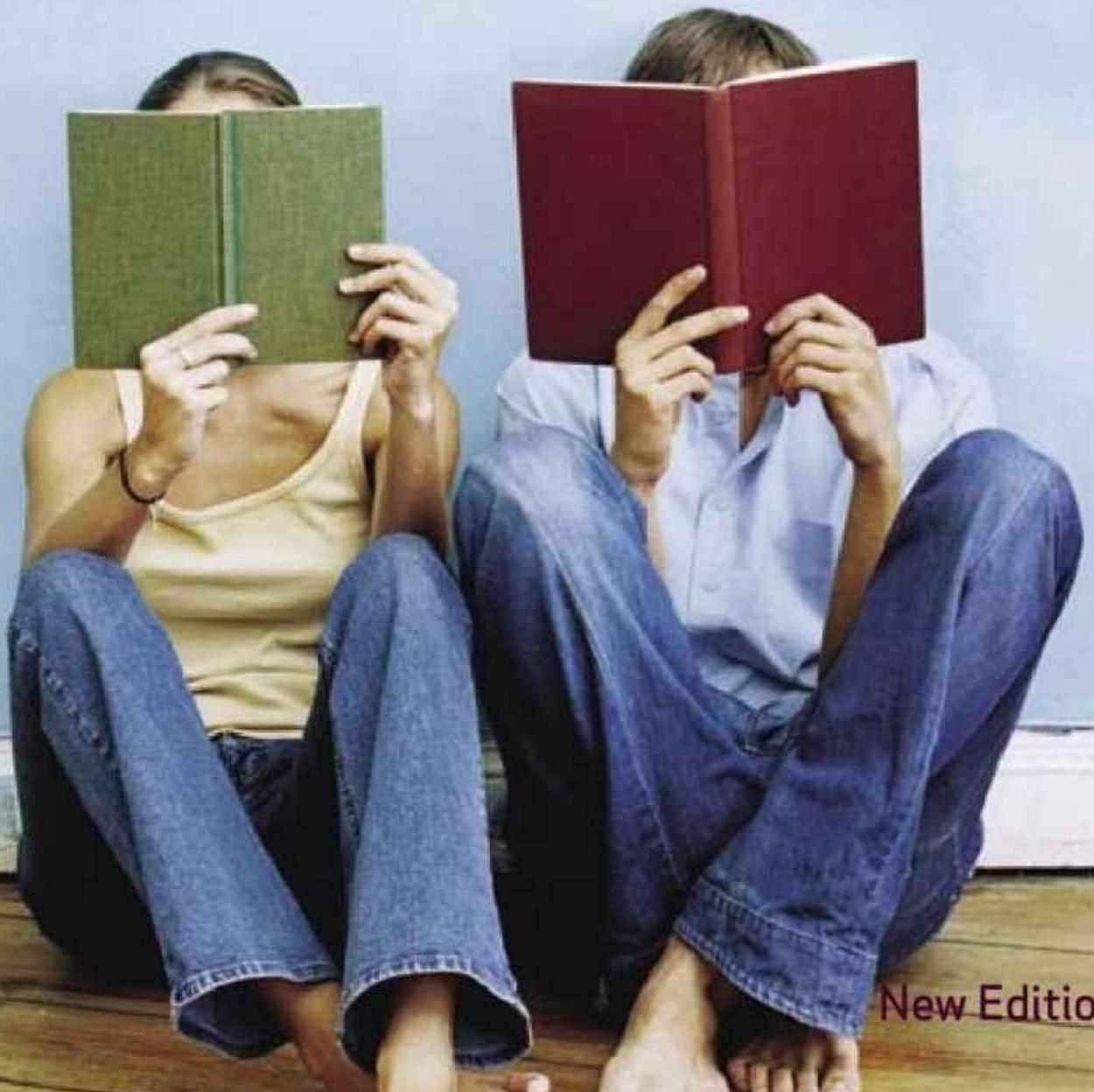




The Open University

The Good Study Guide

Andrew Northedge



New Edition

The Good Study Guide

Andrew Northedge

Author: Andrew Northedge

Project Managers: Penny Bennett, Susan Lowe

Course Manager: Corinne De Souza

Course Co-ordinator: Maureen Richards

Production Team:

Composition: Diane Hopwood

Editor: Kathleen Calder

Design: Vicki McCulloch, Glen Darby

Graphics: Jon Owen

Production Assistants: Elizabeth Rowell-Tinsley, Kathryn Smith, Linda Cambourne-Paynter

Open University Worldwide

This publication forms part of an Open University course K100 Understanding Health and Social Care. Details of this and other Open University courses can be obtained from the Student Registration and Enquiry Service, PO Box 625, Milton Keynes, MK7 6YG, United Kingdom: tel. +44 (0)1908 653231, e-mail general-enquiries@open.ac.uk

Alternatively, you may visit the Open University website at <http://www.open.ac.uk> where you can learn more about the wide range of courses and packs offered at all levels by The Open University.

To purchase a selection of Open University course materials visit www.ouw.co.uk, or contact Open University Worldwide, Michael Young Building, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA, United Kingdom for a brochure. tel. +44 (0)1908 858785; fax +44 (0)1908 858787; e-mail ouwenvq@open.ac.uk

The Open University

Walton Hall, Milton Keynes

MK7 6AA

First published 2005. Reprinted 2005

Copyright 2005 The Open University

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted or utilised in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without written permission from the publisher or a licence from the Copyright Licensing Agency Ltd. Details of such licences (for reprographic reproduction) may be obtained from the Copyright Licensing Agency Ltd of 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1T 4LP.

Open University course materials may also be made available in electronic formats for use by students of the University. All rights, including copyright and related rights and database rights, in electronic course materials and their contents are owned by or licensed to The Open University, or otherwise used by The Open University as permitted by applicable law.

In using electronic course materials and their contents you agree that your use will be solely for the purposes of following an Open University course of study or otherwise as licensed by The Open University or its assigns.

Except as permitted above you undertake not to copy, store in any medium (including electronic storage or use in a website), distribute, transmit or re-transmit, broadcast, modify or of The Open University or in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Edited and designed by The Open University.

Kindle version created by Open University Worldwide/RTH.

PREFACE

PART 1 STUDYING INTELLIGENTLY

CHAPTER 1 INVESTING IN YOURSELF

1.1 Who this book is for

1.2 How this book works

1.3 Investing in your own development

1.4 The challenge of studying

1.5 What does it take to be a skilful student?

1.6 Being a reflective learner

1.7 Thinking about how you learn

References

CHAPTER 2 TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR STUDIES

2.1 Taking responsibility for your own learning

2.2 Managing the work

2.3 Managing time

2.4 Managing your study circumstances

2.5 Managing your morale

2.6 Being a successful self-manager

References

CHAPTER 3 USING A COMPUTER TO STUDY

3.1 Studying in the ICT age

3.2 Getting started

3.3 Useful things you can do with a word-processor

3.4 Organising files

3.5 'Talking' online

3.6 eLearning

3.7 Conclusion

References

CHAPTER 4 UNDERSTANDING HOW YOU LEARN

4.1 Developing ideas about learning

4.2 What does learning mean?

4.3 Why do they write that way?

4.4 Reading, listening, speaking and Writing

4.5 Becoming knowledgeable

References

PART 2 THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS

CHAPTER 5 READING

5.1 Reading is easy, isn't it?

5.2 The experience of reading

5.3 Getting round obstacles

5.4 How quickly should you read?

5.5 Reading actively

5.6 Reading critically

5.7 Are you a good reader?

5.8 Conclusion

References

CHAPTER 6 MAKING NOTES

6.1 Thinking on paper

6.2 Capturing knowledge

6.3 Supporting your memory

6.4 Organising knowledge

6.5 Supporting creativity

6.6 Making notes strategically

Reference

CHAPTER 7 LEARNING THROUGH TALK

[7.1 Talk in higher learning](#)

[7.2 Learning through group discussion](#)

[7.3 Giving a presentation](#)

[7.4 Listening to talk](#)

[References](#)

CHAPTER 8 WORKING WITH NUMBERS AND CHARTS

[8.1 Numbers and studying](#)

[8.2 Living with numbers](#)

[8.3 Describing the world](#)

[8.4 Describing with tables](#)

[8.5 Describing with graphs and charts](#)

[8.6 Using numbers intelligently](#)

[8.7 Review](#)

[References](#)

CHAPTER 9 RESEARCHING ONLINE

[9.1 A world of information at your Fingertips](#)

[9.2 Finding information](#)

[9.3 Evaluating information](#)

[9.4 Misuse of online information](#)

[9.5 Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

CHAPTER 10 WRITING THE WAY 'THEY' WANT

[10.1 Getting to grips with writing](#)

[10.2 What are you meant to write?](#)

[10.3 Argument and structure](#)

[10.4 'Proper English'](#)

[10.5 Strong, clear writing](#)

[10.6 Using your own and other people's words](#)

[10.7 The academic way of writing](#)

[10.8 What is a good essay?](#)

[10.9 Review](#)

[References](#)

[CHAPTER 11 MANAGING THE WRITING PROCESS](#)

[11.1 The challenge of writing](#)

[11.2 Stages in the writing process](#)

[11.3 Expressing ideas in writing](#)

[11.4 Making your essay flow](#)

[11.5 The experience of writing](#)

[11.6 Taking control of writing](#)

[References](#)

[CHAPTER 12 PREPARING FOR EXAMINATIONS](#)

[12.1 The positive side of exams](#)

[12.2 Myths about exams](#)

[12.3 What to avoid](#)

[12.4 Revising for exams](#)

[12.5 Getting 'geared-up' just before the exam](#)

[12.6 Working out your tactics for the exam](#)

[12.7 Will you do yourself justice in the exam?](#)

[POSTSCRIPT](#)

[APPENDIX](#)

[ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS](#)

[NEXT STEPS](#)

PREFACE

This second edition of *The Good Study Guide* is much more than an update of the original. The whole book has been rethought and substantially rewritten. Piecemeal updating was never an option, given the book's use of integrated examples and the critical importance of coherence in the advice. Since nothing less than a complete overhaul was feasible, I have taken the opportunity not only to bring the book up to date, fifteen years on, but to strengthen it and widen its relevance.

Purpose

The Good Study Guide retains its primary purpose as a guide for students with a serious interest in the long-term development of their learning and study skills. It is not a source of quick fixes and instant remedies. It assumes a willingness to invest time in working on exercises and reflecting on them. It offers a thoughtful, theoretically grounded, exploration of the nature of studying and, at the same time, a practical guide to reflective experimentation with techniques, drawing as it does on many years of exploring skills with students.

Changes

The first edition of *The Good Study Guide* reached an audience far broader than the part-time, adult, distance-learning students for whom it was written. Consequently, this new edition has been recast to address the needs of *all students* aspiring to study beyond school-level. It has also been restructured to reflect the *sweeping changes in university study* over a decade and a half. Thus it now has *five more chapters* than before and has been organised into *two parts*. So, with the updating of *case material* and consequent reworking of all the study exercises, this is a long way towards being a new book. However, the basic strategy and underlying assumptions about the nature of learning remain.

Part 1: Studying intelligently

The first part of *The Good Study Guide* addresses the broad strategic aspects of successful study and consists of four new chapters. Three of these address one of the key changes of the past decade, the *relocating of study skills* from their former status on the periphery as 'remedial' activities for beginners, *to the mainstream* under the new marque 'learning skills'. Developing skills as a learner is now recognised as essential preparation for life in the twenty-first century. This is reflected in the title of Chapter 1: 'Investing in yourself'. These skills are not simply practical, but also strategic, requiring a capacity for self-management; hence Chapter 2: 'Taking control of your studies'. They are also 'reflective' skills, which depend on self-knowledge, self-analysis and an understanding of the learning process; thus Chapter 4: 'Understanding how you learn'. This chapter includes an introduction to the principles of critical-analytical reading and writing, reflecting growing recognition of the importance of supported entry into academic discourse for an increasingly diverse student body.

The other key change of recent times is the revolution in study practices brought about by *computers* and *the internet*. This is addressed in Chapter 3: 'Using a computer to study'. Students are often aware of only a few of the many ways they could use a computer to support their studies. This chapter, influenced by my own experiences of designing and teaching online courses, encourages students to explore and experiment. Meanwhile, the rest of the book has been reworked to reflect changes to basic study activities brought about by word-processing, global access to online information, electronic information storage, and the like. And *The Good Study Guide* is now accompanied by a website which students are directed for resources.

Part 2: The essential skills

The second part gets down to the practical business of developing skills in the core activities of studying. As in the original edition, readers are asked to undertake genuine study activities, most of them based around a single text. Though the former article on the growth of shopping centres remains remarkably relevant, it has been replaced by a new one: 'The Secrets of Happiness' by Richard Layard (2003). Generally the content of the original chapters remains, however, 'Making notes' has been separated off from 'Reading', to give it wider relevance and to allow exploration of electronic note-making. Also, the chapter formerly titled 'Other modes of learning' has been recast under the title 'Learning through talk', with extensive new material on group discussions and making presentations. In 'Working with numbers and charts', as well as updating the data, students are introduced to online data sources. Then there is a new chapter, 'Researching online', introducing the basics of searching for online resources.

The two chapters on writing remain the longest and perhaps the most important, since the acquisition of an academic writing voice and the ability to assemble material and present it in the form of an argument is in many ways the culmination of the transition into competent academic practice. Retitled, as 'Writing the way 'they' want' and 'Managing the writing process', they retain the same broad division into the 'what' and 'how' of academic writing. However, the first has been completely reorganised to make the treatment more transparent and accessible. Both take advantage of resources on the Good Study Guide website (www.goodstudyguide.co.uk), to simplify exercises that were previously rather cumbersome. The final chapter, 'Preparing for an exam', is the least changed, though again there is reworking.

I have assumed that many readers will be starting studies at post-school level. However, students in the later years of schooling may find the book useful preparation for the switch to higher level studies. Equally students who have progressed beyond the entry stages of a degree will find much to reflect on. I can say that, many years on from student days, working on the book has reminded me of skills needed to hone.

Assumptions about computing

I have assumed that all readers will have at least some access to a computer and to the internet. Many will already be using a computer for routine study tasks, while others will be looking for advice on ways in which they might profitably switch to computer-based working.

This book has an accompanying website (www.goodstudyguide.co.uk). This is intended to be used as a kind of service centre. At various points in the book, readers are prompted to download resources in order to work on them in activities.

Updating of references

The internet has made the task of keeping references up to date much more challenging. We will post an annually updated list of references on the website.

Terms used

Because the original *Good Study Guide* was used in schools, colleges and campus universities, I have dropped the use of specific Open University terminology and adopted more general terms. However, one or two are somewhat awkward. For example, I have avoided the term 'lecturer', on account of its narrow connotations, even though it is the typical descriptor of a teacher's post. And I have used 'tutor' only in the context of discussion groups, because its usage varies institutionally. Instead, I have used 'teacher' throughout - echoing usage in, for example, The Institute for Learning and *Teaching* Higher Education.

Personal acknowledgements

The original edition of this book benefited enormously from the comments of Open University colleagues and students, and now the same is true all over again of the new edition. So, it is important that I include all those acknowledged in the original addition, before adding the recent ones.

For support with the original book, I must thank all the members of the D103 Foundation Course Team, who read drafts and gave detailed advice: in particular Marilyn Ricci, James Anderson, David Coates and Elaine Storkey. Then there were the members of the 'tutor panels', who undertook heroic assignments of rapid reading and commentary: Lyn Brennan, Alan Brown, Ian Crosher, Donna Dickinson, Norma Sherratt, Jan Vance, Mona Clark, Phil Markey and Brian Graham. Also, thanks to Chris Wooldridge, who as editor gave painstaking attention to the all-important details. Finally, Ellen Chambers of the Open University's Institute of Educational Technology who not only read and appraised every word of every draft, but as my partner made family life bearable for all of us.

For this new edition I am indebted to the production team for their unflagging support over a long period: Mick Jones, Corinne De Souza, Maureen Richards, Deb Bywater, Sara Mills, Elizabeth Rowell-Tinsley and Linda Camborne-Paynter. And again I received invaluable advice from colleagues who read draft chapters and provided detailed commentaries: Ann Allen, Chris Baker, Sally Baker, Lorna Burton-Pye, Terry di Paolo, Paula Faller, Lynne Fisher, Ingrid Jefferys, Wendy Martin, Karen Miller, Gill Needham, Jo Parker, Jenny Pearce, Lucy Rai, Pam Read, Katie Sainsbury, Kate Stilliard, Ravin Talbot, and especially Fiona Harkes, who not only read and commented on everything but also provided extensive consultation by telephone. Kathleen Calder as editor worked tirelessly to achieve clarity, consistency and accessibility, and once again Ellie Chambers read and advised on every word as well as providing support in every other way. I am also grateful to students of the Birmingham Reachout project at Northfield and Newtown, who read the Richard Layard article and gave me their reaction; in particular those at Northfield who also wrote essays for me to use in the book and whose names are in the list below. Thanks too to Marion Bowl and Peta Wymer for making this possible. And thanks to the students who completed my questionnaire asking for their reflections on the learning process and to those who agreed to let me quote their online messages. (Note that names which appear in the book itself are fictional.) The following students of various institutions contributed in one way or another: Billy Anderson, Lorna Archibald, Shirley Bain, Gillian Brewin, Shona Brydson, Jacqui Campbell, Janice Clerk, Jo Chandler, Roseann Cooper, Lesley Dickinson, Ceil Edwards, Ceri Evans, Suzie Eaton, Carol Ferguson, Nicky Gane, Julie Gibbins, Gwyneth Girling, Simon Harris-Dack, Melanie Harvey, Hayley Hill, Gillian Howie, Patricia Jordan, Matthew Lane, Nicola Lloyd, Pauline Knox, Tracy Mogridge, Shirley Moody, Sophie Nichol, Charlotte Northedge, Laura Northedge, Shona Paterson, Tracy Reynolds, Angela Parker, Jan Reis, Janie Richter, Chris Robinson, Kelda Sinclair, Tina Smith, David Shortall, Diane Sloey, Peter Staffell, Ann-Marie Stewart, Deirdre Stewart, Mandy Sutch, Stella Taylor, Matthew Thompson, Jennie Tomlinson, Laura Ward, Ruth Webb, Gail White, Julie Williams, Pepe Wilson and Correne Witchard.

Finally, I am grateful to Richard Layard for permission to use his article as a basis for study exercises.

Andrew Northedge

STUDENT VOICES

You will see quotations from students scattered about the book. These are largely taken from Open University internet chat areas, with the permission of the students. They are intended to offer information, reflection and light relief - a kind of background chorus of those up to their arms in the toils and triumphs of study. They are simply dropped in where relevant and signalled by italics. The names of contributors are acknowledged above.

- [download online **The Tyranny of E-mail: The Four-Thousand-Year Journey to Your Inbox**](#)
- [download online Who Was Martin Luther King, Jr.?](#)
- [read online Raising My Rainbow: Adventures in Raising a Fabulous, Gender Creative Son online](#)
- [read Had a Glass 2015: Top 100 Wines Under \\$20 for free](#)
- [download Rage \(Courtney Family: Second Sequence, Book 3\)](#)
- **El elemento book**

- <http://thewun.org/?library/The-Tyranny-of-E-mail--The-Four-Thousand-Year-Journey-to-Your-Inbox.pdf>
- <http://www.uverp.it/library/Who-Was-Martin-Luther-King--Jr--.pdf>
- <http://metromekanik.com/ebooks/The-Road-to-Gandolfo.pdf>
- <http://www.freightunlocked.co.uk/lib/Refuse-to-Choose---A-Revolutionary-Program-for-Doing-Everything-That-You-Love.pdf>
- <http://tuscalaural.com/library/Rage--Courtney-Family--Second-Sequence--Book-3-.pdf>
- <http://deltaphenomics.nl/?library/Hornblower---Beat-to-Quarters--The-Happy-Return-.pdf>