

Become an expert juggler!

“ I signed up for my degree as I turned 50, full of hope & enthusiasm, not having studied properly for some time.

Make the most of getting to grips with the course & its requirements in the first year, they go fairly easy on you & it doesn't count towards your end marks. Year two is much more intense.

Every submission I would promise myself I would be better prepared, more organised and do the work as I went along... usually manage the reading & prep for next sessions but writing assignments are always last minute.com & make sure you use extensions, they give you the **breathing space** when something inevitably goes wrong when you're a juggler!

Staff are knowledgeable & understanding of issues, CELT, the Library & Student Support are all invaluable sources of help. **Use what's available to you!** I would not have been able to submit an assignment last week if it hadn't been for the people in CELT working out how to transfer something from my laptop to my written work.

Sometimes events/life/crises take over & you might need to halt your studies - I had to intercalate to spend time with my terminally ill mother & deal with the aftermath. **We're human, not superhuman.** Be kind to yourself and accept that occasionally you're not an expert juggler & you need to look after your own mental health whilst trying to keep everything going!

Like others have said, when I've had disappointing marks I've reflected that considering everything we've done well to go to lectures, record & understand information & produce something half decent at the end!

Good luck! ”



Don't give up!

“ I started thinking I'd do a year, if that, on a foundation degree and 3 years later, I'm still here and complete my teacher training in December! I'm 42 and this experience has actually made me feel younger (but more tired!).

My advice would be to **always go to the lecturer you get on best with** as it'll make you feel more comfortable. **Swap numbers with other students**, set up FB or WhatsApp chats. They are a great support as you're all going through the same emotions.

Remember a pass is a pass and do not beat yourself up about any lower grades you might get. You can't ace them all (or none in my case!). **It gets easier** and you won't believe you'll miss the challenge and work of an essay when it's over - that's a weird feeling.

Never stress, **there's always someone there to listen and help**. Oh and **talk to the librarians**. They're so lovely and enjoy a challenging reference find. Always renew your books on the BB app. Get into the habit of doing it every week regardless, to avoid hefty fines.

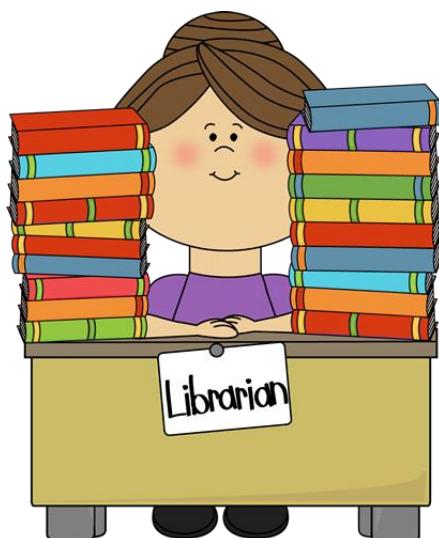
Don't compare grades with your fellow students.

Do go to graduation, it's amazing.

Don't use contractions in your essays.

Do take a walk around campus when the sun is shining.

Do feel rightfully proud of yourself! ”



Plan things out!!!

“Honestly, the worry of being able to get back into education and writing essays was huge for a large number of mature students I have spoken to, as well as for myself. But by the 2nd or 3rd month, everyone was starting to get quite comfortable with it.

The big thing that I've heard brought up time and again is how busy people are with jobs and kids, and all the other wonderful things we have to deal with 😊 SO my advice would be to **organise your finances on Excel**, use the **calendar section of Outlook**, and **download Office to your phone** so it becomes your day planner. Anything along those lines, CELT has a lot of helpful info about these as does student advice.

All the people I know that have done these little things are enjoying themselves that little bit more than the people who are trying to keep it all in their heads.

But good luck and hope you have fun!! ”



Office



Learn to make a case!

“ Think about essays as a form of legal argument and NOT a story. You need all the evidence you can to support your case, from different books, journals, and articles etc. Then play devil’s advocate to try and see if there are any flaws in your arguments and adapt them accordingly.

The stronger and more compelling your case, the higher the mark. Once you ‘get’ that and the notion that it is more about ‘understanding’ than raw knowledge, you are halfway there. All that is left is to word it according to the standards in the orange APA 6 booklet. Presentations are basically an oral essay.

Oh... buy/read the ‘how to write an essay’ books beforehand and invest in a small electronic voice recorder. I defy anybody to listen to a 4 hour lecture and take it all in! ”



Stick at it!

“ I am early 40s and decided last year to go and do a degree. It was an easy decision, but when I started it was overwhelming. **What am I doing? I'm too old! There won't be anyone my age!** I won't have time, I work, I have kids, how am I going to fit it all in?

All these thoughts went through my head. I arrived and met others my age, **I asked questions and asked again.** I became friends with students that were half my age. I found that university was my time, **my time to shine and develop and learn** and I was not just a mum or wife, **I became me again.**

I have nearly finished my first year; it was not easy, in fact at times I wanted to quit but I stuck at it and found that I could actually do it!

Top tips... **read** as much as you can when you can, **start essays early**, go to as many **CELT support sessions** as you can and **ask for help**, no matter how daft you think the question is.

Everyone is lovely, I've made some fab friends and **I don't feel like the old one in my lectures.** I know when the younger students have accepted me when I get a whole load of Facebook requests.

Good luck! ”



Our students say...

Go for it!

“ At 51 I was finally told I had dyslexia just before coming on the course. I left school with 3 O Levels and I never thought I was going to be at University. I really worried that everyone else would be so much more able than me.

Fast forward and I'm still here, nearly one year on and I love it!! The staff at the university are great! I really enjoy talking to all the students and then you realise that everyone - no matter what their age - has similar doubts to you. I **don't notice the age gap anymore**, we all just mix together. It's well worth it!!! ”

Our students say...

You're not the only one!

“ Starting uni as a mature student, do not get yourself stressed over whether you will fit in or whether you should have applied. I had these thoughts and feelings but I **was not the only one** and that's what I want you to remember - if you have those feelings of self doubt or worry about coming to uni later in life, **trust me so is the majority of the room.**

It's wonderful here at BG, everyone is friendly, the tutors are fab, and all the younger students are just as worried as us! 😂 ”



Our students say...

Be realistic!

“ It is an intense course and academic writing is like nothing you have written before. It is worth going to see CELT and study skills for hand outs to help write your assignment.

There are three modules running simultaneously and deadlines are often close together, so **being organised** is important. **Be realistic** with your time and make a planner or timetable to help keep you on track.

Believe in yourself - you have got this. ”

Our students say...

Ask for help!

“ Do not be afraid to **ask for help** if you need it (even if you think it's silly). Literally everybody in the university is there to help you do your best and **everyone wants to see you succeed**. Ask your course mates too because we had a lot of discussions outside of the class room that were really insightful! ”

Our students say...

Get ahead!

“ It is harder than you think it will be! And academic writing is like no other writing you have done before!

I would tell myself to do assignments **well before the deadline** and read 'how to' books to support with writing in this way before starting the course! ”

Our students say...

“Pursue topics that interest you (rather than what you think would be ‘best’ to write about) because it’s a lot more enjoyable if you do.”

“I was worried about being the oldest on my course and how that would make me feel when I started but honestly, in lectures and seminars, I don’t notice the age difference and everyone treats each other equally.”

“Start your reading ASAP and give yourself a schedule for reading and research because it takes a lot longer than you think it’s going to! Good luck! (You can do this!)”

“I am mid 20s and I love my time here at BGU. The staff are lovely, lovely facilities, and everyone is so nice. Go for it!!”

“You might be feeling anxious now, but it’s going to be a great experience! I have so much more confidence, I honestly wish I could start all over again and give a different subject a go!”

“Use a printed copy of the referencing guidelines. It’s so much easier to use that way, and everyone gets given one at the start of term.”

“Hardest and best thing I ever did for myself. You can do this! Go for it. Absolutely need to be as organised as you possibly can. From the queen of procrastination please start your essays early!”

