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Essentials

Welcome to your mid-term newsletter which highlights some of the most important topics for undergraduate and foundation students studying with us, things you need to know, and stories you might be interested in. Take a look over this email and get to know your services and essential information.

In this newsletter:

- Winter on campus – security and keeping safe
- Money and the cost of living
- 10 chances to win £1000 with Santander
- Earn while you learn with Campus Jobs
- Discover the Red Award
- Your Library
- Study Advice for Reading week
- Black History Month
- Academic tutors and how to use them
- Blackboard your online learning platform
- Welcome Survey

- Meet your Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Education and Student Experience
- What you might have missed...

Stay up to date, download the [UoR Student app](#), visit our dedicated [Essentials pages](#) for the latest student guidance & support, and follow our [social channels](#).

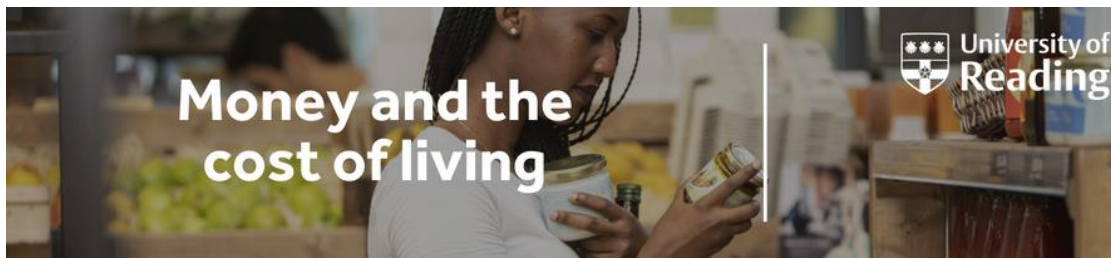
[Download the UoR Student app](#)



As winter nights draw in some of your daytime activities (such as lectures and travelling home) will start to take place in the dark.

Take a look at our blog for simple strategies and support services that help you continue your daily routine whilst feeling safe.

[Winter on campus – security and keeping safe](#)



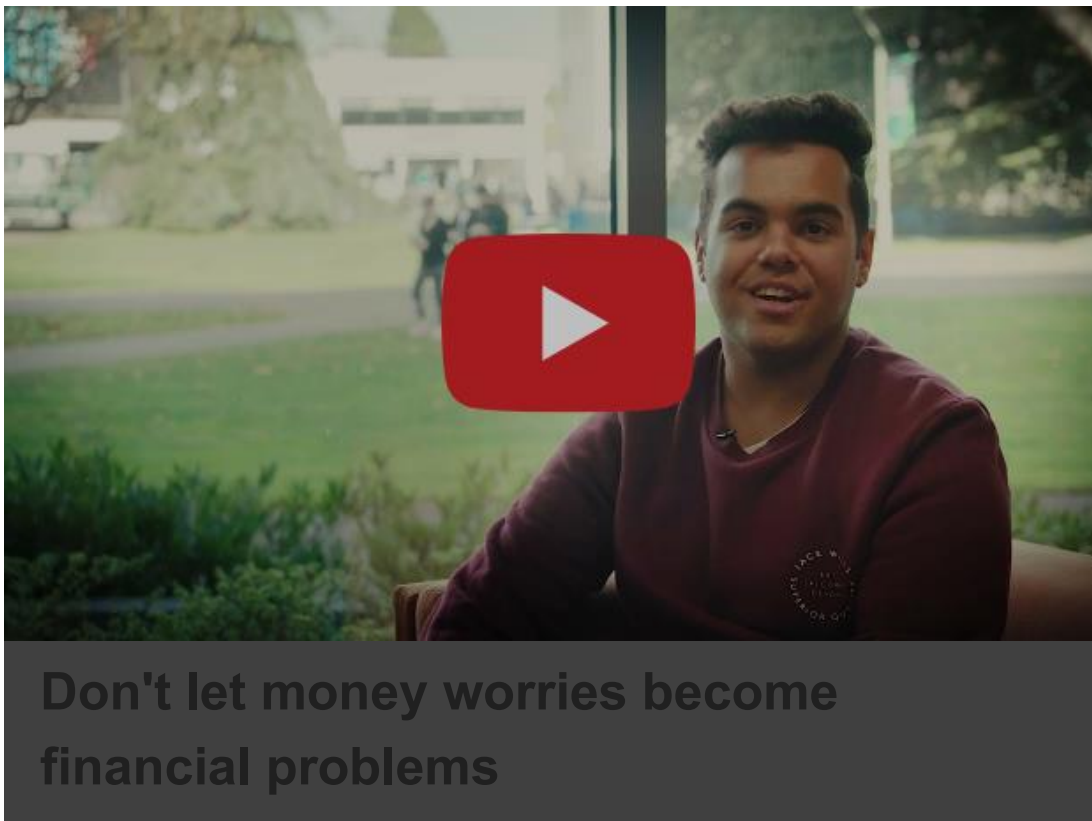
Balancing a budget at university can be challenging, particularly when living costs are rising. 82% of students, in the student money survey 2022, said that they worry about making ends meet. As a result, the students' union and the University have set up a joint task force to provide more support on campus.

The cost of living is a key priority for the RUSU team this year, and your full-time student officer team have lots they plan to achieve this year alongside the University. RUSU also have things in place already that are designed to support you, and help you make the most of your student budget:

- RUSU has welcoming spaces offering a warm dry space for you to study, hang out with friends, or have some quiet time away from campus, including the newly refurbished [Student Opportunities](#) space (previously known as The Study Space). This space will soon be equipped with a microwave for you to heat up a packed lunch.
- RUSU has made sure its food stays as affordable as possible on a student budget, and despite rising food costs they have chosen not to increase their bar and food prices this year. Upper 3sixty café, Mondial, Monterey and the Knights Café offer spaces you can buy food and drink. The White Knights Café offers sandwiches, filled croissants and rolls for under £3 an item, with some items at just £1.39!
- If you're attending the Union event nights on a Wednesday or Saturday during term time (apart from reading week), then you can get home for free on the 360 bus. They run every 11 minutes from the RUSU. Check out the [bus timetable and route](#).

- RUSU has a confidential, professional and independent [Advice Service](#) available to every student. The service is completely free and offers advice on housing, money or academic issues.

Check out RUSU's [Money Advice](#) pages for more information and resources on managing your finances, watch the video '[Don't let money worries become financial problems](#)' below, and don't forget the Essentials page on [Living with inflation and the rising cost of living](#).



Essentials - Cost of living

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Santander Universities are offering 10 lucky winners a chance to receive a Santander Universities award worth £1,000 each, ready to spend on the tailored [Santander Aspire webstore](#). Through the Santander Aspire webstore, you'll find a vast range of products and/or services that will help support your studies and university life, like:

- Computing
- Books and ebooks
- Stationery and office
- Sport and fitness
- Clothing and accessories
- Catering and home
- Electronics and music
- Magazine subscriptions
- Photography
- Watches and wearable tech
- Art and design

And much more!

All you need to do is:

- [Apply on the Santander Scholarship platform](#)
- Create an account on the Santander Scholarships platform (if not already registered).
- Submit your application on the Santander Scholarships platform by clicking the enrol button.

The competition is open until 6 December, and students will be selected at random on 7 December 2022 with until 31 December 2022 to use the credit.

[Please see the terms and conditions of the competition.](#)

Good luck!

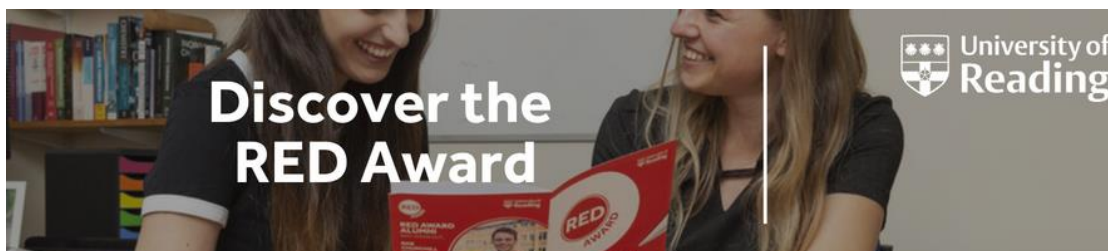
**Apply now - Santander 10 chances to win £1000**



Campus Jobs is the easiest and simplest way to find part-time work opportunities right on your doorstep. There are a wide variety of different opportunities available to suit you, regardless of your interests and skill set. Our job adverts are constantly changing so remember to check back regularly to find something you are interested in.

As well as the opportunity to earn some money, Campus Jobs can provide you with essential work experience within a trusted environment. You'll meet new people, make valuable contacts and develop your employability skills.

As a current student, you already have access to the Campus Jobs website and you can log in using your normal student login details. Once you've done this, you'll be able to view all the current job adverts and apply online, it's as simple as that!



Whether you have been at the University for a few years or you are a new student there is a chance you may have come across the RED Awards but you're not quite sure what is involved or what you need to do in order to achieve one. Here is some handy information if you would like to find out more:

### **What are the RED Awards?**

The RED Awards are the official Skills Awards at the University. They are here to help you enhance your experience whilst at Reading and develop your skills with the end goal of standing out from the crowd when making applications!

### **What do I have to do?**

Each of our awards requires 40 hours of activity, and there are three different types of RED Award:

- [RED Award](#): Complete activity to build your experience, this will involve doing things like part-time jobs, internships and volunteering.
- [RED Sustainable Action Award](#): Increase awareness of sustainability issues, solutions and opportunities. This will involve learning and taking action in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



- [RED Global Engagement Award](#): Develop an understanding of other cultures, global issues and opportunities. This will involve learning more about other cultures and undertaking actions with a global link.

### **Are they recognised?**

Yes! When you complete one of the awards you will receive a certificate and it is added to your diploma supplement annex – so it is officially recognised by the university.

### **Can I use activity previously completed?**

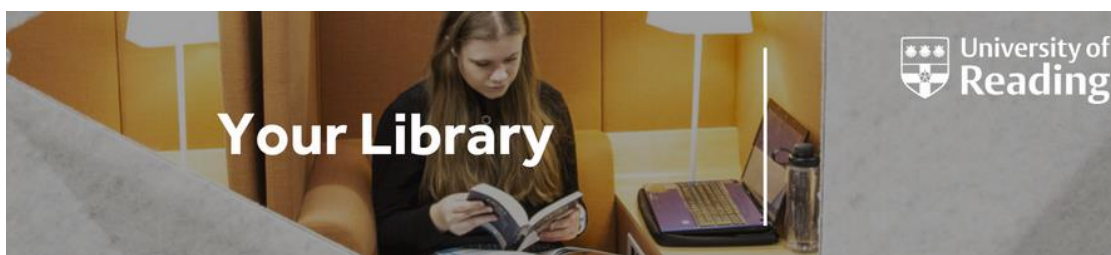
Yes – you can backdate any activity you have completed since you started at the university.

### **How do I sign-up?**

If you are interested in finding out more, please take a look at the [RED Awards webpages](#).

If you have any questions please email [red@reading.ac.uk](mailto:red@reading.ac.uk).

**Essentials - Red Awards**



It's wonderful to see so many of you using the Library.

To make the most out of the Library's services remember to bring your



Campus Card when you visit.

You need it to:

- Scan in and out of the gates,
- Borrow items,
- Print, make scans and photocopies,
- Access the Library if you are coming to do some independent study between midnight and 08:00

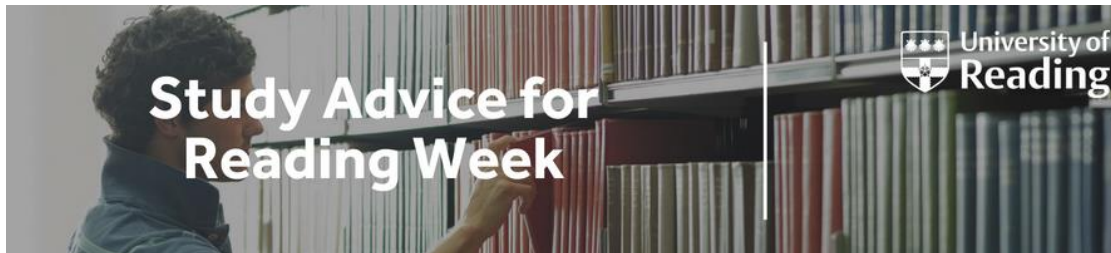
When you're in the Library, remember to keep your Campus Card with you, even if you're just popping down to the café for a coffee.

### **Did you miss our induction webinars during Welcome and Week 1?**

Recordings are now available on our [YouTube channel](#). Our [Information for new students](#)' guidance is still available online too. Take a look to keep building your knowledge of how to find and access resources and services.

**Getting assignments underway?** You'll find a range of support to get the most from your learning, including citing references correctly. We'll show you how to manage references in our Endnote and Mendeley workshops. Simply book using our new booking system that you can access via our [Library Training and events](#) guide.

If you can't attend any of the forthcoming sessions, check out **our online guides**. They'll show you [how to cite](#) and [manage references](#) so you'll soon be referencing like a seasoned scholar. If you have any questions about referencing or any other training needs, [contact your Academic Liaison Librarian](#). For all other queries, visit the Library Welcome Desk, or [email](#) us, we're here to help you get the most out of your learning.



It's now approaching Week 6 which gives you a break from lectures and seminars and perhaps the opportunity to return home for a rest and catch up with family and friends. This is the time to pause, reflect and reset. As well as catching up on those lecture notes, filing and reading – all key activities now – also spend some time thinking about how effective you are at studying. What has gone well for you this term? Have you made yourself a study timetable? Is it working for you? Are you spending too much time procrastinating or endless hours reading without feeling you're achieving anything? We can help.

Study Advice has [Study guides and videos](#) on effective study skills like time management strategies or academic reading. Our 5-minute videos may just offer you the few tips that you need to ensure you're using your time effectively. Also, check out our [Weekly webinar](#) programme, and book yourself onto any sessions that interest you. Coming up we have sessions on report writing, critical thinking and [how to take back control of your studies](#). If you're a first-year student and you haven't yet enrolled on our online transition course, [Study-Smart](#), now would be the time to do it.

If you would like to speak to a Study Adviser and get some tailored advice, we also offer lunchtime drop-ins (on the ground floor of the Library Mon-

Friday 1-2 pm) and bookable [1-2-1s](#).

If you're seeking study success, use Week 6 to get the advice and support you need with [Study Advice](#).

**Study Advice webpages**



October is Black History Month! This is a time to celebrate the achievements of our Black colleagues and friends and to reflect on the fight for racial justice and equality. This month, we celebrated by hosting a range of events and posting a variety of content which focused on bringing our community together, celebrating Black culture and the achievements of the Black community.

Here are a few of our highlights from the month:

- [How I stayed in touch with my culture while away from home](#) - Student Life Content Creator, Esosa Oduware, discusses her experience as an international student living in a different country and what she did to help stay in touch with her culture.
- [Black Figures Changing the World Around Us](#) - As we take this month to recognise and learn about the triumphs, tribulations, and untold stories of Black history, let's also spend some time recognising the present and acknowledging Black figures in our lifetime that have

changed, and are changing, the world around us, putting their stamp on the future's Black history.

- [Black History Month Celebration](#) – A free event that encouraged people to come together to enjoy food, music, and an interactive research display with an insightful talk from Professor Charles Egbu, Vice Chancellor of Leeds Trinity University, about what's really changing in race equity.
- [The Windrush Generation](#) - A free event telling the stories and lived experiences of Reading's Windrush Generation.

Want to find out more about Black History Month at the University of Reading? Head over to our [Black History Month Activity Programme](#) on Essentials.

**Black History Month Activity Programme**



I'm sure you have all heard of your Academic Tutor, but you might not be 100% how they can help you during your time at Reading. This information will give you an overview of how your Academic Tutors can be an important form of support during your studies and how you can get in contact with them.

**Who are Academic Tutors?**

All undergraduate students are allocated an Academic Tutor - a member of academic staff in your school or department who acts as a key point of contact throughout your degree.

Academic Tutors work in partnership with students and the University's wider support services to support your academic, personal, and professional development.

### **How can Academic Tutors help you?**

Your Academic Tutor works with you to:

- Formulate plans to support your academic and personal development
- Help you make decisions in relation to your course
- Connect you with other academics in your field of study
- Help you make the most of the wide range of development opportunities on offer
- Direct you to other University support services as appropriate

Find out how to make the most of your Academic tutor meetings by heading over to our [Academic Tutor Toolkit pages](#) on Essentials to get tips on how to make sure your meetings are beneficial.

### **How can I get in contact with my Academic Tutor?**

Students are allocated an Academic Tutor in Welcome when they first join the University. If your Academic Tutor leaves the University or changes role, your school will contact you to let you know who your new Academic Tutor is.

If you're not sure who your Academic Tutor is, you can find out on the [RISIS](#)

[portal](#) (select 'Programme and Modules', then 'Programme Information'), alternatively, you can contact your [Support Centre](#).

**Academic Tutor**



Blackboard is your online VLE (virtual learning environment) and a core resource in your learning experience at Reading. Blackboard offers you flexible access to online learning and resources for your School, programme and modules.

You can use Blackboard to: submit assignments, view marks and feedback, access online reading lists, and find learning resources for your course.

You can access Blackboard Learn via your desktop browser or on the app. The [Blackboard app](#) has a number of exciting features that makes learning even more flexible and convenient, including push notifications that let you know when anything has been added to your course.

### **Alternative content formats**

You can access and download content on Blackboard in a way that best suits you. Choose from a range of different formats, including an audio MP3 file to listen to or an ePub file to read on an eBook reader. For more info, see [Getting Started with Alternative Formats](#) on the Blackboard Help Site for

Students.

### **Submitting work online for assessment**

You can find guidance on submitting your work on the [Online Submission Checklist](#). If you're submitting using the Turnitin tool, don't forget to [download your digital receipt](#) immediately after you've submitted! You can also find help on [how to access your marks and feedback](#).

**Blackboard**



Have you joined us in 2022? We want to hear about your Welcome experience with us, everything from the information you received from us before coming to Reading, to the events you attended during Welcome itself.

Please complete our [Welcome Survey](#) now and tell us how it went.

**By completing the survey, you have the option to enter our prize draw! Here, you have a chance of winning one of six £100 [Love2Shop Vouchers](#), valid at over 50 stores including supermarkets.**



Welcome survey



Coming up in November - meet your Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Education and Student Experience, Professors Elizabeth McCrum and Peter Miskell. Details coming soon by email.

## What you might have missed...



- [Join us for the Black Leadership Programme](#)
- [Wear Red Day](#)
- [Join us for Green Festival 2022!](#)
- [ADHD Awareness Month](#)
- [A few TV suggestions for this Black History Month and Beyond – by Dominique](#)
- [How I Take Care of My Mental Health as a Student](#)

### UoR Student Life Events

A place to find upcoming student events from across the University, including

diversity, academic, creative, low alcohol, international, lifestyle, networking, and social events. [See what's on.](#)

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Keep up to date with the latest information by downloading the [UoR Student app](#), visiting the [Essentials pages](#), and checking our [social pages](#).

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Essentials