



## Using the Comment Feature in Microsoft Word

### Purpose

The Comment feature within Microsoft Word enables you to annotate your own documents and documents that other people have sent to you for review.

### Description

The comment can be added in Word by first selecting the *Review* tab on the Ribbon, then select *New Comment* in the *Comments* Group. Comments normally appear as balloons in the right margin; however, if there are many of them they may also be displayed in the Reviewing Pane at the foot of the screen. The reviewer is identified by the initials added to the *popular* tab of *Word Options* accessed via the *Office Button* above the ribbon. If more than one person has reviewed the document, then each reviewer's comments appear in a different colour.

If you have a microphone, you can insert a voice comment. Voice comments appear as "objects" inside the comment balloons.

You can only insert a comment in someone else's document if that person has not protected it. Conversely, if you want people to be able to annotate your own documents, then ensure that *either* you have not protected the document at all (by default, all documents are unprotected), *or* if you have protected the document, you nevertheless have allowed comments. If you want more than one person to review a document, then you can send them individual copies of the document and merge all the comments into your own copy later.

You can print the document and comments together. However, in order to fit the comment balloons onto the page, the text of the main document will appear in a smaller font size than the one you have specified.

## Ways of using this tool

You can use the Comment feature in several different ways:

**Tutor-marked assessment:** Ask your students to submit the Word documents of their essays (e.g. using the Pigeonhole tool in WebLearn). You can then type your feedback directly into each student's work, resave the file and return it to the student, keeping a copy for yourself.

**Peer review:** Ask students to share the Word documents of their essays with each other (e.g. by email) and comment on each other's work. The comment feature is commonly used in another form of peer review; by the review panels of academic journals in order to send feedback and suggestions for changes to authors.

**Collaborative authoring:** Colleagues can use the feature to comment on each other's work and on circulations of collaborative endeavours such as joint papers and research proposals.

## Learn More

Press F1 to access the Help menu in Word, type "Comment" in the search box and click *Search*. To learn more about protecting documents, type "Protect document" in the search box.

OUCS offers courses that cover the more sophisticated features of Word, such as the Comment feature.

## Access

The University has a site licence for Microsoft Word, and it is installed on most, if not all, University- and college-owned computers.

**Note:** Increasing numbers of people are using the Open Office suite, which is available free, and includes a word processor called Writer. This also has a comment feature, but it works in a different way.

This document is part of a larger set aimed at introducing the reader to a wide range of technologies. Please visit this web page for more information:

<http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/ltg/>

*Your primary support for IT issues comes from your department or college. If you would like advice on using Word commenting in learning and teaching at Oxford please contact OUCS.*