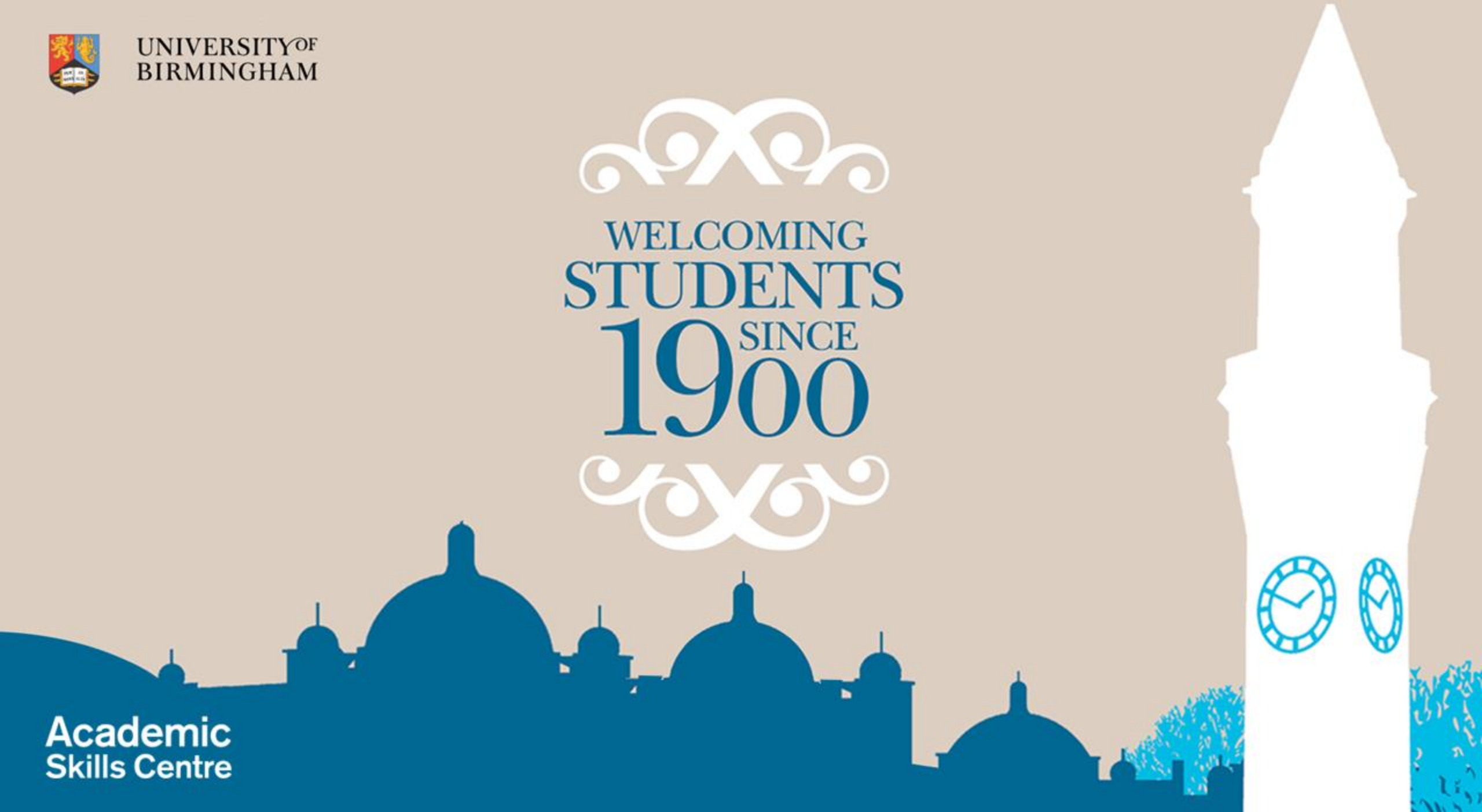
UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

WELCOMING STUDENTS SINCE 1900



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Top tips for effective learning

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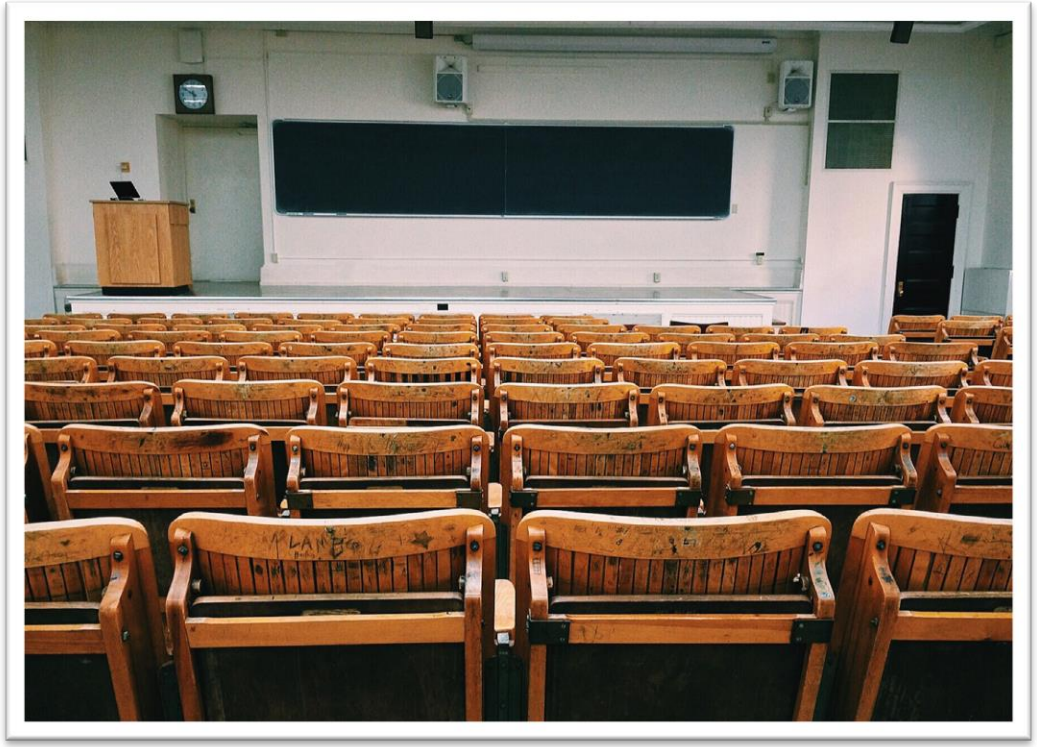
Task 1

What are the main differences between studying at school/college and studying at university?



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School/college	University
Work is set, managed and prioritised by the teacher.	You are expected to decide what to read and follow.
Many students use the same source material.	The sources you use will often be different from other students', even for the same assignment.
Students may learn from absorbing and then repeating information.	Lecturers will expect you to think beyond the information in the texts and make up your own mind about whether the information is important, why it is important and how it connects with other information and ideas.

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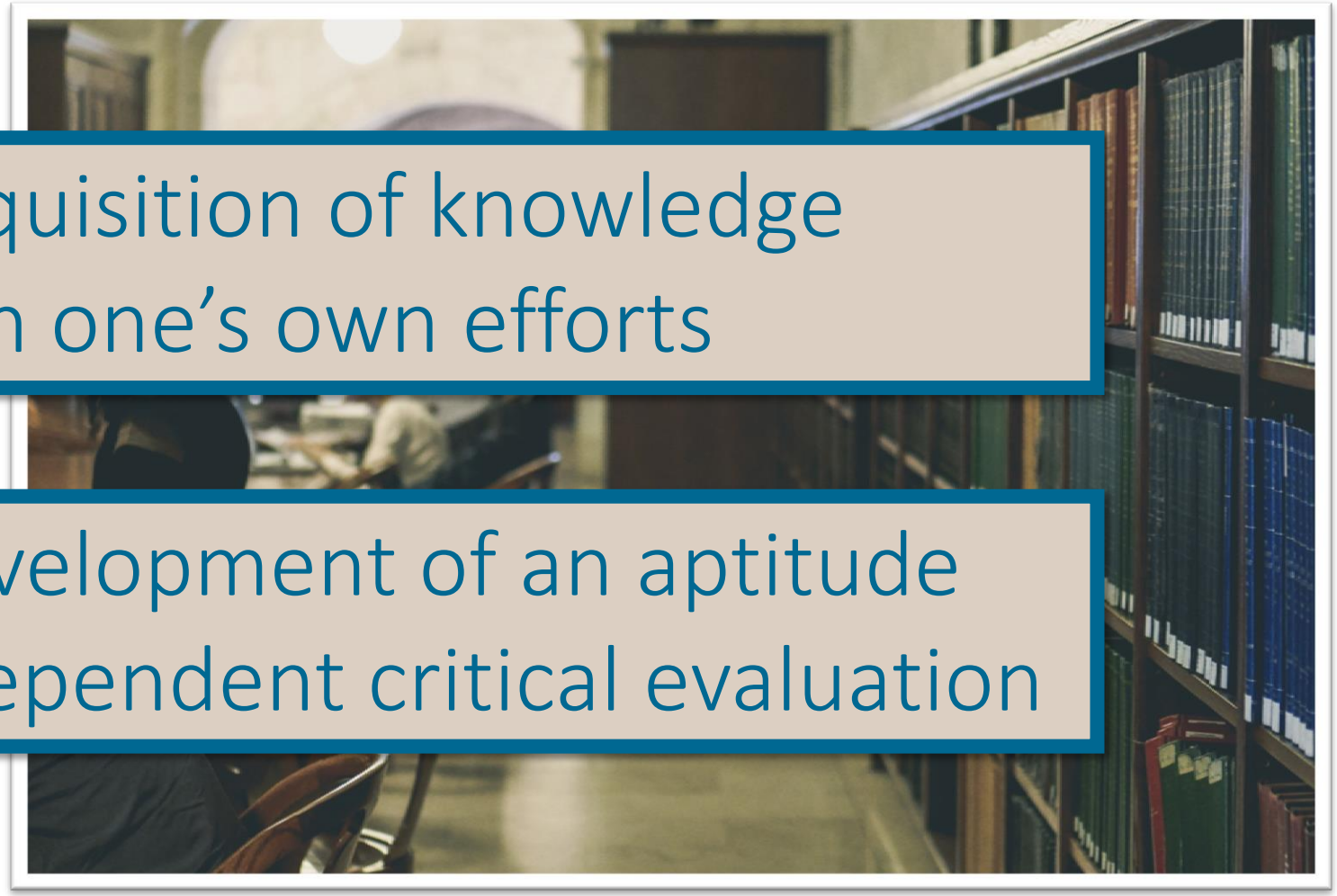
What is independent learning?



The acquisition of knowledge through one's own efforts

The development of an aptitude for independent critical evaluation

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Task 2

In your groups, please discuss and answer the questions as fully as possible.

Remember to include everybody in your discussion.

Be prepared to present your ideas to the larger group.

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1. Manage your time and have a plan

- The academic year is short
- Deadlines creep up
- Forward planning helps
- Use a diary or calendar

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2. Iron out the details

Smooth out the details before you get too deep into the year:

- Timetables
- Locations
- People
- Deadlines
- Guidelines

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3. Don’t bite off more than you can chew

Don’t try too read every book, journal and article on your topic.

Be *selective* in your research and *active* in your reading

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4. Make useful notes

- Make notes clear, concise and to the point
- Don’t try to record everything from a lecture – main points
- Read actively – set questions and test expectations
- Revisit your notes regularly

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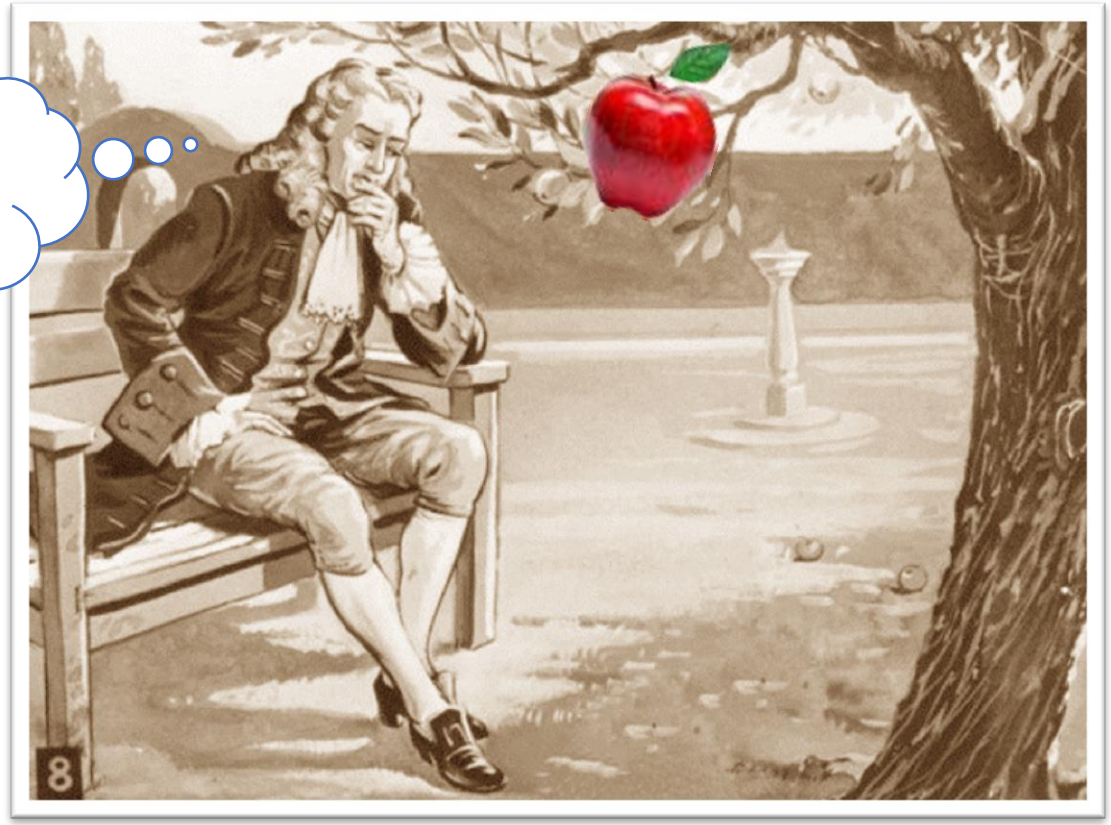
5. Have your own point of view



- Develop your own arguments
- Know the logical routes to your assertions

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6. Communicate well and demonstrate your understanding

- Quality, not quantity of understanding
- Be able to communicate your ideas to others
- Have a clear idea of how to structure your arguments

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7. Think critically

- Don’t take things for granted
- Decide whether you agree or disagree
- Be responsible for your thinking
- Be able to justify your conclusions

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8. Cite your sources

- You are expected to reference others' ideas
- Does the reference support your argument?
- Find out your department's preferred style

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9. Ask for help

- Talk to your personal tutor

- See the university website:

  www.bham.ac.uk

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10. Develop yourself and your skills

- Carpe diem
- Try new things
- Succeed *and* fail

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Location

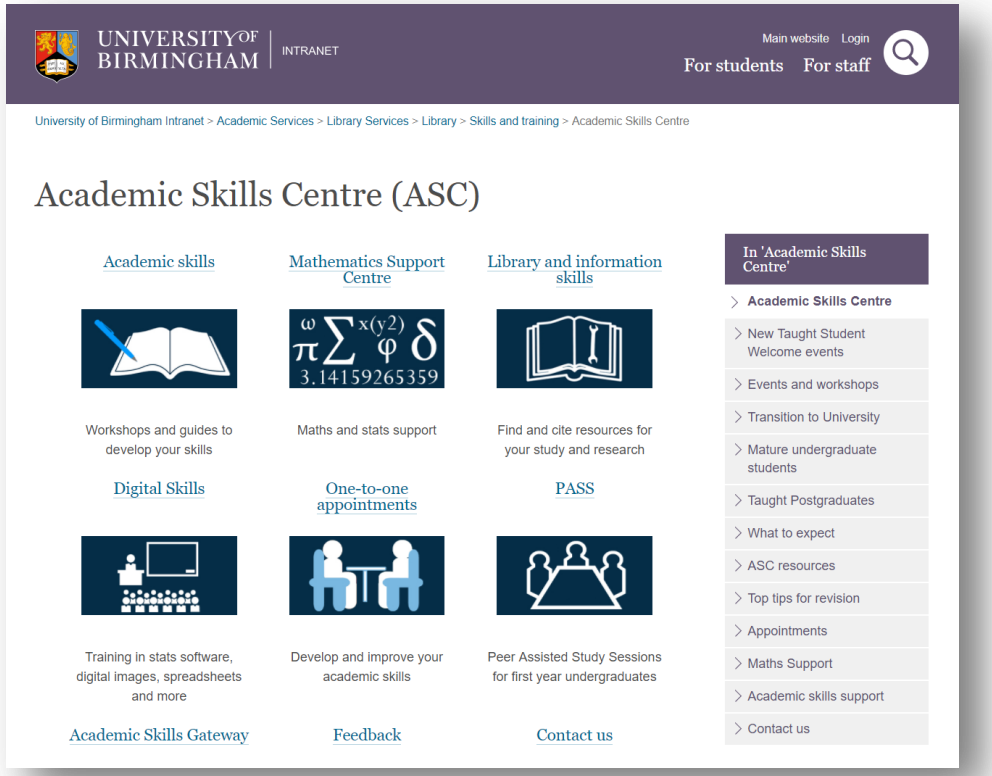
1st floor, main library

Telephone

(0121) 414 3666

Email

asc@contacts.bham.ac.uk



Web

intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/libraryservices/library/skills/asc

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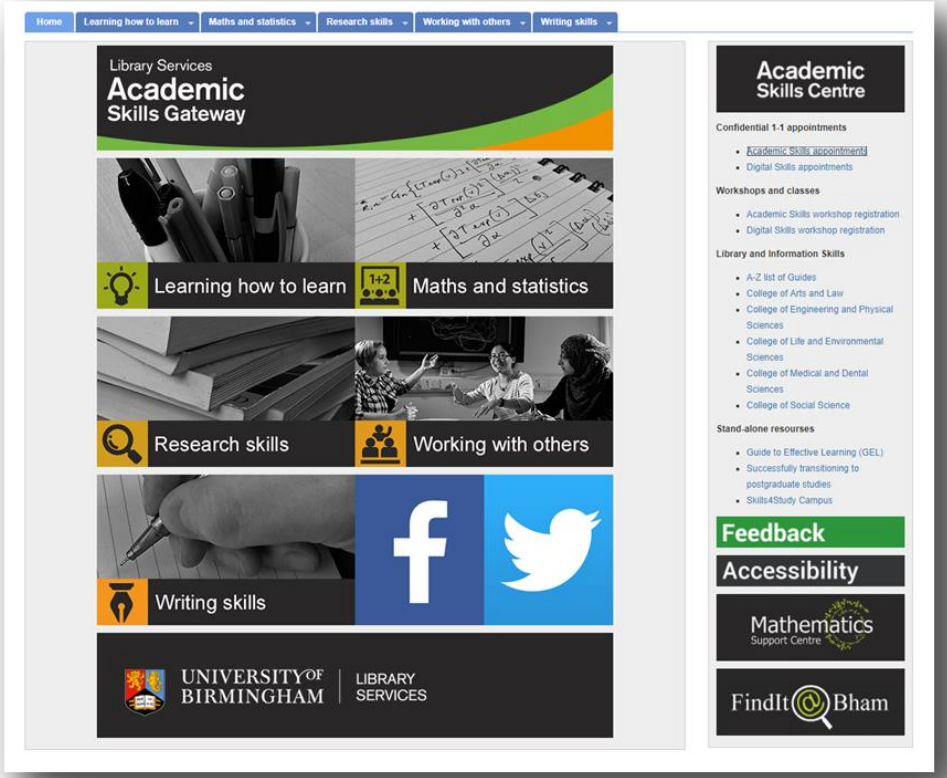
Online skills resources

- Canvas courses
- Printable PDFs
- Interactive activities
- Links and further reading
- libguides.bham.ac.uk/asg



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