

Student  
Wellbeing  
Centre

# Getting Organised

**A self-help guide on getting more organised,  
creating a routine, looking after yourself and  
managing your time.**



UNIVERSITY OF  
LINCOLN

## Why get more organised?

Getting organised means having more control over your routine, time and the things you need to get done each day. By spending a bit of extra time planning your day, you will know exactly what you need to do and in what order. As a result, you will feel more confident in your own abilities.

This guide has information on useful organisational skills such as prioritising, goal - setting, creating a routine and planning. It will also look at daily self-care activities we should all aim to do.

The blank tables and diaries throughout are for you to complete, and are designed to help you get into good habits when it comes to getting more organised.

# Goal - Setting

Goal - setting turns larger complex tasks into much smaller achievable tasks, making the whole thing seem a bit less daunting.

When setting goals, the first thing to do is to write them down. This is then a reference point for you to remain focused. Set them in advance of starting your work, so all you need to do is follow your plan.

An effective way of setting realistic goals for yourself is to use the process of **SMART** Goals.

**S**pecific - Be very clear about what it is that you want to achieve. Break your main goal down, and then down again.

**M**easurable - Your goal should be clear enough so that when you are through, you have clear evidence that you've completed the task.

**A**ttainable - Your goal should be set so that you can achieve it within a specific period. If the goal is too big or there are too many elements to it to achieve within a reasonable time frame, then break it down into more manageable tasks.

**R**elevant - Set goals that are realistic and goals that can be achieved by you with the resources available to you. When it comes to setting your daily goals, it is better to plan only a few things and be successful rather than lots of things and struggle to achieve them.

**T**ime-bound – Manage your goals by setting achievable deadlines. This focuses your attention and concentration on your tasks in priority order.

# How to Goal-Set

**Write Main Goal**

```
graph TD; A[Write Main Goal] --> B[Now start to work backwards - what sections or steps (sub-goals) need to be included to reach the main goal.]; B --> C[Break each step down even further - what sections or steps are required for you to reach each of your sub-goals.]; C --> D[Now allocate a time for completion of each mini-step. Remember to be reasonable and practicable when doing so. This will also help you prioritise what needs to be done first. If you start early enough, you may only have to do one or two small tasks a day.];
```

**Now start to work backwards  
– what sections or steps (sub-goals)  
need to be included to reach the  
main goal.**

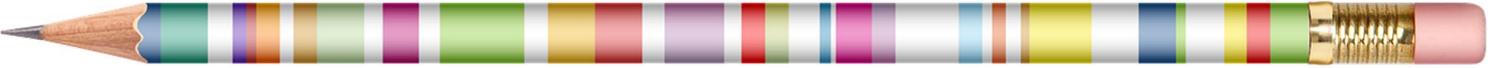
**Break each step down even further – what sections or  
steps are required for you to reach each of your  
sub-goals.**

**Now allocate a time for completion of each mini-step. Remember to be reasonable and practicable when doing so. This will also help you prioritise what needs to be done first. If you start early enough, you may only have to do one or two small tasks a day.**

**Breaking up tasks like this means you may end up with twenty small tasks rather than one large one, however the difference is they are all achievable.**

# Goal-Setting – Your Turn

Main Goal	Sub-Goals	Individual Steps	Completion Date/Time



# Prioritising



Without taking the time to plan what needs to be done and in what order, it can feel like everything is a priority. In these circumstances we are at risk of wasting valuable time potentially doing things that we did not need to.

Distinguishing between urgent and important tasks is the key to prioritising your time and your workload, whether at work or at home.

'Urgent' tasks demand your immediate attention, but whether you actually give them that attention may or may not matter.

'Important' tasks matter, and not doing them may have serious consequences for you or others.

Examples:

- Answering the phone to an unknown number is urgent, but not necessarily important (they could leave a voicemail if it is).
  - Going to the dentist for a routine check-up is important but not always urgent (there is often 6 months or more between appointments).
  - Binding your dissertation ready for the deadline in two days is both urgent and important.
  - Checking Facebook during your lecture is neither urgent nor important. All it really does is distract you.
- 



# Prioritising – Your Turn

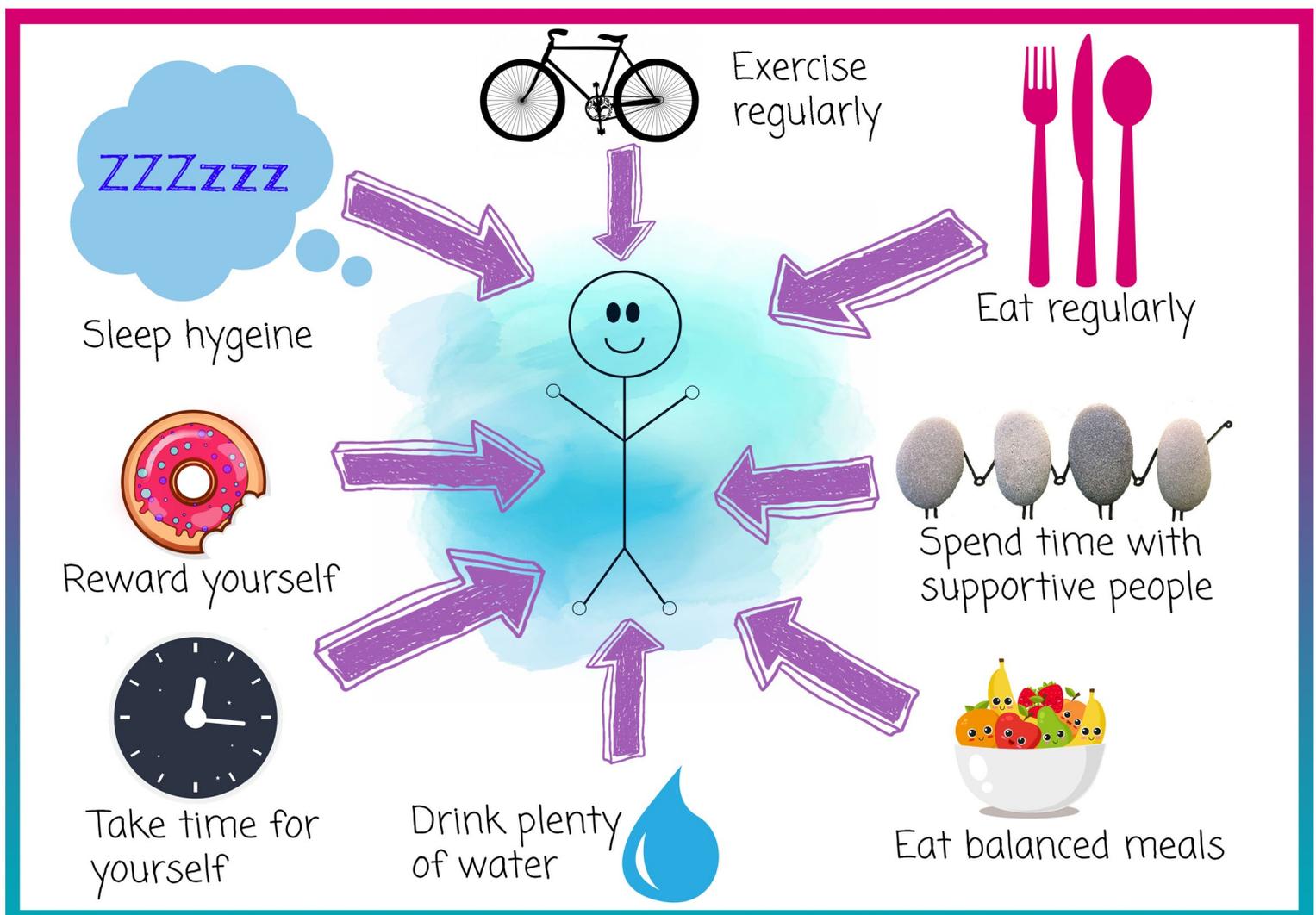
Tasks that are High Importance and High Urgency – DO FIRST	Tasks that are High Importance but Low Urgency – DO NEXT
Tasks that are Low Importance but High Urgency – DO LATER	Tasks that are Low Importance and Low Urgency – DON'T DO

*Adapted from SkillsYouNeed.com Priority Matrix*

# Self-Care

Looking after yourself has more to do with your organisation and overall wellbeing than you may realise. The daily 'basics' such as eating balanced meals, washing and dressing, exercising and getting a good night's sleep should be part of your daily routine.

If you look after yourself properly, you will notice improvements in your energy levels, ability to problem solve, memory, stress levels, focus and attention span. The diagram below demonstrates some of the self-care activities you should be remembering to do.



# Self-care – Your Turn

## Daily Checklist

Today, have I.....	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su
Got up, washed and dressed							
Eaten regular, well-balanced meals							
Completed some exercise							
Got out of the house/flat							
Had a good night's sleep							
Spoken to others today							
Drunk enough water (6-8 glasses)							
Taken time for myself							
Done something I have enjoyed							
Set a realistic to-do list/plan for tomorrow							
Asked for help if I have needed it							

# Getting into a routine

The first step in developing a routine is planning. This is where all the skills discussed will come in handy – goal-setting, prioritising and ways to look after yourself.

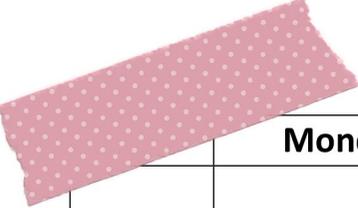
It can help to sit down each evening and plan for the following day. Spending a short amount of time considering all the things we want to get done, in what order and at what time means when we wake, we have already done the hard work and just need to follow our plan.

One of the most important things to consider is time management. This means allocating enough of it to complete the goals we set, being clear about our deadlines, and also making sure we have some time allocated for unwinding and relaxing. Planning will come with practise so don't be put off if it doesn't work initially.

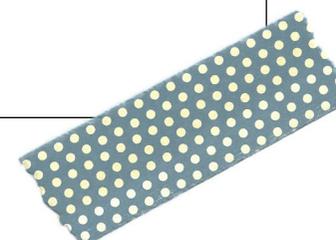
There are a few important things to consider when looking and developing a good routine:

- Work on one new habit at a time
- Simplify and start small
- Add in self-care activities
- Give yourself grace if things don't always go to plan
- Don't be put off and try again
- Go as basic as you need – if you need reminding to have a shower, eat breakfast, check your emails or even ring your mum, add it to your daily plan.
- Use a weekly or daily planner like the one on the next page. If you don't like this one, there are lots of free templates to choose from online.

# Getting into a routine – Your Turn



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<i>Morning</i>							
<i>Afternoon</i>							
<i>Evening</i>							



# What the University has to offer

## University Library

Academic Writing Support – Can help with grammar, punctuation, critical thinking, structuring your work etc.

Academic Subject Librarian – Can help with finding and evaluating information or research for your assignments

MASH – This is maths and stats help. Just drop-in during the Library's opening hours to access support.

To access more information, please visit the Library website: <https://library.lincoln.ac.uk/>

## School Support

You can approach your personal tutor or another tutor within your school for support if you need some guidance.

It is ok to ask for help when needed, your tutors are supposed to know more than you!

Don't forget, it is always easier for a tutor to offer you guidance if you approach them nice and early with a problem.

## Student Wellbeing Centre

The Student Wellbeing Centre run a series of workshops throughout the academic year including a 'Getting Organised' workshop. For more information on the workshops available, and how to book on, visit our website (details on back page).



# Useful Contacts

**University of Lincoln  
Switchboard**  
01522 882000

**Student Wellbeing Centre**  
01522 886400  
studentwellbeing@lincoln.ac.uk

**Accommodation Office**  
01522 886198/231  
accommodation@lincoln.ac.uk

**International Office**  
01522 886040  
international@lincoln.ac.uk

**University Security Office  
(Emergency Out-of-hours)**  
01522 886062

**University of Lincoln Health  
Centre**  
01522 870010

**Student Support Centre**  
01522 837080  
studentsupport@lincoln.ac.uk

**University Library**  
01522 886222  
library@lincoln.ac.uk

**Your School Administrator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Tutor:** \_\_\_\_\_

*(Find out who these people are and fill in)*

## **Other useful contacts to add to your phone**

Your landlord/letting agency  
Your GP Surgery – if not the University Health Centre  
Your dentist  
NOK – Next of Kin

## **Local Taxi Companies**

Direct Cars – 01522 567567  
Handsome Cabs – 01522 545352  
Discount Cabs – 01522 800800

# Useful Resources



Watch the video to be guided through 13 study tips that will help you to feel on track, motivated and more prepared to face your academic work.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVlvxHJdqI8&feature=youtu.be>



Watch Amanda, a University student from Glasgow, talk about her '8 Steps for Success & How to Set Goals'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-NwEpMzzOQ>

**SAVE THE STUDENT!**

Follow the link to read the blog 'How to get more organised in 6 easy steps' available on the Save the Student website.

<https://www.savethestudent.org/extra-guides/how-to-be-organised-in-6-easy-steps.html>

PSYCHOLOGY  LS

Follow the link to download printable weekly planners to help you get more organised. With multiple options, you can find the right layout that suits you.

<https://psychologytools.com/download-therapy-worksheets.html>

# Useful Apps



**Forest: Stay focused (£1.99)** - When the app is open, you can plant a virtual seed that will blossom and grow the longer you leave your phone alone. However, if you cannot leave your phone alone, the tree will begin to wither. The sense of achievement and responsibility will encourage you to stay away from your phone, and will help you make better use of your time. Perfect for staying on track with your studies Available on iOS and Android.

**Brain Focus Productivity Timer (Free)** - Brain Focus is a time-management application helping you to get things done! Based on techniques like Pomodoro, you can adjust the session duration to fit your needs. Set yourself a work session timer and then follow this with a well-deserved rest break. Available on iOS and Android.



**Planner Pro Daily Calendar (Free)** - Designed for those people who are looking for a full-featured app to manage daily life better. Add your daily events, sync with existing compatible calendars, pick your view from daily, weekly or monthly and tick off your tasks once complete. Perfect to help you get into a routine. Available on iOS and Android.

**Hold (free)** - Hold is an app that rewards students for not using their phones. Getting distracted by all those notifications? Frustrated that you can't focus? Put your phone on HOLD, earn rewards and compete with your friends. Available on iOS and Android.





# Drop-in:

**Monday-Friday between 12-2pm**  
**Thursday (term-time) between 5-7pm**

**Tel: 01522 886400**

**Email: [studentwellbeing@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:studentwellbeing@lincoln.ac.uk)**

