



## How to study well





## Outline

This workshop will cover:

- what to expect from university study
- academic and personal skills that you need to develop at university
- recognising how you learn best

This session is aimed at first year undergraduates, students returning to education or students new to studying at a UK university.



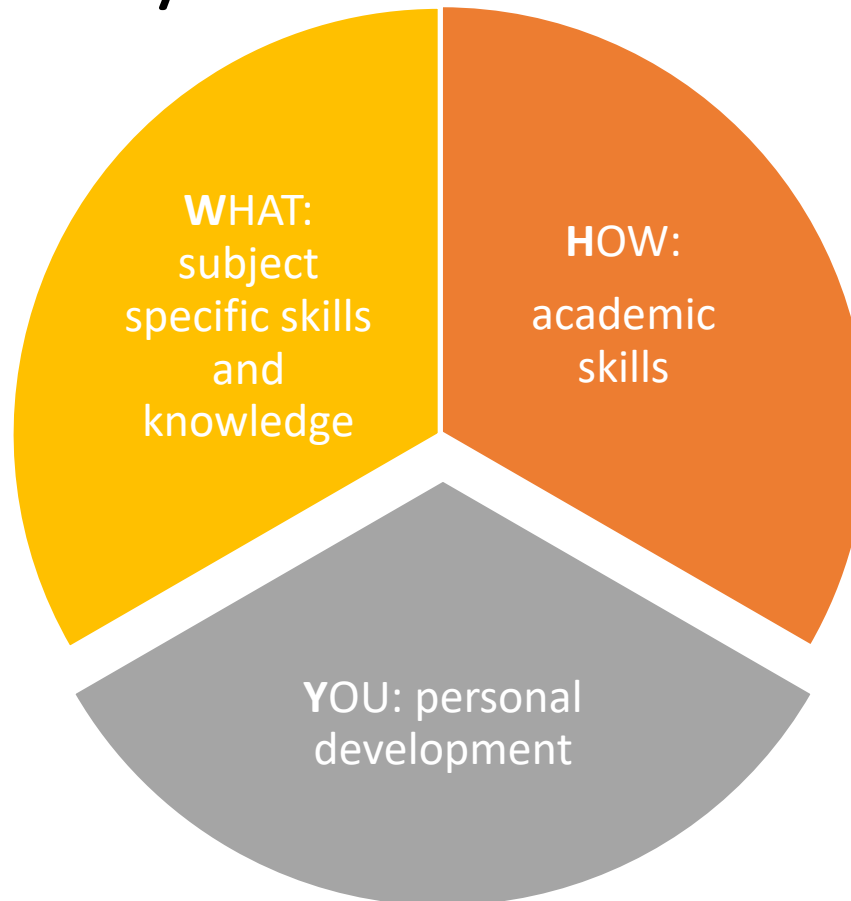
## What students think about university



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whIEeZRpaB8>



## Three dimensions of study: the WHY of learning





## Personal development for effective learning

- Independence
- Self-motivation
- Openness to working with others
- Ability to work things out for yourself
- Ability to set goals to improve your own work
- Ability to organise your time
- Ability to work out when, how and where you learn best



## Developing a growth mindset

- Power of 'yet' and 'not yet' rather than failure
- Hard work makes a difference

### The Growth Mindset:

"People believe... their talents and abilities can be developed through passion, education, and persistence.

For them...it's about a commitment to learning- taking informed risks and learning from the results, surrounding yourself with people who will challenge you to grow, looking frankly at your deficiencies and seeking to remedy them."

--Carol Dweck

[www.eschoolsathome.com](http://www.eschoolsathome.com)





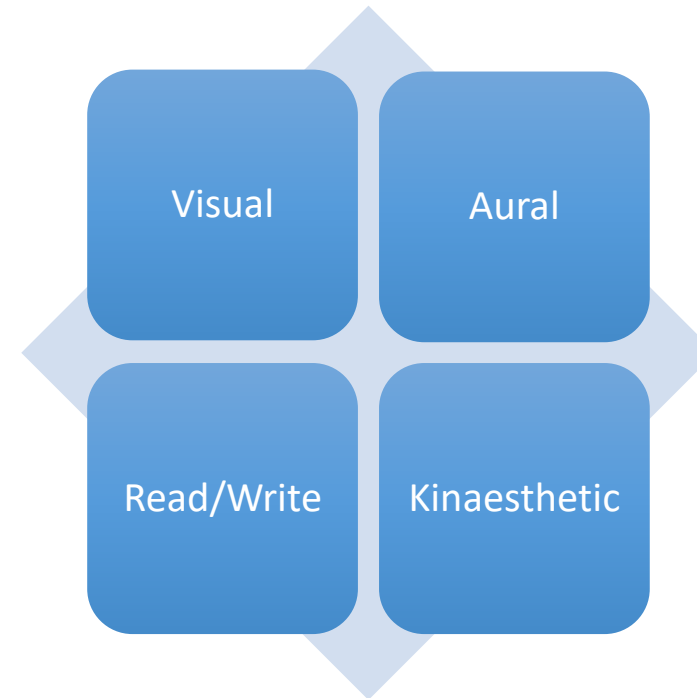
## How do you work best?

- Aim to find a method that works for you
  - Don't compare yourself with others
- Be honest with yourself and your strengths and weaknesses
  - Are you a morning or an evening person?
  - What is your preferred environment? Do you need quiet to be able to concentrate? (the library has different types of environments)
  - Do you prefer to work alone or with others?



## Spend some time getting to know your preferences: VARK

- Questionnaire online:
- <http://vark-learn.com/the-vark-questionnaire/>







## Example VARK question

A website has a video showing you how to make a special graph. You would learn most from:

a)	Watching the actions	Kinaesthetic
b)	Listening	Aural
c)	Seeing the diagrams	Visual
d)	Reading the words	Read/Write



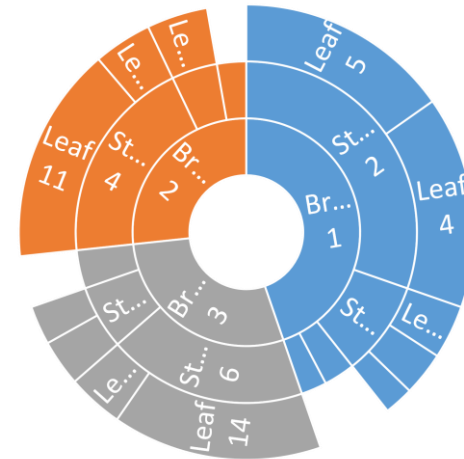
## Example VARK question

Do you prefer a teacher who uses...

a)	Handouts, books or readings	Read/Write
b)	Demonstrations, models or practical sessions	Kinaesthetic
c)	Question and answer, talk, group discussions	Aural
d)	Diagrams, charts or graphs	Visual



## Ideas for visual preferences





## Ideas for Aural Preferences

- Discuss topics with others
- Listen to recordings
- Put summarised notes into a recording and listen
- Ask others to hear your understanding of a topic
- Record your assignment plan



## Ideas for Read/Write Preferences

- Read through your notes and any handouts
- Rewrite ideas and principles into your own words
- Organise graphs, diagrams etc. into statements
- Write assignment plans
- Write paragraphs, beginnings and endings
- Write to-do lists
- Arrange your words into hierarchies and points



## Ideas for Kinaesthetic (learning by doing) Preferences

- Use all your senses
  - Videos – visual/aural combined
- Put 'real life' examples into your notes
- Try to relate your learning to practical examples
- Recall the experiments/field trip/placement experiences
- Trial and error
- Visit collections and exhibits





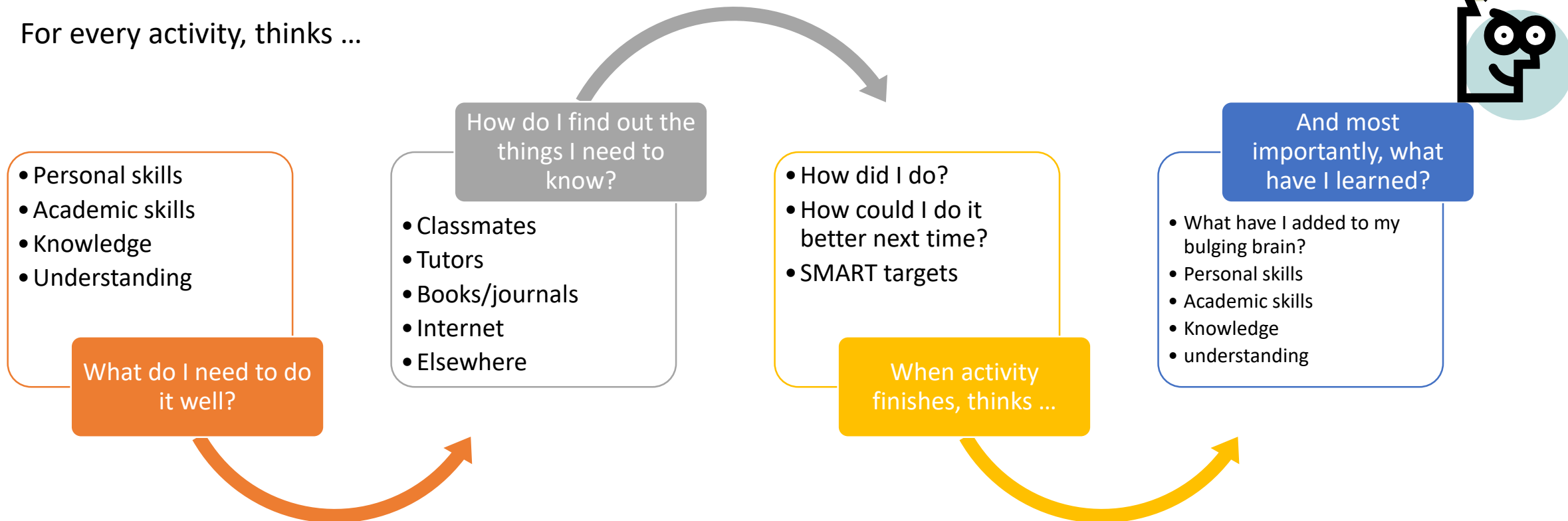
## Be open to new ideas

- Are there areas you need to develop?
- Be prepared to try different approaches
- Be proactive
- Be reflective



## The Thinking Student

For every activity, thinks ...





## Manage your time

- Be aware of your deadlines
  - A number of assignments can be due together
- Prioritisation
- Break down the tasks into smaller components
- Action planning – set targets
  - <http://www.rememberthemilk.com/> for reminders
  - Trello for project management
  - Phone/Google calendar/wall planner
  - Notepads - separate one for each assignment



## What else do you want or need to do?

- Job to help with finances?
- Family commitments?
- Other opportunities – clubs, societies
  
- Make most of university life
- Employability skills
- Keep motivated – work-life balance

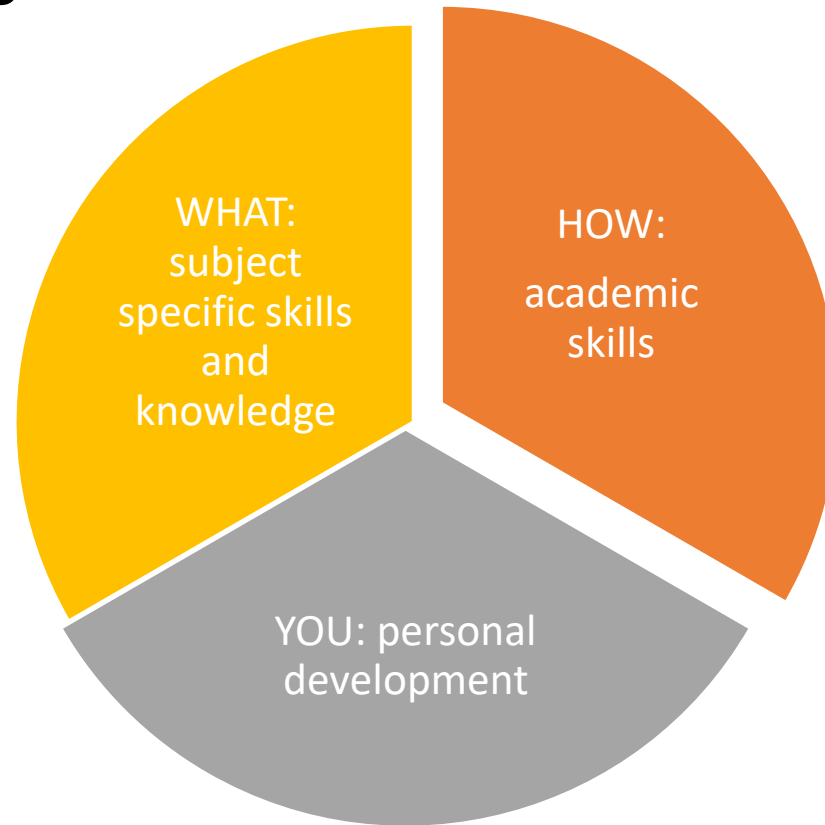


## Manage stress

- Physical effects of too much stress
  - Insomnia, headaches, weakened immune system
- Psychological effects of too much stress
  - Anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, irritability
- Look after yourself
  - Sleep
  - Exercise
  - Eat and drink well
  - Have fun
  - Rest
  - Reduce anxiety eg with calming visualisation
- Ask for help at the Student Centre



## HOW: Academic skills







## Academic skills for effective learning

- Communication – listening and articulating
- Reading
- Notetaking and note-making
- Research and literature searching
- Academic writing
- Referencing
- Responding to feedback



## Academic attributes – Cs and As

- ‘to educate our students in their chosen discipline to become confident, critical, creative, adaptable, articulate and aspiring’ (Teesside University, 2018)
- Complete the skills audit



## Activity

- In pairs, discuss one of the statements which you feel you need to work on.
- What could you do to improve your skills in this area?



## What helps

- Succeed@Tees workshops and online resources
  - <http://libguides.tees.ac.uk/workshops>
- Tutorials with learning advisors and librarians
  - <http://libguides.tees.ac.uk/lrs/tutorials>
- Is PASS running in your course?
  - <http://libguides.tees.ac.uk/pass>



## WHAT: Subject specific knowledge





## Deep vs surface approaches

- Not just about hours spent
- Seeing the bigger picture
- How does it fit together?
- Threshold concepts



Neosnaps (2008) *Open door at Hidcote Manor*. Available at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/neosnaps/2596044654>. (Accessed: 28 June 2018)





## Improving your subject knowledge

- Keep attending, even if it seems difficult
  - Keep motivated by focusing on your end goal
- Read the module handbook
- Regularly check the VLE
  - Blackboard App
- Listen for clues
- Go over lectures – go back to PowerPoint slides, lecture recordings
- Scaffolding – start easy and build up
  - Find something on the reading list that appeals
- Go to PASS if it's running in your course
- Ask your lecturer for recommendations



## REPEAT to become good at things

- **R**einforcing your learning
- **E**xperimenting
- **P**ractise
- **E**xperience
- **A**ccepting that you'll get it wrong
- **T**rial and error



## Learning.....



Good Free Photos (no date) *Three girls in a boat*. Available at: <https://www.goodfreephotos.com/people/three-girls-in-a-boat.jpg.php>. (Accessed: 28 June 2018).



## Resources

- Cottrell, S. (2013) *Study skills handbook*. 4<sup>th</sup> edn. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Macmillan International (2018) *Pocket study skills*. Available at:  
<https://www.macmillanihe.com/series/Pocket-Study-Skills/14549/>  
(Accessed: 4 October 2018)



## Questions?