Working with Long Documents

“How do I change the page margins in Word?”

Page margins provide the empty space around the edge of a document. You can change the size of this empty space by choosing from predefined margins, or creating your own custom margins.

Show/hide the rulers

Use Word’s horizontal and vertical rulers to view and adjust your page margins. The rulers are also useful for aligning objects within your document. Click the View tab, then tick the Ruler checkbox to switch the rulers on.

Choose from predefined margins

Word contains a number of predefined margins that you can choose to apply to your document.

1. Click the Page Layout tab, then click Margins.
2. Select from the predefined margins available from the drop-down list e.g. Normal, Narrow.

   Note: If you have used section breaks in your document, your new margins will only apply to the current section. However, you can press Ctrl + A to select your whole document before applying predefined margins.

Create your own custom margins

You can create your own custom margins by adjusting the top, bottom, left and right margins individually.

1. Double-click on a margin area of the ruler.
2. The Page Setup dialog will open on the Margins tab.
3. Type the size of the margins that you require.
4. Choose whether to apply the changes to the whole document, or the selected section.
5. Click OK.

Further information and help

If you want to learn about any Microsoft product in more detail you can use Microsoft’s Office Support for tutorials, videos and helpful hints.

– For essay formatting requirements, e.g. margins and line spacing, please check with your School.
– Click File and the question mark (top right) for help using Word or press F1. Search for keywords, e.g. margins.
– You can also use MyIT to log calls with the University’s IT Service Desk: https://myit.abdn.ac.uk.