

Preface

The transition from school or college to university is a very significant life event: for all students, it marks the beginning of the next stage in their educational career and, for many, it may be their first experience of living away from home for any significant length of time. This transition, therefore, is associated with a whole range of new experiences in social and academic terms. Among these is a marked change in learning and teaching styles, with an expectation of increasing independence as a learner, and the development of a more mature, critical approach to the subject. Meeting the challenges posed by these changes requires the development of new skills in many areas of life, not least in the areas of study and communication. If you can develop effective study and communication skills early in your university career, you will facilitate your overall learning, and help maximize your academic performance.

This book arose from nearly ten years of experience in developing and delivering a first-year module in Study and Communication Skills for the students in the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Leicester. The structure of the book and its format are based on our experiences of delivering this course, in terms of recognizing where students experience difficulty in developing these skills and in learning from those students better ways of teaching and providing support for their learning. We hope that future generations of students will be able to benefit from this guidance and we also look forward to learning more about the ways in which skills can best be developed.

S.J. and J.S.

University of Bristol and University of Leicester