A few strategies to help you manage reading

1. **Read with a purpose:**
   - **decide what you need to about to prepare for a seminar or answer an essay question**
   - **generate questions to focus and structure your reading**

An effective starting point to do this is to break down the essay into several sub-questions to guide your reading, typically WHAT, WHY, HOW and SO WHAT?

2. Read selectively, using a variety of reading strategies

It is very easy to spend hours reading material that isn't relevant to your assignment or lecture/seminar. You need to select relevant sources to read, and then, read these texts selectively.

Select relevant sources by generating some questions to guide your reading - you can use a number of techniques to identify material that answers these questions:

- Do a quick overview of the chapter: look at headings and sub-headings to get an overview of the structure and the content

- Skim read the text to identify key ideas and content words and phrases – does this text look useful?

- Ladder reading is an alternative to skimming that can be useful, because it's a more structured technique. Read the first sentence last sentence of every paragraph – that will tell you what the paragraph is about and you can identify which sections of the text are relevant to your purpose.

- Once you've worked out which parts of the text are relevant, read them in detail.

Reading about unfamiliar concepts and theories is much harder than reading about familiar material. It may take you much longer than you expect to understand a chapter in a text book or a research report. You may need to do further reading to understand an idea if it's not fully explained in the text you are reading – go to introductory level textbooks for simpler explanations of concepts and theories that you don't fully understand.

Once you've identified relevant sources of material, use these reading templates to help you read and take notes efficiently.

Reading a text book

https://edshare.gcu.ac.uk/6316/1/Template%20for%20reading%20textbooks.pdf

Reading a journal article
https://edshare.gcu.ac.uk/6333/1/Template%20for%20reading%20research%20articles.pdf