

Getting the most out of recorded lectures

Work at a time that suits you

One of the main benefits of recorded lectures is that you can listen back to these lectures at a time when you feel most productive. This is ideal for students who find they work better either late at night or early in the morning and struggle to get the most out of lectures during normal university hours.

Prepare to learn

Even though your lecture is recorded you should still prepare as you normally would by completing the necessary reading and making sure you're prepared to take notes. In addition to this as you will need to focus on your lectures, be sure to let family members or friends know that you will be studying and therefore you should not be disturbed during the lecture.

Take notes

It's easy to fall into the trap of passively watching or listening to recorded lectures so make sure you are taking notes either digitally or on paper. Linear note-taking is great for logical step by step information and mindmaps are great for writing down different concepts and ideas. The Cornell method is great for exploring critical thinking when writing notes and helps when you come to write your assignments. If you are taking notes digitally we strongly recommend that you take regular rest breaks in order to protect your eyes. The mentoring service is able to provide help with note-taking strategies and keeping your notes organised.

Make a summary

At the end of each lecture you watch, create a small summary identifying the key points of the lecture. By creating a summary of the lecture you are able to identify how much information you retained from the lecture, actively engage in the lecture content and also write something you can utilise for revision when it comes to preparing for exams. You can also write down any questions you have, anything you didn't understand or any concepts or ideas you want to explore next.

Treat yourself

It's really easy to get distracted when watching online lectures, so find something that helps you stay connected - this could be wearing headphones and shutting out external noise or rewarding yourself. When you successfully complete a lecture reward yourself with a short break to get a drink, a snack and rest your eyes. It's important to give your brain some time to consolidate what you have just learned before jumping into your next lecture and rewarding yourself with breaks means you're less likely to suffer from burnout.

Listening skills, time management, note-taking skills are part of learning online - to get more tips about these skills, see an Academic Skills Mentor.