



Learning Resource Centres

A Strategy for Survival

Learning Resource Centres
Study Skills Series 7

One thing that you can be sure of during your time spent at college or university is that your studying will not be a matter simply of reading books or writing essays. You will be required to participate in a range of activities, and this leaflet examines some of the strategies you could implement to maximise your time at college.

Dealing with Pressure

As well as dealing with the normal strains of everyday life, the added pressures of studying can result in increased stress levels. Whilst there are professional organisations and individuals who are there if you feel that you cannot cope alone, there are strategies which you can adopt to lessen the effect that stress has upon you:

- Keep things in perspective—what seems a traumatic event now may be inconsequential in a few days/weeks time. If you find a particular situation/event/person stressful take action, remove yourself from the situation.
- Keep fit and healthy—both body and mind are more likely to cope if you look after yourself. Avoid excessive use of stimulants i.e. alcohol and nicotine—they increase stress.
- If it is a problem with a particular piece of coursework that is concerning you, seek out your tutor. He/she will be able to help you to better understand the subject matter.
- Seek help—self-help strategies are an option., but having someone impartial to talk to can provide support. Doncaster College Counselling & Welfare Service is available to all students and appointments can be made via the Counselling Services at The Hub, telephone 01302 553741 or by emailing counselling.service@don.ac.uk

Group work

For the first time, you may be required to participate in group work, and often this idea meets with a lot of resistance. Don't panic, everyone will feel as nervous as you! A lot of the group work in further and higher education centres on projects, reports and giving presentations. Whatever the reasons behind the need for group work, it is a valuable tool which will enable you to:

- Establish a network of colleagues with whom you can discuss issues that are of significance to your course.

Group work (cont)

- 'Tap-in' to your colleagues' knowledge, which in turn will help you to become more 'knowledgeable'.
- Demonstrate your ability to be an effective member of a team.
- Improve your communication skills.
- Listen to others—even when you disagree with what is being said.

Organise Your Time

A great deal of your time whilst at college or university is spent working outside of class—contact hours. Consequently you need to adopt an approach to time management that will best suit your needs, whilst enabling you to have a social life!

- Make a note of your activities, this will help you to identify what you spend your time on.
- Prioritise work and tick off items once they have been completed—this will give you a visual reminder of what you have achieved.
- Plan ahead—don't leave everything until the last minute.

Make allowances for unseen circumstances—e.g. the day before an assignment is due in, your printer may break down! Making sure that you adhere to deadlines will help to cut down on the number of last minute problems that could arise.