



How to balance
Part-time work,
Studies &
Student Life

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Introduction

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We've designed the following resource to help support your wellbeing while you're working, studying, and surviving student life. None of what follows is career, legal, or financial advice.

We acknowledge that everyone will have different experiences and needs when it comes to paid work. Some of you may be balancing additional responsibilities, such as being a parent or having caring responsibilities, and others of you may be providing financial support to family members. Perhaps you don't have other forms of financial support, and so working is your main or only source of funds. Others of you may be only looking for work that directly aligns with your career aspirations. Take the advice that makes sense for you and leave what doesn't.

Please refer to the support resources at the end of this document, or the linked resources throughout this document for more information.

Managing work

Where to find work

If you're looking for work, here are a few places you could look:

- [Career Connect](#) - the University's platform where work locally and further afield is advertised.
- [Union website](#) for Union jobs - we advertise our part time roles on our website, from internships to bars and catering roles.
- [Indeed](#) - This can be a good site for finding work, though you may find that you need to apply via the company's website directly rather than through indeed.
- [Totaljobs](#) - Like Indeed, this is a good repository to find work, but you may have to actually apply through other means.
- [S1 jobs](#) - This site is specifically for finding work in Scotland.
- [GoodMoves](#) - This site specifically advertises work in the Scottish charity sector.
- Shop/restaurant windows and websites - A classic, but sometimes retail places do post their advertisements in their windows or on their own websites.

Your Rights

Students with visas: Please note that international students with visas cannot work or volunteer more than 20hrs per week in semester time (though you can work full time during the holidays). In addition, you cannot be self-employed. You can find out more from [UKCISA](#).

If you're 18 and over

- **Rest breaks:** If you work more than a 6hr shift, you are legally entitled to a break of at least 20 minutes during the day. You may be given more than this, check your contract.
- **Time between shifts:** You are entitled to 11hrs off work between shifts. For example, your Monday shift could end at 7pm, and you would not legally be allowed to go on another shift until 6am on Tuesday.

If you're under 18

- **Rest breaks:** You can't normally work more than 8hrs per day. If you work more than 4.5hrs on your shift, you're entitled to a 30-minute break during the day.

- **Time between shifts:** You should usually be entitled to 12hrs between one shift ending and another beginning, though there are exceptions based on your industry.

For more generally about working rights, please refer to [Citizens Advice Scotland](#).

Your contract

Read your contract and check for:

- Working hour expectations
- Probation period if relevant
- Pay
- Sick pay
- Holidays and holiday pay
- Notice periods if you wish to leave your job
- Anything about recognised trade unions

Where to get help if you need it

If the offer is too good to be true, it probably is. Sadly, recruitment fraud happens, with people claiming to be from an agency that will get you a job. They will ask you for money, perhaps to pay for admin. You should never give money or your bank details in this situation. You can find out more about job scams on the [UK Government website](#), and from [JobsAware](#) who have information on avoiding scams when looking for work.

Refer to [Citizens' Advice Scotland](#) if you are concerned about whether your rights are being protected.

Develop your CV

Make a list of any work or volunteering experience you've had to date, how long you worked there for, and core responsibilities. Also include relevant education and certifications. This will form your 'Master CV' which will be a record of your experience and qualifications from recent years. You will use this document as your base for each new CV or job application you write.

Tailor your CV to the different types of job you're applying for e.g. hospitality and retail, internships, research positions. In these area specific CVs, only include the most relevant experience and qualifications/certifications.

Make sure your spelling and grammar is good (get a friend to check it over for you if you need). Be mindful of using AI in your applications, as some companies you are applying for may have guidance on the extent to which they allow it.

Once you're in work

Check your payslip every month to be sure you've been paid properly. You may receive this physically, via email, or through an online portal. Your payslip must show:

- Gross pay: Your pay before any deductions (tax, National Insurance, or workplace pension) are taken off.
- Net pay: Your pay after deductions are removed as above.
- Hours worked in that period

Managing your studies

Academic support

The Library have several online guides that may help:

- [Getting critical](#)
- [Planning your essay](#)
- [Reading and making notes](#)
- [Time management](#)

The Library have a page on [referencing and citation](#) which will help you find out how to reference no matter which style you are required to use

If you are an undergraduate, you might want to take on the [Academic Skills Project](#) which is intended to help you gain subject-specific study skills. Workshops have previously covered topics like exam preparation, acting on feedback, and analysing sources.

Postgraduate taught students can access [MSkills](#) which offers workshops that will help you with your studies. Academic workshops cover things like critical thinking, academic writing, and writing reports. Postgraduate research students can access [GRADskills workshops](#) which are designed to help you with aspects of your research/studies, and should also help with your employability post-study.

Study tips

You will find a way of working and studying that's best for you. If you need some general suggestions though, luckily for you, we have some below:

- Make a study planner so you set aside plenty of time to study for different exams, complete assignments, and prepare for tutorials.
- Take breaks so that you give your brain time to switch off. Breaks can actually help you think through problems, take information in, and help you be more creative. Your needs will be different, but a good rule of thumb is a 10-minute break for every hour worked, and a longer break after two hours. You could also use things like a [pomodoro timer](#) to help.
- Mix it up if you're feeling uninspired, especially if you've been studying flat out or you feel like every day's the same. Take a different approach, such as working in a different location, studying with friends, or trying a different study technique.
- Finding what works for you will take trial and error. Try things like mind maps, listening to relevant podcasts, deep reading and annotation, practical application, practice exam questions, and working alone or with friends.
- Set yourself some realistic goals for your work sessions, such as completing a required reading, formalising an essay plan, or finishing your notes from a lecture.
- Use the support available from the University, such as reviewing their content on [developing your study skills](#).

Check your emails regularly

You need to check your emails at least once a day, so you don't miss out on updates and information, such as any changes to classes or assignments. We know some of you find it difficult or anxiety-inducing to check your emails, especially if you're having academic difficulties, but we promise you that keeping ware of what's happening will make things easier, and you'll be able to take action sooner if need be.

Speak to academic staff

If you're unsure about assignments or academic content, please speak to an academic member of staff for support, either by speaking to them after class, attending office hours, or sending them an email.

Tell them there is an issue at the earliest opportunity. Staff are there to support you, but they can't do that if you don't tell them there's a problem!

If you've had feedback on assignments that you don't understand, speak to staff and ask questions. Then, you can use this feedback to make your next piece of work even better.

Extensions

Extensions are there as a tool to help if you are facing difficulties, such as short-term illness or personal life issues. You can find out more depth about extensions generally in the University's [FAQs](#).

The University is beginning to acknowledge part time work as a valid extenuating circumstance. But this is not always guaranteed. If you would like to request an extension, contact your module coordinator as soon as possible, and submit a [self-certificate](#) on MySaint.

Disability support and reasonable adjustments

The support and adjustments available to you will depend on your exact circumstances. Student Services have developed some [online guides](#) that explain some of the support you may be eligible for if you have a disability.

Please speak to the Disability Team to explore your options. You can do this by:

- Using this [online form](#)
- Emailing: Disability@st-andrews.ac.uk

Advice & Advocacy

Our Advocacy & Advice Service can help you with academic issues, such as academic appeals, progression, Fitness to Practice, and Entry to Honours. Find out more about what they do on the [Union website](#), and get in touch by emailing UnionAdvocacy@st-andrews.ac.uk.

Managing everything

Plan your time

Make sure you know when your classes, deadlines, and exams and revision periods are. Plan your week (or two weeks) in advance once you have your work shifts. Block in your time for things like:

- Studying and doing your assignments
- Time with friends/family
- Self-care (walks, gym, time in nature, doing fun stuff, rest)
- Life admin (medical appointments, food shop, other errands)
- Volunteering, student representation, or society responsibilities

Do not overcommit yourself

This may be easier said than done, especially if you have other responsibilities on top of work and study, like being a student representative, or caring responsibilities. Try and say "no" to things when you feel yourself becoming overburdened (this may be easier for some of you than for others).

Make time for you a priority.

Prioritise sleep

Getting enough sleep is essential to feeling your best. Good quality sleep helps your body to recover, improves your mental wellbeing, and helps you think more clearly. Find out more about the benefits of sleep from the [Sleep Foundation](#).

Some people have periodic difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep. These issues can be improved by implementing good 'sleep hygiene' such as having a calming bedtime routine, making your bedroom quiet and dark so you're not disturbed by light or noise, or reducing caffeine in the afternoon (sorry).

If you have persistent issues with sleep, talk to your GP. You may also find NHS Inform's [sleep problems & insomnia self-help guide](#) useful. Similarly, you may find [Sleepio](#) helps. This is a free app which is designed to support people who are dealing with insomnia, using a CBT style approach.

Get organised

Time blocking is where you set out chunks of time for specific tasks/jobs. If you've ever made a study planner before, it's like that! For example, you might have a 6hr shift at work, 2hrs planned for downtime afterwards, 3hrs to study, and 4hrs with your friends. Book in time for self-care, time with friends, exercise, events, and studying around your other commitments. See an example calendar below:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
08:00-09:00	Gym	Gym			Gym
09:00-10:00	Class		Class	Assignment	Study
10:00-11:00	Class	Class	Study	Assignment	Assignment
11:00-12:00	Study	Class	Assignment	Study	Assignment
12:00-13:00	Study	Self-care	Assignment	Class	Self-care
13:00-14:00	Class	Shift		Class	Self-care
14:00-15:00	Study	Shift	Sport		Shift
15:00-16:00	Study	Shift	Sport	Study	Shift
16:00-17:00	Study	Shift	Sport	Life admin	Shift
17:00-18:00	See friends	Shift	Sport	Life admin	Shift
18:00-19:00	See friends	Shift		See friends	Shift
19:00-20:00	See friends	Self-care	Study	See friends	Shift
20:00-21:00	See friends	Self-care	Study	See friends	Self-care

Keep your calendar up to date, making sure that your online calendar is correct with your classes, exams, deadlines, work shifts, and other responsibilities. You can set alerts so that you are reminded where you need to be in advance so that you don't forget. You can also use a physical diary if that helps you.

5 Ways to Wellbeing

You may be familiar with the “5 Ways to Wellbeing” model, which can be a helpful way to think about supporting your wellbeing and happiness.

The 5 ways are:

- Connect with others
- Be active
- Learn something new
- Give back
- Be present

Connect with others

- It can be difficult to make friends and connections at university, or to find the time to spend with people who light you up. To help with this element of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing, you could:
- Prioritise time spent with people you care about.
- Call loved ones back home or who live away from you.
- Say hi to cashiers in shops (even just “hi, how’s your day?” can help you feel connected.
- Meet new people by joining societies or attending events.

Be active

Physical activity will be different for everyone, so find ways of moving that feel good to you such as:

- Going for a walk (maybe even going on one of Dog Walking Society’s walks!)
- Swimming safely in the sea or at the leisure centre
- Dancing
- Going to the gym
- Trying something new at Saints Sport
- Going to one of Yoga Society’s classes

Learn something new

Try new things like a new art form, a different sport, take up a new hobby, watch a film in a language you’re unfamiliar with. attend events for language and culture societies. Don’t be afraid to try something new, or to be bad at it to begin with. You don’t have to be amazing at everything to enjoy it.

Give back

This is about giving back to your community or acts of kindness. For example, you could volunteer in your community through [SVS](#), donate to charity shops, help other people out, do a random act of kindness for a friend. It doesn’t need to be complicated or expensive.

Be present

Being in the present moment can be difficult when you have many mental tabs open. The good news is that this can be something you get better at over time, by regularly practising mindfulness activities, or sitting somewhere beautiful and taking it all in. Find your favourite St Andrews beach and take notice of things you can see, hear, feel, and smell. Walk along the Lade Braes walk and enjoy some of the peace and quiet you can find when you leave the three streets.

Support Services

Academic issues

Speak to your adviser of studies, module coordinator, or dissertation/thesis supervisor if you are having academic issues, such as worries about coursework, not understanding course content and expectations, or difficulties meeting deadlines. If you need study tips, you can use resources from IELLI (formerly CEED). Find out more about support for undergraduates, postgraduate taught students, and postgraduate research students.

If you are facing difficulties with your studies, such as Academic Alerts or you are seeking to make an academic appeal, reach out to the Union's Advocacy & Advice Service.

Work issues

If you are looking for work or are looking to improve your applications, you could check the Careers Centre website.

If you are concerned about how you are being treated at your workplace, you may find online advice from or speaking with Citizens Advice Scotland helpful.

Wellbeing issues

If you are facing other wellbeing issues, from mental health to money to disability, please reach out to Student Services, and read their online guides.

Your School's Wellbeing Officer can provide you with signposting if you are having difficulties (though they are not qualified to deliver initiatives like counselling).

If you would prefer to get wellbeing support outside of the University, you could speak to Samaritans, Breathing Space, or your GP.

If you are facing difficulties accessing food, you may wish to consider using the Campus Larder, which is based in the Union, with a no questions asked policy. You can also refer to the Cost of Living Guide for other options on food access.

Financial issues

Within the University

The Money Advice Team can help with various financial issues, including looking for monetary support, bank account issues, and scholarships. You can request an appointment through this link. They may be able to help you access discretionary funding too.

Scholarships and bursaries are available for different levels of study, country of residence, and your academic discipline. Scholarships can provide an additional layer of financial support, if you are eligible.

Outside the University

Citizens Advice Scotland is a good resource for different issues, including money and the cost of living.

If you are dealing with debt, such as on credit cards or so-called 'buy now pay later' schemes, there are so many resources that are there to support you, without judgement. Please note, this does not apply to debt in terms of tuition fees or maintenance loans, these are dealt with differently, and you only need to worry about these after you graduate and earn a certain amount. You can reach out to organisations such as StepChange, Debtline, and Citizens Advice Scotland.

Other resources, including how to get support from your bank, are linked in the Cost of Living Guide.