



The A+ Reference Desk: the toolkit index.

Everything in the series, in one place, with the master checklists you will come back to. The other twelve documents teach one skill each; this one tells you which to open, and when.

1 The thirteen documents

01 Study Schedule and Revision System A timetable your memory can keep.	02 Essay Writing and the Model Essay Question analysis, argument, a model essay.
03 Dissertations and Research Projects From proposal to submission, without drift.	04 Laboratory Reports Aim, method, results, discussion — the expected form.
05 Assignments, Cover Pages and Formats Cover pages, word counts, formats, submission.	06 Referencing and Citation Master Guide One style, applied consistently.
07 Exam Technique and Answer Frameworks Reading the paper, timing, frameworks.	08 Note-Making and Active Reading Notes you can actually revise from.
09 Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Quoting, citing and paraphrasing safely.	10 Numbers, Units and Data Presentation Units, significant figures, uncertainty.
11 Presentations and Seminars Structuring, designing, delivering, defending.	12 Group Work, Supervision and Ethics Roles, meetings, and research ethics.
13 The A+ Reference Desk This index and the master checklists.	

2 Reading it by need, not by number

If this is where you are	Open
Just registered, and not sure how to organise the term	01 • 08
A written assignment, a test or an examination is close	02 • 05 • 06 • 07 • 09
A practical or laboratory report is due	04 • 10
You must present, work in a group, or start a project	03 • 11 • 12

3 How to use this in your first two weeks

- Day one — read Document 01 and build the weekly grid**
Put the fixed commitments in first, then one repeatable study block per module.
- Before your first assignment — read 06, then 02 and 05**
Fix the referencing style before you write, not after. Format is marks you can bank early.
- Before your first practical — read 04 and 10**
Learn the report structure and the units conventions before you handle the equipment.
- Before your first seminar or group task — read 11 and 12**
Know how a short talk is structured, and how a group divides the work and records it.
- Before you submit anything — run the checklist on page 2**
Fifteen checks, two minutes. It catches more lost marks than any last-minute rewrite.

4 What this toolkit is not

It is not a substitute for your module outline, your lecturer's instructions, or your institution's own regulations. Where a rule belongs to your institution we point to it; where the toolkit does not cover a topic, we say so rather than pad it out.



5 Before you submit anything

- The question is **answered**, not just the topic described.
- Every part of the task has been covered.
- The word count is within the stated range.
- The structure is visible: introduction, body, conclusion.
- Every claim from a source carries a citation.
- The reference list matches the in-text citations.
- One referencing style is used throughout.
- Quotations are marked, and within the similarity rules.
- Tables and figures are numbered and captioned.
- Units and significant figures are consistent.
- The cover page is complete: name, number, module, date.
- The file is named as required, and opens.
- Spelling and grammar are checked — not just spell-checked.
- It has been read aloud once, or read by someone else.
- It is submitted before the deadline, with the receipt kept.

6 Around the examination

THE WEEK BEFORE

- List every topic; mark each **can do / shaky / not started**.
- Two timed past papers, marked against the key.
- Retrieval only in the final days — no new chapters.
- Sleep is protected; an all-nighter costs consolidation.

THE NIGHT BEFORE AND THE MORNING OF

- Pack what is allowed; check the venue and time.
- Review the error log, not the whole module.
- Eat, arrive early, breathe slowly for two minutes.
- Read the whole paper before writing anything.

TWO-MINUTE CALIBRATION

- When a marked script comes back, note **where** marks were lost.
- Separate lost knowledge from lost presentation.
- Write one rule per mistake in your error log.
- Adjust the next answer, not your view of yourself.

7 Where the advice comes from

Every recommendation in the series rests on one of four kinds of source, and each is named where it is used.

- **Official documents** — quoted only where a rule genuinely belongs to the institution.
- **Learning-science evidence** — peer-reviewed studies on how memory and practice work.

- **Writing and measurement standards** — style guides and metrology authorities.
- **General practice** — what examiners normally expect, labelled as such, never as a rule.

8 Three habits that carry the whole series

SPACE THE WORK

Short, repeated sessions across days beat one long block.

TEST YOURSELF

Retrieval beats rereading, and beats re-copying your notes.

KEEP AN ERROR LOG

Collect every mistake and the rule behind it, and re-read the log.

9 CS Tutorials — SMARTprep

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This toolkit is free to copy and to share. Where we do not cover something, we say so plainly. Nothing here promises a grade; what it offers is method, and the method is yours to use.