



Creating your own system for saving files on a PC/flashdrive/cloud

We see many students at the UWC Writing Centre who have saved their essays and assignments under a range of titles that actually make it hard for them to find their work easily. This brief guide gives you some advice on how to create a system for saving your assignments that makes them easy to locate when you need to revise them, email them or print them out, and that makes it easy for the person you are emailing to see what the file is for.

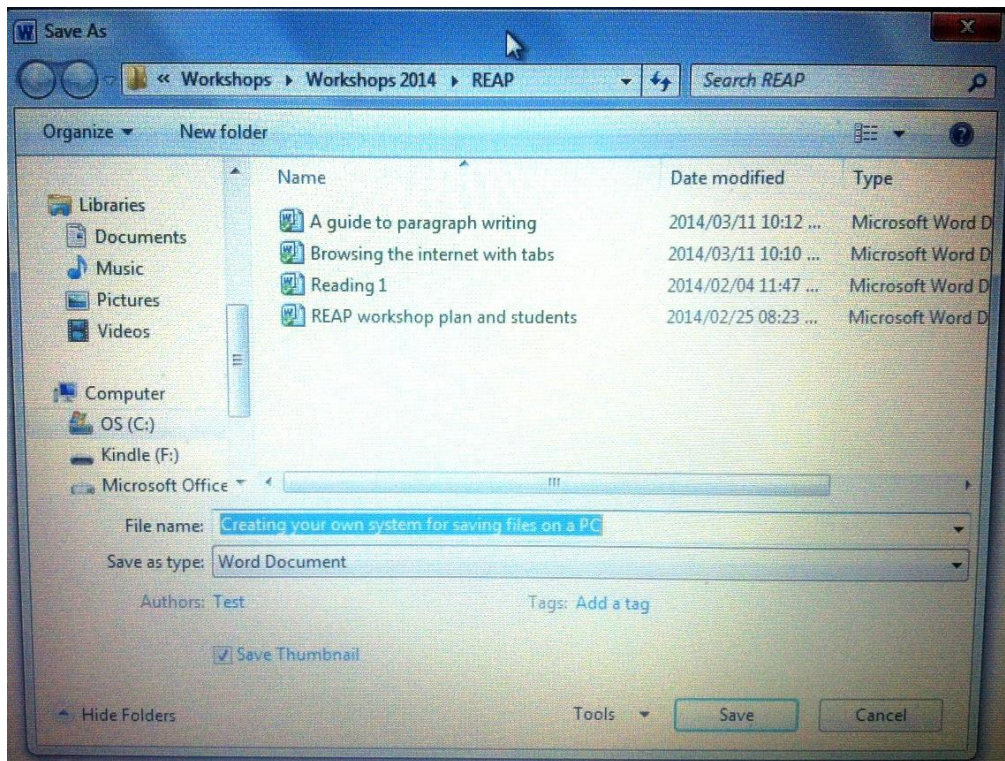
Necessary vocabulary for reading this guide:

A 'file' is a document you are saving

1. How MSWord saves files

Microsoft Word or MSWord is the programme we tend to use on campus to type up our essays and assignments. It has a default method for saving the files we create. In other words, it has a basic rule it follows for saving files which it will only break if we tell it to save the file under a different name. The default method is for MSWord to use the first new words that you type on the screen. So, if your first words are always something like your name, or your student number then all your files would be saved with that title. This makes it hard to save and find you files, partly because they will all have the same kind of name even though they are different documents, and partly because MSWord won't let you save two files with exactly the same title on one computer or flashdrive.

So, if I was going to save this file, I would go to 'File' and select 'Save As' and this screen would pop up:



You can see that MSWord wants to use the first few words I typed on the screen. If wanted to change this, and save the file under a different name, I would delete the blue highlighted text and type in my own title and then click 'Save'.

NOTE: Always click on 'Save As' because this will allow you to rename your files and manage where you save them. If you click 'Save' only, the file will just be saved on the hard drive under the first few words of the document, and you might have a hard time finding it again, especially in a PC Lab where the computer is not your own.

2. Creating your own system

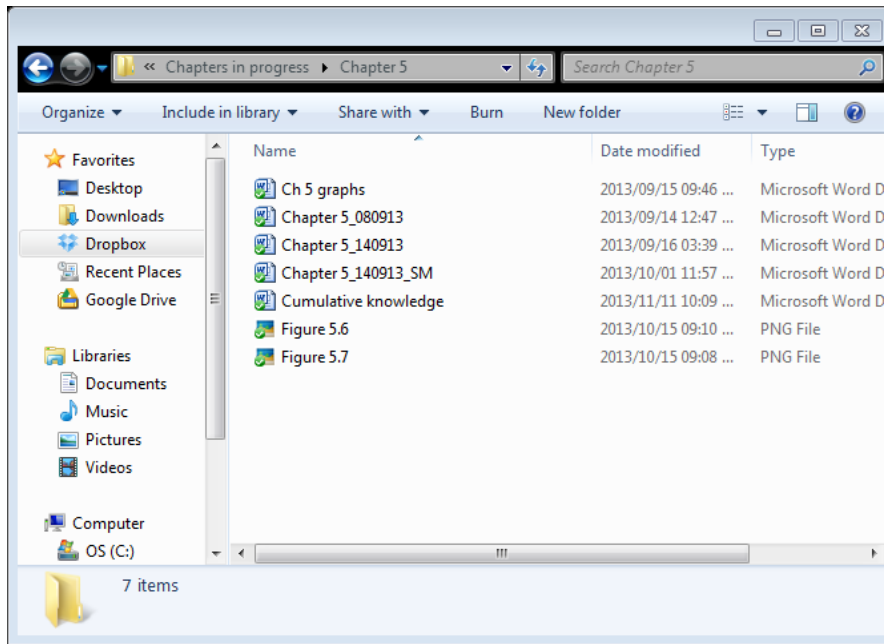
You need to have a system for saving for files. You are going to write lots of assignments in your different courses, and hopefully you will also be writing different drafts of the same assignment. Therefore, you are going to need to think about creating a system that works for you and makes it easy for you to find your files when you need to revise them, print them, email them, or upload them onto iKamva or Turnitin.

Here are some ideas, and a couple of examples from one of our PCs:

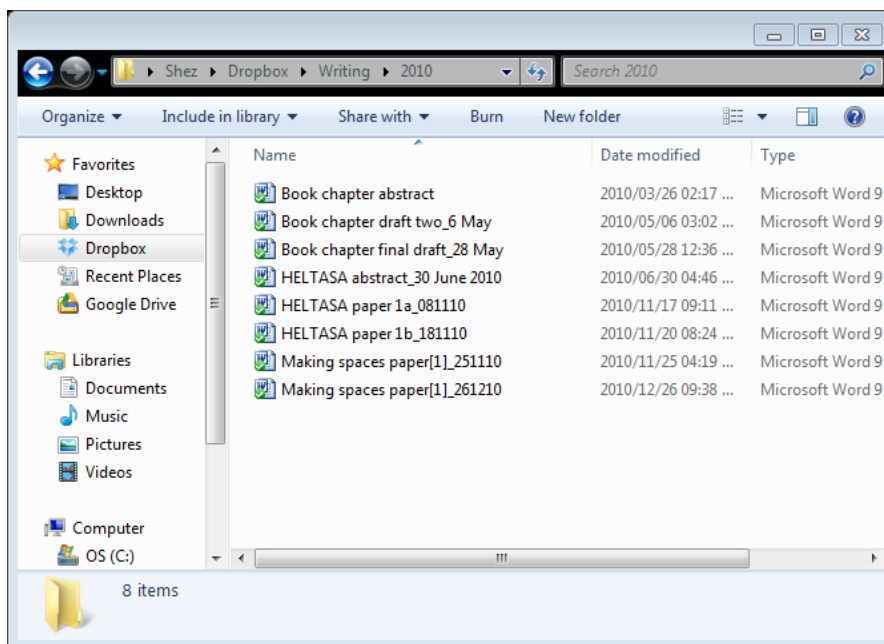
- a. Give your file the same title as your essay. E.g., Climate Change and Human Behaviour. Then add the course code to make it easier to identify. Climate Change and Human Behaviour_GEO211

- b. Give your file a course code title and number it – if you are writing a set number of essays in a course you can then identify the assignment you are looking for. E.g., GEO211_Essay1.
- c. Date your files with the name you give them, so that you know on what date you wrote and saved the essay. E.g, GEO211_Essay1_21 March 2014 **or** GEO211_Essay1_210314.

Example 1:



Example 2:



3. Saving multiple drafts of a document

It's a good idea to save all your drafts, rather than save over them. This way, if you cut something you wrote out of an earlier draft, and decide in a later draft that you want to put it back in then you can do that easily because all your drafts are saved as separate files. If you just save over every time you make a change, you could lose valuable research and ideas. To save multiple drafts you can devise a numbering system, similar to those in the examples above.

- a. You can date your file each time you make a revision or set of changes, so you can also see when you have worked on your document and on what dates you made the changes. For example you could use this file name: GEO211_Essay 1_110314. When you first start writing it on the 11th of March, you will click 'Save As' and type in this file name and click 'Save'.

When you start working on it a few days later, with revisions and additional research, you will click 'Save As' again and the title of the document as written above will appear in the text box. All you have to do is change the date. Click at the end of the blue highlighting to remove it, and then backspace the date and type in the new date.

Then you should have two files, one called GEO211_Essay 1_110314 and one called GEO211_Essay 1_140314. You can keep going like this for as many drafts as you are writing.

- b. You can also number your drafts: GEO211_Essay1_draft 1; GEO211_Essay1_draft 2 and so on. Again, don't click on 'Save' because if you do the earlier version of your document will be saved over. Click 'Save As' which will allow you to rename your file before saving it.

If you would like to talk to a peer writing tutor about your writing, and get advice and guidance, please contact the UWC Writing Centre for an appointment. You can call 021 959 2390 between 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday, email Mrs Daries on gdaries@uwc.ac.za, or drop in and see us on the ground floor of the Old Arts building, opposite the side entrance to B Block.

You can also find out more here:

<http://www.uwc.ac.za/Students/WrC/Pages/default.aspx>

or on Facebook : 'The UWC Writing Centre'.