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How do you stay motivated?

You enter the University in high spirits and motivated for your new study, no doubt planning to make your study a success. Motivation is the keyword. But what is 'motivation' actually and how can you ensure that you stay motivated?

Motivation

Motivation is the entire range of conscious or subconscious motives, as a result of which study behaviour is stimulated and focused. Motivation is not a personal quality, but the willingness to make every effort for your study and actively work on your study

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

A distinction is made between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic motivation comes from inside and extrinsic motivation comes from outside .

Take your choice of study for example: did you choose your study programme because the subject and content interest you (intrinsic), or because your friends also chose to study it (extrinsic).

Your choice is often a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, but if the intrinsic motivation is the strongest, you have much more chance that your study will be a success.

Effect on your study .

If you have chosen the study programme from 'inside', that gives a feeling of confidence in your own abilities, leads to curiosity and the will to learn. You will dive into your books full of enthusiasm and you will go to lectures and tutorials in order to deepen your knowledge and discuss with others. Motivation needs to be fed and maintained, as a student you control that yourself!

Control over your study

That means taking your study and yourself seriously. In addition to motivation, studying also requires discipline, independence, perseverance, personal initiative, curiosity and enthusiasm. Not everyone will possess these qualities to the same extent, but that's also not necessary. If you put the tips below into practice, you will come a long way.

- Keep your study material up-to-date from the start, as knowledge that has been acquired gradually ensures that the study acquires meaning and, therefore, becomes interesting. (For study tips, you can go through the 'How do you read smartly' and 'How do you process the study material' PDFs)
- Attend the lectures, even if they are not required. The University has few contact hours. If you do not go regularly then you will quickly lose the connection with fellow students and the study material.
- Studying in the library often ensures better concentration, contact with fellow students and a feeling of solidarity.
- Making appointments with fellow students to study together makes studying more enjoyable.
- If you have difficulty, for example, with study skills, time management or reading techniques, make use of the workshops and training courses that are offered by Student Services. This can benefit your further career as student.

Control over your student life

Taking and maintaining control of your study and your life as student is of essential important from the first day that you study. Activities that you can undertake to quickly feel at home as a student at the UvA are, for example

- Participation in the introduction of your study to get to know fellow students
- Joining the study association of your study programme. Meetings are regularly organised about subjects that place your study in a broader framework. Alumni (graduates of the University) are

Student Services

Student Psychologists' Office - Student Careers Service - Student Counsellors
Student Service Desk- Office of International Student Affairs

www.uva.nl/studyingsuccessfully

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sometimes invited to talk about their career. In this way, you will receive a picture of the, often wide-ranging, career opportunities

- If you join a student association (generally, for relaxation and fun), you will also meet students from other study programmes.
- Take courses at CREA (the UvA's cultural centre) in order to develop your creative side through music, theatre, dance and art.
- Take part in a sport via the UvA. The University Sports Centre offers the widest range of sports.

The above-mentioned tips will ensure that you build a strong relationship with your fellow students, feel connected with your study, with your faculty and with the UvA.

These are basic conditions to maintain your motivation.

Studying and making choices

Making choices is a part of your study. Choosing a minor, an elective, a thesis topic and ultimately your Master's choice. It can offer a new and motivating impulse to your study

You can choose in various ways. The most important ways follow:

- Choose smartly, and make as efficient a choice as possible.
- Choose strategically: what offers me the most and/or is useful for my career?
- Choose with your heart: what is important to me and what means something to me?

It is often a case of combining these ways of choosing.

Whatever way you choose, ensure that the subject interests you, as only then will you remain motivated and active while working on your study.

Motivating activities outside the study

You can develop all kinds of activities and launch initiatives alongside your study in order to remain motivated and increase your interest, for example

- Sit on the board of a study association, student association or student committee, such as the Introduction Week Committee or ISN (International Student Network).
- Choose a strategic job on the side; acquainting yourself with the field of study from the side-lines. For example, if you are studying law, look for a job on the side at a lawyer's office.
- Be curious about people and their work; interest is valued and it will offer you insight into the labour market.
- Follow current affairs and the news, as subjects can be dealt with there which are directly or indirectly connected with your study.

If you enjoy your study and student life, these things will often come to you naturally, but this can require some energy in the beginning.

Most important points

- Motivation is the willingness to make every effort for your study and actively work on your study.
- There is a difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation
- Take control of your study and student life!

Links

- CREA: www.crea.uva.nl
- University Sports Centre (USC): www.usc.uva.nl
- Workshops / training: www.uva.nl/training-en

Questions?

Please contact the Student Careers Centre if you have any questions about choice of study or motivation. See www.uva.nl/career for the opening times or send an email to studentcareerscentre@uva.nl.

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