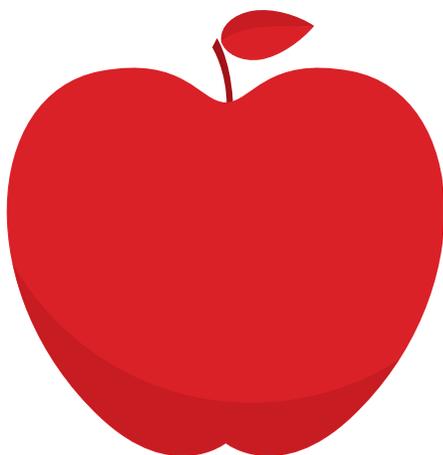
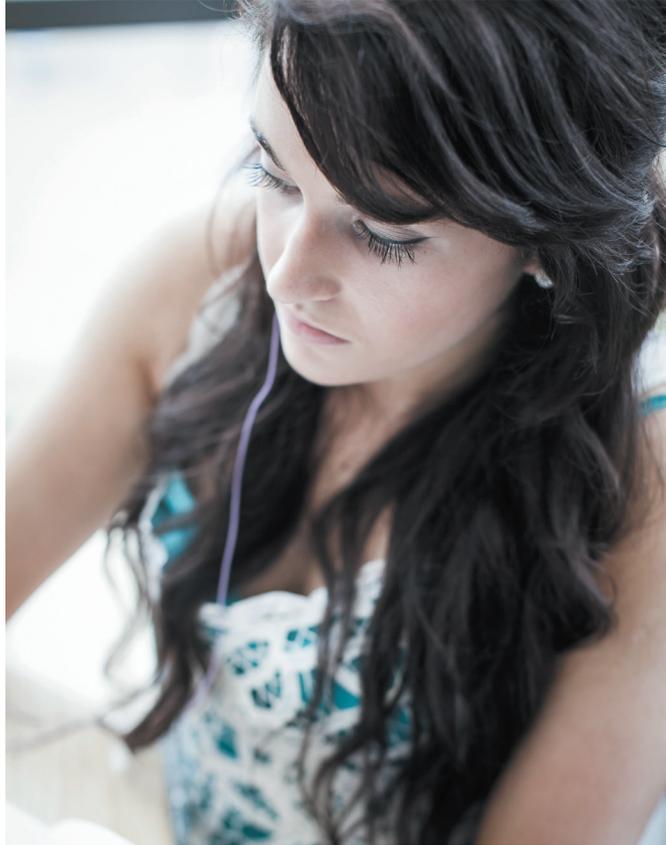


U&Balance



6 Steps

- 1 Diet
- 2 Exercise & Fitness
- 3 Time Management
- 4 Rest & Sleep
- 5 Relax & Unwind
- 6 Study & Exams



1

Diet



Our diet, more than any other factor, has the biggest influence on our health. When you come to university it may be the first time you have lived away from home and had to fend for yourself. To have enough energy to study and enjoy student life to the full you need to eat regularly and healthily! Here are some top tips that will help you to learn easy ways to make nutritious choices...

Top Tips

Eat a balanced diet

Eat regularly and include a wide variety of foods that include fruit, vegetables and fish. Cut down on saturated fats, sugars and salt. Drink plenty of water and don't skip breakfast! Check out the simple food swaps below that can make a big difference.

Swap

For

Fried foods

Grilled or baked foods

Refined grains (white bread/rice)

Whole grains (brown bread/rice)

French fries

Baked potato or sweet potato

Sweetened drinks

Water

Desserts such as cookies, cake, ice cream

Fresh Fruit, popcorn, frozen yoghurt



Get organised Make a shopping list before you go to the supermarket and plan your meals – not only will you save money, but you will be more prepared to cook healthy choices! Take turns cooking with your house mates.

Watch your waste When you buy foods that go off quickly, plan your meals carefully so it gets eaten or frozen straight away.

No time to cook or can't cook? Search the web for easy recipes and cooking tips. Cook extra so you can use the left over's for a quick meal the following day, or cool the remaining portions and freeze. Cook more one pot dishes like risotto and stews where you throw everything in together, you will save energy, time and washing up!

Make your takeaway a healthy one You don't have to give up takeaways completely, as long as you make the right menu choices and don't have them often.

Swap

Chipper: Thin chips and battered fish

Pizza: Deep pan stuffed crust

Indian: Creamy Curries eg. masala & pilau rice

Chinese: Deep fried dishes

For

Chunky chips and plain fish

Thin base, vegetable, lean meat

Tandoori or Madras, boiled rice

Stir fries and boiled rice

Smart Snacking! Beat those hunger pangs with smart snacks! It's too easy to reach for the quick fixes when studying and juggling a busy lifestyle. Keep a stock of healthy snacks you can grab when you're hungry, such as crackers, energy bars, fresh fruit, granola bars, high fibre cereal, nuts, popcorn, carrot/cucumber/celery and Hummus!

2

Exercise and Fitness



Tips to help you get fit and stay fit! You don't have to join a gym to get fit and lead a healthier lifestyle. Getting fit can be more fun and spontaneous when it is free. Here are a few tips to make your lifestyle more active:



Join a DCU Sports Club

This is a fun way to meet new people, learn new skills and to fit in exercise too. Check out www.dcu.ie/sportsdevelopment for more information. Joining fee is only €4!

Get on your bike!

Rediscover the truly invigorating and liberating experience of riding a bike and boost your health in the process. Cycling is one of the easiest ways of fitting exercise into your day. It will also save you money! Cycle to university, work or around the city with the Dublin Bikes scheme www.dublinbikes.ie

Go for a Walk with Friends

Stay fit and catch up with friends at the same time. Instead of going to the restaurant at lunch time enjoy a walk in Albert College Park with friends (located opposite the Hub and Sports Centre entrance). DCU has recently launched a Sli na Slainte which is perfect for chatting with friends and keeping fit. Just walking at a decent pace for half an hour, five days a week will do wonders for your health and fitness. To keep track of your walking, use a pedometer. 10,000 steps can burn up to 400 calories.

Start Running with C25K

Start running with the Couch to 5K, a free running plan developed to help absolute beginners get into running. The plan involves three runs a week, with a day of rest in between each, with a different plan for each of the nine weeks. There is also of free C25K podcasts to help you to achieve your running goal. Visit www.c25k.com/

Home Workout

Devise a mini-circuit in your own home by using steps or stairs for step-ups, do tricep dips on the sofa and use the hallway or garden for shuttle runs. You can work every muscle group and really whittle away your waistline without leaving the house. Check out YouTube for video clips on getting fit at home or borrow fitness DVD's from the library.

Skipping

Rediscover how fun and beneficial skipping can be! Just a few minutes skipping training brings a whole range of health benefits, including heart and lung fitness, strong bones, balance and flexibility. The average person will burn up to 200 calories during 15 minutes of skipping. Skipping is a strenuous exercise, so start slow.

DCU is expanding!

We now have two campuses. Why not take advantage and visit St. Pat's Campus and Glasnevin Campus by bike or by foot. It is 2.5km between the campuses so why not use this to get fit!

For more travel information - go to http://www.dcu.ie/info/get_to.shtml

3

Time Management



Do you have a 'To-Do' list as long as your arm? Are you stressed about what you have to do? Do you have conflicting priorities and have difficulty making decisions? If so, you need a new Time Management strategy.

✘ Unbalanced

Often missing deadlines and feeling stressed

Regularly working long hours

Feeling pressured by lack of time or too many things to do

Jumping from crises to crises

✔ Balanced

Meet deadlines and review quality of work

Achieving work/life balance

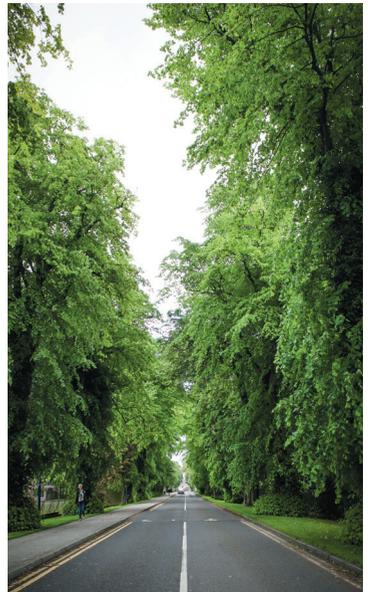
Lower stress and feeling more control

Spending quality time on important tasks

By prioritising what is most important to you, time management allows you to spend quality time doing important things that add value to your life.

Time management is about prioritising your daily/weekly activities and managing those activities throughout the day/week. The foundation of good time management starts with personal goal setting and being clear as to what you want to do. By prioritising what is most important to you, time management allows you to spend quality time doing important things that add value to your life.

To begin managing your time you first need an idea on how you now use your time. Imagine if you were given €168 each week. You are required to spend this money. You cannot save it for a rainy day or invest it for your future. How would you spend it? This happens with us each week with a more valuable resource - our time. Each week we have 168 hours to utilise and it is important to break down your activities into manageable chunks so you have enough time to do everything.



3 Time Management

| | Activity | Hours per week |
|--|---|----------------|
| Complete the Personal Time Survey to get an estimate of how you use your time | Number of hours sleep | |
| | Travel hours | |
| | Lecture hours | |
| | Study hours | |
| | Part time work | |
| | Number of hours per meal/ snack including preparation time | |
| | Sports training & matches/ society/voluntary activity | |
| | Socialising with friends | |
| | Other | |
| | Other | |
| | Other | |
| Total | 168 Hours | |



Now you know how you spend your hours it's time to start planning to use your time more wisely! Here are some tips to help you take some positive action to improving your time management. Why not try this exercise yourself!

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Start doing... | Using planning tools such as your weekly timetable, student diary and weekly to do lists and plan regularly! |
| Stop doing... | Cramming, missing deadlines and feeling stressed. |
| Continue doing... | Schedule Fun & Relaxation. |
| Do more... | Fit in daily exercise time - what works best for you? 30 minutes gym session, a walk in Albert College Park or a training session with a DCU Club. |
| Do less... | Drop unnecessary activities. |
| Continue doing... | Create a term calendar, recording major events and deadlines. |
| Do differently... | Every weekend set a goal of doing one fun activity. |



A lot of the time when we think of having the work life balance, we do not consider the quality of our rest and sleep to be a part of that balance.

As a student, there is a lot going on with study, social life, sport and recreation and house-mates. A good night sleep is not always possible. It is good to be aware of your sleep patterns and to make sure that you have adequate rest and sleep especially coming up to and during exams. Here are some good tips to get the balance right.

✘ Unbalanced

Leave the TV on while going asleep

Drink caffeine products 3 hours before bed time

Work on the laptop/smart phone while in bed before sleeping

Wake up in the morning still tired

✔ Balanced

Have 6 hours a night sleep (min)

Wake before the alarm clock goes off

Wake feeling refreshed after a nights sleep

Find it easy to fall asleep

How to get ZZZ Balance

Avoid anything that will stimulate

your brain 3 hours before going to bed. Stimulant foods include coffee, tea, redbull, sugar drinks and large meals. Stimulant activities include working on any electronic device, which is everything from a smart phone to playing video games. Alcohol is also a reason for lack of sleep. Apart from the obvious like long nights out partying, alcohol can hinder the quality of sleep especially if taken on a daily basis.

Set up a routine for bed-time.

If you go to sleep at 11pm, then start to get ready for bed at 10pm. The routine can include, getting lunches ready for following day, washing and brushing teeth, tidying away clothes in bedroom and reading in bed. Even though watching TV for long periods of time is a stimulant, watching TV for a few minutes while you settle down is okay.

If you find it hard to wind down,

a change in the body temperature can make you sleepy. In winter, have a hot shower or bath. As your body cools down after the hot shower, your body will wind down and you will feel sleepy. Alternatively in summer when it can be hot and humid, you can have a cool shower and have bedroom windows open to cool the body down and help with sleep.

Other remedies to inducing a restful sleep

include a drop of lavender oil on your pillow, drink cold or hot milk before bed, meditate or bring your mind in to focus on your breathing. Listen to your breath for 1 minute without letting the thoughts in your mind take over.

Do you have an app for that?

Sleep Meter – Stop wondering how well you are sleeping and start knowing! This application tracks your sleep habits and presents statistical and graphical analysis.
Android – FREE

Sleep On It – Sleep tracker and alarm app. Get the alarm that does it all! Set your alarm and with one tap you can record how much sleep, then add info about sleep quality, your mood, meds and more to see what affects your sleep and how much you really need to feel rested and energized.
Apple – FREE

You can be more
and **successful**
studying from a
calm and balanced

more effective
if you are
a place of
ance.



The words '**stress**' and '**relaxation**' get used **alot** in articles about studying, exams or work/life balance, but what do they mean? How do we know we are in either state or what effects do they have on the body?

✘ Unbalanced

Spend hours playing video games or surfing the internet

Do not exercise

Do not have hobbies or take part in extra-curricular activities

Find it difficult to sleep at night

Have heart palpitations/shallow breath and feel panicky on a daily basis

✔ Balanced

Take part in extra-curricular activity at least twice a week

Exercise for 20 mins. at least three times per week

Consciously aware of stress points in the body

Meditate

Read instead of watching TV

Stress

In physiology, **stress is anything that causes the body to respond by releasing stress hormones.** This results in the **'fright or flight' syndrome.** Symptoms include faster heart rate, increased blood flow to the muscles instead of the major organs, faster breathing, increase in blood sugars and increase in ability of blood to clot. This is all good if we find ourselves in a situation where we need to react to an emergency situation, however over a prolonged period of time, these stress responses can interfere with how the body is supposed to work.

Chronic conditions include

Back/neck pain

Headaches

Digestive problems

Inability to sleep

Feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, anger, irritability and of being overwhelmed

The "relaxation response" is the opposite of the "stress response." The relaxation response causes the exact opposite physical symptoms in the body. Regular use of relaxation techniques can counteract any symptoms of stress that the body may have. In the run up to exams, stress levels will be higher than normal and if you remain in this state for 4-8 weeks, you will more than likely have experienced some of the above symptoms. If however, you have used some chosen relaxation techniques throughout this stressful time you'll have enabled the **physical and emotional body to remain balanced.**

Results of relaxation techniques include

Regular heart beat

Slow and deep breathing resulting in more oxygen available in the body

Improved concentration

Increased mental clarity

Increased productivity during the day

Organ function, such as digestion, occurs normally

Memory improves

Relaxation

Doesn't this sound like a healthier place to be when preparing for exams or assignments? Absolutely! You can be more effective and successful if you are studying from a place of calm and balance. The following techniques can be used to help with relaxation and can be used at any time:

Physical Techniques

Yoga, Pilates, Tai Chi and Stretching. This will release tension and stress in the muscles, spine and neck areas.

Breathing Techniques

Breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth three times. Breathing should be deep and full. This will slow the heart rate down.

Meditation

YouTube have many 10 minute meditations to help you relax. Find one that suits you. A popular meditation that is easy for first timers is 'Mindfulness Meditation'.

Relaxing Music

If classical music is not your thing, there are many chill out tunes available online on iTunes or YouTube to help you relax when not studying.

Other methods

Exercise, massage, walking or taking part in any hobbies.

Do you have an app for that?

Sleep Meter – The vast majority of people have not had any relaxation training and therefore finds it difficult to switch off and be still.
Android – FREE

Relax HD Lite – Effective and rapid stress relief in 5 minutes. Used to manage anxiety and return balance, this app is an essential tool for modern life.
Apple – FREE

Relax Lite: Stress Relief – For insomniacs and busy folks, this app provides relaxation therapy that really works.
Android – FREE





Do you leave all your studying to the week before the exams? Do you feel **guilty** when out socialising, feeling you should be home studying? Do you feel **frustrated** that you cannot get a grasp of your studying?

✘ **Unbalanced**

✔ **Balanced**

Leaving all studying to last minute before exams

Studying on a weekly basis throughout semester

Not doing any extra research in the run up to exams

Having a study plan for the semester and for the exams

Spending all spare hours socialising and in extra-curricular activities

Having a balance between course work and social life

Having notes and research in different places and are easily lost

Having notes and research in one folder

Not having a quiet place to study with no distractions

Having a quiet environment to study

6 Study & Exams

At university, studying is left up to you and after years of structure in school, it can be hard to motivate yourself to keep going. The key objective is to break down the tasks ahead of you into small manageable tasks. This will reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed by the amount of work you have to do. Also, it will allow you to keep on top of your work and studying for the exams will be less stressful. We have listed below the key areas that can help you be a success at exams.

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Study Skills Workshop | Register for an Exam Revision Strategies Workshop. www.dcu.ie/studentlearning |
| Past Papers | For best exam preparation, see what questions came up last year. You can search for your past papers for all modules online at www.dcu.ie/internal/examinations/papers.php3 and www.spd.dcu.ie |
| Academic Support | Speak to lecturers now if you have any outstanding questions regarding the exams. |
| Study Plan | Finalise your Study Plan if you have not already done this. You can download this Exam Preparation Booklet, which will help you, at: www.dcu.ie/students/advice/student-guides.shtml |
| Positive Thoughts | If you are having negative thoughts, e.g. "I am going to fail", "I can't do this", write them down on a piece of paper, read them and then throw it in the bin. Next, take a new piece of paper, write down 10 positives sentences, e.g. "I am a success", "I'll pass my exams", "and I enjoy learning". You may not believe the sentences but it's important to write them to cancel out each negative thought you have. |
| Ask for Help | Talk to friends, family, lecturers or student support staff if you still feeling overwhelmed. It is normal to feel anxious when preparing coursework or studying for exams. Visit the Student Advice Centre on the Glasnevin campus or the Student Union on either campus, if you are unsure who to speak to or need some study tips. Email: student.support@dcu.ie |

 **Do you have an app for that?**

Studying and Exam Tips – Studying and Exam Tips is an application that is designed to help you improve your skills at studying and for improving your grades. Android – FREE

101 Studying and Exam Tips – These tips have been accumulated over many years from students and just knowing & reading some of them can have a dramatic effect on your academics. Apple – FREE



Join a DCU Sports Club

This is a fun
way to meet
new people,
learn new skills
and to fit in
exercise too.

Useful Contacts

Students based on the St. Patrick's Campus, Drumcondra can call the main number (below) and will be transferred to the correct number on the St. Patrick's Campus and Mater Dei Campus.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| DCU Student Advice Centre | Glasnevin Campus dcu.ie/students/advice T (01) 700 7165 |
| Sports Development Service | dcu.ie/sportsdevelopment T (01) 700 6041 |
| Health Care | Glasnevin Campus dcu.ie/students/health T (01) 700 5143 |
| Counselling | Glasnevin Campus dcu.ie/students/counselling T (01) 700 5165 |

Produced By Student Support & Development
Henry Grattan Building
Dublin City University
Glasnevin Campus
Dublin 9
T (01) 700 7165
E student.support@dcu.ie

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Spirituality

Log on www.dcu.ie/students

Write student.support@dcu.ie

Call (01) 700 7165

Drop in Student Advice Centre