly back up your work, you can avoid wasting time looking for lost files.

Another top tip is to keep a record of your referencing as you read. Note the full reference and any important page numbers. You can then add these to your assignment as you write.

You could use a reference management tool such as Zotero, Mendeley or EndNote to automatically create your bibliographies.

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Regular breaks are important for your well-being and help you maintain concentration. Take a few minutes to stretch your legs, grab a drink and rest your mind.

Even when you have lots of work, try to build in times to do the things you enjoy.

Remember, if you have any concerns about your work, talk about how you’re feeling with your friends, family or personal tutor. And try to resist the temptation to compare your progress with other people on your course. Remember - everyone works in their own way.

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I hope some of these tips have inspired you. Remember - there is no 'one size fits all' approach to managing your time and meeting those deadlines.

Experiment with some of these tips, to help you figure out what works best for you.