

Portfolio for ECEY4012

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AI Acknowledgement

I acknowledge the use of Microsoft 365 Copilot on 21/09/2026 to support my work for part 2 of this portfolio.

Prompts used:

1. I am a university student studying primary education at level 4, I have full time job in a school. How can I effectively manage my time to be able to fit these in every day?
2. I am a university student studying primary education at level 4, I have full time job in a school. How can I avoid procrastination while studying and completing assignments?

Ams er /Tim e	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesda y	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
00:00 - 00:59	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep
01:00 - 01:59	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep
02:00 - 02:59	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep

03:00 - 03:59	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep
04:00 - 04:59	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep
05:00 - 05:59	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	sleep	Sleep	Sleep
06:00 - 06:59	Wake up and get ready for the day	Wake up and get ready for the day	Wake up and get ready for the day	Wake up and get ready for the day	Wake up and get ready for the day	Sleep	Sleep
07:00 - 07:59	Downtime before work, have a coffee	Downtime before work, have a coffee	Downtime before work, have a coffee	Downtime before work, have a coffee	Downtime before work, have a coffee	Sleep	Sleep
08:00 - 08:59	Travel to work, start work	Travel to work, start work	Travel to work, start work	Travel to work, start work	Travel to work, start work	Sleep	Sleep
09:00 - 09:59	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Sleep	Sleep
10:00 -	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Wake up,	Sleep

10:59						shower and chill.	
11:00 - 11:59	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Breakfast.	Sleep
12:00 - 12:59	lunchtime	lunchtime	lunchtime	lunchtime	lunchtime	Chill	Wake up, shower and have breakfast
13:00 - 13:59	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Chill	Chill
14:00 - 14:59	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Chill	Chill
15:00 - 15:59	Work/Finish work	Work/Finish work	Work/Finish work	Work/Finish work	Work/Finish work	Chill	Chill
16:00 - 16:59	Home	Gym	Gym	Gym	Gym	Chill	Chill
17:00 - 17:59	University	Home to catch up with family	Home to catch up with family	Home to catch up with family	Home to catch up with family	Chill	Chill

18:00 - 18:59	University	Have Dinner with family	Have Dinner with family	Have Dinner with family	Have Dinner with family	Chill	Prepare lunch for the week and pack bag for work
19:00 - 19:59	University	University work	University work	University work	University work	Chill	Chill
20:00 - 20:59	University/ get home and get ready for bed	Watch tv in bed after showering	Watch tv in bed after showering	Watch tv in bed after showering	Watch tv in bed after showering	Out with friends	Shower and Chill
21:00 - 21:59	Watch Tv	Watch Tv	Watch Tv	Watch Tv	Watch Tv	Out with friends	Chill
22:00 - 22:59	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Out with friends	Sleep
23:00 - 23:59	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Out with friends	Sleep

Part 2 using AI

Prompt asked -

I am a university student studying primary education at level 4, I have full time job in a school. How can I effectively manage my time to be able to fit these in every day?

Response -

Absolutely. Working full-time in a school while completing Level 4 Primary Education is demanding, but the advantage is that your job and degree overlap considerably. The key is to build a **repeatable weekly routine**, rather than trying to squeeze university work into every spare moment.

1. Start with a realistic weekly structure

If you're working roughly school hours Monday to Friday, I'd suggest something like this:

Day	After work	University work
Monday	Decompress, dinner	60–90 mins: lectures/reading
Tuesday	Dinner	60–90 mins: assignment work
Wednesday	Evening off	No university work
Thursday	Dinner	60–90 mins: reading/notes
Friday	Evening off	No university work
Saturday	Morning	2–3 hour focused study session
Sunday	Morning/afternoon	1–2 hours + plan the coming week

That's approximately **7–9 focused hours** outside work without studying every evening.

Adjust the hours to your actual university workload, but protect those evenings off. You need time when you're neither an employee nor a student.

2. Don't put "do uni work" in your diary

Make each study session specific.

Instead of:

✗ Tuesday 6:30–8:00: University work

Try:

- ☒ Tuesday 6:30–7:00: Read article on behaviour management
- ☒ 7:00–7:20: Make notes
- ☒ 7:20–8:00: Draft 300 words of assignment

You'll know exactly what "finished" looks like.

3. Work backwards from every assignment deadline

As soon as you receive an assignment, divide it into stages.

For example, if you have **four weeks**:

Week 1

- Understand the question
- Check the marking criteria
- Gather academic sources
- Create an outline

Week 2

- Complete your reading
- Start drafting

Week 3

- Complete the first draft
- Check that you're actually answering the question

Week 4

- Edit
- Check referencing
- Proofread
- Submit

I'd personally give yourself an **artificial deadline 2–3 days before the real deadline**. That gives you breathing room if work suddenly becomes particularly tiring or something unexpected happens.

4. Use your school experience intelligently

This is potentially your biggest advantage.

When you're learning something at university, actively look for connections with what you're observing in school:

University theory → What am I seeing in practice?

For example:

- Behaviour management theory → What strategies do teachers actually use?
- Child development → How does this appear among pupils of different ages?
- Assessment → What formative assessment techniques are being used?
- Inclusion → How are individual needs accommodated?
- Pedagogy → What makes a particular lesson effective?

Keep a small **reflective notebook** on your phone or laptop.

You might jot down:

"Teacher used mini whiteboards to assess understanding before moving on. Connect this to formative assessment reading."

Just be careful to maintain your school's confidentiality requirements and **never record identifiable information about children** in university notes unless specifically permitted and handled according to your institution's requirements.

You're essentially turning your working week into an opportunity to reinforce what you're studying rather than treating university and employment as completely separate worlds.

5. Use the "minimum viable study session"

Some days you will arrive home exhausted. Don't expect yourself to produce two hours of excellent academic writing.

Have three levels:

● Good energy

60–90 minutes writing/critical reading

● Tired

30 minutes reading or organising notes

● Completely exhausted

10–15 minutes: check tomorrow's task, organise references, download an article, etc.

Then stop.

Ten productive minutes is better than sitting at a laptop for two miserable hours accomplishing nothing.

6. Separate different types of university work

Not every task requires the same amount of concentration.

Save your best concentration periods for:

High-energy tasks

- Essay writing
- Critical analysis
- Difficult academic reading
- Planning assignments

Use tired evenings for:

Lower-energy tasks

- Organising notes

- Formatting references
- Watching recorded lectures
- Reviewing previous notes
- Planning
- Finding readings

For someone working Monday-Friday, I'd make **Saturday morning your most valuable academic period** and protect it for assignment writing.

7. Try a simple 50/10 routine

During a study session:

50 minutes focused work → 10 minutes break

During those 50 minutes:

- Phone away
- Notifications off
- One university task only
- Don't check emails
- Don't start reorganising folders instead of writing

Two genuinely focused 50-minute sessions can accomplish a surprising amount.

8. Have a 20-minute Sunday planning session

Every Sunday, look at the next seven days and write:

Work

- Anything unusual happening at school?
- Meetings?
- Particularly demanding days?

University

- What lectures/readings are due?
- What assignment is approaching?
- What are my **3 most important university tasks this week?**

Personal

- Exercise
- Family/friends
- Appointments
- Rest

Then allocate your study periods.

This is important because **your available energy will vary from week to week**. A fixed timetable won't always survive the realities of working in a school.

9. Prioritise rather than trying to do everything perfectly

At Level 4, it's very easy to think you need to read absolutely everything.

Instead, ask:

What is the most important thing I need to accomplish this week?

When an assignment deadline gets closer, writing that assignment probably becomes more important than making beautiful notes from every lecture.

I'd use this priority system:

- **Must:** deadline approaching / required activity
- **Should:** important but not urgent
- **Could:** useful if there's time

Finish the reds before worrying about the greens.

10. Most importantly, don't schedule every hour

I'd actually advise **against trying to fit university work in every day**.

You're simultaneously:

- working full-time,
- studying for a degree,
- working with children all day,
- and managing normal adult life.

You need recovery time as part of the plan, not as something you earn once you've finished everything.

A routine I'd recommend for you

If I were designing a starting point specifically for your circumstances, I'd try this for **three weeks**:

Monday: 1 hour reading/lecture

Tuesday: 1.5 hours assignment work

Wednesday: 🍃 OFF

Thursday: 1 hour university work

Friday: 🍃 OFF

Saturday: 9:30–12:00 focused assignment session

Sunday: 1 hour lighter study + 20 minutes planning

That gives you around **7 hours of deliberate university work each week** while still protecting Wednesday and Friday evenings.

Then after three weeks, don't ask yourself *"Did I stick to the timetable perfectly?"*

Ask:

"What part of this routine actually worked with my energy levels?"

Change the timetable around that.

And remember, you're in quite a powerful position academically: **you're learning about primary education while experiencing primary education every working day.** If you get into the habit of deliberately connecting theory from university with practice at school, you'll make much better use of the limited study time you have.

Refined response -

- Plan a realistic weekly routine by setting aside specific times for university work around your full-time job. Make sure you also have time each week to rest and switch off.

- Break university work into smaller, manageable tasks such as completing a reading, making notes, planning an assignment or writing a section. Work backwards from deadlines so that work does not build up.
- Use your experience in school to support your university learning by connecting educational theories to situations you observe in the classroom. This can help make your studying more meaningful and relevant.
- Balance studying with your wellbeing by completing harder tasks when you have the most energy and leaving easier tasks for when you are tired. Focus on making steady progress rather than trying to do everything perfectly.

Ai suggested references

Broadbent, J. and Poon, W.L. (2015) 'Self-regulated learning strategies & academic achievement in online higher education learning environments: A systematic review', *The Internet and Higher Education*, 27, pp. 1–13. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2015.04.007> (Accessed: 21 September 2026).

Credé, M. and Kuncel, N.R. (2008) 'Study habits, skills, and attitudes: The third pillar supporting collegiate academic performance', *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 3(6), pp. 425–453. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-6924.2008.00089.x> (Accessed: 21 September 2026).

Richardson, M., Abraham, C. and Bond, R. (2012) 'Psychological correlates of university students' academic performance: A systematic review and meta-analysis', *Psychological Bulletin*, 138(2), pp. 353–387. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0026838> (Accessed: 21 September 2026).

Robotham, D. (2012) 'Student part-time employment: Characteristics and consequences', *Education + Training*, 54(1), pp. 65–75. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/00400911211198904> (Accessed: 21 September 2026).

Library Search

Cottrell, S. (2024) *The Study Skills Handbook*, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Academic writing

Effective time management is widely recognized as an important skill for university students, particularly for those who combine academic study with paid employment and other commitments. Being able to organize tasks, prioritize responsibilities, and allocate time appropriately can help students manage competing demands more successfully. Research by Broadbent and Poon (2015) suggests that time management is an important aspect of self-regulated learning and is linked to higher levels of academic achievement. In addition, evidence from Credé and Kuncel (2008) indicates that effective study habits can positively influence academic performance. Practical strategies, such as establishing a study timetable, setting achievable goals, and dividing larger assignments into smaller tasks, may help students remain organized and reduce the pressure associated with heavy workloads. Adopting these approaches can support students in maintaining a balance between academic responsibilities and employment while working towards their educational goals.

Avoiding procrastination is an important study skill for university students, particularly for those who are balancing academic study with employment. Procrastination involves delaying academic tasks even when a student is aware that this may have negative consequences for their work and academic progress (Steel, 2007). For students who have demanding employment commitments, procrastination can make it more difficult to manage assignments and may lead to increased pressure when deadlines are approaching. Cottrell (2024) suggests that effective study strategies, including planning work and managing time effectively, can help students develop more organized approaches to their academic responsibilities. Breaking larger assignments into smaller, manageable tasks may also make academic work feel more achievable and encourage students to make regular progress rather than leaving work until the last minute. Starting assignments early and setting personal deadlines can therefore help students manage their workload alongside employment. Overall, developing strategies to reduce procrastination can support students in maintaining consistent progress with their studies and managing the demands of university more effectively.

Reflection

Microsoft Copilot was used to explore two study skills that could support students starting degree level study. The first prompts provided a lot of useful information, but some of it was quite general and needed to be narrowed down. A more specific prompt asking for clear bullet points produced information that was easier to understand and more practical to use.

Copilot was also used to find academic resources relating to the study skills. Some useful websites and books were suggested, although the information was quite general and not specific to the course. The UWTSD library and module reading list were therefore used to find more relevant academic sources.

Overall, using Copilot was useful for generating ideas and providing a starting point for the research. However, the process showed that information from AI needs to be checked and supported with reliable academic sources. The university library provided more relevant resources for the assessment and helped to ensure that the information used was appropriate for the course.

Study Skills

How to manage your time effectively and avoid procrastination

Introduction

Successful university study requires organization, engagement and effective learning habits. Two key skills for success are time management and avoiding procrastination.

Time management

- Create a realistic weekly study routine
- Break university work into small, manageable tasks
- Plan assignments in advance of deadlines
- Prioritise important and urgent tasks
- Balance work, university and personal time
- Complete difficult tasks when you have more energy
- Aim for consistent progress rather than perfection

Avoiding procrastination

- Break large assignments into smaller achievable goals
- Set a clear goal for each study session
- Reduce distractions, such as phones and notifications
- Start assignments early rather than waiting until the deadline
- Set personal deadlines before the actual submission date
- Use shorter study sessions when feeling tired
- Focus on getting started rather than making the first draft perfect

Reference list.

Broadbent, J. and Poon, W.L. (2015) 'Self-regulated learning strategies & academic achievement in online higher education learning environments: A systematic review', *The Internet and Higher Education*, 27, pp. 1–13. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2015.04.007> (Accessed: 27 September 2026).

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