

**Student
Services**



Advise | Support | Inspire



Study Resources

Tools for Reading, Writing, Planning and Organising

UWS is an inclusive and accessible modern university. We recognise that we have a diverse range of learners and we endeavour to offer the latest technology and resources to meet all needs.

This leaflet contains information on some useful software that is installed on all open-access University PCs. These programmes can help with reading, writing, planning and organising.

We have also suggested some free software and apps that can be used on your own PC or portable device.

Guidance and video tutorials on using some of the software are available on Moodle and can be accessed here:

<http://moodle.uws.ac.uk/course/view?id=3320>.

You can also find useful video tutorials for much of the software and apps on Youtube.





"When I have written something I can't find mistakes. When I check it over it looks ok to me."

"I have to read and re-read text to understand it"

"I can't seem to take in the information."

"I'm slow at reading compared to other people"



Reading...

TOP TIPS:

Have text read aloud to help clarify context and assist with complex words or sentences.

Try changing the background colour on your screen or adjust text size, font, or colour.

Software & Apps

Read and Write Gold

- Literacy software makes websites, documents and files more accessible.
- Reads on-screen text aloud
- Pronunciation guide

Read & Write Gold is available on all campus PCs

Balabolka

- text-to-speech software
www.cross-plus-a.com/balabolka.htm

MS Word

- has an in-built text-to-speech function
user guide:

<https://support.office.com/en-gb/article/Using-the-Speak-text-to-speech-feature-459e7704-a76d-4fe2-ab48-189d6b83333c>

Vubar

- ruler that can be used to help keep your place when reading from a screen.

www.fx-software.co.uk/assitive.htm

ssOverlay

- place a coloured overlay on your screen to help reduce visual discomfort

www.fx-software.co.uk/assitive.htm

My Web My Way

- website that shows you how to change the way your internet pages look

www.bbc.co.uk/accessibility/guides/words_index.shtml



"I take a long time to get my thoughts into words"

"It takes me ages to proofread"

"I get confused with punctuation and I mix up words that sound the same"

"I make a lot of spelling mistakes"



Writing...

TOP TIPS:

Have your text read aloud to help check flow, clarity and identify mistakes.

Use referencing tools to maintain consistent academic style.

Software & Apps

Read and Write Gold

- Advanced dictionary tools
- Verb checker

Read & Write Gold is available on all campus PCs

Cerevoice

- high quality computer voice that works with Balabolka (see Reading section)

www.thescottish-voice.org.uk/download

Grammarly

- Real-time proofreading and grammar checking
- Works with a number of programmes and websites, including MS Office packages

<https://app.grammarly.com/apps>

Neil's Toolbox

- easy to use Harvard reference generator

www.neilstoolbox.com/bibliography-creator

WorldCat

- large bibliographic database
- search by ISBN
- generates references in a variety of styles including Harvard and APA

www.worldcat.org/

RefMe

- use your phone or tablet's camera to create references
- import quotes
- collate research material

<https://www.refme.com>



"I've got so much stuff
I can't find what I
need for revision"

"I take notes but can't
make sense of them
afterwards"

"I've got an empty
page and don't know
where to start"



Planning and Organisation

TOP TIPS:

Start by making a mind-map to get all your ideas down.

Plan a study or revision timetable to make sure you meet deadlines

Software & Apps

Inspiration

- easy to use mindmapping
 - visually plan essays and structure revision
 - export mindmaps to MS Word
- Inspiration is available on all campus PCs

FreeMind

- opensource mindmapping software
- plan written work and structure revision

http://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page

MyStudyBar

- collection of apps for reading, writing, planning and organisation

http://eduapps.org/?page_id=7

Calendars

- use built-in features of Outlook, Google or iCal
- set deadlines, reminders and plan a study or revision timetable

Mac Users

Your Mac has many inbuilt features, such as text-to-speech, that can be used to help you study. Information on the inbuilt accessibility options in Mac OS X can be found at:

www.apple.com/uk/accessibility/osx

Where to go for further support

Learning Innovation

Learning Developers working within the Learning Innovation team are committed to helping you achieve your full potential by providing advice, guidance and online resources to develop and enhance the academic skills you will need during your time at University and beyond. Learning Developers offer assistance in the development of academic skills including; Referencing and avoiding plagiarism; Critical Thinking; Studying and exam techniques; Presentation skills; Writing essays, reports and dissertations; Study skills; Planning for studying; Personal Development Planning and Time management

Further information and contact details are here:

www.uws.ac.uk/effectivelearning

Link to specific resources:

<http://moodle.uws.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=3314§ion=3>

Disability Service

The Disability Service at UWS provides information, advice and guidance to students with a disability or long-standing medical condition. We can help you to access appropriate study-related support, such as specialist software or equipment, support workers, alternative exam arrangements and we can assist you to apply for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) to fund your support.

If you have tried the on-campus resources and feel that you may need additional support, contact the Disability Service via disabilityservice@uws.ac.uk or through the Hub (Paisley) or Student Link (Ayr, Hamilton & Dumfries).



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