

WHAT MAKES STUDENT'S SUCCESSFUL?

Generally, people with an “internal locus of control” are more likely to be successful students. This means that they feel that they have power to influence their world rather than believing that the world buffets them around. These are the students who can determine clear goals and take effective action to reach those goals. Habits of successful students are listed overleaf. Which ones can you tick off for yourself? Which ones could you work on?

The HECS census date has now past. Some of you may have been tempted to withdraw but you have decided to keep going. Congratulations! Persistence is one of those keys to success.

There's no shame in choosing to withdraw. Sometimes life deals out circumstances that make it just too difficult to pursue a university career **at that time**. Sometimes you may feel that you need an extra helping hand to get over a few rough patches. So...are there particular characteristics that are associated with being a successful student at university? And could these characteristics give us some hint about how to handle the rough patches?

Well, yes, there have been several studies to show that certain factors make success more likely. Let's be clear what we mean by “success” here. For the purposes of this little article, “success” is limited to **academic** success. This is not to discount the importance of being involved more extensively in the university community. We know that university life should be so much more than just engaging with study – thank goodness!

Right now, however, we'll just look at factors related to academic success. And you need to remember that these studies were conducted at universities with courses and populations which are different from ours. So their results may not be easily generalised to the University of Newcastle. Nonetheless, it's interesting to find out those factors linked with academic success.

Recent research conducted by the University of Southern Queensland concluded that having an extroverted personality is associated with higher grades – maybe because these students ask questions! However, in courses requiring less group interaction, introverted personalities seem to fare better. Other researchers have shown that it isn't the number of competing outside demands you have which makes the difference but the way in which you approach those demands.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
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www.newcastle.edu.au

Where can I get help from others?

You can make an appointment with the University Counselling Service - it is free and confidential.

Phone: 02 492 15801
Email: counselling@newcastle.edu.au

Visit: Find us in the Hunter Building foyer near the Griffith Duncan Theatre

A PLACE OF OPPORTUNITY



It's easy sometimes to ignore the completion of one assignment because there are another two or more to complete. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge each achievement. Take time to be proud. Each of those completions brings you a step closer to getting your degree.

Habits of the Successful Student:

- **Attend most of your lectures, tutorials and labs**

There are always times when it becomes difficult to attend classes. You may be sick or having to care for someone who's unwell. Missing the occasional class when you are determined to catch up is understandable. Missing classes to have a coffee will become a problem. Try to attend most classes.

Ask questions

- Answering questions is one way that lecturers can determine whether they have taught their course properly. You are doing them a favour! You can almost guarantee that there'll be someone in the class who'll be grateful that you asked that particular question. Challenge yourself and ask one question in your next class.

- **Keep up with assignments**

Playing constant catch-up is no fun. If you think that you are going to need extra time to complete an assignment, keep your lecturer informed about what's going on. If necessary, they will encourage you to apply for an Extension of Time. All the forms and coversheets are available from this website:

<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/index.html>

- **Know your degree requirements**

Being clear about your chosen career direction can help you to stay motivated. Other students attend Uni just because they enjoy learning and have no particular career ambitions – and that's fine too. Checking in with the HUBS and/or Career Service can help re-focus that all-important goal and confirm the answer to that question: "Why am I here?"

<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/careers/index.html>

- **Use the resources available to you**

Exploring the web pages will help you to be aware of the support that is available to students. For academic support, you may wish to attend the workshops offered by the Learning Support service or to make an individual appointment to discuss your assignment. You can contact the Learning Support Program on 4921 5350 at Newcastle or on 4349 4572 at the Central Coast.

<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/studentssupport/learningsupport.html>

- **Talk to student mentors**

Make contact with a student mentor from your Faculty who is doing (or has probably already done!) the same course. They have the experience and may give you some valuable practical advice which relates specifically to that course. Mentors' email addresses are available from this website: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/student-](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/student-mentors)

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- **Take care of your physical and mental wellbeing**

Successful students make the adjustments necessary to achieve a balance in their lives. You need to ensure that you are caring for your physical and mental health too. So be sure to get sufficient sleep. Exercise gently and have a balanced diet. Try to do something nice for yourself each day.