

## **Appendix 7: Technology in your toolkits**

You'll have heard of Read & Write, Dragon, ClaroRead, Inspiration – maybe even used them – but other assistive software can sometimes offer tools more suited to your learning style. So whether they're free to download and use, or as a 'try before you buy', why not check out what's new on the market and see what suits you best.

### **Mind mapping**

Map your mind and visualise your thinking. From basic ideas to more critical thoughts, mind maps help you visually capture and process information so you can:

- jot down your initial thoughts
- brainstorm, develop and organise your ideas
- plan and organise your assignments or projects
- decide what's relevant and what's not
- decide whether you've enough information or need to gather more
- translate your mind map to an outline of your assignment
- include text, graphical images, web pages, audio and video files and media content
- save documents as PDF files
- export ideas as JPG or WMF files to include in other materials
- transform diagrams into HTML websites
- use alone or in group brainstorming sessions
- plan your day, your shopping list, assignment project.

<https://bubbl.us>

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

[www.exploratree.org.uk](http://www.exploratree.org.uk)

[www.inspiration.com](http://www.inspiration.com)

[www.matchware.com](http://www.matchware.com)

[www.mindgenius.com](http://www.mindgenius.com)

[www.mindjet.com](http://www.mindjet.com)

[www.mindmeister.com](http://www.mindmeister.com)

[www.mywebspiration.com](http://www.mywebspiration.com)

[www.topicscape.com](http://www.topicscape.com)

[www.wisemapping.com](http://www.wisemapping.com)

Prefer to do all this on a whiteboard and make learning fun? Then Dabbleboard is for you.

[www.dabbleboard.com](http://www.dabbleboard.com)

### **Text-to-speech software**

Struggle with proofreading? Need help with spelling and grammar? Too tired to read huge blocks of text? Could do with some help researching your assignments? Then let Read & Write, ClaroRead or MyStudyBar support you:

- highlight what you're reading
- read aloud to you from texts, web and email
- help you read PDF files
- make on-screen text accessible
- scan and convert your documents into a readable format
- check your spelling and grammar
- predict the correct word you want to use

- read aloud to you from the dictionary
- translate for you
- collate and save facts for you from the World Wide Web.

[www.clarosoftware.com](http://www.clarosoftware.com)

[www.rsc-ne.scotland.org.uk](http://www.rsc-ne.scotland.org.uk)

[www.texthelp.com](http://www.texthelp.com)

### **Voice recognition software**

Find it easier saying what you want to get on paper rather than writing? Why not talk to the machine using Dragon and let it:

- quickly capture your ideas
- type your emails, reports and other academic assignments
- launch web applications
- open files
- control your mouse.

Want the best of both worlds using speech to text to speech? Then dictate with Dragon and listen back to the text with ClaroRead.

[www.nuance.com/dragon/index.htm](http://www.nuance.com/dragon/index.htm)

### **Digital recording**

Struggle to keep up to speed in lectures or meetings? Want to simply listen?

Then a digital recorder and audio notetaker should make annotating seem effortless as you can:

- keep lectures on file to access whenever and wherever you like
- jot down key points or fill in the gaps
- research further
- analyse and transcribe qualitative interviews
- format, colour and organise recordings into manageable sections
- add graphical images and comments alongside audio recordings
- import PDF, PowerPoint slides
- revise and relive your lectures anytime, anywhere by exporting notes to your mp3 player.

Then there's Livescribe EchoPen that lets you:

- record everything that's said and written
- capture words, diagrams and graphical images
- sync everything you hear to what you write
- write as much or as little as you want
- play back what's been said
- transfer your written notes to printed notes on your computer
- relive your lecture with an interactive, digital version of your notes and audio recording
- share this interactive version with your study group through Facebook, for example
- revise anywhere, anytime by exporting your notes to your iPhone, for example
- share notes with your study group.

Or the iPad's ritePen can:

- provide anytime, anywhere annotation with your finger or pen
- convert your written notes into text and documents on your PC

- mark up your screen using other tools such as drawing or shape recognition
- launch a website or other applications on your PC using ink commands
- provide integration with Evernote.

Or again, Study Buddy can:

- help organise and back up your notes
- import your lecture slides and images
- photograph your written notes.

Why not tap in Webopedia and create your own note-taking abbreviation system.

[www.audionotetaker.com](http://www.audionotetaker.com)

[www.livescribe.com](http://www.livescribe.com)

[www.ritescript.com](http://www.ritescript.com)

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

[www.webopedia.com](http://www.webopedia.com)

## Referencing

Don't let referencing stress you out. Using web-based tools, learn to search, collect, organise, store and share your referencing with others or for personal use. With tools such as Evernote, Endnote, Zotero, Google Scholar, Google Books, you can:

- access remote bibliographic databases through the internet
- search and import PDF files
- preview and edit references
- instantly create your bibliography and reference lists.

[www.books.google.com](http://www.books.google.com)

[www.endnote.com](http://www.endnote.com)

[www.evernote.com](http://www.evernote.com)

[www.scholar.google.co.uk](http://www.scholar.google.co.uk)

[www.zotero.org](http://www.zotero.org)

Written and referenced your work? Why not run it through Turnitin? This checks the originality of your work and helps you avoid plagiarism.

[www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)

## Anytime, anywhere mobile apps

Why not access 'on foot' information through your mobile apps and keep working on assignments and group projects anytime, anywhere? So what runs on what?

- Mindmeister runs on your smartphone and tablet pc.
- Dragon Dictation App runs on your iPhone and converts your speech into text so you can paste it into emails, notes and texts.
- Android has a built-in voice recognition function, and can be synchronised to your PC.
- Evernote runs on your smartphone, tablet pc, PC and Mac and is great for keeping you organised with contact details, notes, deadline dates.
- iMindmap Mobile lets you capture ideas anytime, anywhere to develop later on your iPad.

[www.android.com](http://www.android.com)

[www.evernote.com](http://www.evernote.com)

[www.mindmappingmac.com](http://www.mindmappingmac.com)  
[www.mindmeister.com](http://www.mindmeister.com)  
[www.nuance.com](http://www.nuance.com)

### **Relaxation and concentration**

If you need to relax and feel more focused on assignments and exams, then mindfulness exercises should support and help you through that and indeed any other stressful time in your student life.

[www.mindfulness.com](http://www.mindfulness.com)

### **Study skills and subject projects**

Need to graphically learn your learning style? Then work through:

[www.learning-styles-online.com](http://www.learning-styles-online.com)

Practise your study skills and become an independent learner by tapping into podcasts and vodcasts available at:

[www.apple.com/education/itunes-u](http://www.apple.com/education/itunes-u)  
[www.dyslexia-plus.co.uk](http://www.dyslexia-plus.co.uk)

If you need to make your own podcasts or vodcasts, then Audacity, Camtasia or Podbean can help by:

- recording your conversation live
- screening videos, recording PowerPoint presentations
- converting tracks into digital recordings or CDs
- editing sound files such as WAV or MP3 or screenshots
- splicing or mixing sounds together
- uploading, publishing, managing and advertising your message.

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net>  
[www.camtasia-studio.en.softonic.com](http://www.camtasia-studio.en.softonic.com)  
[www.podbean.com](http://www.podbean.com)

Manage your studies with Smartsheet by:

- creating, storing and sharing group project details
- utilising its integration with Google Apps
- importing and exporting between Google Spreadsheet and Smartsheet.

[www.smartsheet.com](http://www.smartsheet.com)

Let your learning fit your anytime, anywhere lifestyle! Access your course online and change the way you communicate and collaborate with tutors and peers using software such as Moodle or Blackboard.

<http://moodle.org>  
[www.blackboard.com](http://www.blackboard.com)

If you need to analyse your statistical research findings, then let SPSS do it for you.

[www-01.ibm.com/software/analytics/spss/](http://www-01.ibm.com/software/analytics/spss/)