

Concentration and memory

Reassurance

If you are new to studying you might be worried that your powers of concentration and memory are not strong enough for the study tasks which lie ahead. Many people feel like this—especially if they are returning to education after a long break. If this is the case, here are two immediate items of reassurance.

- You will develop your powers of concentration with practice..
- You won't have to rely on memory as much as you imagine.

Concentration

Most people will develop their powers of concentration with no difficulty. It happens fairly naturally as they gradually become more familiar with their subject. This is the same as any other activity. If you are not used to doing something, the task may seem difficult at first; but as you develop your skills with practice, it will become easier.

Memory

There will not be as much need for memorising information as you probably imagine. Except for a very few disciplines which require the memorisation of facts, most subjects will put their emphasis on your being able to think clearly and make intelligent discriminations. In addition to this, your memory will become more efficient with practice.

Experience

Your ability to concentrate will normally be proportional to your study experience. If you are just starting, split your study into short manageable periods. Each period should be punctuated by a short pause to give you time for rest and recovery. Have the self-discipline to start work again as soon as the pause is over. Don't invent excuses for yourself.