

The guide to the

Life Tools

Programme 2022–2023



Learn > Develop > Succeed

Creating the pathway to academic and personal success.

Life Tools programme

How the Life Tools programme benefits you

The programme is designed by experts to contribute to your ongoing personal, academic and professional development.

During Welcome Week, talks will be on campus. During the academic year, the programme will be online. The webinars consist of a 45-minute online interactive presentation on Blackboard, followed by time for questions about the topic. You can use the mic, chat and Mentimeter to participate. There are no assessments or evaluations. You can try them out to see what topics interest you and learn more about the programme. There will be some talks on campus. You can check the details of the programme and book your place at reading.ac.uk/life-tools. You can also find the link to the Life Tools Blackboard to enrol and receive a weekly email with details and information.



“ It was an awakening experience, I became more understanding of myself and how to improve aspects of my life (such as sleep). It taught me ways to manage my academic life and prepare for exams. The Life Tool’s Programme helped me to navigate and take control in many areas of my life ”

(Third year student)

Our Life Tools programme won the RUSU staff-student partnership excellence award in 2018-19

The Life Tools programme is free and open to all students.

The Life Tools certificate

- The aim of the certificate is to provide evidence of the skills you have developed.
- It is a way of acknowledging and rewarding your commitment to your personal and professional development.
- You can obtain a certificate when you have completed all of the elements required, and it will appear in your academic transcript.

For more information go to reading.ac.uk/life-tools

The Life Tools Blackboard

You can find resources on the Blackboard organisation. To enrol go to reading.ac.uk/life-tools. Once you enrol, you can access online resources and receive a weekly email with information about upcoming webinars/ talks and Life Tools certificate discussion groups, as well as general information on the topics covered.



Manage academic demands
Invest in your academic and professional development
Enhance personal wellbeing

The topics covered are categorised under the following headings:

- **Creativity**
to develop strategies to increase your ability to problem-solve and find creative solutions.
- **Knowledge**
to increase your awareness to inform your decisions and actions to do well both personally and academically
- **Tools**
Strategies to develop skills to do well in your studies
- **Wellness**
to develop strategies to enhance your emotional resilience and keep well
- **Global awareness**
increase your understanding of cultures and adapt to new situations in the workplace in the future



Creativity



Knowledge



Tools



Wellness



Global Awareness

Each talk is colour coded by the category it most relates to, although most of them have a crossover with other categories.

Life Tools

Talks/Webinars Programme

DATE	TALK/WEBINARS	DAY	TIME *	SELECT YOUR TALK
SEP 20	● Living and Studying in the UK	TUE	10:00-10:45	
	● Preparing for University	TUE	12:00-12:45	
	● Maximising University Experience	TUE	14:00-14:45	
21	● Preparing for University	WED	11:00-11:45	
	● Settling in, getting to know others	WED	13:00-13:45	
	● Live well on a student budget and prevent debt	WED	14:30-15:15	
22	● Maximising University Experience	THU	11:00-11:45	
	● Living and Studying in the UK	THU	13:00-13:45	
	● Settling in, getting to know others	THU	14:30-15:15	
OCT 06	● Under Pressure?	THU	13:00-13:45	
07	● Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health	FRI	13:00-13:45	
13	● Jumpstarting your brain (Procrastination)	THU	13:00-13:45	
14	● Bouncing Back from Setbacks	FRI	13:00-13:45	
20	● Ignite your motivation: Keep Learning	THU	13:00-13:45	
21	● A good night's sleep	FRI	13:00-13:45	
27	● Confidence: "I can" and "I will"	THU	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	THU	14:30-15:00	
28	● Mindfulness: a brief introduction	FRI	13:00-13:45	

DATE	TALK/WEBINARS	DAY	TIME *	SELECT YOUR TALK
NOV 03	● Feedback: food for thought	THU	13:00-13:45	
04	● Focusing or Forgetting?	FRI	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	FRI	14:30-15:00	
09	● Emotional Intelligence	WED	13:00-14:00	
10	● Imperfect Perfectionism	THU	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	THU	14:30-15:00	
11	● Under Pressure?	FRI	13:00-13:45	
14	● Ignite your motivation: Keep Learning	MON	13:00-13:45	
	● Preparing for exams: evidence-based revision techniques	MON	15:00-15:45	
16	● Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health	WED	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	WED	14:30-15:00	
JAN 12	● A good night's sleep	THU	13:00-13:45	
13	● Ignite your motivation: Keep Learning	FRI	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	FRI	14:30-15:00	
19	● Under Pressure?	THU	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	THU	14:30-15:00	
20	● Imperfect Perfectionism	FRI	13:00-13:45	
26	● Mindfulness: a brief introduction	THU	13:00-13:45	
27	● Confidence: "I can" and "I will"	FRI	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	FRI	14:30-15:00	

* For more details, and to book a place on a webinar, go to reading.ac.uk/life-tools

* Or, once enrolled, go through directly via the Life Tools Blackboard site.

🐦 @UoR_LifeTools

👤 @UoR_studentlife

DATE	TALK/WEBINARS	DAY	TIME *	SELECT YOUR TALK
FEB 02	● Ace Presentations and Collaborations	THU	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	THU	14:30-15:00	
03	● Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health	FRI	13:00-13:45	
09	● Focusing or Forgetting?	THU	13:00-13:45	
10	● Ignite your motivation: Keep Learning	FRI	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	FRI	14:30-15:00	
16	● Imperfect Perfectionism	THU	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	THU	14:30-15:00	
17	● Emotional Intelligence	FRI	13:00-13:45	
23	● Bouncing Back from Setbacks	THU	13:00-13:45	
24	● Feedback: food for thought	FRI	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	FRI	14:30-15:00	
MAR 02	● Imperfect Perfectionism	THU	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	THU	14:30-15:00	
03	● Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health	FRI	13:00-13:45	
09	● Under Pressure?	THU	13:00-13:45	
10	● Confidence: "I can" and "I will"	FRI	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	FRI	14:30-15:00	
16	● Preparing for exams: evidence based revision techniques	THU	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	THU	14:30-15:00	
17	● Focusing or Forgetting?	FRI	13:00-13:45	

DATE	TALK/WEBINARS	DAY	TIME *	SELECT YOUR TALK
APR 20	● Preparing for exams: evidence-based revision techniques	THU	13:00-13:45	
	● A good night's sleep	FRI	13:00-13:45	
21	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	FRI	14:30-15:00	
	● Mindfulness for exam prep	THU	13:00-13:45	
27	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	THU	14:30-15:00	
	● Feedback: food for thought	FRI	13:00-13:45	
MAY 04	● Ignite your motivation: Keep Learning	THU	13:00-13:45	
	● Under pressure?	FRI	13:00-13:45	
05	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	FRI	14:30-15:00	
	● Emotional Intelligence	THU	13:00-13:45	
11	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	THU	14:30-15:00	
	● Mindfulness for exam prep	FRI	13:00-13:45	
12	● Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health	THU	13:00-13:45	
	● Imperfect Perfectionism	FRI	13:00-13:45	
18	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	FRI	14:30-15:00	
	● Preparing for exams: evidence based revision techniques	THU	13:00-13:45	
19	● Imperfect Perfectionism	FRI	13:00-13:45	
	● Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done	FRI	14:30-15:00	

RECORDED	TALK/WEBINARS	SELECT YOUR TALK
All the talks listed above, as well as the topics listed here, can be accessed via the Life Tools Blackboard organisation.	● Ace presentations and collaborations	
	● Beyond university	
	● Live well on a student budget and prevent debt	
	● Romantic relationships – navigating changes and challenges	
	● Socialising and substances: When is it too much?	
	● Supporting a distressed friend	
	● Thinking ahead: the workplace and you	

Welcome Week

Prepare for university

Improve concentration, avoid procrastination, and be productive. Learn about the Life Tools certificate, Blackboard and blog. Maximise your potential to do well academically.

Tues 20 Sep
12:00–12:45
Palmer G10

Wed 21 Sep
11:00–11:45
For room, check the Welcome App

For more information visit reading.ac.uk/life-tools/, or
 @UoR_LifeTools

OUR TOP TIP:
Focus on what you want to learn and maintain a regular routine.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND

Living and studying in the UK

Useful information on how to adjust to a new environment and to a different cultural and educational system.

Tues 20 Sep
10:00–10:45
Palmer G10

Thur 22 Sep
13:00–13:45
For room, check the Welcome App

For more information visit reading.ac.uk/life-tools/, or
 @UoR_LifeTools

OUR TOP TIP:
Ask others about life in the UK, and practise your language skills.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND

Maximise your university experience

Find out about how to manage the transition to university, enhance your study skills and increase your knowledge.

Tues 20 Sep
14:00–14:45
Palmer G10

Thur 22 Sep
11:00–11:45
For room, check the Welcome App

For more information visit reading.ac.uk/life-tools/, or
 @UoR_LifeTools

OUR TOP TIP:
Create a healthy routine and focus on learning.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND

Settling in, getting to know others

Whenever we go to a new place, what interests us most is getting to know people, and establishing relationships that have the potential to last a long time. Find out how you can manage this transition.

Wed 21 Sep
13:00–13:45
Thur 22 Sep
14:30–15:15

For rooms, check the Welcome App

For more information visit reading.ac.uk/life-tools/, or
 @UoR_LifeTools

OUR TOP TIP:
Explore what activities are available and try one to learn something new.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND

Live well on a student budget and prevent debt

Is it hard to balance your essential expenses with treating yourself? Know your budget, and make it work for you. Find out about Blackbullion, an online tool to manage your budget at blackbullion.com

Wed 21 Sep
14:30–15:15
For room, check the Welcome App

For more information visit reading.ac.uk/life-tools/, or
 @UoR_LifeTools

OUR TOP TIP:
Keep track of your expenses and plan for what you want to do.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND

A good night's sleep

Sleep is essential for our health and wellbeing. It is also key to learning and remembering. Find out about what influences your sleep pattern and tips to help you sleep better.

Fri 21 Oct 13:00–13:45

Thu 12 Jan 13:00–13:45

Fri 21 Apr 13:00–13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:

Plan technology free time before bedtime.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Ace presentations and collaborations

Developing working relationships with others is an essential skill for academic collaboration. A good presentation can help you to manage group projects effectively.

Thu 02 Feb 13:00–13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:

Simple is clearer, consult with each other

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Bouncing back from setbacks

Life at university can present many challenges, and sometimes things do not work out as hoped. Dealing with setbacks is a key skill to learn from these situations.

Fri 14 Oct 13:00–13:45

Thu 23 Feb 13:00–13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:

Listen to yourself, maintain energy levels

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Confidence: "I can" and "I will"

Do you find that although you know what to do, you doubt yourself? Do you wonder how to achieve your goals? Are you concerned about making mistakes? Learn strategies to develop a confident mindset, challenge negative thinking and develop strategies to maintain your health and well-being.

Thu 27 Oct 13:00–13:45

Fri 27 Jan 13:00–13:45

Fri 10 Mar 13:00–13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:

Change from "I can't" to "I can". Focus on possibilities.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Emotional Intelligence

People who know themselves well and can manage their emotions effectively do well both at work and in life. Learn strategies to communicate with others effectively. This is a key competency for work and life.

Wed 09 Nov 13:00–13:45

Fri 17 Feb 13:00–13:45

Thu 11 May 13:00–13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:

Increase self-awareness, self-manage and relate to others well.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Feedback: food for thought

Managing sensitive feedback is key to make progress with your studies. Find out ways in which you can make the most of the information and advice so that you can develop your knowledge and skills that you can then take into the workplace.

Thu 03 Nov 13:00–13:45

Fri 24 Feb 13:00–13:45

Fri 28 Apr 13:00–13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:

It's not personal, it's to improve your work

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Focusing or forgetting?

In the digital age we are constantly surrounded by stimuli that distract us. Do you notice that you read a lot, but find it hard to remember the material? Find out how to manage distractions, focus better, remember what you are learning and make progress in your studies.

Fri 04 Nov 13:00–13:45

Thu 09 Feb 13:00–13:45

Fri 17 Mar 13:00–13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:

Switch off distractions and create a calm, focused work environment.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Ignite your motivation: keep learning

Learn about what influences our motivation and understand your preferred style of studying better, identify your priorities and structure your time to complete tasks in time. Find out strategies to motivate yourself so that you can increase your knowledge and enjoy your learning.

Thu 20 Oct 13:00–13:45

Mon 14 Nov 13:00–13:45

Fri 13 Jan 13:00–13:45

Fri 10 Feb 13:00–13:45

Thu 04 May 13:00–13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:

Identify your priorities, and structure your day.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Imperfect perfectionism

Do you find that you want to continually improve your work? Does it feel frustrating when it is not just so? Do you find yourself going over your work many times and do not feel you are making progress?

Find out why good enough is good enough.

Thu 10 Nov 13:00–13:45

Fri 20 Jan 13:00–13:45

Thu 16 Feb 13:00–13:45

Thu 02 Mar 13:00–13:45

Fri 19 May 13:00–13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:

Failure is part of life. We learn from it to make progress going forward.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Jump-starting your brain

Difficult to get started? Can't get finished? Fear of making mistakes? This creates unnecessary pressure to meet unrealistic standards. Find out what you can do to get started, make progress and hand in your work in on time.

Thu 13 Oct 13:00–13:45

Check the Learner's mindset section for information on webinars on this topic during the academic year.

★ OUR TOP TIP:

Break tasks down into small chunks.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON



Learners Mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done

Do you find it challenging to get started or continue with your assignments? Do you feel there is too much to do and do not know where to start? It can be frustrating, worrying and demotivating.

Academic work requires focused time and effort. Studying for your degree requires reading lengthy and more complex texts. It can be challenging to focus on one task for a set period when we are used to scanning websites and reading content online presented in a bite-sized format. As a result, it takes longer to get work done.

But it does not have to be this way. The Learner's mindset webinars provide the space to review

strategies to prevent procrastination so that you can make progress with your work.

Learning to prevent procrastination requires consistent effort and practice. Having a group of people with the same goal – to do well in your degree – is a great way to feel energised and motivated to do your work.

The webinar (30 mins) includes a summary of tips, and it is your opportunity to ask questions (you can use the chat, Mentimeter and mic). Each week provides the space to update on skills and apply your knowledge, and exchange ideas with others. It is a space for learning.

Thu 27 Oct 14:30-15:00
 Fri 04 Nov 14:30-15:00
 Thu 10 Nov 14:30-15:00
 Wed 16 Nov 14:30-15:00
 Fri 13 Jan 14:30-15:00
 Thu 19 Jan 14:30-15:00
 Fri 27 Jan 14:30-15:00
 Thu 02 Feb 14:30-15:00
 Fri 10 Feb 14:30-15:00
 Thu 16 Feb 14:30-15:00
 Fri 24 Feb 14:30-15:00
 Thu 02 Mar 14:30-15:00
 Fri 10 Mar 14:30-15:00
 Thu 16 Mar 14:30-15:00
 Fri 21 Apr 14:30-15:00
 Thu 27 Apr 14:30-15:00
 Fri 05 May 14:30-15:00
 Thu 11 May 14:30-15:00
 Fri 19 May 14:30-15:00

★ OUR TOP TIP:
 Create reminders to get started and focus on the benefit of making progress.
 YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Mindfulness: a brief introduction

In a busy world we need to create space to pause. This enables us to manage our thoughts, reduce the impact of demands and derive a sense of wellbeing. Find out what Mindfulness is about, and the benefits for health and learning.

Fri 28 Oct 13:00-13:45
 Thu 26 Jan 13:00-13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:
 Mindfulness is the opposite of mindlessness. Take time each day to check in with yourself.
 YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Mindfulness for exam prep

Tips to reduce tension and maintain your balance during revision.

Thu 27 Apr 13:00-13:45
 Fri 12 May 13:00-13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:
 Take a moment to breathe, pay attention to your environment.
 YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Our Life Tools programme won the RUSU staff–student partnership excellence award in 2018–19

Preparing for exams: evidence-based revision techniques

Do you feel you have a lot to revise in a short period of time? Are you worried about your results, or what to do if an exam doesn't go well? If so, you are not alone. Find out how to do well and keep well while under pressure.

Learn how to regulate emotions to increase concentration and memory, boost motivation, and reduce procrastination to manage your revision and exams effectively.

Mon 14 Nov 15:00-15:45
Thu 16 Mar 13:00-13:45
Thu 20 Apr 13:00-13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:
Start early, do a bit each day. Manage your energy levels.
YOUR TIP:

*For more details, and to book a place on a webinar, go to reading.ac.uk/life-tools
*Or, once enrolled, go through directly via the Life Tools Blackboard site.

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I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health

Life at university can be very busy and at times it may become stressful. Managing symptoms at an early stage is key to prevent them from having a negative impact on your health, wellbeing, and ability to study. Find out strategies to help reduce the impact of stress and maintain your health to study productively.

Fri 07 Oct 13:00-13:45
Wed 16 Nov 13:00-13:45
Fri 03 Feb 13:00-13:45
Fri 03 Mar 13:00-13:45
Thu 18 May 13:00-13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:
Eat well, sleep well, go for a walk.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Under pressure?

Preparing for a degree requires higher levels of depth in your work, while juggling multiple deadlines and managing expectations to achieve the academic standards required.

Build your strategies to manage pressure, maintain your strength, and learn better while keeping well.

Thu 06 Oct 13:00-13:45
Fri 11 Nov 13:00-13:45
Thu 19 Jan 13:00-13:45
Thu 09 Mar 13:00-13:45
Fri 05 May 13:00-13:45

★ OUR TOP TIP:
Set realistic goals and be your best friend.

YOUR TIP:

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Student feedback

The Talks/Webinars

“ Good life skill – especially as sleep is so important in student life due to deadlines and work, and to manage social events. ”

(Getting a good night's sleep)

Blackboard (weekly emails)

“ Receiving blackboard emails for the Life Tools programme is appreciated because the emails are so useful to navigate the programme, and see what webinars are available for each week. The emails also help me to be more organised through deciding which webinars to book. ”

(2nd year student)

About the programme

“ The Life Tools Programme exceeded my expectations. ”

(3rd year student)

“ I work more productively in a shorter amount of time. ”

(1st year student)

“ You can interact with international students... which make you have more of an open mind. ”

(2nd year student)

“ After the webinars I felt very inspired and motivated which I loved!. ”

(1st year student)

Other services

Study Advice

0118 378 4242 studyadvice@reading.ac.uk
visit reading.ac.uk/study-advice

RUSU activities

0118 378 4100 enquiries@rusu.co.uk visit rusu.co.uk/student-activities

Student Finance

0118 378 5555 studentfunding@reading.ac.uk
visit reading.ac.uk/money

Blackbullion (online financial resource) visit blackbullion.com

International Student Advice

int.adv@reading.ac.uk visit reading.ac.uk/essentials/international

Accommodation hotline

0118 378 7777 visit reading.ac.uk/essentials/accommodation

Sportspark

0118 378 8799 sport@reading.ac.uk visit sport.reading.ac.uk

Careers

0118 378 8359 careers@reading.ac.uk
visit reading.ac.uk/careers

Student Welfare Team

0118 378 4777 studentwelfare@reading.ac.uk
visit reading.ac.uk/welfare-team

Counselling and Wellbeing

0118 378 4216 counselling@reading.ac.uk
visit reading.ac.uk/counselling



The Life Tools programme is free and open to all students.



Life Tools

 For more information, you can email: talks@reading.ac.uk
reading.ac.uk/life-tools

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