# Study Advice from Students

## Before a lecture, seminar or other class

“(I use) specific software, like the ‘Inspiration’ software where you can create mind maps, and I can record lectures and have access to lecture notes; I find these so much useful and helps with the reading at the end of the day. Also visual aids, and also being able to listen to the lecture again, that’s very useful. I also have the ‘Olympus sonority’ software, it has an extension of the ‘Sonocent audio (notetaker)’ where you can put the lecture notes and then put your own notes.”

Student focus group, PESE Project 2016

* At the start of each semester get to know each Moodle site, locate the key information for each module and understand the structure that has been used.
* Create a semester planner using Upgrade's template.
* Prepare for lectures, seminars, or practicals by giving yourself time to read through the information that is provided on Moodle.
* Whether you prefer printed versions or to make notes on your laptop, you can convert documents into the format and style you prefer and bring it to the class.
* Prioritised reading lists help you to identify the most important reading, always aim to read more than just the essential reading.
* Do your reading ahead so you can prepare any questions.
* During a lecture, seminar or other class
* Don’t rely solely on the information on Moodle and your independent study; lectures, seminars and practicals provide other ways to learn and get to know your subject.
* If recording your session it helps if you have an external microphone. Our Assistive Technology Manager and Trainer has more [tips for recording lectures](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ffjqzqwZX0uFiqPA4WmFlumhKa6eaPJWp7JjRsERBIg/edit#heading=h.3y5x51aegku5).

## Preparing for assignments, exams and other assessed work

* Read your assignment feedback and contact the marker if you have any questions.
* Review feedback from several pieces of work with your Academic Adviser to highlight any themes and ask for advice about how you can improve.
* Attend sessions for advice on statistics, maths, and study skills such as planning and writing essays, assignments and dissertations with [Upgrade](https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/upgrade/)
* If you have Dyslexia or another specific learning difficulty, access study skills support with a [Dyslexia/SpLD Specialist Tutor](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/dyslexia-spld/support/tutor-support/).
* It helps to have [good IT skills](https://www.skillsyouneed.com/rhubarb/essential-digital-skills.html).
* Learn to use [built in accessibility features](https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/using-assistive-and-accessible-technology-in-teaching-and-learning/built-in-accessibility). These include changing background colour, voice typing, your personal dictionary and using styles and ordered lists:
  + [Microsoft Word](https://support.office.com/en-gb/article/Learn-how-to-navigate-in-Word-using-accessible-features-a16a93f4-163f-4f48-a246-78c2573d8953)
  + [Google docs](https://www.google.com/accessibility/products-features.html)
  + [Apple](https://www.apple.com/uk/support/accessibility/)
  + [PDFs (Adobe)](http://www.adobe.com/content/dam/Adobe/en/accessibility/pdfs/accessing-pdf-sr.pdf)
* Find what works for you - keep trying out different strategies until you find the ones which are right for you.

## Making the most of your course

“I think talking to the other students’- to meet up with peers and just talk seems helpful”

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* If you have found a great video, podcast or article which has helped your understanding, share it.
* Not all the knowledge and information you need will be easy to find, develop your skills to be able to research around the topic and find resources that appeal to you. It helps to have great [library skills](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/library/library-services/information-skills/teach-yourself/)!
* Speak to your Module Leader or course reps about improvements which would help students on your course.
* Know who your Academic Adviser and Student Support Coordinators are and what they can advise on (check your PIP page).
* And finally, be sure to get enough sleep and keep hydrated!