



**BA (HONS)  
PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**

**An Articulated Progression Route for  
Foundation Degree Students**

**(120 credits at level 3)**

**COURSE HANDBOOK**

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# **BA (HONS) PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**

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# A Aims and Objectives

Foundation Degrees have been in place at National level since 2001. As of March 2005, 38,000 students were enrolled on Foundation Degrees (level 5 within the NQF) in England & Wales, and in the Eastern region alone over 3,000 students were enrolled on more than 200 Foundation Degrees. The *BA (Hons) Professional Studies* is intended to address the progression needs of Foundation Degree students working and studying within the East Anglian region. It provides a coherent, bespoke route through to an honours degree which can be combined with full or part-time employment.

The aim of the *BA (Hons) Professional Studies* is to provide an articulated progression route for students who have successfully completed a Foundation Degree (in any subject) or equivalent study at higher education levels 1 and 2. Students progressing to the *BA (Hons) Professional Studies* will be required to meet with the Course Director prior to the commencement of the course and will complete a learning and skills diagnostic checklist which will highlight and identify any skills deficits or learning shortfalls to be developed during their studies on the BA programme. The course aims to provide a two-year or one year part-time programme of study which is in keeping with the demands of level 3 study and which allows sufficient time for personal and professional growth and development.

Students engaging with the programme will normally be in a professional placement or in full-time/part-time employment with a professional body or employer. The course structure and flexible format of delivery are specifically tailored to enable students to combine their professional and work-based commitments with their studies on the course and considerable emphasis is placed on students applying and demonstrating their learning in the workplace. Students may be supported by an informal 'mentor' in the workplace (a suitably qualified and experienced professional colleague) but the academic guidance and support necessary for them to maximise the effectiveness of their work-based learning and to integrate their academic studies within their professional role(s) will be provided by the Course Director and the tutor team.

The course aims to build on the diversity of the student cohort and will seek to maximise the learning benefits to be gained from inter-professional and inter-organisational interaction. Whilst students will be supported in their studies by the Course Director and individual tutors, peer support and constructive collaboration will also be a key feature of the student learning experience. This will further enhance the opportunities for inter-professional interaction whilst enabling students to learn from each other's academic and professional experiences.

By the time students complete the *BA (Hons) Professional Studies* it is expected that they will have developed not only the study skills, organisational abilities, communication skills, research experience, learner-

independence and self-reflective qualities expected of a graduate, but also the team-working, ITC and inter-personal skills and attributes which will enhance their effectiveness within the workplace and equip them to initiate strategies, or adapt to change and new challenges in their professional lives.

The course also aims to develop:

- A commitment to academic study at university level.
- Independent thought and study.
- Analytical and critical ability in the use of evidence.
- Core skills, such as an ability to present, communicate and discuss ideas and concepts logically, both orally and in writing.
- Originality in supervised research and an ability to demonstrate an understanding of the mechanics of scholarship.

## **B Programme Attributes & Learning Outcomes**

### **Programme attributes**

Level 3 hours level study is characterised by a different set of attributes to study at Foundation Degree level. In particular, a level 3 honours programme should:

- place a considerable emphasis on learner-autonomy and independent, self-directed learning;
- give proper emphasis to the mechanics of scholarship (e.g. academic systems of citation);
- allow opportunities for students to apply knowledge, skills and understanding within more sophisticated and demanding assessments such as dissertations, projects or reflective, critical portfolios;
- place considerable emphasis on the development of students' presentational and oral communication skills through a greater emphasis on seminar-based discussion, oral presentations and team exercises;
- encourage students to be self-reflective and critical of their own learning, performance and coursework;
- provide a factual or knowledge base with the emphasis on the more complex and/or unpredictable aspects of the subject(s) in question;
- require the use of in-depth, analytical case studies;
- require the application of a range of practical subject-specific techniques and approaches;
- equip students to discuss confidently those aspects of their subject in which confidence can be placed; but should also enable them to appreciate where open-endedness, multiple solutions or ambiguity exist;
- provide greater levels of one-to-one student learning support and academic guidance;
- facilitate progression to further HE study (e.g. post-graduate study).

## **Learning outcomes:**

On completion of the BA (Hons) Professional Studies students should be able to:

- reflect on and apply their academic learning effectively within a workplace context;
- work effectively within a team and with their student 'buddy' and demonstrate, where appropriate, team-working and team-leadership skills within a professional context;
- work towards the completion of coursework in a disciplined fashion according to deadlines imposed;
- consider and critically evaluate views other than their own;
- exercise independent, critical judgment in the close reading of texts;
- demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of key aspects of their subject and/or professional role;
- design and execute a substantial piece of original research or a work-related investigative project based around self-formulated questions and using appropriate research methods, data sources and resources;
- assemble, interpret and analyse evidence as a means of forming a well-articulated argument;
- employ well-developed time and resource management skills;
- play a pro-active role in seminar discussions;
- demonstrate an ability to execute complex tasks towards a specified purpose or goal;
- perform effectively in periods of self-directed study;
- demonstrate imagination and flexibility in seeking and achieving solutions to problems;
- evaluate and reconcile competing or contradictory theories, views and/or explanations;
- deliver oral presentations using an appropriate range of audio-visual resources and presentational aids;
- be reflective and critical in relation to their own research, writing and Professional Studies;
- employ appropriate academic referencing/citation conventions consistently and to an appropriate standard of competency;
- demonstrate a significant degree of integrity and intellectual maturity;
- effectively employ a range of ITC resources in the completion of coursework including the storage, retrieval and analysis of data, and the use of basic software packages to perform simple forms of computer-based analysis;
- identify, collate and interpret statistical information;
- progress to further appropriate study at UG or PG level.

## **Knowledge and understanding**

Students should be able to:

- demonstrate an awareness and understanding of group dynamics in work-place settings, and be able to maximise their own effectiveness and that of colleagues in group contexts;
- reflect on their own learning within groups whilst also being aware of, and sensitive to, the learning styles of others within group and professional settings;
- recall and apply effective methods and strategies for the supervision of others in the workplace;
- recognise the inevitability of change in the workplace and be able to manage its effects in a positive fashion;
- influence or initiate change in professional contexts.
- demonstrate effective strategies for developing and sustaining motivation in themselves and in others;
- apply effective counselling skills in their professional role (e.g. listening skills, empathy);
- demonstrate an understanding of the effective use of IT in the workplace and in their own professional development, as well as an awareness of how IT is often misused or abused in professional and academic contexts;
- recall a range of management strategies for maximising the effectiveness of groups in professional settings;
- demonstrate a basic understanding of human resource management;
- describe the legal frameworks within which commercial and professional organisation work, describe some of the implications of recent legislation (i.e. EU work-directives, UK disability legislation) and provide examples of how these are being implemented and managed in the workplace;
- recall the rationale and purposes of risk assessment and provide examples of how risk assessments are conducted in professional settings;
- demonstrate effective leadership skills, as well as an ability to take-up and execute roles and tasks for which they have a sole or shared responsibility;
- give examples of their own role in developing effective organisational strategies;
- provide instances in which they or others have implemented organisational strategies;
- evaluate organisational strategies;
- demonstrate effective project management skills and experience.
- provide concrete examples of instances where they have utilised their learning and experience in the questioning and affecting of organisational practice.

## **Cognitive Skills**

Students are expected to develop cognitive skills including the ability to:

- reflect on and apply their academic learning effectively within a workplace context;
- consider and critically evaluate views other than their own;
- exercise independent, critical judgment in the close reading of texts;
- demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of key aspects of their subject and/or professional role;
- design and execute a substantial piece of original research or a work-related investigative project based around self-formulated questions and using appropriate research methods, data sources and resources;
- assemble, interpret and analyse evidence as a means of forming a well-articulated argument;
- play a pro-active role in seminar discussions;
- demonstrate imagination and flexibility in seeking and achieving solutions to problems;
- evaluate and reconcile competing or contradictory theories, views and/or explanations;
- be reflective and critical in relation to their own research, writing and Professional Studies;
- demonstrate a significant degree of integrity and intellectual maturity.

## **Subject Specific/Practical Skills**

Students are expected to be able to:

- work effectively within a team and with their student 'buddy' and demonstrate, where appropriate, team-working and team-leadership skills within a professional context;
- employ effective time and resource management skills;
- employ effective project design and management skills.
- demonstrate imagination and flexibility in seeking and achieving solutions to problems;
- effectively employ a range of ITC resources in the completion of coursework including the storage, retrieval and analysis of data, and the use of basic software packages to perform simple forms of computer-based analysis;
- recall and apply effective methods and strategies for the supervision of others in the workplace.
- recognise the inevitability of change in the workplace and be able to manage its effects in a positive fashion.
- influence or initiate change in professional contexts.
- demonstrate effective strategies for developing and sustaining motivation in themselves and in others.

- apply effective counselling skills in their professional role (e.g. listening skills, empathy).
- demonstrate an understanding of the effective use of IT in the workplace and in their own professional development, as well as an awareness of how IT is often misused or abused in professional and academic contexts.
- recall and apply key proven management strategies for maximising the effectiveness of groups in professional settings.
- carry out basic risk assessments in a professional context.
- demonstrate effective leadership skills, as well as an ability to take-up and execute roles and tasks for which they have a sole or shared responsibility.
- assist in developing effective organisational strategies.
- assist in the implementation of organisational strategies.
- evaluate organisational strategies.
- question and affect organisational practice.
- demonstrate critical thinking.

## **Key Skills and Attributes**

Students are expected to be able to:

- work effectively within a team and with their student 'buddy' and demonstrate, where appropriate, team-working and team-leadership skills within a professional context;
- work towards the completion of coursework in a disciplined fashion according to deadlines imposed;
- design and execute a substantial piece of original research or a work-related investigative project based around self-formulated questions and using appropriate research methods, data sources and resources;
- assemble, interpret and analyse evidence as a means of forming a well-articulated argument;
- employ well-developed time and resource management skills;
- play a pro-active role in seminar discussions;
- execute complex tasks towards a specified purpose or goal;
- perform effectively in periods of self-directed study;
- demonstrate imagination and flexibility in seeking and achieving solutions to problems;
- deliver oral presentations using an appropriate range of audio-visual resources and presentational aids;
- employ appropriate academic referencing/citation conventions consistently and to an appropriate standard of competency;
- effectively employ a range of ITC resources in the completion of coursework including the storage, retrieval and analysis of data, and the use of basic software packages to perform simple forms of computer-based analysis;

- identify, collate and interpret statistical information.

# C Course Structure and Module Outlines

## Working in Groups (10 credits)

### Indicative content

- understanding groups
- reflection
- supervision
- change
- motivation
- counselling skills
- use and abuse of IT in communication

### Method of Assessment

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Group-based assignment                      | Weighting: 30% |
| 2. Written exercise focusing on group dynamics | Weighting: 70% |

## Working in Organisations (20 credits)

### Indicative content

- Management styles
- Organisational structures
- Human resources
- Legal framework (employment, H&S@W, DDA etc)
- Risk assessment
- Leadership skills & responsibilities

### Method of Assessment

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| 1. Work-based investigation and report<br>(2,500-3,000 words)                         | Weighting: 60% |
| 2. Risk assessment exercise.  | Weighting: 20% |
| 3. Written assignment (1,500 words) focusing on a key<br>topic covered in the module. | Weighting: 20% |

## Developing & Implementing Strategies (30 credits)

### Indicative content

- Developing effective organisational strategies for (min) Human Resources, Finance, Product and Market
- Implementing organisational strategies
- Evaluating organisational strategies

- Project management
- Questioning and affecting practice
- Critical thinking
- Management case-study

### **Method of Assessment**

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Work-based investigation and report focusing on organisational strategies (3,000 words) | Weighting: 60% |
| 2. Class-based tests   | Weighting: 20% |
| 3. Oral presentation (10 minutes) based around a poster presentation                       | Weighting: 20% |

## **Dissertation/Project Module (60 credits)**

This module provides students with an opportunity to undertake a focused investigation leading to the production of an 8-10,000 word dissertation/project based around issues relating to their work-based practice and professional roles or the organisations in which they work. In the preparation phase students will be able to engage with a comprehensive programme of weekend study skills workshops focusing on the following areas:

- Project design & project parameters
- Using statistical data in coursework: do's and don'ts
- Delivering effective oral presentations: a practical guide
- Using Microsoft PowerPoint as a tool to present your research project
- Working effectively in a group context – using your group as a learning resource
- Critical thinking & critical evaluation of sources, data and practice
- Introduction to Library resources at UEA
- Word-processing (beginners & intermediate)
- Learning from feedback: becoming a reflective learner

Students will be supported in their research both by their workplace mentor and, in particular, by the Course Director. Each student will be allocated 7 separate 40 minute one-to-one tutorial supervisions with the Course Director or an appointed research supervisor. These tutorials will give students an opportunity to seek guidance on their projects, whilst also giving Course Directors an opportunity to provide guidance and feedback on structure, approach, presentation, sources, initial drafts, time-management issues, workplace issues etc. Students will submit their completed dissertations by mid August (1Year programme) or the end of June (2 Year programme).

## Method of Assessment

1. Initial research proposal for dissertation (to include an evaluation of research sources and resources, secondary literature etc)	Weighting: 10%
2. Oral presentation 1	Weighting: 0%
3. Critical review and comparison of two published works relevant to research area or work-based investigation (approx 2,500 words)	Weighting: 15%
4. Oral presentation 2 (20 minutes): a summary of research/investigation results and conclusions	Weighting: 15%
Dissertation/Project of (8-10,000 words)	Weighting: 60%

## D Coursework and Assessment

The aim of assessment is:

- ❖ to help students get the best out of the course.
- ❖ to help students develop their critical faculties.
- ❖ to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate the achievement of the stated learning outcomes of the course.
- ❖ to ensure that real learning has taken place on an individual as well as a group basis.
- ❖ to help tutors contribute to the student's learning through a process of sympathetic and constructive criticism of the student's work.

Assessment is based on coursework only. There are no exams. The type of assignment will vary and your Course Director will provide full details and guidance. The types of assignment vary from module to module but include:

### Practical in-class individual and team-based exercises

These test students' subject knowledge as well as their interpretative, observational, team-working, listening and communication skills.

### Oral presentations

These enable students to demonstrate the key transferable skill of effective oral communication.

### Essays

These are intended to provide students with an opportunity to:

- focus on key themes/topics covered within the pathway.
- critically analyse and compare key sources and buildings.
- demonstrate a grasp of key issues, debates and controversies raised in the secondary literature.

### **Group-based assignment**

These allow students an opportunity to work towards completion of objectives as a cohort.

### **Seminar papers focusing on work-place issues**

These provide students with an opportunity to research and share with their peers (and tutors) their research on a particular topic within a wider discussion in class. In some cases the student's seminar paper will provide the focal point for discussion.

### **Workplace-focused reports and investigations (work-based)**

Give students a chance to explore a work-related problem or topic in detail using a combination of work-based evidence and academic material.

### **Critical reviews of published works**

These provide a chance for students to employ their skills of close textual analysis to undertake a critical evaluation of two related published sources (normally two journal articles, industry reports).

### **Initial research proposal for the project/dissertation**

Tests students project-design skills and their ability to identify clear objectives, research methodologies, evidence and research questions which are to be addressed.

### **Dissertation/Work-based project**

A major research project of 8-10,000 words which provides an opportunity for students to pursue/research a topic in considerable depth under close supervision, and to produce an original piece of work which relates to their professional role(s) and the organisation in which they are working.

## **E Teaching and Learning**

This course will be taught by a team of tutors who are experts in their respective fields. A range of teaching materials will be employed. Students will be given guided reading before and during the course and will be expected to undertake preparatory reading in advance of class sessions and in relation to coursework. Whilst some coursework will be completed individually, some may involve group work. Guidance will be given on reading and on appraisal of source material so that students may embark on independent study with confidence.

Teaching and learning strategies will include:

- lectures
- problem-solving exercises
- practical workshops

- seminar discussions
- role-playing exercises
- student-led presentations
- independent study exercises
- team-working and team-leading exercises (e.g. via the 'buddy' system of peer mentoring).
- mentoring in the workplace,
- the application of skills and knowledge in the workplace through workplace-based exercises and assessments
- workplace-based research

Students will be trained to use IT, including e mail and the WWW more effectively as a communication tool, as a research resource/tool and as a 'work' tool essential in enhancing their professional performance and effectiveness .

## **Tutorials**

Tutorial sessions are built into the structure of each module. These provide opportunities for the Course Director or tutor to engage in a dialogue with individual members of the group and to discuss expectations and concerns, to give guidance on study skills and also the techniques required to tackle assignments. They also allow for a more detailed review of assignments submitted. If additional help is needed, this may be arranged between the individual student and the tutor or Course Director.

## **Studying on a Higher Education Course**

The amount of study time you commit to the course will largely be dictated by the other commitments you have as an individual. If you have a very demanding job or professional role or diverse family commitments (or both!) you will probably find juggling these commitments with your studies a less than straight-forward exercise. However, don't under-estimate the time management skills which you already possess as an adult learner – experience suggests that mature students often possess a range of 'life skills' which enable them to engage successfully in part-time study despite all the other demands on their time and energy.

Students often ask how many hours a week they will need to dedicate to their studies with the University. There is no simple answer to this question. The amount of time you are willing or able to commit will vary according to your circumstances and in accordance with what you want to get out of your studies. As with many other aspects of life, 'the more you put in the more you will get out'. However, as a rough indication you should try to allocate at least 10 hours a week to independent study (for background reading, finding sources, coursework preparation, visiting key research resources etc) in addition to your weekly class sessions if you are spreading the course over two years, and 20 hours a week if doing the course in one year. Other commitments (e.g. holidays) may make it difficult or impossible to allocate

time each week in a rigid manner, and it may be necessary to vary the time you spend in study on a weekly basis. Higher education study can be highly rewarding and enjoyable but to study successfully will require a certain degree of self-discipline and application.

Experience suggests that one of the most enjoyable aspects of your course will be the weekly contact you have with your tutor and fellow students. Do try to engage with both. You are likely to be studying with people from a wide variety of educational and social backgrounds, each of whom will bring with them a wealth of life experiences, skills and personal qualities. Getting to know your fellow students can be a real pleasure and lasting friendships are frequently forged on continuing education courses. Student groups can provide a very supportive environment in which to study and it is not uncommon for students to support and help each other with aspects of their studies. For example, students often share information with each other (e.g. website tips, or sources of cheap books and other learning resources), comment constructively on each other's coursework, or collaborate in group projects. If you get to know your fellow students well this is likely to add a welcome and positive dimension to your studies.

It is always worth remembering that students learn in different ways and respond differently to different teaching and learning strategies. Try to keep an open mind at all times and respect the diverse needs and learning styles of other group members. The approach taken by individual tutors may also vary considerably and you may be exposed to teaching formats/approaches which are unfamiliar to you or which fail to conform to past experiences at school, college, or work. Again, it is worth remembering that higher education study isn't about being a passive receiver of knowledge and your tutor is likely to encourage students to be proactive in class and in the field, and to engage in active learning activities (e.g. groupwork) which develop and test knowledge, skills and understanding in different ways.

## **F Role of the Course Director**

The Course Director is the person who you will probably have most regular contact with during your studies on the course. Course Directors are normally highly experienced tutors who are experts in their field of study. The Course Director is the person who oversees the day-to-day organisation and running of the BA (Hons) Professional Studies and who leads the teaching team responsible for delivery of the award. The Course Director has a key role in ensuring with reasonable skill and care the quality of the course including teaching and assessment, student and tutor feedback and support. The Course Director is the person who will normally be your first port of call when you need academic guidance, advice on progression or when you think you may need an extension of time for submission of coursework. You will

normally get to know your Course Director quite well and he/she will take a personal interest in your studies and your professional/academic development. The Course Director will coordinate the assessment on the course, ensuring that students are aware of the mode of assessment and submission deadlines.

## **G Completion of the Award**

To complete the award, students must:

- Attain a satisfactory standard and satisfy the examiner in submitting each of the pieces of work identified for each module as set out in Section D .
- Amass a minimum of 120 credits from the modules outlined in Section C

## **H Guided Reading**

### **Books**

There are a number of books held in the UEA Library which contain academic studies relating to HE study, work-based learning and professional development. These include:

### **Work-based Learning & Professional Development**

Brockbank, A. et al (eds), (2002) *Reflecting Learning in Practice*, Gower  
Caldwell, B., (1993) *The Return of the Mentor: Strategies for Work-based Learning*, Falmer Press

Conner, M & Clawson, J., (2004) *Creating a Learning Culture: Strategy, Technology & Practice*, Cambridge Univ Press

Eggertsdóttir, R., (1995) 'From 'workshop' to 'workplace': a research project on teachers learning and educational change' (UEA M.Ed Thesis)

Gibb, S., (2002) *Learning and Development: Processes, Practices and Perspectives at Work*, Palgrave Macmillan

Gray, D., (2004) *Learning Through the Workplace: A Guide to Work-based Learning*, Nelson Thornes

Thompson, N., (3<sup>rd</sup> edn 2006) *Promoting Work Place Learning*, Bristol

Gherardi, S., (2005) *Organisational Knowledge: The texture of Learning in the Workplace*, Blackwell

Massieu Fagoaga, G., (2004) 'Learning in Organisations: A Qualitative Inquiry into Work-based Learning' (UEA MA Thesis)

Moon, J., (2005) *Reflection in Learning and Professional Development: Theory & Practice*, Routledge Falmer

Rainbird, H., (2004) *Workplace Learning in Context*, Routledge

Taylor, J., (2005), *Learning at Work: Excellent Practice From Best Theory*, Palgrave Macmillan

### **Successful HE Study**

Allison, B., (1997), *The Student's Guide to Preparing Dissertations and Theses*, Kogan Page  
Buzan, T., (1974, revised 1982 and later), *Use Your Head*, BBC Publications, Aerial Books  
Chambers, E., & Northedge, A., (1997) *The Arts Good Study Guide*, Open University  
Cottrell, S., (1999), *The Study Skills Handbook*, Macmillan Study Guides  
Fairburn, G., and Winch, C., (1991) *Reading, Writing and Reasoning: A Guide for Students*, Open University  
Frank, S., (1998), *Study Secrets*, Back Pack Study Series  
Marshall, L., and Rowland, F., (1993) *A Guide to Learning Independently*, Open University  
Northedge, A., (1990), *The Good Study Guide*, OUP  
Northedge, A., Thomas, J., & Lane, A., (1997) *The Sciences Good Study Guide*, Open University  
Peck, J., & Coyle, M., (1999), *The Student's Guide to Writing*, Macmillan Study Guides  
Rose, J., (2001), *The Mature Student's Guide to Writing*, Palgrave Study Guides

More detailed guided reading will be provided at the beginning of and during the course by the Course Director.

## I Useful Websites

### Useful UEA Links

<http://www.lib.uea.ac.uk/> UEA Library

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/itcs/> UEA IT and Computing Service

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/itcs/svguide/sv.html> The UEA IT Survival Guide for 2005/6

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/itcs/docs/d20.shtml> The UEA Dial-up Service – provides some very useful guidance on how to dial-up to UEA service from your home computer. You can register online at

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/isd/forms/uea/dialup.shtml>

### Study Skills Links

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/his/ueanetwk/teaching/undergrad/skills/> The UEA School of History's Study Skills site – an extremely useful source of guidance on a wide range of academic study skills which has a much wider relevance than just to historians. Regardless of the subject you are interested in, this should provide some valuable tips.

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/env/technical/maps/> The Map Collection of the School of Environmental Sciences.

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/dos/learning/> The Study Skills section of the Dean of Students Office (DoS) at UEA

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/dos/learning/Tools/Helpsheets/contents.html> Study Skills 'help sheets' available via UEA Dean of Students Office  
<http://www.cmp.uea.ac.uk/information/study.jsp> The Study Skills section of the School of Computing Sciences

## **Anti-Virus & Firewall Software**

<http://www.grisoft.com/doc/1> a highly rated freeware antivirus utility. Regular updates of its signature files, which are vital to protect you from the latest threats, are also free.

<http://www.zonelabs.com/store/content/home.jsp> Another simple and powerful software firewall which prevents malicious attacks on your PC. Available in a free version which is frequently updated.

<http://www.cmp.uea.ac.uk/information/study.jsp> The Study Skills Guide produced by the School of Economics

# **J Preparing for Higher Education Study**

## **1) Reading Skills for Higher Education Study: Some Survival Tips**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Reading academic texts, whether in book, article or electronic form, is important to develop an understanding of the subject you have chosen to study. This can be time-consuming, however, so it is important that you use the time you have available effectively. What follows is some guidance which is intended to help you develop effective reading skills and to 'get to grips' with reading for academic study at higher education level.

Your tutor or Course Director will draw your attention to reading material during the course, and may recommend specific texts which help you to:

- Develop your general understanding of the subject in question.
- Achieve a better understanding of key issues/themes or controversies relating to it.
- Respond to or contribute to class discussions.
- Prepare coursework for submission

### **1.2 What are your objectives in reading a text?**

Before tackling a text, try to have a clear sense of what it is you need to gain from it. For example, are you trying to obtain:

- A broad overview of a subject?
- A detailed knowledge of the subject or a specific topic?
- Answers to some specific questions?

### **1.3 How should I read it?**

Once you are clear about what you hope to obtain you can adapt your reading accordingly by either:

- Skimming quickly through the whole text.
- Reading selected passages/chapters.
- Making a detailed study of the text.

Careful use of the contents page of a book/report, or the index, will help you to ascertain what bits of it are pertinent. Rarely are students required to or expected to read a whole book unless it is a set text on a literature course/module.

#### **1.4 Some 'survival tips'**

When reading a text try to:

- Establish a clear sense of the aims and conclusions of the author and the methodology (approach) employed.
- Make notes as you go, but try to keep these as brief as possible. Some students prefer to organise their notes around key questions they have been set or which they have set themselves. Others prefer to use a diagrammatic approach akin to a flow chart with key notes/points arranged spatially in relation to one another. There is no right or wrong way to take notes, though you might find it useful to show your notes to your tutor so that he/she can comment on them and help you to develop your note-taking technique.
- Make a note of any sections/points which you feel are apposite to your needs and which might be suited to inclusion - for example, in the form of a 'quote' - in your coursework.
- Divide the reading into manageable 'chunks' – since concentration spans tend to be limited to 30-40 minutes you will probably find it easier to read a text in stages than at one sitting.
- Pay particular attention to the introduction, conclusions and the first and last paragraph in each chapter or section. These are where explanations and useful summaries are normally to be found.
- Draw a distinction between statements of fact and statements of opinion.
- Explore your own responses to the text in question – did you enjoy reading it? If so, why? Was it difficult or 'hard work'? Again, try to understand why.
- Keep one eye on your own writing style. Try to emulate examples of what you consider to be 'accessible' or particularly engaging writing. Pay close attention to the use of language, structure, and the presentation of evidence.
- Think about how the author uses diagrams to complement the text. If you found an illustration or map particularly easy to understand, try to identify why and then emulate its characteristics in your own maps or illustrations.

## 1.5 Difficult texts

Sometimes you may find it difficult to understand what is being said. Don't let this worry you – we all experience this from time to time. It is normally a fault of the writing style of the author rather than a fault or lack of intelligence on your part. If you experience difficulties it may help to:

- Re-read the text more than once
- Try to pick-out and make note of what appear to be key/salient points/arguments or conclusions.
- Use a dictionary to find the definitions or meaning of any technical terms.
- Put the text aside for a few hours or a day and then come back to it afresh.
- Share the text, or parts of it, with a fellow student and 'pool' resources in this way.
- Ask your tutor for guidance. If the tutor is familiar with the text, he or she may be able to clarify aspects of it for you. Remember, however, that there are thousands of texts for most subjects and your tutor won't have been able to read them all!

## 1.6 Coping Strategies

At the beginning of the course or module you will be provided with a syllabus which will normally contain a reading list. In some cases (for example in a Course Handbook), the reading lists may be quite lengthy. Don't be intimidated by this – the information is there to help you not frighten you.

On receipt of a book or reading list you may wish to adopt the following coping strategies:

- Select what appear to be the most relevant texts. Normally you will be given a brief list of 'key texts'. This is a good place to start!
- Seek guidance from your tutor to determine, for example, which texts are most pertinent to a specific assignment.
- Select the most appropriate reading method (discussed above). Remember that the objective of effective reading is not to read every word but to extract facts, opinions, arguments and ideas as necessary.
- Define your reading tasks and set realistic targets, reviewing them as necessary. For example, if reading around a topic for an essay, limit yourself to a set number of texts and stick to it. There is often a temptation to carry on reading long after the point has arrived when you should start writing!

## 1.7 A word of reassurance

Most students (yes, even the really confident or apparently 'bright' ones) experience problems in their reading at one stage or another. These problems might include:

- Remembering material which has been read.
- Maintaining concentration.
- Tackling 'difficult' texts.
- Coping with the quantity of reading in the time available.
- Finding the right texts.

Experiencing problems like these is actually quite normal and most students eventually develop their own unique 'survival strategies' which enable them to overcome them or at least limit their effects. As you gain experience and confidence, and obtain feedback from your tutor or Course Director, you will be better placed to find the strategy which suits you best. You may wish to discuss 'how' you study with your tutor, who may be able to suggest ways in which you can fine-tune your reading skills and thus make more effective use of your time.

## **2) Note-taking Skills**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Developing an effective means of taking notes is an important skill to learn during your higher education studies. This is a skill which will almost certainly also have benefits in your daily life, since we all occasionally find ourselves in situations where it would be useful to record information in an organised manner. We all think and work in different ways, however and a technique which suits one student will not necessarily suit another. You should concentrate, therefore, on experimenting with different methods until you find one which suits you.

Taking notes ranges from scribbling down a few points to recording a detailed account of a verbal discussion, a lecture, a text or a field session. In order to determine the most effective means or method to use, you need to be clear about why you are bothering to take notes at all.

### **2.2 Why take notes?**

For example, is your aim to:

- To create a personal record of the text/material/discussion?
- To record and organise key points in order to inform an assignment (e.g. an essay, a report or an oral presentation)?
- To collect or condense material for revision purposes
- To transform learning into a proactive experience (rather than merely a passive one).

### **2.3 The advantages of taking notes**

Taking notes can help you to:

- Focus your attention on a text or a lecture.

- Become more actively involved in learning by deciding what to record and what not to, and then applying the information and learning acquired.
- Develop your concentration and recall skills.
- Develop a kind of an auxiliary memory bank by committing to paper more information than you can commit to memory.
- Develop mental organisational skills which will serve you well when preparing coursework.
- Revise

## 2.4 When to take notes?

There are a variety of contexts in which you may find it useful or necessary to take notes:

- In lectures
- Whilst reading a periodical, book or website
- In class seminars or discussions
- Tutorials (one-to-one or small group discussions with your tutor)
- When watching a video or TV programme
- When listening to a radio programme
- In a field session. On some courses students are expected to submit field notebooks so it is important to develop a note-taking discipline early-on.

## 2.5 How to take notes?

Firstly, it is important to stress that there is no right or wrong way to take notes, though it could be argued that some methods are more effective than others. Moreover, the way in which you take notes needs to suit your own needs and your own style of learning. We all learn in different ways and use strategies which suit our strengths and weaknesses as individuals. You may try several different methods before finding one which suits you, or you may continue to use different methods in different situations.

There are a number of commonly styles of note-taking:

- Outline notes – These can be quite brief and simply record key points or a discussion or textual argument. They can include section headings, bullet points and some form of hierarchy of points. Time and space can be saved by using abbreviations as appropriate. Emphasis can be given to particular points by use of a highlighter pen, underlining etc.
- Summary notes – These may be very brief indeed, and just summarise an argument or discussion using a handful of bullet points or a sentence which ‘sums up’ the thrust of a discussion.
- Flow diagrams – These can be used to organise information spatially or in a sequence on a sheet of paper.

- Mind maps (or Spider Diagrams) – These can be used to articulate key points spatially and according to linkages or relationships between topics/points. The norm is to provide a summary of the main topic in the middle of a blank sheet and enclose it in a box or circle. Draw radiating lines to sub-topics and to sub-topics of sub-topics etc. These types of notes can be useful for analysing ideas.

## **2.6 Some useful note-taking tips**

When taking notes you may find it useful to:

- Record the source from which notes were taken at the top of the page.
- Keep notes of page numbers in the margin along the way so that a page-specific reference/citation can be provided later (e.g. in an essay or a report).
- Record your own observations/thoughts in boxes on the page as an aid to later interpretation.
- Keep your notes as neat as possible and well organised so that you can read them and find them when you need them.
- Listen first, take notes later. If listening to a lecture you may find it more useful to make only the most basic notes, or simply listen rather than making any notes at all, so that you can understand, assimilate and perhaps even question what is being said. The same applies to a seminar discussion. You can then draft a summary of the key points immediately afterwards whilst they are fresh in your mind. The key is to find the right technique for you – one that suits your learning style.
- Try to pay attention to how the information in a book or lecture is organised (for example, a tutor may use of series of headings on OHP transparencies or on a flip chart. These headings may provide you with a simple structure for your own notes.
- Don't worry if you are unsure whether you are taking too many or too few notes – getting the balance right isn't easy! Like anything else, you will probably get better at it as you get more practice.
- Occasionally review your notes at home to see whether they are actually useful. If their value seems limited you may wish to revise your approach to note-taking.
- Use card index boxes. You can summarise key arguments, facts and other details in a condensed form on small card index sheets – these are more manageable than A4 sheets and can be spread around a table in order to get ideas, facts and arguments into a visual sequence. They can also be arranged alphabetically enabling you to keep track of key sources.

## **3) Writing an Essay**

### **3.1 Think about the question**

Choose a topic that interests you. Think about the title you have chosen. Work out exactly what you are being asked (or have set out) to do. You may even want to 'define' the meaning (or at least your interpretation) of some of the words or terms which appear in the essay title. For example, if the term 'Byzantine art' appears in the title, you should be specific about how you intend to interpret this in your essay.

### **3.2 Research**

Look for relevant material. Make short notes. Record the source of your information. Keep your notes in a retrievable form.

### **3.3 Planning**

Think about the approach you intend to take. Make a plan or diagram of the essay's main points. Arrange your material in the order you intend to use it.

### **3.4 Writing**

Bearing in mind that you will almost certainly need to write a second draft, get your ideas onto paper/screen and then revise them. Before revising, check the word length. Pruning may be necessary. If the word length is substantially short of the recommended word limit then you probably need to do some more research!

### **3.5 Structure**

#### **3.5.1 Introduction**

This should give some indication of the scope of the essay and the approach you intend to take. The introduction should also provide a rationale for your study - why did you choose this topic and why do you perceive it to be important? Remember that the purpose of an introduction is to supply sufficient background information so that the reader can understand and evaluate your conclusions without needing to refer to previous publications on the topic.

#### **3.5.2 Discussion and development of argument**

Remember to:

- Answer the question set!
- Use evidence to support your assertions.
- Keep to the point.
- Be specific and avoid generalisations.
- When discussing a work of art, or any other form of graphic image you may like to include a reproduction of the work/image (properly labelled), or refer the reader to a generally available source where the work is illustrated.
- Credit your sources.

- Explain how statistical data has been obtained and how it has been manipulated.
- Do use quotations, especially those from primary sources, but keep them short and relevant.
- Use footnotes to incorporate additional information which might impede the flow of the main text.

### **3.5.3 Conclusion**

This should sum up your argument and possibly refer to the title with which you began. At this stage, look back to your introduction. Sometimes the final sentence can help to inform the opening one. The type, number and nature of the conclusions you draw will depend upon the methodology adopted and the characteristics of the research techniques and evidence employed. Since a number of key points/issues will have been raised, discussed and considered in each section/paragraph of your essay, your conclusions should be brief and clearly stated, providing a summary of the principal findings of your research. You can, if you wish, point out potentially fruitful avenues of future research.

### **3.6 A final tip!**

It is all too easy to become too immersed in your own material. Get someone else (preferably someone you trust to provide honest feedback) to read through your essay prior to submission.

### **3.7 Acknowledgements**

Credit any significant technical help or assistance you receive, the source of any equipment or other materials, and any outside support (e.g. a work colleague, an employer or manager). If your research has required the support of local organisations their assistance and co-operation should also be acknowledged.

## **4) Giving an Oral Presentation: How do I Do That?**

During your studies on the BA (Hons) professional Studies you will be required occasionally to deliver an oral presentation in front of your tutor and your peers. There is no right or wrong way to give an oral presentation, but here are some tips which you may wish to keep in mind when developing and delivering your own presentations.

### **4.1 Developing your presentation**

- Choose a topic which interests you.
- Try to keep your topic as 'focused' as possible by concentrating on a small topic rather than a large, open-ended one. For example, rather than trying to summarise the pattern of Bronze Age settlement in Norfolk, try to illustrate the evidence for Bronze Age settlement in one parish or a small group of parishes as a means of engaging with wider themes and controversies.

- Design your presentation around a series of flip cards, acetates, or slides. These can provide you with useful 'prompts' or 'sign-posts' along the way.
- Try to get the text of your presentation onto 2 sides of A4 which can then be handed out to fellow group members before, during or after your presentation as a record of the event.
- Limit and chose carefully the visual materials/slides/acetates you produce to support your presentation.
- Practice and time your presentation at home once or twice before actually delivering it in class.

## **4.2 Delivering your presentation**

- Have a title appropriate to the content of your presentation.
- Indicate at the start the subject and scope of your presentation.
- Present relevant information (e.g. evidence necessary to support a hypothesis or argument).
- Employ appropriate visual materials.
- Provide a summary or conclusion of some kind –a bullet-point style review of salient points/findings will normally suffice.
- Include an appropriate response to questions from your audience.
- Maintain good eye contact with your audience.
- Project your voice effectively and vary your delivery so as to avoid sounding monotonous or bored.
- Avoid classic anxiety behaviour (e.g. clinking coins in a pocket or saying 'um' too many times).

## **5) Contributing to Seminar Discussions**

### **5.1 Introduction**

A seminar can best be described as a class-based discussion that is focused around a particular topic and which is normally structured either by the tutor or by members of the class. This format of learning is particularly common at higher education level and is a characteristic of continuing education courses. To get the most out of this type of learning you will need to develop your seminar skills. Seminars come in many shapes and sizes. Some may take the form of brief discussions focused around a particular topic; some may be longer, taking up a whole session or a series of sessions. On some courses, all sessions might take the form of seminar discussions. On others, seminars might be only a part of a more diverse learning strategy which includes lectures, field sessions, group visits, tutorials and practical exercises.

In order for you to get the most out of studying at university level, you are encouraged to contribute as much as you can to seminar-style class discussion. One of the frequent learning outcomes on our courses is that students will be able to respond orally (by speaking) to issues and themes

raised by the study of your subject. Your responses, questions, thoughts, and chosen quotations are valuable for yourself and the other students – and for the tutor too.

We are not looking for polished recitals of facts so much as proof that you are engaging with the material covered in the class. Seminar skills require a balance between **listening** and **responding**, following the thread of an argument and bringing your own knowledge and ideas into play when appropriate.

It is not always easy to launch in to a discussion when you are feeling unconfident and do not necessarily know everyone else in the group. For this reason you will frequently be given the opportunity, during class sessions, of working in pairs and small groups, responding to some questions or discussion points raised by the tutor, and then reporting them back to the wider group. Alternatively, you may find you have so many thoughts and questions that it is difficult for you to listen to other group members as you want to do a lot of speaking yourself.

Here are some tips for successfully participating in class seminars and discussions. Following them will not only ensure success in an assessment of seminar skills, but will also equip you to participate in group discussions outside a classroom context.

## **5.2 Preparing for a class**

- If you have been given any reading or researching to do for the forthcoming session, make a few notes as you go along – even if you are not preparing to write an essay or a report. A few striking quotations, a question or two, or a few ideas of your own about a particular subject will be very useful material for a classroom discussion.
- Borrow a book from the library. Even if you don't have time to read it all the way through, glancing through the contents and index will give you an idea of where to find relevant or interesting information. Make a few notes (remembering to reference properly!).
- Think about how you can broaden the context of your subject. If you are studying a particular site, for example, try to find out whether there are comparable sites elsewhere or how the site reflects key aspects of contemporary society. Use the internet as a quick research tool.
- If you don't understand a discussion, something you have read or any material covered in previous sessions, make a note to check with the tutor in the next session. It may be that other students were puzzled too and would appreciate any clarification.
- Think about your own experience and knowledge so far in relation to the subject. If you are studying history or archaeology, for example, has anything you have visited, studied previously, heard or seen on the

radio or TV any relevance and could you share it with the group? Does your prior experience of professional work or experience of working with colleagues in a workplace setting allow you to provide an insight into a particular theme or issue?

### **5.3 In the Class**

- Listen to the tutor or student if they are giving a presentation. In addition to given handouts, make a few short notes on any interesting issues raised. Be guided by whether the tutor has invited questions throughout their presentation or talk, or has requested people save discussion to the end.
- If you are given some time to work in pairs or small groups, always practice giving your responses to a given subject. Speaking up in small groups makes it much easier to speak-up in larger groups. Note down one or two interesting outcomes of the small group exercise or discussion, even if you have not been nominated 'note-taker' for a particular small group.
- In small groups or pairs, from time to time, summarise what you think has been said by yourself and others. This will give you and the others a chance to clarify the responses and rectify any misunderstandings.
- If you are particularly enthusiastic about an aspect of your course, say so – and explain why. Enthusiasm is catching!
- In the same way, if someone else is explaining their enthusiasm – listen to them. You may well feel a renewed interest in the particular subject area.

### **5.4 In the Seminar discussion**

- Don't be afraid to introduce a text or a discussion point. If the tutor asks a general question or invites general responses, try to offer your own angle or point of view, highlighting themes and issues which seem relevant to you. Remember that you don't have to be word-perfect or polished: the aim is to communicate your ideas, rather than make a speech.
- Do your best to respond to particular points. Consider how what you have learned already in the class could be brought to bear in the discussion. Contributing to discussion involves thinking about your information in a way that is relevant. Don't just recite facts that you know; select the ones that are relevant.
- Do allow your knowledge of the subject to come into play. You may have more ideas as the discussion continues. Some background reading or other preparation will stand you in good stead for expanding your ideas.

- Broader context. Remember that any connections you have with the broader context may well be useful for the subject under study. As an adult student you have a wealth of experience and probably know more than you think. This may involve having read some key books on the subject, watched a key television programme, attended a public lecture or having visited particular sites. You may remember facts from radio programmes or conversations, as well as from broader references your tutor may have pointed out in class. Putting a subject in its context – as long as you don't stray away from the subject altogether - will always raise the level and awareness of the discussion.
- Your tutor will help facilitate the discussion, gather threads together, and highlight the important themes and issues. Follow their lead – but if you have a burning issue which has not been addressed, dare to broach the topic yourself.
- Always be courteous to other students and the tutor, even if you disagree with them, and let everyone have their say. If you find a particular comment interesting – say so! Do not be negative about others' comments, in the same way that you would not wish other students to be offhand or dismissive about your own contribution. Ask for clarification when necessary. If someone asks you for clarification, don't be unnerved – just re-state your idea as simply and clearly as you can.
- In every class discussion, do try to contribute something, at least in a small way. It will break the ice and help you to feel part of the group.

You are studying your subject because you are interested in and enthusiastic about it. Seize the chance to speak about it with a group of people who feel the same way – being in a class of like-minded people, with a knowledgeable tutor, is a unique opportunity to share interest and generate enthusiasm and a passion for improving skill and finding out more. Who knows where it might lead?

## 6) Presentation of Coursework

### 6.1 Word-processing

**Two copies of each piece of written work should be submitted.** One will be returned to you, the other will be retained by Continuing Education. All work should ideally be submitted in typescript or computer-generated form. The advantages of word-processing are so great that it is strongly recommended that you familiarise yourself with word-processing techniques. As a registered University student you are eligible to use the facilities of the Computing Centre at UEA, including the Help Desk service which can assist or provide advice about word-processing packages and all forms of computer software and hardware. Most modern packages can provide a very high standard of presentation. Students who submit work in hand-written form will not be penalised.

## 6.2 Pagination

- Completed work should have properly numbered pages with text on one side of the page (the facing page) only. Illustrations, tables, graphs etc. should be properly integrated within the sequence of pagination if this is possible.
- Page numbers should be placed at the lower right corner or centre bottom of each page.

## 6.3 Title page

Each piece of coursework should carry the following information:

- \* Your name
- \* The exact title of the piece of coursework
- \* The title of the award for which you are studying (i.e. BA (Hons) Professional Studies)
- \* The title of the Module on which you are studying (Working in Groups)
- \* The name of the department in which you are registered (School of Education & Lifelong Learning)
- \* The name of the Course Director
- \* The date submitted (Day, month and year)

## 6.4 Assessment feedback form

Part (A) of the assessment feedback form should be filled in by you and the form attached to the essay/project when it is submitted to the Course Director for assessment. The Course Director or appropriate tutor will fill in part (B) of the assessment feedback form. You will receive the pink copy of the feedback form for your own reference.

## 7) Academic Referencing Conventions

The purpose of the academic conventions set out below is to facilitate communication between you and your readers. Properly documented work makes it possible for your reader to follow your exposition and to verify your arguments and conclusions. There is no right or wrong way to employ academic conventions, though some methods are more widely used and recognised than others. Many archaeological or science texts employ a method of providing citations referred to as the 'Harvard Method'. Others employ a different method referred to as the 'Cambridge Method' or 'Traditional Method'.

### 7.1 The Harvard Method

**Text:** (This is what a paragraph would look like on a page in the text of your essay or report)

Archaeologists working in the United States, such as Luke Smith and Ivan Day have recently put forward a theory which suggests that feathers were a relatively common characteristic of Cretaceous period dinosaurs (Smith and Day 1999: 22). A rival group of archaeologists working in Britain have suggested that this conclusion is based on a misinterpretation of the available evidence (Bradford 2000: 190-194; Johnson 2000(a): 123-128).

**Bibliography:** (This is organised alphabetically by surname of author(s))  
Bradford, J., (2000), *Dinosaurs: A Revised perspective*, Blackman Books  
Johnson, B., (2000), *Dinosaurs Revisited*, Howard Books  
Johnson, B., (2000(a)), *Dinosaurs on the Edge*, Howard Books  
Smith, L., & Day, I., J., (1999), *Extinction Theories: Why did the Dinosaurs Disappear?*, Drayton Publishing UK

## 7.2 The Cambridge or 'Traditional' Method

### Text:

(This is what a paragraph would look like on a page in the text of your essay or report)

Archaeologists working in the United States, such as Luke Smith and Ivan Day have recently put forward a theory which suggests that feathers were a relatively common characteristic of Cretaceous period dinosaurs.<sup>1</sup> A rival group of archaeologists working in Britain have suggested that this conclusion is based on a misinterpretation of the available evidence.<sup>2</sup>

Endnotes (Placed either at the end of a chapter or the end of an essay, after the text but before the bibliography)

1. See Smith, L., & Day, I., J., (1999), *Extinction Theories: Why did the Dinosaurs Disappear?*, Drayton Publishing UK, p.22 (If this book is referred to several times in the text, a short title reference could be supplied for use in subsequent endnotes (e.g. Smith & Day, *Extinction Theories...* )
2. See Bradford, J., (2000), *Dinosaurs: A Revised perspective*, Blackman Books, pp.190-194 and Johnson, B., (2000(a), *Dinosaurs on the Edge*, Howard Books, pp.123-128

Bibliography (Placed at the end of a book or an essay, after the endnotes. The bibliography should list all sources consulted, including books, articles, essays, manuscript sources, web sites etc.)

The bibliography is organised alphabetically by surname of author(s)  
Bradford, J., (2000), *Dinosaurs: A Revised perspective*, Blackman Books  
Johnson, B., (2000), *Dinosaurs Revisited*, Howard Books  
Johnson, B., (2000(a)), *Dinosaurs on the Edge*, Howard Books  
Smith, L., & Day, I., J., (1999), *Extinction Theories: Why did the Dinosaurs Disappear?*, Drayton Publishing UK

## 7.3 Quotations

These should only be used when necessary. Try not to quote from secondary works when the point could just as easily be made in your own words. (However, if you are paraphrasing someone else, make sure that you acknowledge this in a separate note.

#### **7.4 Interpolations**

These are your insertions within quotations and should be identified by being enclosed in square brackets, thus: "Ask not what your country can do for you [he said] but what you can do for your country".

#### **7.5 Omissions**

Should be identified by ellipsis consisting of three spaced . . . stops. Ensure that you leave a space before the first stop. Omissions of more than five lines should be indicated by a triple ellipsis, . . . . . Omissions of substantial blocks of text should be indicated by a triple ellipsis on a line of its own:

. . . . .

#### **7.6 Dates and Numbers**

These should be used with care. Try to avoid abbreviating (i.e. twentieth century, not 20th century) and starting a sentence with a date. Note: 1650s, not 1650's. Write simple sums of money in full (i.e. "A labourer's wage in the 1650s was only six pence per day" and not "6d" . Use figures to express more complicated sums (i.e. "John Smith's moveable goods amounted to only £25 3s 4d").

#### **7.7 Conventions of Citation**

##### **7.7.1 Books can be cited thus:**

P. Barker, *Understanding Archaeological Excavation* (London, 1986)  
pp.12-13

or

Beddick, G., (1991), *Managing Workloads: New Dimensions in Professional Practice*, Routledge pp.65-76

(Take the information from the title page and the back of the title page, not from the spine or the dust jacket).

##### **7.7.2 Articles can be cited thus:**

C. Bagger, 'Children as Learners', NRG Bulletin, No.5 (1996) pp. 37-42.

or

Bagger, C., (1996) 'Children as Learners', *NRG Bulletin*, No.5, 37-42.

##### **7.7.3 Contributions to books can be cited thus:**

A. Nother, 'Getting the Best out of Colleagues in the Workplace' in Peter Clark (ed), *Collaboration in the Workplace: Theory & Practice*, (Leicester, 1999) pp.93-110

#### **7.7.4 Dissertations and theses can be cited thus:**

J. Smith, *Workplace Learning: An Agenda for the Future* (MA dissertation, UEA, 1999)

L. Campbell, *Sir Roger Townshend and his Family: A Study of Gentry Life in Early-seventeenth-century Norfolk* (UEA PhD thesis, 1990)

The full reference should be given at the first citation within a shorter piece of work or within a chapter in a longer piece. Thereafter a comprehensible and consistent short-title may be used:

Hassell Smith, 'Militia rates ...', pp.95-102

or

Campbell, Roger 'Townshend...' p.6

#### **7.7.5 Manuscript citations**

The diversity of manuscript materials can give rise to considerable difficulties in citation. Try to ask yourself the following questions, however, and you will not go far wrong:

'Will my references permit my reader to recognise the material to which I am referring'?

'Is the information sufficient to permit him/her to identify and consult the source'?

The main elements to consider are:

The Location: the repository and/or the institution responsible for providing access:

Norfolk Record Office

Suffolk Record Office (East Suffolk, Ipswich)

The call number: the shortest code which will enable the repository to produce the piece. For example:

PRO SC 6/1036/5

Norfolk, Raynham Hall, chest 3 in upper attic

The location within the piece. For example:

.... the number of the item within the piece, e.g., Box 96, letter 17

.... the page, e.g., BL Lansd MS 120 p.123

.... the folio, e.g., PRO E.402/781 fol.67

#### **7.7.6 Citing visual references**

When an essay contains illustrations these need to be correctly cited in the text and the illustrations themselves should be titled.

The text:

In the text, titles should always be underlined or *italicized* and the date of the work must be given in brackets, followed by the number of the illustration in (brackets). Here is an example:

'In *Elephant Killed in the Night by Chapman* (1862) (fig.10), Baines makes a precise, detailed drawing ...'

If there is a lot of discussion about this image, all the empirical data should also be given in a note (footnote or endnote). Insert the note number after (fig. 10). The empirical data is all the information about the work under discussion, namely the artist, title, date, medium, size and collection. The footnote would read

1. Thomas Baines, *Elephant Killed in the Night by Chapman* (1862). Pencil. 20.3 x 36.8 cm. Coll: Museum Africa.

or

1. Thomas Baines, *Buffalo Hunt in the Rain Forest* (1863). Oil on canvas. 45.7 x 66 cm. Coll: Royal Geographical Society.

Note that when using examples of art, the size of work is always given in centimeters in all publications except those written by Americans.

Height precedes width.

### 7.7.7 Captions for illustrations

Underneath an illustration you can indicate to the reader what the illustration shows. E.g.:

Fig. 10

Thomas Baines, *Elephant Killed in the Night by Chapman* (1862). Pencil. 20.3 x 36.8 cm. Coll: Museum Africa.

The subject of the illustration may not be immediately obvious to the reader and a longer caption might be required if the reader is required to refer to specific aspects of the illustration.

In some cases an illustration may be easier for the reader to interpret if it is properly annotated to draw attention to specific features. For example, if using an aerial photograph, a series of arrows pin-pointing salient features (church, hedgerow, house, etc) or features of particular significance or relevance to your discussion could be very helpful for the reader or marker.

### 7.7.8 Citing web sources

The Internet (WWW) is becoming an increasingly important source of information for students. If you are using the Internet in your studies, make sure you avoid plagiarising the work of others by following these simple rules:

When citing information in a Website you should include the following information:

Citation order:

- Title (underline or use italics)
- Full URL: [http: // internet address](http://internet address)
- Date visited [in square brackets]

For example:

*Sedgeford Historical & Archaeological Research Project (SHARP)*. URL: <http://www.sharp.org.uk/courses/course%20index.htm> [1 June 2003]

*Museum of London*. URL:

<http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/MOLsite/menu.htm> [3 June 2003]

*Norfolk Historic Buildings Group*. URL: <http://www.nhbg.fsnet.co.uk/links.htm> [2 May 2003]

Additional guidance on how to cite electronic sources can be found in:

Xia Li & Nancy B. Crane (1995), *Electronic style: a guide to citing electronic information*, Mecklermedia

or

At the University of Bournemouth's Guide to Citing Internet

Sources:[http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/library/using/guide to citing internet\\_sourc.html](http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/library/using/guide_to_citing_internet_sourc.html)

### **Some technical terms explained:**

*Browser* - This is the name given to the software mounted on your computer which searches the Internet. It communicates with a server which is mounted on the networked computer you connect to. Browsers include *Netscape Navigator*, *Explorer* etc

*Internet* - Also referred to as *The Net*. A world-wide network of networks.

*URL (Uniform Resource Locator)* - The unique address used to locate pages, sites and other resources on the Internet. Given such an address, the reference can easily be located. With most browsers, the URL of the document you are viewing is given in a window at the top of the screen. On occasion, the URL may be too long to be completely visible in the window. In such cases, you can click on the address to produce a cursor and use the cursor keys to move to its end. Normally, if a web page is printed-off the URL is provided at the bottom of the page, along with the date. This is probably the most fail-safe method of finding the full URL address.

*World Wide Web (The Web, WWW, W3)* - The system for linking documents on the Internet.

## 8) Study Skills and Academic Writing Guides

Price, G., & Maier, P., (2007) *Effective Study Skills*, (Longman)

McMillan, K., & Weyersw, J. (2006) *The Smarter Student*, (Pearson Education Ltd)

Cottrell, S., (1999) *The Study Skills Handbook*, (Macmillan Study Guides)

Allison, B., (1997), *The Student's Guide to Preparing Dissertations and Theses*, Kogan Page

Buzan, T., (1974, revised 1982 and later), *Use Your Head*, BBC Publications, Aerial Books

Frank, S., (1998), *Study Secrets*, Back Pack Study Series

Northedge, A., (1990), *The Good Study Guide*, OUP

Northedge, A., and Chambers, E., (1997), *The Arts Good Study Guide*, OUP

Peck, J., & Coyle, M., (1999), *The Student's Guide to Writing*, Macmillan Study Guides

Rose, J., (2001), *The Mature Student's Guide to Writing*, Palgrave Study Guides

Those who wish to improve their writing skills are likely to find the following website very useful:

<http://www.litencyc.com/StyleBook/TheEnglishStyleBook.htm>

Some students may find that they need additional guidance and support with regard to the development of their higher education study skills. In addition to the texts listed above, there are two key additional sources of training available to students on the BA (Hons) Professional Studies:

Each year Continuing Education runs a programme of **FREE study skills workshops**. These run on Saturdays during the year. The topics and dates will be forwarded to you. These workshops provide an accessible and valuable forum in which to develop key IT and academic study skills and past feedback from students suggests that they are extremely effective in addressing student needs. Remember to book your place on the workshops you think will be of most benefit to you as soon as you can.

## 9) Coping with the Pressures of Higher Education Study

Learning is exciting. But it can also be very pressured and stressful, especially when you are combining study with work and/or family commitments and responsibilities. A lot has to be achieved in the limited time available. This section focuses on some of the anxieties or concerns that you are likely to encounter as you embark on your courses and suggests ways of coping.

### What difficulties should I expect?

Student life is a transitional period. You do a course because you think it will enable you to do or have something that you want, such as increased job

opportunities or enhanced enjoyment of life. Studying is a part of a process of change. Change can cause a lot of anxiety.

### Changing identities

You may go from being a biggish fish in a smallish pond (as a sixth-former at school, as a full time parent or a manager in a full time company) to being a tiny fish in an enormous pond. You may feel differently about yourself and other people may react to you differently. You will be making new friends and have a chance to make a fresh start. You may be working with peers who are your intellectual equals for the first time in your life. You may find you are cleverer than you thought – or not so clever! It takes time to adjust to this new sense of who you are.

Studying at the University will bring new opportunities. There may be sports, social and political activities open to you which you've never tried before. This has two aspects: it can be very exciting, but it can also be terrifying. Don't get swept away! Recognise how much you are dealing with at once and go at your own pace.

### Family relationships

Relationships with your family may change too. This can be especially difficult if you are the first one ever to go to university, or the first of your gender. Other family members can have complicated feelings about this. They may secretly envy you, or be afraid that your new experience will make you too strange and hard to communicate with – no longer 'one of us'. Their reactions may cause you to feel insecure, lacking in confidence or guilty about having this opportunity. But there can also be problems if everyone in the family has been to university. Can you live up to their standards? Do you have to work in the same field as them or do they feel threatened by your choice of subject? The pressure to succeed may also contain a hidden message about not being too successful. The most important thing with family situations of this kind is that these feelings need to be acknowledged by being talked about. This makes them easier to deal with.

## **How will I deal with practical issues?**

### Get advice

Finance, travel and childcare can all present daunting problems. Ask for help. Don't be proud. You are not alone in your difficulties. There are many institutional sources of advice and information including the UEA Students' Union. The Students' Union publishes a handbook or a welfare manual outlining sources of help. The Dean of Students' office at UEA also provides a range of services which may be useful to you, including the Careers Service, an excellent Counselling Service and academic guidance via a series of highly qualified student advisers.

### Take advantage of social opportunities

The beginning of a course is a key time for making new friends. If you are shy you may find it very difficult to join in. But it's important to remember that there will be many students (yes, even adults!) who are feeling nervous and putting a brave face on it. If there is something that especially interests you, such as music or sport, find out if there is a university society that focuses on this. Once you have found some kindred spirits life becomes more manageable.

### **How will I cope with the academic work?**

Inevitably you will feel anxious about this to start with. Will I be good enough? Can I keep up?

#### The basics

Get the basic information you need right from the start. How many lectures, seminars or weekend workshops are compulsory or necessary? With regard to assignments, what exactly are you being asked to do? For example, with written work, what is the question you are being asked to address? How many words are you expected to write? What is the deadline for handing it in? What resources are available? Where is the library? What hours is it open and how many other students are likely to want to read the same book at the same time? Is there a photocopying machine and do you have to pay to use it? Are hand-written essays acceptable or do you have to use a word processor? If your tutors don't make themselves clear, ask questions and be persistent.

#### Managing time

Make yourself a realistic timetable. When you are assigned a task estimate how long you think it will take you. Then add on a little bit more time, as you have probably been over-optimistic in the first place. Then set a time each day, or each week, to do it. Thinking ahead also involves taking into account any resources you will need to complete the task. It's better to allow too much time and then find the bonus of a couple of hours off, than to stay up all night, drinking black coffee, in a panic.

#### Set clear priorities and be aware of consequences of not doing so

You need to make hard choices. You may want to go to that meeting, film or party, but the essay has to be handed in tomorrow. Or you'd like to spend every waking minute with a new partner, but you haven't done enough revision. Part of the art of survival is to make realistic assessments of consequences. If you are late handing in an essay, what is the penalty? Try to negotiate with your Course Director before a deadline and ask for an extension, if necessary. What will happen if you do badly in a piece of coursework?

#### Get support

Taking responsibility for your own learning sometimes needs some support. Each student has an advisor (normally your module tutor or Course Director),

who can act like a sort of academic mentor. Be prepared to ask for support and help from central student services like Careers, Counselling and the Dean of Students' Office when necessary.

### **What if the work gets too much?**

If you feel things are getting on top of you it's important to acknowledge this at an early stage before you fall too far behind. The first to do is to seek objective advice from your Course Director who will know you, your work and the standards required. It may be that your work is fine but your personal standards are too high – you think your work is not good enough, but others are satisfied with it. On the other hand, it may be that you have not yet learned to organise your work realistically or that you have a problem with deadlines. Your workload may seem overwhelming because you're experiencing emotional problems, which are affecting your ability to concentrate and work effectively. These may be to do with unresolved difficulties from your past education or to do with current problems. It is important to seek help and support if you are distressed. In either case the earlier the problem is acknowledged the more likely it is that a solution can be found.

### **What if there's nobody else like me?**

There will be! The likelihood is that all of the students on the BA (Hons) Professional Studies will have recently completed a Foundation Degree and so will have gone through a similar experience of higher education study and all the pressures which this brings with it, including, of course, juggling study with work commitments, leisure activities and family or parental responsibilities. Seek out others in the same position as you. You may feel alone if you are the only single mother on your course or the only one over the age of 40 but the chances are that somewhere there are others in your position to who you can look for support, comfort and encouragement.

## **K Progression**

The *BA (Hons) Professional Studies* is an articulated progression route aimed primarily (though not exclusively) at students who have already completed a Foundation Degree (or the equivalent study at level 1 and 2). Successful completion of the course will result in the award of a UEA Bachelor of Arts degree in Professional Studies. On completion of the BA, some students may chose to end their engagement with higher education study at that stage. Some, however, may chose to pursue further HE study, either at undergraduate or post-graduate level.

Further information about UEA undergraduate and post-graduate courses is available in the main UEA UG and PG prospectuses. If you would like a copy of either prospectus to be forwarded to you by post, please phone the

Admissions Office (Faculty of Social Sciences) on 01603 593252 or 01603 591451.

Completion of the BA (Hons) Professional Studies degree will provide evidence of successful study at undergraduate level. This will be important in facilitating progression to Masters level courses, or, indeed, to higher level research degrees (MPhil/PhD). Students who wish to learn more about specific degrees should contact direct the Admissions Office of the appropriate Faculty (e.g. Faculty of Science, Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Social Sciences). It is important to remember also that other regional HE providers such as City College Norwich and Anglia Ruskin University may provide courses which are pertinent to your progression needs. Your Course Director will be able to advise you about progression opportunities.

Additional guidance and advice can be sought from Adam Longcroft, School Director of Teaching & Learning, School of Education & Lifelong Learning. Adam can be contacted on **01603 592261** or at [a.longcroft@uea.ac.uk](mailto:a.longcroft@uea.ac.uk).

## **L Some Useful Reminders**

### **Do**

- Hand in TWO copies of your coursework by the published deadline.
- Ensure that your name is clearly printed on coursework.
- Submit your coursework with an Assessment Feedback Form attached. Part A of the form should be completed by you.
- Contact your Course Director in advance if you think you may need an extension of time allowed for submission of coursework – otherwise strict penalties will apply, including deductions of marks.
- Ensure that you adhere to the word limits imposed for each assessment. Flagrant disregard of word limits will be penalised.
- Inform us of any change of address or telephone number.
- Contact the Continuing Education Office if you would like to discuss a matter that cannot be resolved by your tutor or Course Director.

### **Don't**

- Hand in coursework in bulky folders, lever arch files, plastic wallets or in comb bound form (unless specifically requested to do so by your Course Director). Simply staple each piece of coursework in top left corner.
- Let problems or concerns build-up – discuss them with your Course Director at the earliest opportunity. Most problems can be overcome.
- Forget to submit TWO copies of coursework!

