

Tips on notetaking

Note taking is **an important academic skill**. Making clear concise notes in your own words does two important things:

- Helps you store, understand and recall information.
- Helps prevent plagiarism.

There are **two different methods** of note taking. They are often described as either **linear or non-linear**.

Regardless of your preferred method of notetaking, here are a few general tips:

1. Note taking during a lecture is **easier if you have prepared**, for example, read handouts, gone through the slides prior to the lecture, done background reading, know what to expect.
2. **Do not** copy down the slides or transcribe what the lecturer has said. Think about the information being delivered and write it in your own words.



3. **Be economical** with words. Do not try to write sentences, just key terms and main points.
4. Use easily recognisable shorthand, **symbols or abbreviations**.
5. If you **miss a bit** or do not understand something fully, make a note including the slide number, to revisit it or ask the lecturer a question.
6. **Note down citations** or references used in a lecture. They may prove useful as a starting point for independent research.
7. Always start your notes with **the date, module and lecture** information.
8. **Summarise** the lecture both at the beginning of your notes in an introduction and at the end in a summary section.
9. When making notes think in terms of **QEC**:
 - a. **Question** – What is it we are learning about
 - b. **Evidence** – What evidence is there?
 - c. **Conclusion** – What can be derived from this information?
10. Most importantly, **use a method** of note taking that you are comfortable with. You can interchange between different styles or even combine them.