## Introduction

Welcome to OneNote. If you haven’t heard of OneNote, it’s essentially a digital notebook that automatically saves and syncs your work as you do it. OneNote is available to all students at Queen’s, as long as you log in with your Microsoft 365 account with your QUB student email and password. I personally recommend downloading the application itself on your device for the best experience.

## Overview

Here, we’re looking at the overview, or the Home tab you will see when you first open the OneNote app. I’m doing this on a laptop today. Let’s go through the basics first!

In your notebook, you will find ‘Sections’, which is essentially the dividers of your virtual notebook. For example, each section you add can represent a different module in your course. Here, what I’ve actually done is use these sections for my tutorial notes because I take my doing research and additional notes. This way, I find that my notes are much more organised.

Customisation

Here are some handy tips for customising your sections! If you right click on a section, you can change the colour of the section to suit your choice. You can choose a more prominent colour like red for more important notes, or if you’d like your sections to fit a certain colour scheme, it’s all up to you! You can also rename the section, or delete the section, think of it as ripping pages out of a notebook.

Now if you have multiple Microsoft accounts, you can migrate your sections from one OneNote account to another. You can also protect your notes with a password, but try not to forget your password because OneNote won’t be able to recover your data if you forget it.

## Note taking

Now on to the actual note-taking part! OneNote is customisable in almost every way possible. You can begin typing here in one text tab, and if you decide that something else should go in another space, you simply click on that empty space and another text tab will open. So if you see from my notes here, I’ve actually separated different topics into different text tabs so that it’s easier for me to see.

Now if you look on the rightmost of the Home tab you will see some handy tags that you can add to your notes. Simply add the tag as required, and you’re all set. To remove it you just have to click on it again and it will be removed.

Next, under the ‘Insert’ tab, there are several functions such as the Insert Picture, PDF, File Attachment, Equation, or even the Audio Recording functions that can be used to put in additional lecture material that you might already have for easy access. These diagrams here I have to supplement my notes, I actually made them using these Shape functions and different text tabs. I find that visuals supplement my notes much better and I absorb more information from doing that.

Another tab worth taking a look at for more customisations is the ‘View’ tab. Here, you can change the paper colour, or even the paper style. There are also several useful accessibility functions embedded in the ‘View’ menu as well. These are the Immersive Reader function and the Accessibility Checker. Now the positions of the functions under the ‘View’ menu may vary from Microsoft to MacOS, so this is something you might want to take note of depending on your device.

## Immersive Reader

First off, the immersive reader function right here essentially reads back the content of your page or highlighted text back to you. When you access the immersive reader, a new window will pop out, to which you just have to press the play button for it to launch. This is a really valuable feature as it helps you follow along as the text is read, and if you toggle the text preferences on the top right corner, you can customise the text size, increase line spacing, or even change the font style to suit your preference.

## Accessibility

Let’s check to see if our document is accessible. Under the ‘View’ tab, click on Check Accessibility. The accessibility checker appears to let me know that I am missing Alt text for my image. If we were collaborating on this document with others, having alternate text on images is important for those who can’t see the screen. To fix this, right click on the image and select Alt text. Give the image a title and a description. Now this allows screen readers to read Alt text aloud. Click OK when you’re finished, and then click the recheck button. Now our image and document is accessible.

This was a very quick tour of OneNote, and how it can be used for student learning and revision. I use it a lot for my studies as it really helps me organise my thoughts and notes. The best thing of all is that there is no paper involved. Why not give it a try today? Thank you for watching!