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**KAREN FOLEY:** Hello and welcome to the *Student Hub Live*. I'm Karen Foley and in this session, we're going to be taking a look at assessment, a critical part of being an Open University student. And something that's really, really important. So welcome to today's session. I'm hoping that a lot of you who are coming have been regularly coming to the boot camps that we've had for the last three weeks. And if you've missed any of those, they're all available on the catch up, so you can watch those. They're all nicely cut and sectioned as well, so you can find the section that most appeals to you.

We've covered a huge range of things, like about the virtual learning environment, about managing your expectations, about studying online, reading and note taking, essay writing, all sorts of really important skills. But today we're looking at assessment. So these *Student Hub Live* events, for those of you who haven't been here before, are a live interactive discussion. So the idea is that you can chat to each other about pretty much anything that's on your mind, ask questions that I can ask to our guests who are coming into the studio today, and liaise with our hot desk, where we have Sophie and HJ. Welcome back, you two.

**KAREN FOLEY:** We have missed you. Sophie, we have had all sorts of antics since you've been away.

**SOPHIE:** I heard.

**KAREN FOLEY:** I know. Well, aside from us getting in terrible trouble about the whole microwave and popcorn.

**SOPHIE:** Yeah.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yeah, anyway, don't talk about that. And then HJ, of course, you left your bag last week.

**HJ:** Yeah, I was manic over it.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Annie went - yeah, well, Annie had to go out, and then she got stuck in the library doing all the filing of all the books that were overdue.

**HJ:** Oh, I do feel quite bad. But I did have all my important stuff in there, as everyone saw. But I mean, like, I just, no one can go to school with their highlighters, or - what did I have? Oh, yeah, I've still got some popcorn leftover as well.

**SOPHIE:** Ah.

**KAREN FOLEY:** No.

**HJ:** I'll keep that one quiet. But I had all my essentials in there, so I'm glad I've got it with me today as well.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Well, I'm very glad you're back. And same to you, Sophie, as well. So how is it all working today? What are we expecting from people at home, and what would you like them to be doing and sending in to you?

**HJ:** Well, we're just here for any thoughts, comments, or questions for the live studio. Have fun chatting to each other. There's lots of - we're just chatting about the discounts we can get with our student cards as well, which I didn't about some of these. So yeah, send us any tips or study things in.

**SOPHIE:** We've got these ones as well today, so we've got a few things for giveaways. We've got the railways, we've got one about the hunt.

**HJ:** Yeah, so -

**SOPHIE:** I have one, and this one as well. So trauma and emergency care.

**HJ:** So all week, people have been sending us in things like selfies and study tips, and we love hearing about these. And we put some of our study tips on board about meditation and planning. And I found all these tips really helpful starting school. But yes, if you send your stuff in. So like Samantha sent in the best corner in the house, which is her desk. Then we think it's only fair for us to send you stuff back as well. So if you want to send stuff in, [studenthub@open.ac.uk](mailto:studenthub@open.ac.uk), or using our Twitter, [@studenthublive](https://twitter.com/studenthublive). And yes, we picked some great things to send back to you, too. So we'll get in touch about that as well. So yes, we just want you to chat to each other, chat with us, send us some tips. And we want to see where you are and what you're baking. Robert's sent in his cakes again, which is make me jealous because they look so good, don't they? But yes, we're all excited and ready to go.

**SOPHIE:** Yes, we are.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Wonderful. So you can engage with us on Twitter and the email, send things in to us. And of course, if you're in the watch and engage option, you can chat along, too. If you aren't, join us

in that. Go back to the website [studenthublive.kmi.open.ac.uk](http://studenthublive.kmi.open.ac.uk), click in to watch and engage with your normal student or staff log in details, and you can then access the chat and tell us where you are, what you're doing, how you're feeling, whether you were here last week, all of those interactive tools should be coming up on screen so that we can get a sense of who you are out there.

Well, we've got a lot to get through today, so I'm going to welcome our first guest, Jonquil Lowe. Welcome, Jonquil, to the studio.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** Hello, Karen.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Now, you have the task of telling us about finding, planning, and formatting your TMA. So this is the first of four sessions that we're going to be doing around all of this. Then later we have Jayne Horne, who's going to talk to us about how to submit the TMA. Peter Taylor is going to talk to us about expectations and feedback. And then Katherine Moore from the library is going to give us a little run through how the library can give people help in their studies. So Jonquil, oops, we've got our website here that we need to look at. And for a lot of students, finding their TMA is going to be pretty important as they start. So we've got a lot of new students out there. Where do they look, and how do they actually find out where these are, and how important is it to look for them early?

**JONQUIL LOWE:** OK, so I've got the DD102 2015J website up here. I chose 2015 because I didn't want to give away any answers to the TMAs that are coming up, so we're looking at the slightly older site. And on this website, as on all OU module sites, if you scroll down, on the right hand side under Resources you'll find Assessment Resources. So you'll always find your TMAs there. They're also listed in the study planner, but Assessment Resources is a good place to go to get an overview.

So here we are. With this particular module, there are five TMAs. There are also some ICMA's, so little Interactive Computer Marked Assessments. And you can click through to any of them from here. Now, you said how important is it to find them early. It depends a bit what kind of student you are. If you've got lots of time, then you might want to go through the module materials, and then look at the TMA and draw on the notes you've been making as you've gone through the module. That's kind of what I'd call a kind of holistic approach.

But a lot of our students, very short of time. And in that case, you might want to look at your assignments early so that as you read your module materials, you're very aware of what

you're going to pull out to use in your TMA. That means you don't have to take quite such a comprehensive approach to studying the module material. So that's one way of managing your time.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK, that's a great idea. Because 65% of our audience out there are level one students, so we've got 18% at level two, so they'll be very familiar with the TMA process. Can we have a look at a TMA? I mean, I'm one of these people who - I like to know what the danger is before it's there. And I think sometimes it can be quite reassuring to sort of see what you're being asked to do. Because sometimes it's not as complicated as you might think.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** No, no, no, it's not.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Other times it is.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** All level one modules are trying to get you into the OU way of study, and it's always a really gentle start. So the first TMA is not threatening at all. It's usually a lot shorter than the TMAs that come up later. And it's just to start opening a dialogue with your tutor. Because what you need to remember with OU TMAs is it's not all about the mark. You're demonstrating your understanding of the module so that your tutor can see where your strengths are, where your weaknesses are, how best you can develop, and give you the advice you need in order to develop.

So it's really important that you get that first TMA in so that your tutor can start to help you effectively. Of course, you know, we're all interested in our marks, aren't we. But they're really not the most important bit, especially at a level one. Where level one, pass, fail distinction, sometimes it's really not going to make a lot of difference in the long run whether you get a 45% or 70% pass mark. But what is important is that feedback from your tutor. So as well as getting the PT3 that summarises your tutor's feedback, you'll also - it's really important to click through to your script, where your tutor will have put lots of detailed comments.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Well, you'd be very pleased to know that 84% of our audience out there already know what their first TMA is.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** Fantastic.

**KAREN FOLEY:** It's great. And we've got a lot, about just over half of the people watching are FASS, so Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, out there. So DD102 may well be one of the models that people

are working on. Of course, the one that we're showing here now is an example from last year so that we don't give anything away, et cetera. But Jonquil, you've accessed this from the study planner where all the links are. And if you want to, you can revisit Georgina's session on how to navigate the VLE. But also these are listed under the assessment section of the website, aren't they? So you can find them all in one go as well.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** So that's how I came into it, in fact. Through - so you're right. Let's just go back here. So this is the study planner, and you can see, for example, TMA 01 is listed there, and you can click on it. But also, in this right hand navigation panel, if you scroll down, you can see the heading resources. So you've got study resources, which is all your module materials, and then underneath that, assessment resources. And that's where you'll find all your TMAs listed. And you can click through to each one.

**KAREN FOLEY:** So two routes to get in there.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** Yeah.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Excellent, OK. So a lot of people are really excited about their TMAs, which is great. So they found them, they're excited about it. And you mentioned that this is a way of learning, and you get your detailed feedback and things from your tutor. So can you sort of talk a little bit about, I guess from your perspective as a tutor, what is the point of this assessment? And how should students be viewing it?

**JONQUIL LOWE:** OK, so this is very much at the heart of distance learning. So if you are at the conventional university, you would be meeting your tutor. You'd still have assignments, but you'd have a lot of opportunity to perhaps talk one to one and get feedback on how you're doing and what you need to do better. With the OU, because we're distance learning, a lot of that takes place through the TMA process. So you're sending in your TMA so that your tutor can then give you the advice and help and support that you need to get better.

So it depends a little bit what sort of exercises you've got in your TMAs. So with social sciences, very often they're essay questions. So the bulk of your marks will be for writing an essay, and that's certainly the case, generally, with DD 102. With some of the other modules, they may be split. So you might have essay questions for part of your TMA, but you also might have some shorter questions. And they typically take the format of asking you for, maybe, definitions, or to do a calculation. And then you need to analyse the results that you've got from those early parts of the question. And you'll typically find that most of the marks go with

the analysis. So the early bit is checking you understand the concepts, understand the data, and then you use it. And that's where your marks are. So those are the common kinds of assessment that you'll find in social sciences. In some other disciplines, you might have to write a report. And that, again, is a slightly different format.

Now, the good thing is that within the modules, you'll be taught the study skills. So if we just go back again to the main module page, I said above assessment resources you've got study resources. Now, this is DD102, and DD103 is similar. But you'll find if you scroll down, it's got skills, activities, and here we've got, for example, writing assignments. So can you see that? And each of these links will go through to the part of the module where there's some actual teaching of these particular study skills and activities that you can do. So for example, you've got writing effective introductions for an essay. So you'll find some activities there that they give you, for example, you know, bad introductions, good introductions, and helping you to distinguish between them so that you can build your skill of writing your essays well.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Now, skills are one thing. And, you know, it's nice to be able to go back to those and level one, you know, it's the skills and the content that are sort of tandemed along to develop skills. But Judy and Silvia are saying that they're worried about actually understanding the TMA question. They don't mind doing it, but they really want to know exactly what the question is. I think, I don't know. As a tutor, I'd say that that's quite a common error that people might make, is doing really well but maybe not quite addressing that question.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** That's a very common error. And quite often the student notes, which are an important part of your assignment, so you've got the question, you've got some notes that are there to help you. So goodness sake, do read those notes. Because they will point you to the bits of the module you should be using and what the question is looking for, they'll give you lots of tips and advice. But yeah, a really common problem is students write the essay they wanted to write rather than the one that's actually been set.

So for example, one of the modules I'm involved with, we always have a question on debt. And you know, it's meant to be quite a theoretical question. But people have very strong feelings about debt. And not surprisingly, you know, they want to get those feelings across. But that is not the point of the TMA, so it's really important to read the question very thoroughly and understand what it's saying.

So for example, this TMA, this is DD102 and the first TMA is quite straightforward. So it's not

particularly long, you only have to write 250 words. It says, in your own words, define difference and provide two examples of this on City Road, which is the focus of the module materials at this point in the module. Now that we can distinguish what we call content words and process words, so content words here are difference. So there's some kind of concept here that you're going to have to define, difference. It's a word we use everyday, isn't it? But if you read the module materials, you'll find it's used in a very specific way in sociology. So it's teasing out -

**KAREN FOLEY:** Because I guess you could just look at that they go, oh, yeah. I can go and do that. A City Road, right, I'll find out where that is and go and have a look at it. But I guess what you're saying is that you need to define the terms that are used within that context of the social sciences.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** That's right. So the module is there to teach you very specific things, and your TMA is your demonstration of how you've understood and absorbed those concepts and ideas from the module. So not from the great wide world, but from your module.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Which is difficult, because so many Open University students have such a wealth of experience. And you know they've often trained in other fields, and have so much to add. But I guess what you're saying, really, is that this is assessing your idea of what that module has given you. So you read the books, we need to check that you've read them and understand them and understand the context in which some of this applies.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** Well, it's not quite as mechanical as that, because what you're developing at university is what we call critical thinking. So it is the ability to take ideas and apply them and to question what you come across. And certainly, you will have experiences that may be very relevant. And it's fine to bring them in, but it's bringing them in in a structured way and making sure that the framework of your answers is building on what you've learned in the module. So fine to bring in some personal examples, as long as they're relevant and as long as they're argued in a kind of academic way. You can't just say, well, I think this. We're looking for evidence, always, in academic essays. So you have an argument and you're saying, well, where does this argument come from, what evidence, what data, what ideas are there that support this argument that you're making. So that's really important.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK, great.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** And then as well as these content words - so here it's the difference, it's the examples that

you're going to bring in. We have what are called process words, and the process word here is the word define. So that's saying what you need to do with this content. So you've got all this content, but you're going to have to define. Moreover, it says define in your own words. And this is sometimes another problem that students have, is when they see define, they just go to a glossary or a margin definition in their textbook, and they just quote it.

That's not very helpful for this dialogue with your tutor, because you tutor, all he can see is that you can read and copy some text. He can't see whether you've understood that concept. So it's really important to absorb your module materials and then, in your TMA, it's in your own words, describe what it is that you have learned. So that way your tutor can see oh, yes, you know, they've got that concept. Or hmm, that's not quite right. So you know, here's some advice on how to get it right next time.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Can we just pause for one second? Because there's a bit of concern about people not having been allocated tutors yet, and this whole process is sort of moving forwards right now. Don't worry if you haven't been allocated a tutor. It's all in the process. But I appreciate that you're really excited and really, really want to get going with this. And some tutors have been allocated, but it is all in the process of being resolved and sorted and matched up, et cetera. So you should have your tutor's details very, very soon. Actually, Luigi asked a question about whether it was possible to talk to your tutor about your TMA before you submit it.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** Yes, that's a really good question. Your tutor obviously cannot tell you what the answers are, or suggest how you should write your TMA. That is up to you. But your tutor can give you a lot of help and support. So my students, quite often, they're very time poor and they'll come to me and say, I haven't really got time to do this. What should I be doing? And what a tutor can do is say to you, well, here's a quick route through. So these are the areas of the module materials that you should be focusing on. The student notes also give you that kind of advice. So that helps with time.

Your tutor might also be willing to look at your essay plan. He's not going to necessarily say - he or she, I should say - is not going to necessarily say yes, this is a great plan, no, this is a lousy plan. But they can give you pointers and ask you questions, have you thought about. And certainly if you don't understand the question, if you're really not sure what it's all about, contact your tutor and they will help you to understand what's being asked of you in the TMA. So if you've got any doubts or confusion, you should always contact your tutor. And you know, if you're asking something that your tutor really can't answer because it would be giving away

the answer to the question, your tutor will say so.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Can they read draughts, then, or not?

**JONQUIL LOWE:** Well, they can read draughts. A lot of tutors are not happy to, because it then teeters on the borderline of, you know, what feedback can they give you. So they could give you very broad brush feedback like yes, you're on the right track. But they're obviously not going to mark your draft.

**KAREN FOLEY:** No, no. And indeed, the whole point of assessment is that you improve over time and that you get better. And there is a sort of methodical approach to developing those skills as you go along, so you've learned from the first assignment and feed that into the second one.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** Absolutely.

**KAREN FOLEY:** I'd like to see what everyone said, because we asked you how you felt about your first assignment. We've got a lovely word cloud here with a lot of interesting words. I'd like to sense what the feeling is out there. So we've got a lot of different things. Some positive, but quite a lot of negative words as well. Nervous, stress, fear, anxious, scared, timid, challenging, thinking, researching, attention to detail, traumatic, critical thinking. So there's a lot going on here, and I guess that it's interesting, because we asked you whether you were excited about your first TMA and the answer, I think, was yes. But there's a lot of anxiety around that. And arguably, for a lot of people, this may be the first time that they've had some sort of assessment for quite some years. So it's very natural, I would imagine. Can I just go back to the hot desk and see, Sophie and HJ, how you're all doing and what everyone's talking about?

**SOPHIE:** It's very busy. Lots of really good tips. I feel like people really don't feel so alone, everyone seems to be like, oh, I didn't realize someone else felt that way. So it's really nice to see everyone sort of bonding in a way.

**KAREN FOLEY:** You're all bricking it together.

**SOPHIE:** Yes.

**HJ:** If the chat goes a little fast, because there are a lot of people, there's a little pin to the top right of the chat box. If you press that, then you can manually scroll through rather than it doing automatically. I think me and Sophie have to do it all the time just because it goes so fast.

- SOPHIE:** So please bear with us, we will get around to you as soon as possible. But yes, so many good tips. You had some.
- HJ:** Oh, yes, yes. I've got, actually, a great point that I think we can pick up on. Dawn says, what do you do if you just do not have an opinion about the TMA? In social science, you're meant to provide an argument. But I have no argument to begin with. I think what I do in that situation, I'm sure Jonquil and Karen can bear in on this, and perhaps Sophie as well, is usually, I just pick any old side to argue on it. And then when I start to doing that, I find, oh, either yes, this is a really good argument. Or actually, oh, this doesn't quite make sense as an argument, and it doesn't seem quite strong.
- So actually coming from the other side may be a bit better. And that's usually my strategy with that. But we've also got some tips as well. So Debbie's printed off a couple of her first TMAs, so she's got a bit of an idea in her head what she's doing. Which is a nice step as you're going along, just to have - although you may not understand it, you may question check which I never do before I get to them. Having it sort of just down on paper and when you're going through the module materials, you can think oh, that might relate to that TMA later on. So you've got somewhere to start with.
- SOPHIE:** Definitely, yes.
- HJ:** Some good points coming in there, so keep them coming.
- SOPHIE:** Yes, please.
- KAREN FOLEY:** Wonderful, excellent. Now, we've got about five minutes left, Jonquil. And I really wanted to pick up on where we left off about the student notes. Because as you said, your tutor can give you some really good feedback. But these student notes, they're gold dust, you know. They really are so important. So can you show us a bit about what sorts of things people should be highlighting, ideally, from some of these student notes, and what sort of guidance they can give people?
- JONQUIL LOWE:** OK, so remember this, this particular TMA is asking about the concept of difference and some examples. So underneath the assignments, you'll see where the student notes are. So if we click on the student notes for this written part, it tells you what this TMA is focusing on. So it wants to look at your skill of writing. It's just 250 words, so not a huge amount. But it wants to look at how you tackle this question, how fluently you can write about it. It goes on to say "the

material that will help you to answer this TMA is contained in -" and then it tells you which chapters, which parts of the chapters. So that's really useful, that tells you where to explore. It highlights that you're to use your own words.

You know, so this is a really important point. You're going to lose marks if you just type off the definition given in the textbook. And it does actually tell you where that definition is. So if you're really all at sea, you haven't taken in this concept at all, you're being directed very specifically. Here is where you need to start. Then you are asked for a couple of examples, and again, there's some pointers as to where in the module materials you might find some examples you could use.

There's a really helpful list here of the information sources from the module materials. There are some great writing tips that you can follow. And also, really usefully, not all modules do this, but in DD102, you get this really useful outline of what your tutor is going to be looking for when they're marking your answer. So you've got some really comprehensive notes here to help you.

**KAREN FOLEY:** And what I love about DD102 is they also give you examples of referencing.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** They do, they do. I think if we scroll down, yes.

**KAREN FOLEY:** So there's no excuse.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** That's right. So at this early stage, referencing is really important. So you're going to be drawing on lots of different ideas that you're going to embed into your essays. But you must always acknowledge where those ideas come from. I mean, you might have some yourself. But usually what you're doing is you're building up arguments by saying oh yes, well, this expert argued this. And you must acknowledge that expert there.

Now, there's a way of doing it. We tend to use a convention called Harvard. There are different ones, but we use Harvard referencing. So there's a structure to how you reference. But in these early TMAs, your tutor will be so delighted if you reference at all, even if the format's not quite right. They just want you to understand when to reference and how to do it. And so in these early TMAs, they actually give you the format. But it's up to you to think, well, OK, how and when do I use these. So that's what we're trying to get from you in this first TMA, that you've got an idea of yes, I should be using a reference here, and this is how I do it.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Just because we're sort of getting short on time, Jonquil, and I know there's a huge amount to

cover here, and we will be evolving this with other speakers as well, these would obviously be really important in terms of planning. So I can see here how, with all of this material, you might go off and say, right, you've alerted me to this material, go off and read it, write a plan, and figure out what you need to. What are some of the errors that people make, in terms of what would be some of the sort of big things that people do wrong. I mean, we've talked about not answering the question. But what some of the other things be for students to look out for, maybe?

**JONQUIL LOWE:** OK, well, let's focus on essay questions. Because they loom large across most of the modules. So an essay needs to be structured, and this is why you're strongly encouraged to do a plan before you start writing. And the broad structure of an essay is introduction, a body of arguments, and a conclusion. So one of the most basic things is we find, actually, there is no structure in a student's essay. There's perhaps no introduction, no conclusion.

Going on from that, there are students who do an introduction, they do a conclusion, but they don't bear much resemblance to either the question or the body of their essay, or the conclusion is completely different from the introduction. So I always say an introduction and a conclusion are a bit like going on a journey. So the introduction is setting out where you're going to visit, as it were, and the conclusion is saying, OK, well, I've done this. You can see I've visited here and did this. So the introduction and the conclusion must relate to each other. Over and under length essays.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Because I can see we've got the word lengths quite explicitly outlined on the assessment. What's the deal there?

**JONQUIL LOWE:** OK so the word length is there, students always say, oh, the word length is too short. Or if only it was another thousand words. The word length is there specifically to try and make you write concisely and to prioritise your information. So you can't just bundle everything you know into an essay and hope you get a good mark. You've got to be selective about your material. So the word length is important. Now you can go over by 10%, and you won't get in trouble. If you go over by more than 10%, first occasion, you'll get a warning. Second occasion, you're going to lose 10 marks. So that's really serious.

Some modules will also mark you down if you're under length. That's not true of all models, so you need to check the assessment guidance for your particular module. So again, if we go back to assessment resources, can you see up here, you've got assessment guidance. And

that's going to tell you things like how the word length penalties are applied in your particular essay. The thing, though, even if you don't have - even if you don't get marked down for being under length, if you are under length, you're probably missing something out of your essay. You know, so that's a trigger to say OK, maybe I should go back to module materials and the essay question and have another look.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Excellent. Now, this booklet here that you've brought along is really useful. And I think if we could wrap up with showing people what's in this. Now this is something that you can get on, it's on the resources section of the website. If it isn't, we will put it on there. It's one of the skills for study booklets, and this one is called *Preparing Assignments*. It's a lovely little booklet and it's got loads of really, really good advice. So if you are feeling anxious, then do get one of these. You can just go and get the PDF of it on the website and have a look.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** Yeah, definitely. I would endorse that. That covers a lot of the things we've been talking about today, and it's really nice, really concise. And it's got examples of things like mind maps and how you might use them. So yeah, absolutely brilliant.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Excellent. Well, thank you Jonquil Low, very much, for that whistle stop tour of assignments. That's been really useful to show people where it is. But our audience is super organised, although there is a lot of breakfast cereal being eaten. Simon Stephens, stop eating it out of the box. And I hope, Samantha, that you've got rid of the Fruit 'n Fibre that your daughter has thrown around all over the place. I don't know why everyone's eating cereal. I mean, goodness, last week we were all on smoothies, and the week before that it was cake. So it's very varied here at the *Student Hub Live*.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** Brain food, obviously.

**KAREN FOLEY:** We don't do assessments here in terms of the way we check learning. We're having a philosophical boxing match later.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** That sounds fascinating.

**KAREN FOLEY:** I think it's much better than a TMA, and we need some way of checking what everyone's learned.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** Absolutely, yes.

**KAREN FOLEY:** So HJ is going to have a boxing match with someone from the philosophy department, which I

think is the only way to settle things.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** Oh wow. Goodluck with that.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Excellent. Well, Jonquil, thank you so much for that and for being on.

**JONQUIL LOWE:** Thank you.

**KAREN FOLEY:** And I hope that you found that very useful at home. So Sophie and HJ, what's everyone talking about aside from all the cereal eating?

**HJ:** I think we are focused on TMAs a bit, as well, aren't we? Which is good.

**SOPHIE:** Yes. Yeah, definitely. There were a lot of hints and tips. A lot of people asking about tutorials as well, online tutorials and where they can find extra tutorials and things like that.

**HJ:** The main thing we say about tutorials is that most of the time, you get allocated a tutor that's quite close to you, which is good. Sometimes you're not, which happens. But you can still go to tutorials by you, and there's a little tutorial finder tool. And all you have to do is either request to join another tutorial or just send that tutor an email to say hey, can I come along. And they'll never say no to you, because they always want more people there.

**SOPHIE:** As long as the tutors also record their tutorials. So if you have missed one, do check with them, because they might be able to send you maybe the slides or the actual - if it's an online one, especially, they can send you the whole tutorial again.

**HJ:** But on TMAs, as well, Lucy says she has a bit of card that she uses as a bookmark with her TMA question written on it. Which is good, saying about going along. So I like that tip, that's very good.

**SOPHIE:** And there's a lot of post-it notes that get used as well. Post-it notes get blown around during TMAs. I found them really handy. I used to write a lot of things on my post-it notes and then just pop them on a piece of paper. You can make a little plan for an essay, then, that way.

**HJ:** I think everyone's found this session super helpful. But I think it's always nervous starting off a TMA, but I did social sciences. And Sophie, you're doing maths.

**SOPHIE:** Yes.

**HJ:** How would you say that's a bit different for maths students?

**SOPHIE:** Maths is a lot. Well, for starters, I used to have to post all of mine off. You couldn't do it online, so you had to be a lot more prepared. Your deadline was about a week before your deadline. But you're not as much note making, I suppose. It's not as much referencing or anything like that. So it is, some ways, a little bit easier. I was not very good at referencing, so I'm happy I don't have to do that. But it's definitely not as fluid, like you couldn't just go along. So it's tricky, doing maths. I know that Lee is also doing maths. He's doing MST125, which I did. So it will be interesting to see how different he finds it, because I know that he's done other modules as well for -

**KAREN FOLEY:** And what's some of the anxiety, then, around TMAs? Is it just having a new tutor and having that sort of first go at it? What's that all about?

**SOPHIE:** Yeah, I think so. It's the first one. I think a lot of people are struggling with the question and making sure they're answering the right question. So, you know, you've got the TMA question in front of you, you want to make sure you're answering it in the right way. I think people are worried they're going to do a whole assignment that's not actually what they're intending to do.

**HJ:** I think about tutors as well, everyone always worries that tutors can be negative, and they think, oh, that's a rubbish TMA. But tutors aren't like that at all. The way they mark, they sort of build up your score. So they think, right, they've looked at the module materials, they've obviously read it. That's good, let's give them marks for that. They've reference well. And they always build you up, they never mark down. And all their feedback and comments is all designed to build you up and help you progress. And like I always think, looking at my first TMA when I did that years and years ago to the last piece of work that I did for my degree, I can see such a difference. But as you're going along, sometimes you don't see that. But it is happening, and it does take time. And the whole idea of level one starter modules is to see where you are and get you built up as well.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Absolutely. I love it when all my students do well at their TMAs. I had an email, actually, I've got one group of students allocated already. I know the process is ongoing. And she sent me an email saying, "I'm looking forward to the consistently high marks you're going to give me." And I said, well, I am looking forward to the consistently excellent work you're going to give me. So I think that's fair enough. But you know, it is all about that. And it is a really supportive relationship. Also, the tutorials will be published as soon as we possibly can do that. So don't worry, that's all in process. So very soon you'll be able to see where your tutorials are and

you'll get your tutor's details as well. OK, so doing the assignment is one thing, submitting it is another. And joining me now is Jayne Horne, hello, Jayne.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Hello.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Thank you for coming along. Jayne's from the computing help desk, the best thing - well, one of the best things - from the Open University, I think. Because the computing help desk are brilliant. You're open, like, at really sensible hours. Often at night, when you're sort of struggling to get something in. And your lot are so, so super helpful with a variety of computer issues, have been a massive godsend many, many times. I know for me, and a lot of my students. So we're going to talk about submitting a TMA, and we've got some widgets there, which I'd like you to tell us. Have you ever experienced submitting a TMA. So we know there are a lot of level one students, but you may be a level one student on your second module. So let us know if you've submitted a TMA. And also we'd like to know how confident you are with IT. Because submitting a TMA is theoretically OK, but sometimes the barriers can be to do more with confidence than actually using the system. But we're going to show you how it's done, aren't we?

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yes, indeed.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Lovely.

**JAYNE HORNE:** So run-through one is where everything goes right.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK

**JAYNE HORNE:** So first of all, I'm imagining that you've all finished your TMA, it's all written up and you're done and dusted and want to send it off. That there in the top is what you're kind of looking for. I always advise students, if you can, save it to your desktop, because then you see it immediately.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yes.

**JAYNE HORNE:** If you save it somewhere else, that's absolutely fine. You know, it can be in your documents, you can even put it in your pictures if you really want. Just remember where you've saved it. Because obviously, if you say, where have I saved my file, it's a bit like saying, where have I lost my car keys.

**KAREN FOLEY:** I've had students also accidentally submitting the wrong files because they're working on it, and I've noticed now a lot of students are writing, like, TMA one final or to send, something just different so that they can then see that that's the end one.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yeah, naming it just something slightly different. As you say, that's another great thing as well.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK, good. So you've got the TMA.

**JAYNE HORNE:** You've got the TMA, when you're ready to submit - I'm afraid these are screenshots. But first step is log in to your website, and you're greeted with student home. You're looking for the online TMA service link. That's the one that you're looking for. It's generally - let's see if we can get the highlighter up. It's about the second link down. So it's nicely at the top. Probably can't see that. But if you do have two tabs up at the moment, if you are logged in, you should probably be able to see it at the moment already. Once you've clicked on that link, you then get a page like this. It looks quite scary because it's got a lot of boxes on there.

**KAREN FOLEY:** All to submit. 46% of our students have never submitted a TMA.

**JAYNE HORNE:** 46%. OK.

**KAREN FOLEY:** That's just under half, obviously. But OK, so here you've got the thing, and you can see, then, the submits. And those are for each assignment that are in this module.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yes, they are. So make sure you click on the right one.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Oh, yes.

**JAYNE HORNE:** It's not the end of the world if you don't. But it saves us a lot of headaches if you click on the right one.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK.

**JAYNE HORNE:** So double check that you're clicking on the Submit link that's in the same row as your actual TMA.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Now, there's this dummy TMA right at the top here. What's that all about, then?

**JAYNE HORNE:** Dummy TMA is your practise TMA. As you go through later in the modules, do double check that the dummy TMA isn't used for anything. Because sometimes they are, but generally, 99% of the time, it's just for you to submit a practise one. And it's not marked, it's not included in -

**KAREN FOLEY:** So you just send a Word document with your name on it, and then your tutor writes a comment just so that you can check you've read it.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Exactly. Precisely that.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yeah, OK, brilliant. And not all modules have these, do they? But I think the majority do.

**JAYNE HORNE:** No, 99% of them do. Yeah.

**KAREN FOLEY:** I know in one of the modules I teach, it's a chance to practise zipping files.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Ah.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Which I know you're going to talk about.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Oh yeah.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Great. So you find the link, you submit on the right one, OK.

**JAYNE HORNE:** So then you get this page. It's more steps. Lots more steps. It's only three, but it can be a bit daunting when you first look at it. So just take it step by step. Step one is selecting your file. It's like uploading any document or attaching any document to, like, an email. So you've got a nice Choose File button. You click on that, and you get a screen like this where you just select your file. This is where you need to remember where you've saved it.

So if you've saved it to your desktop, there's normally a quick link on the left hand side, and then you select your TMA. And it appears just there. Step two, I haven't cheated. Read those boxes carefully, please. Because it is important that you read them. And then tick them, like so. And then the third and final step is to submit again. Now, some people do get confused because you're submitting at the beginning, and then you're submitting at the end. But this is the final submit step. This is it. Once you've clicked it, it's going and it's off. And you'll get a submission received page.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Very easy. What can possibly go wrong?

**JAYNE HORNE:** What can possibly go wrong? Oh, yeah. Before we get to what goes wrong, if you have got that submission received page, it will be in green. It will list the files that you submitted and it will also give you a receipt code. Make a note of that receipt code, because that is your proof of submission. You can find it if you come off that page, if you go back right to the start.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Do students still get an email with it, or -

**JAYNE HORNE:** They do, but they can be delayed. You know, if there's like 1,000 TMAs going through at the same time, obviously it's going to take that time for those emails to go out. So just make a note of it just in case. You will get an email, as well. But, yeah.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Good, OK.

**JAYNE HORNE:** And you can find it again, as I said, if you go back to the online TMA EMA service, it's located there as well. So if it all goes wrong and you get an error, read it and don't panic. Errors are actually our favourite thing because they tell you what's going wrong. If you just get a blank page, that's when we start to panic. So if you get an error, it is actually OK. There are three main ones that we get. Incorrect file format, the file size is too big, or you've got an invalid zip file.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Lee Christie says he never reads these boxes that come up, tut tut, Lee. I wonder if you submit them all in one time, then.

[LAUGHTER]

**JAYNE HORNE:** Shall I go over there and tell him off?

**KAREN FOLEY:** No, you can't. He's too far away.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Ugh, read them.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK, so these are not, these are something one can get over, I assume?

**JAYNE HORNE:** Absolutely, yes. And most of the time you can do it yourself. Obviously if you're in a panic and you ring us, try make a note of what the error was. Because often we get, I've had an error. And we go, OK, what was it? And they go, oh, I'm not sure. And we have to take them through the submission process again to find out what the problem is. So if you get one, make a note of it. Don't panic.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Now the reason that most TMAs are technically due around noon, but there's a 12 hour grace period often, but not exhaustively, is so that you've got time to ring the computing help desk if you get one of these messages so that you can help.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yes, exactly that. But as you say, you can often help yourself with these ones. So incorrect file format. Let's get out of this, discard the changes. That is where most of the time students have you used something like Pages for Mac, they have used Open Office, or they've used LibreOffice.

**KAREN FOLEY:** I meant to ask you about Macs. And Lee, don't have a sad face now. It's your own fault. What's the difference between Macs and PCs, and is the process the same?

**JAYNE HORNE:** The submission process is the same. When I get to zipping, there will be a little bit that's different. But the actual process of going online, selecting the file, that's exactly the same.

**KAREN FOLEY:** So it's all the same. Great.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yeah. OK, so if you've used, as I say, Pages, OpenOffice, LibreOffice, or any other kind of office software. OK, do you know what I mean when I say that?

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yeah.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yeah. Do students?

**KAREN FOLEY:** I don't think so. Anyone got any questions, ask. Ask now. But there is guidance on the file formats and things like that that are acceptable, and that's fairly self-explanatory, isn't it?

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yes. If you want them listed right now, they're .doc, .docx, .rtf. You don't have to remember that, it will be written. It's normally at the end of your question. It will say please submit, and then it will have the file formats. So yeah, if you've used a different office software, it may save in a different type. So this one here, you can see it's got a different icon. That's your first big hint. And afterwards you've got this dot, you might not be able to see it, but it says odt. Yeah, the system will just spit it back out and say no. But there is actually nothing wrong with the file. It's fine. All you need to do is save it in one of the accepted formats. And that is very simply File and Save As, not File and Save. So most people will be used to using File and Save, and as you see.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Oh, document recovery. That's nice. All right, we'll do it a different way.

**KAREN FOLEY:** So basically, you open it and File and Save As and save as a .doc or .docx or .rtf, rich text file.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yes. I will, though, take you through showing roughly what it looks like.

**KAREN FOLEY:** You haven't written anything on your TMA.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Oh, I'm sorry.

**KAREN FOLEY:** You're going to fail.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Look, there's a TMA 01 there. OK. So you've got your file name, to change your type you've got a dropdown menu just underneath the name. You click that. Yep, and it's there.

**KAREN FOLEY:** So you can just save it in a different format.

**JAYNE HORNE:** And you're just looking for, yeah, you're looking for Microsoft Word '97 to 2003, something along those lines. Select that, hit Save, and you're in the correct format. It may give you a warning about changing the format, but that's fine. And then you're done. And instead of selecting the wrong file, you select the nice new file that's made there.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK, brilliant. Excellent. Perfect, all right. What about the other warnings?

**JAYNE HORNE:** Second warning, the file is too big. 99.9% of the time, this is because you've included lots of pictures. Hundreds of them.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Tutors don't really like more than 8 cat pictures, do they? Per TMA?

**JAYNE HORNE:** Aw, nine? Cats have nine lives?

**KAREN FOLEY:** But this might be something, say, for example, on some of the modules I know students might draw a graph, and then they might need to take a photograph of it and resize it. So this might apply to some of those maybe science or maths modules.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yes, exactly. Now, we tell students to go away and reduce the file size of them. There are several ways to do that. There are actually bits of guidance on the computing guide that there are links to. I wanted, though, to show that doing so doesn't necessarily affect how the picture looks. Because that's mostly what students are worried about. If they reduce the quality of it, what difference is it going to make. So I've got two pictures here, they're from NASA. Thank you very much, NASA. And as you can see, there is no difference to them. No noticeable difference. One, however, will put you over the file size immediately. The other one -

**KAREN FOLEY:** What is the file size?

**JAYNE HORNE:** The file size is how much memory it takes up. So I've saved them here.

**KAREN FOLEY:** And is there a threshold? Is it like two megs or something?

**JAYNE HORNE:** Uh, 10.

**KAREN FOLEY:** 10? Oh, wow. OK, great.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yeah, it increased. So here you can see that one there is 9.47.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK, so that's under.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Just about, but if you include anything else, that's going to go over. Because it's 9.47. You've got -

**KAREN FOLEY:** Right, so how do you reduce it?

**JAYNE HORNE:** To reduce it, as I say, several ways. It will depend, are you on a PC, are you on a Mac. If you're on a PC, go to Paint. Paint is your best friend. Copy it into Paint, and then actually physically reduce the picture. You can do that using resize and stuff like that. Then file, Save As, jpg. That's one of the top options, you'll see it immediately. And that just compresses everything down and makes it nice and small for you, and will bring you under that threshold 99.9% of the time.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Perfect. Another way is zipping, isn't it?

**JAYNE HORNE:** yes. If you're using pictures, you'll normally have, kind of like, two documents as well. So generally, you'll have already done that. This is kind of like you've zipped it, it hasn't made any difference. Yeah. It's normally the pictures. And even if you do zip it, if it is as big as 9.47, that's still not going to bring you under enough to actually submit it. So it's making it a lot smaller.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK, brilliant, all right. Zipping you would need to do, like often, we'll ask people to find papers, for example. So they might need to do a literature review, they might then find some papers they need to submit as PDF files with their assignment. And then they zip that together in a file. And that can cause a lot of anxiety for people. But it's quite easy, zipping. I can do it. That must mean it's very easy.

**JAYNE HORNE:** It's not too bad, yeah. It's just remembering to highlight all the documents that you want. And then for Macs, it is Control click, because Mac mice aren't set up for right click. For Windows, it's right click and then compress. So I can show you now, got two parts of the TMA there.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yeah, so you just highlighted them.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yeah, right click. Send To, and then you've got it nicely across there. Compress in folder. That's all you need to do.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Perfect, and then they're both in there.

**JAYNE HORNE:** And there they are.

**KAREN FOLEY:** And then you submit that file.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Indeed. So if I double click on that, you can see them both copied in there.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Perfect.

**JAYNE HORNE:** There we go.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Excellent. Lovely. Now, our last option, is it for emergencies?

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yeah. Before we do that, though, just quickly, the zip files.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Oh, yes.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yeah, if you get an invalid zip file, OK, if you're on a Mac, make sure that you've copied and compressed your documents on the desktop. Other than that, do give us a call. Because it's often to do with WinZip or 7Zip that you've got installed.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Call about it.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yeah.

**KAREN FOLEY:** So then call the computing help desk.

**JAYNE HORNE:** So then call the computing help desk.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK, brilliant. And then finally, for emergencies.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Emergencies, ah yes.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Help.

**JAYNE HORNE:** This one, so if i do, that one. OK, this information is available through the Help Centre link. It can be a little bit tricky to find. This is if the ETMA system goes down. So it is for emergencies only, and normally, you'll call the computing help desk saying oh, I can't submit my TMA, and we'll be running around yep, we know. It's submitting by email. You can't normally do this, so don't kind of like save it and think oh, I can submit by email.

**KAREN FOLEY:** This is being recorded, Jayne. Now they're going to watch it on catch up.

**JAYNE HORNE:** Yeah, but for emergencies only. Because if - hopefully it never - cross your fingers, touch wood, if everything goes down, you can submit by email. And this is how you do it. You send it to [etma@open.ac.uk](mailto:etma@open.ac.uk), but you have to format the subject field with your personal identifier, forward slash your module, forward slash the TMA number. If you don't do that, it will get rejected.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Brilliant.

**JAYNE HORNE:** But that is for emergencies only, but I thought this is the kind of place to put it, isn't it? So, yeah.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Excellent. OK, brilliant. But the computing help desk are a great source of help and support. And also, if there is something that really, really does go wrong, you can always just speak to your tutor, email your tutor, and tell them that you are submitting it. And there are extensions that can happen for exceptional circumstances as well. So there are lots of ways to get your TMA in. But thank you, Jayne, for showing us how easy that is, and for all those tips. That's brilliant.

**JAYNE HORNE:** No problem.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Lovely. So the computing help desk, then, what time you are open from and until, and what sort of support do you give for students?

**JAYNE HORNE:** OK, so during weekdays, we're open 9:00 AM until 9:30 PM. Weekends, it's 9:00 to 5:00, so 9:00 in the morning to 5:00 in the evening. The kind of help that we give is to do with OU software, so installations. If you ask us how to use it, we won't have a clue. But we can get it installed for you. If you get an error submitting your TMA, we'll take you through that. But if you

ask us how to do your TMA, we won't have a clue. And then if you're having general log in problems, so you can't get into the site or something like that, we can help you with that, too.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Brilliant, excellent. Thank you so much, Jayne, for coming along. Well, that's been a really useful session. Sophie and HJ, how's it all on the hot desk?

**HJ:** Well, it's going well. We've got lots of tips and different things coming through. Some people are saying they're having issues with the stream. So usually hitting the Refresh button will sort that problem out, or changing what browser you're using. I've also been told that changing the quality of the stream, so if you hover over where the video is, and it's a little option to change the quality, may also help with that. We are sorry about this, and thank you for bearing with us.

If there's anything persistent, you can click in the watch only room and have that up at the same time as the chat, or email us [studenthub@open.ac.uk](mailto:studenthub@open.ac.uk) so we can sort out for next time. Because we don't want anyone to miss out as well. But yes, we've had lots of good tips and people sending us stuff as well. Joan said Jayne is really good, so yes, we agree. They're very good at the computing help desk. And Hazel wonders how many times Jayne has to say, have you turned it off and back on again. Probably a few more times than is necessary. But Siobhan's given us a tip about backing up her TMAs while writing it. She says she saves it onto a memory stick and then emails them to herself, which -

**SOPHIE:** I do that, yeah.

**HJ:** I had a hard drive my first year that, I don't know, something went wrong with it before my TMA was due. And I just had to ask for an extension and write it again, I was devastated. So now I do these sorts of things as well, and it's very good to have backup. So I think that's one thing that we got from this. But, yeah, people sent us some great pictures as well. So I'm really excited about this.

**SOPHIE:** We've got some nice ones. These are from Eric in Portsmouth. This is his view over in Portsmouth, at the Spinnaker Tower. I used to go to University in Southampton, so we used to go to Portsmouth quite a lot. So it's quite nice. And that's his study space there as well. So a couple of study spaces coming in, which are really nice.

**HJ:** Yeah, Amy's sent in this study space, and she says, nom nom. She's got lots of treats on her desk there. And we love seeing all these different spaces and all this different food. So we will get back to you. We have stuff to send back to you as well, because it's only fair. But yes, send

us stuff in @studenthublive through Twitter or studenthub@open.ac.uk, and we'll contact you.

**SOPHIE:** Please try remember to send us your address, as well.

**HJ:** Oh.

**SOPHIE:** So that we have somewhere to post them to, and can help.

**KAREN FOLEY:** They need to tell you which, out of the trains, trauma and emergency care, and the hunt.

**SOPHIE:** Yes.

**HJ:** So we had the - what's this one? The trains. Trauma and emergency. And I really, this is my favourite out of it. Oh, this is a big poster.

**SOPHIE:** This is a mistake, I'm sorry. This is - this way?

**HJ:** So I really like this poster. This is my favourite.

**SOPHIE:** Yes.

**HJ:** But what else have we got?

**SOPHIE:** Oh, we've got Darth Vader here from Katie, the study buddy. He's really sweet. Although he does look like he's in a Christmas outfit, but I'm not going to -

**KAREN FOLEY:** He doesn't look very happy, I'll be honest.

**HJ:** And Robert seems to be in a trend of baking cakes for each of these boot camps. So these look very good today. He sent me the recipe of the last ones he made, so I've still got to try them.

**SOPHIE:** Oh, we should make some for this week.

**HJ:** Yeah, oh, I should have done that.

**SOPHIE:** Yeah.

**HJ:** Shouldn't I have? I'll think of that next time.

**SOPHIE:** See what I can do.

**HJ:** And then Justine has, she's got a treat in. She says an interesting chocolate bar, and we have to say the name is quite interesting.

**SOPHIE:** Yes. There's only one.

**HJ:** Yeah, if you've got any very organised study spaces that put me to shame.

**SOPHIE:** More organised than ours, yes.

**HJ:** Or study buddies, or where you are, or interesting names of food and treats, we want to know. Yes.

**SOPHIE:** Yes, please.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Oh, it was lovely seeing everyone's pictures coming through and all the study buddies and things. We put them up on our board and it make us feel like we know everybody. It's also really nice if you've got a picture and you can change your profile, as well. And I've seen some of you doing that in the chat. So you can just go to your details and add a picture there, and then that should come up. And that, again, it's nice to see each other and see what you all look like. We might want to put your pet or your cake there either as well.

Right, now our next session. We're going to talk about feedback. So Peter Taylor, welcome.

**PETER TAYLOR:** Thank you.

**KAREN FOLEY:** You are the director of the open programme, but most importantly for this session, you are the director of the assessment programme at the Open University.

**PETER TAYLOR:** That's correct, yes.

**KAREN FOLEY:** And you're also an, how do you say it? Organosilicon-

**PETER TAYLOR:** Organosilicon chemist.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yeah, we're not going to talk about that. But in all seriousness, when students have submitted their assignments, we've been talking a little bit about how they're feeling about it all. And some people have been saying, I'm really, really excited about it. But also there was quite a lot of anxiety about the whole thing. And I think that's to do with sometimes being allocated a new tutor, going through that first assignment process, and then getting the feedback and thinking, you know, how is it going to be? So we wanted to focus on feedback for this session.

But we also thought that a good way to do this would be for you to give us some feedback. So we've got some widgets there, and we want to know how good is the *Student Hub Live*? Well, a lot of you are coming back, so I'm hoping it's good. But I'm not going to prime that one. How helpful is the *Student Hub Live*? What is the best thing about the *Student Hub Live*? And what do you think of the set? So we'd like to have some feedback from you right now. Also there's a feedback button on the website. And so if you haven't had a chance to fill that in, it's a very quick form that will give us an idea about what you think is good and where you think we could improve. So please do that at some point as well.

We also would like what the best piece of feedback you've received is, and I bet we'll get some really, really good tips in. How did it help you improve? So what was the best thing someone said to you? Could be to do with study, it could be to do with not wearing red trousers and a matching red shirt. So yeah, let us know what the best feedback you had was and how it helped you improve. So Peter, assessment, the marking process. How does it all work?

**PETER TAYLOR:** So you've been listening to how you submit your TMAs, and they go into the ETMA system, and then they're distributed out again to the associate lecturer, who will be busy marking them. And an important aspect of that is the grading process. But in many ways, it's not the most important process.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Well, our students think it is, because the other week we asked them what they thought, and they were all like grades, grades, grades.

**PETER TAYLOR:** Yeah, but actually, as an AL, I spend much more time giving the feedback than they do worrying about the grade.

**KAREN FOLEY:** That's a good point, actually.

**PETER TAYLOR:** So I put a lot more of my time into writing that feedback, and it's specifically tailored to an individual's need. And I really hope that the person who gets it is going to be able to read it, to be able to find time to reflect upon it, and think about how they can use what my comments are to improve their next TMA. So yes, the grades are important. But that kind of feedback, that kind of extra information that you're getting as an individual, and that feed forward into the next TMA, is really crucial.

**KAREN FOLEY:** As an AL, how often do students make the same sorts of errors? Do you find yourself often

repeating things? I guess my point is, do you think your students are taking on board that feedback?

**PETER TAYLOR:** Well, that's a problem for me sometimes. So sometimes, I remember a couple of years ago, this was on a project module. And as part of my feedback, I gave some suggestions for possible ways in which they could change their title of the project. And about two or three weeks later, I got an email from them saying can you give me some suggestions about what I should put for my title.

So clearly they had not actually read the feedback I'd given them, which actually provided that information. And it's because they get the grade, they look at it, they think, hmm, I got 68%. That's not too bad. I'll look at the feedback. But then other things get in the way, the kind of study of the course seems much more important. And never quite get around to looking at that feedback. It's about making space in your study timetable to actually allocate to looking at the feedback.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yeah, yeah. But it can be hard, I think. Because so often, ultimately, the feedback is really telling you how to improve. And one could be forgiven for thinking that's mainly negative, even though I know when I'm marking, I really try and make sure that I've got a lot of positive things in there, because positive feedback is just as important as negative feedback. But equally I appreciate that when you're getting it back and you look at your grade, you have some sort of value laden way of looking at that going 68, that's good, that's bad, that's whatever. Rah, I'm putting it down, if you're not happy with it. Or that yes, that's great. Well, I don't need to read it. So what happens, then, in that process? How would you advise people actually get on board with accepting the grade and then looking at the feedback?

**PETER TAYLOR:** I always feel that irrespective of the grade, there is good feedback within it. So even if I'm giving someone with 85% who hasn't actually got very much kind of wrong, I'm still identifying ways in which they could improve, thinking about the way that they construct their arguments, maybe the way that they're kind of putting forward particular information, the way they're using tables, figures, or whatever. But there's always ways in which people can improve.

So I think - I agree. When I was a lad, back in the dark ages, the kind of feedback I used to get was just things like, this is rubbish. That was useless. I mean, apart from making me feel bad about myself, it really didn't help me kind of progress and learn from my mistakes. Hopefully within the Open University, we've moved on so that now we're kind of identifying ways in which

people can improve, giving students the kind of guidance about how to improve, hopefully linking it to the teaching materials in some way, just kind of making sure that there's always some hints and tips on how to do better, irrespective of your grade.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yeah, no, absolutely. OK, well, we asked everybody at home for some feedback on the *Student Hub Live*. Would you like to know what they said?

**PETER TAYLOR:** Yes.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK. How helpful is the *Student Hub Live*? They said 100%. I think they are a bit biased, though, because maybe those who aren't have been kicked out. So how good is it? 100%. How helpful is it? 100%. So we've got some numerical data, that's obviously brilliant. Thank you for that. What is the best thing about the *Student Hub Live*? So this is a little bit more of a qualitative feel. So informative, community, interactive, helpful. Some negative things, buffering there, some people are having problems with the stream.

Popcorn, yes, popcorn is good. Learning, a community, advice, chat, ease of use, presenters. Lots and lots of really good things, biscuits. So a combination of really lovely comments and food, which is really what the *Student Hub Live* is about. We also asked what they thought of the sets. 43% said what are you doing in a basement, 35% said genius, 90% haven't really noticed - probably because of all the food and cereal eating. And 3% said it's not very academic. So a real mixture of things there.

But when you think about some of these things, how do you feel getting some of this feedback, and what are you taking board with all that mixture of information that we've given you?

**PETER TAYLOR:** Well, there's a couple of interesting. First of all, there was a kind of a multi-choice question there. And one of the things I should say, it's not just TMAs that give feedback, but our computer marked assignments give feedback as well.

**KAREN FOLEY:** The ICMA's.

**PETER TAYLOR:** The ICMA's. So all of our kind of assessment has some feedback element. And when you get feedback, it's as you said earlier on, you kind of think, well, how do I feel about that. So your 100% of liking the *Student Hub Live* is great, except the sad thing about that is you don't know, now, how to improve.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Well, somebody said that the other week. And they said, well, I've got 100% and my tutor said

oh, it's all downhill from here. Which, I suppose ultimately, it is.

**PETER TAYLOR:** So one of the things that I learned very early on in my career at the Open University is when we produce materials, we kind of produce a first draft and we send it around to a number of people to read. And there will always be comments on it. And at first when I got all these comments, I found that, oh dear, I've made a mistake. I haven't written it properly or whatever.

But as I got more comfortable with it, I then started to realise that the comments I was getting were the ways I could improve it. And therefore I got to a point where if I didn't get many comments, I felt quite sad because I couldn't think of the ways of improving things. So I think having those comments, but it's the way that you structure the comments. So rather than saying I don't understand this or this is rubbish, actually kind of trying to understand what the problem is and explain to me what the problem is so I can then think about how I can make it better.

**KAREN FOLEY:** That's a lovely way of putting it, because what you've really said is that within academic writing and, in fact, the academic dialogue, it is all about feedback all the way. You will never have a time when you're not getting feedback, whether you're submitting something for a peer reviewed journal or just writing a module chapter. You are always trying to get that feedback. I know HJ was looking at something and he goes, look at all this stuff, I've done it wrong. And I said no, you haven't. It's just people feeding in stuff, it's good.

**PETER TAYLOR:** I can give you two examples this morning of feedback I've had. One was a journal article, so this is an American journal I'd sent the paper to. And it had gone to three referees, and each of them had given me slightly different comments about ways in which I could improve the paper. So it was fairly straightforward for me to be able to make those changes and to meet their requirements, and it can now go to be submitted.

So that's one way. The other way was in a grant application. So I've written this grant application, but before it goes out of the Open University, I give it to at least two of my colleagues to read so they can be a critical friend. I don't want them to come back and tell me all is well. I want them to say, well, that doesn't work very well, or you need to explain that a bit more clearly. So, yeah, criticism and accepting criticism is very much part of the academic life.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Because you can get to that point, can't you, where sometimes you're so immersed in things, and you understand it. You understand the background, the context. And sometimes it's really helpful for someone to say, you actually need a little bit of information here because what

you're saying doesn't really make sense.

**PETER TAYLOR:** But it's also about, and I do this all the time. I write down what I want to tell the person rather than what they're actually asking of me. So quite often on a kind of research grant application, I will say, I want to tell you about this bit of work. And then some will come back and say, well, if you actually read the small print, this is what you were asked to do. And you haven't done that. And I think it's the same with TMA questions, that sometimes as students, we want to kind of give, this is what I know. This is the answer I want to put down. But it doesn't always match the question. And so part of the feedback is about getting people to think about the question, what it's trying to do, and kind of answering appropriately.

**KAREN FOLEY:** I'm going to be a referee very soon.

**PETER TAYLOR:** Right, good.

**KAREN FOLEY:** I've got the philosophical boxing match coming up soon, so I'm going to umpire that. So I'll be looking forward to my feedback there. Right, reflecting on feedback then. So we get all this feedback, we think about it, how can we actually deal with this and reflect on it usefully?

**PETER TAYLOR:** Well, I think the first thing is that one of the important aspects is it needs to be relatively quickly after you've kind of submitted it. So if you get the feedback three or four weeks later, then it's out of your head, kind of the assignment. You've moved on and it isn't very useful. So it's important to get that feedback within a couple of weeks, while it's still relevant, whilst you remember what you went through in answering the question. And then it's just a question of going through it and reflecting on what your tutor is saying, thinking about, how could I not just or how do I understand that better, but how could I have written it better. How could I have made it so that instead of getting seven out of 10, I got eight out of 10 for that section.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Is it, though, a numerical trajectory in terms of improving? Because I know a lot of students are saying I got x grade, I now want y grade. And I say well, actually, I think you should be focusing on writing a better essay. Our challenge now is to work on your introductions or your conclusions. That's our goal, not getting 2% more. Because the assignments get progressively more challenging. And consequently, the marks get more difficult to award. And they're also looking at entirely different things. So how do you advise people actually take on board that feedback and, I guess, identify the areas then that they want to improve on, or they need to improve on?

**PETER TAYLOR:** That's interesting. Two aspects to that. First of all, there's the actual knowledge and skill content that you're studying at the moment. So improving what you've just been learning about. But the other bit you mentioned was about being able to improve your general kind of assignment writing. So how to write a better introduction, how to make clearer arguments within your essay. So there are two bits to that. So it's about thinking about what are the misconceptions I have of the stuff I'm learning, but also how do I develop my academic voice in terms of creating those arguments?

**KAREN FOLEY:** Can you tell us how one could work with their tutor? Say you identify something like, I want to write better introductions because my introduction isn't clear. That can be quite a big thing. And people can then think, how do I write a better introduction? I'm going to try really hard next time. How do they go about making that feedback useful and working with their tutor or associate lecturer?

**PETER TAYLOR:** One of the things that often disappoints me as an AL is that I will write some feedback and go out to the student, but I then don't hear from them or anything about it until the next assignment. So I would personally be perfectly happy for someone to come back to me and say, well, I've thought about this and I can understand this bit, but I really am not sure how I could do that differently. And I would hope that they would get back to their AL who then might be able to enter that dialogue about ways in which they could improve what they're doing.

**KAREN FOLEY:** I love it when people do that, because we equally are fallible, too. And sometimes I'll think, well, I've made that perfectly clear. And then with hindsight, I think, oh, actually, maybe I should've been a bit more explicit. And so if you don't understand something, it's a really good idea to go back to your tutor and pick up on those things. And it shows us that you've read it.

**PETER TAYLOR:** But try to be in a positive way. I once had a student who kind of their immediate reaction of me being critical, or what they thought I was being critical to them, was to come back and be critical to me. And it was not a kind of an open dialogue. I think I was trying to kind of give them advice on how to improve so maybe they could come back and say well, I understood that. But it really doesn't make sense to me, can you explain that to me again? Or I'm not sure that what you were saying was quite right. And I thought about doing it this way. Can you explain why it wasn't quite right, rather than well, I don't agree with you.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yeah, yeah, no, I know. But it is difficult, I think, and we put so much into these assignments, both in terms of people submitting them as well as us marking them. You know, it is an

emotional process. But equally, you know, they are, I guess, part of a formative learning process where you're getting really personalised, individual advice from your tutor who's spending a lot of time marking these. And really, taking on board and reading them is going to be ultimately useful to you, isn't it?

**PETER TAYLOR:** Very much so. But I said it's about creating that space and saying, this is an important activity to undertake. Because it's precious on everybody's time. And there's always a tendency, oh, I need to get on reading the next bit. And so making space when it comes in to kind of look at the grade and then look at the kind of feedback, thinking about well, how can I use this to improve, maybe making some notes for the next TMA about how I could approach it differently, and it's very valuable. And I would hate to think people are missing out on that because they're just too busy getting on with other things.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Excellent. So the take home message is there's a temporal process here. You're going to get your TMA back, you're going to have some sort of a reaction to it.

**PETER TAYLOR:** Yeah, and it's an emotional one.

**KAREN FOLEY:** It is. And that's cool. But then sit down a bit later, read through it, and maybe pick a few things that you could work on and make sure, I guess, that you're very clear about what those things are. And then really try and work on those for your next assignment, even with your tutor, to pick on those things that you really want to develop for yourself.

**PETER TAYLOR:** Yeah.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Peter Taylor, thank you so much. It's been a really, really useful.

**PETER TAYLOR:** Thank you for letting me come.

**KAREN FOLEY:** No, thank you. I hope that's been helpful for everybody at home. Sophie and HJ, are people feeling a little less anxious now about submitting their assignments?

**SOPHIE:** The strong favourite, I don't care what Ladbrokes say.

**HJ:** Sophie.

**KAREN FOLEY:** What's going on?

**SOPHIE:** Sorry. I'm preparing for the boxing match tonight.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Oh, I'm already ready. I've got my whistle.

[WHISTLE]

All sorted.

[LAUGHTER]

**HJ:** I'm a bit nervous about that. I have heard something about the boxing match.

**SOPHIE:** Yes.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yeah, no, it's going to be really, really good. I'm really looking forward to it.

**SOPHIE:** I wouldn't say that you were our favourite, at the moment, unfortunately.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Really?

**SOPHIE:** Yes.

**KAREN FOLEY:** I'm rooting for you. I think you're going to definitely win.

**HJ:** Oh, now, well, thank you Karen.

**SOPHIE:** I mean, you could earn quite a bit, if you'd like to put some money on it with me.

**KAREN FOLEY:** How much?

**SOPHIE:** Ten to one HJ, yeah.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK, and what about Sean?

**SOPHIE:** He's a bit more of a favourite, so three to one.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Uh huh, OK. Well, all right. OK, I shouldn't get involved, I shouldn't get involved in this.

**HJ:** We'll see what the audience thinks after the show.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Anyway, is everyone still eating cereal, and how are they feeling about their assignments?

**SOPHIE:** I think the conversation's actually gone quite back to more academic. We've all talked about our TMAs and the length of time it takes to write an assignment, how different people sort of plan it and how long it takes you to do it, which has been quite a big topic.

- HJ:** I think one of the things someone just asked that I just wanted to pick up on, they said, so all tutors are associate lecturers. Yes, associate lecturers is just one of those funny words that the OU uses. But they are your tutors, yes. So if you hear us saying associate lecturers -
- SOPHIE:** Or ALs, yeah. It's just to confuse you.
- HJ:** Or ALs, yes. But I think one of the things that was picked up on is getting feedback from tutors, and a lot of people like feedback from their tutors. But if you don't understand your feedback or want to ask more, there's nothing wrong with talking to your tutor about it as well, or asking for more detail about things that you can improve on. And that's what your tutors are there for, is to have a dialogue with. So don't be afraid ever to ask them if you're unsure about something or have a question. But one question which I think is good that a lot of people have mentioned, are you allowed to use proofreaders for the OU for looking over assignments. So I'm not sure. Maybe we'll have to get back to that by email, but I'm not too sure.
- KAREN FOLEY:** That's an interesting - I know that some students who have additional requirements may need proofreaders as part of their learning. And I guess, I'm not really sure what the actual thing on that is. I guess -
- HJ:** Well, I know what we'll do. If there's anything that we can't answer or missed, if you email us, [studenthub@open.ac.uk](mailto:studenthub@open.ac.uk), we'll get an informed answer for that one, shall we?
- KAREN FOLEY:** Yeah, that's brilliant. Because we're here, pretty much, actually, most of the week. So we'll - and I hope you guys are going to come along and join us for the process. We will have some breaks. But yeah, we'll find out about that. But you certainly mustn't plagiarise or get any help. It must all be your own work, that is the most important thing, definitely. Excellent. Good, I'm glad it's all going well, I'm glad you're talking about academic things. I'm now joined by Katherine Moore from the library. Welcome.
- KATHERINE MOORE:** Hello.
- KAREN FOLEY:** So, library, brilliant. We love the library. And we'll be doing a lot of sessions with the library. We're going to talk a little bit about what the library can offer to students. Now, you're a teaching and learning librarian and have been with us for quite a few years. And you wanted to talk about the help that's available for students.

**KATHERINE MOORE:** Yes. So I wanted to talk about all the help available on the library website, because there is a lot of it and it can be hard to see the context of it and where to find a what. And especially around assignment time when, you know, you've probably left it a bit too late and you're a bit stressed, and you just want to know where things are. So I thought it would be a good thing to go through those now.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Brilliant. Now, a lot of our students are very, very organised, and lots of them have already found their assignments. And they're very super organised. But it's worth pointing out that you do get a week to do the assignment, and so we do expect mild panic during that week where everything is being sorted. So if you do think, oh, it's assignment week and it's due in - I mean, I used to do mine right up until the last minute. So you are expected to be doing them fairly close to that deadline as well. So they're in their panic, they're going through, where do they go for help?

**KATHERINE MOORE:** OK, so the library website is really visible from the Student Home. From the library website, the Help and Support tab is where we have pretty much all the help that we give you. Which includes help on referencing, which is something students get really concerned about sort of before their TMAs, and the OU Harvard guide which most students use for referencing is made really nice and obvious on that Help and Support page. We also have help for finding information.

**KAREN FOLEY:** We need to turn the screen around because -

**KATHERINE MOORE:** Ah.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Now, listen, only you can see it and that's not very helpful.

**KATHERINE MOORE:** That isn't, is it? OK.

**KAREN FOLEY:** And I think we might need to just -

**KATHERINE MOORE:** Take two.

**KAREN FOLEY:** There we go.

**KATHERINE MOORE:** OK, so, mainly I'm going to be pointing to the Help and Support page, which I know really quite well.

**KAREN FOLEY:** And if we can just move it a little bit, there we go.

**KATHERINE MOORE:** There we go, OK. So the main sort of help features that we know students use all the time are in the centre of the page, for nice and ease of use, which includes things like referencing as I was babbling on about previously. And then things like finding information, and especially for level one, finding information for your assignment is on the left hand side. And that contains things like where you want to search for things and a little bit about how you search for things, and then also evaluating what you find.

That's all on finding information for your assignment which, if you're studying at level one or level two, you'll find that really helpful. And then students who are level three or maybe taught masters, the finding information for your research topic area, which is also on this side, will give you things like how to do more complicated things. So how to do literature searching and how to do citation searching. And sort of those two main areas are really, really, really helpful resources. But I would say to have a look at, really, everything within that Help and Support tab.

We also have a tab across the top of the page called Training and Events, which I think should be there. That tells you all the training that we have at the library that's online, that you can attend either live, so have a chat to a librarian and they'll talk you with a group of students on a particular subject, or you can view recorded versions of those sessions. There's also the library help desk for anything that we haven't managed to get put in a training session or on the website, and that's available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. And every single page of the library website has the contact details for the library help desk on it.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Brilliant, thank you. There's so much help and support. So people can chat to librarians and go to these online sessions. What happens in those? What do people talk about? Do they just phone you and ask about referencing? What do they ask you about?

**KATHERINE MOORE:** So the online sessions are about particular things. But we also do get lots of questions, various things, from finding information to referencing. And I have prepped with me questions that students normally ask.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Oh brilliant, lovely.

**KATHERINE** I wanted your help with this.

**MOORE:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yes, of course.

**KATHERINE** So if you could read out some of our standard questions.

**MOORE:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK.

**KATHERINE** Whilst dressing up.

**MOORE:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK, that's good. I like that. Shall we bin that laptop? That out the way.

**KATHERINE** It's a little old, I don't think theres a bin for this thing.

**MOORE:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** We love hats at the *Student Hub Live*. Can I choose any one, then?

**KATHERINE** You can choose any one to be any student you like.

**MOORE:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** Sure.

**KATHERINE** I won't insist on a US accent, but you can do one whilst reading the card.

**MOORE:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** No, I'm not going to do my accents. Dear librarian, I spent ages looking for things relevant but I just can't find anything. I am studying level two module, my topic is teaching English as a second language in Africa.

**KATHERINE** Oh, OK, interesting topic. But it kind of doesn't matter what the topic is in terms of where you

**MOORE:** look for help. As you're a level two student, I would send you to the Help and Support pages in the library website and finding information for your assignment. That will tell you A, how to search, and where you want to look.

**KAREN FOLEY:** So you're not going to tell me the answer.

**KATHERINE** No, I'm going to tell you where to find the answer. Oh, blimey.

**MOORE:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** I know. Right, OK, next.

**KATHERINE** The Australian Education Index would be a good database to start, but I'm going to ignore  
**MOORE:** that.

**KAREN FOLEY:** So if you ask again, they might just give you a bit more information. Its all about how you interview these people, isn't it? Dear librarian, my tutor recommended that I use Google Scholar to help me find information for my TMA. Ah, did they now? But I keep being asked to pay for the articles, some of which cost just over 30 pounds for one article. Yours in irritation.

**KATHERINE** OK, so Google Scholar can be a really good tool to use if you've set it up to be able to find  
**MOORE:** what the library has, which you can do really, really, really easily. And there are instructions available on the library website under Help and Support saying accessing eresources using Google Scholar to tell you how to use Google Scholar. So it sees you as an OU student to then be able to take you through to the stuff we subscribe to. So it can be really helpful tool.

**KAREN FOLEY:** But why would you use Google Scholar, then? Appreciate this isn't scripted. I guess because of the citations, isn't it? So you know who is the most published.

**KATHERINE** You can use it for the citations. Some of our students just prefer it. And if you want to do a  
**MOORE:** really, really quick search rather than an in-depth search, then having set up Google Scholar once, it's really easy to use. So yeah, I use both Google Scholar and library search.

**KAREN FOLEY:** So do I cut and paste it and chuck it in the library search then get it for free, that's what I did.

**KATHERINE** If you'd put the effort into already setting up, you wouldn't even have to do that, Karen.  
**MOORE:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** No, I know, I need to get more organised, I know. Whenever the library come on, I always feel so unorganised. Right. Dear librarian, my module has asked me to read this article but I can't find it online. The article is "Law" and it's by Neil Duxbury, and it's published in the American Journal of Jurisprudence. I really need to find it, please help me. In capital letters.

**KATHERINE** OK, so if you've been asked to read it for your module, we will have it. So firstly, don't panic.  
**MOORE:** It's likely that this student has been using library search and just looking for the title of the article, but in this case, that's "Law", so that's going to give him loads of stuff that he doesn't

want to read. So in that case, he'd look for the title of the journal. So the American Journal of Jurisprudence. And then from the journal, he'd navigate to the article. Now, all of that is on the library website under Help and Support, ejournals and articles, and then accessing particular articles.

**KAREN FOLEY:** But it sounds like some of these students, I mean, you keep saying you can find on the library search tab. But there's panic going on here. So how do you support people, then, through this chat? Is a lot of it reassurance and just saying calm down, we can get this?

**KATHERINE MOORE:** Yes, absolutely. An awful lot of it is sometimes just providing a nice, calm voice on the end of the phone, or the same by web chat. And actually, sometimes just the reassurance that the web chat is there 24 hours a day, seven days a week, that really helps.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Sometimes it is just someone. You know, it's always like when I call the computing help desk and they go, turn it on and off, and then it works. And it's just absolutely brilliant. Right. I'm not sure what sort of person this would be, but this is someone with problems. Dear librarian, I'm having problems. You see? Studying at home at the moment, but we're having a new roof.

**KATHERINE MOORE:** Hence the hard hat.

**KAREN FOLEY:** That was a fluke. Can I come to the library in Milton Keynes to study? I live in London, so it's a bit of a trek, but to be able to study without the constant sound of hammering would be worth it. PS, I have tried earplugs, but these don't help. Sad face. Is this from Lee?

**KATHERINE MOORE:** It happens to me regularly, to be honest. And you can always come to the library in Milton Keynes. However, as Lee is in London, there's going to be loads more libraries nearer him that are going to be so much more convenient. So what I would suggest is to join the SCONUL Access scheme, because that will allow you to join university libraries that you can travel to, and you can have a quiet study space to study in. So that's from the Help and Support tab, and then accessing other libraries, will tell you all about how to join Google - not Google Scholar, the SCONUL Access scheme and how wonderful it is.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Brilliant. Excellent, OK. Now, we're going through as many questions as we've got time for, because we've got this boxing match soon.

**KATHERINE MOORE:** Oh, but the boxers were limbering up outside.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Were they?

**KATHERINE** Yeah.

**MOORE:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** Oh, no, I know. I They take it really seriously. Mind you, so do I.

**KAREN FOLEY:** It's the only way to settle such matters. And we're going through all these questions that are really typical. But if you have a question you would like to ask the library, put it in the chat. Right, next. Oh, this is a good one. Dear librarian, please help me. My module asks me to do a literature search for my TMA. My tutor said there was help on the library website, but I can't find it. I haven't really used the library before. I have always muddled through, but now I have to be able to use it really quickly. I know so many students like this. My assignment is due in two weeks, and I'm looking at patient handling in children's wards.

**KATHERINE** OK, so in terms of - sorry, is this citation -

**MOORE:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** Pithy answers only please.

**KATHERINE** - or literature searching, I can't remember.

**MOORE:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** Literature searching.

**KATHERINE** Literature searching. OK, so there's an FAQ on literature searching. There is also an online  
**MOORE:** training session. However, as we're on just under two weeks, I would have a look at the FAQ first and then maybe have a quick look at the recording for the stuff you're struggling with.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK, excellent. Thank you.

**KATHERINE** See, how was that for pith?

**MOORE:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** That was pithy, right. OK, next. Dear librarian - you see, if you go through these quickly, I'll get through more. I found a really relevant tweet - oh, good - for my assignment. This is becoming a lot more popular. I want to quote it to show public opinion, but I cannot work out how to

reference it. Does this mean I can't put it in my assignment as my module tells me I need to use the OU Harvard style.

**KATHERINE MOORE:** OK, so the OU Harvard guide, again on the library website, does have how to reference tweets in there. However, if you had found a source of information that wasn't covered by the OU Harvard guide, that's OK, because there is a section that says, in the OU Harvard guide, this type of resource isn't here. Help, what do I do? And that will tell you how you can reference anything and everything. Brilliant.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yeah, and it's a good idea to reference other things. All right, oh, this is a good one. OK, last one, last one. To whom it may concern, previously I have studied with Oxford Brookes University. There, I had a real library. I find it very helpful to attend the library induction as the library was invaluable to my first degree. I am concerned that not having this facility will become detrimental to my studies.

**KATHERINE MOORE:** OK, so, libraries are great. And, of course, we want to give all our OU students one. So instead of a library induction, we have a Getting Started Guide, which is available from the library home page. In terms of mimicking being able to meet librarians, we have all the training and events that we do on the library website, on that Training and Events tab. And we also have the library help desk for everything else.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Brilliant, excellent. Don't worry, that's all we've got time for. We're out of time. I'm really sorry, Katherine. But I can see there are so many questions, and it is so broad, the scope of the things people are asking. I guess one of the things is that there are a lot of practical things, like how to do things, right at the last minute. It's also very clear that there's a lot of self-help on that website. But also, like you say, so many students might want that reassurance and support to actually do something at the last minute. And you like people being in touch with you, don't you?

**KATHERINE MOORE:** I do. I love it. I'm always happy when students talk to me.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Good, excellent. Are there any burning questions, HJ and Sophie?

**SOPHIE:** What is HJ's name?

**KAREN FOLEY:** He can't answer that.

**KATHERINE** They aren't going to be harder than that.

**MOORE:**

**HJ:** Some people keep suggesting names, which I like there. That's a lot better. So I think someone said Hillary and Hagrid, I got Horton. So I think what we'll have to do -

**SOPHIE:** Herman.

**HJ:** Herman. I like that one. So we'll have to have, someone said we have to have a word cloud with some of these suggestions. And we can all pick, can't we?

**SOPHIE:** I think so.

**KAREN FOLEY:** HJ, don't talk to anyone who's being mean to you. Just ignore them.

**HJ:** But a lot of people, Helen from the library's joined us, and she's just giving people lots of great information. So we're just talking about the fact that you can actually visit the OU library, which is a wonderful, lovely building. And I'm always getting told off for sneaking there instead of being on this desk.

**KAREN FOLEY:** And about your overdue books that you took out last week which -

**HJ:** And my overdue books.

**KAREN FOLEY:** - are now no longer in your possession. Sorry about that. Anyway, yeah. Annie spent ages there. Right, would you like to see a tour of the library?

**HJ:** Ooh.

**KAREN FOLEY:** We have a tour of the library. And while we show you that video, which will show you all around the library, we're going to set up for our philosophical metaphorical boxing match, where we plenarise this whole four series of boot camps and figure out exactly what we've learned and whether the philosophy department or HJ know more about all of the things we've been covering. So we'll see you in about five minutes. But in the meantime, enjoy this video of the library and keep chatting.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Hi, hello.

**HELEN CLOUGH:** Hello, Karen.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Our students want to see what goes on in the library. Can you show us around?

**HELEN CLOUGH:** Yes, please. Welcome to the library.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Thank you.

**HELEN CLOUGH:** So here we have the ground floor. And on the ground floor we have the module materials.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Right.

**HELEN CLOUGH:** So people can come in and they can have a look at what module materials the OU offers.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Brilliant.

**HELEN CLOUGH:** And then upstairs we have some meeting rooms. We also have some books and journals, as well. But for the majority of students, they're never going to visit the library here in Milton Keynes. Which is why we have this fantastic online library, and I'd like to show you a bit behind the scenes of the online library.

**KAREN FOLEY:** That's fantastic.

**HELEN CLOUGH:** So if you'd like to follow me upstairs?

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yep, brilliant. Gosh, there's an awful lot that goes on in here, isn't there, Helen?

**HELEN CLOUGH:** There is. And we only have a short time to show you what we do, so we'd like to talk about three things. We'd like to talk about the help desk, how we support students and staff via the help desk. How we write activities that go into modules. And also how we liaise with academic colleagues who actually write the modules as well.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Excellent.

**HELEN CLOUGH:** Yeah, so let's go talk to Katherine.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Perfect. Hi, Katherine.

**KATHERINE** Hello.

**MOORE:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** So can you tell us, what are you doing right now?

**KATHERINE MOORE:** OK, at the moment, I'm working on the help desk. A student has just emailed us saying she wants to access a particular journal article, but unfortunately we don't have it in our online library. So I'm just emailing her, telling her the alternative methods she can use to access it.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Fantastic. So apart from email, how can students then contact the library?

**KATHERINE MOORE:** OK we're also available through the telephone and web chat. And web chat is 24/7.

**KAREN FOLEY:** 24/7? Excellent. So they can email you questions about finding articles? What else?

**KATHERINE MOORE:** Finding articles, accessing other libraries, finding information in general. If they have a study topic and they're not quite sure where to look, we can help them with that. We can also help them with referencing. Pretty much anything you would ask a librarian, we will help with.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Oh, fantastic. That is such a wonderful support. Well, thank you very much for telling our students about that. Helen, I know you wanted to talk about academic liaison. Can we do that now?

**HELEN CLOUGH:** OK.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Hi, Fiona.

**FIONA RICHARDS:** Hello.

**KAREN FOLEY:** So we wanted to talk a little bit about academic liaison. What's that all about, then?

**FIONA RICHARDS:** Well, I'm actually involved in supporting module teams when they're writing modules to integrate library resources and also, of course, very importantly, digital information literacy skills.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Brilliant. And why is that important, then, for students?

**FIONA RICHARDS:** Well, the resources are important because it helps to enrich the module material. And the skills are really important in today's world, because although it's also important to have digital skills in academia, it's particularly important when you're out in the world of employment these days.

**KAREN FOLEY:** So your role, really, in this sort of sense is really about embedding some of those activities and skills within the module so that students have that seamless experience and are developing those skills along the way.

**FIONA RICHARDS:** That's right, yes. And it's very much my work to raise the visibility of the resources and the skills that the teams can actually integrate into the modules.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Oh, fantastic. Well, thank you very much, Fiona. That's brilliant.

**FIONA RICHARDS:** That's fine.

**RICHARDS:**

**KAREN FOLEY:** So we also, then, can look at this idea of authoring and then, I guess, how these ideas are taken from the academic liaison and written by the library as part of that team. Shall we go and find out more?

**HELEN CLOUGH:** Yep.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Nicola.

**NICOLA BEER:** Hello.

**KAREN FOLEY:** I wanted to talk to you a bit about authoring. So what does that involve?

**NICOLA BEER:** Yeah, so students might not realise that we actually write some of the activities that's in the module materials. So what happens is we go along to module team meetings, which is where all the academics that are writing the course, and then we talk a little bit about what library skills would be really useful to the students at this point in their studies. And then we go away, and we write some activities that will really help with that. And then they appear in the module materials. So at the moment, I'm actually working on an activity for a level one engineering module. And it's all about how to find newspaper articles using some of the really useful newspaper databases that we've got access to.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Oh, brilliant. Well, thank you for filling us in on that. That sounds really, really interesting.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Hello, and welcome back. I hope you enjoyed that. It's always nice to see around the library. Right, we're here for a philosophical boxing match. Which is the way that we like to settle

things and assess our understanding and knowledge at *Student Hub Live*. Sophie, how is everybody doing?

**SOPHIE:** OK, so they're coming down. So, I would say eight to one. Yeah, he's coming in to the favourite, so.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Sophie.

**SOPHIE:** Sorry. Sorry, sorry.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Stop taking bets. How much money have you made so far?

**SOPHIE:** A lot.

[LAUGHTER]

**KAREN FOLEY:** You'll be off on holiday again soon, won't you?

**SOPHIE:** I can only hope.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Anyway, something good's got to come out of all of this. How's everybody doing?

**SOPHIE:** Yeah, everyone's doing really well. I think they're excited for the boxing match. We've had loads and loads of selfies and pictures in, study spaces. Cute little cats. I do like me a cat. This is from Holly.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Let's see the selfies quickly.

**SOPHIE:** So we've got this one here, this is from Kate Withers who's ready for her start on October the first. And we've got some drawings as well. These are amazing, and these are to go with the hunt booklet which Angie Robinson's looking to get. So there's quite a few things going on. A couple more study buddies. We've got - where have I gone? There he is. He looks so cute and cuddled up in bed. I'd love to be somewhere like that. That's Debra Jane. So yeah, loads of nice study spaces coming in. Everyone's really excited for the boxing match. So we'll see how well I've done in a bit now.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Good, excellent. OK, so this is how it's going to work, right? We have HJ and Sean Cordell from the philosophy department. Right. You have both been watching the *Student Hub Live*, and now what we're going to do is we're going to, in turn, ask questions to each other, which I'm going to time. And then the audience are going to say, at the end of each round, who has

answered the questions best. OK, so how well did people answer the questions on a scale of 1 to 10. All right?

And then somehow we're going to find out who the winner was. It's probably not going to be the most scientific process, but this is a boxing match. Right. So without further ado, we're going to set up for studies. So HJ is going to first ask Sean some questions. We're going to go through as many as we can within the time limit. I will call the shots. Clean fighting gentlemen, please. Right. Round one. Navigating the virtual learning environment. Hold on a sec. Go.

**HJ:** OK. So what was Georgina's top tip to remember getting to know the online learning environment.

**SEAN CORDELL:** You can't break anything. You go online, you're not going to crash it or anything like that. And it's a place to explore, look around.

**HJ:** And what are the main resources you can find on the virtual learning environment?

**SEAN CORDELL:** Student Homepage, module information, any forums that might be up there, access to OU Live. Next question.

**KAREN FOLEY:** You'll get scored down for that. Quick, quick, you've got your time.

**HJ:** Name any good things you can do before you start your module on the VLE?

**SEAN CORDELL:** You can meet your tutor, say hello to your tutor there, or other students you can get to know. A good thing to do is actually submit a dummy TMA so you're familiar with the system, so you're not panicking when it actually gets to the real TMA and you think you're missing a deadline. So have a bit of practise. You can access your module materials, of course. Nowadays, usually, PDFs, books. Even you do get them hard copy, they're usually on there, too.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Next.

**SEAN CORDELL:** You're wasting time.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Quickly, get one more.

**HJ:** Uh, oh, one more then. Like I am now, is it normal to feel nervous, anxious, and some panic?

**SEAN CORDELL:** In here? Or on the -

**HJ:** Perhaps as a student, maybe more here.

**SEAN CORDELL:** Yeah, it is totally normal.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Stop. Right. OK, that was Sean's round. How well do you think Sean did in answering those questions. So we would like you to fill in on your widget, if you're in the watch only, how well you think he did. OK, and then we'll find out the answers to that. It is quite difficult, isn't it, having a boxing match. And our students are worried about a TMA. I mean, you guys, fair play. This is a lot more stressful, I think we'll agree.

**SEAN CORDELL:** I don't know about that, it depends.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Right, let's see what Sophie's doing. How are the bets going, Sophie?

**SOPHIE:** They're doing quite well. Everyone seems to be very involved. We're having some nice conversations about the artwork and things that I showed as well, people are happy with the big cats and things. So yes, fingers crossed, we're hoping for a good little match. But lots of people have been very happy with the *Student Hub Live* this week. They're really happy that they've all happened. You know, they're good for getting back into the OU mindset and back into study and things like that. So it seems like we've done a really good job and people are feeling a little bit more at ease at the moment, which is nice.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Hmm. Excellent, Sophie, thank you. Don't worry, Sean. I'm sorry. We had some problems with your microphone, and I'm really sorry about that. I think it was HJ tampering with the thing. And I think that could have impacted on your score, Sean. I think it's foul play, and don't do it again. Right. Don't worry, your turn next. OK. Managing your digital material, round two, Sean to HJ.

**SEAN CORDELL:** OK, first question.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Go.

**SEAN CORDELL:** Did you nobble my microphone? No, not so good.

**HJ:** No comment.

**SEAN CORDELL:** Actual question, OK. So what are some of the benefits of using social networking sites while

studying?

**HJ:** Interacting with other students like we are now and keeping up to date with what's happening with your subject area.

**SEAN CORDELL:** OK, good. What do we mean by digital presence or digital footprint?

**HJ:** Digital presence is like where you are online. So what other people see of you online, digital footprint is what you leave online. So blog posts, pictures of nights out that you'd rather not be on there perhaps.

**SEAN CORDELL:** Yes, yes. How can you keep up to date with your subject via social media, and how do you benefit from that?

**HJ:** Ooh, so keeping up with, like, Facebook pages. So social sciences Facebook pages, a lot of OU groups do. Twitter's a good one, following some of the OU academics and *Student Hub live* as well.

**SEAN CORDELL:** I like the sound of that.

**HJ:** So there's lots of different ways you can follow different groups and different blogs and things like that.

**SEAN CORDELL:** OK, and Helen had some top online employability tips. What were they?

**HJ:** Oh, um.

**SEAN CORDELL:** Or what were some of them?

**HJ:** I think she said you need to watch what you're putting online, so employers don't see those nights out. So you've got to, like, curate your profile, I think the word she used, and kind of separate out your personal and professional. So you might have a personal and professional Twitter and LinkedIn and all those sorts of things.

**SEAN CORDELL:** OK, good. Helen thought you should keep -

**KAREN FOLEY:** Quick, last minute.

**SEAN CORDELL:** You should keep certain things in mind when deciding to use online social tools while studying. What are they? Certain things to keep in mind.

**HJ:** Oh, um, oh, I don't know.

**KAREN FOLEY:** You're out of time.

**SEAN CORDELL:** Saved.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Well done. We've covered a lot.

**SEAN CORDELL:** Yeah. It's - yeah.

**KAREN FOLEY:** I didn't realise it was all so sensible, in between all the microwaving, the popcorn, the tea, the cakes. Yeah, quite -

**HJ:** We actually learned something.

**KAREN FOLEY:** We did, we did. How well, Sophie, did people think that HJ did?

**SOPHIE:** Very well.

**KAREN FOLEY:** And do they think he tampered with the microphones?

**SOPHIE:** They're very impressed. I think there is a little bit of ambiguity about what happened with the microphones there. I'm not sure they're so trusting anymore. But yeah, no, they're very impressed with how HJ did. Definitely.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Does that impact, then, on your betting?

**SOPHIE:** I've done very well. I don't care to say how well. But if I'm not here next week, it will be cardboard cutout Sophie.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yes, cardboard cutout was quite fun. OK, so that's good. So can we see in terms of what people are saying in terms of their votes for how well HJ did? Is the widget up there that they can vote on?

**SOPHIE:** It is - oh, no. No. Oh, I don't have access to it.

**KAREN FOLEY:** It's probably HJ. Removing it. He's got all sorts of technical capabilities. Although you can fix my computer, so I won't be too difficult. Right, OK, let's go now to session 3. OK. HJ is going to talk to Sean. And this time we're going to ask you to vote and we'll feed that in. Because I think the first one was a warm up, all right? Now we're going to score, from now on in. OK?

**SEAN CORDELL:** Yep.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yeah, don't look so scared.

**SEAN CORDELL:** Terrified.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Right, OK. Round three, time management. This is Susanne Schwezner's session.

**SEAN CORDELL:** Time management?

**KAREN FOLEY:** Yes, time management. Hang on, I've got to do the starting thing, otherwise it doesn't work. All right, ready, go.

**HJ:** OK, so what's one thing Susanne thinks we should remember about time management?

**SEAN CORDELL:** OK, that it seems obvious and we'll be able to do it. It's not obvious and it's not easy. And you should plan it and think about what's going to work best for you. Very important.

**HJ:** And what were Susanne's main strategies for time management?

**SEAN CORDELL:** Prioritise the tasks. Get the most, well, some of the boring ones and some of the sort of technical ones and mundane ones out of the way first, and then look at what needs doing and put them in order.

**HJ:** And Susanne suggested some tools we might use to time manage. Can you name some of them?

**SEAN CORDELL:** There's the obvious, the old school ones, which I use. There's wall planners, there's diaries, there's bits of paper, and there's post-it notes. But of course, nowadays there's all sorts of apps that will remind you when things need doing. There's even slightly old school Outlook calendar on your - on that thing.

**KAREN FOLEY:** On the computer?

**SEAN CORDELL:** Yeah. On the screen.

And again, whatever works for you. There may be different ways of doing it. And I'm making this bit up. I've run out of things.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Next question.

**HJ:** OK, is there anything extra Susanne thinks we should keep in mind while trying to time manage?

**SEAN CORDELL:** Yeah, always allow a little bit longer than you think, if that makes sense. So the initial task, you might think it's going to take an hour. Allow at least an hour and a half, just because contingencies, things go wrong, things happen. People get interrupted. And you need space to think, as well. Especially you. Things might take longer than you think to actually work out. You might have new ideas and so on. So allow some flexibility with your time.

**HJ:** So finally, what does Susanne suggest we do to help motivate us while planning and managing our time?

**SEAN CORDELL:** Keep a record of your achievements and what you've done. What's been successful and what's been not so successful.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Right, out of time. Thank you. OK, how well did you think Sean did at answering those questions? I thought you did very well. Susanne is very organised, though. She always puts me to shame. She comes in and she's got all these lovely lists, and it all seems so sensible. But let's see what everybody said then, in terms of things. OK. You are doing well, Sean. You are mainly on the excellent side. A couple of people saying poor. I think that might be Julia. She's a big fan of a HJ's. She said he didn't tamper with the microphones, he's too sweet. He's not, Julia. He may come across like that, but you should have seen the cake he managed to get off the table the other day. Oops, my spittoon.

**SEAN CORDELL:** Kick the bucket, don't you?

**KAREN FOLEY:** I know, it's all going downhill from here. Right, OK, so that was good. Next we've got Sean asking HJ. Right, we're doing now round four. Task planning and what to do first. This was a session with Sharon Davis.

**SEAN CORDELL:** It was. Before starting study, what are some things about ourselves that Sharon thinks we should think about?

**HJ:** So one of the main things is whether you're an owl or a lark. So she was saying about finding the best time to study. Just because sometimes we may think we're better, but we're actually not. So it's working that one out. What skills we may need to work on, I think that was another one. How we can improve those.

**SEAN CORDELL:** OK, what does Sharon think we should think about when we're deciding where to set up to study?

**HJ:** So what - I'm struggling here. What type of studier we are. So things like, do you like ambient noise, or do you like it dead silent. Do you work better in an area where there's lots of people around, or are you better on your own.

**SEAN CORDELL:** Good. It's good to know where you can find help while you're studying. So at the OU, give some examples of where you'd look for help for different kinds of help.

**HJ:** Oh, there's lots of help. So *Student Hub* as well, we answer all your questions, hopefully. Your tutor's one of the main ports of calls. Student support team can answer questions about finance and other things you might be struggling with. You have things like OUSA groups or disabled student groups, study groups. OUSA meetups may help. Talking to other students, that's the main thing. That's going to be my main answer.

**KAREN FOLEY:** All right, you're out of time. And of course the library and computing help desk.

**HJ:** I agree.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Perfect. All right, excellent. Let's see what you thought how well HJ did. I'm going to have to reduce the time, guys, because we're never going to get through all of this otherwise. Right, how do you think HJ did answering those questions? Oh, a lot of people think - ooh. All right, OK. So now we're going to go to making the most of the online learning environment. Right? Round five, HJ to Sean. Time starts now.

**HJ:** OK, so what are the key elements of the study planner?

**SEAN CORDELL:** It's a time scale, it's when you need to do what, it's got all of the resources you should need on it, it's got the forums on your module materials, any podcasts or accompanying materials, too.

**HJ:** So the modules have forums that you can use to collaborate and speak with other students. What are some things that Georgina said we should keep in mind when using them?

**SEAN CORDELL:** That there's always a time lag. They're asynchronous, as we call them. So there's a gap between when somebody may respond. Introduce yourself to other students. What else. There's no such thing as a kind of silly question. I mean, there probably is. But I know -

**KAREN FOLEY:** No.

**HJ:** I think he's philosophising again.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Oh, don't start. Quickly go on to the next one.

**HJ:** OK, so before we think too deeply, Georgina also showed us, talked about OU live tutorials and online tutorials. What are things that we need to remember about those?

**SEAN CORDELL:** OU Live, be aware that you need time to set it up, you need time to get used to the software, the interface, generally. You will get there, but there's always a bit of clicking on the first one. There's going to be a bit of time where you're getting used to it. But you can meet other students just as you would.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Right, and thank you. OK. Lovely. How did we feel Sean did? That was a good round. Lots to cover in Georgina's session. How well did you think Sean did at home? Let's see what you had to say. OK, you're still going well. A lot of people thought you were excellent. More people thought you were excellent than just good. So that's very good on our continuum. That's the most deep you're going to get, in terms of data interpretation, right here, right now. OK, so next. Sean to HJ. Making the most of an online environment with Mark Nichols.

**SEAN CORDELL:** OK, so what did Mark mean by online and digital?

**HJ:** Oh, OK. So digital is like the tools you use to get online. So it's an extension of it. And I think, like I'm finding it hard now, he said it's hard to separate them both.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Here, spit.

**SEAN CORDELL:** Yeah, that sounds right. OK, what are the three main ways online and digital tools can assist us in learning?

**HJ:** So it's about access to information, processing information, and discussing information.

**SEAN CORDELL:** OK. What tips did Mark have for improving technology skills?

**HJ:** He said if you're a beginner, try and get the basic set up. So how to use your module websites and maybe some word processing for getting your assignments. If you're more advanced, he said, play around with the tools you already have for more advanced features, and try out some new stuff as well.

**SEAN CORDELL:** Excellent. What tips did Mark have - sorry. Mark had two sets of skills he thinks everyone needs to study online. So what are they?

**HJ:** Ooh. Uh -

**KAREN FOLEY:** End of time. Right, sorry. OK, how well did we think HJ did? This was the last question, because we're out of time now. You'll both be very pleased to know. So how well did you think HJ did at answering that question? OK, good. Lots of people saying excellent.

**HJ:** Oh, I didn't even think I did that well.

**KAREN FOLEY:** No, you did. You did very well. This is very difficult. So now I'd like to ask you at home who you thought the winner was. All right, we need to decide on a winner and I'm not doing that. So I think you can have a vote, those of you who are in the watch and engage. So let us know who you thought the winner was, and then we can announce them. I'd also like to know what you thought about our session this week.

So do you think a metaphorical boxing match with a philosopher is a better way of doing things than a TMA? I mean, I can tell you right now, it's not going to happen. But just as an idea, do you think it's better? Or would you rather go and do a TMA. I'd like to know what you - yeah, I know. I've tried. I'd like to know what you've most enjoyed about the boot camp, to what extent you feel ready for studying, and three words to describe your experience of the session. And while you're doing that, I just want to go to Sophie. How are you doing? Did you win?

**SOPHIE:** Yes. I've done very well. Cleared up, so I'll be off soon. But no, yes, so everyone's actually been talking about their study space at the moment and whether they like to study in sort of a quiet environment or with some music or things like that. And actually, nobody's mentioned that they like the boxing in on the background, I'm afraid. So it's more of a music or a quiet. Boxing doesn't really work. But it does look like, from the little widget, that HJ's done quite well with the boxing. I'll say that way it's off in his favour.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Well, we'll go with the audience consensus and announce HJ the winner. Well done. I think just because you've been here, everyone's very fond of you. Don't worry, Sean. You can come back again next time.

**SEAN CORDELL:** OK.

**KAREN FOLEY:** So thank you very much for watching. I hope you found this session useful. Today we've had

Jonquil Lowes talking about finding, reading, and planning your TMA. We've had Jayne Horne from the computing help desk talking about formatting and submitting your TMA. Peter Taylor was talking about expectations and feedback. And then we had Katherine Moore from the library about where to go for help. And our very, very good sport Sean Cordell from the philosophy department, and HJ involved in our boxing match.

So thank you for coming. We've got some resources on the website that you might find useful. That feedback button as well, as we know, feedback is very, very important. And we like ours, too, so please spend a minute to fill that in and let us know what you thought about the session. There's also a count me in button on the website, so you can give us your email address and then we'll tell you when our next event is on.

I'm going to tell you right now though, it's on at like 7 o'clock tonight. Because tonight we are starting the Freshers' Fair, and we're going to have our Wheel of Ologies quiz, which is fabulous. And you can play along our studio panels here. So that will be really, really good fun. And then I'm going to talk to Hazel Rymer, who's doing our Be an Ologist session, being an ologist. And she's going to tell us about being a vulcanologist. Which is really, really exciting, Volcanoes. Right, let's see who the final winner was in terms of the votes that we've had counted. OK, 65% - OK, let's have a drum roll, please. 65% to HJ. Excellent, well done.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Sorry, Sean, that means 35% to you. But as we know, these numerical figures don't really mean much, and it's all about the feedback that really matters and taking that all on board. So thank you. There. So thank you both for being such good sports.

**SEAN CORDELL:** No worries.

**KAREN FOLEY:** OK, so is there anything else, Sophie, that you'd like to feed in before we go off air temporarily for the next few hours?

**SOPHIE:** Not really. Just a look at the widgets already, people have got some really positive feedback on these sessions and everyone seems to have really enjoyed them and they've really helped. And it's been lovely being here, it's been a really good couple of hour sessions. We've really liked it. All the catch up is obviously on the website. And if we haven't managed to answer any of your questions, please do drop us an email, [studenthub@open.ac.uk](mailto:studenthub@open.ac.uk), and we'll try and get those answered as soon as possible. So thank you very much.

**KAREN FOLEY:** Aw. And thank you, Sophie and HJ, on the hot desk. You've been absolutely brilliant. Well, 68% of you said that a metaphorical boxing match was better than a TMA. I'm afraid maybe watching it was, but I'm afraid, as I said, we cannot organise that. You're all going to have to do your assignments. But at least you know now how to do them and where to find them. And I hope you feel a lot more geared up for getting ready for your study. We've asked some questions as well to see how you feel about that. So I'd like to know whether you feel a little bit more ready for that, and some words to describe your experience of this session. If you can't think of three, then just put an X there as well so that we can at least get the few words that you are able to add in there.

But it's been a really, really good session. Like I say, we'll be back this evening for our Freshers' Fair. And then for the next couple of days where we have a whole range of activities. We'll also be playing some of the catch up from this boot camp, so you can look at the writing and note taking if you missed it. But what will be nice about that is that we'll have the chat open. And chatting is a really important part of coming to the *Student Hub Live* so you can chat with others as you watch those sessions in the afternoon. So check out the website and see the programme that we've got lined up this whole week, pretty much. Except for Friday, so there's something on every day in the daytime and the evening. We hope you can come.

If you've enjoyed it, please tell people on your forums, if you're set up for those. There are various welcome forums that are around at the moment. So tell everybody, get your friends along, anybody can join and everybody is welcome. So please do come along and join us. I hope you've enjoyed it. As I said, do leave your feedback. I'll be here tonight, so I hope to see a lot of you then. And if you have missed this session, then I hope you can watch it on the catch up as well. Anyway, that's all from us here at the *Student Hub Live*. We will see you very, very soon. And thank you to everybody for watching and for being involved. Bye for now.

[MUSIC PLAYING]