

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?

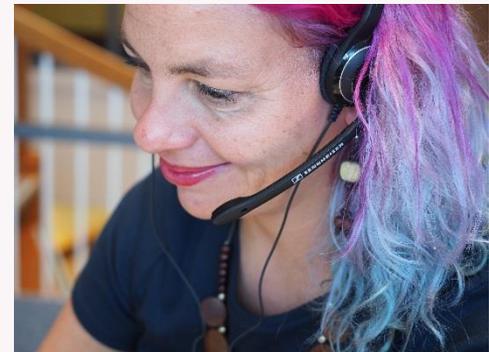
- Arts
- Languages (English & other)
- Social sciences
- Business and law
- Science
- Engineering or technology
- Maths
- Health sciences
- Education
- Sports
- OTHER

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

- Yes last year (any 2018)
- Yes this year (any 2019)
- Yes other
- No (but have listened to one or more recording)
- No (didn't have time)
- No (wasn't aware of before now)

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



Initial polls

What is your main reason for coming along this evening?

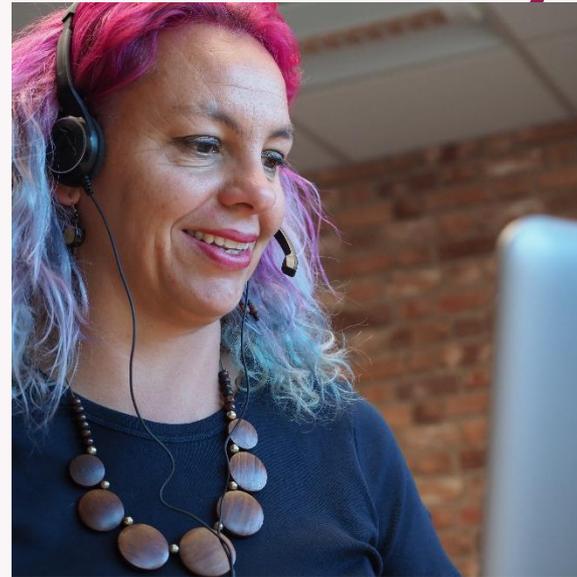
Are you currently...? (please choose the one that is closest)

- part way through a module that began earlier this year (2019) (e.g. February, May)
- on a summer break with next module due to start in October 2019

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.

**Delivering the task, the
whole task and
nothing but the task**

This was our advert...

Have you ever thought you'd written a cracking answer, but not got the grade you expected? Answering the question that is being asked and delivering on the skills that are required is crucial. In this workshop we focus on how to use the guidance you have been provided with to understand not just what to include, but how to do it effectively, economically, and with the right level of detail.

Workshop

- This is going to be a structured workshop covering how to tackle the task that is set
- We'll give some tutor advice and suggestions on areas that are commonly in need of work
- You'll also get the chance to discuss things with others in a small group

Session purpose

- **Is for:**
- Covering how to know what a task is about & how to unpack a question
- Give some guidance about looking for clues and covering what is needed (and not what isn't)
- 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

Initial poll

Have you ever had the feedback that you haven't answered the question that was set?

- Yes
- No

When you read the feedback were you able to see why?

- Yes
- No

Using feedback

- Look at what reasons were given for you not addressing the question that was set
- Was it that you answered a different question?
- Did you miss part of the question?
- Did you miss some other instruction e.g. word limit / sub requirement

What are you making?



What do we mean by unpacking?

- It's:
 - Reading the question
 - Noting the key words
 - Understanding what the question is actually asking

Reading the question

- Reading and answering the actual question is crucial when tackling any question
 - Read out loud
 - Underline key words
 - Possibly make the title into a question

Making a question - poll

What question could you make out of each of these titles? (please answer in the short answer poll available)

- Title 1 – write an essay on the history of chocolate
- Title 2 – write an essay about the American president

Don't change the topic question

- If you do phrase as a question to help you understand make sure you aren't changing the overall topic.
- E.g. what is the history of chocolate is fine
- The 2nd topic – the American president is very open ended, check for additional information or the context (rubric). E.g. history or modern politics – very different

Rubric

- This is the preamble of the question and gives a good indication about what is required
- Look for clues in the information as well as specific instructions
- You may have an overall question but then broken down aspects within the rubric
- E.g. it will set the scene and make it clear what the main topic will focus on

Poll about reading the question

If you are asked to discuss the history of chocolate making select which of the following should not be done:

- Say where chocolate is sold
- Say who invented chocolate
- Say how chocolate is made
- Say where cocoa is grown

Did anyone miss the not?

Whilst the intention is never to trick or catch people out it is very important that you read ALL the words there and don't assume you have read what it says correctly.

Equally don't place more importance on some words than is meant

Process words

- List mean something different from describe which means something different from explain
- Know what each means to know whether you are grasping what you are asked to do
- <https://help.open.ac.uk/process-word-activity>

Considering material

- What information are you going to need to find out? What does the question assume in terms of knowledge?
 - Think definitions
 - Think facts
 - Think what might need to be included

- Back to our history of chocolate question!

Question poll

- What kinds of information do you think you will need to find out to answer the question **write an essay on the history of chocolate?**

(It doesn't matter if you don't know any of the factual content – it is about knowing how to approach a question)

Our ideas:

- What is chocolate
- Does everyone mean the same thing by 'chocolate'
- When was it first produced / made
- Are there key dates to mention?
- Are there key people to mention?

Don't worry!

- Unpacking and understanding the question involves coming up with things that you might need to find out and then considering the material is what that might be
- You aren't expected to know everything before you even start!

Poll time

- Other than what has already been discussed what other clues are there for what needs to be included in an answer? Please use the short answer poll pod provided

Our ideas

- Word count
- Learning outcomes
- Learning objectives
- Tutorials pointed to/ highlighted as relevant
- Topic / book / chapter / resources pointed to / highlighted as relevant

Don't bite off more than you can chew!



Focus on what is being asked and don't overthink the question.

Answer what is asked and not what you want to be asked

Just because you find something interesting doesn't mean it needs to be in your answer

Discussion activity

- Discuss as a group how you can make sure that you understand the question that is being set and the best way to know that you are answering what is being intended rather than anything else
- Please bring back a few points that you can share with the rest of the group.

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 13 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 as a group how you can make sure that you understand the question that is being set and the best way to know that you are answering what is being intended rather than anything else
- Please bring back a few points that you can share with the rest of the group.

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 number in the chat box

If you are only just arriving in this room then unfortunately you have missed the main session. Please log back out and watch the recording which will be available later this evening

So....

- What can people share from their sessions?

Take home message

- Questions are never meant to confuse or trick but you need to understand the language used to be able to answer them effectively
- Remember the context of the question as that will help guide on what would be important

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
- 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)

Online Room summer skills series (Thursdays at 20.00):

18/7 – Developing your academic writing

25/7 – Storytelling or argument; creating an argument in your writing

1/8 – Preparing for the end before you begin

Tonight's slides are available to download from the link provided. Click on the words essay planning 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/>

Send us feedback at

studenthub@open.ac.uk

View past (live) recordings on

www.youtube.com/thestudenthublive

