

# Academic Skills At Wolfson College



Alberto Garcia , Academic Skills Librarian



**Lee Library Wolfson College**

# Skills support

- Not remedial, offer a holistic programme
- 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, including library
- Language Centre
- Disability Resource Centre
- Counselling Service



# 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
- 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 2022



# Enrichment Grant

- Earn eight credits to qualify to apply for a grant by attending session and submitting a reflective statement
- At least four sessions must be provided by Wolfson
- Submit application March 2022
- Awards will be made at the start of Easter term 2022
- 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 2022.



# Recent Grant Projects

- National Youth Theatre
- Travelling to learn another language
- Learning to build an instrument
- Interning at a firm



“I am so grateful for the opportunity this grant has provided me with as I will hold it in my mind forever.”

# Michaelmas programme

- Thursday evenings at 19:00

21 Oct	Getting started on a piece of work - time management and setting objectives
28 Oct	Deciding what to read - Critical evaluation, reading lists and online resources
4 Nov	Speed Reading - Skimming and scanning for effective reading
11 Nov	Making succinct and useful notes from lectures and readings
18 Nov	Academic Writing– General tips to help make your writing stronger
25 Nov	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)



# Library induction

Time	Audience
10:00	AMES, Anglos-Saxon, Norse&Celtic, Classics, MML, and Theology
10:30	History, Education, Archaeology
11:00	Computer Science and Engineering
11:30	HSPS and Land Economy
12:00	English
14:00	Medics and Vets
14:30	PBS and Natural Sciences
15:00	Law

All take place in the Sir David Williams Room (on the right of the Library Foyer). Please wait until your allotted time to enter the room.



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# Reflective practice

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



# Reflect on this image



<https://padlet.com/infoskillswolfsoncam/WolfsonUGfreshers2021>

# Reflection

- Thinking about how something went and how it 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
- Subjective
- A time investment



# Why is it important?

- Identify goals and plans
- Learn from what we have done and moving forward
- Helps with assignments or coursework
- Leads to creativity
- Challenges assumptions
- Good for our wellbeing



# When to reflect?

- Discuss why don't we reflect? What are the obstacles?
- Overcoming barriers
  - Time
  - Culture
  - Lack of skills
  - Environment
  - Motivation
  - Yourself



# How to start it: Free writing

- Uninhibited
- Don't stop to check sense or grammar
- 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.



# 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?



# Personal Development Plan

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?



# 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

**Alberto Garcia**

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See you on Monday!



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