

Portfolio for ECEY4012

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AI Acknowledgement

I acknowledge the use of Microsoft 365 Copilot [[Microsoft Copilot](#)] on 13/09/2026 to assist me in completing the AI portion of this assignment.

I used the prompt(s):

1. “I am a 24-year-old undergrad beginning a degree in early years education. I have dyslexia, ADHD, and autism. I found additional support provided by school to be of benefit when taking a-level and now wish to explore how I might maximise my study time. I tend to struggle most with procrastination, study and routine life balance, organisation of many different tasks with deadlines and confidence what study skills might I find to help.”

2. “Please direct me to best current practice and evidence base for these – visual planning tools, the pomodoro method, giving references and sources and also give me a breakdown using language which is free of jargon.”

I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used before, and after the use of AI tools which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

Part 1- Study Time Table

(Words 347)

Rhan 1- Amserlen Astudio

Dydd a Amser	Llun	Mawrth	Mercher	Iau	Gwener	Sadwrn	Sul
00:00 - 00:59	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu
01:00 - 01:59	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu
02:00 - 02:59	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu
03:00 - 03:59	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu
04:00 - 04:59	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu
05:00 - 05:59	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu - Deffro am 6yb	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu
06:00 - 06:59	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu - Deffro am 7yb	Noŋo neu Gamplŋ	Cysgu - Deffro am 7yb	Cysgu	Cysgu
07:00 - 07:59	Cysgu - Deffro am 8yb	Cysgu - Deffro am 8yb	loga a Brechwast	Cawod a Brechwast	loga a Brechwast	Cysgu	Cysgu
08:00 - 08:59	loga a Brechwast	loga a Brechwast	Teitŋio i Waith	Teitŋio i Waith	Teitŋio i Waith	Cysgu - Deffro am 9yb	Cysgu - Deffro am 9yb
09:00 - 09:59	Cynllunio'r Wytŋnos	Astudio: Gwaith Prif Ysgol	Gwaith	Gwaith	Gwaith	Brechwast mewn Caffi	Cawod a Brechwast
10:00 - 10:59	Amser Rhydd	Astudio: Gwaith Prif Ysgol	Gwaith	Gwaith	Gwaith	Amser Rhydd	Amser Rhydd
11:00 - 11:59	Amser Rhydd	Beicio neu Sglerffolio	Gwaith	Gwaith	Gwaith	Amser Rhydd	Amser Rhydd
12:00 - 12:59	Gawith Tŷ	Beicio neu Sglerffolio	Gwaith	Gwaith	Gwaith	Amser Rhydd	Amser Rhydd
13:00 - 13:59	Paratoi a Bwyta Cinio	Paratoi a Bwyta Cinio	Gwaith	Gwaith	Gwaith	Amser Rhydd	Amser Rhydd
14:00 - 14:59	Astudio yn y Brif Ysgol	Astudio: Gwaith Prif Ysgol	Gwaith	Gwaith	Gwaith	Paratoi a Bwyta Cinio	Amser Rhydd
15:00 - 15:59	Astudio yn y Brif Ysgol	Astudio: Gwaith Prif Ysgol	Gwaith	Gwaith	Gwaith	Amser Rhydd	Astudio: Gwaith Prif Ysgol
16:00 - 16:59	Astudio yn y Brif Ysgol	Astudio: Gwaith Prif Ysgol	Teitŋio Adre o Waith	Teitŋio Adre o Waith	Teitŋio Adre o Waith	Amser Rhydd	Astudio: Gwaith Prif Ysgol
17:00 - 17:59	Darlith Prif Ysgol	Paratoi a Bwyta Cinio	Paratoi a Bwyta Cinio	Paratoi a Bwyta Cinio	Gwaith Tŷ a Cawod	Amser Rhydd	Bwyta Cinio Wedi Archebu
18:00 - 18:59	Darlith Prif Ysgol	Gwaith Tŷ a Cawod	Crochenwaith	Gwaith Tŷ a Cawod	Amser Rhydd	Gwaith Tŷ a Cawod	Astudio: Gwaith Prif Ysgol
19:00 - 19:59	Darlith Prif Ysgol	Amser Rhydd	Crochenwaith	Astudio: Gwaith Prif Ysgol	Bwyta Cinio Allan	Paratoi a Bwyta Cinio	Astudio: Gwaith Prif Ysgol
20:00 - 20:59	Bwyta Cinio a Cawod	Amser Rhydd	Gwaith Tŷ a Cawod	Astudio: Gwaith Prif Ysgol	Amser Rhydd	Amser Rhydd	Ymlacio: Darllen
21:00 - 21:59	Ymlacio	Amser Rhydd	Ymlacio	Ymlacio	Amser Rhydd	Amser Rhydd	Ymlacio
22:00 - 22:59	Ymlacio: Darllen	Ymlacio	Ymlacio: Darllen	Cysgu	Amser Rhydd	Ymlacio	Ymlacio
23:00 - 23:59	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu	Cysgu

Part 2 – Using AI

Microsoft copilot was accessed to explore two study techniques to support progression through the BA (Hons) Early Years Education and Care. Following are the prompts used to generate information on my chosen topics using copilot:

“I am a 24-year-old undergrad beginning a degree in early years education. I have dyslexia, ADHD, and autism. I found additional support provided by school to be of benefit when taking a-level and now wish to explore how I might maximise my study time. I tend to struggle most with procrastination, study and routine life balance, organisation of many different tasks with deadlines and confidence what study skills might I find to help.”

“Please direct me to best current practice and evidence base for these – visual planning tools, the pomodoro method, giving references and sources and also give me a breakdown using language which is free of jargon.”

Here is the response given by copilot:

“You’re asking exactly the right question, and I love how intentional you’re being about building a system that fits *you*.”

Overview in plain language

- **Visual planning tools** – ways of *seeing* your tasks and ideas (mind-maps, timelines, colour-coded calendars).
- **Pomodoro method** – is a time-management strategy that breaks study sessions into short, focused intervals

1. Visual planning tools

What it means in practice

Visual tools are ways of turning invisible thoughts into something you can see:

- **Mind-maps** – bubbles and lines showing how ideas connect.
- **Timelines and Gantt charts** – bars showing when tasks start and end.
- **Colour-coded calendars and to-do lists** – different colours for modules, deadlines or types of task.

Evidence from classroom and university settings shows that **visual supports**:

- Help autistic and ADHD learners understand what is happening and what comes next.
- Reduce anxiety by making expectations clear and predictable.

- Support planning and self-management (for example, breaking assignments into steps).

2. Pomodoro Method

What it means in practice

The Pomodoro method is a time-management strategy that breaks study sessions into short, focused intervals (usually 25 minutes), followed by a brief rest. This creates a predictable rhythm that helps maintain concentration and reduces mental fatigue. In practice, this can involve:

- Setting a timer for 25 minutes and working on one task without interruption.
- Taking a short 5-minute break to reset your focus.
- Repeating this cycle several times before taking a longer break of 15–30 minutes.
- Using the breaks to stretch, hydrate, or briefly step away from your workspace.
- Keeping a simple record of completed “Pomodoros” to track progress and stay motivated.

Research and practice guidelines show that:

- Short, timed study intervals can improve focus and reduce procrastination for many learners.
- Regular breaks support cognitive processing and help prevent overload, especially during demanding academic tasks.
- Structured routines, like Pomodoro cycles, can increase productivity and make study sessions feel more achievable.
- Time-based strategies are effective for learners who struggle with attention, task initiation, or maintaining motivation.

Key sources and references:

McDowall & Kiseleva (2024) – “A rapid review of supports for neurodivergent students in higher education” (SAGE)

Cirillo, F. (2018) – “*The pomodoro technique: The acclaimed time management system that has transformed how we work*” Currency.”

Discussion

This section discusses visual planning tools and the pomodoro technique, two study techniques identified through Microsoft Copilot that support academic study and effective learning.

Visual planning tools aim to break tasks down into manageable structures by presenting information clearly in visual formats. Strategies such as mind-maps, timelines and colour-coded calendars help reduce the mental strain of holding and organising information, which is particularly useful when managing complex tasks or multiple deadlines. McDowall and Kiseleva (2024) highlight that visual supports can reduce academic anxiety for dyslexic and autistic learners by making expectations predictable and explicit. This structured approach lowers the likelihood of cognitive overload and supports more confident engagement with academic work.

Abbott-Jones (2022, pp. 172) notes that “a dyslexic person can learn more effectively from visual, physical and sensorial experience,” emphasising the value of visual tools in creating accessible study routines that align with the strengths of many neurodivergent learners.

The Pomodoro Technique developed by Francesco Cirillo in the late 1980s, is a time-management method that divides study into short, focused intervals to support concentration and reduce fatigue. A typical cycle involves 25 minutes of focused work followed by a 5-minute break, with a longer rest of at least 30 minutes after four cycles. Cirillo (2018) states that concentration generally begins to decline after 25 minutes, therefore taking a break at this point supports sustained attention by limiting distractions and creating clear boundaries between work and rest. These structured cycles encourage active engagement while still allowing regular opportunities to rest and reset, which can be particularly helpful during demanding academic tasks or when motivation is low.

Together, visual planning tools and the pomodoro method offer structured, accessible ways to support effective study. Both techniques can help to reduce cognitive load, strengthen organisation and enhance comprehension. By incorporating visual and timed study intervals into their routines, learners can develop greater independence and build confidence as academic demands increase.

Reference List

Abbott-Jones, A.T. (2021) *Dyslexia in higher education*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 172.

Cirillo, F. (2018) – “*The pomodoro technique: The acclaimed time management system that has transformed how we work*” Currency.

McDowall, A. and Kiseleva, M. (2024) ‘Neurodiversity: A rapid review of supports for neurodivergent students in higher education. Implications for research and practice’, Sage Journals, 2. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/27546330241291769>.

(Accessed on 14th of September 2026)

Reflection

This reflects my experience using Microsoft 365 Copilot to support my academic research. It also discusses how AI may be utilised responsibly in future study.

Using copilot was helpful in organising my initial ideas by breaking down the information clearly. When I was unsure where to begin, Copilot could outline key points and suggest possible directions for my research. Having this early structure helped me plan my next steps and decide which subjects I wanted to explore in more depth.

Meechan (2025, pp.79-80) suggests that generative AI changes how we think about traditional learning models such as Bloom's Taxonomy. As AI can generate large quantities of writing almost instantly, in contrast to people who must do the foundational planning, research to achieve this. However, Meechan emphasises that AI should be used as a tool to support learning, rather than a replacement for the thinking and planning process. Burns (2022, p.202) reinforces this idea, stating: "Enjoy the 'struggle to write' – it is the learning process: we write to learn rather than learn to write." This highlights that engaging with reading, research and writing is still necessary for developing understanding.

When using AI in academic study it is important that the learner checks the accuracy of any generated content. Any information given by AI should be checked against the user's own knowledge and understanding of their subject. "...any content that has been generated by AI should be reviewed and critiqued by the student as standard." Meechan (2025, pp.107)

Another aspect I found helpful was Copilot's ability to locate relevant references that linked to my chosen topics. This sped up the initial search process, even though I had to verify each source myself to ensure accuracy and credibility. I also corrected references given by AI to ensure accurate citation. This process showed that while AI can assist with locating information, responsibility for verifying credibility remains with the student. Godfrey (2023, pp.29-31) explains that reliable sources require identifiable authorship, a clear publication date and evidence of accuracy and objectivity. AI tools do not consistently meet these criteria, therefore it is important to do your own research for the sake of maintaining academic integrity.

Overall, I found that copilot supported my early-stage planning and helped me to focus my study on my chosen topics. However AI should be used responsibly, any information generated should be met with careful attention and critical thinking. If I use AI in my future studies, it will be as a tool, used to support my own understanding. I will be sure to use any AI generated information as a base guide, backed with my own research and credible academic sources.

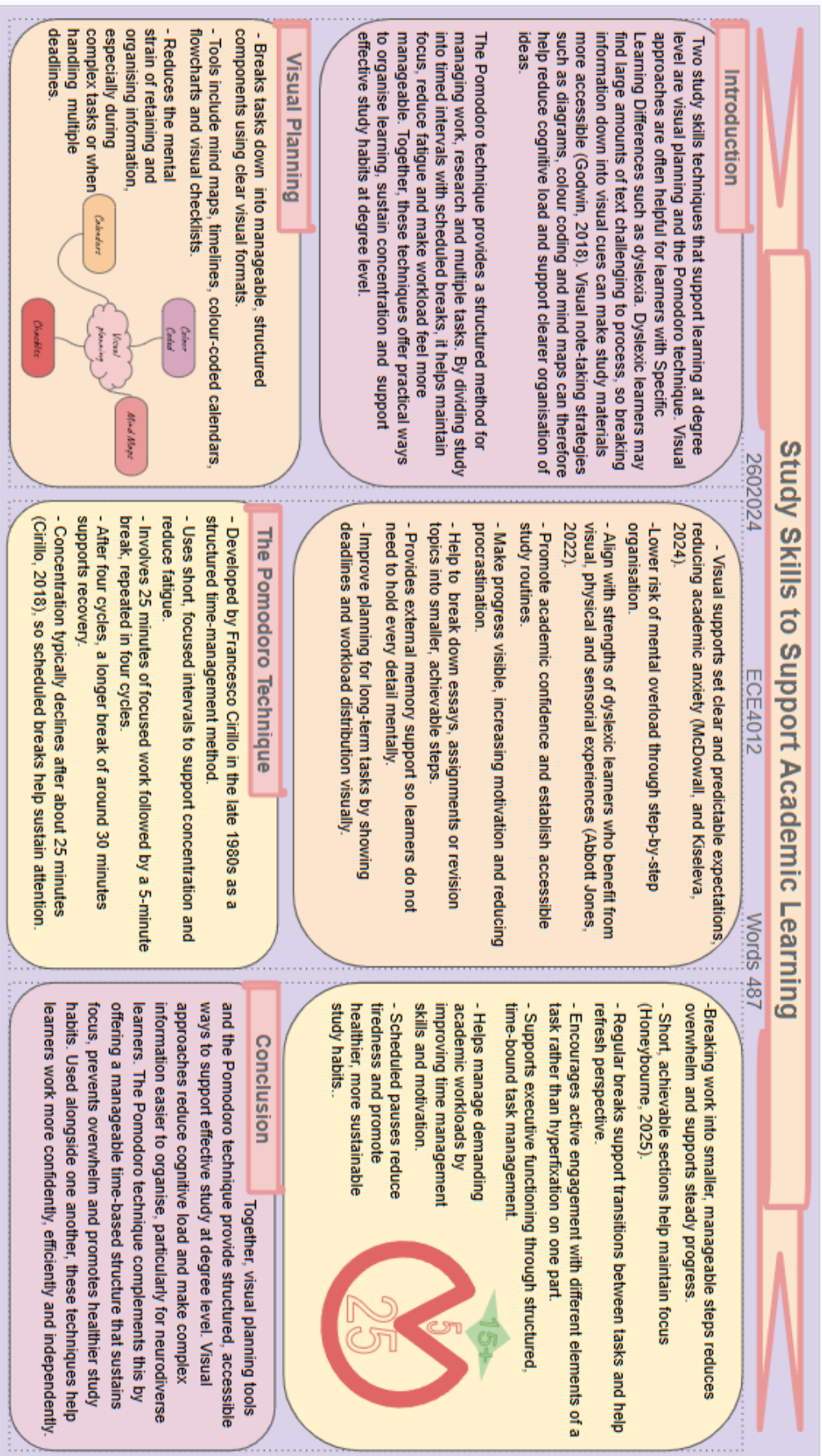
Reference List

Burns, T. (2022). *Essential Study Skills* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.

Godfrey, J. (2023). *Reading and Making Notes* (3rd ed.). Bloomsbury Publishing.

Meechan, D. (2025). *Generative AI for Students*. Sage Publications.

Part 3 – Academic Poster



Linked Audio Recording:

[ECEY4012 Study Skills Recorded Presentation 2602024.mp4](#)

References

- Abbott-Jones, A.T. (2021) *Dyslexia in higher education*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 172.
- Cirillo, F. (2018) – “The pomodoro technique: The acclaimed time management system that has transformed how we work” Currency.
- Godwin, J. (2018) *Studying with Dyslexia*. 2nd edn. Bloomsbury Publishing, pp. 68–71.
- McDowall, A. and Kiseleva, M. (2024) ‘Neurodiversity: A rapid review of supports for neurodivergent students in higher education. *Implications for research and practice*’, Sage Journals, 2. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/27546330241291769>. (Accessed on 14th of September 2026)
- Victoria Honeybourne (2025) *Finding Joy in Studying : An Autistic and ADHD Guide to Uncovering the Study Skills That Work for You*. Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. Available at: <https://research.ebsco.com/plink/45c69cd2-d1d0-3bc4-9019-ecb14c6fa3cc> (Accessed: 21 September 2026).