



## Improving your writing skills for higher education

There's plenty of help available if you're returning to study and want to brush up your reading and writing skills.

### Ask your college

Find out what resources and support the college or university you hope to attend has to offer. Some provide one-to-one help from a tutor, or organise student mentoring schemes that enable more experienced students to offer advice.

### Face-to-face courses

Attending a regular class can increase your motivation and provides the opportunity to work with other like-minded students.

You can take a '**Skills for Life**' qualification if you are over 16 years of age, have left compulsory full-time education and do not have an up-to-date English qualification at GCSE or equivalent level.

Ask your nearest FE College for a prospectus or find out more at:

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/QualificationsExplained](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/QualificationsExplained)

### Distance learning courses

If you prefer to study in your own time, or it's not possible to attend a face-to-face class, the Open University offers short courses called **Openings** in several subjects.

Openings courses all include one-to-one telephone support from a personal tutor and are designed to help you develop your writing skills and prepare for study at higher education level.

[www.open.ac.uk/openings](http://www.open.ac.uk/openings)

### Taster courses

Taster courses give you an idea of what you might meet on a longer course. '**Learndirect**' offers free online taster courses in English as part of their Skills for Life programme. Find out more on the website or phone 0800 101901 for more information.

[www.learndirect.co.uk](http://www.learndirect.co.uk)

### Online skills development

**BBC raw** (reading and writing) can help develop your skills through online activities such as games, quizzes and tests. You can also find out about your nearest RaW centre – this could be your local library or learning centre – where you can take part in activities and share your experiences with others.

[www.bbc.co.uk/raw](http://www.bbc.co.uk/raw)

**BBC Skillswise** offers clear and basic help with English grammar, spelling, vocabulary, reading, writing and listening.

[www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise](http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise)

A free booklet is available from Skillswise, PO Box 7000, Manchester, M60 3HE.

The Open University **Skills for Study** website offers a range of study skills materials, including resources relating to reading, writing and note-taking.

[www.open.ac.uk/skillsforstudy](http://www.open.ac.uk/skillsforstudy)

The Open University's **OpenLearn** project offers free downloadable educational material on a range of subjects including study skills.

[www.open.ac.uk/openlearn](http://www.open.ac.uk/openlearn)

**Move On** lets you test your English skills online, and helps prepare you for the National Certificate in Adult Literacy. If you need a qualification in the subject the website can direct you to a local test centre.

[www.move-on.org.uk](http://www.move-on.org.uk)

### Study skills in print

Depending on where you are and what you're doing it may be easier to dip in and out of a book rather than work from a screen. If you prefer the printed word then browse the Study Skills section of your local library or bookshop to find a book that you're comfortable with and that interests you. Then work on those chapters which deal with writing skills and the use of English.

The titles listed below are a selection of recommended books:

**The Study Skills Handbook**-by Stella Cottrell (Published by Palgrave Macmillan; 3Rev Ed edition-Feb 2008) ISBN Number: 0230573053

**The Buzan Study Skills Handbook: The Shortcut to Success in Your Studies with Mind Mapping, Speed Reading and Winning Memory Techniques**-by Tony Buzan (Publisher: BBC Active-22 Dec 2006) ISBN Number: 1406612073

**Essential Study Skills: The Complete Guide to Success at University**-by Tom Burns and Sandra Sinfield (Published SAGE Publications Ltd-Second edition-22 April 2008) ISBN Number:1412945852

**How to Write Better Essays**- by Bryan Greetham (Published by Palgrave Macmillan-2d edition-29 Feb 2008) ISBN Number: 0230224806

**How to Write Essays and Assignments**-by Jonathan Weyers and Kathleen McMillan (Published by Prentice Hall-26 Jul 2007) ISBN Number: 0273713574

**The Good Study Guide**- by Andy Northedge (published by The Open University.2d rev edition-5 Feb 2005) ISBN Number: 0749259744

You'll find many more in any good bookshop or online by searching:

[www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)