

# Academic Skills At Wolfson College



Laura Jeffrey, Academic Skills Librarian



**Lee Library Wolfson College**

# Skills support

- Not remedial
- To help you excel at all levels
- Technical skills: searching for resources, citing them in a new style, avoiding plagiarism
- Academic skills: efficiency and effectiveness in reading, writing, note-making



# Academic skills support at Cambridge

- Pre-arrival [CamGuides](#)
- Department or Faculty
- Libraries including [LibGuides](#)
- Language Centre
- Disability Resource Centre
- Counselling Service

Much available through [UTBS](#)



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# Academic skills support at Wolfson

- Director of Studies for subject-specific support
- Library staff for generic skills support
  - Online
    - [Using the library](#)
    - [LibGuide](#) pages, pdf guides, how to videos
  - 1-2-1: email for an appointment
- [Royal Literary Fund Fellow](#) for writing support
- WolfWorks Workshops



# WolfWorks

- Year-long programme launched October 2019
- Make strong ties with the community of first-year undergraduates
- Improve your confidence by interacting with peers in a safe and collegial environment
- Develop academic and personal skills to help you transition to studying at Cambridge
- Resources on Moodle after each session
- *Optional* - Earn credits to apply for a Wolfson Enrichment Grant towards an activity in summer 2021



# Enrichment Grant

- To qualify to apply for a grant attend 8 sessions and submit reflective statements
- At least four sessions must be provided by Wolfson
- Submit application March 2021
- Awards will be made at the start of Easter term 2021
- Grants will be awarded for up to £400 for an activity related to your course; up to £250 for a broadly educational activity that takes you somewhere new
- Grants to be spent in the Summer Vacation 2021 (depending on the travel and access restrictions that are in place at that time).



# Michaelmas programme

- Thursday evenings 20:00 on Zoom

Date	Topic
22 October	Getting started on a piece of work - time management and setting objectives
29 October	Communicating in the online environment - lectures, supervisions and email
5 November	Deciding what to read - critical evaluation, reading lists and online resources
12 November	Speed reading - scanning and skimming for effective reading
19 November	Making succinct and useful notes from lectures and readings
26 November	Making the most of feedback - helping you improve

Book places from events page or directly at [www.wolfson.cam.ac.uk/wolfworks](http://www.wolfson.cam.ac.uk/wolfworks)



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# Reflective practice

- To identify strengths and weaknesses
- Pinpoint skills and competencies that you want to develop
- For everyone, not just new students





Reflect on this image



# Reflection

- Questioning how and why an event happened the way it did
- Thinking how it made/makes us feel
- Making connections between past, present and future experiences
- It includes both positives and negatives
- It is useful in its own right, but what we do with it is what matters



# Reflecting on your last educational encounter

- What did you do? (description)
- Did you enjoy it and why?
- What was challenging?
- What went well?
- What would you change?
- Have you started doing things differently?

(reflection,  
particularly if you  
ask yourself:  
**why?**)



# What is reflective writing?

- Written in the first person
- Free-flowing; don't stop to check sense or grammar
- Subjective
- Uninhibited
- Time-limited
- Can be private, such as a journal, or in public, such as a blog
- Review after a break
- Look back, think about what you have learned, and how to use it in the future.



# Why is it important?

Not necessarily what you write but the process, helping you to:

- Identify goals and plans
- Learn from what we have done and moving forward
- Manage time, plan assignments
- Be more creative
- Challenge assumptions
- Good for our wellbeing – just like talking about it but there is a lasting reminder



# What are the obstacles?

- Time
- Culture
- Lack of skills
- Environment
- Motivation
- Yourself



# Personal Development Plan – looking forward

Take 5 minutes to free write the following:

- Identifying your strengths
  - what makes you feel strong, regardless of how good you are at it
- Identifying your weaknesses
  - what makes you feel weak, even if you are good at it
- Which skills do you need to be happy and successful in your work?
- Which skills would you like to improve and why?



# After your first lecture or supervision:

- **Looking back, reflect on:**
  - Your expectations before the experience
  - How you approached it
  - Which parts you found easy/hard
- **Think about what you learned as a result:**
  - How did your knowledge and understanding change?
  - What would you do differently if faced with a similar situation?
- **Consider how you might use your learning in the future:**
  - How might you put into practice what you have learnt?
  - What challenges might you face?
  - How would you deal with these?





# How do you develop skills?

- Attend a workshop – only these qualify for an Enrichment Grant
    - WolfWorks
    - UTBS - [www.training.cam.ac.uk](http://www.training.cam.ac.uk)
    - Faculty or Departmental
  - Read a book (lots of study skills in the library opposite the borrowing machine)
  - Watch a video
  - Listen to a podcast
  - Peer support – just ask!
- } Get in touch via Moodle if you want these to count towards an Enrichment Grant



# Get in touch

Laura Jeffrey

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See you in the Library on Monday!

Time	Audience
10:00	AMES, Archaeology, Architecture, Classics, History of Art, Music, Philosophy
10:30	History
11:00	Computer Science and Engineering
11:30	HSPS
12:00	English
13:30	Any subject - Online - Meeting ID: 802 827 0346 Passcode: 139961
14:00	Medics and Vets
14:30	PBS and Natural Sciences
15:00	Law