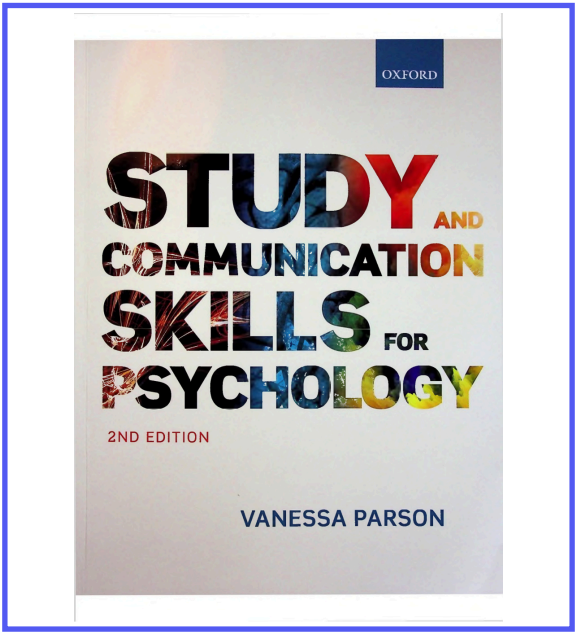


ebookbig.com

or scan the QR code to access the digital study portal.

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP,
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of
Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries

© Vanessa Parson 2018

The moral rights of the author have been asserted

First edition 2012

Impression: 1

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in
a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the
prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press, or as expressly permitted
by law, by licence or under terms agreed with the appropriate reprographics
rights organization. Enquiries concerning reproduction outside the scope of the
above should be sent to the Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the
address above

You must not circulate this work in any other form
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017959730

ISBN 978-0-19-878612-2

Printed in Great Britain by
Bell & Bain Ltd., Glasgow

Links to third party websites are provided by Oxford in good faith and
for information only. Oxford disclaims any responsibility for the materials
contained in any third party website referenced in this work.

Contents

About the online resources ix

1 Introduction **1**
Why do I need this book? 1
How is university different from school? 2
The importance of being an independent learner 2
Learning strategies 3
Time management: a skill best learned early 4
A final word 4

2 Time management: a skill best learned early **5**
Term time juggling 6
Fitting everything in 7
Making your own timetable 8
Vacation juggling 9
Extra help for exam season 11
Checklist 13

3 Teaching time: making the most of it **14**
What's the point of lectures? 14
Handouts—before and after the lecture 17
Asking questions—when is it okay to do so? 18
Where to find information if you miss the lecture 19
Small group teaching—tutorials and seminars 19
After teaching time is over—what then? 21
Checklist 23
References 24

4 Communication and learning with others **25**
Online learning as an individual: virtual learning environments 25
Online learning with others: blogs and wikis 27
Online learning with others: social media (Facebook and Twitter, etc.) 28
Online learning with others: discussion boards 29
Offline learning and sharing with others 31
Checklist 33

5	**Before and after assessments: guidelines, criteria, and feedback**	**34**
	Before your assessment is due—finding out what to do	34
	After the assignment is returned—this thing called feedback	39
	Checklist	42
	References	42
6	**Sources of information and their uses**	**43**
	What to look for in a textbook	44
	Wading through journal articles	47
	Critical analysis and thinking	48
	How to use, and not use, the Internet	49
	How can you tell whether the content of these sources of information is any good?	52
	How to use what you've found in your assignments	54
	Checklist	55
	References	55
7	**How to find and read a journal article**	**56**
	How to find an article to read	56
	Getting to grips with the articles you've found	57
	Checklist	65
	References	65
8	**Plagiarism**	**66**
	What is plagiarism?	66
	Collusion	66
	Avoiding plagiarism—it's easy when you know how	67
	Can you plagiarize from yourself?	69
	Checklist	71
	References	71
9	**What is referencing?**	**72**
	How to reference	73
	Referencing in the text	74
	Referencing at the end of your report	76
	How to cite Internet references	79
	Primary versus secondary referencing	81
	The Harvard system	82
	Checklist	85
	References	86
	Useful sources of information	86

10	**Reading and evaluating text**	**87**
	What is evaluation?	87
	How to think critically	90
	Trying to remain objective	93
	Checklist	93
	References	94
11	**So you think you can write good?**	**95**
	The building blocks of writing: types of words	96
	The building blocks of writing: what is grammar?	97
	The building blocks of writing: structure and organization	97
	The building blocks of writing: squiggly symbols (aka punctuation)	98
	The building blocks of writing: expressing yourself	105
	Different types of writing style	106
	Effective writing—how to communicate your thoughts clearly and precisely	108
	Checklist	109
	References	109
	Useful sources of information	109
12	**Critical analysis: the big new skill you need to learn**	**110**
	The 3C's of critical analysis: consensus, contradiction, and connectivity	111
	Nurturing your inner sceptic: the devil is in the detail	112
	Following the evidence: avoiding assumptions when you're reading and writing	116
	Putting it together: this thing called synthesis	117
	Critical Analysis Signposting: the importance of conclusions and introductions	120
	Final words: read and think, then read and think some more	123
	Checklist	124
	References	124
	Useful sources of information	124
13	**Writing essays**	**125**
	Structure—the basic essay format	126
	Addressing the question	126
	Structure—introductions and conclusions	131
	Demonstrating understanding	134
	Developing an argument	136
	Developing your argument from the essay title	137
	Using and evaluating evidence in your essays	138
	Checklist	139
	References	140

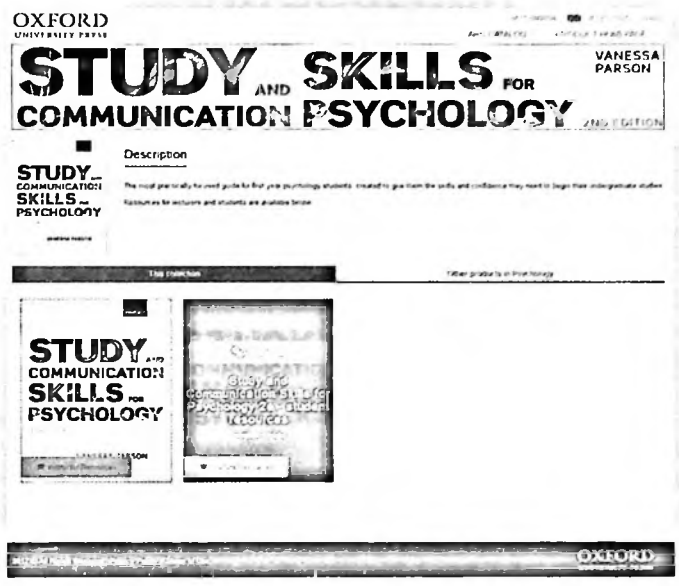
14 Writing practical reports: how to write up an experiment **141**
What are psychological reports? 141
Abstract 142
Introduction 143
Methods 146
Results 150
Discussion 154
References 155
Appendices 156
Qualitative versus quantitative reports—what's the difference? 156
Checklist 158
References 158
Useful sources of information 158

15 Presentations and posters **159**
Presentations—standing up in front of people and talking to them intelligently 159
Posters—presenting your work with minimal talking to people! 169
Checklist 176

16 Revision and exam tips **177**
Tips for helping you remember course material 177
Active revision versus passive revision 179
Different revision methods 179
Doing past papers is like doing practice exams: practice makes perfect! 183
Tackling different question types 184
Coping with stress during exam periods 187
What to do *after* the exam 189
And finally—common sense tips 189
Checklist 191
Reference 191

Answers to exercises 193
Index 205

About the online resources



Study and Communication Skills for Psychology doesn't end with this printed book. Visit the book's online resources at www.oup.com/uk/parson2e/ to find a range of materials, prepared by the author and grouped by chapter, to help you master the concepts presented throughout the book.

The extra materials include:

- Exemplar essays and lab reports to help you see how to implement the guidance given in the book
- Exemplar poster templates
- Downloadable weekly timetable and academic calendar
- Referencing exercises to help you practise what you have learned in chapter 9

Lecturers can also register for access to the following teaching materials:

- Figures from the book in electronic format, ready to download
- Lecture slides covering academic misconduct awareness, essay writing, writing lab reports, and giving presentations
- Handouts for use in class, covering various sections of the book
- Additional referencing exercises
- 'Masterclasses' on written arguments, posters, and critical analysis



Introduction



What will I learn in this chapter?

- The difference between school/college and university
- How to become an independent learner
- Different learning strategies that will help on your journey towards getting your degree

Over my years of teaching a few things have consistently frustrated me about why intelligent undergraduates frequently fail to do as well as they are able to. Students who can verbally communicate in an articulate way in class suddenly lose their communication skills when it comes to written work, and cannot produce good, well-thought-out essays; students who grasp the complexities of statistics beautifully are, for some reason, unable to get the reference and methods sections of their written assignments correct. There are always a few who perform well in all areas of the course, but there are many more who could do so much better if only they had a better grasp of the basics required in psychology—basics such as accurate referencing, setting out coherent arguments in essays, displaying critical thinking skills, and demonstrating the ability to write well-formatted laboratory reports.

As an undergraduate, you have a lot to think about at university, and the subject matter alone can pose many problems for students trying to retain so much information. The difficulty you, as students, face is that no matter how much you know about a subject, and no matter how much you write, you won't get good grades if you can't communicate your knowledge and understanding effectively.

Knowing how to present information is a skill that you started to learn at school and college. 'Started to learn' is key here: you don't stop learning how to communicate when you leave school or college. Instead, it is a skill that you need to continue to learn and improve upon if you want to do well at university. There is no such thing as the perfect essay, report, or presentation; if you keep trying to do better every time you produce one, then you will continue to achieve your potential while at university. Hopefully this book will enable you, as a psychology student, to fulfil your potential and produce work which accurately reflects your abilities.

Why do I need this book?

You will have acquired and developed many skills from your education so far (whether you realize it or not!). However, every course and subject comes with its own fresh challenges and requirements, and psychology is no exception. With this in mind, this book is designed to

help you manoeuvre your way through all the lectures, seminars, and assignments you will be required to do throughout your studies in higher education. Many of you will have studied psychology before, written essays before, made posters, done presentations, and written reports. In psychology, we place a large emphasis on doing these things correctly and in a specific manner. While you may already know the basics, there is no harm in revising and getting better.

Many universities have formal study and communication skills programmes in place, while others have materials available for you to use more informally to learn the basics and improve your study skills. All of these resources and programmes are of a high standard, and you should take advantage of whatever your university provides. However, the term 'study skills' is a fairly generic one, and different degree programmes at different universities vary in terms of what is, and what isn't, covered. By contrast, this book seeks to bring some cohesion to the development of study skills by bringing together in one place the various aspects of these skills taught in psychology programmes at different universities, helping all students to learn the key requirements for psychology to the same high level. This text should complement any study skills course your institution has to offer, and will provide you with a helpful resource throughout your studies at undergraduate level.

In addition, a lot of the skills covered in this book aren't applicable only to undergraduate study. They are just as valuable post university: they are a collection of transferable skills which you will be able to apply to most of the jobs available once you have a degree.

How is university different from school?

Students typically find university challenging, as it is the first time they are responsible for their own learning. There are numerous routes to university, but they all involve clearly directed learning where students are taught from a highly prescribed teaching specification. Consequently, there is limited opportunity for elaboration and independent learning: whatever you do is organized and monitored by those teaching you.

It doesn't take a first year undergraduate long to realize that the university experience is quite different. There is no longer anyone telling you when to do work, or what bits you should learn next—and nobody chases you up if you miss one lecture. Now you are learning to learn independently. It is now your responsibility to work as hard as you like in order to pass the course.

This can be quite intimidating at first, and it can be very confusing to be suddenly expected to navigate a large campus, your online timetable, the virtual learning environment, and the different styles of classes you'll be faced with. You will get used to it, and while you do there are staff available to help you. If you're unsure of something, make sure you ask a member of your department, who will be more than happy to direct you as necessary. You will probably have a personal tutor allocated, so make sure you go and see them regularly if you need to.

The importance of being an independent learner

It's all very well saying that you now have to become an independent learner, but students are often confused about why this is the case. After all, you are paying for an education, so why are the lecturers not teaching you more often and why are you set so much to do by