KAREN FOLEY: Welcome back to *The Student Hub Live.* For a lot of students, starting studying can involve some anxiety about the computer. It may not even be as far as the virtual learning environment or maybe how to submit a TMA, but some people can feel very confident using a computer. So I've got Richard Treves here to give us some tips on making your computer work for you in your studies.

Now, Richard, you're an expert at this because you're a senior designer in Technology Enhanced Learning here at the Open University.

RICHARD TREVES: Yes.

KAREN FOLEY: And you've got some tips for us for students who may not feel so confident with using a computer, and we're going to talk about some various things that they can do to support them in their studies-- other than the virtual learning environment, which we've covered quite a lot of.

Now, I know that we've been sharing a lot of tips and ideas in the chat. Please do share those. Don't worry if you are a bit more advanced than we are. If you've got tools-- I know referencing tools are often very commonly talked about, MOOCs, et cetera-- please do share those links with new students who are joining us this evening. That would be absolutely brilliant.

OK. Richard, why are computers a bit scary for people who may not engage with some of these things like-- I mean, Trello I've never heard of this before-- and I know you want to talk about Twitter and social media? I mean, for some people, those can sort of just evoke a massive fear.

RICHARD TREVES: Oh, yeah. Absolutely. I think it's like maths. It's one of those things that just pushes people over the edge, and some people have a really visceral kind of reaction to them. But when you use them, things have got so much more friendly recently. I think they're a lot more usable for almost everyone. I grew up writing horrible code into computers, so it's great to see how they've been developing recently.

KAREN FOLEY: And even the module websites-- and we've been looking at the qualification websites as well-- they've come on leaps and bounds in terms of being accessible. But for some people, even though we we're talking about the qualification website, and I think Georgina had found the

qualification website, she'd been having some trouble navigating it. So how do people sort of go about finding things that might be useful for them in their studies, and what would you say to sort of start out in terms of things that might help?

RICHARD TREVES: Well, in terms of things to help with their studies, I think there's the VLE, obviously, and what's on the qualifications site. So I thought I wouldn't talk too much about those.

KAREN FOLEY: And we've done lots of that.

RICHARD TREVES: So I'll tell you some interesting things around, first of all, sort of Twitter. I think most people have engaged with it, or a lot of people have to a certain extent, but I think it's diving in a little bit deeper other than just reading what your friends had for breakfast.

KAREN FOLEY: Or Donald Trump.

RICHARD TREVES: Or Donald Trump, yes. That's a big one, too. But it's things like what you can do with it. So you can follow people. That's a little @, the curly a.

KAREN FOLEY: Yeah.

RICHARD TREVES: So that will be a person, or it will be a course. So S112, for example, has a really nice site that they talk about what's coming up in the course and things like that. So you can follow a course. You can follow a person. You can follow me. You may find your academics on the module team are going to be there.

KAREN FOLEY: You can follow *The Student Hub Live.*

RICHARD TREVES: You can follow *The Student Hub Live.* You got that in.

KAREN FOLEY: In fact, you should.

[LAUGHTER]

RICHARD TREVES: But also there's a big movement recently with Twitter chat ups. Twitter chat ups? That's not really a term. But it's group meetings where people all get on Twitter and they follow a hashtag, so that's the hash. And then it is something. So you follow it with a OUChat or something like this. And this is really incredible, is that all these people pile in and will tweet very fast, and it's actually quite difficult to follow up. But you can be there with some real

experts in your field whatever it is, following what's going on, really talking to the people who are at the cutting edge and getting some attention from them sometimes as well.

So these are really exciting to sort of look into and find the one or see if there's ones that really interest you that you can track and follow.

KAREN FOLEY: It always amazes me when I go to conferences. And I remember the first time I went, and everyone was sitting there on their devices, all on Twitter. And they would putting all their questions, much like everyone does in our chat. And there was this massive dialogue going on whilst the speaker was presenting.

So in an academic sense, people are using Twitter. But the library have also been talking in previous events about how you can use social media to support you in terms of things that interest you.

RICHARD TREVES: Yes.

KAREN FOLEY: So you might find, like you say, people or even areas that would support you in your studies. And I guess Twitter is a nice way of sort of keeping up to date with that maybe on the move, maybe in your downtime, just to sort of keep abreast of ideas. What sorts of things do you follow? What sorts of things might students want to start looking for in terms of building their feeds?

RICHARD TREVES: Well, they probably don't want to follow most of the people I follow because it's people--

KAREN FOLEY: Computer coding. Hahahaha.

RICHARD TREVES: It's educational technology, things like that.

KAREN FOLEY: Daven will probably like that.

RICHARD TREVES: Yeah. All those things, I'm following things that interest me, and that's exactly what Twitter is about. You follow people, and you think, oh, that might be an interesting person. You could follow me if you are interested, and then you find out that you are not interested in what I'm saying. So you switch me off and you've found five other people to follow. So it's great.

The thing to really keep a hold on, though, is it can get addictive. I probably do it too much because you can get it on your mobile. So you can sit in your downtime and flick through, and that's to be encouraged. Engagement of students is key to their success in all kinds of ways. But I'm one who does it too much probably, so you've got to watch and make sure that you're not doing your whole life looking at it.

KAREN FOLEY: Now, some of these things, I mean, you get feeds much like Facebook. So you'll get a generic list of everything that you follow on Twitter, for example. But like you say, you can also follow hashtags, so you can sort of philtre, I guess, what you're looking at. Now, this is a common idea in social media, but do people use these filtering techniques to the best of their advantage? Or do they, like you, end up on Twitter sort of scrolling through all the things because it looks so interesting? How disciplined or focused do you think one should be on social media?

RICHARD TREVES: Oh, that's an excellent question. I think most people who get into it and get past-- as I say, once you've worked out what the @ does, once you've worked what the hash does and you start using these, you're quite expert. You can really fish around in this stuff. And then the whole universe is out there to sort of find it. So yes, it is about really limiting it.

And it's very short form. It will tell you small facts, but a lot of our education is about long thinking. It's something that really papers and books and textbooks, and you see there on the module sites on the VLE it's long. It requires a lot of concentration, so we've got to be careful not to really split our attention into tiny bits.

KAREN FOLEY: So a lot of the OU websites and in fact disciplinaries have accounts on Twitter, and they'll often populate those with lots of things that they think students might want to know about, so it might be a nice idea, I guess, to start your studies or maybe just studies just sort of thinking actually, let me just have a little look at what's going on. And you could maybe search the handle of biology-- I mean, there are so many here at The Open University-- and just sort of get a little bit of an idea about what's happening.

RICHARD TREVES: Yeah. Absolutely.

KAREN FOLEY: OK. Facebook, as well, can be a good thing to use, and there are lots of different ways of looking at media. But one thing that I did want to talk about is this Trello site here. Now, this looks quite interesting. You've got overviews, projects. Is this an organisational tool, or is it

something that you can use to share with other people?

RICHARD TREVES: It is. Well, you can share with other people as well. This is my find of last week for myself. I started off lecturing years ago at Sunderland University, and I got very excited about a sort of personal Gantt chart thing I did with paper and pen, and I would plot out--

KAREN FOLEY: I've never made a Gantt chart. It's, again, one of my aspirations.

[LAUGHTER]

If I got around to--

RICHARD TREVES: You go with it or you don't. And I got very excited because this changed my life. It really helped me organise things. And one of my colleagues said, can you come and talk with the third-year students because they're having trouble with their projects about this? So I said, yeah, yeah. I'll come and enthuse and talk about it. And I did. And none of them used it at all, and none of them really understood what the heck I was doing. But it meant, for the rest of the year, every time I was late for anything, they were, oh, your time management is not working there, Richard.

KAREN FOLEY: Hahaha.

RICHARD TREVES: So I've always been into these. They've been really useful. And that tells you something, as well. You've just got to be very careful about telling people they should do it. So I would suggest people may like this. I think it's been a revelation for me.

KAREN FOLEY: And if not, they can let you know on Twitter. Haha.

RICHARD TREVES: Exactly. Yeah, yeah, yeah. So what you can see, if I talk you through it a bit there, Trello is made of what's called boards. So that's the coloured background. So you can think about that as a physical board.

KAREN FOLEY: OK.

RICHARD TREVES: And on that, you've got lists. So I'm thinking particularly with students, they can have sort of their TMAs and things they have to do with their TMAs as they go through.

KAREN FOLEY: Yeah.

RICHARD TREVES: And then on the lists within that, you can have certain tasks that you've got to read some things, you've got to talk to some people, maybe you want to talk to your tutor before it. So you can really track what's going on all this thing. And it's lovely because you can actually pick them up and drag these really nicely from place to place and move them around and go, well actually, that reading doesn't go with TMA 1 I think actually it's in TMA 2. Drag it over there, and drop it over there.

So it's really intuitive how it works, and there's all kinds of details in there. You can start setting times for yourself, and it will ping and go red when it needs to be done and things like that. So it's absolutely fantastic. But you can also share it with someone. So I have one with my partner. We have a household one of all the things, and we keep on moving things into each other's boxes and filling in.

KAREN FOLEY: Important, not important. Haha.

RICHARD TREVES: Exactly. And you can define this in any way you want. So you can have TMAs. You can have important, or done on Tuesday. So the sky's the limit. It's really very flexible. And also the great thing is it works on mobile, so you can be sat on your computer seeing all the lists as we have here and you could see the whole range of them really nicely, or you can be sitting on the bus thinking, ah, I've got to do that and tap it straight in, straight there. And you're not going to forget it, so really good.

KAREN FOLEY: They're liking the sound of this in the chat room, Richard. Let's see what else is going on.

HJ: Yes. We're just having a great discussion about all the tools that we use during study, so things like Zotero, Grammarly. We're talking about OneNote. I like using OneNote as well. We like large white boards. That's another tool that's a bit low tech. Simon says #pinkiepieisbetterthanapplejack. So we're having a conversation there.

[LAUGHTER]

LinkedIn is great for promoting yourself professionally. We talked about careers about the benefits of using that. Ronald just likes the module website. So useful, lots of links and tools on there. Talking about Facebook groups as well, picking up on the points that we're making. And Jane says Trello sounds interesting, and Daven says it was used by the computing students in their final IT projects as well. And, of course, Haley says we've got pen and paper. In the end, that's what we're all using.

KAREN FOLEY: And highlighters.

HJ: And highlighters, of course. We like using our highlighters.

KAREN FOLEY: Some really good tips there. I always sit here, Richard, whenever the students share all these ideas. And as somebody who still writes references in longhand and bitterly regrets it every time I do-- because I'm fully aware of the benefits of some of these referencing packages-- I often think, is it worth the time and investment in doing some of these? And how do students then choose what might be most useful when there are so many wonderful apps?

In particular, for the older of us, who sit there thinking, actually, I'm not that au fait with this. If I sat down and tried to figure this out, that's going to take me 45 minutes maybe tops. It looks a bit scary. I'm not sure I'd be able to use it. Would I log onto every day? And you were talking about your time management and these people saying, well, Richard, you're late, da-da-da-da. So when is it worth the investment in terms of these sorts of tools and techniques paying off in terms of helping you?

I mean, I must say I do bitterly regret not getting the referencing stuff. And I was talking to the library the other day who are going to show me how to do it. And I must put half an hour aside because I recognise now that, whilst it wasn't important, now actually I'm probably on a massive deficit with all of this longhand writing. So what do you say to students about making time and when to make the time for what? How do they know what might work for them?

RICHARD TREVES: It's impossible to say exactly for each student's situation. It depends on their own likes and their own situation of what they want really. But yeah, absolutely. It's worth sometimes putting the investment of time in to really working something out for yourself. But mostly, I mean, I found out about this because one of my colleagues invited me to a Trello board and said-- we were discussing some student feedback about this-- here it is all the data. And I started playing around with it. And I'm going ahh, I understand what this is, and I suddenly saw it. And the light bulb went on, and off I go.

So yes, it is something about the investment of time, and then you see it when you come back. And I think it comes down to paper and pen itself. I still scribble notes on bits of paper to myself because it's so quick and I don't have to worry about it, and the battery doesn't run out. And lots of students will also want to do that, and that's great and fantastic in its place.

But I think there's also a flip side to it, which is sometimes we need to be writing notes

electronically or consider doing that because the big advantage is everything is searchable. Like, someone mentioned OneNote.

KAREN FOLEY: Yeah.

RICHARD TREVES: I use OneNote obsessively.

KAREN FOLEY: Right. I've heard a lot about OneNote, and it's one that HJ is often telling me I should use. What's so special about that?

RICHARD TREVES: Well, I'm particularly playing around with it as a notepad system because it's coming in the Open University. We're getting Office 365. OneNote will be there, and it's a way of you writing your notes. And again, you can do on your computer. And then you can see it on your phone.

KAREN FOLEY: It syncs up with everything?

RICHARD TREVES: That's right.

KAREN FOLEY: So your to-do list is always with you.

RICHARD TREVES: That's it.

KAREN FOLEY: Which could be a good thing or a bad thing.

RICHARD TREVES: That's it. And it will actually do a to-do list for you as well. So I had to-do lists in OneNote before I found Trello, and then Trello was just so much better for me I moved on. But yes, OneNote is the same and it's coming. But at the moment, unfortunately it's been delayed in the rollout to November now. So I didn't want to talk too much about students because computer systems, they just fall out of your head. If you talk about them in detail, you'll just forget it instantly. It's the potential of writing notes and writing them electronically, and it's that being able to search.

KAREN FOLEY: Right.

RICHARD TREVES: I recently looked for a little piece-- again, it was at Sunderland University-- I wrote years ago. I wanted to show someone. I just put it in, and it was almost magical. I haven't seen the thing in

15 years. It's there somewhere in my deeper file system. And I knew what to search, and it had a good search. So it went ping.

KAREN FOLEY: OneNote did that?

RICHARD TREVES: Ping it popped. This wasn't OneNote. This was just me searching, but it's the power of search. You can use OneNote. You can use Apple Notes.

KAREN FOLEY: So you can do to-do lists, and you can do writing notes. And I can see-- I mean, HJ does to-do lists for us actually when we're setting up. And it's great when you've got things that are repetitive.

RICHARD TREVES: Yes.

KAREN FOLEY: So if, for example, you're always writing a TMA and you always know that you're going to have to research the topic, breaking down tasks and things, those sort of to-do lists that can be electronically stored that you can adapt and sort of break down, I can see how they would be really useful. What other functions do you use OneNote for, and what might our level 1 students benefit from that sort of package, even if it's not OneNote itself?

RICHARD TREVES: I think something I use it for quite a lot is taking screen grabs of something. If something is diagrammatic, you can take a screenshot grab. So you have got a physics graphic, say. You drag it. It cuts it out for you. You drop it in your notes. And then either you can write notes on the side, which is the easy thing. And if you really want to be sophisticated, you can go to a Draw, and you can draw all over it and scribble all over it. I have an iPad for doing that. It's particularly useful for doing it that way, but there's all kinds of different ways of doing it.

But it allows you to grab those screen grabs.

KAREN FOLEY: Yeah.

RICHARD TREVES: And that's something you can't do--

KAREN FOLEY: Without all the formatting because in some programmes, like Word, for example, sometimes when I'll put things then, all of a sudden it will get things around the wrong way and it's hard to sort of place things, isn't it sometimes?

RICHARD TREVES: Yes, yes. It does.

KAREN FOLEY: Or maybe that's just me. Probably just me.

RICHARD TREVES: No. Copying things around will mess the formatting up, and everyone hates it. And I don't think there's any easy way around it really.

KAREN FOLEY: No. OK. What about storage of work? Should students be archiving their TMAs so that they can look back on them lovingly in future years? Should they be backing their stuff up? I mean, what is the sort of hot topic right now in terms of storage?

RICHARD TREVES: Well, I would say that storing things and having backups is really incredibly important. And it's one of those things like clearing out the garage that no one ever wants to do but we all know you really should. But just imagine what happens if your computer dies now. What would you lose?

KAREN FOLEY: I can see the look of horror on your face. Hahahaha.

RICHARD TREVES: I have had students who have had this happen to them, and it's absolutely desperate.

KAREN FOLEY: Yes.

RICHARD TREVES: And it's not just work. It's not just TMAs. It can be all your photos now because we all have stuff.

KAREN FOLEY: Yeah.

RICHARD TREVES: So all your devices, you've got to have an idea of how you're backing that up. There's various ways of doing it. Probably the easy, straightforward way is to buy an external hard drive if you've got a computer as your main device. Plug in your hard drive. There's programmes out there. It will just back everything up.

KAREN FOLEY: What about these clouds?

RICHARD TREVES: Yes. So I'll get on to the cloud. That's going to cost you about 50 pounds for an extended drive depending on how many files, but it will do your whole computer. If you haven't got that much stuff or you know you've got important things that you want backing up, there are various--

KAREN FOLEY: Or you can't be regularly organised enough to plug it in all the time.

RICHARD TREVES: Yes. The cloud is really another operation. Now, this, again with Office 365, Office 365 is the big container of all this great stuff-- so OneNote, OneDrive, all these things.

KAREN FOLEY: Word and PowerPoint as well are in there, aren't they?

RICHARD TREVES: Yes. So they're all in there. I've got actually a prop to kind of explain what the cloud is about, if you like.

KAREN FOLEY: Oh, go on then.

RICHARD TREVES: Because I find people struggle with this.

KAREN FOLEY: See, I trust the cloud. I think I store my stuff in a cloud somewhere, and I have ultimate trust in all of this despite having all of my stuff in my computer deleted one year.

RICHARD TREVES: Yes. OK. So I'll talk you through this is. I'll take my little man out. We have your computer, and people understand that. And you have a file, so you type your file out of your computer. You do something with it. You write it. You edit it. And then you save it back to your computer, and you exactly where is. Everything is completely understood. You know where everything is.

The cloud is a little bit more mysterious. We don't quite know where it is. So I can put out of camera shot. We don't quite know where everything is, but that doesn't matter because your file, you have your file. You create your file. You store in the cloud. And then you go somewhere, and you pick it back up. And you're not sure where it's saved, but it is saved somewhere.

Now, that's fantastic. The great thing about this is that someone else can come along and pick this up from somewhere else because it's not on your physical computer. It's out there on the cloud, so you can share it with someone. People can work at it at the same time. And also, if your computer dies, it's OK because it's all there in the cloud, and it's all there saved somewhere else. So it's a great backup system is doing things in the cloud.

Now, the way I would suggest people do things at the moment is to do it with Dropbox, and there's other systems out there as well. OneDrive is coming. That's going to be The Open University one.

KAREN FOLEY:	OK.
RICHARD TREVES:	You can sign up for it at the moment. But it's going to get confusing if you have two OneDrives.
KAREN FOLEY:	Is that part of Office then?
RICHARD TREVES:	Yes.
KAREN FOLEY:	Yeah. OK.
RICHARD TREVES:	But Office 365 is the whole thing. OneDrive is like the hard drive of your computer with all of your files, all your file structure on. Now, that's one thing. So you can have your files. You can put them in your computer or you can put them in the cloud, but you can also have programmes that we usually have working from your computer. So you call Word up and it does things. So here's my little robot man doing things.
	But also-- and this is the bit that people find a little bit difficult-- is, from Office 365, you can call programmes. So from within a browser, you can call Word and operate on your files and then save it to the cloud. And you're all on my computer in my office. You can log and do this. That's the possibilities that Office 365 and working in the cloud gives you.
KAREN FOLEY:	Wow.
RICHARD TREVES:	So it's incredibly powerful because you can be at a conference, you can be anywhere. You can be on the bus and look at your files.
KAREN FOLEY:	So you don't need all the programmes. So some iPads don't have Word or something on them, and you can only maybe read them. This would give you the chance to actually be able to do something without having to have all of the software installed.
RICHARD TREVES:	That's right. You don't have to instal it. Now, the problem with that is that the little robot man in the cloud is cut down. He's not as good as Office working on your computer. It's not got so many features. It's not so powerful. But for quick edits--
KAREN FOLEY:	Yeah.
RICHARD	And again, you can see on the bus and look at your Word files now, but it's a lot more difficult

TREVES: to operate because you're on a very small screen. So you don't want to work that way obviously. But in an emergency and something, you can really do that.

KAREN FOLEY: Excellent. Well, Richard, thank you so much for coming on and telling us about this. Will you come back in our February event and tell us about Office 365, assuming that that's all in store? And that's been a really fantastic set of ideas, I think. I think I might have a look at some of these and invest a bit of time. And for students just sort of getting ready for module start, I guess maybe they might want to think of something that could help them in their studies as well. So thank you very much.

OK. That's the end of our show today. I've had a brilliant day. We've done so, so, so much. HJ, what's been the best thing for you and everyone at home?

HJ: I think it's just sharing all these tips. So I think I'm getting there and being ready for the next academic year, starting modules. And we've had some great tips today. I think it was Will had a great tip for this session. So Will's aiming to reference longhand this year and then use tools next year, so he's got an idea of everything behind it.

But yeah, if you want to send us more tips or pictures for the board--

KAREN FOLEY: Or biscuits.

HJ: Or biscuits, study snacks, or what your setup looks like, or some of the tools you you're using, we'd love to see that-- studenthub@open.ac.uk or @StudentHubLive on Twitter. And Ruth sent in a lovely photo of all her stationery since we had a chat about that earlier.

KAREN FOLEY: Oh, lovely.

HJ: She said she's glad she's not the only one that's excited about stationery. So yeah, send your stationery in or pictures of you power napping or your study space and study buddies. But it would be great to see everyone tomorrow as well or, if you're not joining us then, another time to see how you're getting along.

And I'd just like to end with Peter's comment. He's really excited for the start date and feeling really ready. And he never thought he would study for a degree, so it's really good to see Peter excited to start on this journey.

KAREN FOLEY: Aww, thank you. It is. It's an amazing journey. It really is. And the OU is just such a fantastic

place. Thank you, everybody, for sharing all of your tips and ideas and inspiration. We've had an amazing day. What we've done today is we've met some students. We've talked about fighting fake news with trusted content. We've talked about looking after yourself in your studies with the sports and exercise team. We've looked at creative uses of stationery. We've had the student support team in to tell you how they can support you. We've done an assessment session. We've had some chemistry live. We've had our Wheel of Ologies quiz. We've looked at studying with additional needs, the open programme and flexibility, the Ambitious Futures graduate programme, and of course our religious studies discussion, and finally our session on making your computer work for you in your studies.

So we've certainly covered a lot, and we've been replaying our Boot Camp sessions, which are all very skills based. So if you'd like to learn a little bit about reading, writing, note taking, the virtual learning environment, do check out the Boot Camps. You can watch all of that on catch up. It's on *The Student Hub Live* website. That's studenthublive.open.ac.uk.

Join us tomorrow for another jam-packed session. I'm most looking forward to our sessions on what type of learner are you. We're going to take a look at some learning styles and, again, thinking about how we can learn most effectively. We're also going to look at how we use student feedback, about volunteering, the history of the OU and some of the archives. The graduate school are coming along. We've got the OU Students Association, tutor Q&A. And we've got some news. We're talking about student feedback. Then we've got a space science chat-- which is going to be very exciting-- managing your study workloads, and then what is normal benchmarking and setting your expectations.

So some great time and space to think about your studies, think about your expectations, and what's going to work most for you. Join us tomorrow live from 10:00. Email us in the meantime. We'd love to know what you think. So drop a line to studenthub@open.ac.uk. Fill in our feedback form, and tell your other students and tutors about it. And we hope that you can come and join us tomorrow.

That's all from us today at *The Student Hub Live.* Bye for now, and thanks for watching.