

**Blog – February 2022**

## **Ready...Steady...Go!**



Having recently received an email reminding me to book my graduation portrait sitting, I suddenly felt an overwhelming feeling of the Imposter Syndrome<sup>1</sup>. I mused this topic with my fellow classmates during a zoom breakout group and I found I was not alone! The fact that we are on the last few credits of an entire degree seemed to be a cause of much tension rather than relief. The fear of failure at the last hurdle is irrational. The fact that I've managed to juggle family, work and studies whilst achieved good grades for the past 3.5 years, just does not register as the foremost thought. That is why I cannot bring myself to book my photo session where I don a cap and gown and hold an imaginary diploma until I feel that my final projects are mostly done!

Whether you started as a transfer student, mature or part-time student in January, last September or you are half-way through your degree, its important to remember that the whole experience is much like a marathon. You ready yourself at the start line, eager to get going and full of energy. The main part of the race is more like all the years of study (the blurry bit) when you feel like you will never see the finish line. Once the finish line is in sight, you feel a sense of relief and disbelief that you managed to make it. It is the blurry bit I want to talk about. We don't think about it as much as we should, but ultimately, in the marathon, it is the crowds that cheer you on, provide you with refreshments and medical assistance that play a crucial role in your final finish line moment.

Consider this support crowd as the resources available to you at York. Whichever stage you're at, it's important to focus on the upcoming steps to make sure you are fully in control of your academic journey. To get you started, let's talk about the Reading Week (21-25 Feb). An important pause to help you catch-up on homework, readings, and self-care. **Raven Lovering** from [Learning Skills Services](#) (LSS) shares her 5 tips to stay on track over reading week:

1. **Be Realistic:** Use SMART goals to create your action plan to tackle your course work over the break. Make sure your goals are task-based and follow the SMART model: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic/relevant, and time-based. Sometimes we try to condense too much work into a short period of time, and it can be very disappointing to be let down by performance-based goals. Listen to your strengths and limitations and create set of realistic goals to complete your tasks.
2. **Rest & Recharge:** Reading week is also to rest and take care of our mental health. It can be very draining to only study, so take the time to do something that makes you happy and gives you the energy you need to work on your courses.
3. **Read:** Catch up on readings you may have fallen behind on or take the opportunity to get ahead on a reading or two to lighten your workload after the break. Don't forget to [read actively](#) and take-notes.
4. **Review:** Review upcoming deadlines and notes you have taken already this term. Using spaced practice to review your notes will help you to retain and understand information long-term, this means reviewing in small study sessions over a longer period instead of reviewing everything at once last-minute.
5. **Access Resources:** Remember, you are not alone in your learning! York has many resources to support you as you find out how you learn best and balance academics with your personal life.

Another important milestone to consider is the summer term. I did not take any summer credits in my first year, but when I did, I realised it really helped me manage my workload in the fall/winter terms as I had fewer subjects to take. The summer courses can be intense (6 or 9 credit courses are condensed) so you might have 2 lectures a week. However, if it works in your schedule, then why not! You need to also pay attention to whether the course is S1 (1<sup>st</sup> semester - May-June), S2 (2<sup>nd</sup> semester – June-Aug) or SU (whole summer). Detailed summer dates can be found [here](#). Important to note, that your enrolment date is unique to you and depends on your year of study as well as faculty. You can see your enrolment time under “[my online services](#)” page in your profile.

When planning your courses, Raven recommends visiting the [LSS website](#) which will help guide you to specific resources they have such as “How do I manage by time in university?” or “How do I do all the readings & take good notes?”. You can also check out their online [Time Management Activity](#) which features great practical handouts for planning your term. It is also important to speak to your [academic advisor](#) for specific guidance around your degree requirements. If you are LA&PS student, ACMAPS and LA&PS Advising are holding a workshop on the (28<sup>th</sup> Feb) [Transitioning into 2nd Year \(for Faculty of LAPS Mature/PT/Transfer students\)](#) so do register ahead of time. As always, check out the full list of academic and well-being events for transfer and mature students that we do in collaboration with our campus partners [HERE](#)

Oh, and if you are like me and wrapping up your degree, do book that photo session and most importantly don't forget to [apply to graduate](#) by 1<sup>st</sup> March for the June convocation!

A special thank you to Raven for her contribution to this blog!

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