

The guide to the

Life Tools

Programme 2024–2025



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 delivered both as webinars and also a combination of on campus and online (hybrid). The webinars consist of a 45-minute online interactive presentation via MS Teams, 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. You can check the details of the programme and book your place at reading.ac.uk/life-tools, and also find the link to the Life Tools Blackboard organisation.



66 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 99

(Third year student)

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

The Life Tools Blackboard

You can access online resources on our Blackboard organisation. You can find the link on the Life Tools page on Essentials. Once you enrol, you can access recordings, podcasts and receive a weekly email with information about upcoming webinars/talks.



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

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

The topics covered are categorised under the following headings:



to develop strategies to increase your ability to problemsolve and find creative solutions.

Knowledge to increase your

awareness to inform your decisions and actions to do well both personally and academically



Strategies to develop skills to do well in vour 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

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



Creativity



Knowledge



Tools



Wellness



Awareness

Life Tools

Talks/Webinars Programme

DATE	TALK/WEBINARS	DAY	TIME*	
SEP 24	Living and studying in the UK	TUE	10:00-10:45	
	Prepare for university	TUE	12:00-12:45	
	Maximise your university experience	TUE	14:00-14:45	
25	Prepare 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	15:00-15:45	
26	Maximise your 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	
27	Studying in a second language	FRI	13:00-13:45	
OCT 02	Settling in, getting to know others	WED	13:00-13:45	
03	A good night's sleep	THU	13:00-13:45	
09	Focusing or forgetting?	WED	13:00-13:45	
10	Managing uncertainty: Adapting to change	THU	13:00-13:45	
16	Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health	WED	13:00-13:45	
17	Under pressure?	THU	13:00-13:45	
23	Ignite your motivation: Keep learning	WED	13:00-13:45	
24	Jump-starting your brain	THU	13:00-13:45	
30	A good night's sleep	WED	13:00-13:45	
31	Bouncing back from setbacks	THU	13:00-13:45	
	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	THU	14:30-15:00	
	Mental health mini-series: Understanding anxiety	THU	15:00-15:30	

DATE	TALK/WEBINARS	DAY	TIME*	SELECT YOUR TALK
NOV 06	Confidence: "I can" and "I will"	WED	13:00-13:45	
	Mental health mini-series: Understanding low mood	WED	15:00-15:30	
07	Mindfulness: A brief introduction	THU	13:00-13:45	
	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	THU	14:30-15:00	
13	Focusing or forgetting?	WED	13:00-13:45	
	 Mental health mini-series: Understanding loneliness 	WED	15:00-15:30	
14	Balancing social media: Studies and responsibilities	THU	13:00-13:45	
	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	THU	14:30-15:00	
20	Imperfect perfectionism	WED	13:00-13:45	
	 Mental health mini-series: Maintaining boundaries to prioritise wellbeing 	WED	15:00-15:30	
21	Under pressure?	THU	13:00-13:45	
	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	THU	14:30-15:00	
27	Emotional intelligence	WED	13:00-13:45	
28	Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health	THU	13:00-13:45	
DEC 04	 Preparing for exams: Evidence-based revision techniques 	WED	13:00-13:45	
05	Mindfulness: A brief introduction	THU	13:00-13:45	
05	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	тни	14:30-15:00	

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



DATE		TALK/WEBINARS	DAY	TIME*	SELE YOU TAI
JAN	22	A good night's sleep	WED	13:00-13:45	
	23	 Preparing for exams: Evidence-based revision techniques 	THU	13:00-13:45	
	24	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	FRI	14:30-15:00	
	29	Feedback: Food for thought	WED	13:00-13:45	
	29	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	WED	14:30-15:00	
	30	Under pressure?	THU	13:00-13:45	
FEB	05	Bouncing back from setbacks	WED	13:00-13:45	
	06	Imperfect perfectionism	THU	13:00-13:45	.
	12	Ignite your motivation: Keep learning	WED	13:00-13:45	
	12	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	WED	14:30-15:00	
	13	Focusing or forgetting?	THU	13:00-13:45	
	19	Ace presentations and collaborations	WED	13:00-13:45	
	19	Mental health mini-series: Understanding anxiety	WED	15:00-15:30	
	20	Imperfect perfectionism	THU	13:00-13:45	
	20	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	THU	14:30-15:00	
	26	Ignite your motivation: Keep learning	WED	13:00-13:45	
	26	Mental health mini-series: Understanding low mood	WED	15:00-15:30	
	27	Confidence: "I can" and "I will"	THU	13:00-13:45	
	27	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	THU	14:30-15:00	

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

⊗ @UoR_LifeTools @UoR_student

DATE	TALK/WEBINARS	DAY	TIME *	SELECT YOUR TALK
MAR 05	Emotional intelligence	WED	13:00-13:45	
	 Mental health mini-series: Understanding loneliness 	WED	15:00-15:30	
06	Mindfulness: A brief introduction	THU	13:00-13:45	
	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	THU	14:30-15:00	
12	A good night's sleep	WED	13:00-13:45	
	 Maintaining boundaries to prioritise wellbeing 	WED	15:00-15:30	•
13	Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health	THU	13:00-13:45	
	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	THU	14:30-15:00	
19	 Preparing for exams: Evidence-based revision techniques 	WED	13:00-13:45	
	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	WED	14:30-15:00	
20	Managing uncertainty: Adapting to change	THU	13:00-13:45	
APR 23	 Preparing for exams: Evidence-based revision techniques 	WED	13:00-13:45	
	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	WED	14:30-15:00	
24	 Mindfulness for exam prep 	THU	13:00-13:45	
30	Ignite your motivation: Keep learning	WED	13:00-13:45	
	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	WED	14:30-15:00	
MAY 01	A good night's sleep	THU	13:00-13:45	
07	Beyond university	WED	13:00-13:45	
	 Learners mindset: Prevent procrastination and get things done 	WED	14:30-15:00	
08	Looking ahead: You and the workplace	THU	13:00-13:45	



Welcome Week

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

Live well on a student budaet and prevent debt

Balance essential expenses and treat vourself. Make vour budget work for you. Find out about Blackbullion. an online tool to manage vour budget at blackbullion.com

Wed 25 Sep 15:00-15:45

Palmer 106

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

Living and studvina in the UK

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

Tues 24 Sep 10:00-10:45

Thur 26 Sep 13:00-13:45

Palmer 106

YOUR TIP:

OUR TOP TIP:

Ask others about life in the UK, and practise your language skills.

Maximise vour university experience

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

Tues 24 Sep 14:00-14:45

Thur 26 Sep 11:00-11:45

Palmer 106

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

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 24 Sep 12:00-12:45 Palmer G10

Wed 25 Sep 11:00-11:45 Palmer 106

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

Settling in. aettina to know others

Whenever we go to a new place. what interests us most is aettina to know people, and establishing relationships that have the potential to last.

Wed 25 Sep 13:00-13:45

Thur 26 Sep 14:30-15:15

Palmer 106

Wed 02 Oct 13:00-13:45

Webinar - register on reading.ac.uk/life-tools

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

Studving in a second language

This is an ideal opportunity to learn more about vour subject and about the culture. It can be challenging at times, when not feeling fluent enough. This will include strategies to manage the transition and facilitate vour progress in your studies.

Fri 27 Sep 13:00-13:45

Palmer 106

OUR TOP TIP: Speaking in English every day means more practice and increases confidence and fluency. YOUR TIP-

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

Agood 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.

Thu 03 Oct 13:00-13:45 Wed 30 Oct 13:00-13:45 Wed 22 Jan 13:00-13:45 Wed 12 Mar 13:00-13:45 Thu 01 May 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

Plan technology free time before bedtime.

YOUR TIP-

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.

Wed 19 Feb 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP: Simple is clearer, consult with each other YOUR TIP-

Balancina social media: Studies and responsibilities

Balancing social media. academic pursuits, and personal responsibilities can be challenging Find out practical ways to navigate the digital landscape and make choices that enhance rather than hinder your academic and personal development.

Thu 14 Nov 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

Prioritise your tasks for the day, and focus on these. Put your phone out of view while studying. YOUR TIP:

Beyond university

Finishing your degree is a time of change.

Saving good bye to friends, as well as looking ahead and preparing for life beyond university.

Wed 07 May 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

Keep in contact and follow up with friends. Maintain hope for the next stage. YOUR TIP:

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 kev skill to learn from these situations

Thu 31 Oct 13:00-13:45 Wed 05 Feb 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

Listen to yourself, maintain eneray levels YOUR TIP-

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-beina.

Wed 06 Nov 13:00-13:45 Thu 27 Feb 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

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

11

10

Emotional intelliaence

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 27 Nov 13:00-13:45 Wed 05 Mar 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

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

YOUR TIP:

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.

Wed 29 Jan 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

It's not personal, it's to improve your work YOUR TIP-

Focusina 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 vour studies.

Wed 09 Oct 13:00-13:45 Wed 13 Nov 13:00-13:45 Thu 13 Feb 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

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

YOUR TIP:

lanite vour motivation: Keep learning

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

Wed 23 Oct 13:00-13:45 Wed 12 Feb 13:00-13:45 Wed 26 Feb 13:00-13:45 Wed 30 Apr 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

Identify your priorities, and structure your day. YOUR TIP:

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 aoina over vour work many times and do not feel you are making progress?

Find out why good enough is good enough.

Wed 20 Nov 13:00-13:45 Thu 06 Feb 13:00-13:45 Thu 20 Feb 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

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

Jump-starting vour 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 24 Oct 13:00-13:45

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

OUR TOP TIP:

Break tasks down into small chunks.

YOUR TIP-

13

12

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 lenathy 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 aet 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

Fach week's webinar (30 mins) we cover different strategies and tips to develop skills. It is your opportunity to ask questions (you can use the chat Mentimeter and mic) The webinars provide the opportunity to ask questions and exchange ideas with others. It is space for learning

Thu 31 Oct 14:30-15:00 Thu 07 Nov 14:30-15:00 Thu 14 Nov 14:30-15:00 Thu 21 Nov 14:30-15:00 Thu 05 Dec 14:30-15:00 Fri 24 Jan 14:30-15:00 Wed 29 Jan 14:30-15:00 Wed 12 Feb 14:30-15:00 Thu 20 Feb 14:30-15:00 Thu 27 Feb 14:30-15:00 Thu 06 Mar 14:30-15:00 Thu 13 Mar 14:30-15:00 Wed 19 Mar 14:30-15:00 Wed 23 Apr 14:30-15:00 Wed 30 Apr 14:30-15:00 Wed 07 May 14:30-15:00

OUR TOP TIP:

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

Looking ahead: You and the workplace

A talk for final-year students preparing to enter the workforce we offer guidance on navigating the transition from university to the professional world. We will explore practical strategies for managing uncertainty, coping with rejection and building confidence for interviews Learn how to cultivate a resilient mindset and plan for the next stage. And we will talk about how to make a great start in your new job once you have secured it.

Students from other years who are interested in this topic are welcome too

Thu 08 May 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

Maintain a routine and focus on opportunities. YOUR TIP:

Managing uncertainty: Adapting to change

Studying for a degree and preparing for the future, requires learning to manage change. Find out about ways to maintain your balance as you adapt to new situations and keep well and develop your potential.

Thu 10 Oct 13:00-13:45 Thu 20 Mar 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

Focus on what you can do now and maintain your eneray level.

YOUR TIP:

14 15

Mental Health mini-series

Studying at university can present some challenges. In this series of webinars (30 mins each) we will focus on providing information to understand anxiety. low mood, loneliness and managing boundaries to restore balance and maintain wellbeing.

Maintaining boundaries to prioritise wellbeing

Wed 12 Mar 15:00-15:30 Wed 20 Nov 15:00-15:30

Understanding anxiety

Thu 31 Oct 15:00-15:30 Wed 19 Feb 15:00-15:30

Understanding loneliness Wed 13 Nov 15:00-15:30

Wed 05 Mar 15:00-15:30

Understanding low mood Wed 06 Nov 15:00-15:30

Wed 26 Feb 15:00-15:30

OUR TOP TIP:

Acknowledge your emotions. Then, take time each day to do something that energises you. YOUR TIP:

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.

Thu 07 Nov 13:00-13:45 Thu 05 Dec 13:00-13:45 Thu 06 Mar 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

Mindfulness is the opposite of mindlessness. Take time each day to check in with vourself.

YOUR TIP:

Mindfulness for exam prep

Tips to reduce tension and maintain your balance during revision. Thu 24 Apr 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

Take a moment to breathe. pay attention to your environment. YOUR TIP:

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.

Wed 04 Dec 13:00-13:45 Thu 23 Jan 13:00-13:45 Wed 19 Mar 13:00-13:45 Wed 23 Apr 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

Start early, do a bit each dav. Manage vour energy levels.

YOUR TIP:

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.

Wed 16 Oct 13:00-13:45 Thu 28 Nov 13:00-13:45 Thu 13 Mar 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

Eat well, sleep well, get some fresh air.

YOUR TIP:

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

Thu 17 Oct 13:00-13:45 Thu 21 Nov 13:00-13:45 Thu 30 Jan 13:00-13:45

OUR TOP TIP:

Set realistic goals and be your best friend. YOUR TIP:

PLAN TO ATTEND ON

I PLAN TO ATTEND ON

The Life Tools Certificate

The aim of the certificate is to provide some structure so that you can maintain your motivation and feel productive by developing habits that support your progress towards your academic and personal goals.

To obtain the Life Tools certificate, you must:

Attend 6 webinars/talks. Your
department may be offering some
of the talks as part of your course.
Attending these will count towards
the certificate too. To make the most
of the programme, begin to apply the
knowledge and strategies as soon
as you have been to a talk so that
you can identify what works for you.
Complete a worksheet after each
webinar/talk you attend.

Check the Life Tools page on Essentials for additional webinars/talks during the year (for example, "Understanding ADHD").

Register on the Life Tools Blackboard organisation to receive a weekly email with details of upcoming talks/webinars.

- Attend 2 group training sessions.
 This element of the programme gives you the opportunity to discuss what you have found when applying the knowledge and strategies.
 There will also be an opportunity for questions and answers. The focus of the discussion will be on identifying what helps or hinders applying what you are learning, as well as having an opportunity to expand on your interest in the topics. Complete a worksheet per group discussion.
- Write a reflective piece (about 2 sides of A4). The purpose of this exercise is to reflect on what you have learned, your experience of applying the knowledge and strategies in a more consistent manner, and how you plan to take your learning experience into the future.



Student feedback

66 I remember entering my student hall for the first time and seeing the Life Tools brochure on my table. I was very excited to see what it had to offer students. Attending the first talk during Welcome Week was one of the best decisions I made. The talk was well-structured, and we had the opportunity to interact with fellow students and contribute to the discussions. The online webinars after Welcome Week addressed most of the issues I had, such as settling in, procrastination, stress management, sleep management, and more. I highly recommend any student give it a try, as it is very helpful. 99

(2nd year student)

student, this programme put many university struggles into context. For example, financial management, confidence, and settling in. Better yet, the weekly talks create a sense of community. It's good to know that you are not alone in feeling unsure about the future. 99

(3rd year student)

(3rd year student)

the Life Tools programme since my first year and each time I have left the webinars/seminars feeling much more positive and knowledgeable. It has the perfect balance of personal and academic advice!

of the Life Tools webinars now and they have been so helpful in supporting me through my studies and mental health. I particularly enjoyed the ones ran during exam periods and the mental health series as I took away key skills from those! Some of them are 30 minutes but make a huge difference so I would recommend them to anyone who has time to spare!

(3rd year student)

programme has transformed my academic journey by teaching me the importance of quality sleep, effective time management, tackling procrastination, and maintaining motivation, all while enhancing my overall well-being and mental health. 99

(Master's student)



Other services

Study Advice

0118 378 4242 studyadvice@reading.ac.uk

visit reading.ac.uk/study-advice

RSU activities

0118 378 4100 enquiries@rusu.co.uk visit readingsu.co.uk

Student Financial Support

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

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

Accommodation 0118 200 5011 visit reading.ac.uk/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

Wardens and Hall Mentors

0800 029 1984 wardens@reading.ac.uk visit rdg.ac/wardens-and-hall-mentors

24/7 Confidential Student Support Line

0800 023 2466 (free)

or live chat with qualified experts via the Wisdom AI app

Discover Life Tools on Instagram









@UoR_Student

Follow **@UoR_Student** for student-made content all about the Life Tools programme.







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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