

[MUSIC PLAYING]

KAREN FOLEY: 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 open 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 and 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. 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.

If you save it somewhere else, that's absolutely fine. 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 TMA 1 final, or to send, or 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'll 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.

KAREN FOLEY: So 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. 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 of 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 you can check you've read it.

JAYNE HORNE: Exactly. Yeah.

KAREN FOLEY: 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: Yeah. I know on 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.

JAYNE HORNE: So then you get this page. It's more steps. [CHUCKLES] 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 it 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 saved it. So if you saved it to your desktop, that'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.

KAREN FOLEY: Yes.

JAYNE HORNE: 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 receipt 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've 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?

JAYNE HORNE: They do, but they can be delayed. If there's 1,000 TMAs going through at the same time, obviously, it's going to take a bit of time for those emails to go around. So just make a note of it just in case. You will get an email, as well, but -

KAREN FOLEY: Good.

JAYNE HORNE: Yeah. And you can find it again, as I say, if you go back to the online TMA EMA services 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's 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. Lee Christie says he never reads these boxes that come up. Tut tut, Lee, I wonder if you submit them all on 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.

[LAUGHTER]

JAYNE HORNE: 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 and 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 [GRUNT] let's get out of this. And discard the changes. That is where most of the time students have used something like Pages for Mac, they have used OpenOffice or they've used LibreOffice.

KAREN FOLEY: I meant to ask you about Macs.

JAYNE HORNE: Yes.

KAREN FOLEY: 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: Great.

JAYNE HORNE: 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 do. Anyone got any questions, ask. Ask now.

JAYNE HORNE: Yeah. And -

KAREN FOLEY: 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 your file. It's fine. All you need to do is save it in one of the accepted formats. And that's 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. Oh, Document Recovery. That's nice. All right, we'll do it 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!

[LAUGHTER]

JAYNE HORNE: Look, there's a TMA01 there. So you've got your file name. To change the type, you've got a drop-down menu just underneath the name. You click that.

KAREN FOLEY: Brilliant.

JAYNE HORNE: Yep, and it's there. And you're just looking for -

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

JAYNE HORNE: 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.

JAYNE HORNE: Yeah.

KAREN FOLEY: Excellent.

JAYNE HORNE: Yep.

KAREN FOLEY: 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 eight cat pictures, do they? Per TMA.

[LAUGHTER]

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 you 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, you can have -

KAREN FOLEY: What is the file size?

JAYNE HORNE: File size is how much memory it takes up. So I saved them here.

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

JAYNE HORNE: 10.

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

JAYNE HORNE: It got 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.

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 JPEG. 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. And 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 need to do 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 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: So you just highlighted them.

JAYNE HORNE: Yep, right click. Send To, and then you've got it nicely across there.

KAREN FOLEY: Brilliant.

JAYNE HORNE: Compress It folder. That's all you need to do.

KAREN FOLEY: Perfect. And then they're both in there.

JAYNE HORNE: And then they are.

KAREN FOLEY: And then they 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, 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 7-Zip that you've got installed. 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. 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, I can't submit my TMA. And we'll be running around going 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: 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. 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. 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: So the computing help desk, then, what time are you 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 till 9:30 PM. Weekends, it's 9:00 till 5:00, so 9:00 in the morning till 5:00 in the evening. The kind of help that we give is to do with OU software 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 how to do your TMA, we won't have a clue. And then if you're having general login problems, say 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: It's going well. We've got lots of tips and different things coming through. Some people are saying they've 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 options 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 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? [LAUGHS] So probably a few more times than is necessary. But Siobhan's giving us an 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.

HJ: I had a hard drive my first year. But 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 backups, I think. That's one thing that we got from this.

But yeah, people have 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 I used to go to Portsmouth quite a lot. So it's quite nice. And that's his study space there, as well. So couple of study spaces coming in, which are really nice.

HJ: Yeah Amy's sent in her 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'll get back to you and we have stuff to send back to you, as well, because it's only fair. But yes, send us stuff in [@studenthublive](https://twitter.com/studenthublive) through Twitter or studenthub@open.ac.uk and we'll -

SOPHIE: Please try remember, too, send us your address, as well, so that we have somewhere to post them to and can help.

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

HJ: So we had the - what's this one, the trains? Trauma and emergency and I really - this is my

favourite out of today. This is a big poster.

SOPHIE: This is a mistake. I'm sorry. This is -

HJ: So I really like this poster, so this is my favourite of today.

SOPHIE: Yes.

HJ: But what else have we got?

SOPHIE: Oh, we've got Darth Vader, here from Katie. Her study buddy.

KAREN FOLEY: Aw.

SOPHIE: 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.

[LAUGHTER]

HJ: And Robert seems to be in a trend of baking cakes for each of these boot camps. So these look very good today. So 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, shouldn't I? Yeah. I'll think of that next time.

SOPHIE: See what I can do.

HJ: But and then Justina's - she's got a treat. And she says an interesting chocolate bar, and we have to say the name. It's quite interesting.

[LAUGHTER]

SOPHIE: There's only one?

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

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.

KAREN FOLEY: Aw, no it's lovely seeing everyone's pictures coming through and all the study buddies and things. And we put them up on our board and it makes 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. 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. Or you might want to put your pet or your cake there, either, as well.

[MUSIC PLAYING]