



Academic Skills Development A Guide for Undergrad Students

2020–21

Academic skills programs are here to support your development in key areas, such as reading, writing and studying. Our services are for anyone who wants to become more efficient and effective. Whether you're experiencing challenges or getting straight A's, we're here for you! Using research and best practices, we help students who want to improve their academic skills.

[Visit Academic Skills](#)

One-on-One Virtual Appointments

Academic Coaching

- Meet a trained student peer who can help you improve your academic performance.
- Get support to meet your academic and personal goals.
- Learn strategies and skills for scheduling, goal-setting, online learning, test-taking and studying.
- Get help booking appointments with trained writing peers, signing up for workshops and locating other information and resources.

Academic coaches are trained using the Appreciative Advising Model, which uses positive, open-ended questions to help students achieve academic and personal success.

How: Book appointments on OSCARplus (Student Success Centre > Appointments > Academic Skills).

When: Monday–Friday

Where: Online (Zoom)

[Learn more about academic coaching on our website.](#)



The Writing Centre

- Meet a trained student peer who can help you improve your writing, regardless of your Faculty or discipline.
- Book up to 10 (50-minute) sessions each term.
- Get help with essays and reports or discuss your ideas.
- Get support during each stage of the writing process.

How: Book appointments on OSCARplus (Student Success Centre > Appointments > Academic Skills).

When: Monday–Friday

Where: Online (Zoom)

Note: We will not edit papers, but we will help you become a better writer.

[Learn more about writing support on our website.](#)



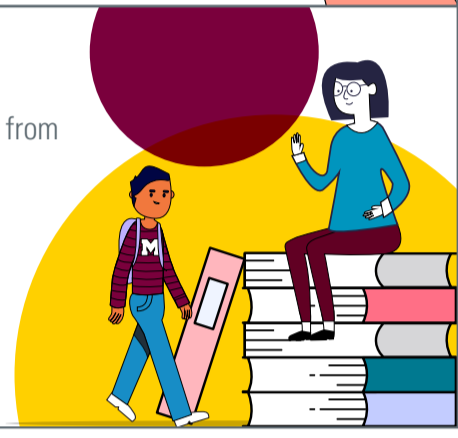
Academic Skills Team

- Receive additional support focused on academic and personal skills from professional staff.
- Co-create individual action plans to meet academic goals.

How: Email skills@mcmaster.ca

When: By appointment

Where: Online (Zoom)



Undergrad Peer Tutoring Network (UPTN)

Access quality tutoring for an affordable rate of \$18 per hour.

Get course-specific support provided by McMaster undergrads who have earned an A- or higher in the course.

How:

Register on TutorOcean and enter the course code.

Where:

Online (TutorOcean virtual classroom)

Note:

Tutors can review key concepts, but they can't help with graded assignments or assessments.

[Learn more about peer tutoring on our website.](#)



Academic Skills Workshops

Participate in small, informal group workshops with the academic skills team.

Enhance academic skills such as note-taking, studying, preparing for tests and writing.

Develop personal skills such as time management and goal setting.

How:

Register on OSCARplus (Student Success Centre > Events).

When:

Wednesdays

Where:

Online (Zoom)



Virtual Study Sessions (General and Course-Specific)

Connect with peers and student staff.

Learn research-based active study strategies.

Meet with peers for collaborative learning opportunities or use these sessions to hold yourself accountable and meet your studying goals.

How:

Register on OSCARplus (Student Success Centre > Events).

When:

Fall 2020 and Winter 2021

Where:

Online (Zoom)



Annual Events



Academic Reboot

Work with the academic skills team to enhance your skills for success. Learn about research-supported strategies to help you thrive and improve your academics.

For the most up-to-date offerings, check OSCARplus (Student Success Centre > Events) and the SSC website.

Writing Contest

Get creative and win some fantastic prizes! New themes are announced each year.

For the most up-to-date offerings, check OSCARplus (Student Success Centre > Events) and the SSC website.



Meet the Academic Skills Team

Jenna Storey, Academic Skills Program Coordinator

Jenna is passionate about helping students envision their best selves and finding resilience through programming and one-on-one consultations. Jenna oversees the Undergrad Peer Tutoring Network (UPTN) and academic coaches. Before joining McMaster, Jenna was a secondary school English teacher for 12 years in the Peel District School Board. Outside of the SSC, Jenna is an animal rights advocate who promotes pet adoption.

Contact: jenna.storey@mcmaster.ca



Mary McCaffery, Academic Skills Program Coordinator (on leave)

After teaching overseas for several years, Mary completed her master's degree in education (2013). She became an advocate for practical and straightforward writing instruction while teaching English for academic purposes at Yukon College. When she began working at McMaster, she had been working on curriculum projects as a consultant in the private sector and for Yukon College. Mary manages the Writing Centre, facilitates events and delivers workshops. She began her PhD in higher education with the University of Toronto in January, 2019.

Contact: mccafm1@mcmaster.ca



Holly Corbett, Program Development Specialist

Holly has a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in education. Her master's program focused on literature and composition education and was informed by the principles of critical, student-centred pedagogy. Holly's master's thesis examined the relationship between personal, narrative writing and Academic text comprehension. Holly is currently a PhD candidate in the McMaster department of English and Cultural Studies. Prior to taking on the role of program development specialist, Holly worked for two years as a writing advisor at McMaster's Writing Centre, which she currently supervises. In addition to her work with the Writing Centre, Holly designs and delivers workshops and programs.

Contact: writing@mcmaster.ca



The Academic Skills Animated Series introduces students to tips and strategies that can help all students improve the skills they need to succeed academically.

[Watch The Series](#)

Helpful Resources

Academic Skills LibGuide: Skills development tip sheets, term workshop schedules and additional resources

Online Learning Support: A comprehensive resource for successful online learning

Student Success Centre Academic Skills: An overview of SSC academic programs and services

