

TIME MANAGEMENT

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TIME AT CAMBRIDGE

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THE PRINCIPLE

- Identify goals
- Decide on order of priorities
- Formulate plans accordingly
- Take control of how you spend your time
- Work hard and play hard
- Achieve goals!

PLANS & GOALS

- Long term plans:
 - ⇒ Personal fulfilment: engineering, career, family, relationships, community, sport, fame, fortune, health, religion, politics etc.
- 4 year plan:
 - ⇒ Personal fulfilment:
 - some or all of the above, to greater or lesser extent
 - + BA, MEng
 - + developing and broadening the mind

WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR YOU?

Get a balance between three main areas:

academic work

non-academic activities

'down-time' social activities

Do enough of each (personal preferences: your priorities)

AND: always leave time for the mechanics of life (eating and sleeping)

If you manage your time well, you can fit in amazing amounts of things!

PLANS & GOALS: THE COURSE

- 1 year plan:
 - ⇒ Learn fundamentals of Engineering; enjoy the course; pass Engineering Tripos Part IA
- 1 term plan:
 - ⇒ Stay up-to-date: Examples Papers and coursework; prepare for College test in January
- 1st week plan:
 - ⇒ Understand Cambridge system; find way round; meet people

WEEKLY & DAILY PLANS

- Identify fixed commitments:

⇒ Lectures + Labs: 20 hours/week

⇒ Supervisions: 2-3 hours/week

PLUS

⇒ Private Study:

Examples Papers (2.5 × 6 hours) 15 hours/week

Coursework reports etc. ~3 hours/week

Reading, reviewing notes etc. ~6 hours/week

Total weekly average ~48 hours/week

+ Recreational and social commitments

SET PRIORITIES

- Draw up a list of “things to do”
- Split big tasks into smaller ones
e.g. when writing a major report
 - ⇒ plan report
 - ⇒ organise the figures
 - ⇒ prepare 1st draft
 - ⇒ proof read, edit and complete report
- Number your “things to do” to indicate priorities

TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR TIME I

- Cambridge has lots of interesting and worthwhile things on offer
- All being well, you will be here 4 years
- Don't have to do everything this term / year:
 - ask yourself: will there be a later opportunity?
- If you are well organised, you can fit in a huge amount

TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR TIME II

- Plan your week, every week
- Plan your day, every day
- Use a diary
- Identify the most important jobs each day, and do them!
- Start doing it now!

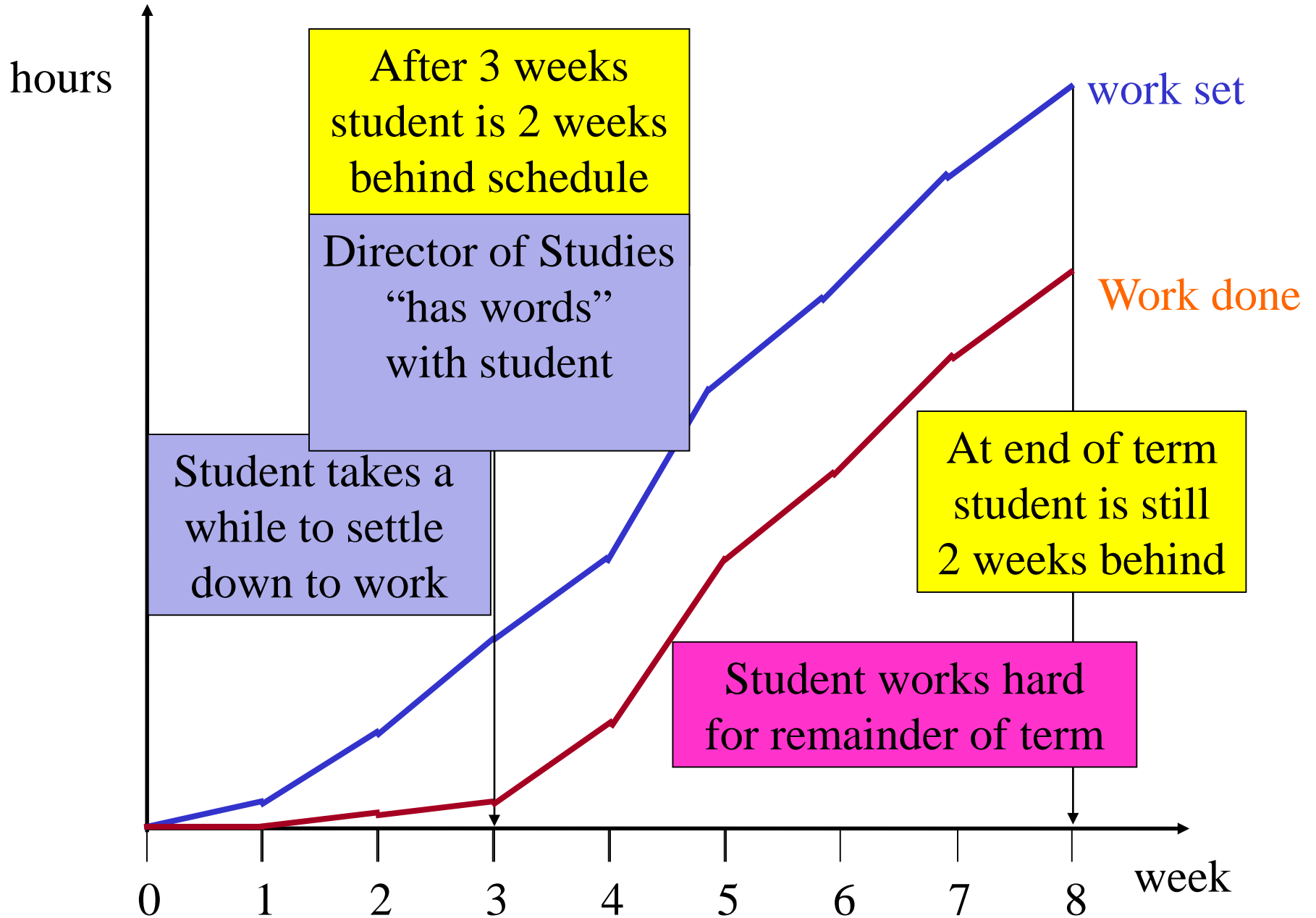
PLANNING WORK I

- Most of your study needs blocks of uninterrupted time (e.g. 1-4 hours)
- Some jobs fit into odd half hours: use them
- Identify your best time of the day for work (early mornings, afternoon, evenings)
- Identify your best place for work (College room, College library, CUED library)
- Ensure your workplace is well-equipped: heat, light, clear desk, notes, data books etc.

PLANNING WORK II

- To get maximum benefit from the course, and for least stress: **stay up-to-date**
 - ⇒ Write up practicals the day of the experiment, *not* the day before the mark-up
 - ⇒ Try Examples Paper questions the day of the lecture, *not* an hour before the relevant supervision
- Most students find Cambridge life very hectic – if you fall behind, it is hard to catch up again

A COMMON STORY



PLANNING WORK III

- **Ration your time** according to benefit (marks) – remember that Part I coursework is for standard credit
- **Prioritise**: identify important tasks; check deadlines; partition your time to meet deadlines
- **Expect the unexpected** – leave time for contingencies
- “Just in time” = “Late” - only too often!

**EXAMPLES OF
GOOD AND BAD
WEEKLY TIMETABLES**

**FIND YOUR OWN
WORKING PATTERN**

FIXED WORK COMMITMENTS

| | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|------|----------|---------|----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 9-1 | [Black] | | | | | | |
| 1-2 | | | | | | | |
| 2-6 | | [Black] | | | | | |
| 6-7 | [Purple] | | [Purple] | | | | |
| 7-11 | | | | | | | |

← 15 free 4 hour slots

CUED activities
Supervisions

Only 6 slots needed for private study

AFTERNOON WORKER



| | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|------|--------|-------|--------|------|------|------|------|
| 9-1 | Black | | | | | | |
| 1-2 | | | | | | | |
| 2-6 | Blue | Black | Blue | Blue | Blue | Blue | Blue |
| 6-7 | Purple | | Purple | | | | |
| 7-11 | | | | | | | |

$6 \times 4 \text{ hours} = 24 \text{ hours of private study}$

EVENING WORKER



| | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|------|--------|-------|--------|------|------|-----|------|
| 9-1 | Black | | | | | | |
| 1-2 | | | | | | | |
| 2-6 | | Black | | | | | |
| 6-7 | Purple | | Purple | | | | |
| 7-11 | Blue | Blue | Blue | Blue | Blue | | Blue |

$6 \times 4 \text{ hours} = 24 \text{ hours of private study}$

SUPERVISION BLITZ WORKER



Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun

| | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|------|------------|------------|------------|-----|-----|-----|------------|
| 9-1 | Black | | | | | | |
| 1-2 | | | | | | | |
| 2-6 | Light Blue | Black | Light Blue | | | | |
| 6-7 | Purple | | Purple | | | | |
| 7-11 | | Light Blue | | | | | Light Blue |
| 11-3 | | Light Blue | | | | | Light Blue |

THE RUGBY PLAYER



Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun

| | | | | | | | |
|------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 9-1 | Black | | | | | Light Blue | Light Blue |
| 1-2 | White | White | White | White | White | White | |
| 2-6 | Red | Black | Red | Light Blue | Red | Red | |
| 6-7 | Light Blue | Light Blue | Light Blue | Light Blue | Light Blue | Light Blue | |
| 6-7 | Purple | White | Purple | White | White | White | |
| 7-11 | White | Light Blue | Light Blue | Green | White | White | |
| 7-11 | White | White | White | White | White | White | |

Rugby training or matches

CU ballroom dancing society

THE BOATIE



| | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|------|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 6-9 | | | | | | | |
| 9-1 | [Black block] | | | | | | |
| 1-2 | | | | | | | |
| 2-6 | | | | | | | |
| 6-7 | | | | | | | |
| 7-11 | | | | | | | |

Rowing, training, coaching or racing

Language class

THE MUSICIAN



Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun

| | | | | | | | |
|------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 9-1 | Black | | | | | Light Blue | White |
| 1-2 | White | White | White | White | White | White | White |
| 2-6 | Light Blue | Black | Light Blue | Light Blue | Light Blue | Green | Light Blue |
| 6-7 | Green | Light Blue | Light Blue | Green | Green | White | Light Blue |
| 6-7 | Purple | White | Purple | White | White | White | White |
| 7-11 | White | White | White | Light Blue | White | Green | Brown |
| 7-11 | Light Blue | Green | Green | White | White | White | White |
| | White | White | White | White | White | Green | White |

Practice, rehearsals or concert

Chapel

SUMMARY

If you're well organised, there's enough time for everything

Find out what you need to do

Understand how you work best

Don't over-commit to non-academic activities (societies etc)

Plan accordingly!

Use your time fully:

do small tasks in odd moments

safeguard blocks of time for serious work

Don't forget to eat and sleep!

Strike a balance: don't work all the time, but do enough

ANY QUESTIONS?