



HOW TO BALANCE WORK AND STUDY

Studying while working can be a lot to deal with. Use these basic tips to stay (or get back) on track.



Know what's expected

Have a conversation with your employer about your training plan, what is expected of you and when the busiest times will be. Make sure they understand that you will need time off to study. Also talk to your teachers to find out how much coursework you will have to do and when your deadlines will be.

Have a plan

- Create a list of short and long-term goals that you want to achieve – why are you studying and working at the same time? What will the rewards be?
- Define how your goals will benefit you in your career or life.
- Set timelines and milestones to keep you on track.
- When you feel overwhelmed or demotivated, go back to your plan and remind yourself why you are doing all this.



Be organised

Balancing work and study means being organised:

- Plan ahead as much as possible: know all key dates, deadlines and important events and mark them on a calendar.
- Keep your study materials all in one place to make them easy to find and use.
- Have a dedicated study place where you can sit down and focus. (Try the library if home doesn't work.)
- Don't procrastinate: start assignments as early as possible.
- Allocate time to study each week.

Create a flexible schedule

While things like class times and work days aren't that flexible, you could plan to use any leave or flexible hours to study or do your homework. Make sure your routine is flexible and allows for adaptation: life happens, and you should be ready to deal with new assignments, unexpected errands or a sudden work crisis without freaking out.



Prioritise and be realistic

There are only so many hours in a day, and you have to be realistic about what you are able to do in a set amount of time. You probably won't have time to do everything, so decide on your priorities and accept that some things, like regular socialising or Netflix binges, might have to change for a while.

Communicate

Make sure that your employer, friends and family are all aware of your tight schedule, and how important it is to you to keep to it. This will help the people around you to know when you are actually available, and stop them from interfering with your study time. Your mates might not understand the responsibilities of working while studying, so make sure to communicate and let them know when you need to study, or can actually socialise.





Don't waste time

Managing your time effectively is very important to hit your goals. Learn to say no to people and things that will negatively affect your studies or work. This includes spending a lot of time on social media!



Learn how to manage stress

Get enough sleep, take regular breaks, exercise as often as you can, eat well, stretch, have fun when you can and be active in class and at work. All these will help you maintain a healthy lifestyle and manage your stress.



Find study friends

If you're struggling to study on your own, it might help to form a study group with other apprentices doing a similar course to yours. Ask other apprentices or trainees if they'd be willing to get together for a study session, check noticeboards at TAFE or consider starting an official study group and inviting others to join.

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS

Save copies of your assignments and assessments to see what you've achieved so far. Keep a record of the competencies you've completed so that you know which units you still need to complete to get your qualification.



Take time off

Every now and then you need to take a breather to clear your head. Schedule a catch-up with a friend, go for a hike in the park, or just spend a day on the beach to re-energise.



Ask for help

Asking for help doesn't make you weak, and it's better to speak up before cracking under the strain! Talk to your employer or your teachers, and ask them to suggest ways that you could structure your work or studies better. It might even be possible to change your course load or adapt the time you need to finish your apprenticeship. Get your parents, friends or loved ones to help as well. It might just be the boost you need to get back on track.



Get in touch

Please call **1300 363 831** and ask to speak to one of our Apprentice Advisors or email us at intrainingsupport@apprenticeshipsupport.com.au