

GETTING STARTED ON STUDY TASKS

You have found yourself time to do some study; prioritised what you want to do; and sorted out your books and notes. You sit downand you cannot get started! You do anything except starting on your study task – doing the ironing; phoning a friend; surfing the Internet; going to the pub; taking the dog for a walk; watching television – the list is endless!

If this is familiar, ask yourself why you find it difficult to get started on study tasks. It may be because you find the topic difficult; you are a bit scared of it; and you do not know where to start. If this is the case, here are techniques to get you started on your study tasks:

- start with an easy task, such as sorting out your notes or reading a short chapter of a book – this gets you into the “mindset” of studying
- break a big task down into more manageable chunks; for example, break reading a book down into its chapters; write paragraphs of an essay one by one
- develop some sort of routine, such as making a cup of coffee and then settling down to study
- study at the same time of day, in the same way as we eat our meals at the same times of day.

KEEPING GOING DURING YOUR STUDY TIME

Once you have got started on a study task, you then have to keep going! Here are some techniques for doing this:

- break your study task down into small steps, or “mini-goals”
- make the most of spurts of activity – if you are on a roll, keep going
- take short breaks –for example, after you have finished reading each chapter of a book
- organise longer breaks such as holidays or weeks away from studying – something to look forward to
- be realistic – do not set yourself too much to do in the time you have available at any one time, or you will become demotivated and will be likely to give up
- be flexible – allow time for relaxation and for anything unexpected, such as the house roof developing a leak