



UNIVERSITÄT
LEIPZIG

STUDY SUCCESS



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STUDYING**

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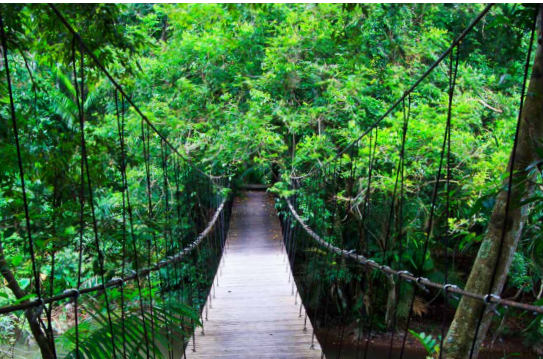


STUDY SUCCESS

Entitled “Study Success”, this booklet is designed to give you valuable tips and advice for all phases of your studies, helping you to make a success of your time at Leipzig University. We know that this will not always seem easy. It will require not just hard work and discipline, but also patience and perseverance.

First the good news: The vast majority of those who start a degree programme at university also successfully complete it. And not only that, they fondly remember their time at university and are very satisfied with where it has taken them. However, and this is the bad news, there are also some who are not so happy with their studies and therefore decide to change degree programmes or drop out. Studying poses quite a few challenges that must be overcome. We will familiarize you with these challenges and help you tackle them. And if you do stumble, we are right at your side. You are not alone! At Leipzig University, there are a great number of people who will lend you the advice and support you may need!

We have divided the content of this booklet into three parts. The first section, “[Understanding Studying](#)”, provides basic information about getting started and organising your studies at Leipzig University. It also includes a [checklist](#) so that you won’t miss any important dates in the academic year.





The second part, “[Overcoming Crises](#)”, addresses situations where things don’t go according to plan. This can involve a lack of motivation, the desire to change your degree programme, or the difficulty of making an informed decision regarding your course of study. We have compiled some helpful tips and methods to help you maintain courage during these challenging times and not lose sight of your goal: successfully graduating from university.

In the third part, “[Finding Support](#)”, the Leipzig University’s appropriate advisory and support services are introduced for (almost) all challenges you may face during your studies. These include topics like coursework and writing theses, exam difficulties, student finance, as well as offerings for physical and mental well-being during stressful phases.

And since life is often serious enough and laughter the best medicine, the booklet ends with a brief “[How not to](#)” guide. Just follow all the tips in this section if the idea of addressing your problems and making a success of your studies just isn’t for you! Let us point out that this last chapter really is intended to be tongue-in-cheek. It is not our intention to trivialize difficult personal situations (such as family, financial or health emergencies) at all.

The Student Advisory Service of Leipzig University wishes you a successful path to your graduation.



UNDER- STANDING STUDYING



GETTING STARTED AT LEIPZIG UNIVERSITY

You have accepted your place and enrolled at Leipzig University – it's time to get started! But how does studying actually work? In your first semester, you will have a lot of questions. That's why the University offers dedicated support services especially for first-semester students.

STUDIENSTARTPORTAL

The [Studienstartportal](#) is a platform of services for prospective and new students. Here you'll find a lot of useful information on the individual degree programmes, student life, as well as housing and leisure activities. There are also checklists for new students, videos, and much more besides to help you get settled.

INDIVIDUAL FACULTIES

Many [faculties](#) have dedicated **contacts and advisory services** for first-semester students. Please check your faculty's website for more information. Many [student representative committees](#) (Fachschaftsräte) also offer **orientation weeks** for new students.

CREATING BENEFICIAL CONDITIONS FOR STUDYING

Study Success actually begins even before entering the lecture hall for the first time, specifically with the choice of your degree programme and the creation of optimal study conditions.

- You should be well aware of the academic requirements your programme places on you so that you can meet them.
- Understand your motivations, needs, and interests and compare them with the profile of your degree programme. Have you found a match? Is there room for adjustment, for example, through elective courses to better align with your interests?
- Develop the necessary grit to overcome the challenges that organising your studies and motivating yourself will present.
- Ensure the best possible study conditions, for instance by securing your finances, living close to campus, and getting involved in field-related volunteer work or student jobs for practical insights.

In all honesty, how did you go about this? Have you made a realistic assessment of your degree programme and studying in general? Have you informed yourself about the requirements and content? Have you, perhaps, taken a look at the exam and study regulations, or read the module descriptions? Have you talked to students from higher semesters? All of this can be helpful to familiarise yourself with the requirements and the daily routine of your studies and to manage them well.

OUR TIPS FOR STUDY SUCCESS

Research on study dropouts focuses on the factors why students quit their studies. For instance, students may not feel connected to their subject or their peers, may learn too little or only memorise without looking beyond the immediate topic, or find their studies too theoretical. Based on these insights, we would like to suggest a few tips to you, so that you can successfully complete your studies.

1. INVEST YOURSELF!

Don't just study biology, philosophy, or teaching, try to become a biologist, a philosopher, or a teacher! Try to understand what it takes to become an expert in your field. How should one think? How should one act? What should one know? Consider which instructors inspire you. Do they advocate a specific understanding of the subject? One that you wish to align with? Develop your own questions. Take an interest in what is currently being discussed and researched in your field. Are there conferences or congresses that interest

you and that you would like to attend? Familiarise yourself with all work locations and resources as early as possible. Studying without having set foot in the library until the penultimate semester? That's really a no-go! Be open to new ideas, but also deliberately focus on your areas of interest. The more self-determined and active you are, the more you are "into it". And those who are fully "into it" are more likely to be successful.

2. STAY INFORMED AND ON TRACK!!

Keep an eye on mandatory requirements, important dates and deadlines. Be aware of the recommended study plan, mandatory courses, registration procedures, and upcoming exam dates. So read the [examination and study regulations](#), regularly check the university's website and your department's information, and keep an eye on your progress in [AlmaWeb](#). Use a calendar to note all relevant dates. If you lose your way, find out quickly what needs to be done. The Student Advisory Service and academic advisers in your faculty are there to help you.

3. CONNECT AND NETWORK!

Allocate time and space to building and maintaining contacts. Good social support is the ultimate protective factor when things get tough - for example, if you fail an exam, feel lost, or are simply stressed. When you exchange experiences with others, you will learn that they are facing the same or similar issues. Hence, attending a party can be considered an investment in your studies, and every participation in a study group is a win. Do not stress if it takes a while to connect with fellow students. It will be beneficial to participate in the informal get-togethers organised by student councils during "freshman week".

Many have found friends here who accompanied them throughout their studies. Also, do not hesitate to contact teaching staff. Make use of consultation and office hours to discuss assignments or exams and to clarify questions or issues. Building a connection also applies on a professional level: take preparatory courses and workshops on academic writing and self-management.

4. BE KIND TO YOURSELF AND OTHERS!

The transition from school to university is a quantum leap. You have to first learn the rules of the game at university and in your classes. That doesn't happen over night but rest assured that you will grow into the demands over time. Willpower needs to be trained, and professional and organisational skills developed. This takes energy. Therefore, take care of your mental and physical health. In short: make sure you have a balance to the stressful everyday university life and ensure sufficient regeneration, especially during exam periods. Beneficial study conditions like living close to the university or having a job related to your field make it easier. Assess your own situation realistically to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on yourself: catching up on subject-related deficits and getting to the top of the class takes time. Working long hours in your job, may make it harder for you to keep the focus on your studies. Therefore, do not hold yourself to the same standards as fellow students who may be less burdened than you.

WHAT OUR STUDENTS ARE SAYING



Tuan,
Business Education

“At the beginning of my studies, I lived further away. It was okay, but not beneficial. You end up staying at home more often, don’t meet up with anyone, and have to organise differently when it comes to grabbing a bite and such. Now I live closer, which is much better. I thought I was alone in finding everything difficult. Until I dared to talk to people. Everyone felt the same way. That was so relieving. So talk to your fellow students. It helps so much.”



Here our students answer the most frequently asked questions about studying and give tips for a good start into your studies.

“Expect that you’ll first have to ‘learn how to learn’. Even after several semesters, I’m still trying to find the perfect learning method for me, and I often have doubts about managing the vast amount of subject matter that one has to know for exams, and especially for the state examination. I’ve noticed that when I study alone, it’s less efficient. I tend to look at the solutions more quickly than when we’re discussing a case together.”



Patricia,
Law



Sebastian,
Mathematics

“Trust the process: At the beginning, I didn’t understand anything in math; the learning curve was extremely steep. It wasn’t until several semesters later that I grasped what was covered in the first semesters. Initially, I tackled ‘series’ on my own. Big mistake. I had a 60-hour week, and I thought I was the only one who didn’t get it. Turns out, you’re supposed to do it as a group. School is not the same as university. Especially not in math. You might fail an exam here and there. It’s tough to swallow, but it’s normal.”

“Even though I knew that studying means ‘learning independently’, I was still surprised by what that actually entails. In most courses, it doesn’t matter if I’m there or not, as there is no attendance requirement. If you take that as an invitation to skip, it can quickly come back to haunt you. Studying has changed me in the sense that I’ve become much more independent and responsible. I appreciate many things in life more than I did before.”



Angela,
Teaching

ORGANISING YOUR STUDIES

MODULE REGISTRATION AND STUDY SCHEDULE

Each semester, about two weeks before the start of the lecture period, [module registration](#) takes place. Depending on your degree programme, you will complete your module registration through either [AlmaWeb](#) or [TOOL](#). Please make sure to check your [Study Office](#)'s website in advance to find out which registration periods apply to you. In the [course catalogue](#), you can see which modules and corresponding courses are offered in the current semester. Remember that registering for a module also means registering for the exam. You can generally deregister from a module and the corresponding exam(s) in AlmaWeb, no later than four weeks before the end of the lecture period, although different deadlines may apply depending on your degree programme.

After you have selected your modules for the current semester and completed the module registration, it's best to create a timetable with the times of the courses to avoid any scheduling conflicts. You can find this information in the [course catalogue](#). Keep in mind that sometimes you'll need to cover considerable distances between venues, for which you'll need to allocate time. You can fill larger blocks of free time with other important activities, such as study group meetings, self-study in the university library, university sports courses, and of course, breaks for relaxation. If you encounter scheduling conflicts and need help in your further course of study, your [Study Office](#) will be happy to advise you.



STANDARD PERIOD OF STUDY

The standard period of study is the average number of semesters it takes to complete a course of study, including all examinations. Your degree programme's study regulations specify the standard period of study for that programme. **Important:** Calculations involving the standard period of study depend not on how many semesters someone spends studying in total (Hochschulsemester), but on how many semesters they are enrolled on a particular degree programme (Fachsemester).

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "FACHSEMESTER" AND "HOCHSCHULSEMESTER"?

Your **Fachsemester (semesters of study)** are the number of semesters you have studied on a particular degree programme. Leave semesters or changes of subject are not included in this calculation. On the other hand, your **Hochschulsemester (university semesters)** are the total number of semesters you have been enrolled at German higher education institutions. This includes leave semesters and changes of subject.

Examples:

- Lea is currently in her third semester of study on the bachelor's degree course in German Language and Literature. She takes a leave semester during the following semester. Then, she will be in her fourth university semester, but still in the third semester of study on her German Language and Literature programme.
- Christian is currently in his second semester of study on the Diplom degree course in Mathematics. In the following semester, he switches to the bachelor's programme in Economics and Management Science. Then, he will be in his third university semester, but in his first semester of study as an Economics and Management Science student.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I EXCEED THE STANDARD PERIOD OF STUDY?

Very important: Depending on the examination regulations, you must have passed your bachelor's examination (consisting of module examinations and the bachelor's thesis) within four semesters of completing the standard period of study. If this is not the case, you will have **failed** your bachelor's examination. Similar requirements apply to master's, Diplom and State Examination courses. In any case, please check the [examination regulations](#) or contact your [examination office](#) for specific information about your degree programme.

Tuition fees for long-term students are charged for all students who have been enrolled at our university since the summer semester 2013 or later and who have already exceeded their standard period of study by at least four semesters. If you are entitled to **BAföG**, you lose this entitlement if you exceed the standard period of study. You should therefore seek advice in good time if it becomes apparent that you will not be able to complete your studies within the standard period of study. A first point of contact for questions about study financing is the [social counselling service of the Studentenwerk Leipzig](#).

TUITION FEES FOR LONG-TERM STUDENTS

Tuition fees for long-term students are charged for all students who have been enrolled at our university since the summer semester 2013 or later and who have already exceeded their standard period of study by at least four semesters. In accordance with the Saxon Higher Education Freedom Act (SächsHSFG), these fees are due at the beginning of the re-enrolment period for the following semester. Tuition fees for long-term students are charged in addition to the regular semester fee and are currently **€500 per semester**. You will receive a fee notice if you have to pay tuition fees. This notice will be uploaded to your AlmaWeb account at the beginning of the re-enrolment period for the semester in question.

I AM NOT ABLE TO PAY THE FEES ON TIME. WHAT CAN I DO?

Upon written application, tuition fees for long-term students may be waived in certain cases. It is also possible to arrange to pay the fees in instalments or defer payment. The relevant form and further information can be found on the [website](#).

WHERE CAN I GET ADVICE ON TUITION FEES?

German students should contact the [Student Office](#) for advice, and international students the [International Centre](#).

LEAVE SEMESTER

If you need a break from your studies, you can apply for up to two leave semesters. Leave semesters do not count as semesters of study. During this time, however, you are still enrolled and retain your student status. You still have to pay the regular semester fee for leave semesters. The Studentenwerk Leipzig can only exempt you from [paying the semester fee](#) under certain conditions. If necessary, it is possible to take examinations during a leave semester. Please ask your [examination office](#) about the necessary formalities.

DOES A LEAVE SEMESTER MAKE SENSE FOR ME?

From internships and going abroad, to pregnancy or illness – there can be various reasons for taking time out during your studies. Or perhaps you are having second thoughts about studying or feeling overwhelmed by the demands of university life; a [leave semester](#) can offer you much-needed time to take stock. It may make sense to seek impartial advice.

Come to the [Student Advisory Service](#) for a confidential consultation free from any bias. International students can make an appointment with the [International Centre](#).

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

Before applying for a leave semester, you should think carefully about how it will affect your studies. Since taking a [leave semester](#) means interrupting your studies, it can have far-reaching consequences for your financial situation, such as BAföG entitlement.

It may also affect child benefit payments, your student health insurance or your student job. If you are an international student, taking a leave semester may have a negative effect on your residence status. For advice on these questions, please use the [social counselling service offered by the Studentenwerk Leipzig](#).

WHEN AND HOW OFTEN

CAN I APPLY FOR A LEAVE SEMESTER??

It is possible to take a leave semester whenever you need to, apart from: for the first semester of study or when enrolling as a new student in a higher semester of study, retrospectively for previous semesters, except in cases of illness pursuant to the enrolment regulations.

Your application for a leave semester must be submitted by the relevant re-enrolment deadline, i.e. by no later than **15 August** (for a leave semester in the winter semester) or **15 February** (for a leave semester in the summer semester). Students are normally entitled to two leave semesters during their studies.

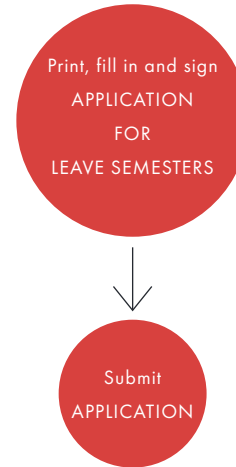
In certain cases, such as pregnancy or illness, you may apply for more than two leave semesters. You can get advice on this from the [Student Office](#).



[Application form for German students](#)

[Application form for international students](#)

HOW DO I APPLY FOR A LEAVE SEMESTER?



to the [Student Office](#) (German students) or
to the [International Centre](#) (international students)

EARLY WARNING SYSTEM FOR STUDY SUCCESS

If you want to make a success of your time at university, it is important to keep track of things and identify any obstacles early on. Leipzig University's early warning system can help you do just this. While you concentrate on what's most important – studying! – the [early warning system](#) can keep an eye on the ratio of semesters you've been enrolled to the number of credits you've earned so far, taking into account the standard length of your degree programme as per the study regulations. This is based on the information stored in your AlmaWeb account about how you are progressing in your studies. Our early warning system comprises four indicators that tell us about potential opportunities for support. If at least one indicator matches the information stored in the study portal about how you are progressing in your studies, an email will be sent automatically to your student email address containing information about suitable advisory services.

IT'S GOOD TO TALK:

HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS OR CONSIDERING DROPPING OUT?

Most importantly, we want you to know that all your options are open. Whether you have received an email from us or not, attending a consultation is just as voluntary as participating in the early warning system. However, if you do ever experience problems during your studies, such as a slump in your performance or doubts about your choice of subject, sometimes it helps to get an external perspective and talk to a neutral person. We offer [German](#) and [international](#) students confidential and impartial advice. We will work with you to develop individual solutions to ensure that your time at university is a success. Participation in the Study Data Monitoring initiative is voluntary. You can register or withdraw your consent at any time by sending us an email. Alternatively, simply manage your participation yourself in your AlmaWeb account.



CHECKLIST: NEVER MISS IMPORTANT DATES AGAIN

BEFORE THE SEMESTER



DURING THE SEMESTER

SUMMER SEMESTER: 1 APR - 30 SEP
WINTER SEMESTER: 1 OCT - 31 MAR

- [Re-enrol](#), pay the semester fee and validate your UniCard on time
summer semester: 1 December – 15 February
winter semester: 1 June – 15 August
- Choose modules for the new semester as per study regulations
- [Find out about semester dates](#), e.g. academic calendar with start and end of lecture period
- Submit BAföG application

- [Module registration](#) (usually shortly before the start of the semester)
- Create timetable
- Register for language courses, [preventive health management courses for students](#), exercise and [university sport courses](#)
- Prepare for exams, create study plans
- Make a note of exam dates and coursework deadlines



EXAM PERIOD/ END OF SEMESTER

- Use supplementary offers, e.g. workshops on academic writing at the [Academic Lab](#) or application trainings at the [Career Service](#)
 - If necessary, deregister from modules/exams (usually no later than four weeks before the end of lectures)
-
- [Re-enrol](#), pay the semester fee and validate your UniCard on time
 - If necessary, apply for a leave semester during the re-enrolment period
 - Await publication of exam results and prepare for resits if necessary
 - Choose modules for the new semester as per study regulations
 - Register for [preventive health management courses](#) for students, exercise and [university sport courses for the lecture-free period](#)

OVER- COMING CRISES



MOTIVATIONAL CHALLENGES

We all experience days when we would rather stay in bed. But what happens when this feeling becomes the norm?

- Do you often find it very difficult to motivate yourself to study or do coursework?
- Have you been struggling with motivation for a long time now?
- Then it's time to start looking for the reason. Reasons are highly individual and complex.

Then it's time to start looking for the reason. Reasons are highly individual and complex.



If you need help, please contact the [Student Advisory Service](#) (German students) or the [International Centre](#) (international students).

COMMON REASONS FOR LOSING MOTIVATION

- Excessive workload and pressure to perform
- Declining interest in your subject
- Academia just isn't for me
- Poor career prospects
- Misconceptions or unfulfilled expectations
- A lack of interest in the typical professions in your field



1. EXCESSIVE WORKLOAD AND PRESSURE TO PERFORM

Examinations, coursework, in many cases a part-time job, and of course a private life – students are often required to be excellent multitaskers. On top of this comes the constant pressure to achieve good grades, for example so that you can get a place on your chosen master’s programme or to increase your chances on the job market. If all these tasks begin to pile up into a seemingly insurmountable mountain and you don’t know where to start, it is not surprising that your motivation can drop. Things get even worse when permanent stress results in poor performance and failed exams: you can even begin to doubt whether you are good enough for the degree programme you chose.

2. DECLINING INTEREST IN YOUR SUBJECT

If you are passionate about something and do it because you love it, then it doesn't feel like working. Every course of study has its less popular subjects, but if your approach to studying is generally marked by enthusiasm, then you will feel an intrinsic motivation to knuckle down. This is why it can become a problem if you lose interest in your degree subject. What's more, if you don't have any extrinsic motivation – such as excellent chances of finding a great job – and you really struggle in the long run to get anything done for your studies, this can be very stressful.

3. ACADEMIA JUST ISN'T FOR ME

Some students find in the course of their studies that they lack the necessary skills to work academically or that they simply do not enjoy it. Besides preparing students for the world of work, university degrees should always enable students to work in a research-oriented manner and to think independently.

4. POOR CAREER PROSPECTS

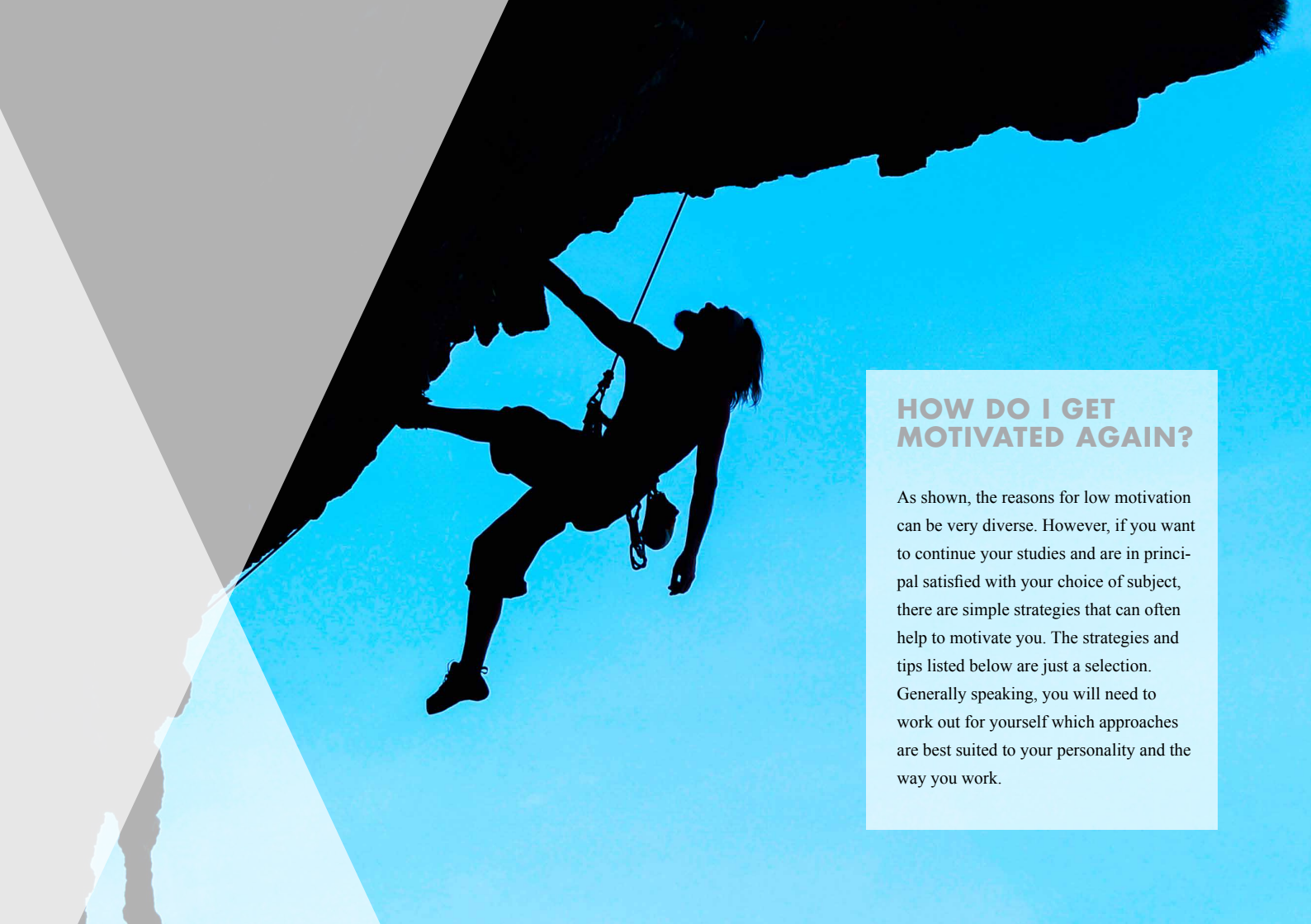
If you face poor career prospects after graduating, or if you lack professional security, this can be very stressful and have a negative impact on your motivation. It may seem more appealing to postpone graduation or to change subjects than to start a career.

5. MISCONCEPTIONS AND UNFULFILLED EXPECTATIONS

Fresh out of school, you often have no real idea of how to study or what to expect at university. Former pupils are often surprised by the speed at which some lecturers teach their courses. What's more, studying at a university requires a lot of private study and personal responsibility. It is also possible that the actual content of the degree you chose doesn't meet your expectations or match your own interests and abilities.

6. A LACK OF INTEREST IN THE TYPICAL PROFESSIONS IN YOUR FIELD

If you are interested in the content of your degree programme, but do not find the professions that are traditionally pursued with your degree attractive, then your motivation to study will evaporate. It makes sense: if you are not really working towards an overall goal, you will increasingly ask yourself why you should even bother. After all, you are not studying for the sake of studying, but in order to pursue a fulfilling career later on.



HOW DO I GET MOTIVATED AGAIN?

As shown, the reasons for low motivation can be very diverse. However, if you want to continue your studies and are in principle satisfied with your choice of subject, there are simple strategies that can often help to motivate you. The strategies and tips listed below are just a selection. Generally speaking, you will need to work out for yourself which approaches are best suited to your personality and the way you work.

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE

Why did you start studying? Where do you see yourself in five, ten or even 20 years? What are you working towards, what is your vision? If you can answer these questions clearly, you are already on the right track. If you have a clear idea of what you want in life and your (professional) future, you know exactly why it is worth the effort and can concentrate on what's important. In addition to a large, overarching vision, even smaller goals help us to focus on our studies and make a success of our time at university. In order for your goals to have exactly this effect, you should set them out in writing and follow the **SMART** approach:

- **Specific:** I will pass all the modules planned for the next semester with at least the grade “gut”. (NOT: I will pass some modules next semester.)
- **Measurable:** I will get up at 8 o'clock every morning and study properly for two hours. (NOT: I'll do some uni work before lunch.)
- **Attractive:** Next week, I'm going to learn the most important definitions by heart. (NOT: Next week, I'm going to learn all those pointless definitions by heart.)
- **Realistic:** Tomorrow I'm going to read and summarise 20 pages from this book. (NOT: Tomorrow I will have summarised and understood the whole reading list.)
- **Timed:** I'll read these lecture notes on Tuesday from 10am until 1pm. (NOT: I'll read these lecture notes.)

EVERY MARATHON BEGINS WITH THAT FIRST STEP

Especially larger goals, such as writing your thesis or passing the State Examination, can be quite scary and in the worst case prevent you from starting in the first place. So it's important to plan stages and break down your goals into manageable milestones.

For a bachelor's thesis, for example, the first milestones could be as follows: reading up on your topic, coming up with your research question, and preparing the structure. Once this is done, you take the first milestone and break it down into individual actions. In our example, the actions for the first milestone could be: researching basic literature in the library, reading relevant articles, preparing concise summaries, etc. From these actions, you then create daily plans with daily to-do lists which are as specific as possible, and from your daily plans you create weekly plans with weekly to-do lists until you have reached the first milestone. Remember to include other obligations, fixed appointments, sports and leisure activities in your daily and weekly plans – and always plan with enough of a buffer.

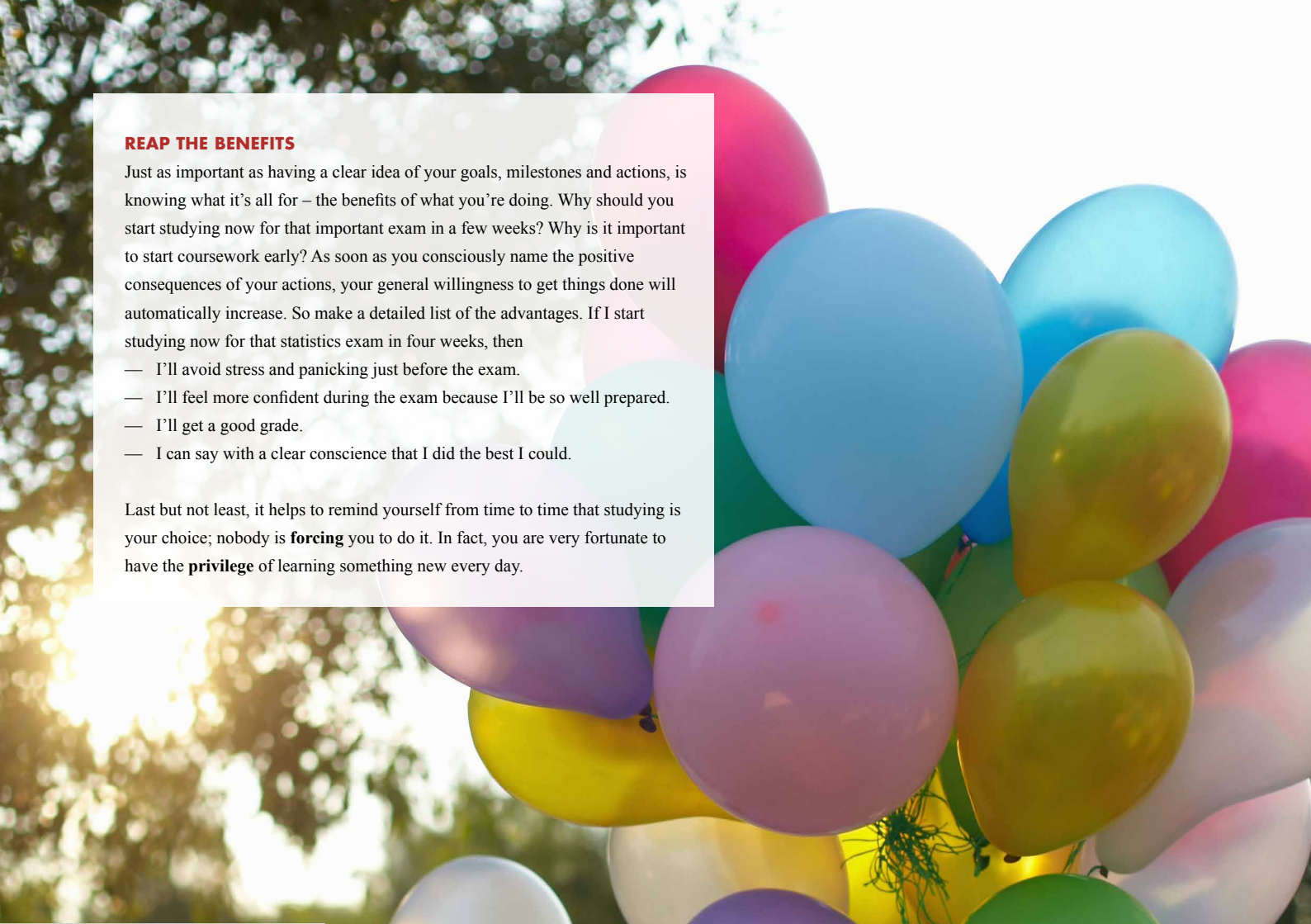
It is important that you do not set your second milestone and divide it up into individual actions until you have reached the first milestone. In this way, you automatically no longer think about the huge mountain, but only about the next (small) step. Sometimes, monotasking is better than multitasking! The daily sense of achievement that you will experience when you tick off your daily to-dos will give you additional motivation. And rewards are expressly allowed.

REAP THE BENEFITS

Just as important as having a clear idea of your goals, milestones and actions, is knowing what it's all for – the benefits of what you're doing. Why should you start studying now for that important exam in a few weeks? Why is it important to start coursework early? As soon as you consciously name the positive consequences of your actions, your general willingness to get things done will automatically increase. So make a detailed list of the advantages. If I start studying now for that statistics exam in four weeks, then

- I'll avoid stress and panicking just before the exam.
- I'll feel more confident during the exam because I'll be so well prepared.
- I'll get a good grade.
- I can say with a clear conscience that I did the best I could.

Last but not least, it helps to remind yourself from time to time that studying is your choice; nobody is **forcing** you to do it. In fact, you are very fortunate to have the **privilege** of learning something new every day.





STRUCTURE IS HALF THE BATTLE

Have you worked out your goals, milestones and individual actions, and know why you're doing all this in the first place? Great! Now all you need is to get started. Transfer the ordered structure of your study plans to your learning environment, arrange your materials and prepare everything for the start. Put yourself in a situation where getting started is the most natural thing in the world and where you no longer have to search for missing information or material. Ideally, you should always prepare for the following day in the evening so that when you get up in the morning you have no excuses not to start.

Even if, unlike most people in the world of work, you don't have fixed working hours to stick to, a fixed daily routine is very beneficial. Go to bed at about the same time every evening and get up at the same time in the morning. Whether you are a morning person or work more efficiently in the afternoon will depend on your biorhythm. Spend some time, perhaps a week, paying attention to yourself and how your ability to concentrate changes during the day; adapt your daily structure

and study times to your results.

Just as important as periods of focused study are regular study breaks, which give your brain some time off. If you spend an hour or two at a time on a task – again, of course, we all vary – your concentration will inevitably decline. Make your break restful and don't fill it with other unpleasant tasks, but reward yourself with an activity that you enjoy. Get away from your books and papers and go out into the fresh air or do some short stretching exercises to compensate for all the time you spend sitting.

Every day spent studying has to end eventually! Never forget this, and make sure you know when to call it a day. Many students find it good to have a ritual such as listening to loud music, especially if you do not actually go somewhere else because you are studying at home.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Productive learning and time management go hand in hand. This is because constant deadline pressure and the feeling of not having enough time can cause stress and leave you feeling overwhelmed. As a result, your motivation can dwindle. So it is essential to reflect on how you deal with time, because time can't actually be managed, extended or saved. Time management is all about self-management. The main goal is to align our time as best as possible with our own professional and personal goals – and to have enough time left over to enjoy (student) life.

THE PARETO PRINCIPLE

The Pareto principle states that 80 per cent of your results come from just 20 per cent of your efforts. Realising this can be relieving, especially for perfectionist students, and take off some of the pressure. Because far too often, fear of failure and excessive expectations of our own performance prevent us from getting started at all. This in turn can lead to procrastination. That's why your first priority should be to get a task done. You can always improve on something later on. So save yourself a lot of effort, work and frustration by accepting that it needn't always be perfect first time – just get started.



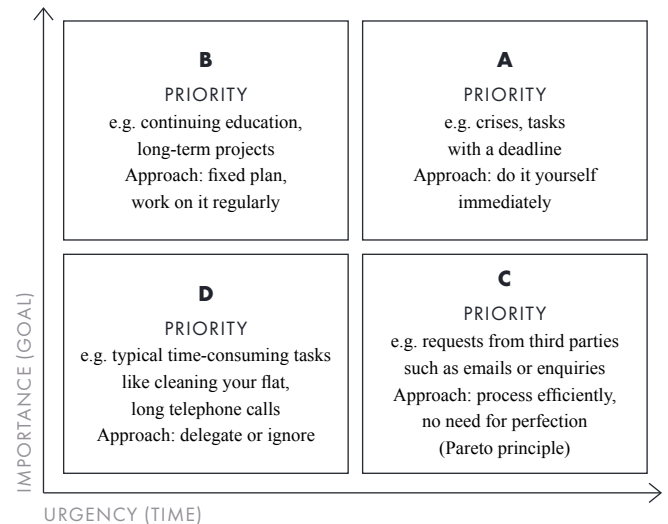
THE EISENHOWER METHOD

We will never have enough time to do everything. We have to prioritise and distinguish important tasks from unimportant tasks. A common mistake we make is to confuse importance and urgency. Especially in everyday life, we quickly fall into the trap of doing lots of urgent and supposedly non-postponable things and lose sight of our overriding long-term goals. We are busy and feel stressed all day, yet at the end of the day we are no closer to our real goal. We should therefore distinguish and evaluate our tasks in terms of importance and urgency.

A task is important if it helps us to achieve our goals. The urgency of a task is measured by the time you have to complete it. While important tasks are always important for us ourselves, urgent tasks may be important for others, but not necessarily for us.

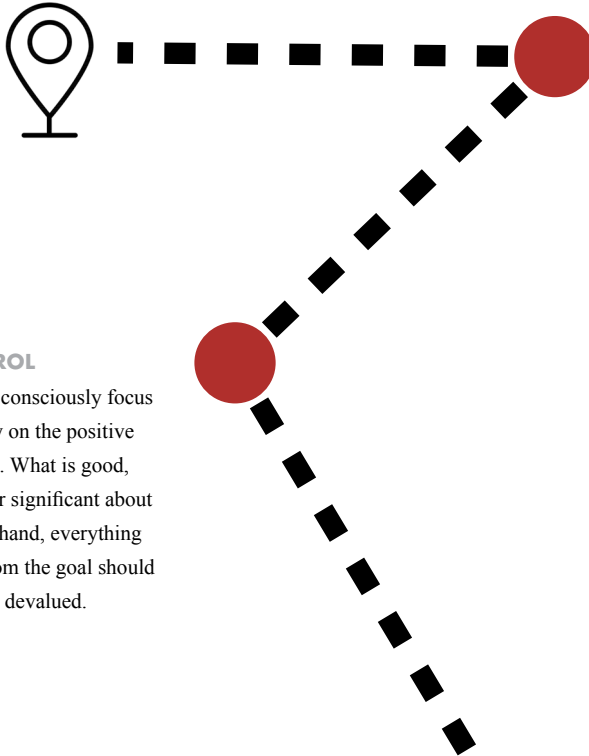
If you use the Eisenhower Method to differentiate tasks according to high or low importance and urgency, you get a four-field grid with four priorities.

When drawing up your daily plans and to-do lists, it can be very useful to classify your tasks according to the Eisenhower Method. Give A-priority tasks the most attention and complete them at your most efficient times of the day.



THE CRUCIAL FACTOR: WILLPOWER

Unfortunately, clear goals, study plans and to-do lists alone are not enough to combat a total lack of motivation. People's success depends more than anything on one factor: willpower, or self-discipline. Willpower is reflected above all in the following characteristics: endurance, perseverance, determination and single-mindedness. And even if these traits don't really describe you, there is still hope. Willpower can be learned. The following strategies can help:



ATTENTION CONTROL

With this strategy, you consciously focus completely one-sidedly on the positive incentives of your goal. What is good, exciting, challenging or significant about the goal? On the other hand, everything that leads you away from the goal should be reassessed and even devalued.

ECONOMICAL INFORMATION PROCESSING

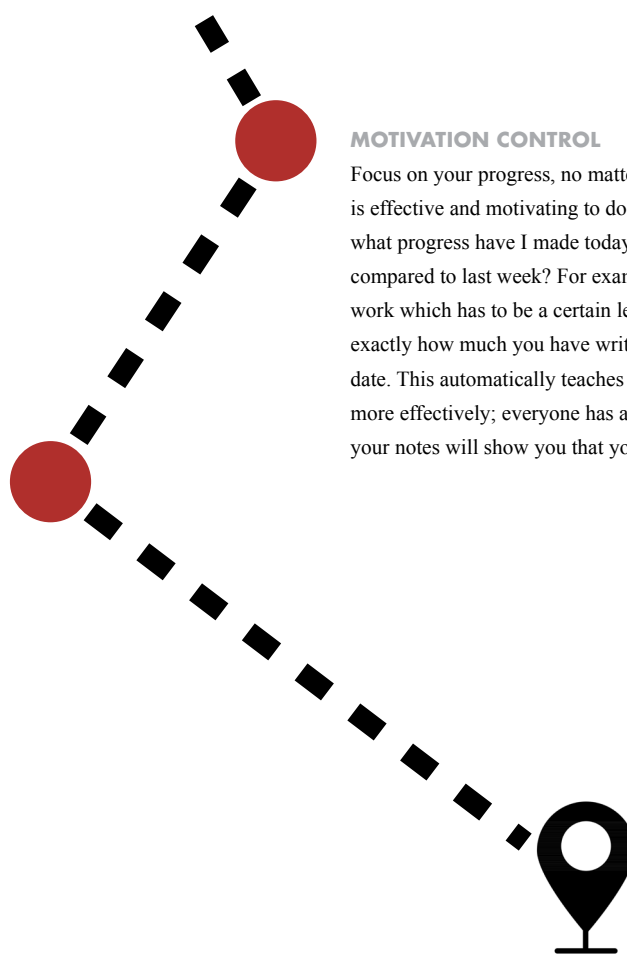
Once you have formulated a goal and intend to achieve it, the decision-making process should be over. Don't waste time weighing things up, and try to ignore all distracting information (e.g. the sun is shining outside, your friends are going to the lake, etc.). You will quickly notice how stress falls away from you and you "come down". You make a decision. You stick to it. Habits can help: once an activity has become a habit and you no longer need to think about it, you save on willpower. Practise fixed work habits and know your triggers that prevent you from sticking to those habits. You should avoid these as much as possible or remove them from your field of vision, for example by moving your mobile phone to another room, closing your email client or avoiding your comfortable sofa.

EMOTION CONTROL

When you imagine yourself, have a productive, motivated person in mind. This is helpful because the way people think about themselves has a strong effect on success. Imagine what it will be like once you have achieved your daily goal – or how proud your parents will be of you if you get a good grade. A self-reward system is also effective. Decide on an appropriate reward for achieving a goal and keep your promise to yourself. If this doesn't help, then consider being a little more drastic. What penalty can you set yourself for not reaching your goal? What about going without your smartphone for three weeks?

MOTIVATION CONTROL

Focus on your progress, no matter how small it may seem. It is effective and motivating to document progress day by day: what progress have I made today? What's going better now compared to last week? For example, when writing course-work which has to be a certain length, it helps to note down exactly how much you have written every evening with the date. This automatically teaches you to deal with setbacks more effectively; everyone has a bad day at some point, but your notes will show you that you are on the right track.



QUICK TRICKS FOR WHEN NONE OF THIS HELPS

If none of the methods and strategies already described help, we have a small selection of motivational tricks for you:

SET A TIMER

Everyone knows the feeling of working under extreme time pressure, for example in an exam. Once the clock is ticking, you don't want to waste a second. Your motivation to start is enormous – all because of the limited time. Make use of this principle by setting a timer to tackle a task. Having a time limit puts pressure on you to focus while you work and to eliminate distractions. Once the time is up, you must stop what you're doing immediately.





THE FIVE-MINUTE RULE

No matter what you have in mind – be it studying for an exam or preparing a presentation – getting started is usually the hardest part. Motivation usually only develops once things are up and running. A simple psychological trick can help you if you struggle to get started. Define a task and only work on it for five minutes. Then, stop: either decide to continue or – if you still don't feel like it at all – do something else and try again later. However, you will most likely find that you choose to spend more time working on the task. The five-minute rule works especially well for challenges that are very time-consuming and daunting. Once you've got started, the task usually doesn't seem so bad any more.

SET A TIGHT DEADLINE

Everybody faces deadlines for coursework and other graded tasks at some point. As annoying as they are, deadlines help us to focus. Because tasks without a deadline can be put off indefinitely, ultimately taking up a lot of time. It is almost impossible to work productively with no deadlines. That's why you should set a deadline for each task. In addition, many students don't work particularly productively until shortly before their deadline. So try to set yourself realistic but tight deadlines. Most importantly, you should ensure that missing a deadline will have a negative consequence and make you feel bad.

CREATE A NOT-TO-DO LIST

You do not necessarily have to learn new things all the time in order to be successful. Often it is enough to break certain habits and shake off detrimental routines. Realisation is the first step towards improvement. Write down a not-to-do list of any destructive patterns of behaviour or activities that prevent you from achieving your goal. Keep that list in full view in your home and update it every week. If you catch yourself doing one of the activities on the list, interrupt what you are doing immediately – this will help you to unlearn the largely automated process.



SURROUND YOURSELF WITH THE RIGHT PEOPLE

Although your main motivation must come from within yourself, other people can be enormously helpful. Look for motivated fellow students to meet up and share ideas with regularly. If we spend lots of time interacting with certain people and groups, this affects us and over time we adopt behavioural patterns: this might include eating habits, exercise habits, but also study habits. So surround yourself with people who are already how you would like to be. Emotions can be

highly contagious, too. If we meet people every day who are in a bad mood and pessimistic, this will rub off on us. Detach yourself – at least temporarily – from energy-consuming relationships and focus your emotions on motivated people who are in a good mood. One nice side effect of (positive) study groups is that you work “under supervision”. The results of your work become visible to others, who in turn serve as a kind of “supervisory body” for you. This fact helps you not to lose sight of your goal when studying.

LITERATURE AND READING TIPS

- Brohm, Michaela (2016): *Motiviert studieren!* Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh.
- Causvic, Edina / Endemann, Carola (2019): *Stress bewältigen – entspannt studieren.* Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh.
- Reichel, Tim (2017): *Arschtritt-Buch. Selbstmotivation im Studium.* Aachen: Studischema Verlag.

CHANGING DEGREE PROGRAMMES

The first subject someone chooses to study is not always the right one. Due to misconceptions, professional reorientation or a lack of interest in the subject, it can happen that changing degree programmes is a sensible alternative, especially if any motivational strategies are having no effect. This guide is intended to help you decide on a new field of study.

EXPLORING ALTERNATIVES

Are you still unsure whether you should change your field of study? The [Self-Reflection Tool](#) can help you to reflect on your current situation independently. If you still can't decide, you are welcome to make an appointment with the [Student Advisory Service](#) (German students) or the [International Centre](#) (international students) and bring your test results along with you. Once you have made your decision, it is important to find out what the alternatives are. Tests for prospective students can provide initial ideas as to which areas you should look into (only available in German):



- [Studium-Interessentest \(SIT\)](#)
- [Check-U](#)
- [Orientierungstest \(OT\)](#)

The University Information Day, the Open Day and our orientation workshops could be helpful in your search for the right degree programme. Through the departmental [student representative committees](#) (FSR), you can talk to students who are already enrolled on a subject you are interested in, offering you a new perspective. Have you decided on your new field of study? Then check the [Leipzig University website](#) to see whether you can study it here. Alternatively, the [Hochschulkompass website](#) can tell you which other institutions offer that particular subject.

REALITY CHECK

If you want to make a fresh start, you should take a close look at your new subject. Does it meet your expectations? Does the course really contain the topics you expect? Will it be possible to realise your career aspirations? To make sure you are as well informed as possible, please note the following tips:

- Read the [study and examination regulations](#) and the study plan.
- Survey your skills for your desired degree programme via an online self-assessment at www.osa-portal.de
- You should discuss very specific and subject-related issues with the academic advisers at the respective institute. There you can also ask about the recognition of credits you have already earned, and clarify whether, if you have already failed any exams, this would prevent you from switching to the new subject.
- For even more information, you can contact the departmental student representatives for the respective subject, check the [course catalogue](#) for details about lectures and classes (some of which you can even try attending, such as lectures in large lecture halls), and apply for internships to gain a taste of the potential professional field.

These points can help you to make a careful and informed decision. If you continue to have difficulties in making a decision, make an appointment with the Student Advisory Service by browsing to termin.uni-leipzig.de/zsb/ - if you are a German student, and by navigating to home.uni-leipzig.de/termin-international/ - if you are an international student. We will work together to find the right solution for you.

“The counselling helped me because it made me face my doubts and talk about them with an unbiased and impartial person.”



Martin,
Business Information Systems



Anna,
German As A Second Language

“I started studying right after graduating high school, but realised after just a few weeks that my degree programme didn’t suit me. Once I knew what I wanted to study instead, it was very straightforward to switch courses. Except for a little time, I’ve lost nothing. I’ve now got my bachelor’s degree under my belt and will hopefully complete my master’s soon.”

BAFÖG*

If you receive BAföG, please note the following (not legally binding) information:

- As a rule, you do not lose your entitlement to funding if you wish to change your course of study once during the first three semesters.
- From the fourth semester of study, it will be more difficult to obtain funding because there must be an important or irrefutable reason, e.g. an illness preventing the student from continuing their studies or pursuing a career in the associated field.
- The legal provisions on BAföG are very complex, because funding decisions take many criteria into account. Please contact the [BAföG service](#) at the Student Service Centre for detailed advice on your eligibility for funding. If you need advice on alternative ways to pay for your studies, contact the [social counselling service](#).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

If you have a **residence permit for study purposes** (residence title), please note:

- Your residence permit is for a specific course of study. If you want to change your course of study, this must be coordinated with the Foreigners' Authority.
- It is usually only possible to change subjects once, and only within the first three semesters. The Foreigners' Authority decides on exceptions.

Do you have a **subject-specific higher education entrance qualification (HZB)**? If so, please also check whether your HZB qualifies you to enrol on the course of study you would like to change to. Please contact the International Centre for advice on this. The relevant contacts and information about their office hours are available [here](#).

* BAföG is granted if the financial means of the applicant's parents are not sufficient to finance the studies and the programme is eligible for support. International students are generally not eligible for BAföG. Exceptions are regulated by Sect. 8 of the German Federal Training Assistance Act (BAföG).

GUIDE TO CHANGING DEGREE PROGRAMMES AT LEIPZIG UNIVERSITY

1. CHECK THE REQUIREMENTS

Check which admission requirements apply to your chosen degree programme:

- Is there a **restriction on admissions** in the form of an **NC (numerus clausus)**?
 - Do you have to pass an **aptitude test**? By when do you need to register for it?
- Do **other requirements** have to be met, such as language requirements, previous internships, phoniatric reports, etc.?



2. OBSERVE APPLICATION PERIODS AND DEADLINES

Find out in good time about the relevant **admission procedure** and **application periods and deadlines**.

- Applications for the first semester of study:
 - Winter semester: 2 May until 15 July (restricted admissions) or 15 September (unrestricted admissions)
 - Summer semester: beginning of December until 15 January (restricted admissions) or 15 March (unrestricted admissions)
- Applications for higher semesters of study:
 - Winter semester: 2 May until 15 July (restricted admissions) or 15 September (unrestricted admissions)
 - Summer semester: beginning of December until 15 January (restricted admissions) or 15 March (unrestricted admissions)



Note for international applicants who are not EU or EEA nationals: Admissions for your applicant group are allocated on the basis of a **'quota' for international students**. As such, the NC table is of limited relevance to you.



Other **application periods** apply in the case of master's programmes and programmes with national admission restrictions. Different deadlines may also apply to international students. Please check the information on the **website for international applicants**.



3. RECOGNITION OF CREDITS ALREADY EARNED

Do you have eligible credits from your previous studies that you would like to take with you? Go to the academic advisers / **Study Office** for your desired degree programme. They will check whether any credits are eligible for recognition and, if necessary, issue you with a confirmation recommending that you begin the new degree programme from a certain semester. Please bring with you:

- your overview of grades from [AlmaWeb](#)
- a printed [credits form](#) (for German and international students)
- the link to your [study and examination regulations](#)



4. HOW TO APPLY

Applications are submitted via AlmaWeb or Hochschulstart. Please note that for most degree programmes you can only apply for odd semesters in the winter semester and for even semesters in the summer semester. When applying for a **higher semester of study**, a recommendation for a placement in a certain semester is mandatory. This recommendation is subject to you having already earned relevant credits. In some cases, it is possible to apply for the first semester of study before then applying to be moved up to another semester, if your application was made via Hochschulstart. It is best to contact the respective [Study Office](#) for advice.



An overview of our [Study Offices](#) can be found on the website



On our website you will find further information for [German](#) and [international](#) students.



HOW TO MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION?

The following chapter presents a number of methods and strategies to help you analyse your goals, values and interests, gather information and ultimately make an informed decision. This is just a selection. You will need to decide for yourself whether an individual method suits you, your situation and your personality.

ANALYSE YOUR OWN GOALS, VALUES AND INTERESTS

- Make it clear to yourself why you want to study. Write it down. What are the reasons for this choice, what are the reasons against it? What do you hope to achieve?
- Try a thought experiment: imagine your future self at the age of 70. You are sitting comfortably in your armchair and looking back on your life. What would you like to have achieved? What will you look back proudly on? Is there anything you'd regret? What would your future self advise you in your present situation? Do these questions reveal values that are important to you in your life and should be taken into account when deciding if and what to study?
- Think about what you will want in your future career, such as free time, climbing the corporate ladder, flexible or fixed working hours,

a particular skill set, a leadership role, self-employment, recognition, influence, responsibility, a certain level of income, security, image, compatibility with family life, sustainability, etc. Prioritise your values and consider which professions might fit in and which are incompatible with your views. Which degree programmes suit your career aspirations?

- Take a closer look at the theory of the three basic motives of motivation. These are the affiliation motive, the achievement motive and the power motive. Some people argue that there is also a fourth – the freedom motive. If you have looked at these more closely: which motive mainly corresponds to your motivation? In which profession can you best realise your potential?
- Tests for prospective students can be used to make an initial analysis of the fit between interest and field of study. Of course, they cannot name a specific degree programme and nor can they determine your

GATHERING INFORMATION

- The [Hochschulkompass website](#) can quickly tell you which institutions offer your preferred course of study.
- Use offers for study orientation such as university information days, taster courses, study fairs and study advisers to gather information about the university and the study programmes.

suitability. They can best be used as a first point of orientation for further research.



- [Studium-Interessentest \(SIT\)](#)
 - [Check-U](#)
 - [Orientierungstest \(OT\)](#)
- Nowadays there are plenty of online self-assessments to test your suitability for certain fields of study. Leipzig University also offers such tests for some degree programmes. Many universities' self-assessment tests are listed on the [OSA-Portal website](#). There you can try out a few tests and see whether you would meet the requirements of certain programmes.

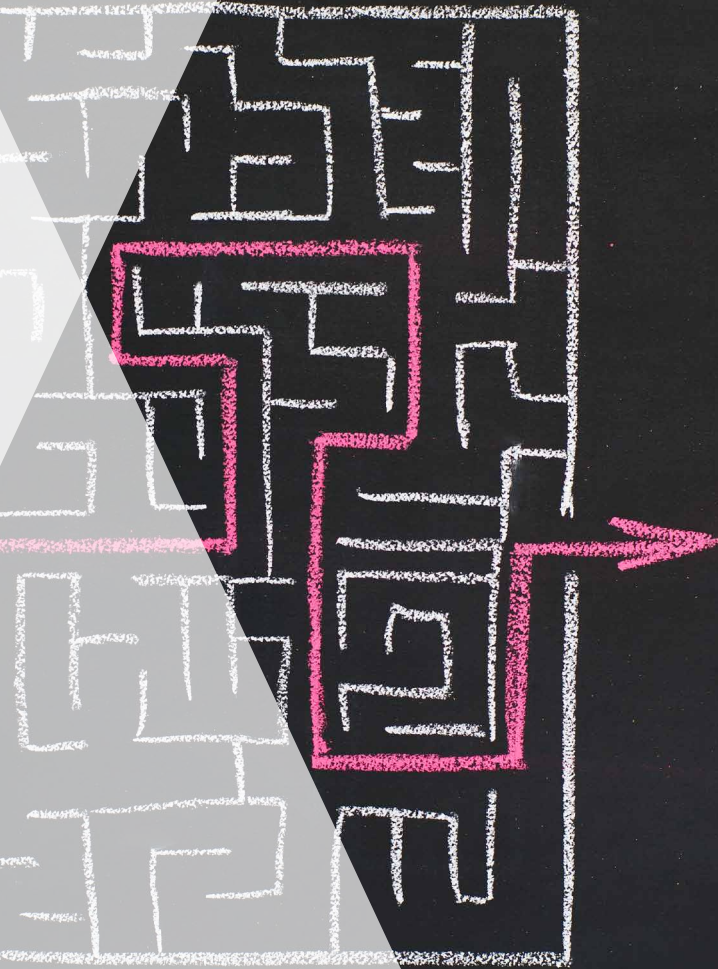
- It also makes sense to speak directly to people who are already studying on your preferred programme. One way to get in touch with them is via the departmental student representatives (Fachschaften). After all, who can tell you more about a degree programme than the students themselves?

DECISION MAKING

Are you not sure whether you should continue your studies or drop out? Or whether you should instead change programmes and if so, which programme is right for you? Making important decisions is not always easy. People often get stuck in the same thought patterns without making any progress. But sometimes we simply lack the courage to make a decision and see it through, when that decision could result in too much change.

But remember: your current situation can only change if you do something different and don't continue as before. Deciding on something also always means deciding against all the other options that are open to you. Whether you decide for or against your current programme also means making your peace with the fact that not all the alternatives that would otherwise have existed are simultaneously feasible. Developing an acceptance of this can sometimes be a long process.

But how do you make a decision that you can live with? In the following, we present a few hints and methods which you should include in your own considerations.



MAKE A CONSCIOUS DECISION

Not deciding is also a decision – a decision to just put up with things as they are. So don't put it off for too long! Instead, make a conscious decision, even if it is more uncomfortable to take responsibility for your life than to leave it to chance.

LISTEN TO YOUR GUT FEELING

If you notice resistance at the thought of going to university and studying, and if you start to put things off more and more, take your gut feeling seriously as a warning sign. Every student goes through better and worse phases during their studies. It's perfectly normal for motivation to drop, especially after failing an exam. That shouldn't worry you right away. However, if these "phases" tend to last for entire semesters or have always accompanied you since the start without ever improving, then you definitely need to do something about it. If you can hardly motivate yourself at the beginning of your degree without putting yourself under pressure, then it will be difficult to complete an entire course of study with increasing demands and a final thesis at the end. So it is better to think about this early, talk to friends and relatives, and seek advice.

WHAT DO YOU WISH FOR YOURSELF?

Reflect on how much you have been influenced by **other people's expectations and wishes** (parents, caregivers, society, etc.). Was your decision to study a certain subject the result of your own wishes and goals? To what extent was that decision influenced by people saying things like, "With grades like yours, you have to study medicine! Studying anything else would be a total waste!", or "You always wanted to do that when you grew up!", or "You'll never find a job if you study that, so you'd better study something more useful."? There is nothing wrong with being open to good arguments. But in the end, you will have to live with your decision, so you should consider your own wishes and values above all else.

ACCEPT THE "SUNKEN COST"

Do not fall into the "**sunken cost**" trap. This is when someone faces a dilemma of continuing to invest (time, money, attention, etc.) in a project that is doomed to failure, only because they have already invested so much in it and think it would be a shame to give up now. Many people think it is better to continue studying a subject they dislike for a few more semesters – after all, they





have already started and invested time, energy and money. Unfortunately, these “sunken costs” influence people’s decision to change course massively. Although it is difficult to admit, you should consider these costs lost and avoid wasting any more of your resources. It makes more sense to realise and accept early on that continuing a course of study merely to justify the belief that “You have to finish what you start” is of little use – and that it is better to use your own resources on a more suitable path. So: what would you decide if you had not already invested so much? Since what you have put in is now irretrievable and any further investment – i.e. carrying on with your current studies – would result in even more costs, you should make a decision without including this old ballast.

DO A SCENARIO ANALYSIS

Take a piece of paper and write down your decision options. Now imagine that you have decided on option 1. What would be the best-case scenario? What would your life look like if you had decided to do this and everything were going well? And then you change perspective. What

would be the worst-case scenario? What’s the worst that could happen if you decided to do this? Play through the best and worst-case scenarios for all your options. What would you like best? What could you imagine putting up with if necessary? How could you avoid a worst-case scenario in each case?

USE A DECISION MATRIX

For this purpose, you extend the typical list of pros and cons by weighting the arguments. The following example explains the method:

- Think about which **alternative** you want to choose – vocational training or further study? Switching to studying A, B or C? The fictitious decision between vocational training and further study is presented here.
- Then consider which **criteria** are important for the decision. In our example, these would be the person’s interest in what they will learn, what they can expect to earn later on, the difficulty of the vocational training, and the time needed to complete it.



- Then, in the **weighting** column, award each criterion a factor according to their importance, so that the sum of the factors adds up to 1 (meaning 100%).
 - In the columns of your respective decision options, you note **points** on a scale from 1 (very little, weak, etc.) to 10 (very much, strong, etc.) that the alternatives score in relation to the criterion. The person’s interest in what they will learn from the vocational training in this example is given more points than their interest in what they will learn from studying.
 - When everything has been filled in, **multiply the weighting of the criteria by their points** and calculate a sum of the results per column. The total score in the “Vocational training” column is thus 6.6 ($0.4 \times 8 + 0.1 \times 5 + 0.2 \times 4 + 0.3 \times 7 = 6.6$). You do this for all columns and end up with a weighted final result.
- Of course, serious decisions cannot be made purely rationally on the basis of numbers, but they can be one argument within the overall view.

Criterion	Weighting	Vocational training	Continue studying
Interest	0.4	8	5
Future earnings	0.1	5	7
Difficulty	0.2	4	6
Duration until completion	0.3	7	4
Total score		$3.2 + 0.5 + 0.8 + 2.1 = \mathbf{6.6}$	$2.0 + 0.7 + 1.2 + 1.2 = \mathbf{5.1}$

GET INTO ACTION

With all this brooding, you might get bogged down in too much thinking. No matter how much time you spend thinking things through, in the end it only helps to **do something**. So first use taster sessions, internships, university information days, workshops, online courses, etc. to see if another course of study is the better alternative and if the grass really is greener on the other side – perhaps it just looks that way.

CHANGES ARE POSSIBLE

(Almost) no decision has to stand for eternity. Should you find that you've embarked on the **wrong path** despite all your meticulous research and preparation, it is usually not too late to reverse course. It might be possible to switch degree programmes or start another one in addition. It is often even possible to voluntarily exmatriculate, for example in order to start a vocational training course, and then restart your current or another course of study. For individual advice on your options, you are welcome to visit the **Student Advisory Service**.



Further information for [German students](#).

Further information for [international students](#).

LITERATURE AND READING TIPS

- Grüneberg, Tillmann (2019): Mit den richtigen Fragen zum richtigen Studium: Selbsteinschätzung rund um die Studienwahl. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag.
- McClelland, David C. (2009): Human motivation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.







HOW HAVE OTHERS DEALT WITH PROBLEMS AND DOUBTS ABOUT STUDYING?

The podcast series “Vom Studieren und Zweifeln” aims to lower the barriers for expressing study-related doubts and to encourage open discussion about it. Various student hosts have talked to students whose life and academic paths haven’t been as straightforward as their parents might have wished.

Conversations have also been held with alumni, as well as experts on topics such as motivation, time management, and stress management.

[Feel free to listen in!](#)

FINDING SUPPORT



WHERE CAN I FIND HELP?



All of the support services listed below are subject to change. Please also refer to the Leipzig University website, which is updated and on a regular basis.

POOR PERFORMANCE AND EXAM DIFFICULTIES

- The **student advisers** provide advice on all questions related to the subject-specific requirements of your degree programme. You can find the contact details of your student advisers via the [study programme database](#).
- In addition, the faculties offer various student advisory and support services, which are provided by institutions like the [student representative committee](#) (Fachschaftsrat).
- The [examination office / Study Office](#) is the place to contact for all examination matters, for example for registration and deregistration, resits and admission to examinations.
- If you have any questions about the content of an exam or are struggling with the nature of the exercises, then students of mathematics, computer science, physics, and economics and management science, but also students of other subjects involving mathematics, can contact the [open math class](#) (Offener Matheraum).
- The [Academic Lab](#) provides interdisciplinary support for Leipzig University students. By offering workshops, online information services as well as research and writing advice, it deals with the challenges of academic work, both in groups and individually.

STUDENT FINANCE

- **BAföG** is granted if the financial means of the applicant's parents are not sufficient to finance the studies and the programme is eligible for support. Advice on this is available from the [Department for Grants](#). Note: International students are generally not eligible for BAföG. Exceptions are regulated by Sect. 8 of the German Federal Training Assistance Act (BAföG).
- A **scholarship** is a good way to finance your own studies.
Important: [Scholarships](#) are not only reserved for the exceptionally talented. Many scholarship providers also support particularly committed young people or special target groups that match their thematic focus.
- [Student loans](#) can be useful for covering the cost of living in certain phases of your studies or for relieving some of the financial pressure.
- If you would like a **part-time job**, then the Studentenwerk [Leipzig's Student Job Office](#) is a good place to start looking.

COURSEWORK AND THESES

- The **Academic Lab** provides various digital and analogue support services on this topic. The [Writing Portal](#) and the [Research Portal](#) offer a straightforward introduction to academic writing and the application of academic methods.
- You can also take [workshops](#) on writing techniques, seek advice from the Research and Writing Lab – including in English
- You may use the [Studierapp](#) to keep track of your written assignments.
- The [study advisers](#) in the faculties and institutes can help you find a topic and a supervisor for your thesis.



DEPRESSION, OVERLOAD, EXAM NERVES, PROCRASTINATION

- The [Studentenwerk Leipzig's psychosocial counselling service](#) offers both individual advice and group consultations on topics such as feeling depressed, putting things off, self-doubt and exam nerves.
- The [psychosocial counselling service run by the Student Council](#) helps with a range of issues including study stress, drug problems and exam nerves.
- The University also offers [initial psychological consultations](#) for students who are considering dropping out due to motivation problems, emotional crises, feeling overwhelmed or other fears.
- Leipzig University's Sport and Health Centre also offers workshops on topics such as stress management, resilience, burnout, sleep disorders, or meditation within its [occupational preventive health management scheme for students](#).





DIFFICULTIES WITH THE GERMAN LANGUAGE

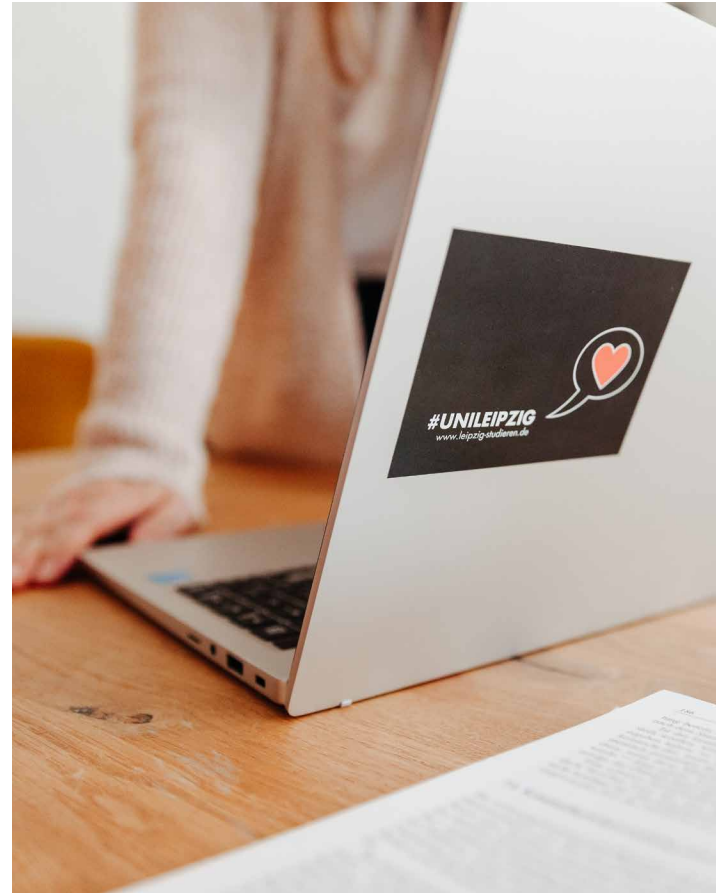
- The [Studienkolleg Sachsen](#) offers language courses to help students improve their German while they study, covering both general and subject-specific language.
- The [Language Institute](#) offers German courses for students with little or no previous knowledge.
- In **key qualification module 30** “Intercultural Communication: German for Non-Native Speakers”, you can improve your language skills, tackle intercultural topics and learn the basics of academic work.
- Leipzig University’s [Language Center](#) offers two modules on autonomous foreign language learning and language learning in tandem. These do not involve language lessons, but will help you to improve your language skills independently under guidance. You will receive credits for successfully completing a module. Depending on what you are studying, it may be possible to have these credits count towards your degree.
- The [City of Leipzig website](#) also has information about easily accessible German language courses in Leipzig.

HEALTH, RELAXATION, STRESS MANAGEMENT, AND SPORTS

- The Health and Sport Centre's [preventive health management scheme](#) for students supports you with weekly courses and weekend workshops on topics such as mental strength, resilience, focus, slowing down, sleep disorders, emotion regulation, exam anxiety, meditation, and much more.
- The [sports programme](#) complements its health offerings with weekly courses in relaxation, mindfulness, back training, shoulder-neck fitness, nutrition, yoga, Pilates, Tai Chi, running groups, or outdoor fitness.

PREPARING FOR CAREER ENTRY

- Leipzig University's [Career Service](#) is the central point of contact for all questions related to professional orientation, career options and preparation for entering the working world. There you will find a variety of offerings such as training workshops, information about industries, talks with alumni, and events and workshops with (regional) companies.
- In the [job portal](#), you can find job offers for starting your career as well as listings for internships. In individual counselling sessions, you will get early professional orientation, advice on how to make your application stand out, and the best possible support to make the transition from studying to working life as smooth as possible.



Inspired by Paul Watzlawick's "The Situation is Hopeless But Not Serious (The Pursuit of Unhappiness)", the following "guide" is intended as a satirical reminder of certain behaviours and risks that could see you more likely to drop out of university. Our aim is to encourage you to reflect on your own situation and perhaps give you the Eureka moment you have been looking for. However, we are well aware that sometimes satire is not appropriate in difficult situations. If you find yourself in a difficult personal situation (unexpected setbacks such as illness, death of a relative; financial difficulties; mental illness, etc.) and need help, you will find suitable support services and contacts in the section "Finding support" (p. 53-57). Rest assured that you can turn to these people in confidence.

RECOMMENDED READING

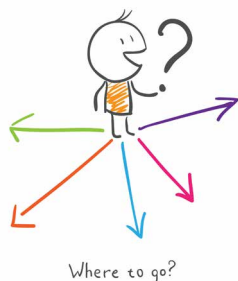
- Watzlawick, Paul (1993): *The Situation Is Hopeless, But Not Serious: The Pursuit of Unhappiness*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.



sabotage

HOW NOT TO: A GUIDE TO SUCCESSFULLY DROPPING OUT OF UNIVERSITY

Our experienced advisers have pinpointed a number of criteria to help you successfully make a mess of studying. It is true that some students manage to drop out without any help at all, but to save you the hassle and uncertainty, here we provide a few tips and behavioural strategies for achieving your goal more effectively.



DECIDING WHAT TO STUDY

If you want to make a success of dropping out, you need to be proactive from the start.

Try the following:

- Avoid too much information, because that will only make it harder to choose. We recommend closing your eyes and picking a course of study at random with your finger or cursor. Trust in fate and just go for that one.
- Stay well away from students who are already enrolled on this subject. Avoid all sources of advice and orientation at any cost.
- Do not search for a programme based on your own wishes, but rather on other people's suggestions (parents, caregivers). Let them make the decision for you. This will mean you can shirk responsibility and needn't worry about making a careful decision of your own.

STUDY AND SOCIAL HABITS

In order to achieve your goal of dropping out of university like a pro, you should adopt the following behavioural strategies:

- Spend as little much as possible studying each day. Forget your former friends and leisure activities, because you are a student now. Learn to survive on little sleep and break off all social contacts. After all, you have to learn every detail by heart. Reinvent yourself as a lone fighter. If you take on too much and once again fail to get everything done, punish yourself extensively by blaming yourself and drown your self-confidence in feelings of guilt. Repeating phrases such as “I should have studied a lot more” and “I can't get anything done” is helpful in this context.
- Alternatively, don't let lectures and studying for exams spoil your life as a student. You should only attend classes sporadically or not at all. Join as many clubs and take up as many hobbies as you can, in order to distract yourself as much as possible from the stress of university life.





GRADUATION

Don't be afraid. If you have somehow made it to the final stage of your studies despite all your efforts, don't worry: there are still some ways to successfully not finish your degree. Here's what you have to do:

- Postpone the last exams or your thesis as long as possible – ideally until the relevant lecturers have retired.
- Your thesis must be at least as wide-ranging and insightful as a doctoral dissertation. Otherwise, your supervisor will be very disappointed in you. Be satisfied with nothing less than perfection.
- Fear the new phase of your life after finishing university. Your hitherto exciting and eventful life will come to an end, and the dreary everyday struggle to earn a living will begin, a hamster wheel until retirement. Don't let them tell you otherwise.

We hope that this booklet has provided you with some useful suggestions and tips to help you on your path to successfully completing your studies. That path will not always be straight and you will at some point probably lose your way or take a detour. But no matter what problems you face, you are not alone. Don't be afraid to use the relevant advisory and support services at the University and don't lose sight of your goal.

We hope your time as a student is a success.

Your Student Advisory Team.

IMPRINT

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Department of Academic Administration, Student Advisory Service; International Centre

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