HOW TO SUCCEED IN YOUR FIRST BSc TESTS

By

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IMAGINE YOUR FIRST TEST

Picture this scenario: Your first biology/physics/computer science test is tomorrow. After supper, you find the lecture slides on Amathuba and read them over and over until they become familiar. You also find YouTube videos on the test topic. This all takes longer than you expected, so you only go to bed at 4 a.m. and sleep through your 8 a.m. lecture (or maybe you 'cross night' or 'pull an all-nighter' and don't go to sleep at all)! However, you feel confident that you're prepared for the test. How do you expect you'll perform?

The truth is: you will almost certainly fail the test. Even if this strategy worked for you at school, it is not going to work at university. Here are some reasons why:

- Learning doesn't start the day before the test. Learning started on the first day of lectures.
- Your studying activities (reading and watching videos) were different from the test activities. You practised doing the wrong thing.
- Sleep is vitally important for the level of cognitive function that you need to write a university test.
- University tests are different from school tests (this chapter explains the difference).

In the chapter on time management, we introduced the idea of working smart. Working smart means working less and getting better results. This chapter is all

about working smart. To work smart, you need a clear understanding of the goal, which means that you need to understand the difference between university and school tests – so let's start with that.

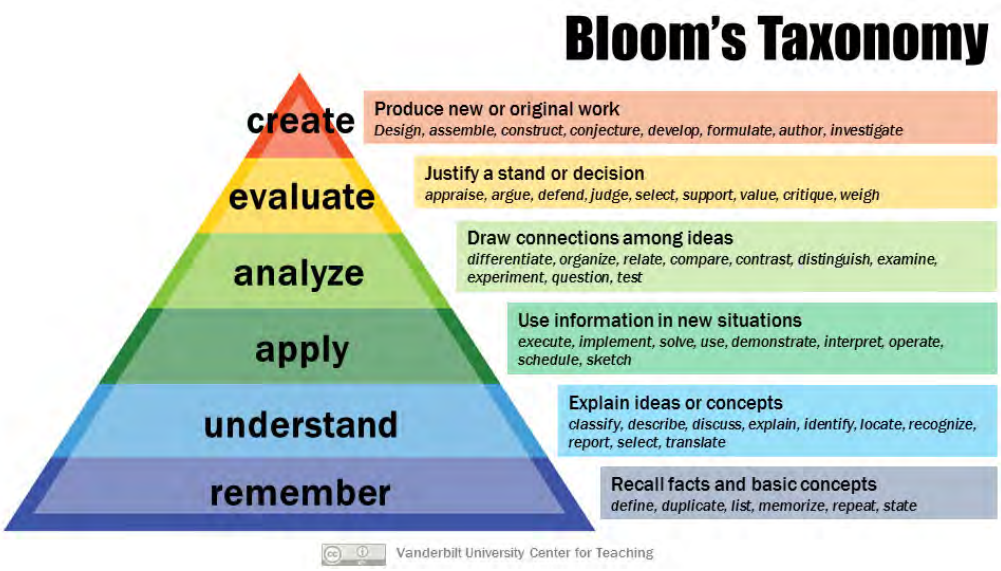
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN UNIVERSITY AND SCHOOL TESTS: BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

Think back to when you were in high school. During a lesson, the teacher's job was to deliver information and your job was to record that information in your book. Your book stored the information, until the day before a test, when you moved the information from your book into your head. During the test, you regurgitated (repeated from memory) the knowledge onto paper. By the following day, you had forgotten it all. While you may have passed the test, in the end you actually learnt nothing.

To understand why this approach to 'learning' doesn't work at university, let's look at Bloom's Taxonomy [1]. Have you seen the colourful pyramid in Figure 1 before? It is useful for classifying different types of test questions, and thus will help you understand what is required of you in university tests. The bottom of the pyramid (the **remember** level) includes questions such as 'Define ...' or 'List ...'. It's possible to memorise information and answer these questions without

actually understanding the concepts. The next level (**understand**) needs conceptual understanding and includes questions like 'Explain…' or 'Discuss…'. The **apply** level requires you to apply your knowledge to new situations, often by solving a problem. At the **analyse** level, you need to draw connections between pieces of knowledge, in order to 'Compare…' or 'Contrast…'.

Figure 1: Graphic representation of Bloom's Taxonomy (Source: **Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching CC BY**)



Can you see why Bloom's Taxonomy is shaped like a pyramid? The higher levels of the pyramid are supported by the lower levels: you can't **apply** or **analyse** knowledge that you don't **remember** and **understand**.

Which Bloom's Taxonomy levels do first-year university tests use? Most undergraduate university tests focus on the middle levels (**apply** and **analyse**), in contrast to school tests, which focussed on the bottom two levels of the pyramid. Postgraduate study uses the top levels, so you will start to move towards those levels in third-year courses. Table 1 shows that the BEES (Biology, Earth and Environmental Sciences) courses test

four Bloom's levels, but the problem-solving disciplines (chemistry, computer science, maths and physics) mostly assume that you **remember** and **understand** everything, and require you to **apply** it to problems that often require you to **analyse** a situation.

Table 1: Bloom's Taxonomy levels used in first-year BSc tests

Bloom's Level	Biology (BIO1000F)	Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEO1009F)	Problem-solving disciplines
Analyse	Compare / Contrast / Distinguish	Use a selection of knowledge to answer a particular question about a map/ illustration, etc. *(60–70% of test marks)*	Multiple choice / Problems / Graphs / Proofs (maths) (~100% of test marks)
Apply	Multiple choice / Problem solving when given a scenario / Use an annotated diagram/ graph to illustrate		
Understand	Explain (how structure affects function; how structures interact) / Outline (step by step explanation of a concept/process) / Supply a detailed example	Explain	[Not applicable]
Remember	Describe / Define / Label a diagram / Give examples	Define / Label a diagram	[Not applicable]

What do we mean by a 'problem'? The so-called 'problems' in your Grade 12 maths and science exams were not problems; they were actually just exercises.

This is because you had learnt a method (an algorithm) for answering such questions: for example, you knew the method for answering the Doppler question in the physics paper (even if you didn't really understand the Doppler effect). Often, all you needed to do was write down the given information, find a suitable formula on the information sheet, and 'plug and chug', i.e. plug in the values and chug along, using your calculator to get the answer. In contrast, university problems really are problems, i.e. situations where you can't immediately see how to get the solution. (We provide a problem-solving approach later in this chapter.)

Ndila ine ha gudiswa ngayo fhano yunivesithi yo fhambana na ine ra guda ngayo musi ri sekondari. Muthu u fanela u vula muhumbulo a ḓiimisele u guda. Ndila ya vhuḓi ya u guda ndi u kunana na vhagudi nga iwe khathihi na vhagudisi.

The way they teach us here in university is very different from the way they used to teach us in secondary school. One must be very open-minded and determined to learn. The best way to learn is to assist each other as students, together with our lecturers.

Rofulufhela Mphaka
Second-year biology student

Take a look at past tests and exams to find out what kinds of questions to expect. You can ask your class reps to ask your lecturers to make some past papers available on Amathuba. Pay careful attention to *what* you are required to do in a question – can you identify the Bloom's level? For BEES subjects, don't mistake **analyse** questions (compare, contrast, etc.) for **knowledge** questions. (A word of warning: don't get complacent just *looking* at past tests, you need to *practice* doing the required tasks – more about that later in this chapter).

In summary, to succeed in university tests, you need to **know** and **understand** the course content well enough to **apply** and **analyse** that content in the way that each discipline (subject) requires. This chapter helps you work smart, so that with hard (but not excessive) work, you can do all of that.

STRATEGIES TO PREPARE FOR THE TESTS

Now that you understand the difference between school and university tests, how should you prepare for your university tests? This section provides practical strategies that work for all subjects. At the end of this chapter, we give strategies that are subject-specific.

Practise

Practising is an essential element of test preparation. Table 2 shows some examples of what a student (Tom) is expected to do in his tests and what he did to prepare for them. Can you see any problems with his study techniques?

Table 2: Comparison between test requirements and test preparation techniques

Subject	What Tom is expected to do in the test	What Tom did to prepare for the test
Biology	Write a paragraph that compares two things	Read the textbook or lecture slides. Used flashcards to test whether he knew all the terminology.
Physics / maths	Solve problems	Read the textbook or lecture slides. Watched videos of the lecturer (or Khan Academy) solving problems. Read over the tutor's solutions.

Tom's test preparation was inadequate because he didn't actually practise the test activities. He didn't give himself the opportunity to try and fail – and learn from his failures (which is often the most effective way to learn). Activities like reading, using flashcards and watching videos are not wrong, but they are not enough in themselves. When you do such activities, be clear that the goal of doing these activities is to help you get to the place where you can do test-like activities.

When can you practice test-like activities? Your courses are designed with opportunities to practise: lecture examples, tutorials, assignments, weekly exercises and so on. Don't make the mistake of seeing these activities as an end in themselves or as being about marks. The marks are just feedback on how you're doing. Take hold of every opportunity to learn – all these opportunities are part of your test preparation. However, note that physics and chemistry labs are intended for learning *laboratory* skills, which are tested separately in lab tests.

You need to attain **self-mastery** of test activities. Self-mastery is a process that starts by watching others (your lecturer, tutor or peers), then working together with others (in a tutorial or study group), and then trying it yourself. It's easy to watch someone else, and you can be fooled into thinking it's easy for you if it's easy for them. In contrast, doing it yourself is TOUGH - you probably won't get it first time. This means being willing to struggle, so take Blessing Gumbu's advice on struggling. You also need to practise under test conditions, with a strict time limit and no access to your notes.

Our final tip is to practise with an audience. In a test, an expert will read your answer

and assess it. So you should practice test activities with an audience. Can you explain something to someone else? This is where teaching your peers is useful. Never be shy about asking questions – you give your peers an opportunity to learn by teaching you. Another suggestion is for you and a study buddy to mark each other's answers to a question. Putting yourself in the marker's role will also help you to realise what markers look for and, therefore, what kind of answers you should give.

Take the initiative: Ask

Lecturers want to help you – they want you to learn and succeed and use what you have learnt to find solutions to our societal and world problems. However, lecturers can only know if you need help if you tell them – so take the initiative and ask. Believe it or not, lecturers are human beings. Just like you, they also did first-year maths at some point in their lives, so think about that when trying to reach out and approach your lecturer. Try your maths tutor or your class rep if reaching out to your lecturers feels too intimidating. Lecturers can only do something to help you if they know.

Make crib sheets

Sift through your all the material you have on a certain topic (your lecture notes, the textbook, useful YouTube videos, online resources etc), and, on a single piece of paper (or less), write down the crux (main points) of that topic. You can ask yourself what/when/why/how questions: What (is the topic)? When (do we use it)? Why (do we use it i.e. what is the end goal)? How (do we do/use it)? Use these crib sheets when working through problems and exercises but note that you can't take them into tests or exams – that is not their purpose.

Memorise with meaning

Although university tests focus on the middle levels of Bloom's pyramid (**apply** and **analyse**), these are built on the foundation of the bottom levels (**remember** and **understand**), so you still need to do memory work. Let's start with a memory test. Read this sentence twice, then look away and see how much you can remember: *ndisebenzile kanzima eskoleni*.

How did you do? If you know what the sentence means (I worked hard at school), then it's easy to remember. This example illustrates an important principle: it's much easier to remember things that have meaning. Rather than wasting time trying to memorise meaningless things, take time to understand them. After all, even if you can recite the whole textbook, you won't pass the test unless you understand and can apply the content. And no lecturer expects word-perfect definitions – they'd rather you explained in your own words. There are more memorisation tips in the last section of this chapter.

Flashcards for BEES subjects

Flashcards are great for memorising words or individual facts, which is particularly useful for the BEES subjects. A flashcard is a small piece of paper on which you write a word on one side and the meaning on the other side, or a question on one side and the answer on the other side. You then go through your pile of flashcards, looking at one side and seeing whether you can remember the other side, preferably by saying it out loud. You then check yourself by looking at the other side. Put the flashcards that you get correct in one pile, and the rest in another pile. (You can also have a third pile for half-correct

answers.) Put the 'correct' pile to one side and go through the other pile again, sorting the cards into two piles again. Repeat.

Here are two pro tips for flashcards. Firstly, make them visually interesting by using different colours and little sketches – this makes them easier to remember. Secondly, you can use apps (such as Mnemosyne and Anki) to make electronic flashcards. These apps allow you to make flashcards on your computer and then access them on your phone – great for learning while you're on the bus or standing in a queue! These apps also sort the cards into piles for you.

MY STORY

Struggling is okay

Blessing Gumbu *Second-year biochemistry and physiology student*

Struggling is okay. (You're probably thinking: 'Wait, what? It is NOT okay.') Well, to your surprise, it is okay and it enhances your chances of success. When one deems it to *not* be okay, that is when it becomes a problem. Coming into university is a big step from high school. Maybe you come as the top achiever from your school, district or province. Then you get here and, wait a minute, you lose your ground, and you realise that you have to shift your thinking from how you thought in high school, in order to survive university.

Struggling comes in all forms: academic, social, financial and more. But I would like to focus on academics. You get exposed to a lot of new concepts, for example, things that you used to do in 2D in high school physics will now be in 3D. Amid all that you experience, you need to process a high volume of content and, as if that is not a lot already, you are also adjusting to university.

When I arrived at UCT in my first year, I thought it would just be a soft ride as it was in my matric (being the top learner in the district). I even got more excited because I was going to do courses that I was familiar with: physics, chemistry (my favourite), biology, mathematics and stats. Well, reality struck. I really struggled in the first months to adjust my studying skills and my abilities in general to suit the kind of hecticness that I had going on. During this time, I would look around at other students and see them as being successful and not struggling. That comparison took a toll on my self-esteem. Comparison is the thief of happiness and success.

I am very grateful for a conversation with my mom one day when I came from a physics test that went badly. She said: 'Remember in high school, when you got to Grade 10, the first term was a bit of a struggle because you were getting to dive deeper into science, but you built your way to the top, worked around your struggles, and eventually you got the hang of it and started enjoying science and doing well in your studies. Same thing applies now, you're telling me that it's so hard'.

It was in this moment that I realised that I was deeming this whole struggling thing as being *wrong*, which kept me from surpassing the struggle and coming up with a strategy to deal with all this change around me. From that day onwards, I changed my perception about struggling. And I came to realise that struggling is okay, in fact it is necessary for growth.

There will always be a struggle, but how you view the struggle is the most important thing.
Struggling is good because it gives one a chance to evolve and grow. When you are struggling, you're put under pressure, which means you need

to come up with ways and strategies to improve. So I challenge you to change the way that you view struggling, and see what happens to your ability to deal with challenges.

MY STORY

How pleasant is your study environment?

Blessing Gumbu *Second-year biochemistry and physiology student*

Is your study area a welcoming space that you want to be in? Or is it an uncomfortable environment that makes you want to do the minimum and leave? Here are some suggestions to make your study environment more conducive to learning:

- Pick an area where you are most comfortable to study; this increases your efficiency.
- Wear clothing/attire that inspires you when you're studying in your room/res/home (e.g. scrub hat).
- Surround yourself with motivation on your wall to inspire you.
- Remind yourself of the reason why you are studying. Make sure this a very strong reason, as it forms the core foundation of your self-discipline when studying (e.g. to be successful, to make mum proud, to make myself proud, to get an A).
- Positive energy! Speak good words to yourself, like 'you are kind, you are smart, you are beautiful, you are capable', before studying.

- Try to also play some soft background music (like Chinese instrumental or piano music) when studying; or, if you love complete silence, stick to that.
- Before you study, always remember: you've got this!
- Be organised: have different notebooks for each course; file and organise your work to make it simpler to navigate through.

WRITING THE TESTS

Now that you've got a sense of how university tests are different from school tests, and how to study for them, you're probably wondering what it will it be like to actually write them. This section describes what you can expect and provides some practical test techniques.

Getting ready for a test

Here's what you need to do to get ready for a test:

Venue

The test venue is different from your lecture venue – make sure you know where it is. Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes early. Allow for the possibility of the shuttle being late – no matter what your excuse is, you will not be given extra time if you arrive late.

The night before

The most important thing is to get a good night's sleep because you can't apply your knowledge if you're too tired to think straight. Don't do anything new – it will just make you anxious.

Make your peace with what you know

You can get a quarter of a test wrong and still get a first (75 %); you only need half the marks to pass. You'll never know everything, but it's a shame to not get credit for what you do know because you're too tired or anxious to perform at the level you're capable of. Read over your summaries and leave it at that. Remind yourself of all the learning you've done through the term – every tutorial and every assignment has been part of your test preparation.

What to take with you

You are required to show your student card (or another identity document if you've lost your student card). Also take stationery and your calculator, if needed. Note that you're not allowed to wear a watch. Your cell phone must be switched off or on be silent, and not on your person (which means it must be in your bag, usually under your desk). You're allowed to take a water bottle and sweets in with you. Take something for blowing your nose so that you don't sniff and disturb other students.

Remind yourself

This is only a test, and only the first test at that. The marks do not contribute that much to your final course mark. This is just an opportunity to get feedback on how you're doing. It's not worth getting into a state about.

What to expect

When you get to the test venue, here's what you can expect to find:

Seating

Wait outside the venue until you are invited inside (5–10 minutes before the start of the test). For tests, you can usually sit anywhere

(but for exams, you will be allocated a particular seat).

Attendance slip

Fill in the attendance slip that you find on your table, leaving out any details that you don't know. Put the attendance slip to one side with your student card on top. The invigilators will collect the attendance slips during the test and use them to complete the register.

Answer booklet

You'll either answer on the question paper or in an answer booklet. Either way, write your name and student number on the front cover. You can ask for additional answer booklets at any time.

Clock

Look around to find the venue clock (because you're not allowed to wear a watch). If you can't see one, ask. If there isn't a clock, the invigilators can write times on the board.

Reading time

Some courses provide reading time before you start writing. During this time, get an overview of the test and rank the questions so that you can do the easier questions first.

Waiting to start

It can be difficult to ignore the anxiety of people around you. Try closing your eyes and focusing on your own breathing, slowing it down and breathing deeply. Or make a gratitude list on the back of your answer booklet. Both these techniques can have a positive physical effect on your brain waves.

Test technique

Here are some pro tips for making the most of what you know:

- The test has a time limit, which is probably less time than you really need to do justice to the questions. Work with that reality and do the following:
    - Leave the most difficult questions to the end. Then you won't lose out on easy marks.
    - Don't write a lot where only a little is required. (The mark allocation gives an indication of how long your answer should be.)
    - Don't worry about neatness – your work just needs to be legible. There is no time to work in pencil first. Just put a line through anything that you don't want marked.
    - Don't get stuck – rather move on to the next question. You can always come back if there's time.
- If you don't know a particular word, put up your hand and ask an invigilator. The examiner may speak English as their first language and may have used an unusual word unintentionally. The worst that can happen is that the invigilator says: 'I'm not allowed to tell you'.
- Instead of imagining your examiner reading your script, imagine that you are explaining something to a friend. This is a mind trick that usually leads to a better-quality answer.

SUBJECT-SPECIFIC TIPS

Different subjects require different approaches. In this final section, we share some subject-specific smart-study tips from students and lecturers. You should also pay attention to the tips that your own lecturers provide.

SPECIALIST PERSPECTIVE

Hacking maths and applied maths

Naseera Moosa *UCT maths lecturer*

As a maths lecturer, I can offer you two tips to help you excel in first-year maths, based on my own maths journey. The first is to remind yourself that you are capable. Most students enter university with the impression that first-year maths is HARD and that they can't do it, it is not for them! (I mean, why is first-year maths compulsory for a BSc degree anyway, right?) As it happens, you already made it this far – you got into UCT, so you are plenty capable enough to excel in maths. Keep telling yourself, 'I am capable and I can do it'. I failed my first Maths class test in my first year because I saw everyone else outside the test venue with no notes in their hands and thought that they must know their work and that me with my crib sheets, did not (and the test was actually easy and doable!). I have never made that mistake ever again. The content in lectures and the questions asked in tuts and tests/exams may be different from high school, the pace fast – that may make maths hard, but you are capable.

Your efforts and hard work will be rewarded with improvement. A section may be difficult to grasp, but it is only temporary, only for now – keep trying. Embrace those challenges as opportunities to grow – that way you will truly excel in maths.

The second tip is practise, practise, practise! Everyone knows 'practice makes perfect'. This cannot be truer than in the maths discipline. Find easy problems to get a feel of the topic at hand (with your crib sheet by your side) and then move onto more difficult problems to challenge yourself and expand your mathematical perspective. Undoubtedly, worked examples given in class, assignment questions and even tutorial questions are a must when it comes to practice. After engaging with these, you can move onto questions in past papers and the textbook. Never cram material the night before – rather progress slowly. Try to do at least five problems every day – that way you always keep a handle on your maths (and are unlikely to fall behind).

SPECIALIST PERSPECTIVE

Problem-solving methods

Associate Professor Dale Taylor *UCT physics lecturer*

What do you do when you can't immediately see how to get a solution? Here's an approach that works well, across all science disciplines:

Step 1

Take time to understand the problem. If you can, draw a picture, and put information on the picture. Pay attention to all the information given in the question, not just the numbers (Too often, students answer the wrong question, because they haven't taken time to understand what the question is actually asking).

Step 2

Brainstorm any concepts that might possibly be relevant to this situation. Jot down words or symbols as you brainstorm.

Step 3
Test one idea from your brainstorm. If it doesn't work, test another idea. This is all part of the process of problem solving. (In a test, be sure to do this on the answer paper, not elsewhere – so that you can be given credit where you deserve it.) Keep going until you find something that works.

Step 4
Do a 'sanity check'. Is your answer a reasonable size? Do the units work out? Have you actually answered the question? Is there another part to the question?

Any time you get stuck: get up and leave. Let your subconscious brain work on the problem in the background. Or ask someone for a clue, (but don't let them do the whole thing, because you'll lose out on the learning opportunity that you'll get from doing it yourself).

It's normal to move back and forth between these steps. Maybe you realise you haven't fully understood the question (step 1), or that your brainstorm (step 2) is incomplete. Your sanity check (step 4) may send you back to test another idea (step 3).

SPECIALIST PERSPECTIVE

Tricks for remembering

Dan Moore *UCT psychology major*

One of the most popular ways for memorising is simple repetition – reading the same paragraph over and over until you can recite it by heart. Contrary to popular belief, this is an inefficient learning strategy. Instead, the active manipulation and elaboration of new information forges bonds in your mind that make it easier to remember when you need to (like in an exam). To remember new information quickly, your brain needs to create meaning. Meaning is an anchoring rope that holds information in your memory. Additionally, like with ropes, the more forms of meaning you have, the more secure that information becomes.

There are several ways to create new meaningful neural pathways that will help you remember information more effectively. The following strategies are related to retrieval cues. Retrieval cues are small prompts which assist your brain in accessing more complex information. Without retrieval cues, no amount of in-depth memorisation is useful.

Multiple mental representations

You remember different types of information using different but connected systems within the brain. For example, when you read something new in a textbook or hear something spoken by your lecturer, you remember it as verbal information because it takes the form of language. By creating versions of the information that engage other processing systems, you give your brain more ways to remember it. This is why things like infographics (pictures with information) are helpful, as they engage both visual and verbal memory.

Another method is to create song lyrics for a tune you know well – the tune helps you remember the words. The more ways you absorb a piece of information, the easier it is for your brain to recall it.

Pictures

If you need to memorise a list of objects, imagine all the objects together in an amusing mental picture. Pictures can also represent more complex topics, like an apple symbolising Newton's laws. You can create mental pictures or you can draw them on paper. Mind maps with colour-coded categories and small sketches are excellent for long-term storage of new memories.

Mnemonic devices

A mnemonic device is a simplified summary designed to serve as a memory cue. A first-letter mnemonic takes the first letter of each item in a list to form a new word. An example of this is 'MRS GREN', which represents the traits of living beings: Movement, Respiration, Sensitivity, Growth, Reproduction, Excretion, Nutrition. You can also form a sentence, for example: "My Very Eager Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas", is used to remember the order of the planets in our solar system (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto). Or you can come up with a rhyme to help you remember important information. There are plenty of mnemonic devices out there, each one using slightly different mechanisms of memory.

SPECIALIST PERSPECTIVE

Hacking biology

An important skill for cell biology is visualisation: being able to picture structures in your head. The flat diagrams in textbooks or lectures represent three-dimensional structures, so always try to visualise the structure in 3D or watch YouTube videos that show structures in 3D.

Biology has a lot of terminology that you need to know. It's easier to learn if you know the roots of words, for example:
cyto = cell and plasm = membrane, so cytoplasm = cell membrane.

SPECIALIST PERSPECTIVE

Hacking physics

Kenneth Freeman *Astrophysics undergraduate student*

- Go through the content before lectures and tuts.
- Work with other students. Also work on your own, a lot!
- Attend and engage in all tuts/WPS and read the textbook.
- Follow the learning plan created by your lecturer. They know best.
- Practise! Practise! Practise!
- Enjoy it to the fullest with the new friends you have made.

SPECIALIST PERSPECTIVE

Hacking computer science

Asisipho Mdikane *UCT computer science student*

Gary Stewart *UCT computer science lecturer*

- Understand that computer science is different from other subjects you studied at school.
- Programming: Understand the programming language syntax. Name your variables sensibly in your programs. Learn how to debug programs.
- Be aware that computer science is about more than programming language syntax; it is also about problem solving. Practise, practise, practise solving different problems.
- Start your assignments early, since they take more time than you think.
- Struggling is okay, but you have to know how to act with your struggle.
- Seek help early if you're not understanding things. If you are not a person who engages easily with lecturers or tutors, make sure you have friends you can rely on.
- Making friends who are going to help you through the assignments is key in studying computer science. If you are struggling to make friends, ask for your classmate's numbers and contact them when you are struggling. Sometimes you may even realise that you are not the only one struggling, which can bring a sense of relief because thinking you're the only one makes the struggling even worse.
- Attend lab exercises.

- Do not only rely on the assignments and think you understand: make sure you go through the content and do past papers to get used to how questions are asked in the theory part of computer science.
- Spend time working on a computer if it is new to you.
- Organise your electronic resources and files in a folder structure. Name your files and folders correctly and consistently.

CONCLUSION

You should by now have a clear understanding of how university tests are different from school tests, and an awareness of what is required of you in terms of the Bloom's Taxonomy levels. You should also know some general 'smart study' strategies, and some subject-specific ones. You also have an idea of what to expect in the actual test environment … so that's one less thing to stress about.

The next step is to try out some of strategies we've introduced you to. At the same time, don't forget the importance of sleep, exercise and a healthy diet, particularly at this stressful time. Ask yourself whether there is anything you can do to make your study space more pleasant to be in (Blessing Gumbu gave some advice). And remember – you've got this!

READ/WATCH MORE

Study techniques

Study techniques
College Success is a digital book similar to Science is Tough, except it's written in the USA. Here is the section on **study myths & strategies**.

Mnemonics
This **page** gives nine different types of mnemonics.

Flashcard tips
This **flashcard article** is a fun read on how to use drawings effectively on flashcards, and other tips.

Flashcard apps
Here is info about free apps that you can install on both your computer and phone: **Mnemosyne**; **Anki** (Anki is not free for iOS)

The role of sleep
Read the American Academy of Sleep Medicine's article on research that leads to them to conclude: **College students: Getting enough sleep is vital to academic success**.

Writing tests

Venues
Look up your test venues on **Campus maps**.

REFERENCE

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