Assessor Recommendations Guide

Contents

Please use the outline menu/hyperlinks to navigate through the various condition categories

Introduction

MindMeister is an online mind mapping application that allows students to visualise, organise, and prioritise their thoughts.

MindMeister was launched in 2007 by MeisterLabs GmbH, a software company founded by Michael Hollauf and Till Vollmer.

MindMeister is a centralised tool within which students can plan, structure, and organise all aspects of study.

For example:

- Essays
- Coursework
- Note-taking
- To do lists
- Timetabling
- Project planning
- Brainstorming
- Exam preparation

MindMeister Key Features and benefits

MindMeister focuses on the key elements of planning, and has a user-friendly interface, especially good for those who find it difficult learning new software.

MindMeister provides a way to visualise information in mind maps utilising a focused interface.

MindMeister provides tools to facilitate real-time collaboration, coordinate task management, and create presentations

MindMeister is to enable individuals to collaborate on a mind map, where everyone can share ideas, comments and plans, as well as vote on ideas in real-time.

MindMeister allows users to share and edit mind maps, leave comments and feedback, attach files, images, videos, and link to external, as well as internal sources, via embedded URLs.

Mind maps can be shared with peers or tutors via an email invitation to collaborate, or via a hyperlink. Mind maps can also be turned into interactive presentations.

Who is the MindMeister for?

MindMeister can be recommended for students who have general difficulty organising, planning, and information. This could be as a direct result of a diagnosed specific learning difference (SpLD), a physiological, or psychological diagnosis. All of these conditions have an impact on cognition, neurological pathways, and executive functioning skills.

For example: ***(Click on the links to jump straight to the recommendations guide)***

Specific Learning Difference (SpLD)

- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia or Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)
- Dyscalculia
- Dysgraphia
- Speech and language difficulties
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Attention deficit disorder (ADD)

Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC)

Mental Health

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD)
- Dissociative disorder
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Attention deficit disorder (ADD)

Physical /Unseen and Other disability types

- **Physical:**
  - Arthritis

- Scoliosis
- Sciatica
- Raynaud's syndrome
- Fibromyalgia

- **Unseen / other:**

  - ME / Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)
  - Sickle cell anaemia
  - Long Covid
  - Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
  - Brain injury
  - Sickle cell anaemia
  - Postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS)

Areas of study where MindMeister can be recommended.

Specific Learning Difference (SpLD)

- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia or Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)
- Dyscalculia
- Dysgraphia
- Auditory Processing Disorder
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Attention deficit disorder (ADD)

MindMeister can help students who have general difficulty collating and organising information, which is as a direct result of a diagnosed specific learning difference.

Research and Reading
● Where a student with an SpLD struggles to process dense academic texts, and there are difficulties retaining what has been read, MindMeister can help to break down and summarise the material into a visual overview. In this way, linear text which is difficult to digest becomes easier to process. ● Reading can be simplified into branches, acting as a scaffold to aid critical analysis. The software uses visual memory techniques, allowing for the presentation of information in a clear, visual structure, making it easier to conceptualise and learn. The use of colour coding and images strengthen visual memory. Research notes may be developed into essay plans as required supporting the transition from reading and research to writing. ● **MindMeister** will help students to compile and store research

notes in a manner that eases processing, and retention of information.

- **MindMeister** supports students who have organisational issues and often lose research material. **MindMeister** can be used immediately to store information in the form of text, attachments, or hyperlinks, reducing the risk of misplacing or losing vital research.

- **MindMeister's** graphical structure as well as the use of images and symbols, allows students to adopt a multisensory approach to research. By building association with information, **MindMeister** will improve retention of information, and memory formation.

- MindMeister can be used with other AT such as Pro-Study to extract and colour code research content from sources (e.g. websites and PDFs). This can help to see connections between ideas or across different articles and creates the building blocks for assignments.

- TextAid can be used to read text aloud as key points are added to MindMeister, allowing for active reading and aiding working memory.

- It is also possible to use MeisterTask within MindMeister to create tasks within a mind map to help with organisation.

Writing and Reviewing Academic Work
● Where there are difficulties organising ideas into a logical structure, MindMeister offers visual essay planning support. It's possible to plan in a flexible way, firstly, by brainstorming ideas and then easily organising this content using a 'drag and drop' process to develop a logical flow.This helps to actively engage with the content, and better understand and develop relationships between concepts. ● As outlined above, when MindMeister is also used to support the research process this also provides a solid foundation for writing as content is already visually mapped, making it easier to embark on writing tasks. This can be especially helpful when students struggle to make a start with their work and there is a fear of the blank page. ● Once happy with the structure, MindMeister can be used to export plans into Microsoft Word, which will help streamline the working process. Plans are displayed as a hierarchical outline. MindMeister therefore, speeds up the planning process,and helps compensate for additional time spent in other areas of study. ● TTS can be used to read the content aloud to review the text as a prospective reader would, this can ensure that writing is formal, objective and has the correct tone. This strategy can also help with proofreading to identify errors and poor syntax. ● Dragon can be utilised within MindMeister to dictate ideas, full paragraphs in the notes section or comments ● When transferring ideas from MindMeister to a MS Word document, Lightkey can offer predictive typing and real-time

grammar checks with corrections and suggestions that are context specific.

- Tasks can be added to any part of the mind map using Meister Task to help with planning.

- If the student has limited or ineffective planning strategies, working with a Study Skills tutor (where relevant NMH support is recommended and permitted under the appropriate funding guidance) will help the student to develop core strategies, which can be put into practice using MindMeister.

Note-taking in Lectures and Seminars

- **MindMeister** can be used as a tool to aid note-taking difficulties. It can be used to map key concepts on a device such as a laptop or phone during lectures. Visuals like mind-maps can help to simplify complex information, making it easier to grasp and visuals can also create stronger mental associations.
- As students can take typed notes, and organise them instantaneously within MindMeister, it is ideal for students who have organisational issues, and if there are vulnerabilities misplacing notes.This strategy can also help students with poor working memory by grouping and separating information.
- Where poor focus and inattention present and impact performance, MindMeister can assist due to active engagement with the content. Creating a mind-map to capture lecture content can also help to stay focused during teaching sessions. Notes can be expanded to support revision and composition.
- Where there are difficulties with spelling, using MindMeister it's possible to capture notes using short phrases, reducing the need to write full sentences and the pressure to listen and write notes simultaneously.
- MindMeister can be used in collaboration with a digital voice recorder, such as the OM System LS-P5. Students can review the recording after the lecture, and supplement notes taken within MindMeister.
- Students can use the icons, emojis, and attachment feature

within MindMeister to build visual links with information. MindMeister is ideal for students who are visual learners, or for those who find it difficult to build links between topics, or to put information into context.

- Notes taken in a lecture can be converted into a mind-map, which can be used as a basis for an essay plan, or developed into more reliable learning resources for later reference.
- MindMeister is ideal for students who prefer to take typed notes, due to issues with handwriting speed, or legibility. MindMeister can also be used in combination with Dragon to capture ideas via voice.
- MeisterTask can be used to convert topics in a MindMeister map into study tasks to aid follow up.
- Students can work with their study skills tutor (where this support can be recommended in line with the funding guidance) to develop their note-taking strategies, and employ these into MindMeister

Time management and organisation

- **MindMeister's** centralised database eliminates the risk of students losing information, as all work can be stored instantaneously.
- Mind-maps mirror how many learners think - in a non-linear way, looking at the bigger picture. This approach can help to break down complex tasks into manageable steps using branches and sub-branches. Each node on the map can represent a task or subtask. This strategy helps with planning and task prioritisation.This can help to reduce overwhelm by presenting information visually. Used with MeisterTask, it is possible to turn nodes into tasks with due dates and reminders.
- MindMeister is directly compatible with MeisterTask through integrations and embeds which supports better idea management and project planning.
- MindMeister also compliments or enhances students' current planning and organisational strategies.
- MindMiester is ideal for managing multiple assignments or higher

volumes of work, as the visual aspect of the software allows students to easily switch between tasks.

- MindMeister supports students who do not have any robust organisational strategies in place. Students can also work with their study skills tutor or specialist mentor (where this type of support is permitted under the funding guidance) to develop organisational strategies, which they can then hone and enhance within MindMeister.

Access to and use of technology

- MindMeister can be used as a central visual dashboard to map out academic activities adding deadlines and priorities. This can reduce the number of applications that need to be used, thereby reducing cognitive load and support working memory as fewer applications need to be used.
- Predefined templates facilitate ease of use.
- Keyboard shortcuts make it easier to add topics, format text and arrange mind maps.
- Expandable notes make it easier to add context and detail.
- Easy addition of attachments.
- MindMeister has a simple, intuitive interface with drag-and-drop, keyboard shortcuts and clear navigation.
- MindMeister can be used alongside other AT Tools, including Dragon, Pro-Study, ivvi Notes and MeisterTask to provide an integrated support system.
- MindMeister's Focus Mode can help with concentration challenges by dimming all but the active part of the mind map. This helps to reduce distraction and overcome problems of inattention.

Practical Sessions, Placements, Field Trips and Additional Course Activities
• Students can use the MindMeister mobile app on the go to create new or work with existing projects. • MindMeister mobile app can be used to instantly log ideas before they are lost from memory, thereby reducing the risk of forgetting key points. • MindMeister can be used to support pre-session planning. Procedures and steps can be mapped out visually. This can aid familiarity and support recall • The MindMeister mobile app and web access means mind maps can be accessed anywhere, anytime. • Post-session notes can be added to the mind-map to create links between practical and theoretical course elements. • Used in combination with MeisterTask, field and placement notes can be converted to action plans.

Examinations and Timed Assessments
• Where a student does not have any effective exam preparation strategies in place**,** MindMeister can be used as a tool for revision. • MindMeister is a visual learning tool, and is useful as a means to organising information, improving memory formation. • Information can be exported into MS PowerPoint, and used to create notes, and cue cards.

Social Interaction and Communication
● **MindMeister** can be used to prepare for presentations, by sequencing visuals and text notes, which students can then export to PowerPoint. ● Although it is not a social communication tool, MindMeister can be used with MeisterTask. This can offer support for group projects, as tasks can be assigned to team members.This can help to set clear expectations.

Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)

Students with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) may face a variety of challenges at university due to differences in social communication, sensory processing, executive function, and adapting to new environments. While each student is unique, there are several common issues they might experience that can affect academic success, wellbeing, and independence.

Students who are diagnosed with autistic spectrum disorder or Asperger's, may also present with comorbid conditions such as anxiety, hypermobility, sensory processing issues, auditory processing issues, obsessive-compulsive disorder, or specific learning differences.

MindMeister can help students who have difficulties with prioritising, organising, and sequencing information.

Research and Reading
● Where there are problems identifying the core ideas in a text, **MindMeister** can be used to summarise reading material in a visual format. ● Reading can be simplified into branches, acting as a scaffold to aid critical analysis. The software uses visual memory techniques, allowing for the presentation of information in a clear, visual structure, making it easier to conceptualise and learn. The use of colour coding and images strengthen visual memory. Research notes may be developed into essay plans as required supporting the transition from reading and research to writing. In this way, MindMeister acts as a bridge to move from reading to writing. ● Using MindMeister to summarise reading supports understanding as the information can be interpreted using a visual representation which is clear and logical. ● Mapping the information from several sources in one visual dashboard can help to see connections and patterns across sources and also identify any gaps in information when researching.Context is key.

- MindMeister can be used with other AT such as Pro-Study to extract and colour code research content from sources (e.g. websites and PDFs). This can help to see connections between ideas or across different articles and creates the building blocks for assignments.
- TextAid can be used to read text aloud as key points are added to MindMeister,to allow for active reading.
- MindMeister will help students to compile, organise and store research notes in a more effective manner The visual approach of mind maps will help students to retain information with greater ease. Research notes may be developed into essay plans as required.
- MindMeister is a useful tool in helping students to prioritise information. By using MindMeister, the mind map provides a natural order, allowing students to organise and sequence information more effectively.
- MindMeister supports students who have organisational issues and often lose research material. MindMeister can be used immediately to store information in the form of text, attachments, or hyperlinks, reducing the risk of misplacing or losing vital research.
- MindMeister's graphical structure as well as the use of images and symbols, mind mapping allows students to adopt a multisensory approach to research. By building association with information, MindMeister will improve retention of information, and memory formation.
- The visual structure of MindMeister, and the use of images and symbols helps with long term memory, allowing students to access information more efficiently.

Writing and Reviewing Academic Work

- **MindMeister** can be particularly effective in supporting a student with ASC with writing and reviewing academic work. This can prove challenging as abstract or ambiguous language is often used in academic task deliverables.

  To complete an assignment successfully it is crucial that the question or brief is correctly understood. For students with ASC there can be problems understanding academic tone and literal interpretation, with some difficulty identifying implied meaning. MindMeister can be used to assist by deconstructing the question. A central node can be created for the question, and sub notes and icons utilised to clarify the command words or directive words. Colour coded branches can ensure that all components are answered in multi-step assignment briefs. This can reduce overwhelm and anxiety when expectations are unclear.

- TextAid can also be combined to hear questions read aloud.
- Where there are difficulties generating and sequencing ideas, MindMeister can be used to map out key ideas in a visual format. These difficulties can stem from literal thinking.
- Where there are difficulties organising ideas into a logical structure, MindMeister offers visual essay planning support. It's possible to plan in a flexible way, firstly, by brainstorming ideas and then easily organising this content using a 'drag and drop' process to develop a logical flow.This helps to actively engage with the content, and better understand and develop relationships between concepts.
- As outlined above, when MindMeister is also used to support the research process this also provides a solid foundation for writing as content is already visually mapped, making it easier to embark on writing tasks. This can be especially helpful when students struggle to make a start with their work and there is a fear of the blank page. This approach facilitates an easier transition from reading to writing

tasks, aided by MindMeister's export options.

- MindMeister makes it easier for students to plan and structure both the process of planning coursework, as well as the composition process itself. The branches on the mind-map mirror the sections and headings in the final written assignment. This will help students to address structural difficulties, and both plan and execute written work with greater ease. MindMeister can be used to export plans and work into word processors will also help streamline the working process, thereby speeding up the formatting process, and help compensate for additional time spent in other areas of study.
- MindMeister will help to enhance and improve upon the effectiveness of Student's current planning strategies in conjunction with support from a Study Skills tutor where this type of support is permitted in line with the funding guidance. This strategy enables real time collaboration and core strategies can be put into practice using MindMeister.
- MindMeister will allow students to break down the work into smaller and more easily achievable subtasks, which in turn will reduce the stress and/or anxiety they experience with written work.
- The visual structure and layout of MindMeister will make it easier for students to showcase their knowledge, and communicate their ideas.
- Other AT tools can be incorporated to ensure academic success:
    - Where there are difficulties presenting ideas in print, using MindMeister in combination with Dragon can allow an individual to capture ideas even more easily. This approach can be beneficial when there are difficulties getting started and procrastination is an issue.
    - When a mind-map is exported to MS Word, Dragon and Lightkey can offer support with the more technical aspects

of writing.
    - To ensure all aspects of the assignment are completed it is possible to set deadlines in MeisterTask to ensure the assignment is reviewed and submitted on time.
    - TextAid can also support proofreading.

Note-taking in Lectures and Seminars

- **MindMeister** can be used as an aid to note-taking allowing students to take notes, and organise them instantaneously within MindMeister. Ideal for students who have organisational issues, and may be vulnerable to misplacing notes and who benefit from the use of visuals to understand key concepts and simplify complex information.
- MindMeister can also be used to create a note-taking template, offering a predictable layout to follow during taught sessions.
- Mapping lecture content can also reduce verbal overload, and break down dense topics into smaller units to aid recall.
- Creating a mind-map to capture lecture content can also help to stay focused during teaching sessions. Notes can be expanded to support revision and composition.
- MindMeister can be used in collaboration with audio note-taking Key moments from recorded lectures can be highlighted and mapped visually using MindMeister.
- Lernabl can be used to define any unfamiliar terms and these can be mapped to create a glossary of terms in MindMeister.
- MeisterTask can be used to convert topics in a MindMeister map into study tasks to aid follow up.
- **MindMeister** is ideal for students who prefer to take typed notes, due to issues with handwriting speed, or legibility.
- Students can work with their study skills tutor to develop their note-taking strategies, and employ these by using **MindMeister.**

- When **MindMeister** is used to support note-taking difficulties, for a student with ASC, this strategy can help to show how ideas connect and support “big picture” thinking - supporting reflection, active learning and revision.

Time management and organisation

- **MindMeister** will help students to break down larger projects into smaller sub-tasks. This will make it easier to structure and manage large and complex projects, which will make them less intimidating and easier to start.
- **MindMeister’s** centralised database eliminates the risk of students losing information, as all work can be stored instantaneously. This can help to overcome any weaknesses with organisation and in executive functioning,
- Mind-maps mirror how many learners think - in a non-linear way.Some students with ASC can struggle with tasks that require a step by step process. This approach can help to break down complex tasks into manageable steps using branches and sub-branches. Each node on the map can represent a task or subtask. This strategy helps with planning and task prioritisation.This can help to reduce overwhelm by presenting information visually.
- Used with MeisterTask, it is possible to turn branches into tasks with due dates and reminders, also useful when there is poor awareness of time and how long tasks take. Colour tagging in MindMeister can also help to identify priority tasks.This approach provides a clear framework to support organisation.
- MindMeister is directly compatible with MeisterTask through integrations and embeds which supports better idea management and project planning.
- **MindMeister** can be used to create a visual representation of a task list, or routines which can help develop muscle memory, and improve a student’s ability to manage unexpected change.

Access to and use of technology

- **MindMeister** can be used as a central visual dashboard to map out academic activities adding deadlines and priorities. This can reduce the number of applications that need to be used, thereby reducing cognitive load and supporting working memory as fewer applications need to be used.
- Predefined templates facilitate ease of use.
- Keyboard shortcuts make it easier to add topics, format text and arrange mind maps.
- Expandable notes make it easier to add context and detail.
- Easy addition of attachments.
- MindMeister has a simple, intuitive interface with drag-and-drop, keyboard shortcuts and clear navigation.
- MindMeister's *Focus Mode* can help with concentration challenges by dimming all but the active part of the mind map. This helps to reduce distraction.
- **MindMeister** can be used alongside other AT Tools, including Dragon, Lightkey, Pro-Study, ivvi Notes and MeisterTask to provide an integrated support system. If there is any resistance or anxiety in relation to the adoption of AT, this combination of AT represents a cohesive support system addressing all areas of study and providing a seamless transition between academic tasks.

Practical Sessions, Placements, Field Trips and Additional Course Activities

- **MindMeister** can be used to support pre-session planning. Procedures and steps can be mapped out visually. This can aid familiarity and help confidence before embarking on a new task or entering a new environment. This can help to reduce anxiety associated with this type of teaching environment. With ASC, some students can struggle with sequential tasks.
- Post-session notes can be added to the mind-map to create links between practical and theoretical course elements aiding transition.

- As **MindMeister** is a visual learning tool, this software will be useful as a means to organise information and commit it to memory.
- The MindMeister mobile app and web access means mind maps can be accessed anywhere, anytime.
- In combination with MeisterTask, field and placement notes can be converted to action plans.
- **MindMeister** can be used as a workaround for collaborative work, where students find it difficult to work or communicate with others as other members of the group can use MindMeister Mobile to contribute to group projects.

Examinations and Timed Assessments
• **MindMeister** can be used as a visual learning tool, this software may be useful as a means to organise information and commit it to memory. This may also help students to structure and organise the revision process. • Where a student does not have any effective exam preparation strategies in place**, MindMeister** can be used as a tool for revision.
Social Interaction and Communication
• **MindMeister** can be used to prepare for presentations, by sequencing visuals and text notes, which students can then export to PowerPoint. The document export can be used to create notes and cue cards. • Presentations can be delivered directly from within MindMeister, no need for PowerPoint. • Predefined templates make it easier to get started. • Although it is not a social communication tool, used with MeisterTask this can offer support for group projects, as tasks can be assigned to team members. This can help to set expectations clearly and avoid

any ambiguity.

Travel and Access to Higher Education Environment

- **MindMeister** can be used to schedule a journey before travelling. This visual structure can help to make the journey less overwhelming and intimidating and offer reassurance when travelling alone via public transport
- The visual representation of a mind map will help the student build muscle memory, helping to make independent travel less anxiety provoking. Photos of the environment or signage can be added to add and build familiarity, and time estimates can be added along with links to live travel updates. This strategy can create consistency.

Mental Health

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD)
- Dissociative disorder
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

MindMeister can help students who have been diagnosed with a mental health condition which affects executive functioning, and in turn their ability to organise, structure, and sequence information. A diagnosed mental health condition can also bring problems with concentration and focus, motivation and task initiation as well as time management and organisational difficulties.

Research and Reading
• A mental health diagnosis can result in barriers to research and reading. There can be concentration difficulties which can make long readings and dense academic texts feel unmanageable and mentally exhausting. This can make it hard to keep pace with reading demands and avoidance may creep in. **MindMeister** can be used to create a visual summary of readings. This strategy can also bring a sense of achievement and encouragement, by tracking reading progress. • TTS software can be combined with this strategy, for example, TextAid. Having academic readings read aloud can provide additional focus, allowing active rather than passive engagement. • Reading can be simplified into branches, acting as a scaffold to aid critical analysis. The software uses visual memory techniques, allowing for the presentation of information in a clear, visual structure, making it easier to conceptualise and learn. The use of colour coding and images strengthen visual memory. Research notes may be developed into essay plans as required supporting the transition from reading and research to writing. In this way, **MindMeister** acts as a bridge to move from reading to writing.

- Using **MindMeister** to summarise readings supports understanding as the information can be interpreted using a visual representation which is clear and logical.
- Mapping the information from several sources in one visual dashboard can help to see connections and patterns across sources and also identify any gaps in information when researching.Context is key.
- **MindMeister** can also help students to compile, organise and store research notes in a more effective manner. It can be used with other AT such as Pro-Study to extract and colour code research content from sources (e.g. websites and PDFs). This can help to see connections between ideas or across different articles and creates the building blocks for assignments.
- The visual approach of mind maps may help students to retain information with greater ease. Research notes may be developed into essay plans as required.

Writing and Reviewing Academic Work

- The presence of a mental health condition can affect the ability to engage with academic writing. There are problems with task initiation and avoidance, and this can lead to missed deadlines. Commencing on written work can feel overwhelming and there are times when motivation is poor. MindMeister can be used to initiate academic writing. It can be used to deconstruct the question. A central node can be created for the main question, and sub notes and icons used to clarify the command words or directive words. Colour coded branches can ensure that all components are answered in multi-step assignment briefs. This can reduce overwhelm and anxiety when expectations are unclear.
- Where large writing tasks feel daunting. Breaking an assignment into colour coded sections can reduce overwhelm and make the task feel more achievable.
- TTS software, for example, TextAid. can also be combined to hear

questions read aloud.

- When MindMeister is also used to support the research process this also provides a solid foundation for writing as content is already visually mapped, making it easier to embark on writing tasks. This can be especially helpful when students struggle to make a start with their work and there is a fear of the blank page. This approach facilitates an easier transition from reading to writing tasks, aided by MindMeister's export options.
- **MindMeister** will make it easier for students to plan and structure both the process of producing coursework, and the coursework itself. This can help build a sense of achievement and aid motivation.
- **MindMeister** will allow students to break the work down into smaller sub-tasks, diffusing the stress and anxiety associated with large written projects by changing the way that they are perceived and approached.
- The visual structure of **MindMeister** will also make it easier for students to regain momentum after a break, and support incremental working patterns. Furthermore, the ability to export plans to Word will also help to streamline working processes.
- The visual structure of **MindMeister** as well as the use of images and symbols helps with long term memory, allowing students to access information more efficiently.
- Additional AT tools can be combined with MindMeister to support the writing process overall including:
    - Pro-Study: to organise reference and source information.
    - Dragon: to dictate ideas or full paragraphs of text in line with the branches on the map.
    - TextAid: to read MindMeister content aloud and to aid proofreading.
    - Lightkey: once content is exported to a word processor, e.g. MS Word, Lightkey can aid sentence construction and spelling.
    - ivvi Notes: audio from lectures can be used to populate

mind-maps with relevant detail to enhance writing.
    - MeisterTask: can be used to break the writing process down into manageable tasks.

This combination of AT tools can assist across all areas of study to help reduce anxiety.

Note-taking in Lectures and Seminars

- **MindMeister** can be used as a note-taking tool. As students can take typed notes, and organise them instantaneously within
- **MindMeister**. Ideal for students who have organisational issues, and those vulnerable to misplacing notes.
- Where there are difficulties keeping pace with lecture delivery, and poor concentration, this can make it difficult to generate a full set of comprehensive notes, and can exacerbate anxiety. When MindMeister is used to support note-taking, information can be visually captured and organised, using the lecture topic as the central node.
- This strategy can be coupled with audio note-taking. Using lecture recordings to build MindMeister maps from audio segments.
- **MindMeister** can be also used in collaboration with a digital voice recorder such as the OM Systems LS-P5. Students can review the recording after the lecture, and supplement notes taken within **MindMeister**.
- ivvi Notes supports the capture of audio for note-taking during lectures/teaching sessions. These recordings can then be reviewed and summarised with key points transferred to **Mindmeister** if required.
- Lernabl can be used to define any unfamiliar terms and these can be mapped to create a glossary of terms in MindMeister.
- MeisterTask can be used to convert topics in a MindMeister map into study tasks to aid planning.

Time management and organisation

- **MindMeister** will help students to break down larger projects into smaller sub-tasks. This will make it easier to structure and manage large and complex projects, which will make them less intimidating and easier to start and should reduce stress levels associated with large projects.
- **MindMeister's** centralised database eliminates the risk of students losing information, as all work can be stored instantaneously. This can help to overcome any weaknesses with organisation and reduce anxiety,
- **MindMeister** can help to break down complex tasks into manageable steps using branches and sub-branches. Each node on the map can represent a task or subtask. This strategy helps with planning and task prioritisation.This can help to reduce overwhelm by presenting information visually.
- Used with MeisterTask, it is possible to turn nodes into tasks with due dates and reminders, also useful when there is poor awareness of time and how long tasks take. Colour tagging in **MindMeister** can also help to identify priority tasks.This approach provides a clear framework to support organisation.
- **MindMeister** is directly compatible with MeisterTask through integrations and embeds which supports better idea management and project planning..
- **MindMeister** can be used to create a visual representation of a task list, or routines which can help develop muscle memory. This can aid resilience. During times of low mood or low emotional energy, this strategy can offer routine and predictability.
- **MindMeister** templates can be used to support routine.

Access to and use of technology

- **MindMeister** can be used as a central visual dashboard to map out academic activities adding deadlines and priorities. This can reduce the number of applications that need to be used, thereby reducing cognitive load and concentration as fewer applications need to be used.
- Predefined templates also facilitate ease of use.
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Practical Sessions, Placements, Field Trips and Additional Course Activities

- **MindMeister** is a visual learning tool, this software will be useful as a means to organise information and commit it to memory.
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- **MindMeister** can be used as a workaround for collaborative work, where students find it difficult to work or communicate with others. As other students can use MindMeister Mobile to contribute to group projects.
- **MindMeister** can be used to support pre-session planning.

Procedures and steps can be mapped out visually. This can aid familiarity and help confidence before embarking on a new task or entering a new environment. This can help to reduce anxiety associated with this type of teaching environment.

- Post-session notes can be added to the mind-map to create links between practical and theoretical course elements aiding transition.

Examinations and Timed Assessments

- **MindMeister** can help students to break down the exam revision process, helping them to work through the process incrementally, and better manage associated stress or anxiety as a result.

Social Interaction and Communication

- **MindMeister** can be used to prepare for presentations, by sequencing visuals and text notes, which students can then export to PowerPoint.
- Presentations can also be delivered directly from within MindMeister, no need for PowerPoint.
- Predefined templates make it easier to get started.
- The document export can be used to create notes and cue cards. This can help to overcome anxiety around presentation delivery. Visible structures like mind-maps can support logical thinking and confidence.
- For group work, where there is a degree of social anxiety or difficulties expressing an opinion due to fear of confrontation, MindMeister can be used to map out talking points and to visually break down roles and tasks for collaborative assignments.
- These group work tasks can be added to MeisterTask for shared accountability.
- Where there are difficulties taking feedback on board, a **MindMeister** map can be used to map out the comments and plan follow up questions.
- The MindMeister mobile app and web access means mind maps can be accessed anywhere, anytime.

Travel and Access to Higher Education Environment
• **MindMeister** can be used to map a journey before travelling. This visual structure can help to make the journey less overwhelming and intimidating and offer reassurance when travelling alone via public transport • The visual representation of a mind map will help the student build muscle memory, allowing them to tackle independent travel with greater ease. Photos of the environment or signage can be added to add and build familiarity, and time estimates can be added along with links to live travel updates. This strategy can create consistency and help to alleviate anxiety •

Physical /Unseen/Other disabilities

Physical

For example:

- Arthritis
- Scoliosis
- Sciatica
- Raynaud's syndrome
- Fibromyalgia

Unseen / other:

For example:

- ME / Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)
- Sickle Cell Anaemia
- Long Covid
- Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
- Brain injury
- Sickle cell anaemia
- Postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS)

MindMeister can be recommended for conditions which have a direct impact on cognition, processing speed, concentration, and executive functioning skills. Often side-effects of students' medication can exacerbate these issues.

Facets of many physiological conditions can have a detrimental impact on students' neurological state. For example, conditions such as chronic fatigue syndrome, postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome or fibromyalgia, can leave students experiencing brain fog, or fibro fog (fibromyalgia).

Even Long Covid is known to have a significant impact on executive functioning skills, often affecting an individuals' neurological pathways

Research and Reading

- Cognitive fatigue due to the impact of pain, side-effects of medication. or exhaustion (physical and/or mental) can impair reading comprehension, limiting focus and memory. **MindMeister** can be used to break down academic articles using mind map branches to create subtopics. This can reduce overwhelm.
- Once information is added to the mind-map it can reduce the need for re-reading. This can be helpful when it's not possible to sit and read for extended periods. A TTS tool such as TextAid can also be combined to have material read aloud. This is useful when an individual can tire easily.
- Reading progress can be tracked visually and summaries and notes can be added. Adding links to supporting documents, e.g. websites, lecture slides on the virtual learning environment (VLE) or PDFs and websites can also assist with information overload. This strategy reduces the need to work with multiple sources. Information is available in a central location.
- This strategy will help to compile, organise and store research notes in a more effective manner. Pro-Study can be used in combination to collect source material. When paired with the Assist app, this can also reduce the need to carry heavy books. This approach can also bridge research with idea mapping and help with the transition from reading and research to writing, making it easier to develop an initial draft, saving time.
- Mapping the information from several sources in one visual dashboard using **MindMeister** can help to see connections and patterns across research sources and to identify any gaps in information when researching. This is helpful when fatigued or when concentration is poor.

Writing and Reviewing Academic Work

- **MindMeister** is an efficiency measure which makes it easier for students to keep pace with academic workload without physically over-exerting themselves.
- Where there are problems with writing and/or typing, keyboard shortcuts make it easier to add content to a mind-map, to format text and arrange the structure of mind maps. MindMeister has a simple, intuitive 'drag and drop' interface allowing for improved accessibility and clear navigation. Dragon can also be used in combination to dictate ideas directly into MindMeister or MS Word.
- Where there is cognitive fatigue, it can make it difficult to organise ideas in writing. **MindMeister** can help to break down assignments into structured sections.
- When **MindMeister** is also used to support the research process this also provides a solid foundation for writing as content is already visually mapped, making it easier to embark on writing tasks. This can be especially helpful when students struggle with task initiation due to fatigue, poor concentration and/or overwhelm. This approach also facilitates an easier transition from reading to writing tasks, aided by MindMeister's export options.
- **MindMeister** will make it easier for students to plan and structure both the process of producing coursework, and the coursework itself. This can help build a sense of achievement and aid motivation which is especially helpful on low energy days. Ideas can be added in any order and work can be carried out in short spurts where energy levels fluctuate.
- **MindMeister** will allow students to break the work down into smaller sub-tasks, diffusing the stress associated with large written projects by changing the way that they are perceived and approached.
- The visual structure of **MindMeister** will also make it easier for students to regain momentum after a break, and supports

incremental working patterns. Furthermore, the ability to export plans to Word will also help to streamline working processes.

- Coupled with the visual structure of **MindMeister,** the use of images and symbols can also help with long term memory, allowing students to access information more efficiently.

- Additional AT tools can be combined with **MindMeister** to support the writing process including:

    - Pro-Study: to organise reference and source information.

    - Dragon: to dictate ideas to MindMeister or full paragraphs of text in line with the branches on the map.

    - TextAid: to read MindMeister content aloud and to aid proofreading.

    - Lightkey: once content is exported to a word processor, e.g. MS Word, Lightkey can aid sentence construction and spelling.

    - ivvi Notes: audio from lectures can be used to populate mind-maps with relevant detail to enhance writing.

    - MeisterTask: can be used to break the writing process down into manageable tasks.

    - This combination of AT tools can assist across all areas of study to aid cognitive fatigue, pain and reduced stamina.

Note-taking in Lectures and Seminars

- **MindMeister** can be used as a note-taking tool. Due to issues with handwriting dexterity and/or handwriting speed this method can enable an individual to capture information more easily, reducing physical effort.
- Where there are problems writing continuously due to fatigue or pain, **MindMeister** can be used to capture information from taught sessions using visual maps. Typing is minimised by the use of keywords and bullet points.
- Where reduced fine motor skills and discomfort from writing or typing make note-taking challenging, audio note-taking applications can be used in conjunction with **MindMeister.** Mind-maps can be populated in greater detail following the lecture, using ivvi Notes for example, Dragon can also be used to dictate directly into MindMeister.
- **MindMeister** can be used in collaboration with a digital voice recorder. As students can review the recording after the lecture, and supplement notes taken within MindMeister.
- Low energy, and cognitive fatigue can make it difficult to keep pace with fast paced lectures. **MindMeister** allows for the rapid capture of ideas in a visual format, and keyboard shortcuts make it easier to add topics, format text and arrange content. This approach can also aid computer interaction via an easy to use and intuitive interface, aiding focus on the material itself.
- Students can take typed notes and organise the material instantaneously within **MindMeister**. This approach is ideal for students who have organisational issues due to impaired cognitive performance, which can leave them vulnerable to misplacing notes.
- Notes taken in **MindMeister** can easily be developed into reliable learning resources, and then used as a basis for essay plans.
- Lernabl can be used to define any unfamiliar terms and these can be mapped to create a glossary of terms in MindMeister.
- MeisterTask can be used to convert topics in a MindMeister map into study tasks to aid follow up.

Time management and organisation
● Where fatigue is present due to an ongoing medical condition, this can make it difficult to engage with coursework tasks for extended periods of time. There can be difficulties pacing workload due to fluctuations or a flare up of symptoms, and at times this may lead to overcommitment due to the unpredictable nature of the diagnosis. Using **MindMeister,** tasks can be broken down into manageable steps using branches and sub-branches. Each node on the map used to represent a task or subtask. This strategy helps with planning and task prioritisation.This can help to reduce overwhelm by presenting information visually. ● This strategy can be coupled with the use of MeisterTask, where tasks can be mapped by intensity. This will make it easier to structure and manage large and complex projects, which will make them less intimidating and easier to start. This strategy allows for flexibility enabling tasks to be completed gradually, giving a sense of accomplishment. This approach can also compensate for cognitive/brain fog. ● Colour coding in **MindMeister** can also help with pacing to identify urgent or priority tasks initially Without a clear structure projects can often feel overwhelming. ● **MindMeister** templates can be used to support routine.
Access to and use of technology
● **MindMeister** can be used as a central visual dashboard to map out academic activities adding deadlines and priorities. This can reduce the number of applications that need to be used, thereby reducing cognitive load and concentration as fewer applications need to be used. ● Predefined templates facilitate ease of use. ● Keyboard shortcuts make it easier to add topics, format text and arrange mind maps.

- Expandable notes make it easier to add context and detail. Easy addition of attachments.
- MindMeister has a simple, intuitive interface with drag-and-drop, keyboard shortcuts and clear navigation.
- MindMeister can be used alongside other AT Tools, including Dragon, Lightkey, Pro-Study, ivvi Notes and MeisterTask to provide an integrated support system. If there is any resistance or anxiety in relation to the adoption of AT, this combination of AT represents a cohesive support system addressing all areas of study and providing a seamless transition between academic tasks.
- MindMeister's Focus Mode helps with concentration challenges by dimming all but the active part of the mind map. This helps to reduce distraction and improve focus.

Practical Sessions, Placements, Field Trips and Additional Course Activities

- Practical sessions can be fast-paced and these types of teaching environments can pose challenges where symptoms including pain, fatigue, mobility restrictions or poor memory are present. **MindMeister** can be used to create a map for pre-session preparation. The branches on the map can be used to identify step by step processes, and reduce reliance on memory and recall.
- Using templates, maps can be duplicated for each practical teaching session, saving time and adding familiarity. These maps can also be used to track progress as well as any outstanding follow-up activities. Linking this content to MeisterTask can help to set reminders.
- During or post session, ivvi Notes can be used to record reflections or key points, and main action points, especially those outstanding, can be summarised in **MindMeister (**using the template).
- MindMeister Mobile can be used on the go to create new or work with existing projects. Thereby maximising all available working time. The MindMeister mobile app and web access means mind maps can be accessed anywhere and at any time.

Examinations and Timed Assessments
● **MindMeister** can help students to prepare for exams, breaking down study activities to support an incremental approach to the revision process with manageable and realistic blocks mapped to revision goals and with custom timelines matched to energy levels and levels of activity ● Enhanced with the use of Lernabl, revision priorities can be established. Checkmarks and/or status labels can also be added to show progress. ●
Social Interaction and Communication
● **MindMeister** can be used to prepare for presentations, by sequencing visuals and text notes, which students can then export to PowerPoint. ● Presentations can also be delivered directly from within MindMeister, no need for MS PowerPoint. Predefined templates can also make it easier to get started. ● The document export can be used to create notes and cue cards. This is helpful where students who have difficulty with long-term memory and can find it hard to recall information in the moment.