

Sport and Nutrition: Study Skills



Written by Xander Ryan (University of Reading) in collaboration with PET's Welsh Prison Project: Clare Lloyd, Iva Gray, and Pwyll ap Stifin.

This is a trial version of the course that has been written for the purposes of research and development and printed in March 2020. **Copies of this trial version are intended for the feedback volunteers only.** It is prohibited to photograph, reproduce or circulate this material in any form.

The final courses are scheduled for publication in summer 2020 and will be available as a free download. Please contact PET at our Freepost address or go online for more information.

[copyright info]

Prisoners' Education Trust
The Foundry | 17 Oval Way | London | SE11 5RR
020 3752 5677

Help people in prison build brighter futures through education.

prisonerseducation.org.uk | Registered Charity No. 1084718

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| <i>Introduction</i> | 4 |
| 1. Time Management | 6 |
| 2. Reading and Noting | 19 |
| 3. Academic Writing: Clear Communication | 29 |
| 4. Essays and Exams | 38 |
| 5. Making the Most of Distance Learning | 52 |
| <i>Answers to Exercises</i> | 61 |
| <i>Acknowledgements</i> | 65 |
| <i>Notes</i> | 66 |

Introduction

Studying, like any other form of work, requires a specific set of skills. Whether you're learning at college, home, university, or in prison, study skills will help you enjoy your studies and get the most out of the learning process. This short course aims to improve skills such as notetaking, academic writing, and exam revision, so that you can hit the ground running in your future studies.

This course also aims to give you a taste of what it is like to study sport and nutrition at level 2 and above. Courses in these two areas are very popular amongst prisoner learners. Increased knowledge of anatomy, training techniques, diet, and health can be of great benefit in day to day life. Many people also take these courses aiming to find employment in the growing sport and health industries after their sentence has finished, applying for roles such as gym instructor.

Distance learning requires motivation and commitment. We hope that by giving you a taste of what the process is like, this course will help you work out whether you want to apply for a full course or not. To find out what courses PET offers funding for, please look at our *Distance Learning Curriculum*.

Unlike classroom or lecture-based courses, distance learning is centred around independent study. Students receive all their course materials at the beginning of the course and stay in touch with tutors by email or letter.

Studying in prison 'gave me a positive outlook on life again and gave me focus on what I could achieve while I was behind bars. I threw myself into advancing my education because here I had the time as well as the opportunity to do so.'

Prisoner learner funded by PET, 2019

Being able to study in your own time and at your own pace has many advantages. It allows students to fit studying around other commitments such as jobs, family responsibilities, and prison sentences. Not being in a classroom means you can't be disrupted by other students or discouraged by bad teaching. For prisoner learners it gives access to courses and qualifications that aren't offered by prison education departments.

Distance learning can also be challenging. There's no teacher to remind you when to work or to guide you through the trickier parts of your subject. This course anticipates some of these challenges, highlighting them in advance so you can approach them with confidence.

Study skills are very transferable. Good academic writing, for instance, is persuasive and effective, attributes that are useful in many other contexts such as writing a cover letter for a job application or a blog post about training techniques. Good time management, the first chapter in this course, could help you create a nutrition schedule for a client or balance time commitments in your personal life. Many of the skills in this course are highly valued by employers and can also be helpful in everyday life, whether you are solving logistical problems or helping family and friends.

We hope that you enjoy this course and that it gives you motivation and confidence to go forward with your studies.

CHAPTER 1

Time Management

Efficient time management is key to successfully completing a distance learning course. With no teacher or lecturer on hand to take you through each part of the course, it is your responsibility to structure your learning process.

This is a good opportunity to organise your studies in the way that suits you best. It can be daunting however, and sometimes students don't know where to start or they lose track midway through the course. This chapter sets out some tips and principles for successful time management so you can make the most of independent learning.

I. The three main principles of time management: O R A

There are three principles underpinning successful time management that can be summed up by the **ORA acronym**:

Organised

Realistic

Adaptable

stay ORGANISED

- Make an organised plan at the beginning of your course. If you want to progress through your course materials and hand in assignments on time, you will need a clear idea what work you want to get done each week.
- Students usually receive all the course materials when they start a course. If you organise this material into manageable chunks and decide on clear deadlines, then you will set yourself up to progress smoothly.
- In the section below, we look at the moment when you start a distance learning course, taking HFE's Gym Instructor course (Level 2) as our example.

be REALISTIC

- If you make your study targets too ambitious then your progress might feel disappointing, even if you've been working hard. Keep things realistic.
- How much time do you have to study each day? How long does it take you to read a chapter of your textbook? Calculate what you can realistically achieve in the available time.

- There is an exercise later in this chapter in which we will look at what a realistic daily schedule might look like, focusing on one day in a typical Category B prison.

keep ADAPTABLE

- Adaptability is a key ingredient to successful time management. Change and adapt your plans when you need to.
- Prison life can be unexpected. A sudden lockdown can make the library or computer facilities inaccessible. Cell searches can disrupt carefully organised papers and interrupt a study session.
- Studying is rarely a smooth journey, in or out of prison. Illness and bad news are obstacles that students face in all walks of life. Don't be hard on yourself if your studies don't go as planned, this is normal. We will talk below about how to build in **breathing time** to your studies, to make your schedule more adaptable.

The Wider Picture

These principles are helpful when managing time in all areas of our lives. Food plans and training schedules that have been abandoned a few weeks in are a familiar story. Usually they could have been happily maintained if the plan had been more realistic and better organised to start with, and if the person doing it had been more prepared to adapt to changes in their circumstances or perspective.

A large part of the job for many professionals in health and fitness is creating nutrition or training programmes. This might be a group programme, perhaps for a weight loss class or a sports team who want to improve their strength and conditioning. Alternatively, the programme might be tailored to the needs of an individual client. The final part of this chapter sets out some fundamentals for writing programmes for clients and managing time in conversation with them.

II. Receiving your course materials

On starting a distance learning course you will be sent all the materials you need. Seeing all the knowledge and concepts gathered in one place can be an exciting moment.

Some people get overwhelmed by the volume of information, whilst others dive straight in to the bit of the course they find most interesting, but end up getting lost through a haphazard approach. Here are six strategies to make the best possible start to the course and help process the moment in which you receive all the materials.

1. Chunking

- Break your course down into manageable chunks and complete them one-by-one. As well as making your work feel more achievable, it is satisfying to tick each task off.
- Creating a schedule with specific chunks of work will help you to focus on the work in hand rather than being side-tracked by other parts of the course.
- Often your course provider will have done some of this 'chunking' for you, splitting the course material up into separate units and sections. Use their divisions and **adapt them to your own learning speed and schedule.**
- This method can also be applied to individual tasks and assignments. Instead of saying 'I need to write this essay in two weeks', break it up into four sections: research; planning; writing; editing. Give yourself a set amount of time for each one and stick to the schedule.
- Once you've finished each task on your schedule, stop studying and relax – you've earned it.

2. Work to deadlines

- Deadlines are the dates by which you must complete a piece of work. These deadlines might be for submitting assignments, such as reports and essays, or sitting exams.
- Find out the deadlines your course contains straight away. You don't want to be taken by surprise later.
- Write down each deadline and create a list.
- It is very important to get your assignments completed and sent in on time. A good piece of work handed in on time is much more valuable than a perfect piece of work that misses the deadline.
- If you have job interviews in the future then your experience and ability in meeting academic deadlines is an attractive thing to talk about – most employers highly value this skill.



3. Create your own deadlines

- Some courses have very flexible timings, allowing you to set your own deadlines.

- Work out how you want to structure your course. Perhaps you want to complete it before you transfer to another prison, or maybe you want to hand in the next essay before the end of the month.
- In order to make your own deadlines, calculate how much work is needed to complete each task. This is a good time to remember the 'Be realistic' principle – choose a date that is achievable, based on how much study time you have available. Remember to add these deadlines to your overall list.
- If your deadlines are self-imposed then stick to them whenever possible, treating them as official. Very occasionally you will have to adapt them – unexpected circumstances affect the best-laid plans.

4. Eyes on the prize

Stick your list of deadlines up on the wall or inside the front cover of your notebook. Seeing these dates regularly is a good way to keep them in your mind and maintain motivation.

5. Get a diary

- Having a diary is a useful way to structure time and can help you relax as you don't have to know your different dates off the top of your head.
- Write your main deadlines in the diary together with any major non-study activities, such as visits, medical appointments, family birthdays, or security category reviews. This will help you balance your commitments and plan your studies accordingly.
- Diaries are sometimes available from prison chaplains or education departments; other prisons include diaries on their list of accepted postal items.
- If you can't get hold of a diary then get a notebook and make a simple one of your own.

6. Build breathing room into your schedule

- Including free space in your timetable means that if something unexpected happens you have breathing room.
- This might take the form of an empty studying slot once a fortnight, with no content scheduled for it. Or in your long-term schedule you can earmark a couple of free weeks before a major deadline.
- You can use these spaces to catch up on work you missed or to do some extra studying on a topic you found especially difficult.
- If you have got everything done on time, then so much the better – take the free space as time off, or hand in your work early.

Now let's look at a sample from HFE®'s Gym Instructor course (level 2). This is a sample from the suggested 'Home-Study Guide' that students receive when they start the course:

Home-Study Guide

| Week | Anatomy for Gym Instructor | ✓ |
|----------------|--|---|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Basic Anatomical Terminology ▪ The Skeletal System ▪ Health, Safety and Welfare in Fitness Environment | |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Muscular System ▪ Basic Principles of Nutrition and Healthy Eating ▪ Professional Practice in the Active Leisure Sector | |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Cardio-Respiratory System ▪ Supporting Clients in Exercise and Physical Activity ▪ Meeting the Needs of Customers in the Fitness Sector ▪ <u>Complete 'Providing a Positive Customer Experience, Parts 1 and 2' Assessment Workbooks</u> | |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Energy Systems ▪ Nervous Systems ▪ <u>Complete 'Lifestyle Management and Health Awareness' Assessment Workbook</u> | |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Components of Health and Fitness ▪ Principles of Health and Fitness ▪ Effects of Exercise and Physical Activity on the Body ▪ <u>Complete 'Anatomy and Physiology' Assessment Workbook</u> | |
| 6 (Day1-2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Considerations for Working with Special Populations | |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anatomy and Physiology Mock* | |
| 8 (Day 3-4) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anatomy and Physiology Mock* | |

The course providers (HFE) have done some chunking and scheduling for students already, assigning different parts of the course material for each week, and choosing deadlines.

But this study guide is only an example – the schedule is designed for an example student who can do 1 hour of studying per day, 5-7 days a week. Is this a sensible schedule for you? How much study time do you have available during your average week?

When you receive your course materials you should make your own schedule based on how much study-time you have available and how quickly you want to do the course. In the following section we will look at daily schedules to show **ways of calculating this**.

III. Calculating your available study time

Available study time is dictated by circumstances such as our health, pre-existing work commitments, and facility opening hours. But study time is also shaped by our **personal approaches to learning**.

- Do you work best in short bursts, or in longer sessions?
- How regularly do you like to take breaks?
- When do you find it easiest to study?

Here is an average Thursday in a Category B prison for a prisoner on Standard Level of the IEP Scheme. Let's call the example prisoner Rhys.

| Rhys' Thursday Timetable | |
|--------------------------|--|
| | |
| 8.00 | Unlock for breakfast and medication |
| 8.30 | Lock up, preparation for movement to off-wing activity |
| 8.45 | Move to work – laundry job |
| 11.30 | Return from work |
| 11.40 | Lunch |
| 12.20 | Lock up |
| 1.30 | Move to off-wing activity |
| 1.45 | Work – laundry job |
| 4.30 | Association: 45 minutes gym, 15 minutes socialising |
| 5.30 | Tea |
| 6.00 | Lockup |
| 6.30 | Watch football match |
| 8.30 | Chat to cellmate and play cards |
| 10.00 | Write letter to family |
| 11.00 | Reading and sleep |

Rhys is starting a distance learning course and wants to calculate how much time he can put aside every day to study. Here are two possible daily schedules for Rhys, with the study sessions highlighted in yellow. **Which timetable option looks better to you?**

| Thursday Studying: Option 1 | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | |
| 8.00 | Unlock for breakfast and medication |
| 8.30 | Lock up, preparation for movement |
| 8.45 | Move to work – laundry job |
| 11.30 | Return from work |
| 11.40 | Lunch and 20 minutes study |
| 12.20 | Lock up |
| 1.30 | Move to off-wing activity |
| 1.45 | Work – laundry job |
| 4.30 | Association: study |
| 5.30 | Tea |
| 6.00 | Lockup |
| 6.30 | Study |
| 10.00 | Chat to cellmate |
| 10.30 | Write letter to family |
| 11.30 | Reading and sleep |
| | |
| Total study time: 4 hours 20 mins | |

| Thursday Studying: Option 2 | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| | |
| 7.15 | Study |
| 8.00 | Unlock for breakfast and medication |
| 8.30 | Lock up, preparation for movement |
| 8.45 | Move to work – laundry job |
| 11.30 | Return from work |
| 11.40 | Lunch |
| 12.20 | Lock up |
| 1.30 | Move to off-wing activity |
| 1.45 | Work – laundry job |
| 4.30 | Association: 45 minutes gym 15 minutes socialising |
| 5.30 | Tea |
| 6.00 | Lockup |
| 6.30 | Study, including ten minute break |
| 8.00 | Watch final 30 minutes of football match |
| 8.30 | Chat to cellmate and play cards |
| 10.00 | Write letter to family |
| 11.00 | Reading and sleep |
| | |
| Total study time: 2 hours 5 minutes | |

The first timetable has much more study time, but it is unbalanced and it will be **hard to maintain**. Rhys would sacrifice his work out and let study cut into his lunch. He would no longer be socialising during association and has less time to chat to his cellmate. Rhys's evening study session involves 3.5 hours continuous study with no breaks!

A **balanced timetable** is key for enjoyment of studying and **keeping up motivation**.

- Keep up regular exercise. Physical exertion increases brain function and reduces stress – this will benefit your studies in the long run.
- Studying is often a solitary activity and it is good to mix it up with socialising.
- If studying cuts into your sleep and mealtimes then your energy levels and productivity are likely to drop.

The second timetable is much more realistic. Rhys would do 45 minutes study in the morning, because he enjoys doing a short task before he gets tired by his laundry job. He has scheduled a

break during his evening session because it helps his concentration and productivity. Instead of skipping the football entirely he can look forward to watching the game's final half hour, a good way to switch off and let his brain wind down after his academic work.

If Rhys follows the second timetable then he is much more likely to complete his course with the best grades he can and enjoy the process of getting there.

Here are three tips for how to organise your own daily timetable:

1. Look after your mental health and physical wellbeing

- Studying is hard work, but it should be enjoyable and bring pleasure as you learn new ideas and expand your horizons.
- Balance your study with the other things you care about.

2. What time of day suits you best?

- Some people prefer to study during the working hours of 9-5, some prefer late in the evening, others first thing after waking up.
- If there is a time that is more productive for you then arrange your schedule accordingly.

3. Take breaks

- Just like taking a rest between hard efforts in the gym, your mind needs to have a rest between concentrating for long periods. Get up and move around, leaving your screen or your books for a few minutes. Stretch, make a hot drink, socialise briefly. When you return to your books you will be re-invigorated.
- Whether your breaks are 3 or 10 minutes long, set a time by which you must be working again.
- Successful public figures sometimes boast in interviews and autobiographies about their single-minded focus. Whilst this makes a good story, the reality is that the best athletes, writers, entrepreneurs, and leaders have a balanced work schedule that avoids exhaustion and mental burn out. The work required to perform at our best in any setting requires longevity, and unbalanced schedules cannot be maintained for long.
- If we integrate our studying into a balanced lifestyle then we will protect our motivation, energy levels, and might finish the course hungry to embark on another one.

***** Exercise: Write a study timetable for one of your own average weekdays *****

Write out your routine. When might you be able to study?

| Timetable For Your Example Weekday | |
|---|-----------------|
| <i>Time</i> | <i>Activity</i> |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Total study time: | |

- Take your total study time and multiply it by 5 to get your rough hours available for the week.
- Do you prefer to work on weekdays or over the weekend?
- Always remember to take one or two days off a week, so that you can relax and return to your work with renewed energy.

Return to the **O R A acronym** to optimise the daily study schedule:

Keep ORGANISED

- Set times for breaks
- **Keep track** of your progress. At the end of each day make a note of what you achieved, and which academic tasks you want to achieve the following day.
- If a task or section of your course is proving unexpectedly difficult then adapt your overall schedule to give it more time. Don't get too stuck – if it is still proving tricky after this extra time then move on so that your subsequent tasks don't suffer.
- Keep returning to your long-term schedule to make sure you're on track. If not, then make changes to your schedule, or adjust the way in which you are working during the week.

Be REALISTIC

- Don't try to follow a timetable you won't be able to sustain.
- Be realistic about how much each piece of work takes – an entire assignment can't be written in one hour! Make a note of how long it takes you to carry out different academic tasks and adjust your schedule accordingly.
- When time is tight, **prioritise**. Which topic needs the most revision? What are the basic things you need to do to meet your assignment deadline? Complete these first – anything else is a bonus.

Be ADAPTABLE

- If you have a deadline approaching and you need to increase your hours, then skip a gym session or work late one evening.
- If you are exhausted then take a couple of days off and re-write your timetable to make it more sustainable
- If you are stressed by another event in your life and struggling to work, then take time off. Mental stress can make it difficult to concentrate. Return to studying when you are ready or reduce your schedule to short, very achievable sessions and simple tasks.

IV. Creating sport and nutrition programmes – professional uses of time management skills

Some of the time management skills outlined in this chapter can be easily transferred from studying to professional life in sport and nutrition.

Nutritionists create meal plans for clients and look at slowly adapting nutritional intake over time, creating carefully managed programmes. Gym instructors often create and design exercise programmes for individual clients. Fitness coaches working with sports teams will manage workout plans around short-term goals such as weekend fixtures and long-term season goals such as play-off finals or a major race.

Here are some details about creating these programmes and indications of how time management skills can be used.

a. Customized training programmes for individuals

- Gym instructors design programmes based on information they have gathered from their client, incorporating factors such as overall goals, current fitness levels, previous experience of sport and medical history.
- Learning the information needed for a successful plan requires an **in-depth consultation** with the individual client.
- Courses in personal training and gym instruction will teach you customer service skills that enable successful consultations.
- Effective programmes require knowledge of the body and exercises that you will learn through courses in anatomy and physiology.
- Successful programmes will set out exercises at an appropriate frequency and give clients enough time to rest and recover between exercising different parts of the body. This notion of balance and adequate recovery has similarities to the rhythm of a successful studying routine, as previously discussed.
- Programmes should be modified based on regular feedback from the client, your observation of how they are executing the exercises, and your evaluation of whether the programme is progressing towards its goals. Small tweaks such as making an exercise easier or harder, substituting one type of activity for another, can make a big difference to progress and motivation.



- This involves the **adaptability** principle of successful time management. There are links between gaining client feedback and the way in which we must observe our own academic progress and motivation.
- **Keeping clients healthy and safe:**
 - There are significant risks involved in programme design: clients can be badly injured or even at risk of death if they use faulty equipment, carry out exercises with poor form, try to lift weights that are too heavy, or exercise at a higher intensity than they are ready for. Health and safety is an important aspect of gym instruction.
 - At the end of your studies in gym instruction you will have learnt the common features of poor form that often lead to gym users becoming injured. The NHS has made a useful list of some features on their Live Well webpage:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/top-10-gym-exercises-done-incorrectly/>

b. Designing nutrition plans

- We previously looked at how to calculate your average daily schedule in prison and then worked out how to fit studying around other commitments.
- Successful individual nutrition plans must be tailored to the other demands in a client's life: their sleep patterns, working hours, levels of physical exercise, and family life. There is no point advising clients to eat five small meals a day if their working routine involves a 9 hour shift with only one lunch-break in the middle.
- Tailoring nutrition plans in this way requires good communication skills and also involves the **be realistic** principle from the ORA acronym.
- Nutrition planning often starts with asking a client to record what they eat over a period of time by filling in a food diary or daily record.
- We've talked about how our study schedules should be adapted if unforeseen external circumstances arise. If, mid-way through a nutrition programme, a client experiences upheaval in their professional or personal life, then the scale and complexity of their plan should be scaled back accordingly. Small positive changes can still lay the foundation for more ambitious dietary adaption later. **Be adaptable.**
- The **keep organised** principle is helpful for effective communication with your client. Arrange consultations well in advance; respond to queries promptly; present their nutrition programmes in a simple and clear style so it is easy to follow.

CHAPTER 2

Reading and Noting

Distance learning is centred around reading course materials that contain the knowledge and techniques you need to pass your qualification. A reading-based learning process has many benefits – unlike a lesson or lecture, you can pause on concepts that interest you and speed through passages you find easy or already know. Areas of completely new vocabulary and knowledge often takes longer to process.

This volume of reading can be tough. The key to absorbing all this information is to turn reading from being a passive process of scanning the page into an **active process** that allows you to connect the text's meaning to your own perspective and experience.

Notetaking is an important ingredient in active reading. Good notes will represent data and ideas in a way that suits your personal learning style and that serves your immediate **academic objectives**.

The notes you make are useful not only for transforming reading into a more active process, but they also create a resource that you can return to later. **Well-organised and purposeful notes** will help you write the best possible assignments and ensure that exam revision is efficient and easy.

This chapter looks at these twin skills of reading and notetaking, suggesting strategies for maximum effectiveness. Once we've covered the main points, there is a reading exercise about nutrition and recovery, in which you can try putting some of these techniques into practice.

I. Directed Reading

Before reading a text decide the purpose of your reading, in order to give it direction. Different purposes require different reading styles, which vary in terms of speed, precision and how you filter information. This table outlines the main different purposes and styles of directed reading:

| Purpose | Style |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Introducing yourself to the topic | This can be done in a relaxed way. Enjoy discovering new ideas and the pleasure of learning. |
| Learning new vocab and terminology | Find each unfamiliar term in the text and make a note of it. Make sure you have fully understood the meaning of these words before continuing. |
| Researching for an assignment | Skim read over material that isn't relevant, then go more slowly when you find a passage or section that relates closely to your assignment question. (see more in <i>Further research skills</i> below.) |
| Reading for argument | When reading a newspaper article or a chapter, it is often useful to condense the writer's argument . Once you've isolated their key points , you can engage their argument with confidence. |
| Reading for exam revision | Go back over the course materials or, even better, the notes you made from these course materials. Look out for any information that might come up in the exam and pause on any fact or idea that you haven't yet learnt. Once you've isolated this material, try testing yourself on it. Past papers will help you with all these steps. There is some further advice on exam revision in Chapter 4 of this course. |
| Reading critically | Consider the author's motivation, especially when reading texts such as newspaper articles or blog posts. Are they trying to inform their reader or entertain them? Are they biased at all? Watch out for arguments that don't offer any evidence to support their claims, these are often based on opinion rather than research. |

If your reading speed slows down, or you're losing interest in the text, then remind yourself of your purpose. This will help keep your reading style efficient and focused, speeding things up again.

The divisions between the different types of reading are not always fixed. Sometimes you will be reading a text for multiple purposes, such as researching for an assignment but also looking out for new vocab at the same time.

II. General Advice on Notetaking

Why take notes?

- Notes can help you read and listen in a more concentrated and engaged way
- Writing, even if you are copying things out, engages your comprehension and memory
- Making notes keeps your brain active and encourages creativity
- You can structure information and rephrase it in your own style, making it easier to understand and remember

Organise your notes:

- Some simple organising of your notes will be a big advantage when you return to them in the future, allowing you to write better assignments and revise easier
- Remember to do the basics -- put a title at the top of each new section of notes write the date on each piece of work
- If you have loose bits of paper and notes, collect them in a file and label the file so you know what is inside
- Once you have finished a notebook, make a note on the cover about the contents, so you can locate the right notebook speedily

Creative forms of notetaking

- Lists of words and ideas are a useful way of organising information, but sometimes more creative methods of notetaking are advantageous.
- Brainstorms are a good way to create links between different ideas and to gather information around a question or topic. Students and professionals often use brainstorms near the beginning of an assignment or a project.
- In Chapter 4 there is a detailed example of a brainstorm.

Referencing and Plagiarism

- When you take notes from a source, make sure you write down the author, title, year and place of publication. It is important to keep this information so you can credit your sources in your assignment and avoid plagiarism
- Keep track of whether your notes are verbatim (word-for-word) quotes, or whether you are putting the material in your own words.
- See Chapter 4 for an explanation of correct referencing with examples

III. Harnessing the jargon

Readers often complain about the unnecessary use of technical terms, or ‘jargon’. But when used effectively in the right context, specialised vocabulary is very useful. It can facilitate **technical discussion** and **rapid communication** of ideas and details.¹

Learning the relevant technical terms in your subject area (such as anatomical parts or different types of nutrients) will give you access to more complex texts and discussions.

Whenever you come across unknown terms in your reading, **stop and find out what they mean**. Course materials will sometimes have a glossary of technical terms, or the word will have been explained in an earlier chapter. If there isn’t an explanation in your course materials, look the word up next time you have access to a dictionary or a computer.

Make a note of key vocabulary for your course – this creates a valuable resource that you can refer back to later, either when writing your assignments or preparing for exams. If you’ve forgotten what a term means, then your list of key vocabulary will save you time by explaining it straight away.

Employ these technical terms in your own writing, whether that is an assignment or an exam. **Correct usage** will demonstrate your knowledge and expertise, and you should be rewarded by the person grading your work.

Preparing for exams: which specialised vocabulary do you tend to forget? Make a list of these elusive words and look over them once or twice a day in the run-up to your exam.



IV. * * * * Exercise: Reading and Notetaking * * * *

Let’s imagine you have been given an essay question:

Weight training is increasingly popular even amongst people who aren’t interested in body building. Give two groups of people who might benefit from weight training and explain the reasons why. Write 800 – 1,000 words, drawing on evidence from your course guide and one other resource.

In your research for this assignment you have found a book in your prison library with **a chapter on strength and conditioning**. The book is called *How to Ride a Bike* and is by Sir Chris Hoy, the former track cyclist who won seven Olympic medals. It contains detailed practical advice for cyclists of all ability levels, with Hoy sharing much of the experience and knowledge that led him to such success.

Below is an extract from the book. Give yourself 20 minutes or so to read the text and make notes. Structure your notes following the two techniques we discussed above:

1. Take out 4 – 6 key points that are relevant for your assignment (*reading for argument*)
2. Identify any key vocabulary that you want to learn (*learning new vocab and terminology*)

Put some of the key points in your own words. If you copy out anything word-for-word then remember to put it in quotation marks.

Once you have done this task, compare your notes with the example answers at the end of the course materials.

Sir Chris Hoy, *How to Ride a Bike: From Starting Out to Peak Performance* (London: Octopus, 2018).

Extract from Chapter 3, 'Strength & Conditioning for Cyclists' (Kindle edition).

RESISTANCE TRAINING – WHY YOU SHOULD DO IT

There are only so many hours in a day and you want to ride your bike, so why do resistance training? Well, first there are ways of doing resistance training on your bike (see *Building a Strength & Conditioning Programme Part 1*) but lifting weights is the most effective way to get something every cyclist needs, and that's a bit more torque and power. There are other benefits to be gained from training with weights, such as improved physical balance and, if done sensibly, protection against injury.

WHAT IS TORQUE?

Torque is force applied in a rotational direction. An extra bit of grunt, as it's often called, can really to produce a lot of torque can help you stay seated in the saddle on climbs while others are expending more energy heaving themselves uphill out of the saddle. It helps you accelerate quickly with less effort, it helps you create a gap quickly and saves long, energy-sapping efforts. Grunt also helps you win sprints, and winning sprints helps you win races.

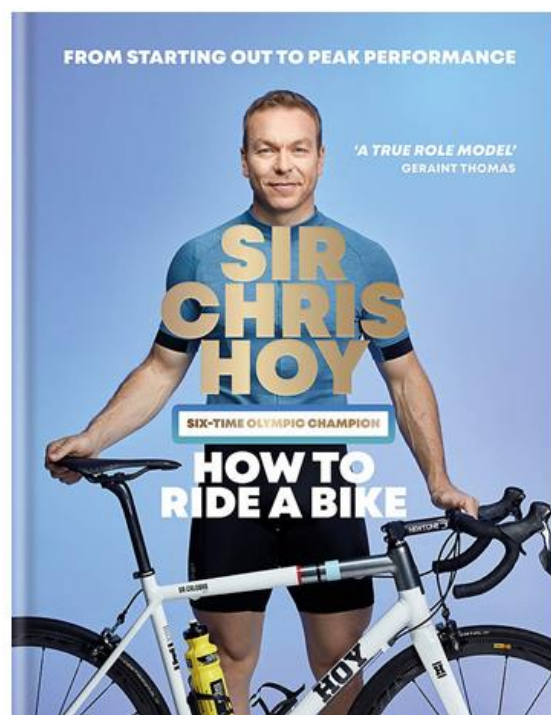
As a track sprinter, I did a lot of weight training as it was central to the performance demands of the events that I rode. For most cyclists, increased torque can be gained by doing a handful of key exercises, using relatively high loads and less than ten repetitions per set (explained below), but always using good lifting form. Never sacrifice form for lifting more weight. If you are unfamiliar with the exercises shown in *Building a Strength & Conditioning Programme Part 2*, get some coaching before embarking on a weight-training programme.

REPS & SETS

Repetitions (reps) means the number of times you repeat an exercise in one go. Sets is the number of times you do the repeats of that exercise. So three sets of eight repetitions means repeating the exercise eight times for one set, and doing the same number of repeats twice more. There's a specified rest period in between each set, which can be shortened or lengthened to manipulate the training effect.

Some cyclists avoid lifting weights because they think it builds bigger muscles, and bigger muscles means more body weight, which is not what most cyclists want. However, it takes a huge amount of high-resistance training with a high-protein diet to significantly change your body shape. A chapter or two of moderate load and intensity per week is all the average rider needs to get that

extra torque without gaining mass. It can also be a welcome break from the bad weather and monotony of dark winter road miles during the off-season in the UK.



OVER 40s

Those over 40 should especially consider incorporating strength training into their programme all year, and consideration becomes need over time for two reasons. The first reason to lift weights in older age is to maintain bone health, and the second is to slow down the drop-off in performance due to decreased production of two key hormones.

Cycling is fantastic exercise for anyone of any age, but one of the things that makes it so good is its biggest drawback too. When you ride, your bike carries your weight, which makes cycling a great choice for anyone with injuries that would be adversely affected by running, or for anyone who is overweight. However, bones are living tissue, their cells are continuously regenerated throughout your life. But cells are replaced in response to load, so if you don't load your bones, your body won't create new live cells at the rate the olds ones die, and you could end up suffering from osteoporosis.*

It's something women have a particular tendency to as they age, but studies have found that even some young male professional cyclists have the early signs of osteoporosis. This is because they spend hours on a bike with their weight supported. It can be avoided by regularly putting your bones under load, and weight training does that in spades.

The two key hormones that play a vital role in recovery from training are testosterone and human growth hormone, and production of them both drops at an increasing rate as you

age. Luckily, short bursts of hard training, such as heavy lifting or sprint workouts, increase the production of these two vital hormones, even in older people. This is why older cyclists should spend a bigger proportion of their training time doing these kinds of workouts, and cutting back on longer rides.

***Osteoporosis:** This is a medical condition that weakens bones, with the result that they become fragile and easily broken. Genetic factors contribute to osteoporosis, but the health of our skeletons is also affected by diet and lifestyle. Weight-bearing and resistance-based exercises help to maintain and increase bone density.

New Vocab

Key points

[illegible]

V. Further research skills: Key words / Skim reading / Using indexes

- When researching for essays and reports, we often need to consult multiple different sources. These can add up to a large amount of text and there isn't time to read every word.
- This is where **skim-reading** comes in
 - Choose some key words from your assignment topic, then skim-read your texts, looking for instances of these (or related) words
 - Keep your eyes moving quickly and then pause whenever you see a key word, reading this passage of text more carefully and slowly
- Similarly, you can identify relevant passages from books by **using the index** – the list of key terms at the back.
 - The index functions in a similar way to the Contents Page, splitting a book into different topics and ideas, but in a much more detailed fashion
 - Sometimes the index will show you that the book contains very little information connected to your task. This is useful because it stops you wasting time on an unhelpful source and you can immediately start looking for a more relevant one.
 - The index contains page numbers. Make a list of relevant pages and then you can read them one-by-one, ticking them off the list as you go. Making sense of the pages using the surrounding context, if necessary.
- Skim-reading and index-searching are crucial skills and are regularly used by effective researchers whether they are high school students or professors.

Example: Using key words and an index

Clare is studying for a Certificate in Diet, Health and Nutrition (Level 3). She has been given an assignment: *What are the dangers of exercising whilst dehydrated?* (Write 1,200 words)

She makes a list of keywords for her assignment:

| | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| hydration | sweat |
| dehydration | humidity |
| fluid | urine |
| water | electrolytes |
| heat | sodium and potassium |

After searching for relevant sources in her prison library, Clare has found the book *Nutrition for Sport and Exercise: A Practical Guide* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012) by Hayley Daries.

She has searched the index for her keywords or anything close to them. On the right is a sample from the index. You can see that Clare has found two relevant index entries.

Next she needs to

- read the pages listed next to these words (make a list and tick them off, one by one)
- take notes on anything useful for her assignment that they contain

266 Index

for recovery, 78–9
 simple, 65
 in sports, requirements for, 63–5
 stores in body, 61
 training menu for athletes, 75*t*
 value, 60–61

Carbohydrate-electrolyte beverage, 190

Casein, 90

Chicken caesar salad, for athletes, 169

Classic pea and ham soup, for athletes, 82

Cognitive-behaviour therapy (CBT), 133

Constipation and iron supplements, 157

Creatine, 204*t*, 208–12

Creatine kinase (CK), 154

Dehydration, 102, 177, 179–83

Delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS), 152

Dietary assessment, of athletes
 habitual energy and nutrient intake, 23–4

nutritional analysis, 26

Dietary extremism, 6–7

Dietary fat, 120

intake of, 120–1, 121*f*

CHAPTER 3

Academic Writing: Clear Communication

Some assessments in sport and nutrition courses are in multiple choice format or require short answers of one sentence or so. At other points in these courses you have to write longer passages of text ranging from a couple of paragraphs up to full essays, whether as part of an exam paper or for coursework. The proportion of writing increases in courses that are Level 3 and above.

Academic writing requires more than just knowledge of the topic – you will need to be able to communicate this knowledge effectively. This chapter sets out the basics of good academic writing, looking at the underpinning principles and the detailed aspects such as spelling and grammar. The next chapter will look at wider issues such as how to plan an essay and use supporting evidence.

Many of these strategies are directly transferable to other forms of writing. The ability to communicate clear and well-structured information is beneficial in many situations such as writing business plans, emails to friends, job applications, and blog posts.

I. The four principles of good academic writing

1. Clarity

Make your points clearly and concisely (giving all the key information but without using unnecessary words). It is better to use two sentences that can be clearly understood than five sentences that come across as confused or include irrelevant information. A clear message will help the reader understand your argument.

The clearest writing uses sentences that are short or medium in length. Overly long sentences should be split up into shorter ones. In longer pieces of writing break the text up into paragraphs, making it easier to read.

2. Objectivity

In face-to-face conversation we are often interested in people's instinctive opinions and the personal sides to a story. But good academic writing is very different because it aims to be objective and unbiased. Make sure that your statements have evidence to back them up.

A good way to show your objectivity in longer essays is to put forward both sides of an argument and then weigh up which one is more convincing. If you are simply following your gut feeling then you are unlikely to convince your reader.

3. Purpose

Every paragraph you write should be focused on a specific topic or point. A paragraph containing three unconnected ideas will be difficult to follow, whereas a clear sense of direction helps your reader. When editing an essay, you can cut out words or sentences that don't contribute to your purpose or message.

Remember to keep your tone appropriate for your purpose. Academic writing requires a relatively formal tone, so avoid using informal language such as slang.



4. Evidence

Bring in evidence to support your answers whenever possible. This might take the form of specialist vocabulary, a statistic or a quotation. Evidence demonstrates your knowledge of the topic and builds trust with your reader.

II. Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Using correct spelling, punctuation and grammar will make your text easier to read and help the reader understand the points you are making. Here are some simple tips for improving these aspects of your writing:

1. Capital letters

These are needed:

- At the beginning of each sentence
- For names of people (such as Peter or Fatima)
- For titles (such as Mrs Doubtfire or Doctor Jones)
- For names of places, from villages and cities up to countries and continents (for example Brighton, Romania, Asia)
- For names of companies or organisations (such as the Co-operative supermarket or Bristol Rovers F.C.)

- For days of the week, months and festival days (for example Monday, August, Christmas and Diwali)

2. Commonly misspelled words

If there are words that you often misspell then **make a list** of them and put it somewhere that you can see easily, such as inside the front of your notebook or on the wall next to where you write. When writing you can look at the list to check you are spelling these words correctly. Eventually the correct spellings should become habitual.

3. Proofreading

- ‘Proof-reading’ is the process when you go back through a piece of writing, looking for any mistakes in spelling, grammar, and punctuation, and correcting them.
- Try reading your writing aloud. This is an effective way to spot grammar and syntax errors: you will often hear when something is wrong. Make a note of this then correct the text.
- Leave a few minutes at the end of your exams to go through your answers, editing and proofreading them. You will be surprised at how many simple mistakes you are able to catch and correct.
- For longer pieces of coursework and assignments it is important to schedule in time for proofreading before you submit them.

4. Learning difficulties

Learning difficulties such as dyslexia can make spelling and grammar more challenging. But this should not be an obstacle to achieving your goals. There are people with learning difficulties working at the highest levels of sports and nutrition who have them. Here are some techniques for improving your academic writing if you have a learning difficulty:

- If you are writing on a computer then use the spell-check function.
- Set aside some time every day or two to read printed words from a magazine or a book – these will increase your recognition of correct spelling and grammatical structures, helping your own writing.
- If you have written an important assignment or document then get a friend to check it over for any spelling and grammar mistakes before you send it off. Ask them to comment only on spelling and grammar and not to discuss the content, this will ensure that all the content remains your own work and you can’t be accused of cheating.
- Compile a list of words that you regularly misspell, as discussed above. Before submitting your assignment put aside time to check your text for these words, correcting them where needed.
- Consider telling your distance learning tutor that you have learning difficulties. This can help them to understand why you have strengths in some areas but find other aspects more

challenging. It will also inform them that spelling mistakes are not a result of you being careless.

- Examinations often have provision for students with learning difficulties – this might take the form of computing facilities or extra time to complete the exam. Enquire about this in advance so arrangements can be made.
- When you are proofreading your work, you can use the ‘read aloud’ or ‘speak’ function in Microsoft Word – this can help to flag up misspelled or wrongly chosen words because you will hear the pronunciation is wrong or the sentence doesn’t sound right.



III. Apostrophes:

Incorrect or missing apostrophes are one of the most common mistakes in the English language. Although many people get them wrong, in fact the rules are relatively simple. There are only ever two reasons to use an apostrophe: **possession** and **contraction**.

a) Apostrophes for contraction

These are used to show that letters have been removed from a word, usually because it has been joined to another word. In these instances the word has been shortened or ‘contracted.’ Common examples include:

it is → *it's*

do not → *don't*

could not → *couldn't*

I have made → I've made

you are → you're

we will → we'll

let us go → let's go

Here are a couple of examples in context:

It is the gym routine you need. → It's the gym routine you need.

You are not an athlete until you have adapted your diet. → You're not an athlete until you've adapted your diet.

Contractions usually indicate a conversational tone. Whilst this is appropriate for some forms of writing, such as journalism or informal emails, academic writing has a more formal tone and so usually all the words should be written in full.

b) Possessive apostrophes

The second use of apostrophes is to indicate possession, showing that something *belongs* to someone. Possessive apostrophes are often used after names of people, institutions and places. Some examples:

Newcastle's best gym.

Catherine's next race.

Your client's nutritional needs.

The gym instructor's skillset.

Plural possessive apostrophes:

If there is more than one person or object doing the possessing then the apostrophe is placed *after* the "s" instead of before it. For example:

The players' changing room.

Placing the apostrophe after the "s" shows us that the changing room belongs to more than one player.

The number of objects being possessed is not relevant to the placement of the apostrophe. The only thing that concerns us is how many people, places, or organisations are doing the possessing – one or several? For example:

England's 10 best players.

There is only one England so the apostrophe goes *before* the "s", it doesn't matter if we are writing about one player or ten players.

c) Common apostrophe errors:

➤ Placing the plural apostrophe in the wrong place for singular and plural

For example a sign that reads:

Bills' gym.

By placing the apostrophe after the “s” the sign mistakenly suggests that the gym belongs to many Bills, whereas in fact there is only one owner. The number of objects being possessed (gyms, in this case) is irrelevant.

➤ Using apostrophes when you don't need them

Incorrectly placed apostrophes are confusing for readers. If you are in doubt about whether or not to use an apostrophe, check that you are using it either to indicate possession or contraction. If neither of these reasons apply then you don't need to use one.

➤ Its/It's, Your/You're, Their/They're

You *cannot* use a possessive apostrophe with the words ‘it’, ‘your’ or ‘they’, only ever an apostrophe of contraction (showing that the words have been shorted from ‘it is’, ‘you are’ or ‘they are’). For example:

The team has won its first trophy. Even though the trophy belongs to the team, we cannot use possessive apostrophe with the word ‘it’.

If you are unsure about whether to use an apostrophe when you are writing ‘its’, try expanding the word to ‘it is’. If it makes sense, then it is a contraction of ‘it is’ and needs an apostrophe. If you can't then it is possessive and doesn't need an apostrophe. For example:

*The boxing gym has lost **it's** license. → The boxing gym has lost **it is** license.*

This clearly doesn't make sense, so we know that the apostrophe was a mistake and should be removed.

***It's** not the best way to train. → **It is** not the best way to train. This does make sense, so we can see this is an apostrophe of contraction and the sentence is correct.*

* * * * **Exercise: Apostrophes and Punctuation** * * * *

Task Split this passage up into sentences of an appropriate length, adding capital letters, full stops, commas and apostrophes. Watch out for the apostrophes, there should be **four** of them. Once you've finished your answer compare it to the example corrected version at the end of the course.

there has been a great increase in sport teams attention to nutrition in recent decades when football manager arsène wenger arrived in london in 1996 he had to ban chocolate bars from arsenals canteen today it is common for elite sports teams to hire a dedicated nutritionist for instance the cyclists in team sky are supported by professor james morton a specialist in nutrition and exercise metabolism who joined in december 2014 a well-functioning digestive system helps to deliver nutrients to muscles during exercise poor gut health can impede an athletes physical performance and recovery the signs of poor gut health include diarrhoea, constipation and stomach cramps to regulate and improve gut health nutritionists advise eating food rich in probiotics popular examples include yogurt and fermented vegetables such as kimchi from korea and miso from japan its widely recognised that leaner meats such as chicken and fish are better for digestive health than red meat

A blank sheet of lined paper with 20 horizontal dashed lines for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. The page is framed by a solid black border.

A blank sheet of lined paper with horizontal dashed lines for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. The page is framed by a solid black border.

CHAPTER 4

Essays and Exams

This chapter looks at some of the larger aspects of academic writing, such as making sure to answer the question fully and the brainstorm method for planning essays. At the end, we turn to exam revision and how to use the revision card technique.

It's worth considering how these skills could help you in other contexts. Many jobs require writing a report or an email that successfully answers a specific question or brief. Learning how to memorise facts, figures, and ideas are useful for situations such as job interviews or public speaking.

IV. Answering the question

The quickest route to getting high marks in your essays and exams is to make sure that you answer the question. You need to understand the question before you start planning and writing the answer. Make sure you address each different part of the question, not just the bit that interests you most.

Identifying the **keywords** and **question phrasing** in each task is a tried-and-tested method. These can provide a structure to your answer and, in the case of coursework essays, help you to plan your research.

Here's an example question from an exam paper²

Question 17: Assess the relative importance of the different muscle fibre types to performance in a game of tennis. (9 marks)

In the exam you would have about ten minutes to answer this question and you are given a full side of A4 in which to write your answer.

First of all let's look at the **question phrasing**:

- **'Assess the relative importance'** – the examiners want a sense of comparison in your answer. Tell them why one type of muscle fibre is important, and then explain why a different type is important. You can use this structure to separate your different paragraphs. Return to this question phrasing in your conclusion – is one muscle fibre type more important? Are they all important?

Now let's look at the **keywords**:

- **'different muscle fibre types'** – this is the anatomical knowledge that you are being tested on. Make sure that your answer discusses slow twitch and fast twitch muscle fibres and explains how they are suited to different physical actions and activities.
- **'performance'**
'game of tennis' – what movements are involved when playing a game of tennis? Serving, hitting the ball during a rally, running round the court, explosive movements to react quickly to your opponent's shots. Match the different muscle fibres to each movement.

Make sure that your answer addresses all the keywords in the question. There's no point demonstrating your encyclopaedic knowledge about slow twitch muscle fibres if you don't explain how they are used in tennis. Similarly even if you explain the different muscle fibres and their use in tennis, you won't be able to get full marks if you don't respond to the question phrasing: make sure you evaluate and compare their **importance**.

Here is another question.³ What are the **keywords** and **question phrasing** here?

Question 6.2: Childhood obesity is increasing in Britain and has been linked to an unhealthy diet.

Assess the various factors which contribute to childhood obesity and explain how an unhealthy diet in childhood may put future health at risk. (12 marks)

Question phrasing:

- **'Assess the various factors'**

Keywords:

- **childhood obesity**
- **Unhealthy diet**
- **Future health at risk**

The phrase 'various factors' shows you that your answer will need to refer to at least three different factors in order to get full marks. You will need to give some details of what makes an unhealthy diet, using specialist terminology where possible. Show how these good types might affect future health by linking them to specific health problems that are commonly experienced by adults

* * * * **Exercise: Answering the Question** * * * *

Let's look at are two more questions.⁴ Identify the **question phrasing** and **keywords**. See the back for the answers.

Question 8: Why is goal setting so important to effective performance in sport?

Explain how goal setting could be used in the different stages of learning to ensure effective performance in sport. (20 marks)

Question 19: Describe a meal that would be appropriate for an endurance runner in the 36 hours before they run a marathon. Give reasons for your choices and refer to both macronutrients and micronutrients in your answer. (6 marks)

Assessment criteria

The assessment criteria explain what is being tested in exams and assignments, showing you what the person marking your work is looking for. It is useful to read these when they are available in order to make sure that your work satisfies the criteria.

With certain courses the assessment criteria are included in the course materials. For instance, in HFE's Gym Instructor Level 2 course, the assessment criteria for the practical section can be found on the final page of the Student Manual. In other courses they can be found on the course provider's website.

Familiarise yourself with the assessment criteria before major assignments or exams, so that you know what you are being tested on. In general, it's worth remembering that your marker will be looking for you to demonstrate the knowledge that you've gained in the course so far.

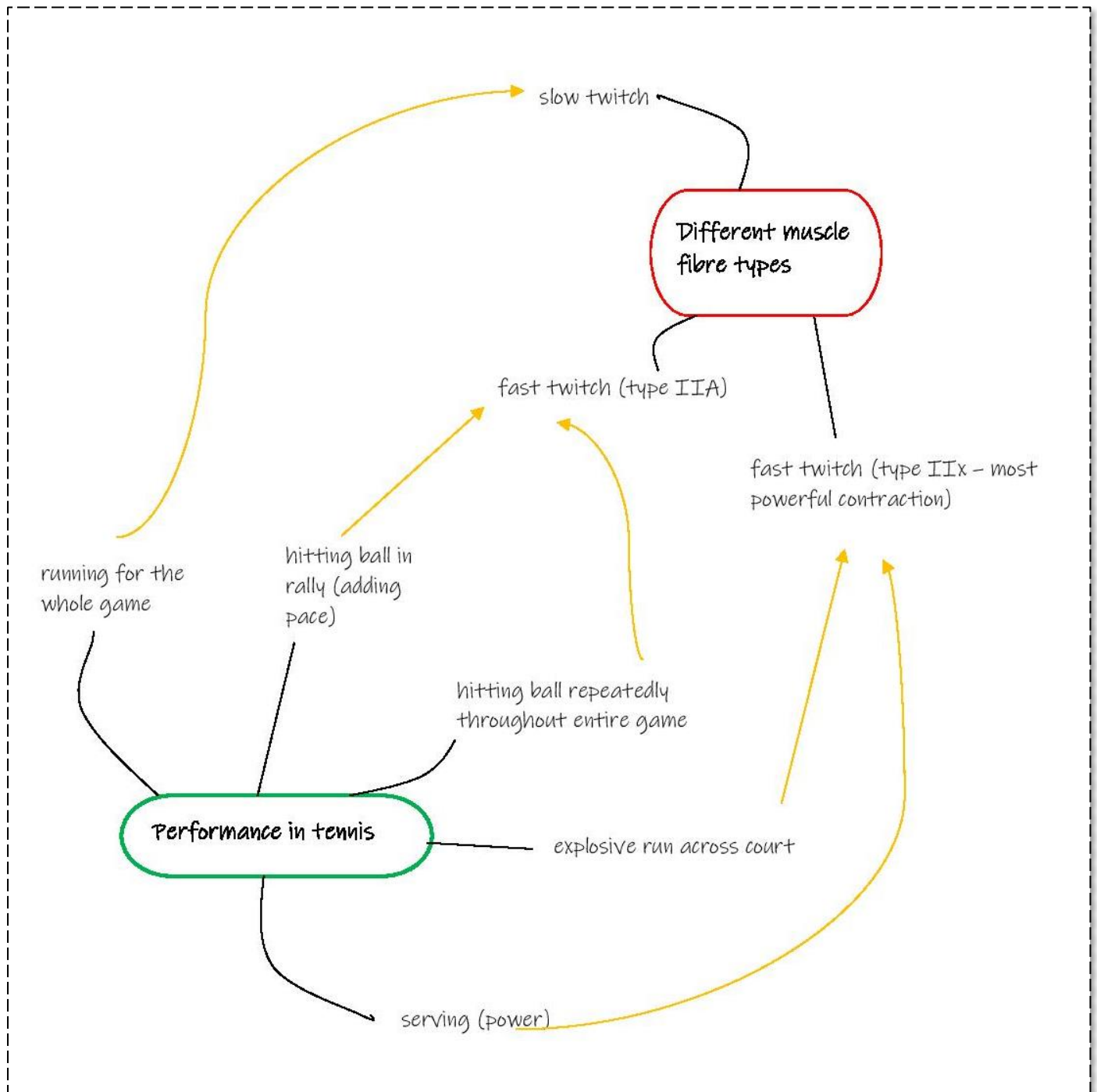
V. Collecting thoughts and planning an answer

a) Mind-maps and brainstorming

Once you have worked out what a question means, a good way to start an essay is to create a brainstorm (also called a mindmap). For shorter exam questions where you are under tight time constraints you won't have time to do this, but for longer exams questions and

coursework essays brainstorms are a useful way to organise your thoughts. Returning to one of the questions above, here is an example of what a brainstorm might look like:

Question 17: Assess the relative importance of the different muscle fibre types to performance in a game of tennis.⁵



You can see that the person writing this brainstorm has written down the two keywords from the question. They have then thought through the relevant information they know and then noted it down around each keyword.

The great advantage of mindmaps is that you can collect scattered bits of information on one page, allowing you to organise ideas in clusters and see connections. Their freeform structure can be good for sparking creativity and is well suited to people who think visually.

Not everything on a mindmap might make it into the final written answer – putting everything on one page like this allows you to decide what is most relevant and what you can leave out.

b) Planning an essay

A more structured way to plan an essay is to make headings for each paragraph topic and then under each heading briefly note the main facts and ideas that relate to that topic.

This is a good type of plan to create shortly before you start writing. It's especially useful for long coursework essays when there is a lot of information that needs to be shaped into a coherent structure.

Sometimes once you've written down the different paragraph headings you will begin to see that there are better ways to order the paragraphs and link them together.

c) Start writing!

- Students writing coursework essays delay the writing process because they worry haven't yet done enough research or worked out their precise argument.
- Don't put off writing for too long! Many teachers advise that you start writing *before* you feel you are ready. This is because you will often discover ideas and solutions *during* the writing process.
- The danger of starting to write too late is that you won't have enough time to include all the main points in your argument, or you won't have time to proof-read and edit at the end.
- The earlier you start writing the easier it will be to meet your deadline. Remember, it is better to hand in a good piece of work on time than to hand in an excellent piece of work late.

d) Writing sessions

- When you are writing make sure to take regular breaks, standing up and walking to get the blood and oxygen flowing round your body again.
- Some people find it helpful to aim for **specific targets in each writing session**, for instance aiming to write three paragraphs or to fill an A4 page. Others like to structure writing sessions by time, such as writing for 45 minutes before stopping, regardless of how many words have been written.
- It is a good idea to leave time at the end of your writing process for **editing**. Editing is the process of improving the work by making small changes or adding and deleting words and sentences. Sometimes when you read over the work you will spot simple ways to make it better.

VI. Using Evidence and Referencing Correctly

1. Choose appropriate sources

The most persuasive writing uses evidence to support its claims. Bringing in outside sources is especially important when writing longer coursework essays and for courses that are level 3 and above.

Evidence from outside sources might take the form of an idea or a quotation from a respected authority on the subject (such as a qualified nutritionist or sports scientist). Alternatively you might incorporate some relevant data such as statistics or measurements into your argument. At Level 2 it usually isn't necessary to carry out independent research to find relevant evidence – the information you need should be contained in your course materials.

When doing independent research make sure that you are using **respected sources**. Personal blogs and tabloid



newspapers (such as The Sun, The Daily Mail, The Daily Mirror) are not appropriate. Blogs are not independently verified and tabloids have low editorial standards, aiming for sensational reporting rather than factual accuracy.

The best sources to use are text books, books published by major publishers (some self-published books are brilliant but many are not), and online material from respected institutions (such as websites run by universities or the NHS). Sometimes reputable newspapers (such as The Times, The Daily Telegraph and The Guardian) or established magazine titles (such as Runner's World) might be appropriate.

2. Incorporate evidence in your writing

There are two ways of including information from external sources in your own writing (known as 'citing'). You can either explain their idea in your own words or you can quote their exact words inside quotation marks. The important thing is that whichever method you use, **you must name your source**, giving the title of the book or article, the name of the author and the date it was published.

Doing this will avoid plagiarism (passing off other people's ideas as your own). Naming your source will also make sure that you get the credit for having done independent research.

Here is an example of each method, taken from an assignment answer about how sportspeople should consume protein:

i. citing a source by quoting them directly

Christie Aschwanden is an American sports journalist and former athlete. In her book *Good to Go: How to Eat, Sleep and Rest Like a Champion* (London: Pan Macmillan, 2019), she argues that athletes don't need to rely on supplements like protein shakes to get their daily protein intake. Aschwanden writes that 'Everyday foods are perfectly suitable, whether that means dairy products, plant sources like beans, or the little tins of tuna and salmon that have seen a resurgence in Australia' (p.XX).

ii. citing a source using your own words:

Christie Aschwanden is an American sports journalist and former athlete. In her book *Good to Go: How to Eat, Sleep and Rest Like a Champion* (London: Pan Macmillan, 2019), she argues that athletes don't need to rely on protein shakes and other supplements to get their daily protein intake. She writes that sportspeople can eat protein from normal everyday sources such as beans, milk, cheese and fish.

In general, you should only use quotations occasionally and keep them short – just quote a few words or at most a sentence or two. The person marking your work is interested in what *you* have to say. By putting other people's ideas into your own words you will demonstrate your understanding and so it is often a more impressive method of citation – just make sure you name your source.

The academic community is based on trust and sharing ideas – plagiarism undermines the system and the consequences are serious. Plagiarised work, in which the writer uses someone else’s words or ideas without giving them credit, is almost always disqualified and given a fail grade.

If you are writing notes from a source, make it clear to yourself whether you are using your own words or just copying their material verbatim (word-for-word). This will help you avoid accidental plagiarism if you return to your notes later when writing an essay.

Putting material into your own words has the added benefit of increasing your understanding and memory of the content, as well as developing your vocabulary.

3. Longer references for Level 3 and above:

At level 3 and above, references are usually expected to include more information the source than just the basics of *author, title, and date*. Here is a brief list of what you need to include in different types of references at this level:

- the full name of the author or their surname and initials
- the title of the work
- the year it was published
- the name and location of the publisher (if it is a book)
- if your source is a magazine or journal then include the title of the magazine and the number of the volume
- for printed sources (such as book, magazine, academic journal, newspaper) include the relevant page number
- for an electronic resource write down the URL for the website and the date you accessed it

Examples of correct references:

A book:

Bradley Wiggins, *My Time* (London: Yellow Jersey Press, 2012), 19.

(the final number indicates the page you are quoting from, so this is from page 19 of Wiggins’ book)

A newspaper article:

Barney Ronay, ‘Fans must take it upon themselves to resist football’s politics of hate,’ *The Guardian*, 9 December, 2019, 34.

An online resource:

'Eat well', *NHS Live Well*, accessed 10 January, 2020, www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well.

Once you have referenced a source in full, later references to the same source can be shortened. For example, after full references to Wiggins' book and Ronay's article, we could then use the abbreviated reference:

Wiggins, *My Time*, 31.

Ronay, 'Fans must take it upon themselves,' 35.

Referencing style

- There are different styles for referencing, such as Harvard style and Chicago style. The three examples above use Chicago style referencing. Courses and educational institutions often have a preferred style – find out from your course materials, the course provider's website or your tutor style they want students to use.
- The main thing is to make sure that you are referencing consistently (i.e. using one style) and are including all necessary information about each source.
- This online resource from the University of York is an excellent guide to all the major referencing styles, with example references:

<https://www.york.ac.uk/students/studying/skills/integrity/referencing-styles/>



VII. Exam Revision

Revising for exams is a crucial part of being a successful student and make sure you gain credit for the work you've put in during the course. Here are some simple tips:

- Start by making an overview of what you need to revise. Exam revision can be undone by forgetting to revise a crucial topic.
- Once you have an overview of what needs to be revised, draw up a timetable that uses the available time before the exam. You might, for instance, allocate three days per topic, or one day per course material chapter.
- Work on your weak spots. If there's a chapter or topic you find particularly challenging then this might need some extra days' revision.
- Put your timetable somewhere you can see it and tick off each topic as it's completed.
- Stick to your timetable. This will make sure you don't get delayed on one topic and run out of time.

Revision cards

- Revision cards are a useful tool for learning facts, figures and specialist terminology.
- Write questions on one side of the card and the answers on the reverse. You can then use these cards to test yourself.
- If you don't have access to lined record cards then use paper or card to make your own.
- Here is an example revision card:

Topic: **Recovery** Questions

1. What supplement can you take to help with hydration?
2. What benefits does sports massage give an endurance runner?
3. Give one way to aid recovery in older athletes
4. Give two elements that can be included in a warm down session following training
5. Give three benefits of warming down after exercise

Answers

1. Isotonic drinks containing salts
2. Reduces inflammation of the muscles and aids recovery
3. Increased protein intake (more than younger athletes)
4. Easy exercise to lower heartrate and static stretching
5. Reduces feeling of fatigue, removes waste products from muscles, improves blood circulation

* * * * **Exercise: Writing a Revision Card** * * * *

Now try turning the following extract into a revision card. Read the passage of text from *The Complete Guide to Sports Nutrition* by Anita Bean and take **five questions and answers** from it, writing them in the revision card boxes below. There are multiple different questions you could formulate, see the end of the course for an example set of questions and answers.

‘When is the best time to eat before exercise?’

Ideally, you should eat between 2 and 4 hours before training, leaving enough time for your stomach to settle so that you feel comfortable – not too full and not too hungry. This helps increase liver and muscle glycogen levels and enhances your subsequent performance (Hargreaves *et al.*, 2004). Clearly, the exact timing of your pre-exercise meal will depend on your daily schedule and the time of day you plan to train.

[...]

If you leave too long an interval between eating and training, you will be at risk of hypoglycaemia – low blood glucose – and this will certainly compromise your performance. You will fatigue earlier and, if you feel light-headed, risk injury too. On the other hand, training with steady blood glucose levels will allow you to train longer and harder.

How much carbohydrate?

Most studies suggest 2.5g carbohydrate/kg of body weight about 3 hours before exercise. Researchers at Loughborough University found that this pre-exercise meal improved endurance running capacity by 9% compared with a no-meal trial (Chryssanthopoulos *et al.*, 2002). So, for example, if you weigh 70kg that translates to 175g carbohydrate. You may need to experiment to find the exact quantity of food or drink and the timing that works best for you.’

(Text from *The Complete Guide to Sports Nutrition*, 6th edition by Anita Bean (London: A & C Black), p.31.)

Topic: **Eating before exercise** Questions

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Answers

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

CHAPTER 5

Making the Most of Distance Learning

As discussed in the introduction to this course, distance learning has advantages and disadvantages compared to classroom-based education. In addition to the inbuilt challenges of distance learning, studying whilst serving a sentence in prison also brings challenges of its own. This final chapter looks at some of these, suggesting ways to overcome and work around them. Finally, we have a look at an example CVs, thinking about how courses in sport and nutrition might help your future employment prospects.

I. Resilience and Support

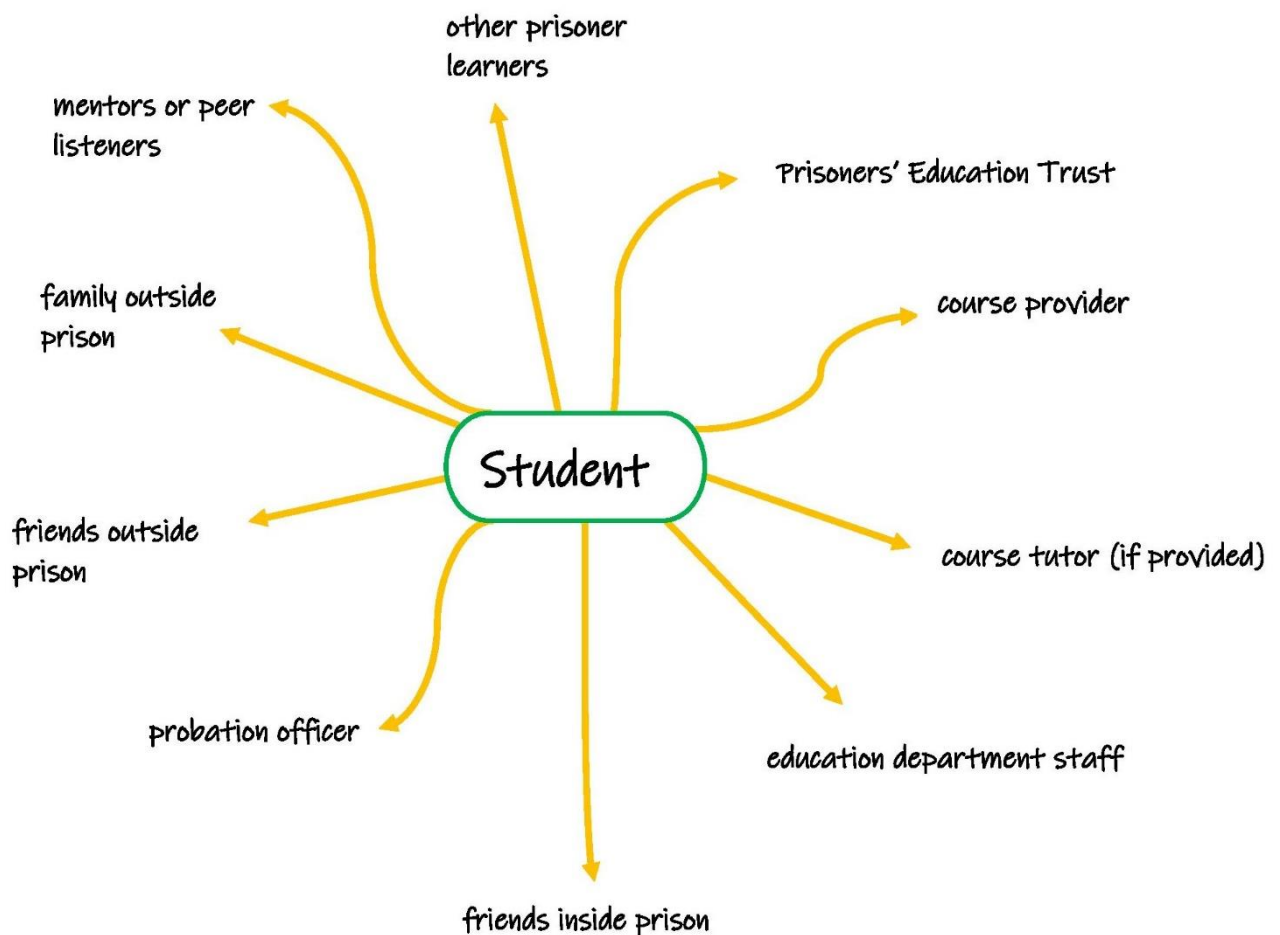
1. Support Networks

- In classroom-based learning, students have a teacher and classmates with whom they can discuss their work with and ask about problems. Such points of contact are not so immediately available to distance learners, so it is a good idea to create your own support networks.
- Tell people close to you that you are taking a distance learning course. That way they can ask you how it is going, support you if it gets tough, and celebrate with you when you reach milestones.
- Talking to other prisoner learners is a good idea. They might have done a similar course to you and can share their experiences, or you might want to arrange times when you meet together in the education department for study sessions.
- If you are doing a vocational or technical qualification, there might be other prisoners who have professional experience in this area who would be happy to discuss details with you.
- Some distance learning courses have tutors you can contact or academic staff who work for the course provider. If you have a question or a problem with your course then don't hesitate to write to them.
- If the course materials don't arrive at your prison or you have problems with the course then you can write to PET at any time. Please write to:

FREEPOST, Prisoners' Education Trust, The Foundry, 17 Oval Way, London, SE11 5RR.

The 'Freepost' address means you don't need to use a stamp.

- In the map below are some suggestions of people who might form your support network:



2. Anxiety and Stress

- It is normal to feel some stress when pushing yourself academically. Students almost always experience stress to some degree, whatever environment they are studying in.
- The key is to manage your stress levels and make sure that they stay at a low and sustainable level.
- Talk to people you trust in your support network. It can be helpful to say things out loud and the person you talk to might have helpful advice or be familiar with similar situations.
- The answer to academic stress is often *not to do more* studying. Stress is frequently a sign that you need to take more regular breaks. Doing other activities can help you gain perspective and refresh your mind.

- Make sure you take at least one or two days off every week. You will be energised and more productive for having taken time off.
- If your studies seem unsustainable then return to your plans and adapt them to improve the situation.
- It is widely recognised that physical exercise and fresh air helps to ease anxiety and lower stress levels.
- Regular sport improves sleep patterns and the endorphins released after exercise help to lift our mood.
- LJ Flanders is the author of an excellent book called *Cell Workout* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2016). Part of his journey towards writing this book included doing distance learning courses whilst in HMP Pentonville. He shared helpful advice with PET about the importance of doing exercise:

'Did you know that increasing your cardio will ultimately boost energy and productivity, helping to create the right frame of mind to study? A 30-minute cardio session three times a week will yield results. It will pump extra blood to the brain, delivering the extra oxygen and nutrients it needs to perform at its maximum efficiency. Cardio also floods the brain with chemicals that enhance functions like memory, problem solving and decision making.'¹

From *Prisoners' Education Trust: Learner's Handbook*, p.63

II. Challenges of Distance Learning in Prison

Students in prison are sometimes held back by frustrating circumstances but their endeavours are no less valuable for that. In fact, by working out how to overcome these obstacles the learning process can become even more valuable.

The best employers will recognise and appreciate people who have gained qualifications in difficult circumstances. One prisoner learner went for an interview with a construction firm and reported the following experience:

'Towards the end of my sentence I was in open conditions and I went to a job interview with a construction firm. The director was amazed that I'd got these qualifications during my time in prison. He told me that I was better qualified than some of his senior staff.'

Below is a list of the obstacles to studying that often arise for distance learners in prison and some suggestions of how to work around them:

1. Organisation and study environment

- The confined space of a cell is not the most practical place to work, for instance having to write sitting on the bed or the floor.
- One strategy for managing this small space is to keep your papers and course materials well-organised. Label every notebook you use and keep loose papers together in a folder.
- Allocate your time wisely. Do activities that can be easily done in a cell during lockdown hours and save tasks that need a desk or a computer for when you have access to the education department.
- One previous distance learner told PET that 'I soon found a study pattern that worked for me. I'd do my reading and notetaking in my cell instead of watching TV and then do my assignments in the Distance Learning Room' (*Learner's Handbook*, p.23).
- Given that you are sharing a small space with your cellmate it is worth discussing your studies with them. Negotiate quiet times when you can study. Be prepared to compromise and work around some of their own commitments and preferences.

2. Short notice transfer to another prison

Courses are sometimes interrupted when students are transferred to another prison at short notice. Ideally a course can provide a helpful sense of continuity and stability in new surroundings. Here are some ways to lessen the disruption of a sudden move:

- Introduce yourself to the education department in your new prison as soon as possible and let them know you are currently doing a distance learning course funded by PET.
- If your learning materials have been left at your previous prison then ask for them to be posted to you. The education department staff can help you make this request.
- If it is impossible to get your materials posted, then ask PET staff to request a new set of course materials.¹

3. Distractions and procrastination

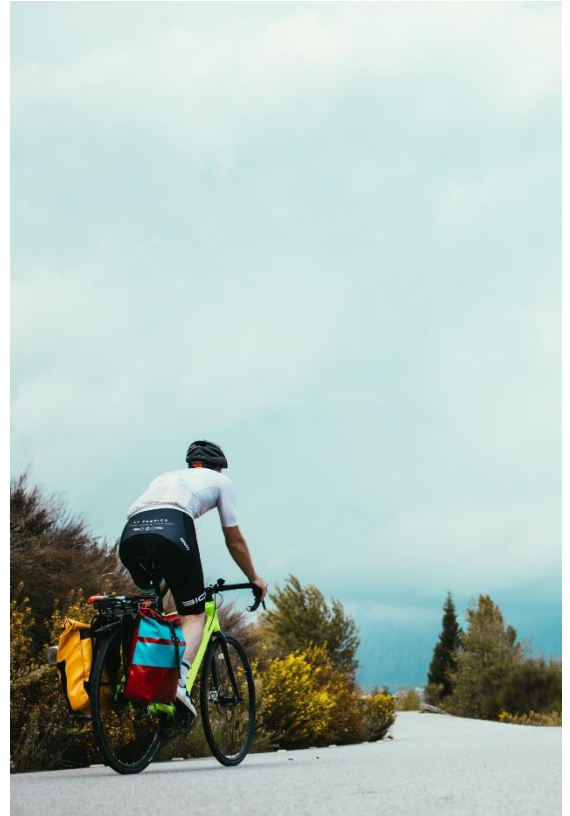
- From socialising to TV, music and social media, there are numerous ways to get distracted from doing your work.

¹ Query for WPP: is that correct?

- The best way round this is to schedule achievable targets for work sessions, as discussed in the Time Management part of this course, and stick to them. Put distractions out of reach and save them as a reward for when you finish your work.

4. Not having the resources you want

- Sometimes your work can be held up by not having the resources you want. This might be internet access or library books when researching an assignment, or it might be computer access for when you want to listen to a tutorial online.
- Speak to the education department if you are having trouble accessing something, they might be able to source an alternative or help you find a way round the problem.
- Make the most of the resources you do have – sometimes you might be able to solve the issue by finding an alternative resource in your prison library or online. Get creative with the resources you do have access to.
- If you are lacking paper or pens then speak to your prison canteen, someone on the peer advisor or education mentoring scheme, or staff in your prison's education department.



5. Receiving feedback

- One of the main forms of interaction in distance learning course is through getting written feedback on your assignments. Sometimes this can be challenging to deal with, especially if the feedback contains unexpected criticism or isn't as constructive as you had hoped.
- Don't be disheartened by critical feedback. Remember that your course is a learning process and you are not expected to begin it as a perfect student. If you already knew all the answers at the beginning of the course then there wouldn't be much point taking it.

- Learning how to react to feedback in a positive way and improve our work accordingly is a skill in itself, one that students and professionals can gradually improve in all walks of life.
- Different students respond better to different sorts of feedback. Some of us need more encouragement whilst others need firm reminders of where they should improve.
- But tutors don't always give the type of feedback that suits us best. If you are struggling to process your feedback then concentrate on the parts of it that are most useful for you. Take two or three helpful points from the feedback and let these guide how you approach your next piece of work.
- Make the feedback work for you. If parts of it aren't helping you then don't dwell on them.
- If you want clarification about the feedback you've received then write to your tutor and ask about it.

6. Against perfection

- Sometimes our desire to make things perfect – whether that's your study environment or an answer to an essay question – can actually stop us achieving good work.
- The French philosopher Voltaire quoted an Italian proverb in his *Dictionary of Philosophy* (1770): 'Perfection is the enemy of good.' ('Il meglio è l'inimico del bene.')
- An example of this would be missing a deadline because you want to write the perfect assignment. Instead of handing in a good piece of work on time you've missed the deadline by chasing perfection.
- Another example would be getting so stressed about a coursework essay you are unable to do any work. Lower your expectations and write whatever you can.
- Doing the best you can is good enough.

7. Partial course completion

- Some distance learning courses have a 'theory' part and a 'practical' part. If the practical part requires attending a workshop or training centre it won't be possible if you are still serving your sentence in closed conditions.
- This isn't a reason not to do the course. Sometimes course providers will give you up to two years to complete the practical part, and so you can do it after your sentence has ended or if you are released on temporary licence.
- If you are unable to do the practical part then you can still complete the theory section and put that on your CV.

- If you are unsure about the feasibility of a course you want to do, then please contact PET and we can advise you.

8. Being released from prison

- Like being transferred to another prison, the disorientation and upheaval of this process can interrupt your studies.
- Inform PET that you have been released, writing to them at the Freepost address.
- Please finish the course you have embarked on. This can provide some helpful stability in your new circumstances and make the most of the time you spent studying inside.
- If you want to pursue further education after release there is some advice on our website:

<https://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/get-support/people-leaving-prison/continue-with-education/>

III. Writing and Updating your CV

It is good practice to write your CV and update it when you complete a course.

If you have a target job in mind, then think about which courses will help you reach that goal and start working to build a suitable CV. Visualizing your CV can be helpful motivation for studying.

If you are applying for jobs in the future then it is useful to have an updated version of your CV already. CVs should be adapted to the specific requirements of each job, emphasising how you are suited to it. But having a template with your main accomplishments on it will give you a helpful resource to start with each time.

On the following pages is an example of how you could lay out your CV.

CV

Joe Bloggs

Contact details: 4 Southall Lane, Reading, RG9 4SZ, United Kingdom.
07961 679400
joebloggs@gmail.co.uk

Profile

- Dedicated sports professional with a passion for helping people achieve their sporting goals at whatever level.
- Particular experience in distance running and crossfit training, having completed two marathons and helped to run a crossfit challenge day at my local gym.
- As a personal trainer I can help clients gain confidence in the gym, lose weight, improve their fitness, target specific events or work on general strength and conditioning.
- I aim to make sure that my clients enjoy their training by keeping training sessions varied and listening carefully to feedback.

Skills

- One-to-one personal training and group sessions
- Devising exercise programmes for individual clients, including older adults
- Strength and conditioning
- Kettlebells
- Track sessions, distance sessions and interval training for runners
- Making customized nutrition plans and diet advice to clients.

Professional Experience

DPD driver (2017)

- Managed my own schedule
- Engaged with a wide variety of customers
- Upkeep and maintenance of vehicle
- Frequent travel round Greater London and ability to adapt to different environments

ASDA store assistant (2015 – 2016)

- Excellent customer service
- Carrying out a variety of tasks in store
- Adapting to changing circumstances

Qualifications and Education

- REPS accredited CPD Kettlebells Course (Origym) – 2020
- Level 3 Award in Nutrition for Physical Activity (HFE) – 2019
- Level 3 Exercise for Older Adults Award (HFE) – 2019
- Passport to Level 2 Certificate in Gym Instructing (HFE) – 2018
- Attended Windsor Boys' School from 2012-2015
 - GCSEs in Maths (B), English Language (B), English Literature (A), Chemistry (B), Physical Education (A), Geography (A*), and French (C)

Hobbies and Interests

- Crossfit
- Parkrun (completed over 20 Parkruns and volunteered at my local Parkrun)
- Running (completed London Marathon in 2014 and Liverpool Marathon in 2015)
- Cooking for friends and family

References from former employees and tutors are available on request

Answers to Exercises

Chapter 2: Reading and Noting

Exercise: Reading and Notetaking

(notes made from *How to Ride a Bike* extract)

New Vocab

Torque = 'force applied in a rotational direction'

Repetitions = how many times you do an exercise at one time

Sets = a collection of repetitions

Osteoporosis = medical condition of having fragile bones that might be easily broken

Key Points

There are many different points in the extract, here are 12 points that we chose. Notice that we have put them all in our own words apart from one. Point four is copied out word-for-word so we have put it in quotation marks.

1. Weight training can give you better torque and power for cycling. It also improves your physical balance and leads to reduction in injuries.
2. Good torque (cyclists sometimes call it 'grunt') allows you to stay sitting in the saddle when cycling up hills, instead of having to stand on the pedals.
3. Good torque give cyclists fast acceleration and makes them better sprinters.
4. 'Never sacrifice form for lifting more weight.'
5. Cyclists generally don't want to become heavy by increasing their muscles.
6. To change your body shape you have to do a lot of high-resistance training and consume protein in large quantities.
7. Weight training is especially good for people over 40.
8. Cyclists and older people (especially women) sometimes suffer from bad bone health (osteoporosis).
9. By placing load on the bones, weight training encourages cell regeneration.

10. Testosterone and human growth hormone help you to recovery after exercise.
 11. The body produces less testosterone and human growth hormone as it gets older.
 12. Older people should do more high intensity training (including weight training) because it makes the body produce more testosterone and human growth hormone.
-

Chapter 3. Academic Writing: Clear Communication

Exercise: Apostrophes and Punctuation

There has been a great increase in sport teams' attention to nutrition in recent decades. When football manager Arsène Wenger arrived in London in 1996 he had to ban chocolate bars from Arsenal's canteen today it is common for teams to hire a dedicated nutritionist. For instance, the cyclists in Team Sky are supported by Professor James Morton, a specialist in nutrition and exercise metabolism who joined in December 2014. A well-functioning digestive system helps to deliver nutrients to muscles during exercise. Poor gut health can impede an athlete's physical performance and recovery. The signs of poor gut health include diarrhoea, constipation, and stomach cramps. To regulate and improve gut health many nutritionists advise eating food rich in probiotics. Popular examples include yoghurt and fermented vegetables such as kimchi from Korea and miso from Japan. It's widely recognised that leaner meats such as chicken and fish are better for digestive health than red meat.

Explanation of apostrophes:

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| <i>sports teams'</i> | Possessive apostrophe (plural). We are talking about more than one team so the apostrophe comes after the "s". |
| <i>Arsenal's</i> | Possessive apostrophe (singular). |
| <i>athlete's</i> | Possessive apostrophe (singular). We are referring to a single example athlete so the apostrophe comes before the "s". |
| <i>it's</i> | Apostrophe for contraction. This needs an apostrophe because it is a contraction of 'it is'. |

Chapter 4: Essays and Exams

Exercise: Answering the Question

Question 8:

Question Phrasing:

- Why is ... so important
- Explain how

Keywords:

- Goal setting
- Effective performance
- Different stages of learning

Question 19:

Question Phrasing:

- Describe
- Give reasons

Keywords:

- Endurance runner
 - 36 hours before
 - Marathon
 - Macronutrients
 - Micronutrients
-

Exercise: Writing a Revision Card

Topic: Eating before exercise.

Questions

1. What is the best time to eat before exercise?
2. Give two advantages of eating before training
3. What is hypoglycaemia?
4. Why do you risk injury if you don't eat before exercise?
5. What is the optimum ratio of carbohydrate to body weight?

Answers

1. 2 to 4 hours beforehand
 2. Performance is improved and glycogen levels in the liver and muscles are increased
 3. Low blood glucose
 4. You might be overly fatigued and or become light-headed, causing you to have an accident
 5. 2.5g of carbohydrate per kg of body weight
-

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the Arts and Humanities Research Council who enabled Xander Ryan to undertake a placement with Prisoners' Education Trust, through the South West and Wales Doctoral Training Partnership.

Thanks to HFE for permission to reproduce an extract from their Gym Instructor Level 2 Study Guide. For more information about the courses they offer please visit their website <https://www.hfe.co.uk/>.

[other permissions pending]

Photo credits:

The following photos are covered by a nonexclusive license and are from the Burst Shopify stock collection. Front cover: 'Soccer Field Goal Drone', photo by Matthew Henry. Time Management chapter: 'Race Track Numbers Photo', photo by Matthew Henry; 'Healthy Beet Juice Photo', photo by Brodie Vissers. Academic Writing chapter: 'Students Working And Studying', photo by Matthew Henry; 'Workout Fitness Center', photo by Humphrey Muleba. Essays and Exams chapter, 'Prepping for Fresh Pasta', photo by Sheila Pedraza Burk. Making the Most of Distance Learning chapter: 'Cyclist On Bike Path', by Brodie Vissers.

NOTES:

¹ Image from Evalblog, by John Gargani. Accessed 5 January 2020.

<https://evalblog.com/2012/03/12/evaluator-watch-your-language/>

² Question taken from the Pearson Edexcel GCSE (Level 1/Level 2) in Physical Education (Short Course), Sample Assessment Materials 1 (2016), accessed 13 February, 2020,

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/physical-education-2016.html>.

³ Question taken from the AQA GCSE in Food Preparation and Nutrition (Specimen Paper, 2015), accessed 13 February, 2020, <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/food/gcse/food-preparation-and-nutrition-8585>.

⁴ 'goal setting' question is from the OCR A Level in Physical Education, Sample Question Paper for 'Psychological Factors Affecting Performance' (2016), accessed 13 February, 2020,

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-and-a-level/physical-education-h155-h555-from-2016/>.

⁵ Content of mindmap adapted from mark scheme for Edexcel GCSE (Level 1/Level 2) in Physical Education (Short Course).