Critical listening – making the most of lectures

What is the purpose of lecture?
• To teach a ‘body of knowledge’.
• To help you identify and understand key concepts.
• To make you think about a subject in a new way.
• To make you see a topic from different perspectives.
• To stimulate you to think critically.

Before the lecture
• Read recommended texts.
• Become familiar with key vocabulary.
• Start thinking about the topic.
• Check the lecture summary in the subject outline – make sure you know what the lecturer is trying to achieve.

During the lecture
• Be an active listener:
  • think about the topic
  • ask yourself questions
  • relate new ideas to what you already know
  • concentrate
  • listen for and make notes on main points.
• Why take notes?
  • Helps you remember the content.
  • Gives you a framework for revision.
• Helps you to stay alert in the lecture.

**After the lecture**

• Talk to someone else about the content.
• Ask your lecturer for a copy of the PowerPoint presentation if it was used in lecture.
• Reread and reorganise your notes and handouts.
• List things you don’t understand to ask your tutor.

Adapted from the following source: