Note-Taking from Lessons/Lectures

Before the Lesson

- Look at the topic of your lesson and consider what the topic may be about;
- Complete any set readings for the class so that you are thinking about the topic.

During the Lesson

Teachers have different ways of presenting information. Here are some ideas to help you make the most from the lesson.

1. Identify the topic and write the main ideas– what is the main topic of the lesson? Listen carefully for cues. For example: “Today I will discuss…”, “This lesson will focus on…”. Read Power points or handouts to identify the main topic.

2. Identify key terms – write down key words or phrases that are the focus of the lesson. Do not try to write everything down.

3. Consider the structure of the presentation. Often teachers divide a lesson into an introduction where they introduce the key features of the lesson; a body where each key topic is discussed in detail and references and examples are presented. Finally there should be a conclusion to draw ideas together.

4. Write major ideas. Ideas are supported by evidence, examples and details, often included in the introductory and closing comments.

5. Note any major perspectives or controversies discussed.


7. Make notes of repeated information.

8. Write notes on every other line. This will make your notes seem clearer and leave you space to add to the notes at a later time.

9. Read Handouts: If your teacher uses a Power point presentation, print out the slides and make notes against these.

10. Use abbreviations: E.g., Etc, =, +, &, c.f. = compared with and there are many more.