

Tips for dealing with writing problems

This document will provide you with several tips that could help you deal with writing problems.

Stimulate your writing process

- Practice your writing by doing exercises like making mind maps, writing short texts or keeping a diary
- Write down your initial ideas and take notes that you can expand upon later
- Form a writing group and write together
- Don't immediately delete what you have written and only start correcting a text after you have finished an entire paragraph

Expand your knowledge

- Look up information about scientific papers and the corresponding requirements (like the topic, outline, basic literature, structure, size of the paper and when/how you are supposed to turn it in)
- Get in contact with your supervisor and keep them in the loop about your developments
- Polish your writing skills by reading self-help books and working with the worksheets provided by the faculties
- Ask for feedback on what you have written
- Read other scientific papers and familiarize yourself with the structure

Improve your time management

- Set realistic goals and divide up the work in specifically defined steps
- Draw up a schedule for the coming day, week and month
- Allow for buffer periods, in case something unexpected happens
- Create realistic to-do lists and work through them step by step
- Write down what has to be done the next day after finishing a writing phase
- Figure out at what time of day you are most productive and plan accordingly: Tasks like grocery shopping, cleaning and sending emails can be done during less productive periods

Work more efficiently

- Take regular and well-timed breaks - the length of each break depends on how much time you have spent working before that
- Keep your workplace tidy and only use it when working
- Eliminate all distractions (turning off the sound on your phone helps!)
- Make sure you can easily and quickly find everything you need while writing

Motivate yourself

- Reward yourself for finishing certain tasks
- Look to friends and family for emotional support
- Write down what you want to achieve by writing (like "I want to get my diploma").

Make time for relaxation

- Make sure to take care of your body by eating healthy food, drinking enough, getting enough sleep and exercising regularly.
- Meet up with friends and family and plan other activities to achieve a healthy work-life balance.
- Take some time out of your day to really relax (by doing relaxation exercises, for instance)
- Find out what is causing stress and try to minimize those factors

Reduce self-doubt and develop realistic expectations

- Lower unfeasible expectations
- Don't strive for perfection immediately and have the courage to write a rough draft first
- Focus on positive aspects and build from them ("What is going well?")
- Recognize and acknowledge all steps in the right direction