

## Note-taking Strategies

### Before Class

Preparation is the start of the learning process. It equips you to be more selective and decisive in note taking. It helps you produce a better set of usable notes.

- Recharge your motivation by focusing on your goals and why you decided to do the course.
- Check course outline for next session.
- What do you already know about topic?
- What did you learn last week?
- Preview new material
- Review last session (texts, Moodle, handouts, pictures, diagrams, headings, summaries, new words / concepts)
- Check Moodle for new information.
- Try abbreviating new course words
- Prepare: pens, folders, clothes, drink / food
- Be mentally prepared (put worries aside)

### During Class

- Arrive well prepared
- Sit where you see well; avoid distractions
- Head your paper: date, tutor, topic, page
- Focus your attention: view time in class as work
- **Listen actively**
  - Make mental connections to what you know
  - Try to visualise the facts
  - Listen / look for structure of session
  - Try to identify main points
  - Identify details or examples that give fuller understanding to main point
- Write **key facts** or ideas in own words
- Note details briefly
- Use abbreviations consistently
- **Use headings**, numbering, underlining, highlighting, colour (maintain active listening)
- Record and format clearly for reading later
- Formulae, calculations: **copy correctly**. Leave space between each formula or calculation.
- Science, physics, math: **copy exact notes**

### After Class

- Where possible, talk to others about the information / ideas presented immediately after class
- Allow time each day to revise your notes:

#### Revision process

- Same day – make a mindmap or brief notes of what you remember from the lecture / class. Ask yourself some questions: **who, which, what, when, where, why, how** to stimulate your memory
- Look at your lecture notes and add to your review any points you had forgotten
- For clarity and understanding, **practise** explaining the topic clearly in your own words to yourself or others
- Fill in gaps in your notes from text books, handouts, Moodle or other sources. Find answers to questions you noted during class.
- File notes in order. Have clear headings.
- Summarise topic on **ONE page** in a way that triggers memory and connections e.g. mind map
- Within a week and regularly every 2-3 weeks, briefly return to notes. Check what you already know before reading notes or summaries.