LECTURES AND TUTORIALS

Lectures and tutorials are the main, on-campus ways of learning about your subject at university. They provide golden opportunities for you to meet staff and students and to ask questions.

THE LECTURE

In most cases, the lecturer presents an overview of key issues. These provide good pointers to the important topics you should target in your reading. Lecturers will provide current examples and instructions on preparing for assessment items. Normally, they will initiate discussion and ask questions to encourage you to be actively involved in the lecture. Where possible, use this opportunity to clarify any points you do not fully understand.

Lectures are used to:

1. provide a logical structure in which the significant course topics are covered;
2. provide raw material and information that you can utilise in your course studies;
3. explain key concepts;
4. introduce the most recent research about a topic;
5. indicate where to find further information;
6. explain and discuss complex or controversial issues; and
7. offer practical advice on how to complete tasks including assessment.

What is the key to making good lecture notes?

Find a balance between writing everything that is said and writing notes that are so sketchy that they fail to make sense in the long term. The skill of taking notes lies in the ability to separate main ideas from details. Note the former, and simply listen to the latter.

How effective are you in taking lecture notes?

- After a week or two of taking notes try the following survey to assess how well you are doing.

1. I prepared for the lecture by reading assigned texts and reviewing notes from the previous lecture.	Yes	No
2. I dated the notes.	Yes	No
3. I listened actively by deliberately sitting where I could concentrate on the speaker.	Yes	No
4. I deliberately listened for and noted the lecture topic and title.	Yes	No
5. I wrote more notes than were given in the handout or provided on the PowerPoint.	Yes	No
6. The subtopics and headings of the lecture are easily identified in my own lecture notes.	Yes	No
7. I left space between ideas and topics so it is easy to identify where new topics were introduced.	Yes	No
8. I included examples and significant details to help make the lecture concepts clearer.	Yes	No
9. I organized my notes so that it is easy to identify how details relate to main ideas.	Yes	No
10. I added transitional phrases and sentences that help show how ideas are related.	Yes	No
11. I wrote neatly and tidily to make the notes easy to study later.	Yes	No
12. I edited the notes for accuracy and legibility after the lecture.	Yes	No
13. I actively reviewed my notes later by mapping them to the course or topic objectives.	Yes	No
14. I reviewed the notes and added further questions related to the title, each major topic or heading, and each term that was important to the lecture.	Yes	No

If you have more No's than Yes's find out how to get more out of your lecture through effective notetaking @ http://www.usq.edu.au/learningcentre/alsonline/lecttuts/notes.htm See also QUICK TIP FOR STUDENTS on NOTE TAKING.

THE TUTORIAL

Tutorials comprise a small group of students and a staff member. Their purpose is to review the subject matter for that week in an interactive manner. You may raise questions with your tutor, and clarify confusing issues. Tutorials provide opportunities to explore examples and attempt practice questions. It is common for students to be asked to lead part of a tutorial session, and there may be tutorial tasks that are assessed. The same purposes and principles of interaction operate for tutorial groups conducted online.

Tutorials provide opportunities to:

- discuss course material in depth;

- debate and discuss issues informally;
- develop and practice the application of course concepts;
- ask for help or clarification; and
- get to know other students and staff.

In tutorials, staff expect students to:

- attend all course tutorials and be fully prepared;
- identify which parts of the course content they find difficult;
- ask for examples concerning difficult ideas or concepts;
- offer their own ideas and opinions;
- challenge ideas with evidence;
- encourage each other to speak and participate and not dominate discussions; and
- listen actively and attentively.

Check your own effectiveness in tutorials

Use the template to assess your tutorial participation in the first week or two of the semester.

1.	Did I prepare sufficiently for the tutorial?	Yes	No
2.	Did I make contributions during the session?	Yes	No
3.	Were my questions and comments relevant to the discussion?	Yes	No
4.	Did I listen to, and consider, points raised by other people?	Yes	No
5.	Was I encouraging to the main speaker and others?	Yes	No
6.	Did I take relevant notes and references?	Yes	No
7.	Did I keep my attention or get distracted?	Yes	No
8.	Did I make contributions to the whole group or simply my neighbor?	Yes	No
9.	Am I clear about what to do for the next tutorial?	Yes	No

If you have more No's than Yes's talk with a Learning Centre tutor about how to get more out of your tutorials.

RESOURCES

- Other QUICK TIPS FOR STUDENTS   http://www.usq.edu.au/learningcentre/tips.htm

- Online resources on ALSonline
  http://www.usq.edu.au/learningcentre/alsonline/lecttuts/tuts.htm

- Talk with a tutor at The Learning Centre (tlc@usq.edu.au)

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