



# STUDENTS' PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY PROGRAMME

*This programme has been devised in response to graduates' requests to make the training available as an integral part of the student experience. Based on the premise that undergraduate life is a professional job in its own right, the programme offers excellent preparation for the world of work by promoting attitudes and skills currently emphasised by organisations such as AGCAS (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Service), the Academy of Enterprise and The Higher Educational Academy.*

## THE PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The programme is based on *Four Phases* and an ongoing personal service, as follows:

- **Pre-Programme Discussion** - a telephone discussion before the Workshop
- **Personal Productivity Workshop** - Phase One One Day or Two Half Days
- **Project/Assignment Planning Workshop** - Phase Two Half Day
- **Personal Coaching** - Phase Three 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hours : one month after Workshops
- **Personal Coaching** - Phase Four 1 hour : two months after Phase Three

## ONGOING SUPPORT

- **Refresher training at Workshops previously attended** - free of charge
- **Telephone access to our Consultants for ongoing advice** - free of charge

## TRAINING APPROACH

The Workshops (in groups) and Personal Coaching (one-to-one) modules are phased over several months, which ensures that students gradually ease into the new techniques.

One of the main benefits of the Workshops and Coaching, is the practical application of the training techniques. Students are asked to bring their own information to the Workshops (e.g. diary, action lists, project to plan); and after illustrating the techniques through slides and discussion, students practise the skills with the Personal Productivity Organiser System, which is provided as part of the programme.

The System brings all of the organisational "tools" into one place and is designed around the techniques of the programme, so that students can apply them consistently and to a high level of productivity.

# PRE-PROGRAMME DISCUSSION

This is a telephone discussion with each student, prior to the Workshop. The aim is to:

- understand each student's particular workload and associated pressures
  - identify issues of self-organisation which may require particular attention and focus
  - answer any questions students may have in respect of the training modules.
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# PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY WORKSHOP

Students are asked to bring their own diary, academic timetable, outstanding actions and details of future activities, so that they can apply the techniques throughout the training day and implement the planning upon leaving the Workshop.

## The Topics are:

### ◆ *Introduction and Programme Objectives*

- A brief discussion of the objectives and System overview.

### ◆ *Planning - Productivity Techniques*

This topic deals with the four elements of a working day:

- meetings, lectures and related travel
- identifying daily tasks (e.g. dealing with paper flow, e-mails, etc)
- planning all of the other known tasks/activities
- discussing and allowing for the "Unknown", which consists of all contacts/interruptions, "urgent" tasks etc.

Students plan their next working day, with the information they have brought with them and productivity discussions then include:

- the setting and focusing on priorities
- the control and management of interruptions
- how to deal effectively with the post/paper flow and e-mail systems
- how to plan realistically to ensure that the appropriate tasks and goals are achieved, allowing for all the elements and commitments in the day. This ensures students avoid overscheduling their day and committing themselves to too many things that they are unable to complete.

### ◆ *Forward Planning*

This topic shows students how to:

- plan accurately into the future
- enable realistic decisions of priorities
- ensure tasks are achieved to meet the relative deadlines.

### ◆ *Paper and E-Mail Management*

Students are shown how to:

- organise their paper flow and e-mail in-box
- work from a clear desk on one task at a time
- have a clear e-mail in-box
- set up appropriate filing systems – for both paper and e-mails.

### ◆ *Managing One-2-One Communications*

This module deals with the monitoring and control of communications to ensure that:

- students do not "lose" items to be discussed
- they prepare adequately for a communication
- the responses of the other person(s) are noted
- action points from discussions are integrated into the above daily and forward planning
- delegations of tasks to other people are monitored, followed up and controlled.

### ◆ *Conclusion*

- outstanding questions from students.
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# PERSONAL COACHING

These phased modules are a visit to each student, on a one-to-one basis; and having had a reasonable period of time to apply the techniques in their own "real world" situation, the Personal Coaching is a *consultancy* meeting which:

- identifies which of the techniques are working well for the student so far,
- looks at the specific areas, which each student wishes to improve,
- enables each student to discuss any aspect of *personal productivity* they wish.

As with the rest of the programme, the Personal Coaching appointments incorporate a very practical approach, with students applying the techniques with their own information throughout the meeting.

It is inevitable with any training, that students will leave Workshops and not remember everything, or will have problems when applying the techniques, so these Personal Coaching follow-up modules ensure a continuing increase in productivity and customises the programme to each person's specific situation.

# PROJECT / ASSIGNMENT PLANNING WORKSHOP

## *Project Planning and successfully delivering Multiple Projects and Long-term Goals*

If one accepts that every assignment is a 'project' then students are by definition project-driven. Therefore, in addition to the topics covered, this Workshop will reinforce the phased programme so far and will extend the training from more effective daily activity management to achieving more longer-term strategies and successful project delivery.

### **The Topics are:**

#### ◆ **Introduction to the Workshop**

#### ◆ **Project Planning**

We are defining a project as any task which totals approximately eight hours or more, and usually has a start and end date and various stages/"steps"; and students are asked to bring their own project to plan.

Students are taken through the stages of Project Planning, through slides and discussion, and then students plan each of the stages in respect of their own project.

Students therefore leave the Workshop with their own project plan to implement, as well as learning the Project Planning techniques.

The *agenda* of this module is:

#### 1. **Initial Assignment Objectives and Project Design**

- Complete Statement of Objectives
- Discuss the collation of background information and assignment specifications
- Mind-mapping - developing creative ideas in respect of assignment activities
- Contingency planning

#### 2. **Complete Project Plan**

- Plan key stages and tasks
- Consider other people involved and their responsibilities
- Establish expenses - time and money
- Estimate time scales - allow sufficient contingency for changes and the "unknown", in order to achieve target dates
- Discuss the benefits of Bar charts, Network Analysis and the Critical Path Method
- Consider further sub-Project Plans

#### 3. **Implementation**

- Plan dates into diary
- Discuss reviews, delegation and other control procedures

#### 4. **Completion and Review**

- Discuss results and further actions

#### ◆ **Successfully delivering Multiple Projects and Long-term Goals**

People tend to commit themselves to future objectives/projects over long-term periods, and because the target dates are months ahead, it is hoped that they can be fitted into their workload.

Experience shows that with these longer-term projects, as the deliverable date comes closer, people run out of time and get into "crisis management", when trying to achieve these goals.

With this *module*, students are asked to bring outline details of their future projects and assignments and are taken through an "exercise" which shows them whether their future commitments to these longer-term objectives equal the resource they have available (i.e. their own time).

The accurate techniques shown to students ensure that appropriate decisions are made to deliver *multiple* projects/assignments and the achievement of long-term goals, as well as short-term tasks.

#### ◆ **Conclusion of Workshop**

- Any outstanding questions.

## ONGOING SUPPORT

Clients appreciate our support and reinforcement modules, which we offer to suit individual requirements:

- **refresher training - an entitlement for students to attend any of the Workshops they previously completed** - as many times as they wish.  
“Open” Workshops are run regularly, and there is no additional charge for the *refresher* training apart from a small fee which is made to cover the expenses of conference room hire, lunch, refreshments etc.
- **telephone access to our Consultants** - for ongoing advice (*free of charge*),

## BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAMME

The phased approach of practical Workshops and Personal Coaching, ensures that each student receives the benefits they individually require and the main results include:

- increased personal motivation and productivity,
- students consistently say they accomplish more in their day,
- control of crisis management,
- the tracking of tasks, so that they are not lost or forgotten,
- improved paper flow and being focused on one job at a time,
- ensuring e-mails are organised and actioned appropriately,
- a focus on priorities and students find they get more of the **right** things done, at the **right** time,
- achieving target dates of short and long-term goals, with improved quality of work,
- realistic decision making of what can be achieved. Students end their day knowing what they have accomplished, what was left incomplete and when they will be able to realistically complete it.  
Best of all, they know where they are starting off the following day,
- accurate forward planning, so that students can more effectively meet imposed timescales and deadlines,
- improved communication and follow up of commitments,
- students have reported a substantial improvement in their ability to plan and manage projects/ assignments,
- the programme rewards investment by increasing the potential for improving academic performance,
- a more productive and healthier student *Work - Life* balance, which is customised to each student's requirements,
- the skills and attitudes promoted on the programme are readily transferable on a long-term basis to the world of work.

*Information is also available on our web-site at:* [www.personalproductivity.co.uk](http://www.personalproductivity.co.uk)



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