

Is planning vital for student success at university?

Introduction

The journey through university is undoubtedly one of the most transformative and challenging experiences in a person's life. With academic rigour, diverse opportunities, and newfound independence, students navigate a complex landscape that demands strategic navigation.

This essay explores the importance of planning in achieving success at university, highlighting how effective planning contributes to academic achievement, personal growth, and a well-rounded university experience.

Academic Success

Successful navigation of university academics requires careful planning. From managing coursework to preparing for exams, planning provides students with a roadmap to stay organised and focused. A well-thought-out study plan ensures that time is allocated efficiently, allowing students to delve deep into subjects, engage with course materials, and excel in assessments. University life is marked by a range of activities which goes beyond academia. These might include social events, extracurricular activities, being members of various clubs and part-time jobs. Effective planning is essential in striking a balance between academic and personal commitments. Students who plan their schedules wisely can allocate sufficient time to each aspect of their lives, reducing stress and fostering a healthy work-life balance.

Assessor's comment:

The essay context could have been stronger with setting 'the importance of planning in university' to give your introduction a stronger background.

How to use this feedback:

When [writing an introduction](#), clearly state the topic along with 'why' the topic is worth exploring. This is also known as rational or your position.

Assessor's comment:

Good outline of the overall structure of your essay.

How to use this feedback:

Make note of positive feedback so you can continue to improve on your strengths in future assessments.

Assessor's comment:

Reference? You need to support your writing with peer reviewed sources.

How to use this feedback:

Use [peer-reviewed sources](#) from unit readings and your own research to support your writing, and use writing strategies to [acknowledge your sources](#).

Assessor's comment:

spelling error

How to use this feedback:

Use a spellcheck, and add common errors that you make to a list that you can manually check for.

Assessor's comment:

You have discussed two issues in this paragraph. A paragraph should have one key idea supported by example and evidence.

How to use this feedback:

Our resource on how to [build a clear paragraph](#) can assist you to improve your paragraph writing.

Legend

 Good practice

 Needs improvement

 Comment

Goal Setting and Motivation

Planning is intrinsically tied to goal setting. By outlining short-term and long-term objectives, students create a sense of direction and purpose. Setting achievable goals fosters motivation, as students can witness their progress over time. Whether it's completing assignments, achieving certain grades, or pursuing specific projects, planning lays the foundation for success.

Effective planning is vital to student success especially while writing an assignment. Spending time reading about the subject and contextualising information is likely to result in a smoother flow of information, and better clarity of understanding. This is supported by Brown and Davis (2019) who found that the marks of 25 undergraduate nursing students who planned their tasks were 20% higher than for a similar group of students who completed their assignments without planning. Identification of key topics during the early stages of assignment work allows students to focus more time on relevant articles, which has been shown to relate to higher grades in geology, biology and biomedicine (Smith & Johnson, 2021, p. 267). Plans are an important first step in assignment success, but they must be supported by effective time management and setting realistic goals.

Adaptability and Flexibility

While planning is essential, the ability to adapt and be flexible is equally important. University life is dynamic, with unexpected challenges and opportunities arising. A well-structured plan should allow for adjustments, enabling students to adapt to changes and seize new possibilities while staying on track with their goals.

Assessor's comment:

Both points mentioned in this heading are excellent. However, you needed to expand on the link between them.

How to use this feedback:

Be mindful of the key ideas you are developing. [Organise your ideas](#) and ensure you fully address each of them and the relationships between them.

Assessor's comment:

Avoid using contracted words in academic writing.

How to use this feedback:

Create a checklist of 'things to avoid' in your writing, and consider using the [Academic Language Feedback \(ALF\) guide](#) for reviewing your assignments. Make you set aside time for editing and proofreading before the deadline.

Assessor's comment:

Aside from the linking issue noted below, this is a well written paragraph with a clear topic sentence supported by examples and evidence. This is how you should be developing all your paragraphs.

How to use this feedback:

When you receive positive feedback about a section of your writing, compare it with other similar sections to see what you have done differently. If you are unsure, [book a consultation](#) with a learning adviser and show us your writing. We can help you identify and further develop your strengths.

Assessor's comment:

This is a good summary of the main ideas. However, you needed a linking sentence to connect to your idea in the next paragraph.

How to use this feedback:

This comment highlights the importance of developing skills for [building clear paragraphs](#) and [signposting to guide your readers](#).

Assessor's comment:

No doubt this is important. However, you needed to expand this aspect more by clearly stating how adaptability and flexibility are related to your topic.

How to use this feedback:

Developing your [critical thinking](#) skills will help you [create strong academic arguments](#) that clearly support your topic with evidence and examples.

Personal Growth and Well-Rounded Experience

Beyond academics, university is a time for personal growth and exploration. Effective planning extends to personal development, encouraging students to explore diverse interests, engage in extracurricular activities, and build a network (Garcia, 2018). A comprehensive plan ensures that students not only excel academically but also emerge from university as well-rounded individuals ready for the challenges of the professional world.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the evidence is clear: planning is an indispensable factor in achieving success at university. From academic accomplishments to personal development, the **benefits of strategic planning** are multifaceted. Students who approach their university journey with a well-devised plan are better equipped to navigate challenges, capitalise on opportunities, and emerge not only as successful graduates but also as individuals prepared for a lifetime of achievement. As the saying goes, **"Failing to plan is planning to fail,"** and in the realm of university success, planning stands as the cornerstone of a fulfilling and triumphant academic experience.

References

- Brown, M., & Davis, L. (2019). Effective planning strategies and their influence on academic achievement among university students. *Educational Planning and Development*, 7(1), 72–74. <https://doi.org/10.3109/epd.2019.9876543210>
- Garcia, R. (2018). The role of strategic planning in enhancing student success: A longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Educational Strategies*, 68(5), 843–856. <http://doi.org/jes.2018.0123456789>
- Smith, J., & Johnson, A. (2021). The impact of academic planning on student success in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Success*, 35(12), 266–280. <http://doi.org/10.1234/jhes.2021.1234567890>

Assessor's comment:

This is an important aspect of the importance of planning. However, you needed to expand more on this with clear discussion on how planning is related to personal growth. This is an 800-word limit essay. As you had not reached the word limit, you could have expanded on these concepts to strengthen your argument.

How to use this feedback:

The word limit for a task indicates how long your assessor expects you spend discussing your topic in order to meet the requirements. If you are over the word limit, you may have included unnecessary information, and if you are under the word limit it is likely that you have not provided enough detail. To achieve the right balance, you can [create an outline](#) and allocate words for each section. This will allow you to develop your ideas with adequate details.

Assessor's comment:

You needed to unpack this in the above discussion.

How to use this feedback:

This indicates that 'strategic planning' is a new topic which you have not discussed in the body paragraphs. A [conclusion](#) should summarise content that has already been introduced.

Assessor's comment:

Use academic references with proper citation.

How to use this feedback:

[Academic writing](#) requires you to use formal language and tone in your essay. Avoid using proverbs and colloquial language in academic essays. It is also vital to [cite and reference](#) all of your sources.