



Managing projects using a GANTT chart

Introduction

When writing an assignment it is essential that you plan your time effectively. One way of doing this is through the creation of a Gantt chart. This is a project management technique which enables you to schedule and then track your task progress.

This resource provides a worked example of how to create a Gantt chart.

Step 1 – Identify your deadlines

Start by making a list of each of your assessment deadlines:

Key dates	At this stage I should...
22 February:	Finalise aims and objectives
30 March:	Write at least 50% of literature review
13 April:	Finalise report content
4 May:	Submit

Step 2 – Identify sub goals related to each deadline

Breakdown each of your deadlines into smaller and more manageable sub goals. As shown in the following examples:

Finalise aims and objectives**(complete by 22nd February)****Sub Goals**

- a) Make sure I understand the question - read around key concepts and make notes
- b) Expand on my initial reading to build up a more detailed appreciation of the topic(s)
- c) Draft aim and objectives – make sure these fully address the brief
- d) Start to plan the structure of my literature review

Write at least 50% of literature review**(complete by 30th March)****Sub Goals**

- a) Finalise structure of my literature review
- b) Start to draft a section of the report – develop information from my notes and link information from different sources together
- c) Start to draft next section of the report – develop information from my notes and link information from different sources together

Finalise report content

(complete by 13th April)

Sub Goals

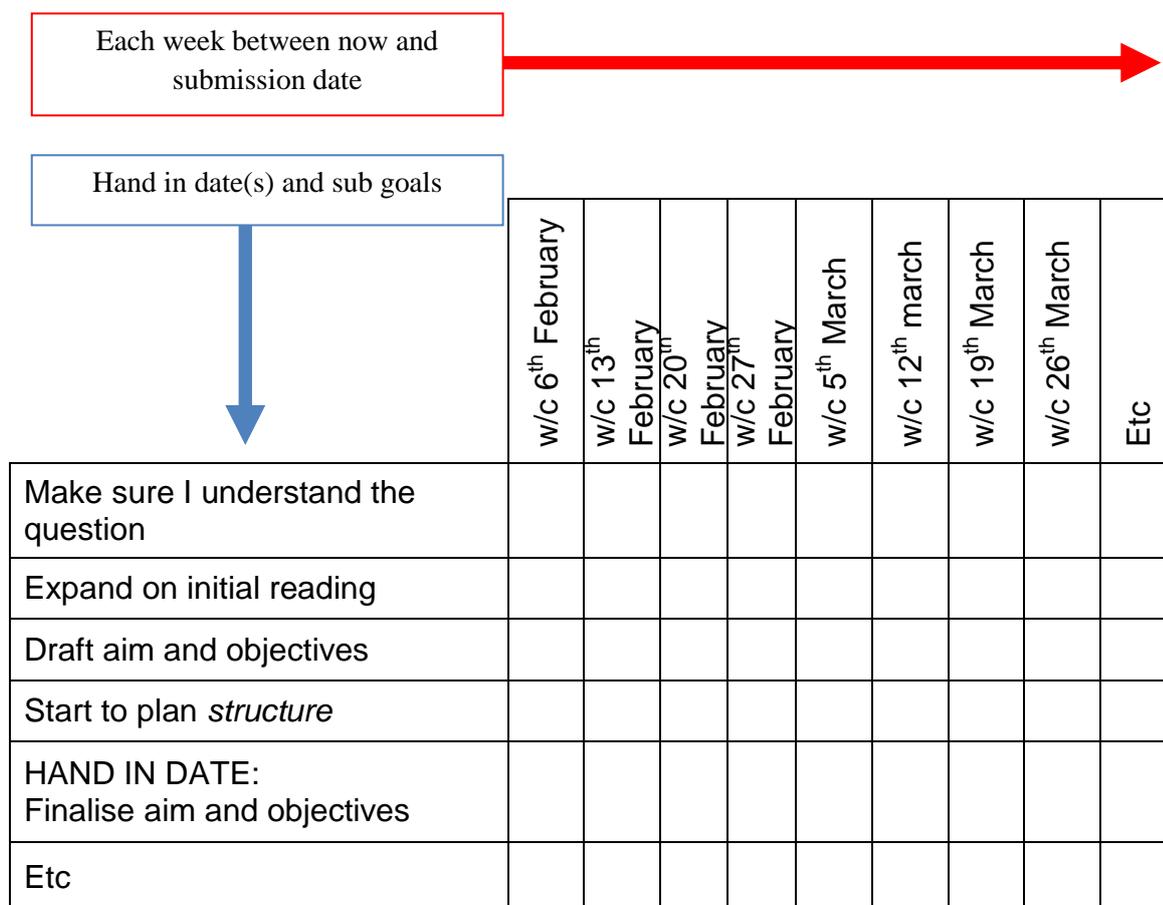
- a) Finish drafting report sections
- b) Check my aim and objectives are clearly addressed
- c) Create a contents and title page
- d) Check all sections / appendices are labelled
- e) Draft executive summary
- f) Proofread the document for spelling and grammar / check references / formatting / etc

Step 3 – Put this information into a chart

Create a table and list:

- every week between now and your submission date
- all of your hand in dates
- all of the sub goals you have identified

This could be formatted as follows:



Step 4 – Allocate time frames

Allocate a time frame for completing each deadline / sub goal by shading in the corresponding cell or cells (if the task will take more than one week) within your table. As illustrated on page 5:

	w/c 6 th February	w/c 13 th February	w/c 20 th February	w/c 27 th February	w/c 5 th March	w/c 12 th march	w/c 19 th March	w/c 26 th March	Etc
Make sure I understand the question									
Expand on initial reading									
Draft aim and objectives									
Start to plan structure									
HAND IN DATE: Finalise aim and objectives									
Etc									

In this example, week commencing (w/c) the 6th is being used to make sure the student understands the question. He/she then intends to spend two weeks (w/c 13th and w/c 20th) expanding on his/her initial reading. Also in w/c 13th he/she plans to draft his/her aims and objectives. In w/c 20th the student will start to plan the structure of his/her project (intended to be completed by w/c the 27th). Also in w/c the 20th there is the first hand in date.

To finish the Gantt chart this process would need to be repeated for each sub goal that was identified in step 2. The end result will be a visual representation of when specific assignment related tasks need to be completed.

Other things to consider

Unexpected events

It is likely that you will find that unexpected events occur whilst you are writing your report. Should this happen you will need to review your Gantt chart and change your task timings (where can time be saved?)

Periodically review your progress

Even if you do not encounter unexpected events, an important part of time management involves reviewing your progress. You should therefore aim to revise your Gantt chart on at least a monthly basis – this will ensure your targets remain realistic.

Further information

The Learning Resources Study Hub provides a range of opportunities (such as workshops and drop-ins) for you to enhance your academic skills. For more information visit:
lrweb.beds.ac.uk/studyhub

