

Digital Tools

As you start the new term, you will be using the University's digital tools to support your learning and experience. Here's a short guide to help you get the most from them.

Tool	Summary
Minerva	The University's Portal and Virtual Learning Environment
UniLeeds	The University's app for viewing your timetable, library record, etc.
Leeds Office 365	Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.
Library Search	Search the Library resources
Collaborate Ultra	Virtual classroom (Blackboard)
Microsoft Class Teams	Virtual classrooms and collaborative tools (Microsoft)
Zoom	Virtual classroom (Zoom)
Top Hat	Voting, discussion and assessment
PebblePad	An E-portfolio to record, reflect on and evidence your learning
LeedsforLife	Support for your personal and academic development
Mediasite	Digital content: podcasts, videos, presentations and screencasts
Padlet	Facilitates online discussion, resource sharing and collaboration
Gradescope	For submission of work including handwritten work and code
Turnitin	For submission of assignments
FutureLearn	Short flexible courses
LinkedIn Learning	Video-based courses
Box of Broadcasts	Records programmes and has a searchable archive
iTunes and Apple Podcasts	Free podcasts, audio and video content
MyCareer	Careers and employability opportunities and support
Ally	Provides alternative formats of files in Minerva
Labster	3D laboratory training software

Name: Minerva

What's it for?

Minerva is the University's Portal and Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). It provides quick access to many of the other digital tools (listed below) and to the online materials for your modules. From Minerva you can access: University and departmental announcements, module areas, the Library, Office 365 email, Student Services and Timetabling.

How do I get to it?

Visit minerva.leeds.ac.uk and sign in using your username@leeds.ac.uk and password.

Where can I find out more?

Read the [Navigating Minerva Guide](#) and [Minerva Help](#) pages.

Top tips:

- Use the navigation bar to navigate around Minerva
- The landing page 'My Leeds' contains links to other useful websites and University systems e.g. Library, Office 365 email etc.
- Check the Activity Stream to find out what's happening in your modules and organisations, you can change the settings by clicking on the cog.

Name: UniLeeds

What's it for?

It is the University's app for viewing your personalised timetable, checking your library record and accessing other useful features.

How do I get to it?

Download the app through Apple or Google app stores.

Where can I find out more?

Read the [IT Knowledge Base article on UniLeeds Mobile App](#).

Top tips:

- Make sure that you login using your username@leeds.ac.uk.
- If timetabled sessions are showing at the wrong time, check your phone's date and time settings. The time zone needs to be set to automatic and the time format to 24-hour.

Name: Microsoft Office 365

What's it for?

Office 365 is a cloud service that provides apps like Word, Excel and PowerPoint, along with productivity apps, device management, and advanced security, in one connected platform. It also provides secure storage via OneDrive.

How do I get to it?

Sign into [Leeds Office 365](#) with your University account.

Where can I find out more?

Check the [IT Knowledge Base articles on Office 365](#).

Top tips:

- Familiarise yourself with the suite of applications available within Office 365.
- Share documents through One Drive links, rather than email attachments.
- Collaborate and edit documents through One Drive.
- See the free courses on [LinkedIn Learning](#) on how to use Office 365 tools

Name: Library Search

What's it for?

To find library resources and manage your account.

How do I get to it?

Go to the [University of Leeds Library homepage](#) where you can search and sign-in using your username@leeds.ac.uk and password.

Where can I find out more?

See the [Library Search Help](#).

Top tips:

- Start a general search by typing a keyword or phrase into the search box.
- Search for a particular item using the author's family name and a keyword from the title.
- You can limit the search results using the filters on the left of the search results. This can be used to limit results to resources "available online".
- Your username and password enable you to access online journals, eBooks and databases with Library subscriptions, especially important when you're off-campus.
- [Ask the Library](#) if you can't find what you need.

Name: Blackboard Collaborate Ultra

What's it for?

It is a virtual classroom used for live learning activities e.g. lectures and seminars. Details will be posted in Minerva if it is being used for your module(s).

How do I get to it?

Usually through a Collaborate link under 'Collaboration' in the Module menu. Select the link to access the course room or individual sessions. You do not need to download anything as Collaborate Ultra works in a web browser.

Where can I find out more?

Visit [Blackboard Collaborate Ultra's website](#).

Top tips:

- Make sure that your web browser is up-to-date and [supported](#). If you are accessing it from a mobile phone, use Chrome for Android devices, or Safari for iOS.
- Enter the room early to check your connection and familiarise yourself with the features before the session begins.
- Your tutor will let you know how the session will be run. This may differ between modules.

Name: Microsoft Class Teams

What's it for?

If your tutor has created a Class Team for your module, it will be used to communicate and collaborate online. Teams' functionality includes video meetings, posting messages and working together on files. Your tutor may organise you into Channels to help with group work, and into Breakout Rooms for discussion during live sessions.

How do I get to it?

Visit [Leeds Office 365](#) or [download the app](#). Login with your university account.

Where can I find out more?

- [What is Microsoft Teams?](#)
- [How to: Meetings and Calls in Microsoft Teams](#)
- See also Microsoft's [Teams guidance](#).

Top tips:

- Turn on notifications to receive instant updates.
- Use Group Chat or Posts (where directed) for working with other students on projects, tasks and activities.
- For live sessions, ensure you have a good Internet connection, are in a quiet place and can hear your tutor. You may find that headphones help.

Name: Zoom

What's it for?

Zoom is used for interactive, live learning activities. If your tutor is using it on your programme, you will see details posted on the module page in Minerva.

How do I get to it?

[Download the Zoom client](#) for your device or use the app store and select Sign In with SSO. Sign into Zoom via **universityofleeds.zoom.us** using single sign-on (SSO) so that your tutor can recognise you easily. See the IT Knowledge Base articles on [Zoom Guidance and Access](#), and [Using Zoom – Student Guide](#)

Where can I find out more?

See [Zoom online resources](#) to help you setup Zoom on your device and get the most out of it.

Top tips:

- Make sure you have a good internet connection, are in a quiet place and can hear your tutor. You may find that headphones help.
- Your tutor will give advice on how the session will be run, and this may differ between groups.
- Use text chat, audio and video to interact with your peers and teachers during classes.

Name: Top Hat

What's it for?

Top Hat is a mobile voting, discussion and assessment tool. It can be used by tutors to ask you questions that start classroom discussions or to check your understanding. Tutors may also use it to assign you homework or to set assessments that you will need to complete online.

How do I get to it?

Tutors who are using Top Hat in their teaching will send you an email invitation with instructions of how to sign up for an account so you can access their course. You can then either [log in through a web browser](#) or download the Top Hat app.

Where can I find out more?

[DE Systems Help Site articles on Top Hat](#)

Top tips:

- Make sure you sign up for an account using your University credentials when your tutor invites you to join their Top Hat course so you can participate in-class.
- Review answers to quizzes and tests to find areas of learning that you should work on.
- Use Google Chrome to access Top Hat if you are using a PC or laptop.

Name: PebblePad

What's it for?

PebblePad is an e-portfolio tool which can be used to record, reflect on, and evidence your learning, and bring your learning journey stories together into interactive presentations. Students own and manage their own PebblePad content. You might use it to log your academic progress, to build and evidence your CV, or maybe even blog about your Couch-to-5K progress. During this year, your tutors may begin to use the tool for assessments and academic personal tutoring (see below).

How do I get to it?

You may be sent PebblePad links by your tutors, or see them inside Minerva modules, but you can access PebblePad via a web browser any time you like. The [University's PebblePad login page](#) uses single sign-on (SSO).

Where can I find out more?

Digital Education Systems Help website has [information on PebblePad](#).

Top tips:

- Anything you've created in or uploaded to PebblePad is referred to as an 'asset'. You'll find all your work in the Asset Store.
- Any templates provided by PebblePad, the University or your tutors are called 'resources' and can be found in the Resources Store. When you begin to work on a resource it becomes your asset.
- PebblePad's Learning Centre has lots of short videos and how-to guides to introduce you to the tool and make the most of it.

Name: LeedsforLife Academic Personal Tutoring (LfL APT)

What's it for?

LeedsforLife helps you to get the most out of your time at university by supporting your personal and academic development. It is currently used by many Schools to organise tutoring. LeedsforLife has been refreshed for 2021 and introduces two new digital tools – PebblePad (see above) contains the LeedsforLife workbook which encourages you to reflect and articulate on a variety of experiences. This will help you to lead discussions with your academic personal tutor, whilst StREAM@Leeds hosts valuable learning insights. Using these digital tools will help your academic personal tutor to work in partnership with you towards your academic and personal goals.

How do I get to it?

You will be able to access a LeedsforLife workbook through the PebblePad system. The [University's PebblePad login page](#) uses single sign-on (SSO). Click on **Resources** to open the resource store and select the **UG LfL Workbook** (Undergraduate) or **PGT LfL Workbook** (Taught Post Graduate).

Where can I find out more?

You can find out more about Academic Personal Tutoring on the [LeedsforLife website](#). You can find out more about [PebblePad](#) and [Learning Analytics StREAM@Leeds](#) on the Digital Education Systems Help website.

Top tips:

- Explore LeedsforLife to see the range of opportunities.
- Your school will explain how personal tutorials will be organised.
- Follow the links to MyCareer to find out more about volunteering work, vacancies and internships

Name: Mediasite

What's it for?

It gives you secure access to digital content (video and audio) and lecture recordings provided by your tutor. You can also record, edit, upload and share your own content such as podcasts, videos, presentations and screencasts for learning and assessment.

How do I get to it?

[Mediasite](#)

Where can I find out more?

[Introduction to Lecture Capture and Media Management](#)

Top tips:

- You can record content on a mobile phone and edit this in any software you choose before [uploading it to Mediasite](#).
- To link your recordings to Minerva, please [see the following IT guidance](#).
- Find extra learning resources on [VideoLeeds](#).
- Have a look at the guidance on [using lecture capture recordings for study](#) from Skills@Library.
- There is a student guide for recording, editing and sharing content in Mediasite too which [can be found here](#). This is particularly useful if you are using Mediasite for video assessments.

Name: Padlet

What's it for?

Padlet is available to all staff and students to use. Quite simply it's an online notice board which you can keep private or share. Add text, links, videos, audio files and documents to your Padlet to brainstorm, facilitate online discussion, share and collate resources, and map processes.

How do I get to it?

Go to the [University of Leeds Padlet login](#) and use your University credentials

Where can I find out more?

For step-by-step guides, how-to videos and more, see [Padlet: Student Guides](#).

Top tips:

- Create Padlets for your group-based projects to share ideas and collaborate.
- Create a personal Padlet to assist your learning, pinning webpages to refer back to, or hosting drafts of work.
- Create a Padlet to brainstorm an essay before writing it, keeping all your notes in one place.

Name: Gradescope

What's it for?

Gradescope is a tool that allows you to submit a number of different assessment types, including handwritten work and computing code.

How do I get to it?

Through a link in your Minerva module (within Submit My Work)

Where can I find out more?

[Minerva support on Gradescope](#)

Top tips:

- Submitting a PDF is often quicker than submitting individual images, due to the smaller file size.
- If you need to scan your handwritten work for submission to Gradescope, download Scannable (iOS) or Genius Scan (Android) to create a PDF file.
- You can resubmit your work at any time until the deadline passes. If your assignment is timed, you can resubmit at any time before the timer elapses.
- Computing code can be submitted directly from GitHub or Bitbucket.

Name: Turnitin

What's it for?

You may be asked to submit your assignments to Turnitin via Minerva. You may also receive assignment feedback/marks via Turnitin.

How do I get to it?

Links to Turnitin will be available in your Minerva modules: there will be a separate link for each assignment. Look under "Submit My Work" in the module menu.

Where can I find out more?

[Minerva support on Turnitin](#)

Top tips:

- Make sure you use a supported browser e.g. the most recent version of Chrome, Safari, Edge or Firefox.
- When submitting to Turnitin, you must wait for confirmation of submission – you will see a green tick and the option to download your digital receipt. If you don't see this, you haven't submitted and must wait.

Download a copy of your digital receipt and save it (e.g. to your OneDrive) – it will not be emailed to you.

- If you have any technical problems when submitting, contact the IT Service Desk with a screenshot of the error, module code, assignment name, date/time and location (PC number if you are in a cluster). If you are going to miss your deadline, let your School know this information too.

Name: FutureLearn

What's it for?

FutureLearn is a leading online learning platform that enables learning through conversation. The platform offers short flexible courses, Microcredentials, programs, and online degrees. Students at the University of Leeds have free upgraded access to University of Leeds courses on FutureLearn via FutureLearn Campus.

How do I get to it?

To get free access to University of Leeds courses on FutureLearn, follow [these instructions](#). You will need to use your University of Leeds email address.

Where can I find out more?

Advice on [Using FutureLearn](#).

Top tips:

- [Search for a course](#).
- Boost your knowledge and skills within, or beyond, your discipline to improve your success.
- Publish your FutureLearn Certificates of Completion to your LinkedIn profile to demonstrate your commitment to learning and professional development.

Name: LinkedIn Learning

What's it for?

LinkedIn Learning is an online learning platform which you can access anytime and anywhere. It contains over 16,000 video-based, professional courses in a wide range of areas such as technology, business and professional, and creative. Courses are led by experts, are on average an hour long, and are broken down into bite-sized chunks.

How do I get to it?

To activate your account, [go to LinkedIn Learning](#). You will be directed to log in via the University's single sign-on page, login with your University of Leeds credentials. Alternatively, on the [Minerva](#) My Leeds page you'll find a link to LinkedIn Learning under the 'Tools and Other University Systems' tab (select, show all).

Where can I find out more?

For further information visit the dedicated [LinkedIn learning pages](#) and the [IT knowledge base](#).

Top tips:

- Connect your personal LinkedIn profile to your LinkedIn Learning account. This will enable you to publish the courses you have completed on your profile (as a certification / badge). You will also receive personalised course recommendations based on your profile information and your learning history will remain with you once you leave the University.
- In the 'My Learning' section remember to set the skills you are interested in and you will receive daily recommended courses based on your area of interest.
- Set yourself a weekly learning goal and monitor your progress.

Name: Box of Broadcasts (BoB)

What's it for?

BoB allows you to record programmes from over 75 free to air channels, and also to search the BoB archive of over 2.2 million broadcasts. Users will need to be in the UK to be able to access all content as some isn't licenced for viewing outside the UK (mostly news content).

How do I get to it?

Type 'Box of Broadcasts' into the [Library search box](#) or access at the link [here](#).

Where can I find out more?

Visit the [About BoB](#) page for more information.

Top tips:

- Use Bob to find documentaries and films that are relevant to your studies.
- Once in Bob use the Guide to browse programmes or search to find future and past programmes for viewing or recording.
- You can receive email alerts when programmes are ready to view.

Name: iTunes and Apple podcasts

What's it for?

A range of free podcasts, audio and video content from the University of Leeds and other educational institutions.

How do I get to it?

On Apple and iOS devices you can access iTunes and Apple Podcasts via the usual apps. iTunes can also be installed on Windows PCs.

Top tips:

- Use it to research and find content that is of interest and helps to broaden understanding of your subject.
- Subscribe to podcasts from leading people in your field or from prominent schools/institutions.
- Ask for recommendations from other students and staff.

Name: MyCareer

What's it for?

Careers and employability opportunities and support including: opportunities for volunteering, placements/ internships, graduate roles, careers events, and appointments with careers and study abroad advisers.

How do I get to it?

[MyCareer](#)

Where can I find out more?

["Talk to us" at the Career Centre](#)

Top tips:

- Set up your preferences when you first log in each academic year.
- Get the system to work for you; set up weekly event and vacancy alerts.
- Use the 'Resources' tab to access instant CV feedback (VMock), practice video interview (Shortlist.me), practice online tests, access global vacancies & job searching advice (GoinGlobal), virtual career fair app and more.
- Use the 'Career Discovery' tab to access advice on all things careers; from options with your subject, to postgraduate study, application tips, to sector specific information and advice

Name: Ally

What's it for?

For most files on Minerva modules and organisations, you have the option to download alternative formats of content. For example, if your lecturer has uploaded a Word doc, but you prefer audio, you'll have the option to download it in that format.

How do I get to it?

In your Minerva modules and organisations, look out for the Ally icon:



Click on it to see which alternative formats are available.

Where can I find out more?

Read the [Ally guide](#).

Name: Labster

What's it for?

Labster is a 3D laboratory training software, which allows you to work through interactive, virtualised laboratory simulations that your tutor has added to your module.

How do I get to it?

If Labster Simulations have been added to your module, a Labster Simulations item will be on the left hand module navigation menu.

If you are using Labster Simulations in Ultra Pilot modules, you will access them in your module content items.

Where can I find out more?

[Labster section of the DE Systems Help website](#).

Top tips:

- Supported browsers are Chrome, Firefox and Safari.
- More [guides and support resources](#) are available on Labster's website.
- Some student resources on the Labster website refer to creating an account or payment options. You may safely ignore these pages as any Labster resources used in your modules will be provided by the University of Leeds.