



**“What advice would you give to students starting your course?”**

For all of you who are stressing about what to do or buy before you start your Biomedical Science degree, stress no longer. I'm going to let you in on a few insider secrets that will prepare you for the challenge that lies ahead of you. It just takes five easy steps to inevitably make the transition into further education easier for you.

For all of you who have been researching the topics which you will be studying and the heavy reading list that goes with it, “stop right there”! Put down the Waterstones shopping list and listen to step number one. Until you actually start your modules you will not know to what extent topics are covered, this is why it is important that you first look through the recommended books once you have an idea on what is expected of you to learn. This can be done in a far away place known to few students as the university library. Here you can sample the books to see if they suit your style of learning, you will most probably find that many of these books listed won't be of any assistance as a lot of books can lack detail and fluidity which you will require, not everyone suits the same learning styles, so don't buy books just because someone else has. If I would have known this I could have potentially saved buying hundreds of pounds worth of dust collectors as most of the material needed was readily available from university.

Step two, prepare yourself for new ways of learning. No longer will you be sat in the same room writing pages of notes while daydreaming about which member of ‘Take That’ you want to marry or my personal favourite, what to have for lunch. You will be introduced to a whole new way of thinking which will start in a large lecture room with hundreds of your fellow class mates. For those attending it's a display of scientific data and imagery which will leave you amazed but slightly baffled, and for the others it will be a chance to crack that sudoku puzzle which has been the bane of your life for the last three hours. Either way, this style of teaching offers opportunity for debate and question, which is mainly lead by your peers. Lecture style teaching therefore enables students to teach each other by asking the questions that others are too scared to ask. Practical sessions are available to each student which enables laboratory techniques to be learnt and developed although progress can be slow if you work with friends, as the temptation to wreak havoc by spraying colourful dyes onto each others lab coats can be overwhelming. That is why it is important that you choose your laboratory partners well. There's a time for fun and a time to work and it is important that you do well in these practical sessions as they contribute towards your final grade, this can be used as an opportunity to raise your end of year grading if you are not fond of examinations. I found that good practical and essay marks acted as a safety net in case I struggled in an exam. This leads me onto step three, start all essays as early as possible. It's all too easy to leave work till last minute but realistically the best marks will be much harder to achieve if you employ this method. It may seem like your life has ended for a few weeks but it will be worth it in the long run, if you want the best jobs and opportunities offered to you then you need to put in the hard work. Start your work early because

Not only will it help you with achieving great essay marks, it will also help you with examination revision as the essay titles are usually based around a topic which will appear on the examination.

Step four will perhaps be the single most important piece of advice which you will receive about revision techniques. If you want to obtain the best classification possible for your degree, buy some colourful stationary. Red, blue and black pens, maybe even glittered ones for the more daring of us. The different colours will brighten up even the dullest of topics which can seem like an uphill struggle. It may seem strange, but breaking up blocks of work with different colours can really help you keep your concentration. However, step four may well be a personal preference so it's up to you to discover the techniques which suit you best.

Finally step five, which is probably the only thing which you should be thinking about at this stage. Come with an open mind, you will meet people of all ages, life experiences and religions. Embrace them as these people may end up being your best friends or your pillar in a time of need. Whether you are 17 or 65, everybody that you meet will have some contribution towards you life long learning, and hopefully they will learn something from you too. This degree inevitably is opening up many doors for you, it's your chance to become a professional and work in a lucrative field. If you put the work in then you will reap the benefits.