

Using Twitter



For academic purposes

Twitter is a micro-blogging tool useful for building an academic or research community and for keeping up-to-date with social and educational interests.

The tips below will give you an idea of some key things to consider.

⇒ **Follow relevant organisations for your studies and future careers**

Many organisations have Twitter accounts, which you can follow and receive their tweets. These can be useful for keeping up-to-date with developments in your field, breaking news, new research, and even graduate job vacancies.

⇒ **Follow your lecturers**

Some of your lecturers may be on Twitter and may post information relevant to your modules and their own research projects.

⇒ **Follow your University Library:**

The University of Sunderland London Library is on Twitter at [@UoSLondonLib](https://twitter.com/UoSLondonLib). Follow us to find out about new books and other library resources, training sessions, competitions, changes to opening times, any disruptions to services, send us feedback or ask us a question.

⇒ **Search Twitter for information about emerging trends and breaking news**

Use the 'search' function on Twitter to find information posted by organisations, professional bodies or industry experts. This can be useful for getting updates for subject areas where policy and practice changes relatively quickly, such as education, health, business and politics.

⇒ **Use Twitter to follow events, conferences or debates**

Using Twitter to find out what topics are 'trending' can be useful to search for popular events, discussions or conversations. Hashtags (#) are used to tag group or topics together and can be useful for following professional conferences or events such as a world trade meeting, political summit, art exhibition or cultural event.

Reflection: using Twitter for academic purposes

- ⇒ Think about the ways you could use Twitter for academic purposes
- ⇒ Do you follow any of your lecturers on Twitter or any of the University Twitter accounts? Do you think this could help you stay up to date and be a way to communicate with staff and other students?
- ⇒ Think about the different types of people on Twitter
- ⇒ Which news organisations, industry bodies, governments departments, companies, charities, industry and academic experts, academic journals, career information providers, etc. might you want to follow for your studies, research interests and future careers?



Tweets are limited to 140 characters, so good 'tweeting' skills can help develop skills relevant for your studies by

- * Summarising key messages
- * Combining brevity and clarity
- * Writing succinctly and precisely
- * Selecting only the most important information and cutting out what is not essential
- * Ensuring you get your message across to your audience

Adapted from: Cottrell, J. and Morris, N. (2012) *Study skills connected: using technology to support your studies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.