

The guide to

LIFE TOOLS

PROGRAMME 2019–2020



Increase **your** knowledge, enhance **your** life

Acquire. Assimilate. Apply



LIFE TOOLS PROGRAMME

How the Life Tools programme benefits you

Our Life Tools programme is designed by experts to facilitate your transition into university and enhance your student experience. It also allows you to take control of your personal development and strengthen your skills to achieve your academic potential and prepare for life beyond university.

In today's demanding job market, employers are looking for applicants with specific skills, abilities and personal strengths to work in their organisations. They are seeking candidates with behaviours and competencies which complement their academic achievements, and who can work independently while being good team players.

Learn skills that will enable you to make a difference in the workplace.

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

Manage academic demands effectively Improve resilience when life becomes challenging Enhance your personal wellbeing Every talk is about developing tools to use in daily life, and consists of a 45 minute presentation followed by an opportunity to discuss, ask questions and give feedback.

The topics covered are categorised under the following headings:

- creativity,
- knowledge,
- · wellness, and
- global awareness.

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

You can expand your experience by attending the monthly group discussion exploring topics covered by the talks in more detail, and hear how others are applying the strategies in day-to-day life.

For more details refer to the timetable at the end of this brochure.

Enroll on the Life Tools Blackboard course

Popular talks will be repeated so if you missed a talk, or cannot attend because of other commitments, you can keep up to date by enrolling on the Life Tools Blackboard course. It also contains resources and links to the Life Tools blog. which you can access at any time. Once enrolled. you will receive a weekly email with information about upcoming talks. and group sessions, as well as general information on all the topics.

Visit

reading.ac.uk/life-tools

- to enrol on the Life Tools Blackboard course,
- Blackboard course,
 access the Life Tools blog.
- find out what students have been saying about the programme.







Knowledge



Tools



Wellness



The Life Tools programme is free and open to all students

- there's no need to book.



WELCOME WEEK

Prep for success

Useful tips to improve concentration, prevent procrastination, and be productive in your first few weeks at university. Learn about the Life Tools certificate, Blackboard course and blog. Find out how you can maximise your potential and do well academically.

Wed 25 Sep 11:00-12:00 Palmer, G10

Living in the UK

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

Wed 25 Sep 13:00–14:00 Palmer, G10

Maximise your university experience

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

Thu 26 Sep 11:00–12:00 Palmer, 104 and 13:00–14:00 Palmer, 103

LIFE TOOLS TALKS 2019-2020

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.

Wed 16 Oct 15:00–16:00 Thu 28 Nov 16:00–17:00 Mon 13 Jan 13:00–14:00 Wed 12 Feb 14:00–15:00 Wed 6 May 15:00–16:00 Thu 14 May 14:00–15:00

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 engage with others and get your message across. Find out how to work better with others, polish your presentation skills and manage group projects effectively.

Wed 30 Oct 15:00-16:00 Mon 3 Feb 13:00-14:00

OUR TOP TIP:

Simple is clearer, consult with each other.

YOUR TIP:

Beyond university

Prepare yourself for the end of your time as a student, to saying goodbye to friends, as well as looking ahead at life beyond university.

Wed 22 Apr 15:00–16:00 Wed 27 May 13:00–14:00

OUR TOP TIP:

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

YOUR HP:

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. Learn ways in which you can prepare to deal with obstacles and unexpected events with confidence

Wed 10 Oct 17:30–18:30 Mon 25 Nov 13:00–14:00 Wed 29 Jan 12:00–13:00 Thu 23 Apr 14:00–15:00 Thu 6 May 13:00–14:00

OUR TOP TIP:

Listen to yourself, maintain energy levels.

VOLID TID:

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 wellbeing.

Wed 13 Nov 14:00-15:00 Wed 5 Feb. 15:00-16:00

OUR TOP TIP:

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

YOUR TIP:

Creating connections: 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 the transition into a new environment, settle in, and communicate with others when all is new and different, and make friends over time.

Wed 3 Oct 13:00–14:00 Thu 31 Oct 13:00–14:00 Thu 23 Jan 16:00–17:00

OUR TOP TIP:

Know yourself, reach out and talk with others.

/OLID TID:

Emotional Intelligence

People who know themselves well and can manage their emotions effectively do well both at work and in life. Find out ways in which you can boost your capacity to understand yourself, your reactions and behaviour. Learn strategies to communicate with others effectively at university, work and in daily life.

Mon 9 Dec 16:00-17:00 Thu 5 Mar 13:00-14:00

OUR TOP TIP:

Self-awareness is key. Notice your thoughts and feelings. Give yourself time.

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 which you can then take into the workplace.

Mon 2 Dec 13:00-14:00 Wed 4 Mar 14:00-15:00

OUR TOP TIP:

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

YOUR HP:

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.

Mon 30 Sep. 13:00–14:00

Mon 30 Sep 15:00–14:00 Thu 21 Nov 16:00–17:00 Mon 10 Feb 16:00–17:00 Mon 2 Mar 13:00–14:00 Mon 27 Apr 13:00–14:00 Mon 18 May 16:00–17:00

OUR TOP TIP:

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

OLID TID.

Ignite your motivation: keep learning

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

Thu 17 Oct 13:00-14:00 Thu 16 Jan 16:00-17:00

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 going over your work many times without making progress?

Find out why good enough is good enough. Learn how to overcome challenges, deal with setbacks and manage expectations so that you make good progress and submit work you are proud of.

Wed 4 Dec 14:00-15:00 Mon 9 Mar 16:00-17:00

OUR TOP TIP:

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

YOUR TIP-

Jump-starting your brain

Difficult to get started? Can't get finished? Often, not feeling like doing work is more about not being sure about how to make progress, or fear of making a mistake. This creates unnecessary pressure to meet unrealistic standards Find out what you can do to overcome procrastination make progress and hand in your work in on time.

Mon 14 Oct 13:00–14:00 Thu 14 Nov 13:00–14:00 Mon 20 Jan 16:00–17:00 Thu 13 Feb 16:00–17:00 Wed 11 Mar 14:00–15:00 Thu 7 May 13:00–14:00

OUR TOP TIP:

Break tasks down into small chunks.

OLID TID.

Living well on a student budget

Do you find it hard to balance important cover expenses with socialising and treating yourself? Understand what influences your relationship with money. Knowing your budget, and how to make it work for you will allow you to have enough for what the stress of getting into debt

Wed 23 Oct 14:00–15:00 Thu 5 Dec 16:00–17:00 Wed 15 Jan 15:00–16:00 Mon 2 Mar 13:00–14:00

OUR TOP TIP:

Log expenses. Keep a running total, know how much you have available.

YOUR TIP-

Men and the university experience

This talk will be about understanding men and relationships, concepts of masculinity, male mental health and wellbeing.

Is there a crisis in masculinity as the media would have us believe? Is there really any difference between the male and female experience? Is there a battle of the sexes and how does it play out at uni? Are men less good at relationship talk and if so why? Why are men so much more likely to become addicts and take their own lives?

Everybody (men and women) are invited to come and explore these important themes, and to learn more about themselves, their friends and partners.

Thu 24 Oct 16:00-17:00 Thu 6 Feb 16:00-17:00

OUR TOP TIP:

Be yourself, discussing things with others improves wellbeing.

YOUR TIP

Mindfulness: a brief introduction Part 1: Getting started

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

Mon 28 Oct 13:00-14:00 Mon 27 Jan 12:00-13:00

Mindfulness: a brief introduction Part 2: Keep going

Learn some mindful activities and find out how to make it part of your everyday life. It is not necessary to have been to part 1 to attend this talk

Wed 27 Nov 14:00–15:00 Wed 26 Feb 14:00–15:00

Mindfulness for exam prep

Tips to reduce tension and maintain your balance during revision.

Wed 22 Apr 13:00-14:00

OUR TOP TIP:

Take a moment to breathe, pay attention to your environment.

OUR TIP:

Preparing for exams

Do you feel you have a lot to revise in a short period of time? Does your mind sometimes go blank when you look at an exam paper? Are you worried about your results, or what to do if an exam doesnt 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.

Thu 12 Dec 13:00–14:00 Wed 18 Mar 14:00–15:00 Mon 23 Mar 16:00–17:00 Mon 20 Apr 13:00–14:00 Wed 29 Apr 13:00–14:00 Mon 11 May 13:00–14:00 Wed 20 May 13:00–14:00

OUR TOP TIP:

Maintain healthy habits, manage your energy levels.

YOUR HP

Romantic relationships – navigating changes and challenges

Romantic relationships can be very rewarding provided they involve mutual trust and respect. At times feelings change, turning the world upside down and leading to break ups and feelings of sadness and loss. Find out ways to manage these challenges. keep safe, understand feelings, and restore vour stability and hope for the future

Mon 25 Nov 16:00-17:00 Thu 27 Feb 13:00-14:00

OUR TOP TIP:

If it feels wrong, it IS wrong.

VOLID TID

Socialising and substances: When is it too much?

Socialising with peers often includes having a drink as a way of relaxing and having fun. But how do we know when to stop? Find out what works for you, how to prevent the negative impacts of substances on your body and health and enjoy socialising safely.

Wed 20 Nov 13;00-14:00 Thu 30 Jan 15:00-16:00

OUR TOP TIP:

All in moderation, know your body and what is important to you.

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 preventing 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. Learn about the benefits of exercise and nutrition for learning and feeling well.

Wed Oct 13:00–14:00 Mon 21 Oct 16:00–17:00 Wed 18 Nov 14:00–15:00 Thu 16 Jan 13:00–14:00 Mon 24 Feb 13:00–14:00 Thu 12 Mar 17:30–18:30 Wed 13 May 13:00–14:00 Thu 21 May 13:00–14:00

OUR TOP TIP:

Eat well, sleep well, go for a walk.

VOLID TID-

Support your mates

This is a 3-hour interactive workshop developed by Student Minds for students who may be supporting a friend experiencing mental health difficulties or would like to know more about mental health, the support available, and maintaining wellbeing while at university.

The workshop covers:

- understanding the student experience at university,
- spotting the signs that your friend/peer may be struggling,
- starting a conversation with that individual,
- basic listening and motivating skills,
- signposting and information about what professional and further support is available,
- looking after your own wellbeing.

It includes presentations, group discussion and individual activities delivered by trained Student Services staff. To book a place email talks@reading.ac.uk

Wed 20 Nov 14:00-17:00 Thu 30 Jan 14:00-17:00

OUR TOP TIP:

Support by maintaining boundaries and encouraging others to contact services.

Thinking ahead: the workplace and you

Discover your strengths, identify what motivates you and prepare your mindset to manage the challenges of the changing work environment. Find out ways to build your confidence to communicate what you can contribute at work.

Wed 11 Dec 14:00-15:00 Mon 16 Mar 15:00-16:00

OUR TOP TIP:

Start early, contact the Careers team.

YOUR TIP:

Under pressure?

Preparing for a degree requires in-depth 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 3 Oct 16:00–17:00 Mon 11 Nov 13:00–14:00 Wed 22 Jan 14:00–15:00 Thu 19 Mar 13:00–14:00 Thu 30 Apr 13:00–14:00

OUR TOP TIP:

Set realistic goals and be your best friend.

YOUR TIP:



STUDENT FEEDBACK

The Talks

66 They really helped give practical advice on how to be more organized, motivated, and to do well, not just at uni, but at just getting things done, and feeling more productive. They helped me to always feel like I was working on improving myself, not just improving academically. 99

(Talk: Under pressure?)

66 It is a great way to help with problems, getting work done, and changes your way of thinking about procrastination. I know now what to do, I have positive thoughts about getting work done. **99**

(Talk: Jump-starting your brain)

Blackboard emails (during exams)

advice and encouragement over the revision period was useful and made me feel like I was being supported despite not being on campus. Also, it was nice to have a continuing link with University, as it is easy to feel forgotten when studying a lot. 99

LIFE TOOLS

TALKS PROGRAMME 2019-2020

DATE	TALK	WHEN & WHERE	
SEP 25	Prep for university	WED 11:00-12:00 PALMER, G10	
	Living in the UK	WED 13:00-14:00 PALMER, G10	
26	 Maximise your university experience 	THU 11:00–12:00 PALMER, 104	
	 Maximise your university experience 	THU 15:00-16:00 PALMER, 103	
30	Focusing or forgetting?	MON 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
OCT 03	 Creating connections: settling in, getting to know others 	THU 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
	Under pressure?	THU 16:00-17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
09	 Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health 	WED 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
10	 Bouncing back from setbacks 	THU 17:30-18:30 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
14	Jump-starting your brain	MON 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
16	A good night's sleep	WED 15:00-16:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
17	 Ignite your motivation: keep learning 	THU 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
21	Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health	MON 16:00-17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 126	
23	Living well on a student budget	WED 14:00-15:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
24	Men and the university experience	THU 16:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 126	
28	Mindfulness: a brief introduction Part 1	MON 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
30	 Ace presentations and collaboration 	WED 15:00–16:00 EDITH MORLEY, 125	
31	 Creating connections: settling in, getting to know others 	THU 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	

DATE	TALK	WHEN & WHERE	✓
NOV 11	Under pressure?	MON 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	LEY, 124
13	Confidence: "I can" and "I will"	WED 14:00–15:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
14	Jump-starting your brain	THU 13:00-14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
18	Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health	MON 14:00-15:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
20	Socialising and substances: When is it too much?	WED 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
	Support your mates	WED 14:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 125	
21	Focusing or forgetting?	THU 16:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 126	
25	Bouncing back from setbacks	MON 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
25	 Romantic relationships- navigating changes and challenges 	MON 16:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 126	
27	Mindfulness: a brief introduction Part 2	WED 14:00–15:00 EDITH MORLEY, 125	
28	A good night's sleep	THU 16:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 126	
DEC 02	Feedback: food for thought	MON 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
04	Imperfect perfectionism	WED 14:00–15:00 EDITH MORLEY, 125	
05	Living well on a student budget	THU 16:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 126	
09	Emotional intelligence	MON 16:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 126	
11	Thinking ahead: the workplace and you	WED 14:00–15:00 EDITH MORLEY, 125	
12	Preparing for exams	THU 13:00-14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	

DATE	TALK	WHEN & WHERE	✓
JAN 1	🗸 🗶 A good night's sleep	MON 13:00-14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	
1	 Living well on a student budget 	WED 15:00–16:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
1	 Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health 	THU 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	
***	 Ignite your motivation: keep learning 	THU 16:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
2	Jump-starting your brain	MON 16:00-17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
2	Under pressure?	WED 14:00-15:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
2:	 Creating connections: settling in, getting to know others 	THU 16:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 125	
2'	 Mindfulness: a brief introduction Part 1 	MON 12:00–13:00 EDITH MORLEY, 125	
2	Bouncing back from setbacks	WED 12:00-13:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
	Support your mates	WED 14:00-17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 125	
3	Socialising and substances: When is it too much?	THU 15:00–16:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
FEB 03	 Ace presentations and collaboration 	MON 13:00-14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	
0	6 Confidence: "I can" and "I will"	WED 15:00-16:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
0	6 Men and the university experience	THU 16:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 125	
1	Focusing or forgetting?	MON 16:00-17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
1	2 🔵 A good night's sleep	WED 14:00–15:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
1	Jump-starting your brain	THU 16:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
2	 Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health 	MON 13:00-14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	
2	 Mindfulness: a brief introduction Part 2 	WED 14:00-15:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
2'	 Romantic relationships- navigating changes and challenges 	THU 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	

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09	Imperfect perfectionism	MON 16:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
11	Jump-starting your brain	WED 14:00-15:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
12	 Stressed? Learn ways to maintain your health 	THU 17:30–18:30 EDITH MORLEY, 125	
16	 Thinking ahead: the workplace and you 	MON 16:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
18	Preparing for exams	WED 14:00–15:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
19	Under pressure?	THU 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	
23	Preparing for exams	MON 16:00–17:00 EDITH MORLEY, 124	
APR 20	Preparing for exams	MON 13:00-14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	
22	Mindfulness for exam prep	WED 13:00-14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	
	Beyond university	WED 15:00-16:00 EDITH MORLEY, 175	
23	Bouncing back from setbacks	THU 14:00-15:00 EDITH MORLEY, 175	
27	Focusing or forgetting?	MON 13:00-14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	
29	Preparing for exams	WED 13:00-14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	
30	Under pressure?	THU 13:00-14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	
MAY 06	Bouncing back from setbacks	WED 13:00-14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	
	A good night's sleep	WED 15:00-16:00 EDITH MORLEY, 175	
07	Jump-starting your brain	THU 13:00-14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	
11	Preparing for exams	MON 13:00–14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	
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27	Beyond university	WED 13:00-14:00 EDITH MORLEY, 301	

■ Wellness ■ Global Awareness

Other services

Study Advice

0118 378 4242 studyadvice@reading.ac.uk reading.ac.uk/study

RUSU activities

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

Student Finance

0118 378 5555 studentfunding@reading.ac.uk reading.ac.uk/studentfinance

Blackbullion (online financial resource)

reading.ac.uk/blackbullion

International Student Advice

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

Accommodation hotline

0118 378 7777 reading.ac.uk/accommodation

Sportspark

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

Careers

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

Student Welfare Team

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

Counselling and Wellbeing

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

Big White Wall (24hrs online counselling resource)

reading.ac.uk/big-white-wall

LIFE TOOLS

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

