

## How do I keep motivated in my studies while I'm isolating or working a lot online?

This year most of us are finding it harder to stay motivated. Being on our own a lot isn't easy for anyone, and is particularly hard for some people. It's understandable to struggle a bit, but there are some simple things you can do to help.

- **Consider finding a study buddy.** This might be someone in your yeargroup doing the same subject. Work out with them a 'mutual accountability' plan in which you agree to watch the same lecture at the same time, and check in afterwards, share what you're hoping to get done, and then maybe reward yourselves with a joint online coffee break. NB make it encouraging, rather than competitive, unless you both agree that competition is what motivates you!

*If you're not sure how to find a study buddy, your JCR subject rep may be able to help put you in touch with someone who would also value this.*

- **Develop a daily routine that works for you.** You may have quite a lot of flexibility about when you sleep, eat, work, and relax, but generally human beings do better with a bit of a pattern or routine. If you can, set yourself a time for getting up in the morning, and a time when you down tools at the end of the day and stop working, and mark these times with 'normal' rituals such as a morning cup of tea, getting dressed in daytime clothes even if you're not going out, and even a bedtime routine that helps you feel sleepy.
- **Take care of your physical needs.** Eat real food, try to get enough sleep, move around / exercise regularly during the day (there are some tips for keeping moving while in isolation on the welfare hub), keep hydrated, and get some fresh air. All of these will help your underlying mental and physical health, and make it easier to feel motivated.
- **Divide the day into manageable chunks.** When confronted with a day that has no timetable, it can be hard to know where to start. Divide your day into bite-sized chunks, and take breaks between them to move around, stretch, or look out of the window. You may find it helpful to write down at the end of each day what you need to do the next day, and when you hope to do it, to give yourself a bit of a timetable. You don't need to stick to it absolutely, but it may help you get started. Notice what length of 'chunk' works best for you and your concentration span (which may be different for different kinds of tasks) and play to your strengths.
- **Build some social contact into your day.** Even if it's just a check in with a study buddy, or a video chat with a friend from home, make sure you interact with other people each day in a way that is comfortable for you and safe. Think about the kinds of social interaction that you are happy to have, and seek out people to share that with – going for a walk may be a good option if you're able to do so.
- **Think about your general wellbeing.** Do a 'mood check' – ask yourself 'how am I feeling today?' taking into account your physical, mental and emotional state. If you find that you are often feeling low, or experiencing other things that concern you and don't feel right, please seek support from the welfare team. It's OK not to be OK.

*If you would like any help developing a routine that works for you, or any other support to help you feel motivated, please contact the welfare team.*