

# MAKE THE MOST OF TUTES

## About tutorials

Tutorials, or tutes, are small groups (usually no more than 25 students) where the unit topic for each week is discussed in depth.

Tutes are facilitated by tutors but you are expected to contribute to the discussion, which will relate to the topic covered in the lecture and unit reading for that week.

Your unit outline sets out the topics, readings and tasks for each week, as well as the percentage of marks allocated for tute participation (if relevant to your unit).

### 1. Making the most of tutes

Tutes are a great opportunity to learn through listening to other students and contributing your own ideas.

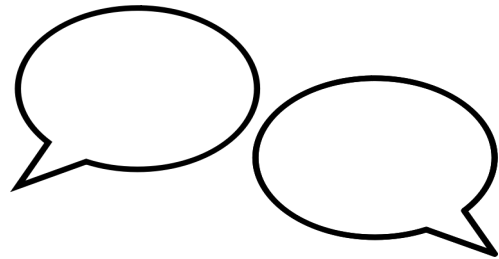
Tutes provide opportunities for you:

- to **ask** questions and get answers,
- to **develop** your communication skills,
- to **hear** a range of opinions, ideas and perspectives,
- to **'unpack'** the material covered in the lectures and readings,
- to **test** your understanding of the topic,
- to **develop** your critical thinking skills and
- to **form** your own views on the topic.

### 2. Preparing for tutes

Before each tute:

- Attend the lecture and take notes.
- Do the required reading set out in your unit outline (and check your unit LMS regularly as additional readings may be added each week).
- Complete any tasks required for the tute.
- Review your lecture notes and develop some questions to ask in the tute.



### 3. Speaking up in tutes

Speaking up is important because:

- A range of opinions and perspectives is necessary for good discussion.
- Adding your point of view helps others to think differently.
- Contributing to the discussion will help you develop your critical thinking.

If you are shy or find it difficult to speak up in groups, here are some tips to get started:

1. Talk to some members of the tute in the first session. You will find it easier to speak up if you already know some people. Start by talking to the person next to you.
2. Plan what you want to say. You could ask a question or make a comment.
3. Plan to make at least one or two comments in each tute, to build your confidence.
4. Ask for clarification if anything is unclear. The answer will also help others.
5. Find different ways of joining the discussion. Observe how others in the tute contribute to the discussion.

**TIP:** Start contributing in tutes from week one, even if it feels scary. If you are unsure what to say, start with a question.

## Taking a position:

It is important to **take a position** on what you read, see and hear, and to be able to **argue** your position. This will involve agreeing and disagreeing with others, so express your views respectfully. Criticise ideas but not the people you disagree with!

Here are some phrases you can use for agreeing and disagreeing:

### To agree

I agree with the idea / proposal because...

This is a good argument / theory because...

I support this idea because...

In my opinion this is a good approach to take because...

### To disagree or challenge

The weakness in this argument is that...

While this opinion/theory may be valid, we should also consider...

What evidence is there for this?

In my opinion this does not address the issue sufficiently...

The problem with this approach is that...

This argument fails to take account of...

**TIP:** Always provide reasons, evidence and/or examples to support your position.

## Responding to other people:

Discussion in tutes involves **listening** carefully to what other people say and **considering** their ideas, before responding.

Some ways you can respond to other people's ideas/ comments:

- Ask relevant questions.
- Ask for clarification/further information.
- Comment on their point/s.
- Respectfully disagree with them and explain why.

Phrases you could use to respond to other people's comments:

I'd like to refer to (name)'s comment ...

I'd like to add to (name)'s point about ...

To return to what (name) raised earlier ...

I'm unclear about the argument made by...

I'd like to ask (name) what s/he meant by ...

I disagree with the comment/argument ...

I'd like to ask (name) the reasons for ...

**TIP:** To get a discussion started, ask a question or offer a comment / opinion for others to respond to. Try out your ideas and remember that your opinions are as valid as anyone else's.

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