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AI acknowledgment

I acknowledge the use of Microsoft 365 Copilot on 16 September 2026 to begin the research of my assignment. I used the prompt:

- 1: Can you give me techniques to avoid procrastination?
- 2: Can you show me time management techniques for studying?
- 3: Can you show me techniques to improve productivity?
- 4: I am studying at level 4 in university with a full-time job, could you show me the best study technique for time management. Can you include sources for the information given.
- 5: Could you give me the best technique to improve and retain productivity while studying a level 4 university course around a full-time job? Please output the response in bullet points and include sources for the information used.
- 6: Could you give me the top three techniques for retaining productivity while researching and writing an academic assignment for a level 4 university course while working a full-time job. Can you give responses in bullet point form and give sources for information used.
- 7: I am a university student studying a level 4 course with a full-time job, could you show me good references and research on delayed gratification in relation to studying and time management? Please only use sources from 2016-2026.
- 8: Can you show me academic evidence that shows the positive effect of using implementation intentions for a level 4 university student? Only use sources from 2016-2026?

9: Are there any credible and beneficial sources that show the positive effects of using the academic delay of gratification while studying at university? Is there any research specific to first year student? Please only use sources from 2016-2026.

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 Timetable

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6:00-6:30	Asleep	Asleep	Asleep	Asleep	Asleep	Asleep	Asleep
6:30-7:00	Get ready for work	Get ready for work and watch the lecture pantopto	Get ready for work	Get ready for work	Get ready for work		
7:00-7:30	Yoga stretches	Prepare lunch for work	Yoga stretches	Yoga stretches	Yoga stretches		
7:30-8:00	Research and prepare interventions	Help the class teacher set up for the morning	Prepare interventions	Help the class teacher set up for the morning	Help the class teacher set up the classroom	Breakfast	Breakfast
8:00-8:30						Yoga stretches	Yoga stretches
8:30-9:00	Bus Duty	Bus Duty	Bus Duty	Bus Duty	Staff Meeting	Workout	Refine the reflection of AI use
9:00-9:30	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Write the main body of the assignment	
9:30-10:00							
10:00-10:30							
10:30-11:00	Break Time	Break Time	Break Time	Break Time	Break Time		
11:00-11:30	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work		Short workout
11:30-12:00							Lunch
12:00-12:30	Lunchtime Supervisory Duty	Lunchtime Supervisory Duty	Lunchtime Supervisory Duty	Lunchtime Supervisory Duty	Lunchtime Supervisory Duty	Lunch	Shower
12:30-13:00							
13:00-13:30	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Write the conclusion	
13:30-14:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work		
14:00-14:30						Social Media and Lego Break	Structure the information for the academic poster
14:30-15:00						Refine the assignment after using Turnitin	
15:00-15:30							Further research information for the poster
15:30-16:00	Travel to University Go over last week's work	Travel home and destress the day	Travel home and destress the day	Travel home and destress the day	Travel home and destress the day		
16:30-17:00	Travel to University Prepare for the upcoming lecture	Play a relaxing game with my sister	Dinner Time with my family	Dinner Time with my family	Dinner Time with my family	Dinner Time with my family	Dinner Time with my family
17:00-17:30	University Lecture	Dinner Time	Read an article on productivity	Research relevant studies for technique 1	Write the Introduction	Write the reflection of AI use	Create the academic poster
17:30-18:00	University Lecture	Play a relaxing game with my sister	Run while listening to music to lower stress and anxiety.		Write the main body		
18:00-18:30	University Lecture	Play with the cat		Research relevant studies for technique 2			
18:30-19:00	University Lecture	Create a study timetable	Short Shower			Social Media Break.	
19:00-19:30	University Lecture		Use CoPilot to assist research			Write the reflection of AI use	Watching my TV show.
19:30-20:00	University Lecture			Draft the assignment outline and what information to include			
20:00-20:30	Train Station Check emails and messages of the day						Catch up with social media and emails
20:30-21:00	Travel home on train Listen to calming music	Prepare lunch for work then relax	Prepare lunch for work then relax	Prepare lunch for work then relax	Relax and unwind from the week		Prepare lunch for work
21:00-21:30	Asleep	Asleep	Asleep	Asleep	Asleep	Watch the family's TV show	Prepare work and university bag
21:30-22:00	Asleep						Asleep
22:00-22:30						Asleep	

Part 2 - Using AI**Initial Prompts**

These are the initial prompts given to Microsoft 365 Copilot:

Prompt 1: Can you give me techniques to avoid procrastination while studying from home with distractions?

Prompt 2: Can you show me time management techniques for studying at a university level?

Prompt 3: Can you show me techniques to improve productivity for someone who struggles to be motivated?

Initial response to prompt 3

Yes. Productivity is really about managing your attention, energy, and priorities, not just working harder.

1. Follow the 80/20 Rule

The Pareto Principle suggests that roughly 80% of your results come from 20% of your efforts.

Ask yourself:

Which tasks have the biggest impact?

What can wait?

What can be eliminated?

Instead of doing 10 small tasks, focus on the 1 or 2 that move you closest to your goal.

2. Use the "Top 3" Method

At the start of each day, identify your three most important tasks.

Example:

Complete revision notes for Biology

Finish Maths homework

Prepare presentation slides

If these three get done, the day has been productive.

3. Time Block Your Day

Schedule tasks into specific periods.

09:00 - 10:00 Study

10:00 - 10:15 Break

10:15 - 11:15 Coursework

11:15 - 11:30 Break

A schedule reduces decision fatigue and helps you stay on track.

4. Eliminate Multitasking

Research consistently shows that switching between tasks reduces efficiency.

Instead:

Work on one task at a time.

Close unrelated tabs.

Mute notifications.

Finish a work block before changing activities.

Single-tasking almost always beats multitasking.

5. Use the Two-Minute Rule

If something takes less than two minutes:

Do it immediately.

Examples:

Replying to an important email

Filing a document

Writing down an assignment deadline

This prevents small tasks from piling up.

6. Work According to Your Energy

Notice when you're most focused.

Many students find:

Morning = difficult work

Afternoon = moderate work

Evening = review and simpler tasks

Use your best energy for your most demanding tasks.

7. Batch Similar Tasks

Group similar activities together.

For example:

- ✓ Check emails once
- ✓ Complete all flashcards together
- ✓ Do all practice questions in one session

Avoid constantly switching between different types of work.

8. Set Clear Deadlines

Even when no deadline exists, create one.

Instead of:

"I'll revise chemistry sometime this week."

Try:

"I'll complete chemistry revision by Thursday at 7 PM."

Specific deadlines encourage action.

9. Take Strategic Breaks

Working non-stop usually reduces productivity.

Try:

25 minutes work, 5 minutes rest

Or 50 minutes work, 10 minutes rest

During breaks:

Stretch

Walk around

Drink water

Avoid getting stuck on social media for long periods.

10. Review Your Day

Spend 5 minutes each evening asking:

What did I complete?

What slowed me down?

What's most important tomorrow?

Small daily improvements add up quickly.

A Simple Productivity System for Students

Morning

List top 3 priorities.

Start with the hardest task.

During Study

Use Pomodoro sessions.

Keep your phone out of reach.

Focus on one task at a time.

Evening

Review progress.

Plan tomorrow's top 3 tasks.

Weekly

Check goals.

Adjust your schedule if needed.

A useful mindset is:

Don't aim to be productive all day. Aim to be productive during your planned work periods.

That approach is more realistic, less stressful, and usually leads to better results over time.

Refined prompts

These are the refined prompts given to generate more detailed responses from Microsoft 365 Copilot:

Prompt 1: I am studying at level 4 in university with a full-time job, could you show me the best study technique for time management. Can you include sources for the information given.

Prompt 2: Could you give me the best technique to improve and retain productivity while studying a level 4 university course around a full-time job? Please output the response in bullet points and include sources for the information used.

Prompt 3: Could you give me the top three techniques for retaining productivity while researching and writing an academic assignment for a level 4 university course while working a full-time job. Can you give responses in bullet point form and give sources for information used.

Prompts to identify sources

These are the prompts given to attempt to identify Copilot's sources and make sure they are credible for this assignment:

Prompt 1: I am a university student studying a level 4 course with a full-time job, could you show me good references and research on delayed gratification in relation to studying and time management? Please only use sources from 2016-2026.

Prompt 2: Can you show me academic evidence that shows the positive effect of using implementation intentions for a level 4 university student? Only use sources from 2016-2026?

Prompt 3: Are there any credible and beneficial sources that show the positive effects of using the academic delay of gratification while studying at university? Is there any research specific to first year student? Please only use sources from 2016-2026.

Discussion

This text will explore two study techniques that are beneficial in the support of academic success. The two techniques discussed are the Academic Delay of

Gratification (Bembenutty and Karabenick, 1998), and implementation intentions (Gollwitzer, 1999, cited in Cousins, 2024).

The first method, Academic Delay of Gratification, is a method where the student delays something they deem as a reward to prioritise important work needed for a long-term outcome over choosing to have that reward instantly (Yan and Li, 2024). For example, a student could choose to wait to have a treat until they have completed the first draft of an assignment. Research shows that using this method is positively linked to academic achievement and success (Chen and Woody, 2025; Corwyn and McGarry, 2020). This approach gives students a clear goal to achieve along with a drive to avoid procrastinating their work. Alaya *et al.* (2021) say that procrastination can negatively affect academic performance and achievement, which is further evidence that this method is an effective study method.

Another point of interest is that there is evidence that this technique has a positive effect on the mental health and well-being of students (Poon, Chan and Tang, 2019). It does this by boosting long-term self-control and promoting a healthy work-life balance, and by boosting self-control it consequently boosts their well-being (Buyukcan-Tetik, Finkenauer and Wiebke, 2018).

The second technique, implementation intentions, is a self-regulatory if-then planning strategy that is more effective than regular planning by setting specific goals and times to complete those goals to avoid procrastination (de Bruyne, 2026). Study shows that using this method results in better goal progress which leads to academic success, since allowing students to create plans on their own increases motivation to complete those tasks by retaining a sense of control and having better control of academic stress (Seo et al., 2018; Rackemann et al., 2023).

In conclusion, these two study techniques promote higher academic performance and decreases procrastination while having a positive effect on mental well-being.

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Reflection on Using Microsoft 365 Copilot for Academic Study

This is a reflection of my experience using Microsoft 365 Copilot to assist my academic study. It will consider how using AI went for this assignment, what benefits I found, the limitations of using AI and if it could be used in my future academic work.

To begin I found that Copilot's interface was very easy to manoeuvre and use. It generated useful responses quickly, studies showed that AI-assisted research was approximately 23% quicker than human only research (Egan *et al.*, 2025). This helped save time at the beginning of the assignment by narrowing down the subject to identify which areas would then be further researched.

At the start of the process, I was quite sceptical as this was my first experience of using generative artificial intelligence, and I was aware that AI had a tendency to be inaccurate and unreliable when giving responses. Although it took some time to improve and optimise my prompts to be more specific, I found they were useful by giving summaries of articles which saved myself from having to scan through articles to find what ones could be useful for the assignment.

However, the credibility of this tool is arguable. Research shows that AI tools have produced unreliable information and sources, even fabricating articles (Alkaissi and McFarlane, 2023; Naeem, 2026). To combat this, I had to use critical thinking and check any sources that I wanted to use to ensure its credibility. This counteracts the argument that AI is a useful tool to save time researching because verifying the

reliability of AI sources takes up time that could have been saved, had I done the research myself from the start.

The biggest downside to generative AI is its negative effect on the environment. AI requires vast amounts of energy to run, in 2024 AI was responsible for around 1.5% of global electricity consumption (IEA, 2025). According to research by O'Donnell and Crownhart (2025), the rough estimate of one person's daily energy consumption using AI would be the equivalent of running a microwave for over three and a half hours. To create energy fossil fuels are burned which releases harmful greenhouse gasses into our environment, contributing to global warming (BBC Bitesize, no date), and in 2017 28% of total global emissions produced by electricity use. In short, global warming causes an increase of wildfires, severe storms, drought, air pollution, disease, a loss of species and a decrease of food sources (United Nations, 2022).

Henceforth, I do not believe I would use Microsoft 365 Copilot, or any other generative AI tool, as it would make me extremely uncomfortable, knowing its detrimental impact on the environment.

Reference List

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Part 3 – Academic Poster

Self-Regulated study: Academic Delay of Gratification and implementation intentions

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478 words

This poster will explore two study techniques that could be helpful to reduce procrastination while studying. It will explain how they work and how to implement them, as well as discuss the positive effects on student well-being.

Academic Delay of Gratification (ADOG)

Setting a goal is a great way to boost focus, motivation and performance while studying (Sutton, 2024). The Academic Delay of Gratification is a method where a student delays a reward until after they have completed a chosen amount of work (Yan and Li, 2024). An example of this could be waiting to have a cake until after they have completed a draft of their current assignment. This gives the student a clear goal and motivation to complete tasks in a timely manner, which helps combat procrastination. By decreasing procrastination, it will have a positive effect on the student's academic performance and achievement (Alaya *et al.*, 2021) which makes this an effective study method for students.

Research shows that incorporating delayed gratification has shown a positive growth in psychosocial well-being and life flourishing (Poon, Chan and Tang, 2019). Delayed gratification has also shown to increase a person's dopamine levels by creating a spike in anticipation (Charanya, 2026). By using ADOG it can help maintain a work-life balance, which in turn has a positive effect on mental health development. It also creates a higher level of self-control over time, by boosting self-control you also boost wellbeing (Buyukcan-Tetik, Finkenauer and Wiebke, 2018).

Implementation Intentions

Implementation intentions are an if-then planning strategy that works by setting a trigger and an action, which translates intentions into specific actions (de Bruyne, 2026). An example of this would be; If it is 4pm on a Monday then I will complete the main body of my assignment. This works better than simply setting a goal by pre-linking a trigger which motivates the student to follow-through with the action. Researchers have found that using implementation intentions have produced a positive effect on goal achievement (Wang, Wang and Gai, 2021). This method has been shown to increase academic success by creating better goal progress. This is because allowing students to create plans on their own increases motivation to complete those tasks by retaining a sense of control (Seo *et al.*, 2018).

Rackemann *et al.* (2023) found that using this technique can support stress management by strengthening action planning, suggesting that structured if-then plans may help individuals respond more effectively to academic stress. By pre-deciding when and what to do, the student removes the mental stress of having to make choices in the moment, which in turn lowers psychological stress and eases self-regulation (Cousins, 2024).

(Source: Piscine26 / Adobe Stock, n.d.)

This poster has investigated two self-regulated study techniques that should support university students to achieve academic success, a healthier mental well-being and reduce academic stress.

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Part 4 – Oral Presentation

[ECEY4012 Presentation.mp4](#)

This link was also shared with the lecture team via email.