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KAREN FOLEY: Hello, and welcome to the Student Hub Live. My name's Karen Foley. And I'll be hosting the next five hours of a ram-packed interactive programme that we've got lined up especially for you all about results and progression. So welcome to our studio. You've probably logged on from our new website. We've been doing lots of work behind the scenes. And we're at the Open University in Walton Hall today, on the 31st of August.

Now, we've got a great line up of sessions for you, which you can check out on the website. That's StudentHubLive.open.ac.uk. And you can say that we're going to be starting with results, and implications, and next steps. We'll be talking you through registration, study intensity, and time planning, developing your skills as an online learner. And then, we've got sessions about each level that you'll be progressing from, so Year 1 to 2, Level 1 to 2, and so on and so forth. And then, ending the afternoon, we've got some sessions on assessment banking and also resits and resubmissions, so hopefully, something there of value for you throughout the day.

Now, it's a long programme. You can sit there for the whole five hours like I will be. Or you can drop in and out as you would like to. So simply come and engage with us when it suits you. Or you can leave when you want to as well. The sessions will be available very shortly afterwards on Catch Up. So you can rewatch any sessions that you may have missed. And also, you'll see on our YouTube channel there's lots and lots of other content that can be really useful over the summer, as you're starting to prepare for your next module.

Now, there's a Watch and Engage option, which I hope that a lot of you are in. You can just sign into that using your OUCU, your Open University Computer Username. And if you don't have one of those, you can look at the Frequently Asked Questions section on the website and get one very quickly and easily. Or you can watch on the live stream. And there's also a Chat option there. So you can add any comments as you would like to. We're following Twitter. And our hashtag is #StudentHubLive17. Our handle is @StudentHubLive. And you can also email us, StudentHub@open.ac.uk, so plenty of ways for you to have all your questions answered.

Now, to help facilitate and answer all those questions, we have on our hot desk just today HJ, because Sophie is off on holiday. So HJ, how are you, busy typing away?

HJ: Busy typing away, yes. And sometimes, it can go bit quick. So it's always worth remembering that pin, especially because I'm on my own today. But yes, no, it's all going well. And we've got lots of people in the chat.

KAREN FOLEY: Brilliant. And don't forget as well, there's a different range of interfaces. So on the bottom right-hand side of the screen, if you'd like the chat to be larger or smaller, you can just have a play around with that and choose the window that suits you. And as HJ says, there's the Pin button. So who's in the chat? I've seen lots of familiar faces.

HJ: Well, we've got a lot of early risers. Because for me, 10 o'clock is usually no good. But Siobhan's here, Dave, a lot of people got their results. So Kate's got her results, preparing for her next module, so lots of great sessions today. Gail's doing an EMA on AA100 about leisure on the seaside, which sounds fantastic. So maybe she'll go and do some experimentation, get some experience first. That sounds good. Shirley's joined us for the first time, which is fantastic. And Libby's passed her module and is preparing for next year as well. So I'm sure we've got loads of sessions that everyone's said they're really looking forward to and should be helpful to do. So yeah, we're good.

KAREN FOLEY: Excellent. Well, welcome those of you who are coming for the first time. You'll see some widgets, if you're in the Watch and Engage option. And you can tell us if you've come to one of the sessions before. You can tell us where you are. You can tell us how you're feeling right now. So just press on the widget that you'd like to tell us the results to, enter what applies. And if it's one of the things ones that have three options, you need to put three things or they won't send. So if you can't think of anything, just put a full stop in, and then press Send. And it will submit your results. And we'll be able to then get a good capture of who's out there at the moment.

Right, I think that's everything covered for the minute. I shall leave you to chat and welcome our first guests. So today, we have the wonderful Georgina Blakeley and Matt Staples on the sofa. Thank you for coming back.

GEORGINA You're welcome.

BLAKELEY:

KAREN FOLEY: Georgina, you're the Director of Teaching and Social Sciences. And Matt, you're the Chair of DD102, Introducing the Social Sciences. Now, this session is all about results, implications,

and next steps. I mean, it's a huge thing for people, getting their results.

MATT STAPLES: No, it is. It's a combination of a year's worth of study for most of our students. They've often put their heart and soul into it. And it's a time to pause, really, and think about the result, and think about the implications of the result as well. It's a good time to pause and have a good think about things going forward, yeah.

**GEORGINA
BLAKELEY:** And I would say, even if you didn't get the result that you hoped for, it might be lower than you thought, you've still got to give yourself a huge pat on the back. Because just completing a module, regardless of any grades, anything like that, is a massive achievement for our students. Because they're all studying part time. They've got children often. They're juggling careers, work, family, friends. It's just a massive, massive achievement to complete a module.

KAREN FOLEY: You get the piece of paper, or the email in these days, often, you look at the result. And you look at the number. And there's a huge amount of value attached to this numerical value, which is, as you say, a whole year's worth of work. And a lot of students, you'll say, did you do well? And I think a lot of students say, oh, I hoped I would have got more of this, that, or the other. What is the value attached to some of this? And what do you think students should be thinking about in addition to that number that they're getting faced with, in terms of their performance?

**GEORGINA
BLAKELEY:** Well, I think, first of all, it's personal. So students set themselves different goals at the start. For some students, their goal will be to get a 70 or an 80. For some students, the goal will simply be to submit one TMA, perhaps try and submit more than that. So each student starts with different goals. And I think that's what they should do. It's perfectly valid to have your own personal goals. So I think that's important as well. Because it's all part of this learning journey and learning to be a student.

Don't forget, many of our students will have come back in to study not having picked up a pen and paper for 20, 30, 40 years. So just going through that process, regardless of your result, is really, really important, I think. So it's important see in that light as well, and then, of course, to not just look at the number, which I know all students do. And I completely get that. But to think about all the learning that has gone into that number, because that's what really counts. It's all that learning, all those skills you've developed throughout the module, which will then go on and feed into what you do next.

MATT STAPLES: Yeah, I think it's important. I mean, certainly with Level 1, most Level 1s, are EMAs or projects

rather than exams. Some are exams still. But if you're a Level 1 student, just get your results, you'll have your feedback as well. I think it's really important to look at that. Because this isn't the end. It's the end of the module. But it's not the end of your story, your university story for most students. And so it's using that feedback. Actually, how did it link in with the feedback from your tutor? Because often, it's marked, the EMA or project's marked by somebody else. So how does it feed into and link with that? And then, some of the students were saying they're looking for the next module already. Well, how does that feedback set you up for the next module? What things do you maybe need to work on a little bit more or think about? Is you referencing quite right, or your essay structure, or something?

GEORGINA

BLAKELEY:

Absolutely, I mean, I think, once you've got over either the excitement or the disappointment, whatever that result has caused in you, is to then, once you've got over that, to just sit down and think, well, OK, if I was going to write to my next tutor in my next module, what would I want them to know about me? What have I done really well at? What have been my strengths? What are the areas that I still need to work on? And if you can actually do that, draft an email or a letter, that's super useful for the next tutor. Because that then gives them a sense of where you're coming from and what you want to achieve in the next module. You don't have to send it. It can just be for your personal use, of course, but it's really good.

KAREN FOLEY:

I love that idea. How interesting, maybe, to after six weeks of summer, when you're starting again, to pick it back up and say, actually, maybe I was being a bit harsh on myself with that. Or maybe I should really work on that. Because it is going to be detrimental with things like referencing, for example.

GEORGINA

BLAKELEY:

I mean, a number doesn't reflect the person. And we all take it personally. You look at the number and think, oh my gosh, it's like a judgement on yourself. But it's not. It's not about you at all. And it's important to then think, well, what have I achieved? What do I think I've really done in this module? And as I said, for most students, it will be just a huge achievement to get to the end. Let's not forget a lot of students don't. They don't get to handing in that final assessment. So or just doing it, even if it's not what you wanted it to be, in terms of quality, is great. It really is.

KAREN FOLEY:

HJ, how are people feeling about their results in the chat? Have people been putting about their way that they're happy or not so happy with what they've got, the ones who've just completed?

HJ: I think a lot of people are happy. And they're very positive, which is really nice to see. On the widget, a few people are saying they're not very happy with their results. But I suppose the thing to remember is that it's all a learning experience. So you can always put what you've learned into the next module, which I think is worth keeping in mind as well. And I'm sure a lot of our guests will say the same thing and have good advice about how to take the feedback forward into the next module.

KAREN FOLEY: Yeah, I mean, this is an interesting point. Because Georgina, your assumption, in terms of setting goals and then knowing whether you've achieved, I'm out to get a 2:1, or I'm out to pass, or whatever, is something I certainly know, for me, when I was studying, I didn't really have those goals in mind. I always just felt I should do a bit better. So how do you know if you have done well, in terms of, I guess, the future of your career? We know that things are weighted in different ways. So Level 1 doesn't count so much towards the overall qualification level. But what sort of advice could you give to people who say, I don't think I've done that well? But equally, they may not have had an idea about what they were trying to achieve, in terms of the grade.

GEORGINA BLAKELEY: Well, I think it depends, as you said, on what level students are at. If they're studying at Level 1, all you need to do is pass the module. Because those grades are not going to count towards your final degree classification. So just maximise what you're doing at Level 1, in terms of learning from that experience and developing your skills. At Level 2, it starts a matter a little bit more. But it's still Level 2. The results that you get are not double weighted. It's Level 3 that really counts, in terms of double weighting.

But in terms of whether you're doing well or not, it does depend on what you want to get out of it. So for some students for example, if they're doing psychology, they'll want BPS recognition. And so you do need certain grades in order to get that recognition. Other students will be doing it for very different things. A lot of our students are doing it just for fun. We tend to forget that and think that all students are doing it for career purposes. But that's not always the case.

MATT STAPLES: It's very true. I mean, also talking about the little widget there, and some students maybe wouldn't have done as well as they would have hoped to. But often, most modules are a combination of continuous assessment and the examinable component. And sometimes, not always, the examinable component might be better or it might be worse. And students often have strengths in particular areas. So they're better at doing a continuous assessment. Or they're better at doing an exam. I know when I was at university, I was actually better at doing

exams. But I wasn't so good at the continuous assessment.

And students, they often have strengths and weaknesses in different areas. So if the students got an examinable component, the EMA or the exam, may be not as good as they would have wanted, actually, it's something they maybe need to work at or practise. And so look at their overall performance and say, what are the things I did really well; what are the things I didn't do quite so well; and maybe going ahead, thinking about that letter to the tutor actually will say, this was really good. And I'm quite strong on this. This wasn't so good. Could perhaps we work on this in the year ahead?

GEORGINA

BLAKELEY:

We mustn't forget that the final component, whether it's an EMA or an exam, is harder than the TMAs that you do throughout the module. So if it's an EMA, it tends to be looking back across the whole module. You tend to have to bring things together in a way that you don't have to do in a single TMA, which is often just concentrating on a very small part of the module. And of course, an exam is testing very different skills altogether. So they are intended to be harder. And most students will have lower marks in that final component than they do throughout the module.

KAREN FOLEY:

That's a really good point. Because I think so often students will say, oh, well it's half this, or half this, or however it's weighted and assume that they are fairly similar things. And perhaps, if you did less well in the exam, you could think, oh, I've had a deterioration. But you're saying that it's a more complex task.

GEORGINA

BLAKELEY:

Absolutely, yeah.

MATT STAPLES:

There's more pressure as well, I think. Because it's cumulative, you're bringing together your learning, often on the whole module. And actually, it's a slightly more advanced task anyway. Because it's the end of a learning journey, where the skill steps have been getting harder and harder. And so it's a double whammy, as it were. And so I'd say to a student who's done maybe not quite so well, don't worry so much about that, actually, if it has gone down a bit.

GEORGINA

BLAKELEY:

Exams are testing your ability to perform under pressure. And often, you don't have much chance to practise that. So for students who have been out of education for a long time, to suddenly come into that situation, it's completely unnatural in a way. We never really do that kind of thing outside of universities. So if you've not done that before and you've felt it was really hard and that's then reflected in your result, don't be too hard on yourself. Because it is

hard. It is difficult.

KAREN FOLEY: Let's see what you said at home, in terms of how happy you were with your results. Oh, lots of people are very, very pleased. So that's a very, very good to hear. Obviously, a lot of conscientious people watch Student Hub Live. So that's good to see. Now, I've had some of my students who said, I just missed the boundary by one or two percentage points. And I could have got a this or a that, going into different category. How important are these distinctions? And do they imply different quality of answer? Is it a case that, if you've got an 84 you were 1% off a first? Or is there something fundamentally different in terms of the skills and things they're shown throughout both the examinable component and also the continuous assessment?

MATT STAPLES: I mean, the more Award Board will have made a judgement. I mean, it's quite technical. But the Award Board or the Module Results Panel will have made an assessment of how the module as a whole has performed and will have set boundaries as appropriate. Invariably, most years, they stay the same. But with that example, probably, that script or exam has been looked at two or three times. And so it's been verified.

So if a student has got an 84, then often there will be three people thinking that's an 84, actually. Because the marker will have looked at it, it will have been second marked. And because it's just one below the boundary, it will have been looked at for a third time by a member of the Award Board or Module Team Member. And so we've both been spending quite a lot of time recently looking at scripts, where students didn't quite make the grade, just to make sure that mark is an appropriate one. And so there's lots of quality assurance. I really would reassure students on this. It's not an accident that that's just above or just below a borderline.

KAREN FOLEY: Because often, there are real skills that people need to demonstrate to get a first, levels of independent thought, or criticality within something, that will differentiate something. So it may be that you did a really, really good job. But there just wasn't something that needed to be there for another.

GEORGINA BLAKELEY: I mean, it does differ from subject to subject. So it's hard to generalise. But usually, to get that Level 1, that plus one mark, you are talking about a lot of critical analysis, using evidence from a wide range of sources, things like that that just make your answer stand out that little bit more from the others.

MATT STAPLES: And in terms of the STEM subjects, a lot of technical ability in maths, or computing, or science.

KAREN FOLEY: Excellent. So in terms of the next steps for students to look at over the summer, we've got a whole range of sessions this afternoon. So I don't expect you to go into too much detail. But I loved your idea about taking advice from the tutor. I wonder if we could just think about this whole thing about thinking about the boundaries and what students got, perhaps and what they might want to achieve next year, in terms of goal setting and things, bearing in mind the trajectory, in terms of the weighting of the assignments. What would you encourage students to do now, in terms of thinking, this is what I want to do, this is how I might be able to get to a different level, or even actually unhappy doing it like this, because I've got a life in addition to my studies? What goal setting would you think would be helpful?

GEORGINA BLAKELEY: The first thing I would say is relax. You've earned it. Take a few weeks off and just recharge your batteries. Because I think that's really important for our students, particularly those who are working full time as well. It's exhausting to get to the end of this. So take a few weeks off, and then start to think about your next steps, really. So that's my first piece of advice.

Secondly, I think a lot of modules stress these days self-reflection. And the reason that we do that is that that helps with this goal setting. So you need to think about your goals. Because if you do want to get the really high marks, then you need a plan to achieve that. It's often not going to just happen by itself. So if that is your goal, then you need to look back all the feedback you've got over the module, which is sometimes quite hard to do. But students tend to think, right, that TMA's done, file it away. And I'll get on to the next one.

But if you get a bit of time over the summer, go back and look at all that feedback you've got from your TMAs throughout the module and write down those points that keep coming up again and again that your tutor says you need to work on. And then, you've got a to-do list for your next module. And that again is something that you can share with your next tutor. Because they can find that helpful to work with you on. But I think the first thing is setting those goals. Because you might not want to be aiming for that. You might be just thinking, actually, I just want to get through this next module. I'm still at Level 1. That's fine. That's my next plan. And then, get a plan of action for that.

MATT STAPLES: Yeah, similar advice, really, I mean, I'm sure a lot of students will have spent the last week or so ruminating over their exam results. And they may have done some of the work that Georgina mentioned. So you can do it one of two ways. You can do it now, then have a relax,

have a break. Or you can put it aside for a few weeks, and then, towards the end of the summer, go back to it and just start to think about what did I do, how does that feed into the next module.

And I think everybody's registered. Most students are registered on the qualification. And it's about a mindset of thinking about the qualification as a whole, rather than just thinking about an individual module and success or failure. Because its success or failure over actually quite a lot of modules, and thinking about how they link together, and ensuring they take the learning from one to the other, and thinking about it is a piece. Yeah, that's really important, I think.

GEORGINA
BLAKELEY: It's good to have time to step back and look at that bigger picture. Because I think, as students, you can often feel that you're on a conveyor belt. And you're just going from one module to the next.

KAREN FOLEY: TMA1P.

GEORGINA
BLAKELEY: Yeah, absolutely. You're not joining it all together. So if you do have a chance just to stand back a bit, it is really good to see it in qualification terms. Because that is the bigger picture for many students, not all, of course. Because not everyone is going to want to work towards a qualification.

KAREN FOLEY: And what about this feedback that people get from the examinable component? I mean, often from an exam or an EMA, you get something that's to what extent you've met this and this. And it can sometimes give a clear indication of what you've done well. But sometimes, students can be a little bit confused. Because they are often fairly generic, certainly not anywhere near as specific as the level of TMA feedback. What's the point of that piece of paper? In terms of this feedback, where does that fit into taking things on board for next year?

MATT STAPLES: It is much more formulaic. And there's less space. But nonetheless, there should be kernels of learning there. And it's about seeing how the link with the previous TMA feedback. Are there similarities? Are there things that are being picked out all the way through? And those will be the areas for development.

GEORGINA
BLAKELEY: And at Level 1, students will still expect a certain level of feedback, actually, on their EMAs. So there will be feedback that they can use there. Because obviously, at that level, it's particularly important to see the EMA as part of that continual learning process. And of course, that

feedback can be really important, if students have failed and they need to resubmit. Because often, the resubmission is to resubmit the original piece of work but improved. So in order to improve it, you need the feedback, obviously.

KAREN FOLEY: So whilst that feedback, I guess, is linked to a lot of the learning outcomes that may not make so much sense, in terms of how the TMA was presented. They're often very small things that you can think, well, that's the same as the big thing. But it's still a number on a scale. So it's, I guess, about understand why you've got the grade you've got, and then taking the tutor feedback and thinking, OK, this is how I develop and push forward.

MATT STAPLES: It's feedback feed forward, that's right. It's the classic OU sandwich that we talked about earlier. But it is still relevant. And I would say to any students here who may not have been so forthright on the media, those who maybe have got a resubmission, it's about the opportunity to resubmit. It's not failure. Actually, if you look at the stats, a lot of students who get to the end their module, very few fail, actually. A lot get a resubmission opportunity, actually, yeah. And so there's an opportunity over the summer really to focus on that.

GEORGINA BLAKELEY: Because then, it's that sticking power of getting to the end of the module, which is actually the thing.

KAREN FOLEY: Yeah, absolutely.

MATT STAPLES: It's involved an OU student.

KAREN FOLEY: And we'll be doing a session on on resits and resubmissions later this afternoon. But before we have our break, HJ, I want to pick up some of the people who got through. So can you tell us some of those success stories that I know you've been talking about on the HotDesk?

HJ: Yes, we were talking to Libby and she was saying how one of the TMA scores was a bit lower. So it got pulled down to the boundary, but was moved up by higher TMA score. So I'm sure that's by looking at the feedback and taking that forward to the TMA. So she's really happy and positive, which is fantastic to see.

And Gail's really pleased with her result. She's also told me she's doing design thinking next So she says she was previously an art director. And she's going to use this module to brush up on some of her skills as well. And I think Andrew's had a slightly disappointed by his result. But I think it's good that he's identified where the error is that's pulled him down and how he can take that forward as well. But I think, overall, we're realising what has impacted our TMAs

and the positive points as well. And I think a lot of us will have some good experience from these assignments going to the next module. It's all very good, and positive, and very happy, which is good to see, yes.

KAREN FOLEY: Excellent, all that's wonderful news. Thank you all for sharing so much in the chat. And if you're watching on the live stream only and you'd like to participate in the chat, then please rejoin us. You can just sign in using your OU Computer Username as you normally would. So go back to the website and reenter that way. And it'd be great to see you in the chat. And don't forget all those other channels with the Twitter accounts and also our email, StudentHub@open.ac.uk.

Matt and Georgina, thank you so much. It's been a wonderful session with loads of brilliant advice. I love your idea about writing to your tutor and also about compiling all that feedback so that you can use it to feed forward into the next module. So thank you very much for joining us today.

MATT STAPLES: It's always a pleasure.

**GEORGINA
BLAKELEY:** Thank you. Right, we now are going to have a little campus tour. So I, a few weeks ago in the summer, talked to Dan Weinbren, who's in the Faculty of Social Sciences. And he was showing me some of the buildings and talking about why their names were as such. So here we are in the library, where Dan is going to introduce the book that he's written and take us on the start of our campus tour, that will form most of our breaks during this day's programme. We'll see you in a couple of minutes for our next session.

[MUSIC PLAYING]