

Pre session polls

What level of study are you?

- Access
- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
- Postgraduate

What would you consider is your main area of study?

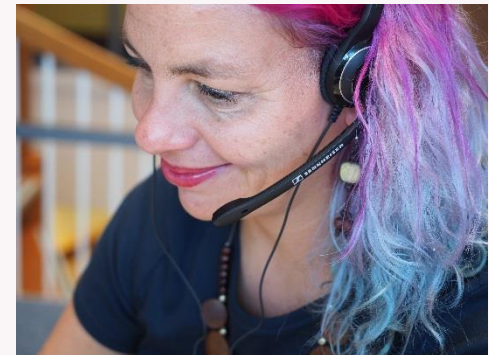
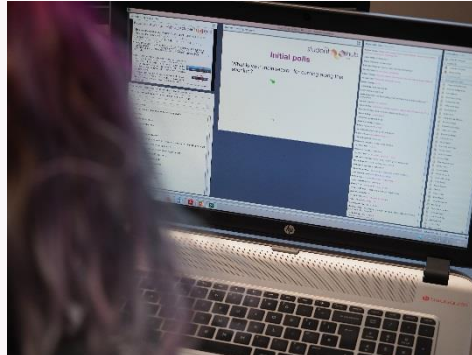
- Arts
- Languages (English & other)
- Social sciences
- Business and law
- Science
- Engineering or technology
- Maths
- Health sciences
- Education
- Sports
- OTHER

Have you been to any student hub live online events before?

- No (I'm brand new!)
- No (but have listened to one or more recordings)
- No (didn't have time)
- No (wasn't aware of before now)
- Yes this academic year (2019 since September)
- Yes last academic year (2019 up to August)
- Yes previous year (any 2018)
- Yes other

What are student hub live online sessions?

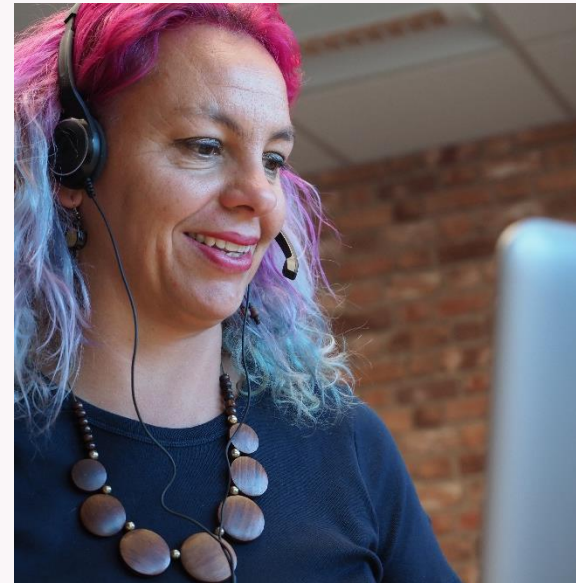
- All student hub live sessions are non modular and focus on skills relevant to study at university level
- Polls are anonymous to other participants but the chat box will have your logged in name associated with your comments
- All online sessions are recorded and available to view on catch up on a public facing website. *Small group discussions are not recorded.*
- Slides are available at the end of the session and from the main website



student hub live is the OU's live online interactive platform to support academic community



Karen Foley is a lecturer at the OU, head of student hub live and chairs Y032. She also tutors in social sciences, psychology and science.



Isabella Henman is an essay writing aficionado and skills trainer. She tutors in science and health sciences at Access to level 2.

Initial polls

What is your main reason for coming along this evening?

(If you are on a mobile device remember you need to tap into the polling option)



To come back to these slides after completing a poll click on the share pod slides icon



Essay planning

This was our advert...

This workshop will focus on essay planning. It is aimed at those already planning but maybe not doing themselves justice with that planning. It will look at how to ensure the essay is aligned with what is being asked for and including the critical information.

Workshop

- This is going to be a structured workshop to help you get thinking
- We'll look at what is meant by essay planning, including some different styles and methods, as well as key points for what needs to be included
- Then we'll give some tutor advice
- You'll also get the chance to discuss things with others in a small group

Session purpose

- **Is for:**
- Covering the basics of essay planning
- Give some guidance about ways to plan effectively
- Provide a space to share ideas and connect with other students
- **Is not for:**
- Telling you what you HAVE to do
- Providing any module specific advice

First thoughts

- How many academic essays have you written in the last year?
 - None
 - One
 - Two
 - Three
 - Four or more

Academic essays

- Have their own style!
- Are a way of helping you to communicate your understanding in a specific way and structure
- Do take practice!

Emotions of essays polls

- What grade are you hoping to achieve for your next essay?
 - 85%+ (pass level 1)
 - 70%+ (pass level 2)
 - 55%+ (pass level 3)
 - 40%+ (pass level 4)

- What is my emotional feeling about this essay?
 - Loving it
 - Enjoying it mostly
 - Topic OK but just want to get it over
 - Absolutely hate everything about it

What do we mean by planning?

- A plan is a road map of what you intend to do. It helps you to know what you intend to do and allows you to know whether you have done this
- The format of that road map is up to you
- You can also think of it as a recipe which makes it clear what is going to go into the essay and the order

Planning poll

Have you had to write an essay plan before?

- yes
- no

Planning Q&A

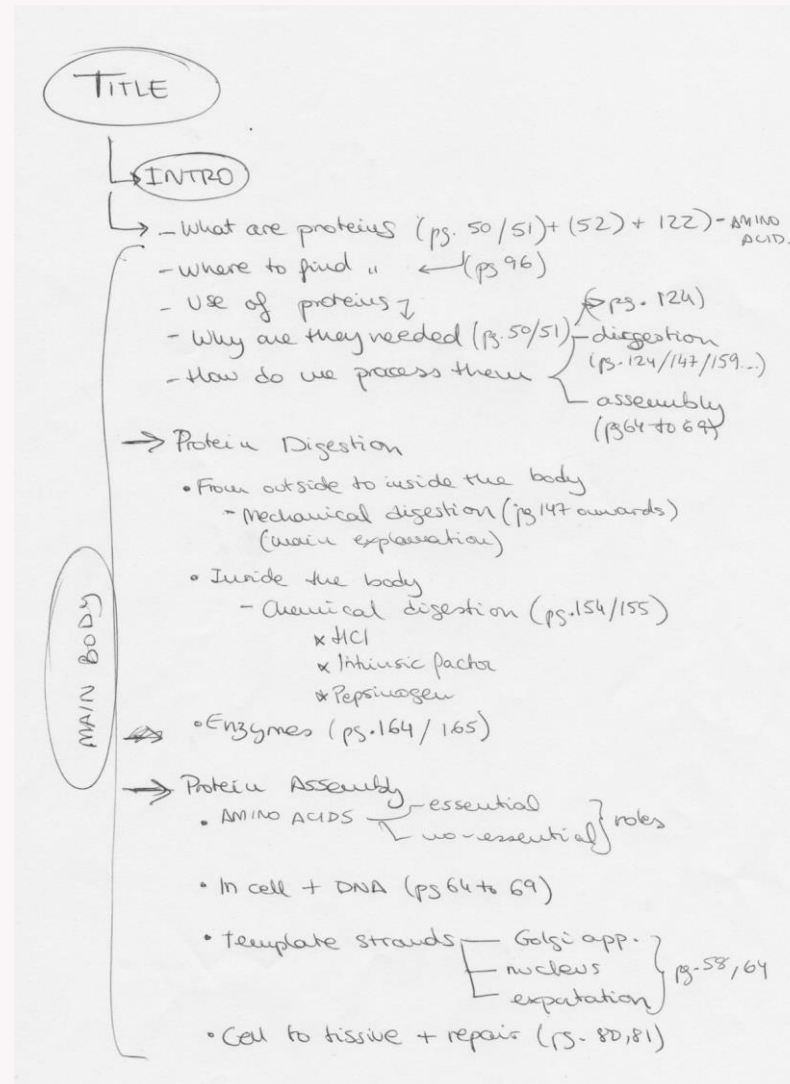
- Please suggest in the short answer poll pod available what type of plans you can think of. (here think about the style of plans you might be aware of – don't worry if you don't know but do look at other suggestions)

Types of plan

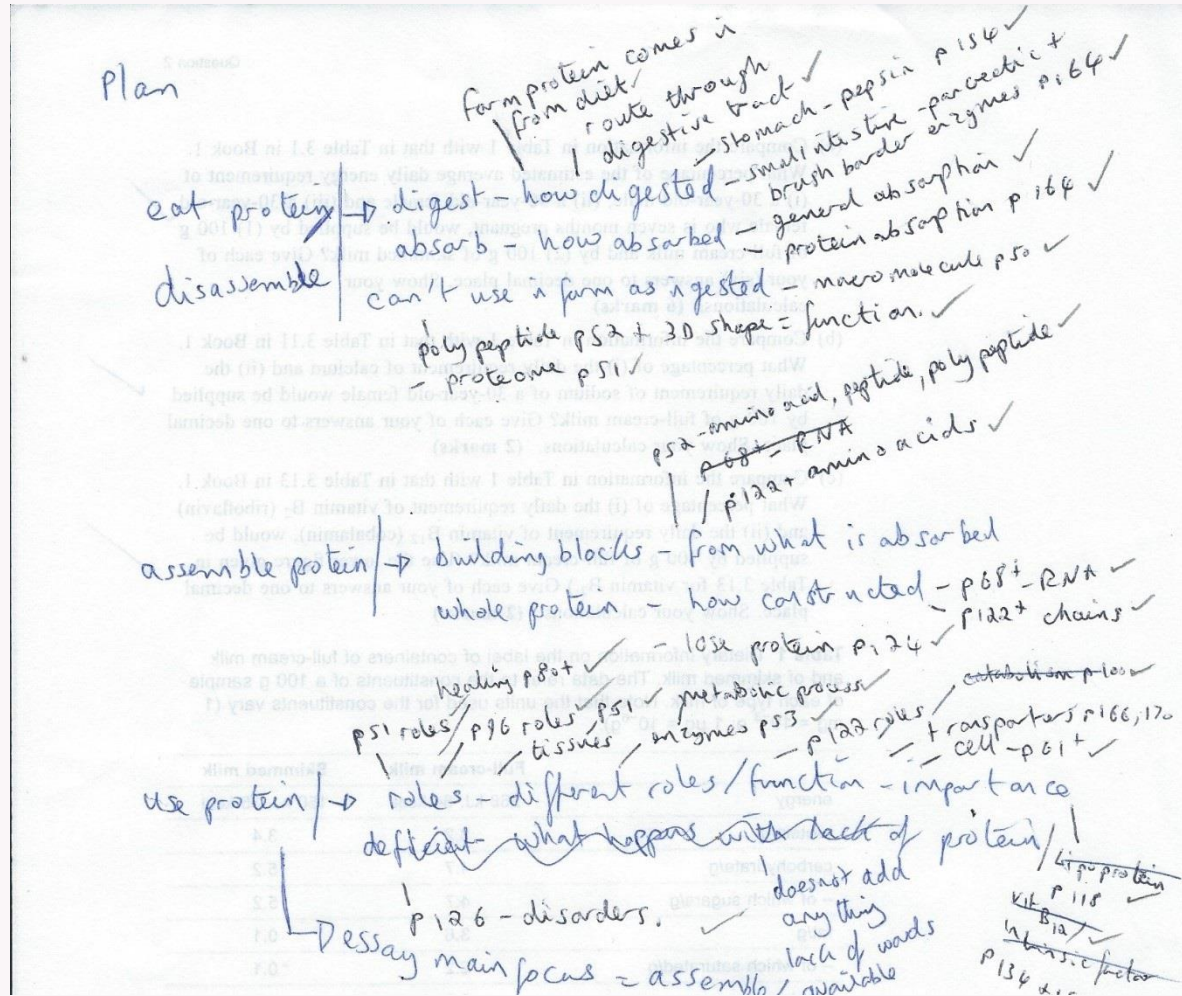
- Simple list
- Series of relevant page numbers / topics
- Mind map
- Spider diagram

(examples to follow)

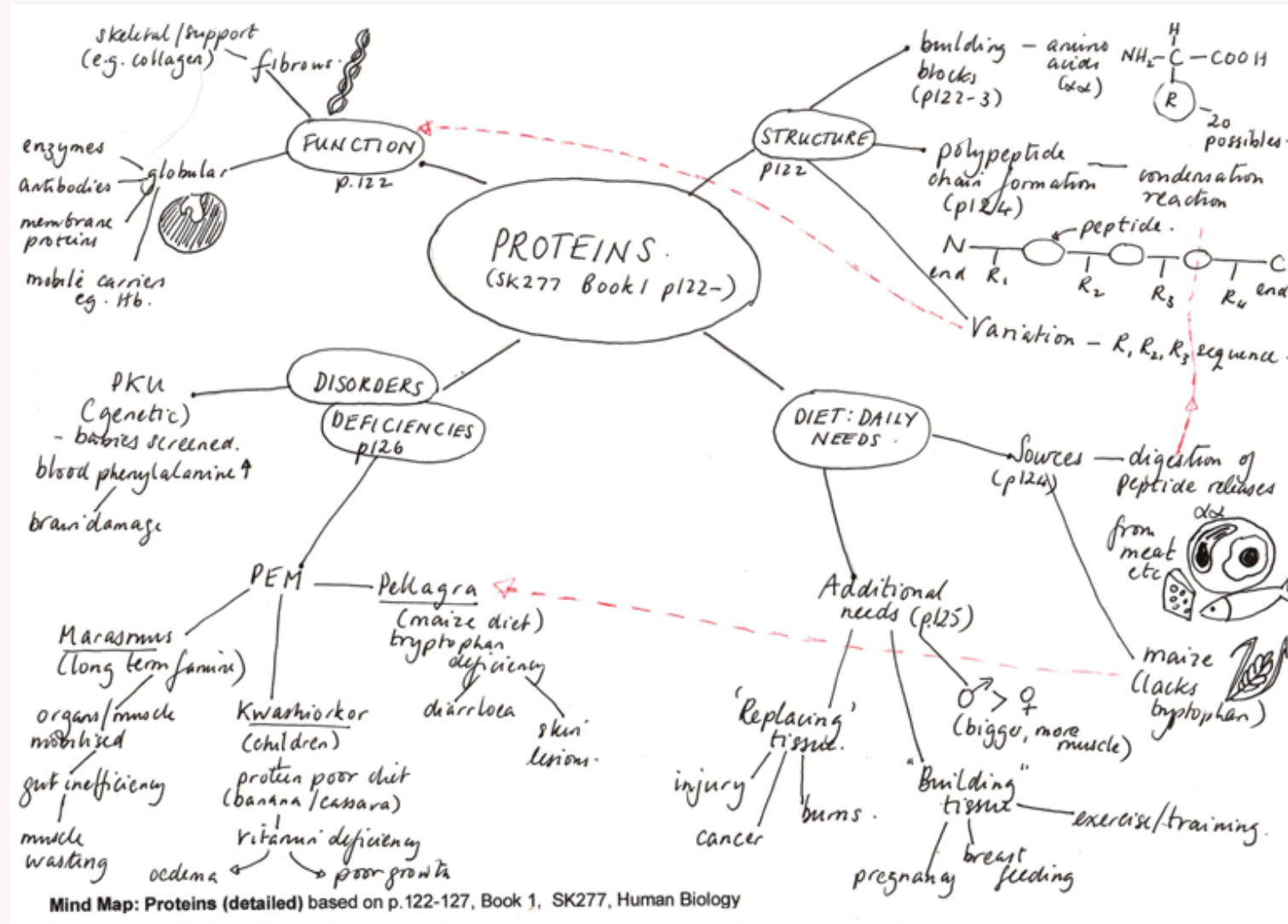
List style plan



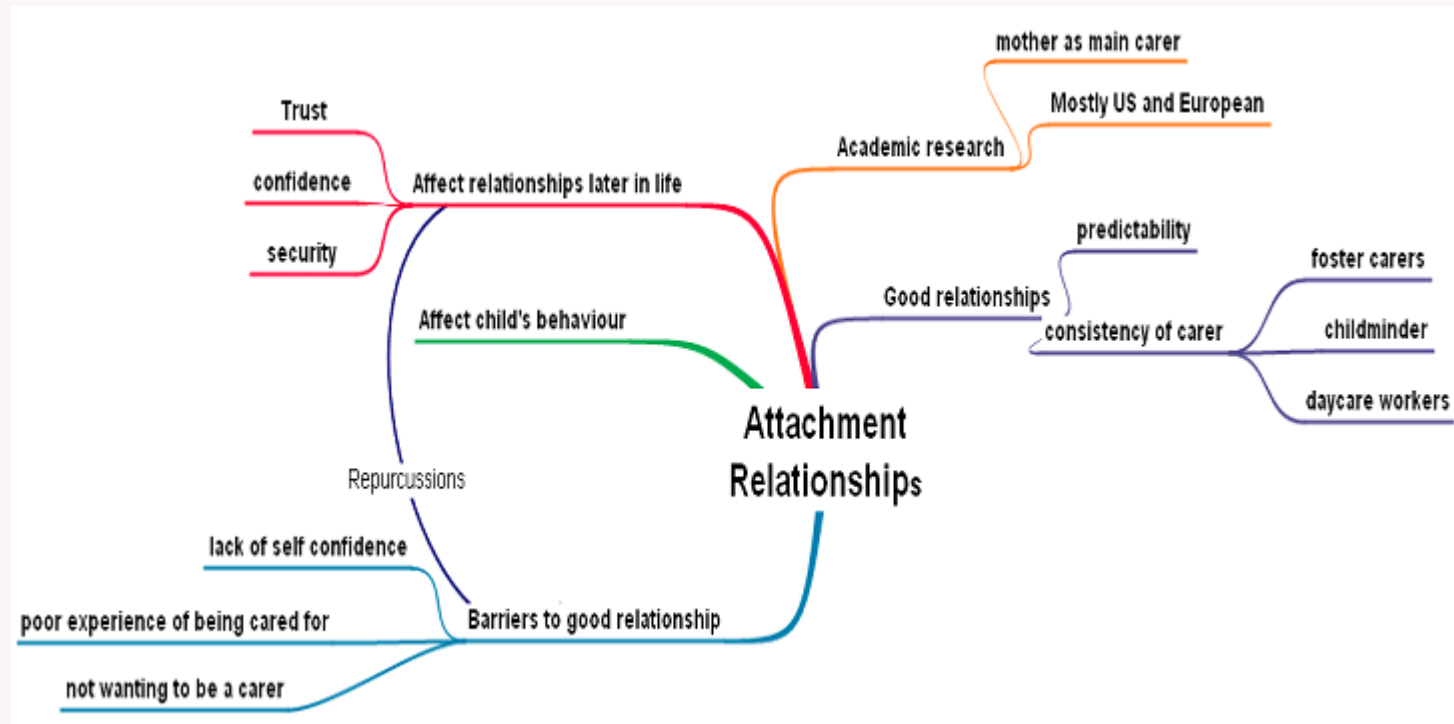
List style plan



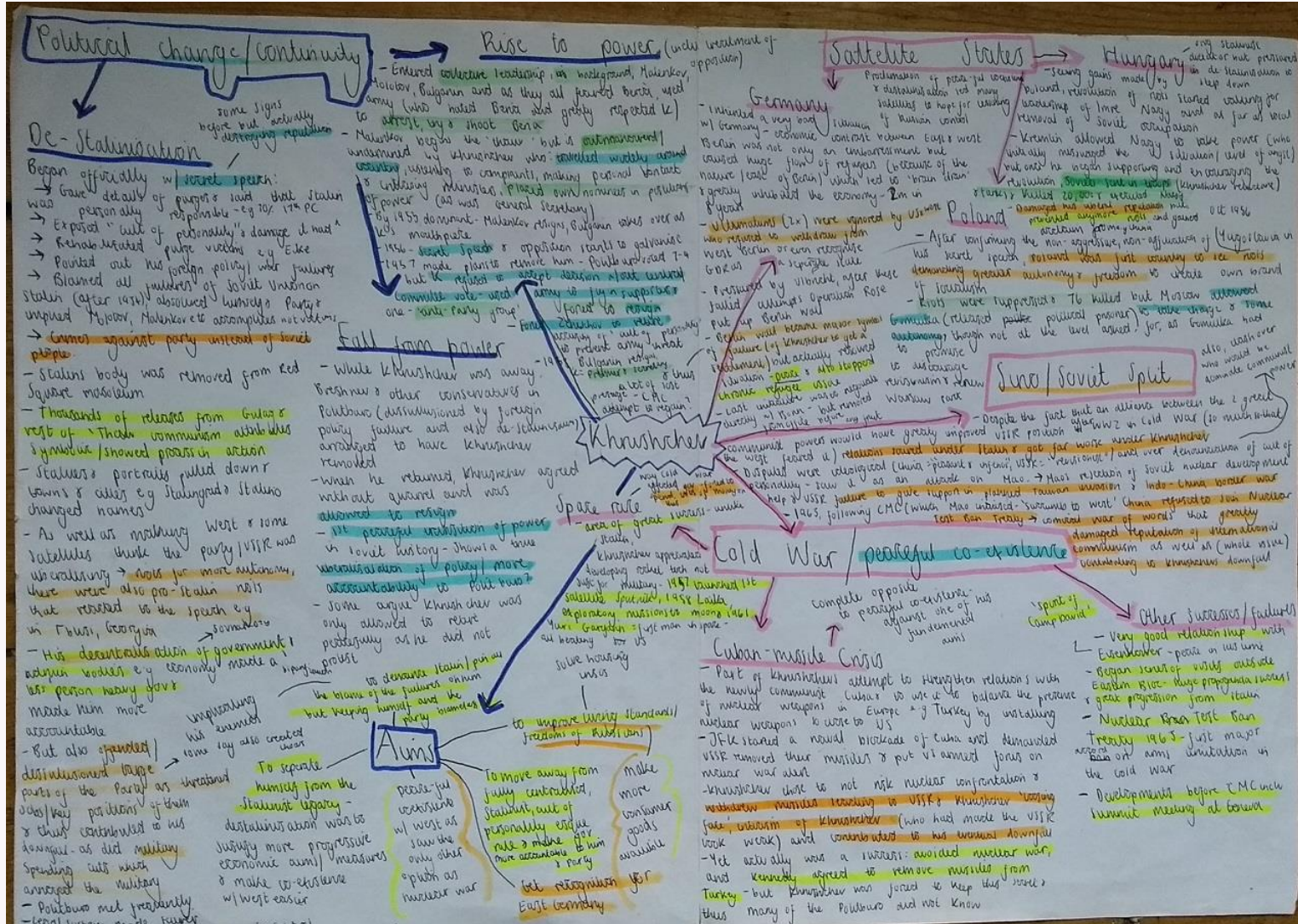
Hand drawn mind map



Computer generated mind map



Very detailed mind map!



Shopping list

- Do you use a shopping list when you go food shopping?
 - Yes
 - No
- Why do you / don't you use a list? Please give some of your reasons in the short answer poll pod provided

Shopping lists

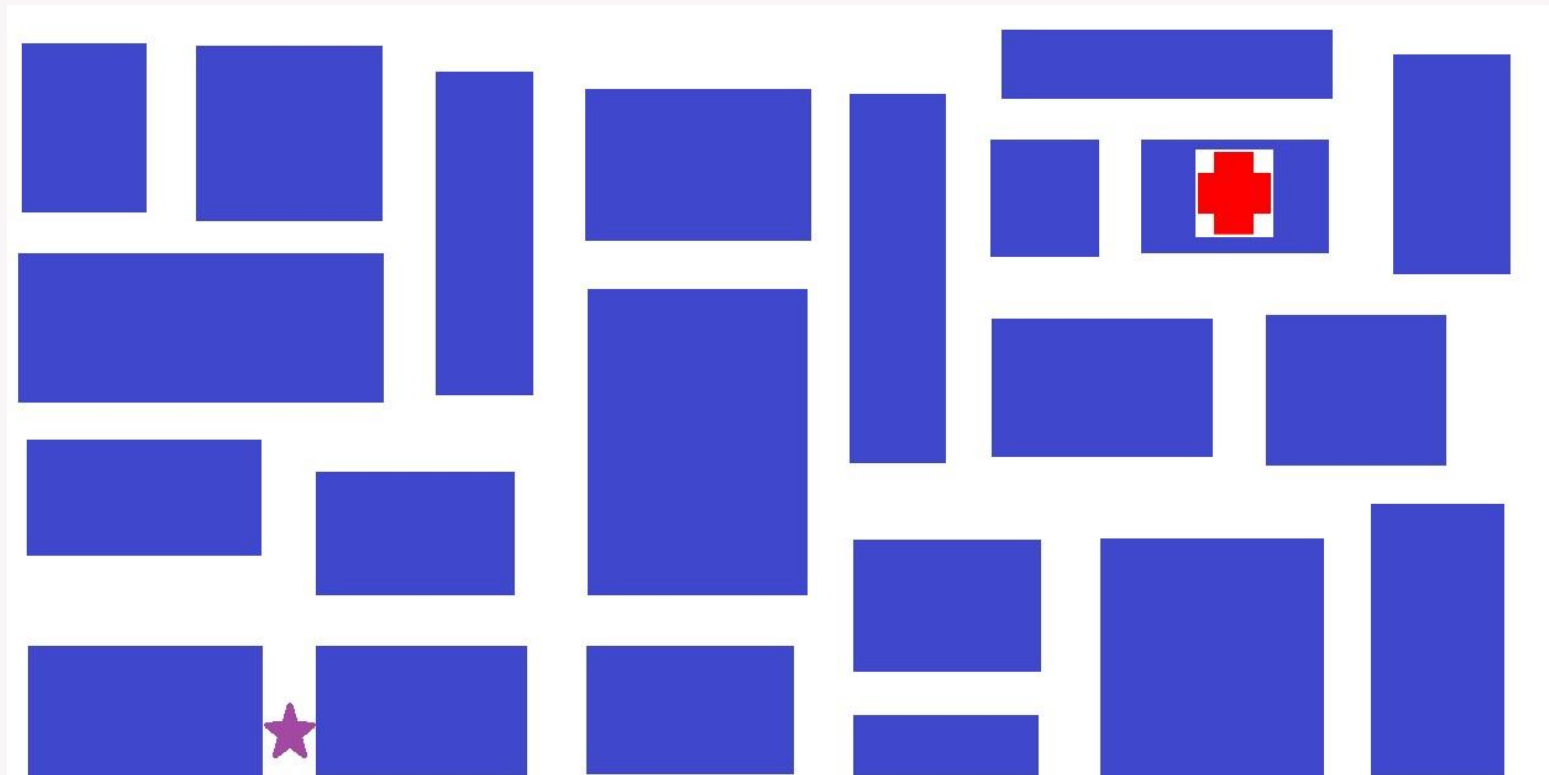
- Are often an aide memoire and by writing 'bread', 'butter', 'chocolate' you know what you mean by that and what brand / size you are looking for
- Your own essay plan can also be this, but you need to think about whether it is enough information for it to be clear to someone else picking it up. Fine not to have 'brands' etc but is there enough information for it to be clear overall? E.g. 'sandwich things' could mean all sorts. Likewise 'evidence for point' in a plan could be highly variable

Why plan?

- It allows you to structure your work and know what you need to do.
- It also ensures you cover all parts of the question.
- It saves time in the long run randomly writing information that isn't relevant.
- But... plans can change and don't have to be perfect.

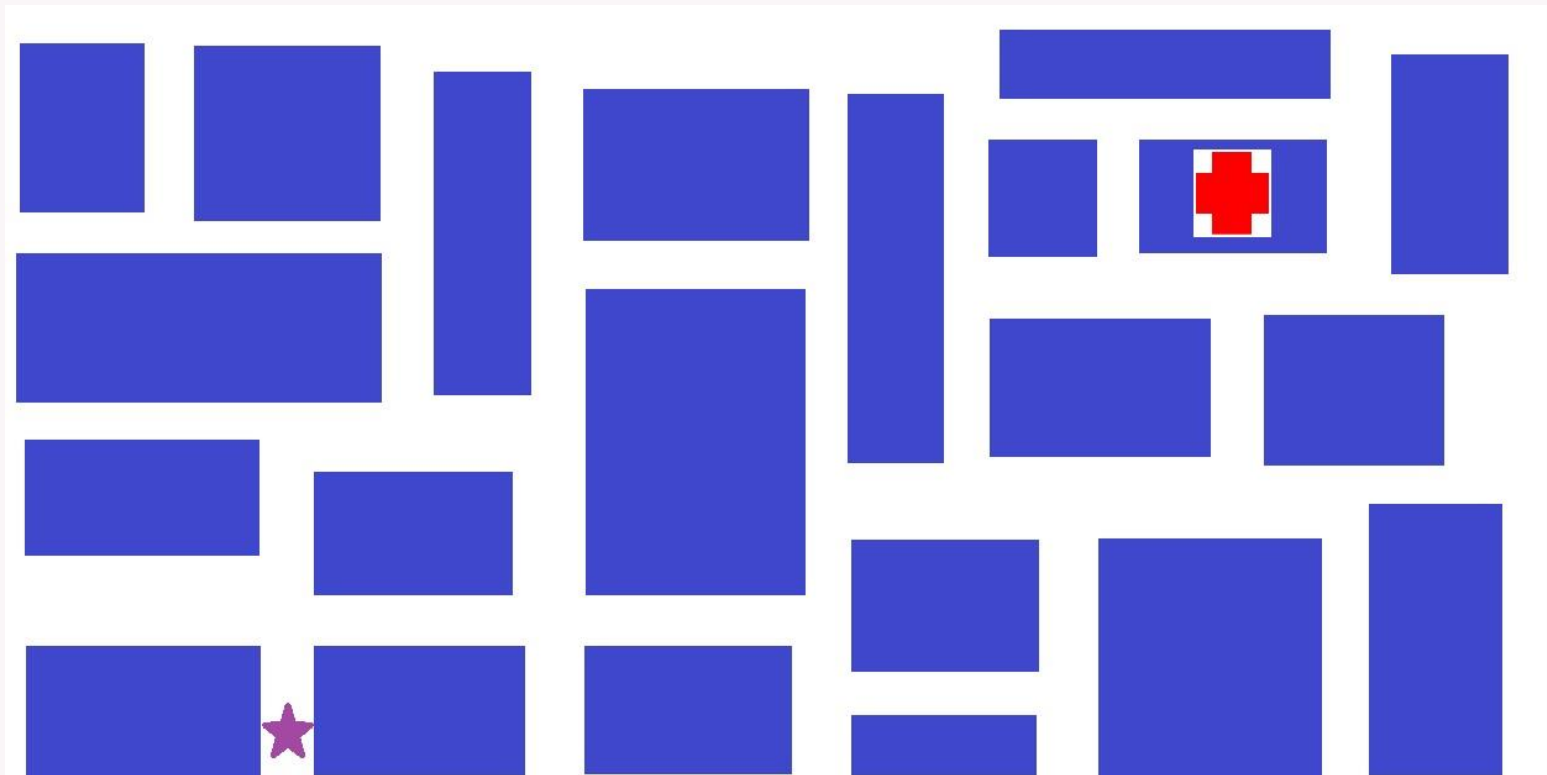
Activity

Look at this simple road map and look whether you can find a route from the purple star to the red cross using the white roads only (blue blocks are buildings).



Activity

Now think about anything that might affect the route taken. Please use the polling pod provided to suggest any ideas



What was the point?

- The idea was to show that there are lots of different ways to get from the start to the finish so you have to think about which you are going to take
- However not all ways are logical – and that is important for essay writing

Structuring

- This may come within the plan itself but it is important to think carefully about how you will structure your essay.
- Broadly speaking the allocation is as follows:
 - Introduction is ~10-15% of words
 - Content (body) is ~75-80%
 - Conclusion is ~10-15%

Plan like a recipe

- A plan can be thought of like a recipe as well – when you first start out you need highly detailed instructions but in time you learn more about what is meant
- Cooking with mother books compared to Delia / Jamie / Nigella / Whoever

Get active!

The earlier activity involved 'movement' e.g. action & a plan has to be active:

- HOW will you answer the question?
- What is the AIM of your essay?
- How does the information you are including relate to the topic – not just because a word search or the suggested areas to look has revealed it as relevant – WHY is it relevant?

Answer the question

- It helps to know what the question is for your essay then you know what you are answering, and if you have achieved that.
- So, as we said in the understanding assessment session – sometimes it helps to operationalise the task and create a question that you can answer.
- Be careful though to not change the meaning if you do this.
- More in the recording / slides from understand assessment that was run on October 9th.

Information polls

What level of study are you?

- Access
- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
- Postgraduate

Are you currently...? (please choose the one that is closest)

- Brand new to OU study
- Have done at least one previous OU module (in last few years)
- Have done at least one previous OU module (many years ago)

Have you been to any student hub live online events before?

- No (I'm brand new!)
- No (but have listened to one or more recording)
- No (didn't have time)
- No (wasn't aware of before now)
- Yes this academic year (2019 since September)
- Yes last academic year (2019 up to August)
- Yes previous year (any 2018)
- Yes other

Discussion activity

- Discuss with your group how you could put what you have learnt about planning into practice.
- Please bring back a few points that you can share with the rest of the group
- You do not have to speak on mic if you don't want to but please do interact with your group using the chat option

Useful points for breakouts

- We suggest you use the first couple of minutes to introduce yourselves and get used to the room. Choose a volunteer to keep the discussion on track and feed back to the main room
- Remember to activate your microphone to speak as per the instructions given.
- Breakout groups work best if people engage and contribute and discuss
- There will be ~10 minutes for the breakouts overall – we'll send regular reminders to let you know how long you have got left

Remember to check the number of the room you are in (shows at top of chat pod as “chat x breakout y”) in case of connection issues and for bringing back information.



Breakout activity

- Discuss with your group how you could put what you have learnt about planning into practice.
- You could discuss which type of plan you prefer or how to make the plan active.
- You do not have to speak on mic if you don't want to but please do interact with your group using the chat option

This session is currently in breakouts (small groups).

If you are part of this group and have had connection issues please let us know your room
If you are just arriving in this room and are not part of this live session then please log in at the advertised room opening time to take part (15 mins prior to advertised session time).

So....

- What can people share from their sessions?

A plan is better than...

- A shopping list – this is simply a static list
- A recipe – this says what but not how or why

You don't need all the details in the plan but need a clear idea about what you are hoping to achieve in the essay

Otherwise how will you know whether you have achieved the aim?

Take home message

- Effective essays are planned so that you have a clear idea of what you are going to do and can then know how to achieve that
- Any plan needs to have enough information for you or someone else with a reasonable grasp of the content to pick up and be clear on what is intended

Final polls

What do you feel is the main thing you will take away from this evening?

What are you going to do as a result of this evening's session?

Which of the following elements of tonight's session did you find useful?

- Tutor led explanation
- Opportunity to chat in text chat box
- Opportunity to suggest ideas in polls
- Opportunity to read ideas suggested in polls
- Breakout room (discussion with / learning from other students)
- Breakout activity (reflecting on the concepts in more detail)
- Any other aspect (please give details in chat)

Upcoming sessions

20th November 7pm Essay writing
27th November 7pm Learning from your first
assessment
11th December 7pm Time Management

Details and booking information from <http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/>

This session's slides are available to download from the link provided. Click on the title then download file and it will download to wherever downloads go on your own computer

Past student hub live online sessions [here](#)

Visit us at <http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/>

and subscribe for events as they are
announced

Send us feedback at

studenthub@open.ac.uk

View past (live) recordings on

www.youtube.com/thestudenthublive

