

Contents page

Part 1 - Study Timetable, page 2-3

Part 2 – AI Activity, page 4-9

Part 3 – Poster page 10

Part 4 – Link to oral presentation also shared with lecture team, page 11

Reference List – Page 12

AI Acknowledgment

I acknowledge the use of Microsoft 365 co-pilot on 10th September to research study skills techniques.

I used the prompts:

- 1- I am a first-year university student looking for ways to help my concentration while studying
- 2- I am a first-year university student looking for ways to help me manage my wellbeing while studying
- 3- I am a first-year university student looking for ways to help me concentrate and manage my wellbeing while studying

I confirm 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.

Study Timetable

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	sunday
7:00 – 8:00	Wake up, have breakfast, get ready for the day	Wake up, have breakfast, get ready for the day	Wake up, have breakfast, get ready for the day	Wake up, have breakfast, get ready for the day	Wake up, have breakfast ready for the day	Wake up, have breakfast, get ready for the day	Have a lie in, have breakfast, get ready for the day
8:00 - 9:00	Take sons to school	Take sons to school	Take sons to school	Take sons to school	Take sons to school	Quick tidy up and take my son to his football game	Tidy up, sort washing out
9:00 - 10:00	head to the gym, use sauna	placement	Go to the gym, use sauna	Placement	Go to the gym, use	Watch my sons football game	Watch my eldest son play rugby
10:00 – 11:00	steam room and jacuzzi	placement	Steam room and jacuzzi	placement	Sauna, steam room	Still watching my sons football game	Still watching my son play rugby
11:00 - 12:00	Arrive home, have lunch	placement	Home have lunch	placement	And jacuzzi home	Head back to the club house to meet team members	Head back to the club house to meet team members
12:00 - 13:00	Have a Tidy up and chill out	placement	Study time	placement	Home, tidy up chill out	Make our way home quick change and head to my husbands football match	Make our way home and have lunch
13:00 – 1400	Watch some television or read my book	placement	Study time	placement	Study time	Watch my husbands football game, (he plays in goal)	Chill out and enjoy some family time
14:00 – 15:00	Take my siberian husky for a walk through the woods	placement	Take dog for a walk	placement	Study time	Watching husbands football game	Chill out, enjoy family time
15:00 – 16:00	Pick sons up from school, have tea	Head home from work Placement	Pick sons up from school,	Head home from work placement	Pick sons up from school	Head back to my husbands clubhouse after the match for a quick pint after the football match	Go see our parents
16:00 – 17:00	Leave for lecture	Have tea	Have tea	Have tea	home walk dog	Still at the clubhouse after the game, having	Still at parents

						chats with friends	
17:00 – 18:00	lecture	Study time	Family time,	Have tea	Have tea	make our way home	Make our way home
18:00 – 19:00	lecture	Study time	Family time	Relax, have family time	Watch tv, chill out	Relax, watch some television and have family time	Study hour
19:00 – 20:00	lecture	Bath and relax, some reading	Bath and relax, some reading,	Relax, have family time	Watch television	Order a takeaway, Chinese or Indian	Watch television
20:00 – 21:00	Leave lecture arrive home	Get into bed, either watch some Netflix or read my book	Bed, Netflix	Relax, have family time	Relax, bath and bed	Watch some Netflix with the family	Chill out
21:00 – 22:00	shower and something to eat	Watch netflix or read my book	Netflix	Shower, something to eat	Netflix, bed	Relax and chill watch Netflix or reading	Get bready for bed
22:00 – 23:00	Get into bed watch Netflix and sleep	sleep	sleep	Netflix and sleep	sleep	Relax and sleep	sleep

Initial prompt input

I am a first year university student looking for ways to help my concentration while studying

Initial prompt output

The single most important thing you can do to improve your concentration is to control your environment and use evidence based study methods.

Everything else builds on that. Below is a clear, structured guide tailored to you as a first-year university student, grounded in recent research.

Core Takeaway

Your focus improves dramatically when you:

- Remove your phone from the room
- Study in short, timed sprints
- Set specific goals for each session
- Use active recall instead of re-reading
- Build a consistent study environment

Why concentration feels hard (and why it's not your fault)

Most focus problems come from:

- **Task switching** — every notification or glance at your phone creates “attention residue,” slowing your brain for minutes afterward.
- **Vague goals** — “study biology” gives your brain no target.
- **A depleted brain** — poor sleep, dehydration, and hunger wreck concentration before you even begin.

Understanding this helps you fix the real causes instead of blaming yourself.

The 6 most effective techniques for deep focus

1. Put your phone in another room

Simply having your phone visible reduces your cognitive capacity — even if it's off. Students who studied without their phone nearby scored **significantly higher** on memory tests.

How to apply: Leave it in another room or lock it away. If you need music, use a laptop playlist or a separate device.

2. Study in timed sprints (Pomodoro)

25 minutes of work + 5 minutes break = optimal focus and less fatigue. Students using timed intervals reported **15–25% higher focus** and **20% less fatigue**.

How to apply: Start with 25 minutes. If that feels too long, drop to 15; if too short, increase to 40.

3. Set a specific goal for each session

Your brain needs a finish line. Replace “study chemistry” with “complete 15 molarity practice questions.”

How to apply: Write one sentence before each session:

“By the end of this sprint I will _____.”

4. Use active recall instead of re-reading

Active recall improves retention **20% more** than passive review.

How to apply:

- Close your notes and write everything you remember
- Use flashcards
- Do practice questions
- Teach the concept to someone else (Feynman Technique)

5. Build a consistent study environment

Your brain forms associations with places. A dedicated spot becomes a “focus cue.”

How to apply: Choose one quiet, well-lit place. Keep it tidy. Use it only for studying — not scrolling or eating.

6. Protect the first 15 minutes

The hardest part of studying is starting. Once you push through the first 15 minutes, focus deepens naturally.

How to apply: Commit to 15 minutes with zero distractions. After that, concentration becomes easier.

Sleep, hydration, and breaks matter more than you think

Sleep is **non-negotiable** — memory consolidation happens at night. Skipping sleep degrades recall and attention even if you study longer.

Hydration and regular meals also directly improve concentration.

Quick comparison table

Need	Best Technique	Why it Works
Stay focused longer	Pomodoro	Prevents burnout; boosts sustained attention
Remember more	Active recall	Strengthens memory through retrieval effort
Reduce distractions	Phone out of room	Removes cognitive load from resisting temptation
Get started faster	15-minute commitment	Overcomes initial resistance; builds momentum
Avoid procrastination	Specific goals	Gives your brain a clear target and endpoint

Refined_Prompts

- 1- Can you provide me with accurate information from creditable websites and people ways that help support concentration and why concentration is important for studies as a first year university student
- 2- Can you provide me with accurate information from creditable websites and people ways to help me support and manage my wellbeing while studying as a first year university student

Prompts used to identify sources

- 1- Where did this information come from?
- 2- Is this information accurate and up to date?
- 3- Can you provide me with links to this accurate information?

Discussion of the two techniques

This piece of writing will discuss two study techniques to support academic success. The two techniques are concentration (Cotterell 2024) and wellbeing (mindwill-leeds.org.uk)

Stella Cotterell states in her book the Study Skills Handbook that as students go through higher education, they undertake problems they have to solve, students must require better memory skills and the stamina to sustain attention for longer. Cottrell states this can be done by familiarising yourself with the task, allowing yourself time to get used to vocabulary and make sense of difficult material. This concentration technique is a way that can help students stay on track, meet deadlines and can offer a way of staying focused. Cottrell (2024) also states that this concentration technique is a way that can help students stay on track and complete assignments on time. Secondly Mindwell-leeds.org.uk states that studying and wellbeing are deeply connected and we concentrate best when the brain is rested. To help students improve study skills while maintaining their wellbeing while studying. Secondly having routine breaks while doing studies help calm, rest, the mind to stay on tasks for longer easier, prevent fatigue and improve concentration making studying easier. When wellbeing is supported, our academic performance improves, and this improves our memory, we have more motivation and have better concentration (Clariwell, 2023). To help better wellbeing we need to get enough sleep, eat well balanced meals, keep hydrated, take breaks and keep a routine as this helps the brain to learn. A good approach to this is the pomodoro technique, Cirillo (2018) suggests that this technique is made up of four cycles, to do this students study for 25-30 minutes then take a 5-minute break then repeat, suggesting this helps improve wellbeing because it reduces stress, making studying feel less daunting, and more manageable so the brain doesn't panic. (Francesco Cirillo – pomodoro technique to support wellbeing)

In conclusion these two study techniques can support focus, concentration and wellbeing, all of which are important aspects of effective learning.

Reflection on using Microsoft 365 Copilot for Academic Study Work

This reflection considers my experience of using Microsoft 365 Copilot to support my academic work. At first, I wasn't sure how I felt about using this tool, as I had never used it before, as this was my first time I was unsure what it was or how to use it, but as I continued to play around with it one of the biggest benefits I found was the speed and accessibility of copilot, and how information could be generated quickly which made it very useful. I learnt that I could ask copilot to explain something more simple or provide an example, I also asked where the information came from and if the information was creditable, this helped me by reducing the stress that often comes with starting a new topic and made me feel more capable of engaging with academic material. Sometimes I found using copilot was not always reliable which was difficult as I thought some of the information was generated this required me to think carefully because I felt some information was not always accurate and lacked depth, this meant that I had to find additional research to gain a more detailed understanding of my work from creditable websites, people, journals, books and the library. The benefits I found of using copilot when studying is that it gathers all my needed information all into one place while giving me watermarks / trademarks, these are when AI gives me when the information came from. Also, it provides the best study techniques, and it remembers how I do things and my best ways to study. Also, the instant feedback keeps me active, focused and on task, the AI 24/7 support means there's no period of time where I need to be online or not, this allows me to take a break and balance my work life. Also, recently used Copilot AI to find me local coastal nature walks in my area, this helped my wellbeing as I felt ready and focused on doing my studies after refreshing my brain this gave me a clearer mind to come back making my studying better and easier. As part of my study's I plan on using copilot responsibly in the future as this can make my studying much easier, although I will also always think independently and critically while using copilot or any other AI tool.

Cottrell, S. (2024) *The study skills handbook*. Sixth edition. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Crillo, F. (2018)

Pomodoro technique. (2026). In: *Wikipedia*. [online] Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Pomodoro_Technique&oldid=1364480643 [Accessed 11 Sept. 2026].

Part 3

Introducing two study techniques to support academic success as a first-year university students

As a first year university student you may well be feeling nervous or a bit overwhelmed, this poster will provide information on two study techniques designed to help you as first year university student by explaining how you can manage your wellbeing while staying focused and concentrating on your studies.

5 Most effective techniques for concentration and focus while studying:

- 1 - Removing your phone from the room helps remove cognitive load from resisting temptation
- 2 - Study in short timed sprints (Pomodoro technique) to prevents burnout, and boost attention
- 3 - Set a goal for each session, to give your brain a clear target and endpoint
- 4 - Use active recall instead of re-reading to strengthen memory through retrieval effort
- 5 - Have a consistent study environment as a dedicated spot becomes a focus cue

Promoting concentration means creating a calm environment, setting clear goals, reducing distractions supports your brain with healthy habits and using structured focus techniques like short study blocks and regular breaks, Concentration is a core cognitive process that enables learners to maintain focused attention, suppress distractions, and support effective information processing and memory formation (Posner and Petersen 1990)

To help better wellbeing we need to get enough sleep, eat balanced meals, keep hydrated, take breaks and keep a routine as this helps the brain to learn. A good approach to this is the Pomodoro technique (Cirillo 2018) suggests that this helps improve wellbeing because it reduces stress, making studying feel less so the brain doesn't panic.

When wellbeing is supported, our performance improves, and this improves our memory and have better concentration. (Clariwell 2023)

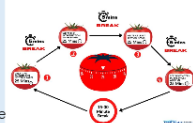
Wellbeing is essential for effective learning, as a healthy mind supports focus, motivation, and academic success.

Concentration improves when you remove distractions and engage actively with your learning. (Cottrell 2024)

These two study techniques can support focus, concentration and wellbeing all of which are important aspects of effective learning.

"A pomodoro works because the finish line is visible before the resistance shows up." Pomodoro technique: Cirillo (2018) suggests that this technique is made up of four cycles, to do this students study for 25-30 minutes then take a 5 minute break then repeat, suggesting this helps improve wellbeing because it reduces stress, makes studying feel less daunting, and more manageable so the brain doesn't panic. (Cirillo 2018)

THE POMODORO TECHNIQUE



Cottrell states that the concentration technique is a way that can help students stay on track and complete assignments on time, she also suggests that you should give your body and mind time to refresh and return to task energised and ready to enjoy. (Cottrell 2024)

Ways of promoting good wellbeing include:

- 1- Regular sleep routine
 - 2- Eat well balanced meals and keep hydrated
 - 3- keep active
 - 4- take breaks
- These habits reduce stress and improve mood, focus and energy.



Reference List

Claricoats 2023 study well stay well.pdf

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Part 4

main presentation.pptx

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<https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood> <https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/pay-attention-to-concentration>

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