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Motivation and Feeling Good About Assignments



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The first step you can take to feel good about assignments is acknowledge you're going to have to do them at some point and what you have to do. Realising it has to be done, and making a start now is your best chance to do well, even if it feels like it isn't right now. This is because you have the most time available to you, so even if you start now and immediately struggle, that's okay, you have time to figure out a plan and get support!

Try out this fun quiz [here](#) to see if you do procrastinate around assignments - the quiz is not intended to make you feel negative, but instead act as the first step in realising a different approach may be helpful!



BIGGEST CHALLENGES

When we think of starting an assignment, you may instantly go to the negatives. This is fine - but let's break them down and actually understand them. You can write them as a list, or use the target to put the most difficult challenges towards the centre, and the least towards the outside.

Once you've done this, then make a note with each - write what would help you start doing this, rather than an excuse for not doing it at all.



Reflecting Upon Previous Assignments

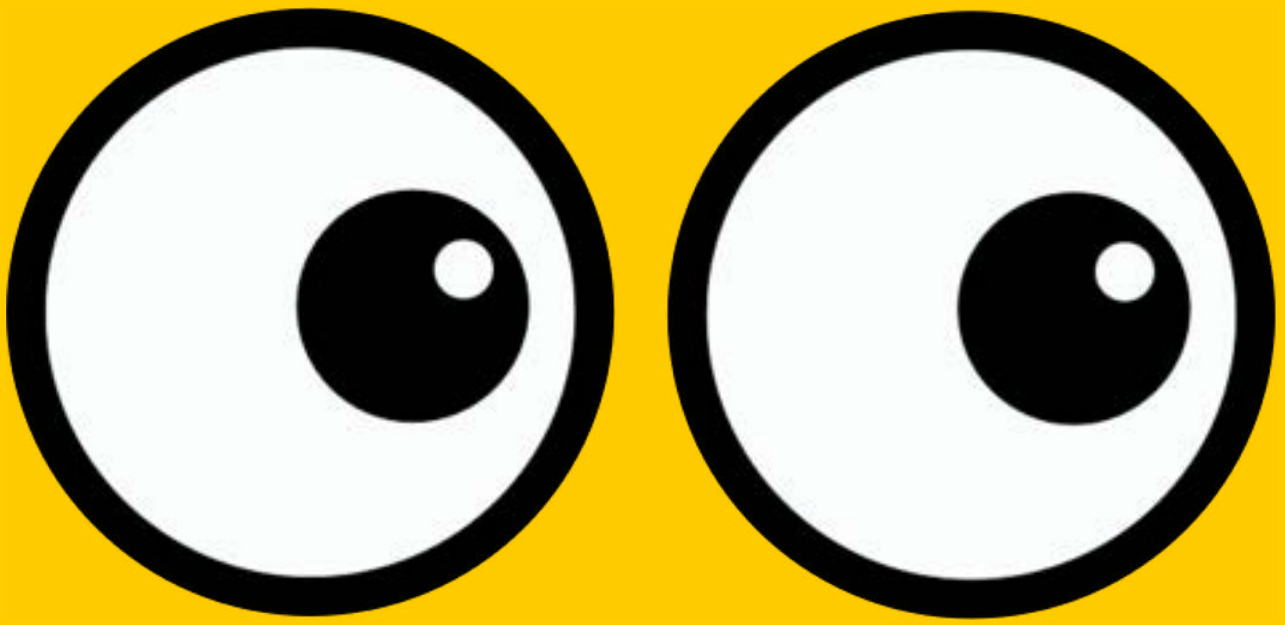
Starting an assignment can feel like a huge task - even if you are okay once you start! 'Where do I begin', 'I'll just leave it until next week', 'what do I have to do again?'. These are all examples are reasons why you might put off getting started.

Reflecting on previous assignments can be really good to help you develop a plan on what to do this time!

Let's ask ourselves some questions?

Write down the answers to these on a sticky note and pop them near your work!

- What did you enjoy once you started your last assignment?
- What has worked before and what happened when I left it?
- Then finally, write down on a separate coloured sticky note every time you experience something positive once you start an assignment e.g. a reward, a feeling of achievement, reduced stress.



Visualise Success!

Visualise success! **Take 30 seconds**, close your eyes, and think of the reduced stress and positive emotions you may feel if you don't have to worry about an assignment hand-in that's coming up soon. Feel the physical sensations, imagine what you'll be doing, how you'll celebrate, and what your thoughts will be like inside. This can help you focus on your goals!

How do we find more motivation?

Let's think about why we're doing this!

Try writing down below why you are taking this course, what things you are looking forward to after graduating, what happens when you do well, and what job you want in the future! This one assignment may be a small step towards a dream life! What are your future goals around studying - why are you doing this!?



TIMINGS AND SCHEDULE

Scheduling appropriate time to complete assignments will benefit your wellbeing as you can prevent unnecessary stress from occurring closer to the hand-in date.

Planning is a really good way to split tasks down into manageable, timely chunks! Assignments are like a cake! If you try to eat the whole thing at once you can struggle, but if you eat one piece a day, you'll manage to feel good still!

It's important to plan immediately once you get the assignment - this way it is fresh in your head and it only takes 20 minutes to write a brief plan. When planning, figure out how many days there are between now and the hand-in date. Also, find out how many words have to be written. Divide the number of words by how many days, this will give you the amount you have to do each day!

Try bullet pointing what you need to cover (look at the marking scheme to help you)!



Did someone say pasta?



Yes! Well...although pomodoro is an Italian pasta sauce, it is also the name of a really good assignment motivation technique! Try working for **20-30 minutes, then having a 10-minute break.** Research has shown it helps with motivation and staying on track! Repeat this until you complete your goals!

Finding Your Workspace

Your workspace is key to helping you feel good about working.
A safe, comfortable, workspace is important for motivation.

- Go it alone or surround yourself with hardworking people that will encourage you to stay on track! Being around others who have good boundaries when it comes to working, will help you do the same, and ensure you also get rewarded for your hard work
- Communicate your work/study goals and aims to friends and people you live with - this ensures they know what you're up to preventing you from being distracted by them, but also they can ensure you are getting plenty of breaks!
- Get comfortable! Your workspace should be comfortable, cosy, and safe! It can be bright and vibrant, but also with minimal distractions so avoid rooms with lots of other screens and gadgets!
- Vary up your workspace! Don't feel you have to be stuck in your room! Try going to the library, coffee shops, or classrooms!
- Try using a focus app such as 'Forest' - this can make studying fun!



WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH MUSIC?

Research shows that listening to music is okay, but to ensure focus, it is best to avoid songs with vocals/lyrics in. Stick to lo-fi or classical for example. Have it on quietly in the background - it can help you feel energised, but still maintain your focus on what you're writing and reading! Research suggests that this approach can lead to reduced anxiety, increased motivation, but it can help some people more than others, so find what works for you! If you find that when you hear the music it is preventing you doing work, maybe pop the headphones away! Also avoid music with ads in between which can derail your focus!





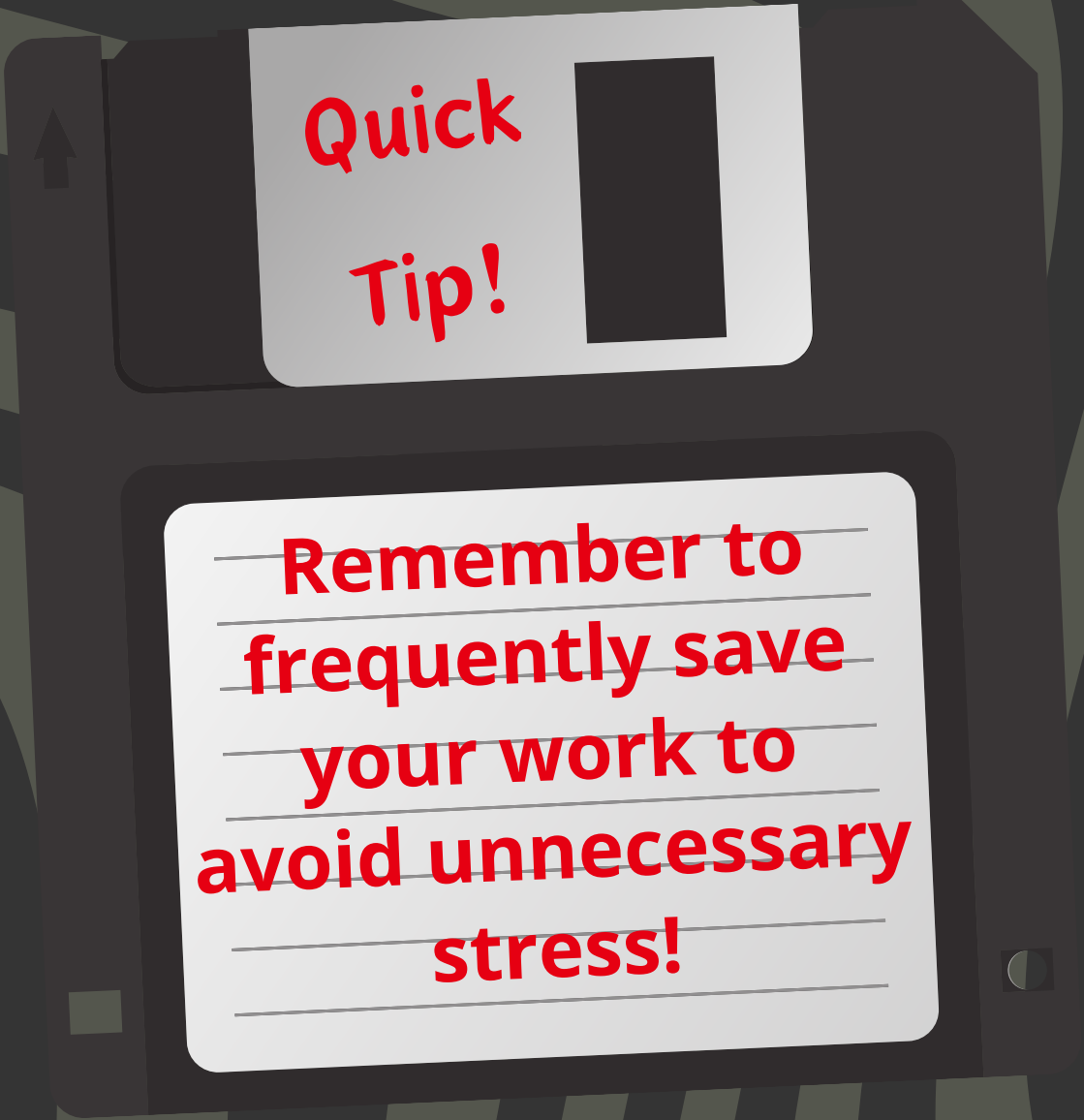
MEDIA



Varying the way you study can massively improve your engagement and motivation, leading to feeling better about your work! Learning a new topic, need inspiration, need a summary before doing research? Try using videos/films, flashcards, or quizzes, maybe reading books or writing a short story about a topic for the assignment.

What other methods can you think of?





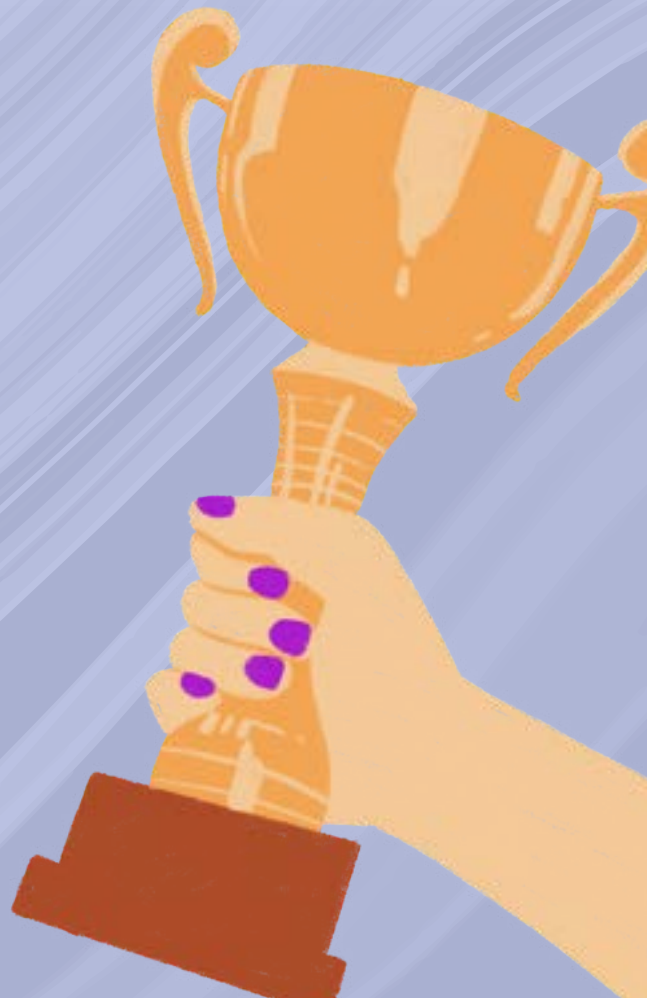
**Quick
Tip!**

**Remember to
frequently save
your work to
avoid unnecessary
stress!**

Rewarding Yourself!

Rewards are a great way to celebrate achievements along the way with your assignments! By doing this, you can also look forward to completing further tasks, helping you stay on track!

Rewarding ourselves when we do lots of work makes us want to do it again! This can be a simple activity such as watching TV or playing a game once you've done 100 words/30 minutes of work, or once you've completed a full assignment, maybe go to the cinema, a fancy meal, or a day out! Make a list of what you'll do every 100 words or after every assignment hand in!

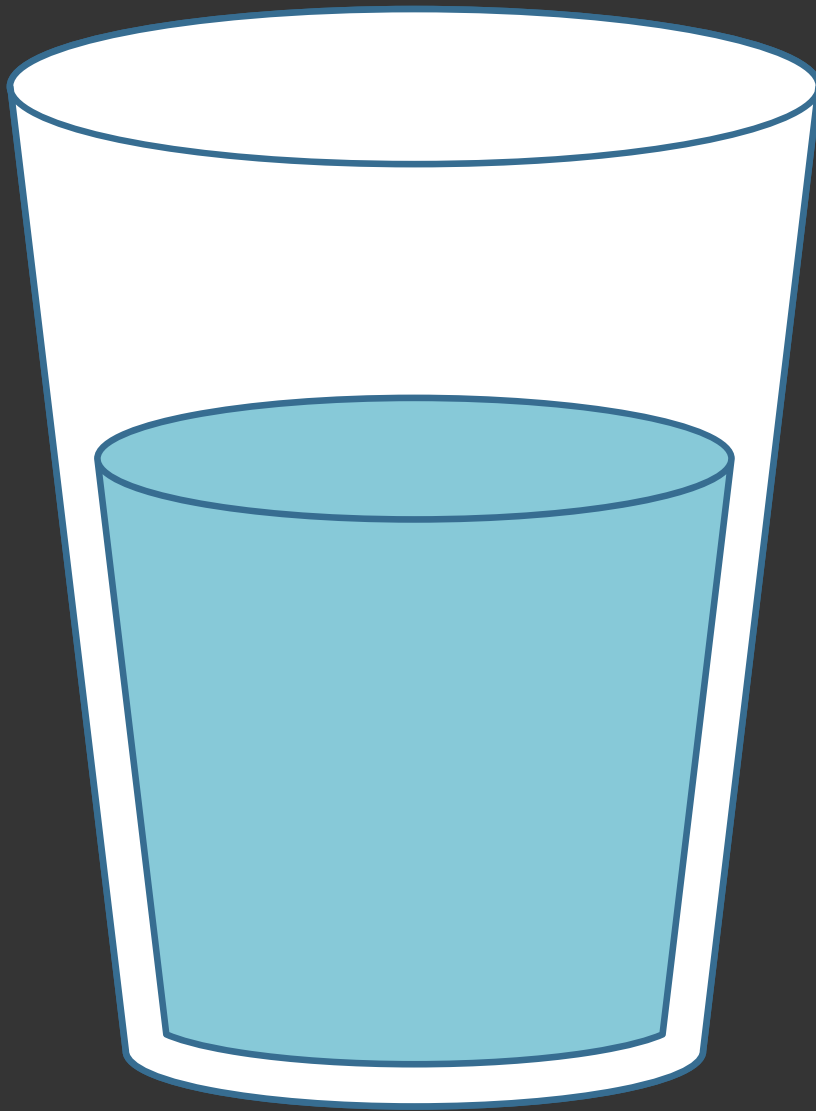


Looking After Ourselves!

It's important to look after ourselves with not only rewards, but self-care also! Our 'Self-Care Box' and 'Building a Relationship with Yourself' guides have some really good self-care techniques which you could check out! However, when doing assignments, you also want to make sure you're getting plenty of sleep, exercise, and water!



Let's get drinking!



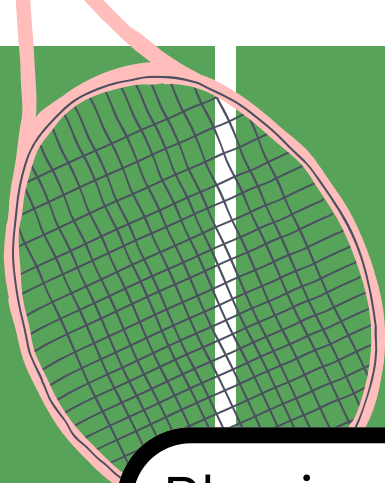
A water tracker app can really help you stay hydrated and leads to better physical and mental health, helping you concentrate! Investing in a cool-looking bottle and keeping it by you at all times also can help you feel motivated!



Getting a Good Sleep When Working

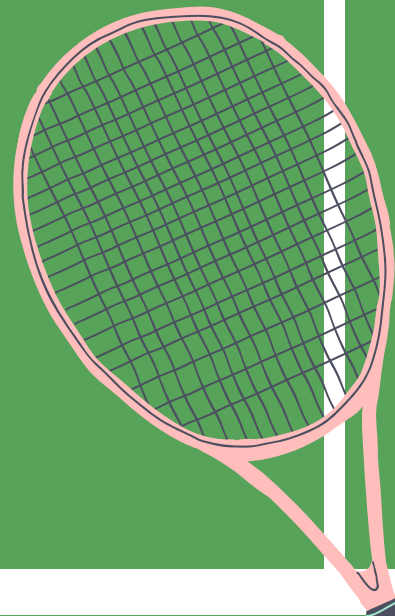
Feeling awake is linked to higher energy levels and greater productivity - so how do you do it as a student?

1. Maintain a regular schedule (even on weekends) - different amounts of hours of sleep work for different people, so experiment and find what works for you, leaving you with the most energy the next day! Always try and wake up at the same time, and once you've found the right amount, stick to it!
2. Create a relaxing routine - try a hot bath, reading a book, listening to calming music or ASMR. Avoid screens and work for at least 30 minutes, ideally an hour before bed.
3. Don't use your bed for anything else - this includes eating, sitting during the day, or anything else! This helps create a relationship with your bed which = sleep!
4. Avoid alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, and food close to bedtime.



Get Active!

Physical activity can be a good reward for working towards an assignment, but research has also shown it **improves productivity** with your work! Try getting active before or after studying - even go together with friends!

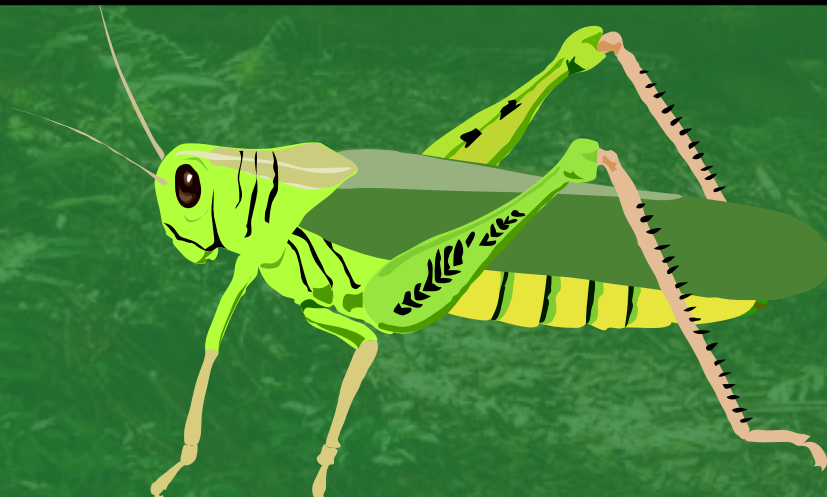


LOCUST~~X~~ OF CONTROL

Apart from being locust without the 'T', Locus of Control (LoC) is a great thing to think about when ensuring you stay motivated for your next assignment or project!

An internal LoC means that you believe you are in control of what happens to you in your life, and an external LoC is someone who believes that life is down to luck, fate, or external influences.

You can develop an internal LoC by taking responsibility for your actions - in this case, responsibility that you are the only person that can do your assignment and get the grades you want. People are there to support you, but ultimately, the effort you put in and the skills that you have, will be the result of the work you produce, which is amazing - because you did it! Having this approach going forward will help you feel in control and feel better about the assignments you do, and make you realise how good you can be!



Further Support:

Do you understand everything that is asked of you in your assignments - it's okay to ask for help!

- **Lecturers/Tutors** - they will be able to support you with marking guides and assignment/course support.
- **Hub** - Learning development tutors can support with study skills and academic literacies, as well as digital learning support - appointments can be booked via the online booking system.
- **Library** - can offer 1-to-1 support with accessing reading lists and literacy material. There are also online FAQs and guides.
- **Student Minds** - range of guides and support on mental wellbeing and university.
- **The Student Room** - site for students to share experiences at university and gain support from other students.
- **Mental Health Advisers** - we can talk through mental health support we can offer if you're struggling. Appointments can be booked via BlackBoard.

