



So you failed an exam – what now?

Directorate for Counselling and Career Development

Reflecting on your exams

Failing an examination could be overwhelming and you might feel that it is difficult to continue with your studies. Reflection will help you to gain perspective about your situation: what do I need to do in order to pass my examinations next time?

There are a number of factors that contributed to you failing an exam and reflecting is a way for you to focus on the things that you could do differently.

Taking stock of your exam

Reflecting on

- How you wrote the exams.
- What your emotional state was like.
- How you prepared for the exams.
- What you would want to do differently.

How did you write your exams?

- Did I complete the exam?
- Did most of the exam questions come from the content and activities of the study guide, the textbook or the assignments?
- How were the questions different from those in the study guide, textbook or assignments?

What was the state of your emotions?

- What was my emotional state like on the day of the exam?
- What was my emotional state/ personal circumstances like during the semester/ year?

How did you prepare for exams?

- How much time did I spend preparing for each module (during the semester/ year)?
- Did I cover everything at least once?
- Did I use the activities in the study guide to test my knowledge?
- If yes, did I check my score per section? (to make sure that I understood what I have learnt)
- Did I make effective notes? What type of notes did I make?

How did you prepare for exams?

- Where was the greatest source of error? (careless errors; lack of time; lack of understanding the material; uncertainty of which method to choose; lack of prerequisite information; exam anxiety)
- How can I change my study habits to adjust for the errors that have been made?

What you would like to do differently?

What else should I have done?

Do I know what to do differently next time I write this module/ paper? Write down the plan of action:

e.g.

My Learning Plan for Second Semester		
What do I want to change?	The action I will take and the type of support needed to achieve the goals ?	Have a due date for achieving your goals?
1. Completing assignments	Work through the assignment questions and read through the study guide/ text book. Start answering assignment questions	Check if you have submitted before the assignment due date.

WHAT NOW?

- Think about the support you need.
- Plan/decide on the number of modules to register for.
- Think about your career vision.

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