



On Course with the ZSB (Issue 1)

Hello!

Welcome to our brand new newsletter.

We're the [Student Counselling Office](#) (ZSB) team and we're here to support you through your degree course, whatever situation you find yourself in.

We've launched this **newsletter, *On Course with the ZSB***, to provide you with ideas, information and inspiration that will help you to manage your studies successfully.

On Course is full of:

- **supportive input on relevant topics** including organising your studies, staying motivated and managing your time
- **practical methods and tools** for steering a safe course through your degree
- **up-to-date info on events, deadlines etc.**

We hope your semester gets off to an inspiring start!

The Student Counselling Office team



Photo by Andrew Nelson on Unsplash

‘We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust our sails.’ (Aristotle)

Setting sail for a successful semester

So you’ve survived the first few weeks of semester and sorted out your classes. The switch back from online to face-to-face learning is a bit bumpy here and there, but it’s good to interact ‘live’ with people again.

This semester, you’re determined to get it right. You’ve signed up for all this semester’s courses and are taking another three modules from last semester which you really need to get done. Yes, your timetable is rather full, but you’re sure you can handle it...

Perhaps it’s time for a reality check.

Try and ask yourself:

- How much time do I – really – have available? Which other things are taking up my time this semester?
- Has there been a change in my attitude to my studies and my working habits since last semester?
- How much time am I prepared to invest in meeting my goals? Am I prepared to put my studies first, and treat them as a full-time job?
- Do I have strong enough networks with other students on my course?

- What do I absolutely have to do, and what's optional? What is driving me to set these goals?

And – summing everything up – is my plan a realistic one?

How do I decide what's most important now and what I can put off until next semester?

There is no one single answer to this question. As a general principle, it makes sense to work through anything you have left over from previous semesters first of all – don't forget that some modules build on previous ones. It's tempting to throw yourself into the more interesting required elective modules, but then you run the risk of getting stuck on the basics. It's important to keep yourself motivated by choosing one or two classes you are really keen to do.

If in doubt, come and see us at the ZSB – we'll help you with the details.

Sometimes less is more...

You may feel quite a lot of pressure to follow the course schedule for your degree exactly.

Remember that it's not compulsory to do this. It's a guideline which, if followed, can ensure you complete your course within the standard duration.

Sometimes, though, life doesn't stick to schedules. There may be family, health or work issues in your life that mean you need more time; in this case, it may make sense to take fewer modules than the course schedule suggests. It can be difficult to do this while watching others (seemingly) sailing effortlessly through their studies, but everyone has their own individual situation and comparing theirs with yours doesn't really work. It's better to focus on a few modules and pass them with good grades than to sign up for more than you can manage and not do as well as you could have with more time and less pressure.

If you receive BAföG, it's a good idea to make sure you know the progress you need to be making each semester and the maximum duration of the funding.

It helps to make a plan

Planning your work at the beginning of the semester will help avoid situations where your tasks grow over your head, you miss important deadlines and end up facing a mountain of work that seems impossible to conquer. Use an analogue or digital calendar or schedule (apps such as UniNow can be helpful) and enter all your modules and classes into it, alongside other key info such as times of classes, exam dates, and registration and submission deadlines. If you do this, you'll know (for instance) how much time you have available for study in the run-up to exams. You can break down your schedule into flexible weekly plans, incorporating any paid work, hobbies or revision time.

There's more [guidance on time management](#) – including an explanation of the 10/90 rule – on our website.

Need more support? [Talk to us](#).

The Toolbox

Featuring in this issue: The
Pomodoro Technique

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Have you seen...?

our new [Instagram account](#)? [Why not follow us?](#)

Get inspired by the student takeover and let the 'worry eater' gobble up your problems – or simply send us a message.

What's next?

The next issue will be all about motivation and the right mindset for keeping moving towards your goals. Until then – stay safe and study smart!



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