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# Top tips for mastery

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Welcome to the final instalment in this series on mastery in writing for level 7 study and how to achieve it.

My colleagues and I have covered a wide range of topics that we hope have enlightened, supported and helped you in some way on your journey to academic mastery.

In this last instalment, I want to summarise and depart leaving you with some top tips and advice for your studies. As I write this, I wonder to myself: is this a summary or is it a conclusion?

Artificial intelligence (a whole other ball game and one not to be used to write your assignments) proffers that a summary condenses the main points of a text, giving a brief overview of what is already stated. A conclusion draws inferences and interpretations of the presented information, offering the opportunity to provide a new perspective. I think we can safely say that this final column is a summary.

However, doesn't a solid conclusion sound as if the author will be achieving mastery? A great goal to be working towards if you can assimilate the information and draw your own conclusions. Therein lies the first top tip. Present the information and form your own opinion – especially around how it applies to you and your practice.

In order to present a rounded view of the information, you must do what I think is possibly the most important part of study: read, read and read some more. You can't present a rounded view unless you have researched and read around

the subject thoroughly, considering the strengths, weaknesses and all different sides to the story. Consider alternate viewpoints, those from different but related professions, and practice in other countries. Remember that at level 6 and 7, we are not looking for descriptive waffle, but for facts, critical discussion and analysis of the evidence. So top tip number 2 is to read!

You will have realised by now that to do yourself justice and earn the grades you would like, it is going to take commitment and time – commitment from you but also those around you to support and give you the space to study. You cannot (unless you are superhuman) write a dissertation with your 10-year-old in the background telling you the intricacies of the latest Minecraft village they have built – trust me, I know!! So top tip number 3 is, give yourself time. Be honest with yourself and your tutor. As tutors, we are here to help you, but we can't do this if you bury your head in the proverbial sand and tell no one you are struggling. Life has a habit of getting in the way and we understand this, so please talk to your tutor or module lead if things aren't going as planned. Study is expensive so make those modules work for you.

Top tip number 4 is utilise your feedback. This may be from previous assignments or from formative work within the module. Lecturers spend a lot of time providing feedback so please use it to stop the same mistakes recurring.

Final words of wisdom are to never stop being critical, sceptical and questioning everything you read. Don't be afraid to play devil's advocate – both with the evidence and also your own beliefs and practice. Apply everything back to own practice where possible. Oh, and last but not least, enjoy – learning is meant to be fun. **JPP**

