Birkbeck Library Study Skills Resources

Birkbeck has a good range of Study Skills titles, including subject specific texts in business and law. It also has a section on *Taking exams and giving presentations*. You can pick up a hard copy list of the titles in the library on the second floor (to the right of the help desk), or can access the list from the following link:
http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/subguides/studyskills
On the left hand side of this page you will find 4 useful links:

- Study Skills Web Sites:
  http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/subguides/studyskills/studyskillsweb
  Topics covered include: Writing, Basic Maths, Research, Citing your References, Using the Internet, Taking Exams, and Presentation Skills

- Study Skills Book List:
  http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/subguides/studyskills/studybooks

- LIFE: Library Induction for Everyone:
  http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/life/

- Citing Your References:
  http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/about/how/cite
  This link takes you to many good tutorials and activities to help yo with citation and referencing in your work.

Recommend titles in library stock include:
- Allan, B. Study skills for business and management students (2009) 658.00711 ALL
- Bedford, D. & Wilson, E. Study skills for foundation degrees (2006) 378.170281 BED
- Cottrell, S. The Study Skills Handbook (4thed. 2013) 371.30281 COT
- Moore, S. et al. The ultimate study skills handbook (2010) 378.170281 ULT
- Creme, P. Writing at university: a guide for students (3rd ed. 2008) 808.042 CRE
- Levin, P. Write great essays! (2nd ed. 2009) 808.066 LEV
- Northedge, A. The good study guide (2005) 378.170281 NOR

University of Northampton Resources

Centre for Achievement and Performance (CfAP)
https://nile.northampton.ac.uk/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_group=courses&url=%2Fwebapps%2Fblackboard%2Fexecute%2FcourseMain%3Fcourse_id%3D_20120_1
CfAP is an excellent site to access a range of resources to help you in your academic development. Topics that are covered include: essay writing, reading, reflective writing, note taking, critical thinking, plagiarism, referencing, English grammar, presentations, and help with maths.

Skills Hub

http://skillshub.northampton.ac.uk/

The Skills Hub is an excellent open access resource containing videos, guides, interactive tutorials and blog posts covering core academic skills areas at an array of levels. It is for use by students, schools, researchers and the community.

Areas covered by the Skills Hub include: academic writing, argument, critical thinking, eseay writing, evaluating information, Harvard referencing, and much more.

University of Northampton Plagiarism Awareness Course (UNPAC) You will need NILE login in order to access UNPAC:

https://nile.northampton.ac.uk/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_11_1&content_id=_431097_1&mode=reset

Other General Academic Skills websites

Learn Higher

http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/

Although this website is primarily for staff in higher education, there are some downloadable documents that are 'student friendly'. One of these is a 71 page downloadable guide on when and how to reference using the Harvard system:

http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/writing-for-university/referencing/references-and-bibliographies-booklet/

The Open University (OU) Skills for Study

http://www2.open.ac.uk/students/skillsforstudy/

Access to a wide range of study skills resources and activities to help develop your academic and learning skills. Topics include: Planning and writing assignments, Revising for exams, Developing effective study strategies, Using maths and statistics in your studies

Skills for OU Study also includes a Study Skills Health Check to provide you with a personal learning plan targeted to your individual study needs and goals. Register for free and you can download booklets expanding on the information available on the website. For postgraduate students there's a separate topic focusing on the additional skills needed for postgraduate study.

Royal Holloway Study Support

https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/studyresources.aspx

To access much of this site you need to have a Royal Holloway login. However, the Essay writing guide and Maths support sections are open source and very good.

Study for College

http://studyingforcollege.com/index.htm

Studying for College is a commercial site designed for students who want to boost their study skills.

University of Manchester Skills Website

http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/studyskills/essentials/index.html

The Essentials section of the University of Manchester Skills website includes lots of good materials for reading, listening, writing, and note taking.

University of Reading
http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/studyadvice/StudyResources/sta-studyresources.aspx
The University of Reading Study Guides and video tutorials are excellent and cover all the key areas of academic study skills.

University of Wolverhampton
http://www.wlv.ac.uk/lib/skills_for_learning/online_skills_resources.aspx
Excellent YouTube Skills for Learning online tutorials. Topics include:
Introduction to Skills for Learning, Writing your Assignment, Finding journal articles, How to work in a group, Presentation skills, Guide to Harvard Referencing, Introduction to Critical Thinking, Report Writing.

Surrey Study Skills
http://www.surrey.ac.uk/library/splash/studyskills/
University of Surrey study skills materials covering all the relevant topics.

University of Sussex Guide to Punctuation
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/informatics/punctuation/
Probably the best punctuation guide.

Anglia Ruskin Referencing Guide
http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/referencing.htm
The Anglia Ruskin library website has an excellent guide to the Harvard system and also one for OSCOLA.

Oxford Brookes
https://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/upgrade/study-skills/
Oxford Brookes University Study Skills A-Z. An excellent resource and collection of related web links.

Queen Mary University Academic English online resources
http://aeo.sllf.qmul.ac.uk/
A very comprehensive and well laid out resource.

UEAFP (Using English for Academic Purposes)
http://www.uefap.com/
A very comprehensive guide for English for academic purposes.

University of Manchester Academic Phrasebank
http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/
This website contains an excellent list of academic vocabulary and phrases. The vocabulary and phrases are organised clearly so you can, for example, look for language you can use to 'be critical' or 'comparing and contrasting'.

Institute of Education: Writing Centre Online
http://writingcentre.ioe.ac.uk//
An excellent resource for academic writing (includes a sample dissertation with exercises).

Langauge and Learning Online
http://www.monash.edu.au/lls/llonline/index.xml
Language and Learning Online is a collection of resources to help students improve their academic performance. The resources include online tutorials, interactive exercises, and examples of Writing for Subjects.

Listening practice websites

University of Reading Lecture Practice
http://www.reading.ac.uk/SACLL/UniversityofReadingLectures/SACLL-UniofReadingLectures.aspx Use this University of Reading website to practise listening (and taking notes) to real academic lectures. It also contains tapescripts and comprehension questions.

TED Studies Lectures
http://www.ted.com/read/ted-studies
This is an excellent lecture resource designed to help students, professors, and self-guided learners explore important topics in higher education.

Top Documentaries
http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/
Free documentaries organized by subject.

Reading practice websites

The Economist Past Debates
http://www.economist.com/debate/archive
This is an excellent resource which will engage your critical thinking skills. You have a number of debates to choose from which focus on a variety of topics. Read how the debate unfolds over the course of the week, make up your own mind, and post a comment on the website. This is a very good way to keep up-to-date with current affairs. You can watch a tutor review the site by clickingg on the video below.

The Conversation
http://theconversation.com/uk
The Conversation is an independent source of news and views, sourced from the academic and research community and delivered direct to the public. The editors work with university and research institute experts to unlock their knowledge for use by the wider public. This website aims to better understanding of current affairs and complex issues.

Legal Skills websites

The Legal Writing Skills Guide
http://www.routledge.com/cw/slapper-9780415639989/s2/writing/
The Legal Writing Skills Guide is based on Lisa Webley's book, Legal Writing, which also covers writing legal dissertations.
The resource helps you develop your legal writing skills through video modules. The areas covered are:
- Understand the nature of essay and problem questions
- Understand assessment and grading criteria
- Identify relevant legal issues
- Plan your answer
- Write and present the issues
- Reference correctly
- Polish and submit your final answer

BBC Law in Action website
http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006tgy1
Long-running legal magazine programme, featuring reports and discussion on matters relating to law. An excellent listening and reading practice website.

Maths websites

Mathcentre
http://www.mathcentre.ac.uk/
Mathcentre is an excellent website that deliver mathematics support materials, free of charge, to students, lecturers and everyone looking for post-16 maths help. The mathcentre team are a group of people who run university mathematics support centres, who teach mathematics, and who design new media products for learning.
mathcentre gives students the opportunity to study important areas of pre-university mathematics, which they may have studied before or may be new to them.
There are a variety of resources: self- study guides; test yourself diagnostics and exercises; video tutorials; iPod and 3G mobile phone downloads; and case studies. Resources are available on-line, and may be printed or downloaded.

StudyMaths
http://studymaths.co.uk/
A good collection of revision notes, interactive worksheets, a question bank, interactive examples, and a glossary of key mathematical words and their meanings. Although this is aimed at GCSE level, it contains much good material.

Centre for Achievement and Performance (CfAP): Academic Mathematics Study Packs
https://nile.northampton.ac.uk/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_48889_1&content_id=_1908361_1
CfAP is the University of Northampton's academic skills centre. Their maths numeracy study packs include exercises and answers on: numbers, factors, HCF & LCM, fractions, decimals, significant figures, percentages, ratio, proportion and change of units, directed numbers.

Khan Academy
https://www.khanacademy.org/math
This is an American site so has references to their education system, but there are some very useful materials on it.

Typing training websites

Like most skills, typing improves with practice. If you are worried about typing fast or are not familiar with using a keyboard, there are a number of websites that can help you improve your speed and learn typing. The trick is to go online and practice for a few minutes daily. You will be surprised at how quickly your typing improves. The following links are all designed to help you. Most of these resources can be accessed via your smart phone/ipad/tablet; however, it is best to use a computer to practice typing. A big keyboard can make all the difference to your hands as well as eyes. All the resources mentioned below offer free lessons and games that you can work through in your own time.

Typing.com
https://www.typing.com
This is an encouraging website that teaches basic and intermediate typing. You need to register, but the site is free. You even get a typing certificate after you have completed the tests successfully. The menu on the first page (that looks like the picture below) gives you access to the lessons and the games available on them.

Learn2Type.com
http://www.learn2type.com/typingtest/lessons/typinglessons.cfm
Learn2type is aimed at improvers as well as those who have never used a keyboard or typed before. If you use the link above, you will be directed straight to the typing lessons. You do not need to login or signup. Do not be put off by the number of links that appear from sponsors, just keep to the above page and you will be able to use the lessons.

Typeonline.co.uk
http://www.typeonline.co.uk/lesson1.html
For those of you who like things scientifically explained in terms of which fingers control and facilitate particular actions on the keyboard, you might like this site.
Below is an extract of the explanation offered by the first lesson. On the website, you will be able to view the complete explanation. An author that wanted to refresh his own typing skills runs the site.

The **home row** of the keyboard is the most important to the touch-typist.

When at rest the typist's fingers are positioned, lightly, on the A - S - D - F keys for the **left hand**, and the J - K - L - ; keys for the **right hand**.

- The **left index finger** will control the F and G keys, the **right index finger** will control the J and H keys.
- The **left middle finger** will control the D key, the **right middle finger** will control the K key.
- The **left ring finger** will control the S key, the **right ring finger** will control the L key.
- The **left little finger** will control the A key, the **right little finger** will control the ; key.
- The spacebar is controlled by the **right thumb**.

Typingstudy.com
http://www.typingstudy.com
Another website where you can learn how to position your fingers in such a way that typing is made easy. You can select 'UK English' and then it will bring up a page of lessons.

Learntyping.org
http://www.learntyping.org
There are several basic, intermediate and advanced lessons on this site. The site also teaches you keyboard shortcuts, a useful thing to know.

Websites for improving IT skills

With most things being computer-based these days, IT skills are needed for nearly everything from paying bills, to completing an academic course successfully. To the mature student, this can often be seen as daunting; however, IT skills are relatively easy to acquire. Like learning most things, they just require us to be focused and consistent.

Rather surprisingly, the best place to learn IT lessons is online. The online lessons require a basic amount of prior knowledge. You will need to know the following things: how to switch the computer on and off, how to get on to websites by selecting safari, internet explorer or google chrome, and how to use a keyboard and mouse. If you have this basic knowledge to hand, then the following websites can help you greatly improve your computer skills. If you do not have this knowledge yet, then the best way forward would be to go to your local library and sign up for the free lessons on basic IT. Alternatively, you could visit a bookshop and ask for a book on 'Beginner's IT'. The 'Dummies' series (do not be put off by the name, these are books that break everything down into comprehensive bits of information) that are readily available in most bookshops take you through the basic needed to operate a computer effectively. Here are some online resources that can help you acquire more IT Skills.

Learnmyway.com
http://www.learnmyway.com/get-started/tasters
Comprising of everything from a thorough overview on 'how to use email', to using the internet safely, this site offers guidance in a comprehensive manner. It uses video clips from the BBC to demonstrate things further. You will need to register; however, the site is free for most things.

BBC Webwise
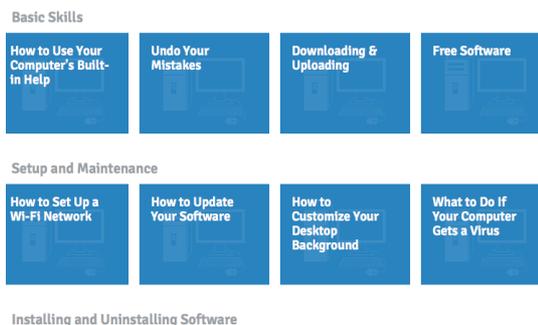http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/0/20595791
This site contains an explanation of everything from what broadband is, to where you can get online access if you don't own a computer. It is effective and comprehensive in its presentation. The site offers a simple explanation of 'web related' terms.

GCF Learnfree.org
http://www.gcflearnfree.org/basic-computer-skills
The Goodwill Community Foundation is a support network of individuals whose sole purpose is to make education accessible to all. The computer skills on this course cover everything from 'How to use your computer's built in help', to installing software on your computer. The image below shows you some of the topics on offer.

Basic Skills

How to Use Your Computer's Built-in Help	Undo Your Mistakes	Downloading & Uploading	Free Software

Setup and Maintenance

How to Set Up a Wi-Fi Network	How to Update Your Software	How to Customize Your Desktop Background	What to Do If Your Computer Gets a Virus

Installing and Uninstalling Software

Websites specifically for international students

Prepare for Success
http://www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk/
Prepare for success is an interactive web learning tool for international students who are getting ready to come to the UK for study in further or higher education. It contains learning resources which are activity-based to help you find out about different aspects of academic life in the UK and the skills needed for effective study. As well as preparing you for what to expect during your studies, the activities provide scope for English language improvement.

University of Warwick
http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al/learning_english/leap/
University of Warwick Learning English Online materials aimed at international students.

Onestopenglish Guardian Articles
http://www.onestopenglish.com/skills/news-lessons/monthly-topical-news-lessons/
This very popular website allows you to download lessons based on controversial Guardian articles. The articles will keep you up-to-date with current affairs. Additionally, each lesson contains exercises which provide useful practice for focussed reading practice.