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Study Factsheet Series - No 9

Returning to Study After a Long Break

Congratulations on your decision to come back to further your education and career opportunities! Many people who make this decision feel unsure about how they will go, so we have put together this information sheet to assist you with a few tips.

Be CONFIDENT

Mature-aged students generally do very well at tertiary study. Although you may have been away from study for some time, the life experience you have had in the meantime can serve you very well in your approach to study and your chances of success. Adults returning to study tend to put in a lot of effort and can reap the results.

ADJUSTING to study

It's common for mature-aged students to feel worried about how they will cope with assignments, exams and the whole thing. Some things that will help you are:

- > Organising your study schedule – make a weekly timetable for when you will study away from class.
- > Make a list of due dates and cross them off when done!
- > If things seem overwhelming, break them down into small steps – such as a piece of work you can complete in an hour. When that's done, set a goal for the next step.
- > Get to know your learning style – it will help you study more efficiently. Such as, do you learn best by reading, saying things out loud, having a picture or diagram of the facts, making a song of what you need to learn?
- > Create a support group – find some others in a similar situation in your class and meet outside of class time to support each other as you study.
- > Learn some skills for studying for exams and researching assignments – your Study Skills Teacher in the Learning Centre (Library) and the Student Counsellors can help with this.
- > Give yourself little rewards and positive feedback whenever you achieve something. Such as, a treat after an assignment's handed in or a short break after completing an hour's study.
- > Maintaining motivation – sometimes it can be hard when everything's due or overdue or seems too hard – try to remind yourself of your future goals (what do you hope to be doing in two years' time?) and how far you have come already. Talk to the Counsellors to get a boost!

What teachers expect

Teachers will expect that you will:

- > Find out what is required for your assessment tasks and when they are due
- > Organise yourself and your time
- > Hand in your work on time
- > Advise teachers if your work will not be on time or if there are any other issues affecting study

- > Treat others with respect
- > Not plagiarised, your work is your own
- > Use eLearn to keep up with what is going on
- > Seek help if you need it (from Student Services and/or teachers)

Juggling It All! (Study/Work/Family/Life)

One of the most difficult things for mature students is that they often have lots of other things happening in their lives that also need their attention. Some tips are:

- > Avoid overload. You are super-person enough just to be doing this – some other things are going to have to let go a little to fit the new demands in. Don't expect too much of yourself with work and other commitments – try to plan ahead to have less on your plate than you did before study.
- > Getting enough sleep, relaxation and exercise. 'Who's got time for those?' you may find yourself thinking. But paying attention to these will mean that you will study more efficiently, remember more and get less stressed when the heat is on. Put it in your weekly schedule.
- > Managing the others in your life. When the study pressure is on, things can get tricky with partners, children, parents, friends, finances, and other things. Come and have a chat with Student Counsellors – you deserve the support!

Other normal worries

- > They've made a mistake to let me in
- > I don't know anybody
- > School leavers seem so young and confident
- > Computers? I have enough problems with the mobile phone!
- > What if this turns out to be the wrong course for me?
- > For any of these issues, try talking it over with someone helpful, such as a friend, a teacher, a Student Counsellor, or the Study Skills Teacher.

Sources of Support for you

- > Learning Centre (Study skills teachers/using computers/literacy and numeracy/how to use the library)
- > Counselling (esp. re self-confidence/getting organised/stress/life issues)
- > Disability support
- > Migrant support
- > Scholarships for fees (see the Counsellors)
- > Peer tutoring
- > Student Services Hub
- > Find a mentor – someone supportive

Remember, you deserve all the support you may need, and the team at CIT are here to help you succeed in your studies and reach your goals.

Want to make an appointment with CIT Student Support staff? Call our reception on **(02) 6207 3290**.

Find more helpful CIT Student Support information on **eLearn** :

Click **Student Links** tab then **Student Services and Support** option at the top of any eLearn page.

Studiosity – 24/7, 365 days a year, online help with assignments and written work:

Click the **Study HELP** tab at the top of any eLearn page.