

Setting Goals

‘Goals’ are those things that we want to achieve. People set goals for many reasons. Goals can be about self-improvement, career, sport or music. Goals can be short term or long term. A short term goal is something we want to achieve in the coming weeks. A long term goal may be achieved over several years.

WHY ARE GOALS IMPORTANT?

Goals provide us with **direction** and **focus**. Having a goal **motivates us**. Your teachers or coaches will often set goals for you because they know this will help direct you towards completing a task.

When international students begin their secondary studies in Australia they often have a long term goal of University study. What is important is to establish short term goals directed towards long term achievement.

There is no doubt that students’ who set goals have better school achievement and academic success than those who do not. Sit down and think about what you really want to achieve from your studies. You may want to be a dentist, you may want to work in management or hospitality; you may be undecided about a career but want to further your studies at tertiary level. In all of these situations you are setting long term goals.

HOW DO WE SET SHORT TERM GOALS?

Short term goals help us to achieve our long term goals. Short term goals may relate to this weeks maths test, completing an assignment, preparing for a mid-year examination or improving your English vocabulary. All of these study goals build towards achieving the success that you need to realise long term goals. There are some things that you should keep in mind when setting goals.

- Make sure the goals you set are **achievable**. Consider carefully your skills and abilities. Make a list of strengths and weaknesses. Setting a goal of achieving an A standard in all subjects may be what you would like but is it achievable given your skills and abilities? Setting goals that are beyond reach is disheartening. Be honest with yourself and set goals that are achievable.
- Goals should be **realistic**. It is realistic to say that you will build your English vocabulary by ten words each week. It is not realistic to say that you will learn one hundred words per week. Goals that are realistic are manageable.

- Make sure that your goals are **flexible**. Sometimes things do not go to plan. Your goal may be to complete research for an assignment by a set date. If you spend a few days in bed with a bad cold this goal may no longer be achievable. Unexpected events happen to all of us. Review and reset the goal when you are able.
- Goals should also be measurable. If your goal is to improve your performance in tests then you should be able to measure your progress through your test scores. Measuring your improvement in this way increases your motivation to work harder.

Goals are important at most times throughout our lives. They provide the important steps towards achievement and success. They are the basis of personal motivation in both study and work.

Write down your goals so you can be constantly reminded of them. Students who set goals are more likely to improve their school performance and enjoy their studies. They are motivated and focused and get satisfaction from measuring their progress through each short term goal towards long term achievement.

Goal setters study better!

If you would like more information on improving your secondary education studying results, be sure to check out [Stirling Education's website](#).