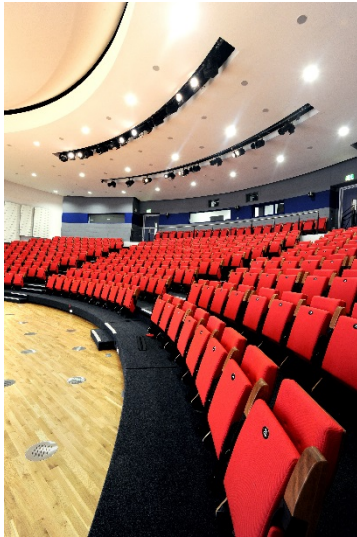




Using Your Lectures Effectively



A lecture...

- Introduces or opens up a subject and gives the important facts
- Reinforces or confirms ideas about the subject matter
- Awakens critical thought and provides a framework for private study
- Brings the subject to life and provides information which is not available elsewhere

(Issacs, 1994, p.208)

Activity:

Think about your own attitudes and behaviours towards lectures. Are you **on time**? Do you **prepare**? **How** do you prepare? List two ways to make your lecture time more effective.

- 1)
- 2)

Before your lecture

You will get the most out of a lecture by arriving prepared. Below are a couple of suggestions to help you do this.

1. Use your module guide:

- ★ Many students don't use their **module guides**, but this will give you an understanding of how the module is structured
- ★ Each week, know **the topic of the lecture** you're attending
- ★ Do the **required reading** before the lecture. This will help clarify confusing concepts

2. Create interest in the subject matter:

- ★ If you can't **generate some interest** in the subject, you won't learn much!
- ★ Make the subject more interesting by figuring out **what you'd like to know** from the lecture (this may come from your required readings!)
- ★ Write down three to four **questions** beforehand, and try to answer them during the lecture



During your lecture

In a lecture, it can be difficult to remain focused and not let your attention wander. However, there are ways that you can boost your concentration and effectiveness.

1. Be active:

- ✳ **Take notes!**
- ✳ Your notes will help you in your **assignments** and your **revision**
- ✳ Jot down any **questions or specific** points you need to follow up on
- ✳ **Link** points and ideas to topics from other lectures
- ✳ Identify the **key points** you'll need to remember
- ✳ **Ask questions!** If you're not sure about something, ask

2. Listen and write effectively:

- ✳ Use the lecture slides as a **guide**
- ✳ **Don't** write down the key points or information on the slides – you'll have access to these either before or after the lecture
- ✳ Record the **important information** that **relates** to those key points

After your lecture

It's easy to end up with piles of notes from lectures, so it's a good idea to order these after the lecture.

1. Restructure your notes

- ✳ Putting your notes into a **logical sequence** will help you to make sense of the material and understand it better
- ✳ **Do this for all your lectures** – not just the ones you didn't quite follow
- ✳ Reread your notes and **identify the main concepts**
- ✳ Make a note of any **questions** you have or topics you need to **follow up** on

2. Follow up:

- ✳ Where you haven't understood something, **follow up** on it
- ✳ **Don't wait until the end of term** – otherwise, you may find it more difficult to understand new material, or to complete an assignment or write an exam
- ✳ **Speak** to your lecturer or personal tutor
- ✳ **Read** through the appropriate sections of your assigned readings

Remember:

Be **prepared** before your lecture

Be **engaged** during your lecture

Be **organised** after your lecture

Reference: Issaacs, G. (1994) Lecturing practices and note-taking purposes. *Studies in Higher Education*, 19(2):203-216. DOI: 10.1080/03075079412331382047

