

THE STAR 21/2/19 MS 5

Making time to study

IDEALLY, studying is something you do full-time. However, these days, very few of us can afford to go through our adult working life without a bit of skills upgrading now and again.

If you want to take a course but aren't sure if you have the time to do it, use this education scheduler.

Figure out your classes

Find out how many seminars, tutorials, labs and other meetings you have to turn up for.

Add up these hours and then figure out how long it will take you to get to class and back again. Write this as a separate number.

Estimate study time

A typical course has a textbook and exercises that lay out learning objectives. Estimate how long it will take you to read the book and complete the exercises.

Many schools put in an estimate for this. The book may also contain this information. If it's not there, ask the student support

centre. If you've been away from school for some time, or it's a new subject to you, be safe and double the estimate. Add this to your total.

Completing assignments

Many schools provide a study guide for this. If they don't, then one way to guesstimate the work needed is to see what is required and to relate each task to your own work.

A personal rule of thumb is that an undergraduate research paper of 3,000 words takes about 20 hours whereas a postgraduate research paper of 5,000 words will take about twice that length of time. This excludes running experiments.

Revision

In theory, you should have mastered everything while you're studying.

The rules of thumb vary but if you look to taking up about a quarter to half as much time as original study time, you should do well.