

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!

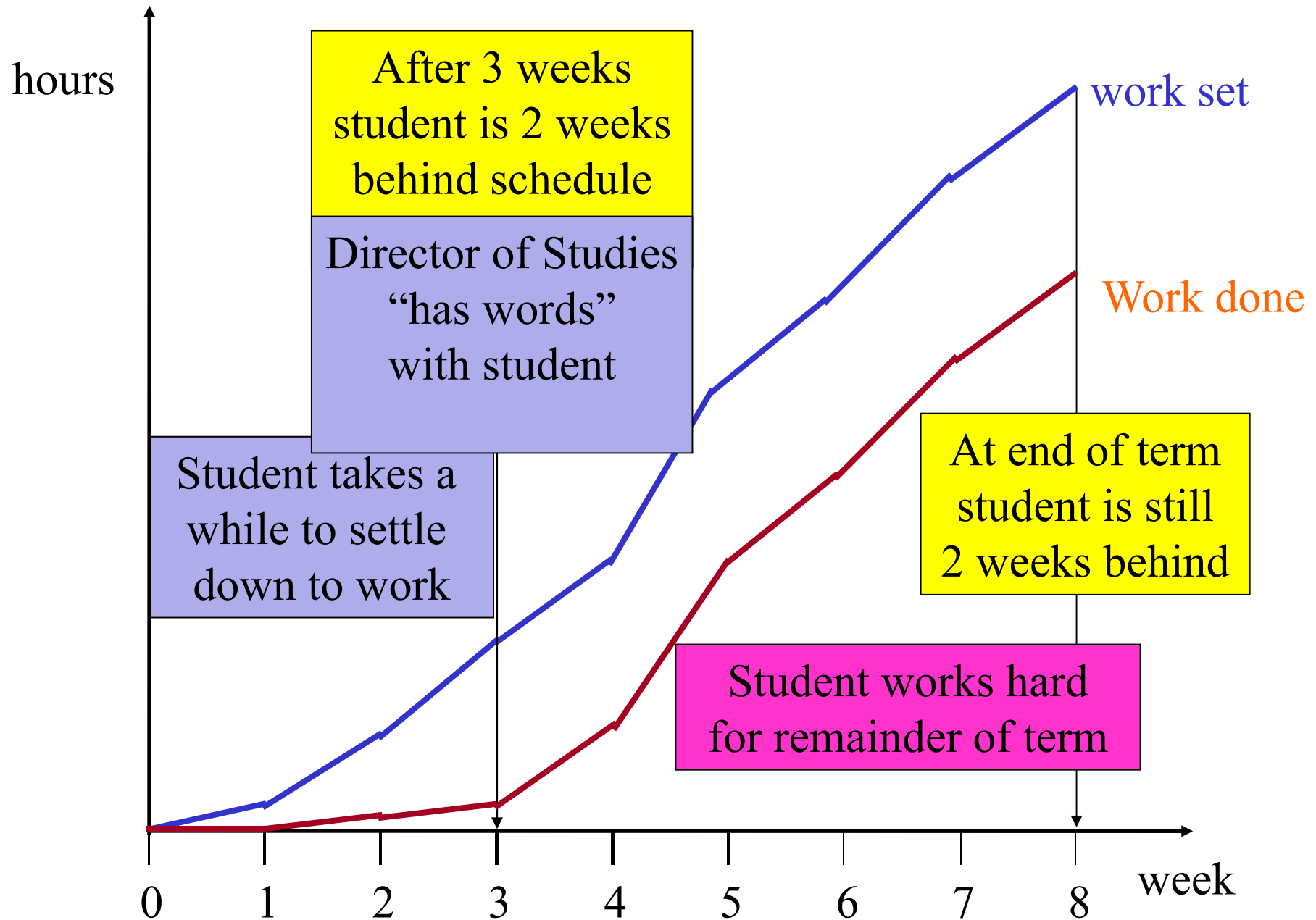
# PLANNING WORK I

- 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							
1-2							
2-6							
6-7							
7-11							

CUED activities  
 Supervisions

Only 6 slots needed for private study

15 free 4 hour slots

# AFTERNOON WORKER



	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
9-1							
1-2							
2-6							
6-7							
7-11							

$6 \times 4$  hours = 24 hours of private study



# EVENING WORKER



	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
9-1							
1-2							
2-6							
6-7							
7-11							

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

# SUPERVISION BLITZ WORKER



Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun

9-1							
1-2							
2-6							
6-7							
7-11							
11-3							

# THE RUGBY PLAYER



	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
9-1							
1-2							
2-6							
6-7							
7-11							

Rugby training or matches

CU ballroom dancing society

# THE BOATIE



6-9	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
9-1							
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							
1-2							
2-6							
6-7							
7-11							

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?