

learning pace style – format, breaks, time,

Take care of yourself and make allowances.

It's important we are taking care of ourselves when studying or an assessment is on the horizon, this includes the important things such as eating well, getting some fresh air and of course taking a break.

When you don't do these things, it's more likely you will make mistakes, can't focus for long and ultimately then give up. Self-care is particularly important before the day and on the day of an assessment or test.

Scheduling daily CPD time

1. Decide how much time you'll need to spend on CPD/studying. Do so by reviewing the course syllabus, talking to your tutor and what has worked best for you in the past. Remember work to your own strengths. It might be a few hours a day, 20-minute study blocks or a specific day.
2. Factor into your schedule your other commitments — walking your own dog, marketing, your 1-2-1 sessions and time spent with your own family and friends. Decide when your energy levels are at their highest and be prepared to block some time off and commit to it.
3. Treat your work sessions as you do work with your clients: start on time, have breaks and give it your best effort.

Working from home

Home can be full of distractions (as I sit here trying to type as birds sit around me!). Think of a separate working area or maybe even visit your local café. Being at home is so tempting to stop studying and do something else. I do a mix, I have an office, go to the local café and due to the high needs of my birds sometimes work beside them.

Use a timer to schedule those breaks!

Estimate the amount of time you think you can study for and stay focused. This will vary between everyone. That could be 20 minutes or an hour. Remember this will vary on your energy levels and other commitments. During your breaks, use this time to your best advantage. Avoid multi-tasking during your breaks or doing other things. A break is a break.

Create milestones and reward these!

Milestones for study time might a few pages, a study subject. Make sure you have your very own positive reinforcement! Try to prepare how you will reach these milestones and don't be too hard on yourself.

Allow time for the learning to sink in!

It takes time particularly to process new information. Sometimes if things are getting a little overwhelming, I'll put the book down and come back to it later. If a topic is particularly challenging, I will break it into chunks over a few days.

Use mind maps

This is particularly great for those of us with ADHD or those of us who are neurodivergent. Writing can be a challenge sometimes as it requires us to organise our thoughts and words. A mind map is a graphic way of representing ideas and their relationships. Whether this be in a circle form or jotting down ideas.

Use colour-coding.

Colour coding or even post it notes. This helps visually and break things into subjects or topics.

Small steps to help prevent procrastination

It's easy to put off things when it becomes overwhelming or if it's unclear. Break things down into small chunks or steps.