



Charlotte Wood SVN

Charlotte is currently a final year student veterinary nurse completing the degree entry route and works in a general small animal veterinary practice. Charlotte became a BVNA student council member in 2018. Charlotte became a veterinary nurse as the vocation is varied and every day is different. She has a passion for animal welfare and quality improvement. She joined council to make a difference and move our profession forward.
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Keeping track of lectures

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Lectures are one of the main ways that you are given information to train as a student veterinary nurse so it's important to find a way that suits you to be able to keep on track of your lectures. Life as an SVN is challenging and there is always so much to think about, lectures, practicals, work, reading, essays, reports, presentations, and the list goes on... So here are some of my top tips to try and keep on top of your lectures and get the most out of them!

1. You cannot write down every word

You do not need to write every single word your lecturer says. You need to listen for key points, key arguments and key themes in lectures and focus on noting them down. If your university or college has the ability to record the lectures then utilise this feature and listen during your lecture and try to take in as much as you can and then you can listen back to the recorded lecture to make your final notes. If your university or college does not record lectures then I suggest asking if you can bring in a dictaphone or have a laptop to record the lectures yourself if you are worried about missing vital information in your lectures.

2. Pay attention

Make sure you are well rested before your lectures so that your attention span can last the length of your lecture (8 hours of sleep a night is recommended). If you are allowed, take a coffee or hot chocolate into your lecture if that helps you stay focused. Try to pay attention and follow along with your lecturer and get involved!

3. Make sure you underline, highlight and capitalise

Lecturers often stress or draw attention to key points within a lecture so make sure in your notes you also stress the importance of these key themes too (it makes it a lot easier when it comes to revision).

4. Try to use shorthand or abbreviations

If you do like to make lots of notes during a lecture, try to use shortened words or abbreviations, but make sure you know what they mean!

5. Put distractions away

It is a really good idea to put your phone on aeroplane mode or just put it in your bag so you cannot get distracted by it during the lecture. As well, if you are working on a laptop, try to turn your notifications off so that you can focus without emails or social media notifications popping up all the time.

6. Be comfortable

Make sure that you are punctual to your lectures and choose a seat that you are comfortable and can see and hear the lecture.

7. Ask questions when you are confused

Do not suffer in silence! Always ask for clarification when you are confused. No question is ever a silly question and chances are, someone else in the class is thinking the same thing as you. If you do not feel like you can ask in front of the class, try to speak to your lecturer after class or ask for a meeting.

8. Speak and discuss with classmates

Speaking and discussing with other classmates can help you to gather a greater understanding of a subject; two heads are better than one! They might have picked up some points from the lecture that you did not and vice versa.

9. Notepad or laptop

You need to decide what works best for you. Some people like to have the lecture on their laptop and then use the notes section or a document open to make additional notes to what is already on the slides and some people also find that they can type faster than they can write. Some people prefer to use notepads and write their notes whilst following the lecture as writing it down solidifies the knowledge better for them; some people also like to print out the lecture and then write notes on this. It really depends on whether you prefer to type or write and what works for you!

10. Get involved!

Getting involved with in class discussions and debates can sometimes help to solidify knowledge and gain other people's opinions on a topic that you might not have thought of before. Try to answer the lecturer's questions, even if it is a guess!