Developing effective study skills to become a confident and competent learner.

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Introduction

This poster shows three foundational skills required to be a confident and competent learner and promote how to develop a range of study skills to support academic progress. Academic study skills can help give a person the skills to enable them to succeed in higher education. To be able to organise and plan your workload to meet deadlines, arrange social life around study and being able to maintain a good working, family and social life balance is important. (McMillian, 2012).

Time Management

The Ultimate study skills handbook states there are three big time management issues for students, which are; 1. **Planning 2. Procrastination 3. Perfectionism.** Moore, 2010)

Planning is vital when people have other commitments and busy lifestyles. Using a diary or calendar to set deadlines can help manage deadlines and allow you to set reminders. Most of us have mobile phones which we can now have to hand and have applications which we can use such as, calendar and alerts to set reminders. Being more in control can help manage your time. In addition to having the tools and organisation of adhering to deadlines it is an equally important aspect to not let eroding factors take up too much of your time. For example, (Vann 2021) talks about how these factors can impede your time and get in the way of achieving time.

It is often said that procrastination may seem to be a bad thing, (Moore,2010) states that procrastination is not. He explains taking a breather from the task at hand can mean that you are taking yourself away from getting angry or aggressive over the task, which allows you some breathing space. One of the most important considerations is having realistic goals which are key to ensure you allow sufficient time to produce good, quality work. (Carr, 2001) states in his article If you want a job done right and done on time, set a series of deadlines, not just one. He talks about research that indicate the way deadlines are set have a profound effect on the degree to which workers procrastinate and it can affect the quality of their work. Perfectionism can be seen as a good and bad trait. It may take others longer to complete the task, resulting in deadlines not being met, but also a good trait in terms of the standard of work being produced can be of better quality.

Critical Thinking

Smale and Fowlie, (2009) has indicated how key success to learning is to be able to reflect and to learn how you learn. Being able to make sense of what we are learning, consider and seeing what we have learned. Being able to produce good work that is objective, critical and grounded. So, to be able to explain what you know and how you know it is true. (Cottrell 2019) talks about how we need to be like detectives and look out for clues and how they all can fit together. Cottrell explains that to question everything and to look at it from different angles. Ask open ended questions, (What, Who, How, When, Where.) to gain a deeper knowledge on the subject.

Diagram 1. Image showing steps how to organise yourself. (Child success centre 2015).

Critical thinking skills for dummies, (Cohen, 2015) talks about how we need to be sceptical readers. Don't always take what you read as true and to assess the soundness of its content.

NoteTaking

There are many different methods of note taking. Some people will use the pen and paper method while others will want to take the electronic option by using laptops, iPads or kindles. There are some mixed opinions on which methods are used during lectures. According to an article by Mueller, and Oppenheimer (2014) it can have a negative effect on other people in the room as it may cause some distraction. The bright lights of the screen or even the noise from the keyboard can be distracting. It is also said that using devices may look as if students are not concentrating and look as if they are disengaged. Lots of options to get side tracked to open emails or other applications on these devices. The article claims how pen to paper notes Is far mighty than the digital option.

It is often said that taking notes (whether it is done digitally or by writing) It can assist your memory for when you need to use it later. It helps you to pay attention to the speaker as you are writing down what they are explaining and can help you understand. Studies have shown that if you write down the information you are less likely to forget the information later. (Gray Williams, and Hayward, 1987).

Conclusion

There are several points to consider when becoming a resilient, healthy and independent learner. Time management, Critical thinking and Note taking are just three points mentioned in this poster. With the research and resources available it is evident that being able to manage these points well and effectively, can contribute to you becoming a confident and competent academic learner. Using the stop, think, plan and do method (Diagram 1, 2015) can aid you in preparing for the task at hand and organise your work to be of good quality and content.

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