

Making notes is a skill that will help you to manage the information content of your programme of study. This checks your understanding and avoids intentional plagiarism.

- o Use highlighter pens or a colour-coding scheme to distinguish different sections of notes.

Beware of collaborative working on assignments as this may lead to accusations of plagiarism. Making notes is something that you will do in many different situations: lectures; seminars; tutorials; reading a book or journal; surfing the Internet; watching television or a video. This involves copying information 'word for word' from another source e.g. tutor, book, handbook. The safest idea is to work collaboratively while you are learning a subject and to produce your assignments independently.

Making Good Notes: During your university career you will make notes from a variety of sources, including lectures, books, and the Internet. Making good notes is about identifying and selecting relevant information. You can

- o list main headings and topics – keyword notes.

To engage fully in the process of making good notes it is a good idea to ask questions within your notes and to consider the accuracy and relevance of what you are reading. Finally, you may find that in the early days of your study programme you make copious notes, but as you become more experienced you might make fewer, but more specific, ones.

- o Leave spaces for additional notes or comments.
- o Use arrows, symbols, diagrams.

This type of collusion may lead to accusations of plagiarism or unfair means.

Referencing your Notes and Plagiarism: It is very important to keep full details of the information sources you use when making notes.³ It is usually impracticable to try and copy all the information presented to you during a lecture. Instead, listen to what the lecturer is saying, read any visual aids, and make notes from your understanding.

- o what assumptions does the author make?

What you should know when you make notes:

- o Start with background details, for example, lecture notes should include the module title, the date, the title of the lecture, and the lecturer. This makes it easier to organise your notes for planning or revision.
- o To help avoid unintentional plagiarism make notes in your own words.
- o Notes should be concise, clear and consistent. This is a good idea as it improves learning and enables you to exchange and share ideas. They may be helpful in your defense if an accusation of plagiarism is made against you. In addition, you may find them helpful for revision as well as other learning and teaching activities.

It is a very important practical skill and your notes will help you to

- o identify and understand key ideas.
- o prepare for examinations.

Making notes Taking notes This involves making your own record of key information and ideas. You may add your own ideas or questions, or make links to the work of others. Used during lectures or reading. Used when copying specific information, for example, advice on an assignment, details about room changes.

- o Do you want an overview of the subject?
- o Do you want to record extremely detailed information?
- o copy out specific details, for example, a quotation from a book. This will be a summary, the key points, or details about the original source. Spend some time after the lecture, or after you have finished reading an article, reviewing your notes.
- o Should you do some additional reading on the topic?
- o how can this be verified?
- o do other researchers agree with this position?

DO NOT COPY WORD-BY-WORD when making notes from books, journals, Internet.⁴

- o Try reading a relatively long section, **CLOSE THE BOOK OR SWITCH OFF THE COMPUTER SCREEN**, and then make the notes in your own words without looking at the original source.
- o File your notes – be organised. It is no good discovering two months later that you have lost them.

DO NOT work together as a group and produce a 'model' answer that you individually present in an assignment or exam. You will

need to include this information in your list of references. If you do not include this information in your assessed work then you may find that you fall foul of the code of practice on the use of unfair means. You should also keep your notes after you submit your work.

- o learn key ideas and information.
- o keep a record of information for future use.

2 The following table shows the difference between making notes and taking notes. You will use your own words.

1. Think about why you are making notes.

- o Will you be sharing your notes with a friend?
- o Are you looking for a specific piece of information?

This is important as it will affect how you make notes. There are different ways of making notes.

- o draw a Mind Map.

Ask yourself some questions.

- o Is there anything you can add?
- o Is there something that you might benefit from discussing with a fellow student?

Useful questions to start off this process include

- o so what?
- o how can this be backed-up?

2.

- o Make sure you can read your notes.
- o Only use one side of the paper.

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