

149 - Finding your way around small

ISABELLA HENMAN: We're so sorry that there's been technical issues. We're not quite sure what's happened. The mice that are supposed to be running the wheels have gone on strike. Maybe we need to give them some more cheese or maybe chocolate. I realised that it got to be quite a long way through yesterday's broadcast before I mentioned chocolate. And I need to mention how important chocolate is in finding your way around, how important it is in the student journey, how important it is as a key thing to do in terms of Student Hub Live and overall student welfare.

So my name is Isabella Henman and I'm your presenter today. I've got some lovely people hopefully helping out in the chat, if they've managed to get in, so that's Emma and Frank. And Heidi will hopefully be along soon. She's also having a few technical issues at the moment, but we'll try and get to her later. I've got some lovely guests with me today, and I've got Rehana, and I've got Richard, and I've got Alex. So I'm actually going to come to Rehana first. We're going to do things in a slightly different order because of the technical issues. So, Rehana, this session is about finding your way around. You have got a lovely title, which I'm going to hopefully see on screen because I always forget your title. So I think you're Lecturer in EDI, and I'm going to let you finish it for me. Tell me why you want to help our students find their way around today.

REHANA AWAN: Hi, Isabella, and thank you for having me today. It's really good to be here. So my title is incredibly long. So EDI is Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, but I'm also the Academic Lead for Interdisciplinary Studies Open and Access at the OU, as well. So I'm really interested in supporting students who study across different subjects, and try to make knowledge, and bring that together to see what those connections are and how those connections can enable deeper learning, and thinking, and analytical skills, and all that kind of stuff.

So I think supporting students as they start, and are thinking about what they're studying, and why they're studying, and where they're going to go on their journey, is a really important thing to do. So it's really good to be here.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Lovely. So that idea of a student journey is a really important one, isn't it? So all the students that are here today that are watching on the recording-- yourself as a learner, myself as a learner, we're on a student journey. So those first steps on a student journey. Rehana, perhaps you could tell me a little bit about the students that are starting out, our lovely freshers that are starting out and due to begin their modules coming up in October. How do they start that first step on their student journey? How do they help finding their way around?

REHANA AWAN: OK. So, I mean, that's a really good question because it can be quite overwhelming when you first start to study at the OU. There's lots to think about, lots to take in. And also there's lots to reflect on because you're taking on a new identity. So you might have been a mum, a worker, you might be a nurse, or whatever else it is that you're doing in your life. You're then also going to be a student. So it's about taking a bit of a step back, and taking stock and thinking about who you are and what this new identity means. And there are lots of ways that you can do that. And one of those is by familiarising yourself with the website, for example. So we've got StudentHome, and we've got your module website, but there are other places that you can go to for support, as well. So you've got Student Hub Live, you've got OpenLearn, where there are some fantastic free resources that you can look at.

And, of course, there's the OU Ready Induction site, as well, which is a really important part about helping you to navigate your way around what it is and what it means to be an OU student. Because of course, we study, don't we, online and by distance. So that's slightly different to other people. And you need slightly different skills to do that.

And that's a really good place to start, I think, on your student journey, as well as thinking about time management and where you're going to find the time to study, so doing a study timetable. And this sounds almost basic, but it really works. And that's this idea of mapping out your week. You literally-- Monday all the way through to Sunday, starting at the time that you get up and have breakfast. Maybe you walk the dog. Maybe you have to go to work in the daytime or maybe you do a school drop off. But thinking about all of those commitments that you have during the day and then looking for the gaps, and those gaps can be study gaps. And then you can assign those times to yourself. And you can see then how much time you've got in your week to dedicate to study, of course, allowing for relaxation, because that's really important on your student journey, and having fun, as well-- so taking time out for yourself to spend with family, as well.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah, thanks. And that's a really useful thing, and that's very important. Obviously, I started off talking about chocolate. But making sure that you're relaxing and you have time for yourself-- man of our wonderful students are working alongside study, so they're working full-time or part-time. And when I come to Alex later, I know they are working full-- they are working part-time. I think I've got that right. And they're studying alongside. So they will give some useful tips from the student's perspective. And I know Richard, when I come to him, as well, he's got lots of things that he's discussed with students about that time management. Because it was interesting what you said about finding the gaps for study, amongst the other things. I'm going to push back a little bit on that one, actually, Rehana. Because sometimes I think on some of those study calendars, people will go, oh, well, study is the bit that I've got left over. Now, perhaps we could bring it up in the priority.

And I don't know about you, but sometimes I think, you know what? There's some other things that I do that maybe I could delegate to somebody else-- things like the washing up. Somebody else in the household could do that. Or maybe somebody else could cook for you at some point unless, of course, you find cooking therapeutic, which I do very much. And the eating is even more therapeutic. But sometimes when you're thinking about that, what do you think about that, Rehana? Does that resonate or are you going to push back on me again?

ISABELLA HENMAN: No, I think you're absolutely right. I think there are some things that are non-negotiable. So, for example, the school drop off might be your sole responsibility. But then there are other things that you might be able to delegate. And certainly, in my house-- because I'm also studying-- we do have a night that each of us cooks. So that is something that we do.

I'm lucky that I've got kind of teenage daughters or teenage girls. So they also have a turn each night of the week where they will cook. So that just buys me back a little bit more time to do my study. So, yeah, I think there are things that you absolutely can negotiate if you've got other people that you can negotiate with, of course. If it's just the dog and you, then you need to walk the dog.

[LAUGHTER]

ISABELLA HENMAN: I was going to say, can we get the dog cooking the meal? That would be quite an interesting one. I just read part of a book. The only reason part of it is because I had to take it back to the

library because there was a hold on it. But there was a very interesting dog in it, which was very, very human-like in some of the things it did. I thought it was great.

But if I just backtrack a little bit-- so you actually mentioned StudentHome, and I wanted to actually come back to StudentHome in terms of the finding your way around. So some people might get a little bit muddled about some of the terms we mentioned, especially as lots of them have got the word "student" in-- so StudentHelp, Student Hub Live, StudentHome. StudentHome-- can you take us a bit through StudentHome and what students should be looking for there, please, Rehana?

REHANA AWAN: So that's interesting, isn't it? And this is where I would definitely recommend spending time looking at StudentHome and exploring it as well for yourselves. But on StudentHome, you will find a link to your module website. So your module website is likely to be the place that you spend most of your time, because that's where your study materials are, and your study calendar, and information about what you need to be doing each week. And that's where you'll find your tutorials, as well.

But also on Student home, you will find a link to tutorials, so there'll be a link to your tutorials. There's also a link to the ETMA system, which is the Electronic Tutor Marked Assignments system, and that's where you submit your TMAs, your Tutor Marked Assignments. But also there's a link to your study site.

Now, your study site tends to be about the qualification that you're studying. So if it's Psychology, for example, you'll be taken to the Psychology study site. If it's Social Sciences, you'll be taken to the Social Science and Global Studies study site. And on the study site, there's loads of useful information there, as well.

Now, one of the things to bear in mind is that we do have a lot of information at the OU. And it's trying not to be overwhelmed by it-- so prioritising what you need to look at and when. Noting down where you find things is also really important-- so thinking about, OK, so it was on StudentHome that I had the link to the tutorials and the ETMA system. Make a note of that. Have your book next to you. Make a note of these important things, because it can be quite easy to get lost.

There's also the Help Centre on StudentHome, as well, which is worth mentioning. And on the Help Centre, you can get all sorts of information from, I don't know, support with your study skills, writing skills, all the way through to finding mental health support, and information about policies, and all sorts of things on the StudentHelp page, as well.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Lovely. Thank you. So it was given lots of things. And I'm very impressed that you actually managed to say all the different words and the acronyms, as well. Because that was something we found yesterday as we were using these pieces of terminology, and it's like, oh, my goodness me, what do they mean? So we have to say them.

So just one little thing about that, because it came up yesterday, as well. So tutorials and the ETMA system-- you will have a link to the ETMA system. But even if you have to submit a dummy practise TMA, until you've got your tutor allocated, don't submit that. Because it basically doesn't know where it wants to go. So you need to have your tutor allocated for the system to know where that goes to, and the same with tutorials. Most people will find their modules are starting on Saturday the 5th. A couple of modules have a start date this coming Saturday, but most of them start then.

But you've got all this welcome information in advance to have a look through. So the things like the study sites, they're really, really useful because they've got access to things like community groups and things like that, as well, which is great. So in terms of then-- I've just mentioned, Rehana, that the modules are starting in a couple of weeks' time for people. What kind of key tips, other than the ones you've said

already, would you say you would want people to be getting ready so that they are ready and raring to go on that day one of the module? What kind of things, other than what you said, if there's anything else, indeed?

REHANA AWAN: So I'd say, wait to hear from your tutor. Your tutor will contact you usually within the first kind of week of the module. But if you haven't heard from them by the first week, then maybe you can get in touch with them. But they will be in touch.

We've talked about OU Ready. I'd also like to say, if you're an open degree student-- so if you're a student that's registered on a qualification the open degree-- you might also want to do an OpenLearn course, which is called Introducing Multidisciplinary Study at the OU.

That can be really helpful just to help you to navigate the space. Because you're slightly different in that you're not on a named degree, but there's lots of support and community for you. So we've talked about study timetables, study calendars-- oh, a learning journal. It's quite a nice idea.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Lovely. That sounds good.

REHANA AWAN: Lots of modules will talk about it. Thank you. Lots of people talk about learning journals on modules. But it's quite a nice thing to do. And the reason that it's a good thing to do is because a lot of our Tutor Marked Assignments will have a part of it that is about reflective practise. So that's you thinking about you as a student, this new identity, and who you are, and how that's changing, and what you're learning as you go on.

And it's much easier to write those reflective pieces if you're recording that as you go through. You don't have to keep it as a day to day diary. It could be just something that you reflect on after you've read something that was really interesting, that sparked your interest, or got you thinking about something or something that you found actually maybe that you didn't like. And why didn't you like it? What didn't you like it?

Or perhaps there's something that's really challenging you. Why is it challenging you? And then you can write about that, hopefully, when you come to do your reflective pieces in your Tutor Marked Assignments, in your TMAs. Have I missed anything, Isabella? I'm not sure.

ISABELLA HENMAN: I'm just trying to think through all the possible things. Because, as you say, it's so easy to be overwhelmed because there's so many things you can look at. And I'm trying to think what I'm doing when I'm preparing. I think that that study calendar-- and I know some people have the printed out calendars. So I've got some of them-- not that you can see them at the moment, but I've got them printed and they're stuck on my wall here. So I've got the study calendars.

I've got things like dates. Any of the dates that you've got already, putting them in your calendar is quite a good idea. And then just getting yourself ready-- I think some students say, it's OK, the module doesn't start until then. But if you have early access then it's quite useful. And actually, I think despite our technical issues, we actually might actually have some questions that are coming through, which is wonderful. So I'm going to go to Heidi now. Heidi, hopefully you're managing to get these things working. What kind of questions are people managing to get through?

HEIDI: Yeah, sure. So we've had a question through so far from Cheryl. So Cheryl is saying that with her mental health, she likes to have everything planned in advance, which I think is a very, very common thing, Cheryl. So Cheryl's question is, "When will my tutor be allocated, and when can I book my tutorials? I start on the 5th of October." Now, Rehana did just outline then about when-- about when to get in touch

with tutors if you haven't heard yet. But if you wouldn't mind just repeating that, Rehana, for Cheryl, that would be really helpful.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. That's fine. Rehana, are you OK answering that one then?

REHANA AWAN: Yeah, sorry. Thank you. So tutors then are being allocated probably about now, but that doesn't mean you'll see or hear them yet. Because you will get notification on the Start of your module of who your tutor is. So, as Isabella said, by the 5th, by the start of your module, you'll know who your tutor is. And they will get in touch with you in that first week. And if you haven't heard from them by the end of that first week, then you can always email them and get in touch with them.

Now, in terms of booking tutorials, you'll know when you can book them. Because they will show when you click into the tutorials link on your student home page and it will come up, or in your module website. If you go to the module website tab that says "tutorials" and you click into that, it will list the tutorials in your area, in your cluster, all the other tutorials that you can also access.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Brilliant.

REHANA AWAN: There's a thing isn't there, about being a student, about being really keen and wanting to get going? But sometimes doing a little bit of less is more can be helpful. So just taking stock, doing your own OU Ready, putting your dates in the calendar, like Isabella said, getting yourself thinking about your student journey and what it is that you want to achieve will help you to get going. And there is some advice, as well, on StudentHome about managing mental health and mental being, as well, that you'll be able to access.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Absolutely and we do a number of different sessions to do with that within Student Hub Live. It's a particular passion of mine, and I know Alex and Richard may well talk about that later in their slots. So I know from my own module, which isn't due to start until November-- I actually sneakily managed to find last year's calendar, and I've already put potential tutorial dates in based on last year. So you know you said about being keen, Rehana. Yeah. I'm very, very keen on that one. So I have to remember I put question marks. Otherwise I'm going, is this actually a real tutorial or not? And then I have to do it. But, yeah, that's quite an important one to do, as well.

But, yeah, it's this point where I think sometimes it's almost that little bit confusing because you get the early access to parts of the website. But not everything is live until the module actually starts on that official Week 1. So Week 0, the induction week, and so everybody is doing access or Level 1. So that's the majority of our brand new students. You'll have that Week 0 or the-- they'll either call it a welcome week or say Week 0 on the calendar.

And, as Rehana was saying, look at the induction materials. Look at OU Ready. Get ready. If there's a welcome forum, they can be quite a good thing to go into. Have you ever engaged with a welcome forum, Rehana, when you've been studying?

REHANA AWAN: Yes, I have, actually. And I know how daunting it is, because I've been a student, about making that first post. And if I'm totally open with you, which I will be, it took me about three days of when the course had opened to build up the confidence to post. And I'm someone who works in higher education.

So it can be daunting. But it was really lovely to then get people respond to me. And I felt like I was connected with other students that were doing on the same sort of path. So although it's daunting, I do recommend that you go and say hello, and introduce yourself. You might find people who live locally to you, obviously, being careful about what information you release. But there might be study groups in your

area that you can connect with, and possibly meet online with them or even face to face. So it really is worth doing if you want to get the full university experience and feel that you're not too alone, which sometimes studying by distance can be lonely.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. Because that's one of the reasons why we have Student Hub Live. So we're about academic community. Yesterday, somebody said about studying in the metaverse. I have to confess, I don't quite know what that meant, but that's lovely. I'm not sure.

But actually, I wanted to actually talk about Student Hub Live, what we're doing at the moment. And you've actually got academic oversight about Student Hub Live now, haven't you, Rehana? So how does Student Hub Live fit into that community, into the student journey for our new learners, Rehana?

REHANA AWAN: Yes. I'm really excited to be looking after Student Hub Live from an academic perspective, because it is really important in a student's journey. It really does provide an opportunity for students to connect, to ask questions, and get answers like we've just had. It provides a space, as well, for us to come together and share information in real time, which I think is quite interesting.

I like the fact that lots of students also can watch the recordings back. So people can access it at a time that's useful and convenient for them, as well. So it's a really exciting and interesting way of connecting students. And I think we do recognise at the OU that it can be slightly lonely for some people. Some people quite like the idea of working in isolation. And that's absolutely OK, as well. It's whatever works for you.

But for those people who want a little bit more of a connection, then Student Hub Live has that and has some amazing sessions. So, Isabella, you mentioned some of the stuff that you're doing around mental well-being and supporting that. That's really important. And there's also things around helping you to think critically, isn't there, developing your study skills. There's a whole load of stuff that you can also go back and look at. So if you're brand new to the OU and you haven't seen Student Hub Live before, go and have a look at the back catalogue. It's really worth it.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. If you want to be overwhelmed, see the sheer number of sessions that we've been running. But you don't have to look at all of them. But, yeah, as Rehana said, we've got all sorts of things because Student Hub Live has actually been running for 10 years, almost 10 years. We've got a birthday celebration next month, which we're very excited about.

I've been involved-- I came along three years later, and I pioneered all the workshops and things like that. And it's really great, because I remember when I was a student first time around, my first degree wasn't with the Open University. And those ideas of study skills were not something that anybody ever taught me at all. So having to write essays, having to research, I had no idea.

And even when I started studying with the university-- so I started with the Open University as a master's student, and it was straight into doing research. And the module materials are wonderful and they're great, but there was nothing like Student Hub Live. There was nothing like these additional how to find these skills. And I remember thinking, I'm completely by myself, and I've got to try and work out how to do this.

So that's what we're really proud of Student Hub Live, is we sit outside modules, but we've got lots of information. And dip into it. Have a look at what works for you. And just have a go at boosting those skills, because I think it's the skills that are the important thing. Some people call them soft skills and I don't like that term, because that makes it sound like they're not important. And they are.

It's those skills that underlie your learning to enable you to access the information, as Rehana was saying, to enable you to think critically about what you're looking at and to plan. We were talking about time management earlier. And, actually, we do sessions in terms of well-being, neurodiverse community sessions when I have student guests and they discuss their experience. And there's carer sessions, which my colleague Rob does, and where student carers get to discuss.

So we do lots of different things like this. Now, I think we've actually got some more questions that are coming in from Heidi, so I'm going to go to Heidi now. What other questions have been coming in, Heidi?

HEIDI: We do. Yeah, we've got a few coming in now. So first question from Eleanor, "Are you able to see the TMA questions before you start your-- before you start studying the topic?" So at the very beginning of the module, are we able to see the TMA questions?

ISABELLA HENMAN: Excellent. And that's a very, very good one. Yeah. These are the kind of things we should probably should have mentioned earlier. So it depends on your module. So some modules get a printed assignment booklet. And I could have a little scruffle down next to my desk to my printed assignment booklet, but will probably end up doing something weird technically.

So, for instance, if you're on Access, you will get a printed assignment booklet. And that has all of the TMA questions in it, apart from ICMA's if the module has ICMA's, which are Interactive Computer Marked Assignments. Some of the modules do have printed assignment guides. Others, they will be on the module website.

So Rehana mentioned earlier about the link to Tutorials on the module website. There's also a link to Assessment. So have a look on your module website on there. There's a strip that says-- it's Home, Assessment, Tutorials, Resources, News. So if you click on Assessment, it will tell you which TMAs are available. It depends on the module.

So some of them do get published in advance. Some of them come when you need it. And the reason for that, it's not to stress people, like Cheryl was mentioning earlier about wanting to make sure that it was all planned out to help mental health. It's not that we don't want people to know. But some people jump ahead a little bit much, and therefore they might miss out on some of the study experience. So that possibly sounds a little bit weird, but hopefully isn't.

So we've actually got a widget for you if you're able to engage with it. So it's what we call a continuum widget, so you can choose from the extent to which you agree with that. And that widget is, How Confident Do You Feel Finding the Information You Need to Succeed? So Rehana was talking about finding information.

And while that's going, I'm going to go to my next guest, Richard, just to briefly-- and I know I'm changing the order, Richard-- but just about this idea of finding the information. So I know you particularly wanted to talk about the first step to help people find their way around. So we'll get that continuum in a minute. But, Richard, what would you say would be the first step to finding your way around? I think you're on mute, Richard, somehow. I'm not sure how. At least I can't hear you.

RICHARD PEAT: Let's try that. How's that? Is that any better?

ISABELLA HENMAN: That's better. I can hear you now.

RICHARD PEAT: Hello. Wonderful.

ISABELLA HENMAN: You're there.

RICHARD PEAT: Now, all I was saying is the first thing to clarify is I am not a tutor. My role is actually supporting students, and specifically students with some sort of significant barrier in relation to the work

that they're actually doing. So that's where I'm coming from, so I'm a little bit different to everybody else. I'm hearing different voices coming through my headphones.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yes.

RICHARD PEAT: I don't know if anyone else can hear that voice, as well.

ISABELLA HENMAN: That's OK, Richard. Yes. That's fine. We have had lots of ghostly voices today, Richard.

RICHARD PEAT: Yeah. Yeah. IT is fantastic when it works. So the question was, what's the first-- well, basically what I would recommend is if you were going to a red brick university, what would be the first thing you would do is you would explore it. And it's pretty much what Rehana was saying earlier on, as well, is just go and have a look at the Open University materials.

Now, Rehana has mentioned a lot in relation to the actual course elements and the module elements. But bits that I would actually point out is this StudentHome that people are talking about that you go into when you sign in, there's loads, and loads, and loads of different links all over the place. There's a particular row that we usually advise people to look at, which is kind of like the top right hand, a blue list of links. And in there you've got a study link. So that actually looks at things like Connect and Discover, Skill, Plan, Succeed. So don't just click on that and look at the first page, because there's loads and loads of information beyond that, as well. There's Help Centre, as well, which again was also mentioned, covering areas like well-being and funding. Basically anything you ever need to know is in the Help Centre. And it does have a search box, so you can go in there and just search on something, and hopefully stuff will actually come up.

The library-- now, I really, really do want to recommend the library.

ISABELLA HENMAN: I love the library.

RICHARD PEAT: For many students, it's kind of the last place that they go to, but it actually should be one of the first places you go to. And one thing in particular that I know a lot of students get stressed up about is referencing. Where do you go for help with referencing? It's the library. Go to the library and speak to the library staff.

ISABELLA HENMAN: You mentioned the word.

RICHARD PEAT: They've got loads and loads of different talks and everything, as well. So, yeah, definitely go there. There's a community link, as well. You click on that, it lists all of the different groups, including Student Hub Live, and OUSA, and all of the other ones, as well. So actually explore, and have a look at all of those different places and see what there is in there. Again, as Rehana said, there's loads, and loads, and loads of information on the Open University.

It's all virtual. If you're walking around a university building, you'd spot these different offices and information and whatever. Well, obviously we're virtual, so that kind of access to it is through your StudentHome. So do spend some time actually going through and looking at the information there, because probably the vast majority of questions you've got, the answer is in there somewhere. You just have to find it.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah.

RICHARD PEAT: But, as I say, it is through all of those different links. There's IT help, as well, and other stuff like that. So that's kind of what I'd be recommending. Find your way around.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Thank you, Richard. Yeah, There's so many things in there, and that's really helpful. I like this idea of saying about being a virtual university and there's so many things there. And I

think that's a really useful point to make, is that if you were in a brick university you would probably have somebody holding up a sign and saying, first years come here, and that kind of thing.

RICHARD PEAT: That's right.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Whereas we sort of do that. That's what we call the induction. That's what we call these freshers weeks. So you mentioned OUSA, the Open University Students Association. I think they have a series of freshers events that are launching at the weekend.

RICHARD PEAT: That's right.

ISABELLA HENMAN: And that on your Student Home News, which is, again, on the right hand side underneath that Success, Expire, Succeed-- whatever the words were. Sorry, I forgot, Richard.

RICHARD PEAT: Yeah, yeah.

ISABELLA HENMAN: But those kind of events, they're mentioned, so I'm just aware that I think it would be a really good opportunity to actually go to Alex next. Because Alex is one of our students. And we've been talking about the student experience, and actually, Alex is a student. So Alex has been studying for a number of years.

I think actually, if I'm right in saying, Alex, you're actually taking a bit of a study break this year. But you've had some fantastic study experiences so far, not least because I was your tutor last year. And I'm sure they were wonderful study experiences. Anyway, so Alex, what would you like to tell us about? So your student experience, what kind of things do you think are useful to know about starting out?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: I started in 2020, so it was a slightly different experience because we were all in lockdown and all my children were at home. So I was quite glad that I hadn't registered at a regular university, because that would have been really difficult.

For starting with OU-- well, don't panic. The website seems quite overwhelming at first. There's so many different parts to it, but you will use all of them. And just try to enjoy it. Try not to get too caught up in "I need to do everything immediately and know where everything is immediately." It will all come with time.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. I think that's a really key point, isn't it? Because that's why I was saying I was super enthusiastic and snooping on last year's module. It does come in time, doesn't it? And I don't know whether you remember back to 2020, when you first started, but what would you like to tell yourself? If you could go back and say to that first Alex starting out-- other than don't worry, it will come in time-- what kind of other things would you like to have told yourself?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Probably to engage with my tutors more. I was too nervous to email my tutors because I didn't want to be a pain. I didn't want to be taking up their time, when that's their job, really. So, yeah, definitely be more engaged. And you don't have to lock yourself away in an office and talk to no one. There's loads of parts of the website you can talk to other students, and your tutors are great.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Thank you. Not least because, as I mentioned earlier, you were one of the people that came to my tutorials last year. So, actually, we've got a widget that's been launched-- Are You Intending to Attend Tutorials? So, hopefully, people will have a go at that one. So, as a student, we've mentioned about when you can potentially book your tutorials. So we know people are keen on that. Why would you say attending tutorials or watching the recording if you can't attend live, why as a student, was it so important for you, Alex?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: It solidifies your knowledge. So I like to read the content before attending the classes because then, if there was any bits that didn't get in the content, I could ask questions. And

there's little extra bits, and it's just so good for reinforcing knowledge and exposing all those gaps that you've got that you didn't realise you had.

ISABELLA HENMAN: And gaps aren't a bad thing, are they?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Oh, no. It's a good thing to spot gaps, definitely.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. Because I think you said about that being nervous bit-- because I know, as a student, initially I thought, oh, I must be wrong if I don't understand something. That's what the word learning is about, isn't it? You don't have to know everything to begin with. You're learning. I have to remind myself of that so often. And I work for the university as well as studying with the university. But it's like, you do get worried, don't you? And you're thinking, oh, no. Somebody's going to look at me and go, you don't know that? Does it matter? Does it matter if you don't know that? Well, yes, it does when you come to your exam. But you got lots of chance to get through to that, haven't you, Alex, of that practise and asking? And I think you were relatively good about asking me questions. So you'd got past that being worried last year.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Oh, yeah, four years in.

[LAUGHTER]

ISABELLA HENMAN: But I remember I learned lots of things. I learned TL;DR from you, because I hadn't come across that before. So the Too Long; Didn't Read-- have I got that right?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Yes. Yes.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Is that the terminology? Yes, which do you want to explain a little bit about what that means for people who might not be familiar with that expression?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: It was just I have a tendency to send really long, rambling emails. So I always stuck a bit at the end with a summary of the key points of the email because you can get lost in the length of the email. And sometimes that's helpful.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. And I remember, I think I tried to do it for you a couple of times and then I forgot. But you didn't pick me up on it, so hopefully I didn't send too long rambling emails. Maybe you just got fed up by then. I don't know.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: No, yours aren't too bad.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Good. Thank you. I'm glad about that. And Alex hasn't been bribed to say these things, I should point out. They're very honest. They've been very honest with me all the time when I was their tutor. And I learned a lot, which was really helpful. Now, I think we've actually got a question from Heidi for potentially you, potentially me, potentially both of us. So what question have we got, Heidi?

HEIDI: Well, I just want to pick up on a point that Patty has shared with us saying that-- so lovely to have you with us, Patty. So Patty is studying A111, and hoping to do a BA Honours in Arts and Humanities. So Patty says, "One thing that I've noticed is the sheer volume of information available. It can be really quite overwhelming and quite intimidating," which I think is very, very common, Patty. Lots and lots of students feel that way. I certainly did when I started with the OU way back in 2009 as an undergraduate student. But when we're talking about tutorials, one of the questions that Mariam has, which I think that, Alex and Isabella, you'll be really well placed to respond to, is Mariam said, "There are multiple tutorials, so how do we know which ones to select? Should we attend them all?"

ISABELLA HENMAN: Actually, that's a really good question. And it's actually something, Alex, that we discussed, didn't we, about how do you decide on tutorials and actually what one even looks about. So if

we can cover-- I'm sorry to throw you in at the deep end. But what does an Open University tutorial look like, and how did you decide which ones you were going to attend?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: The tutorials are just-- they're like PowerPoint presentation with a chat box down the side. And your tutor will be on microphone. Some of them use cameras, as well. And as the tutors just go through the slides asking questions, and everybody will respond down the side. Sometimes the students will use microphones, as well, which is nice.

And some of the modules might be overwhelming, some of the bigger ones. But, yeah, I went to all of my tutorials, but not necessarily all live, because I was either at work, or dealing with the kids, or something else. I put all of the tutorials into my Google Calendar and then attended the ones I could, and made a note to go back and watch the recordings for the ones that I'd missed.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Excellent. That's really helpful. So when you say you attended all of them-- so in your modules, did you have any ones where there were multiple different ones? I think there were Tutor Group ones, there were Cluster ones, there were Module ones. Did you go to all of those or did you just choose the ones that you thought were useful?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: I went to all of them, because there's not-- at the beginning of the year, there's a really long list. And it feels like there is so, so many of them. But in reality, when you're actually studying, it's one per week, maybe two per week, depending on how many modules you're doing. And it's not as many as it feels. So I just went to all of them or watched the recordings later on when I have more spare time. They were great for revision, as well, when you're coming up towards exams.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Excellent. And I think we've got another question that Heidi has got for us. So, Heidi, what have you got for us now?

HEIDI: Yeah, that's right. So Cheryl has asked, "What times and what days in the week are tutorials?" So it might be quite helpful if we can explain that, obviously, they all vary depending on what it is that you're studying.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. And that's actually quite a good point to raise. So when you get that tutorial list, you'll see the times they are. So most tutorials are in a particular system, which allows you to book them. So Alex was talking about booking them so they knew when they were. And it very much varies. Many modules, they will be in an evening. Some will be daytime. Some will be weekends. They do vary. So, Alex, when you were looking at the ones, I think you probably found there was all sorts of different times, didn't you? And in terms of that, was it just a case of put them all in your calendar and reminder or did you put in a I'm going to be watching the recording of this? How did you practically manage that?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: I have a Notion page, which is a piece of software or a website that you can store notes and times. And use that to manage my student life. And I had a table that was full of all the different classes, and then I would mark them in a certain colour depending on if I was going to attend them or if I was going to watch them later. Then I would go back and check that I'd-- and tick them all off. So that's how I did it. But you could easily do it in a notebook, and just do different colours with a tick box so that if you've attended them or not.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah, lovely. That's really helpful. When I used to have a big wall calendar, I used to all the tutorials on that in different colours. Apart from then, sometimes they got shifted around or something, and sometimes I wouldn't have enough space in the little blocks. So I think if you say you've got this Notion thing, that's probably quite a good idea if it expands. It's not like the little tiny box that you have to try and put things in.

I like colour coding, so I put the different things in different colours in my Google Calendar. You mentioned you use a Google Calendar. Do you use colour on your Google Calendar at all, Alex, or just everything goes in the same colour?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: I had different calendars for each module. So if you're doing more than one module, which at Level 1 I wasn't. I was only doing one. But when I was doing more than one I had two different calendars, two different colours to try and keep track of it all.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Lovely. Excellent. That sounds really, really good. Thank you for that. Now, I'm going to come back to Richard next. Because when Richard and I were discussing this, we were having this discussion about this idea of being a normal student or not. And now, Richard, what did you want to say about this idea of whether there was a normal student or not? You said you support students. Do you ever see a normal student?

RICHARD PEAT: Yes. No. What we see is lots and lots of different individuals who are all completely different. And I think that's one of the things you need to take on board, is that you are you, and you do things in your particular way, and your brain works in the way that your brain works. So while the OU actually provides guides and guidance on a structure and a way that you can actually be going through your studies, it doesn't mean you've got to be forced to go through that. If you do things in a slightly different way, then do it in a slightly different way.

A good example is-- one of the things that we do recommend to students if they're particularly having problems in trying to get assignments done or whatever, is something known as the Pomodoro Technique, which is basically where you have 20 or 25 minutes of intense study and then a break of 10 minutes, and then you come back and do another 20, 25 minutes of study. Now, with some of the students that I've worked with, it's kind of like a magic box. Suddenly, everything starts working for them. But for other students, it doesn't work in the slightest. That's not the way that they work.

So I'd use myself as an example, that my brain's a bit like a car engine. Takes a while to warm up. So by the time it actually gets up to speed, I'm going to keep going at that speed. Because if I switch off, I'm going to have to warm up again. Everybody's different, so it's actually recognising where you're coming from, so thinking about learning styles and all aspects in relation to that. And, again, there's lots of information in the Help Centre on identifying your learning styles and all of that. There's so much stuff in there.

So, yeah, I think being self-aware as to who you are as a person and who you are as a student is really, really important in the way that you actually attack and organise your studies, and knowing where your weaknesses and where your strengths. If you've got particular weaknesses, then focus on trying to get those sorted.

ISABELLA HENMAN: And there's nothing wrong with having weaknesses. Alex was saying earlier about the gaps. And it's fine. Weaknesses are fine.

RICHARD PEAT: Absolutely.

ISABELLA HENMAN: You know what? They happen. We're learning. We're on a study journey. We all are. I think we've got a question that's come in for you, Richard. So I'm just going to go to Heidi to find out what that question is. Heidi, what do people want to pin Richard down about?

HEIDI: Yeah. I wondered if Richard will be able to help with responding to this one. So it's a question that's come through from Eleanor. And Eleanor would like to know, "Are all OU examinations online now,"

Richard? Eleanor keeps coming across some conflicting information and assumes that some of it is outdated. So is that something you might be able to just clear up for us, Richard?

RICHARD PEAT: No. I'm not a tutor.

[LAUGHTER]

ISABELLA HENMAN: Thank you.

RICHARD PEAT: Just in relation to some of the students that we work with, there-- well, what they all have-- and you tutors amongst here will know this far more in detail than me-- a final assessment. Now, that final assessment could be an exam. It could be an assignment. It could be even a meeting up and actually doing an activity. There's loads and loads of different types of them. Some of them are timed, some of them are not timed, so they're all different.

And the way that you find out, as they've been pointing out, is go and have a look in the Assessment Centre. And when you actually-- your full module opens up, you can actually scroll down and actually look to see where everything is. And I think one of the things that I would always recommend to students is identifying when your assignments are due, and also when your final assessment is and what you need to do for that. And if it is an exam that you're needing to do online, then actually making sure you know when that is, if you need to do any revision for it.

But they're all different. Every module is very, very different in different ways. So make sure you work out exactly how it is. So there's no one answer to that question, I'm afraid. It depends on the module that you're doing. Did I answer that OK?

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. I think it's an interesting one. I think because it's this idea of conflicting information is because everything is different. So I know, and Alex had experience of this in last year because one of their modules had an exam. Now, many modules, if they've got an exam it is a remote exam, which basically means you do it from home. You have a set time when you're going to be doing it, and you will be told about that.

All of the exams are in a set time period and that's already published through that Help Centre, that information that Richard said about, because they published them sort of about 24, 36 months in advance. But you'll then get the actual day and date nearer to it. Now, the reason why there might be some other conflicting information is because there may be some modules that do have face to face exams because of professional qualifications or professional recognition. So it's not that we're trying to be conflicting.

But, as Richard said, there are quite a few things that are different. It's really frustrating because we want to give you all the answers, but we can't give you any one answer. And I saw this incredibly scary graph the other day. Richard, you've probably seen it, and Rehana, I'm sure you have, as well, about the assessment policies and the number of different assessment policies there are at the university.

And they want to actually streamline them so that they're now only going to be something like 28 different assessment policies, which shows that if the streamlined version is there's only 28, goodness me, how many were there originally? So, yeah, hopefully that answers that question for Eleanor there. Not trying to be awkward, but just we can't give you any one answer.

So, Richard, you say you support students, and we've sort of touched on this a little bit. But in terms of reaching out for support, what would be your best recommendation for our new students in terms of reaching out for support? How would they do that? And why is it such a good idea?

RICHARD PEAT: I actually wrote down this answer, so let me see if I can find it. Now, where is it? Because there's a button that you can actually press that's contacting someone in the OU. That was it. Yeah, I've found it now. So, again, if you go to the Help Centre there is a Contact the OU button at the top. So if you click on that, it actually provides you with all of the contact details of people that you can actually get in contact with.

Now, the first one on that is going to be your Student Support team. So if you've got any questions or issues in relation to your module-- not necessarily the content, because that would be your tutor that you need to speak to-- you've got the Student Support team. But there's also links to, again, Library Service. I mentioned the Library Service again, how much they can actually help you. IT Help Desk-- that's in StudentHome, as well. There's the Disability Support Team, as well. I think we've mentioned OUSA and Student Hub Live.

There's loads of different people in there. But if you get stuck and you're not quite sure where to go, then phone your Student Hub Live. Not Student Hub Live-- start again-- Student Support Team. Because they'll be able to point you in the right direction. There's loads of information in there, but that's the best way to do it.

And what I would highly recommend is, if you do get stuck, ask. It's something that Alex was saying earlier on, and it's something we find quite a lot with students who we've had referred to as who are struggling. And when you do speak to them, it's because they're frightened of asking. And I think one of the things that I would highlight straight away is the OU is not school. So whatever experience you may have had at school, put it to one side. The OU is not school.

So do make sure that you actually do ask questions. Your tutor is not going to tell you off for asking a question. They are there to help you, so do remember that. Do ask them questions, and they will reply to those questions. And once you take that on board, that's going to help you.

Another thing that I would highlight, as well, is there is no expectation from the OU that you're going to start being brilliantly fantastic, getting great scores from assignment one. In fact, the expectation is you're not going to do as well at the start, and you'll get better as you go along because you're learning.

And you can make mistakes. You can even fail an assignment and still pass the module. But that's what it's all about. So recognise it's a learning process. People are there to help you. They're not trying to trip you up. They're actually there to try and help and support you.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. And that's a genuine. As tutors, we're here to support, the Student Support Team, the other support advisors. Now, we actually asked-- on one of the continuums we asked earlier-- hopefully, we can get that widget showing-- about whether people feel confident of asking for help and knowing where to help. So if we can just show that now-- and, actually, it's really encouraging because, actually, most people are quite confident, which is good.

So it's clearly those of us that are guests at the moment, we're all the ones that are being overwhelmed with everything. But everybody watching is quite happy. So what I wanted to move on to next is possibly something a little bit lighter. And I wanted to talk about motivation and rewards. So I'm going to come to you first, Richard, then I'm going to come to you, Alex, afterwards about this.

So I know when we were talking-- when we were planning earlier, Richard, when we were talking about this, about student motivation, we talked about a long journey. And Rehana and I were talking about that earlier. So sometimes people might go, you've got so many things. You've got all those deadlines, and

you've got all these things to do. How do you reward yourself, Richard? How do you keep your motivation?

RICHARD PEAT: Oh, yeah, I've prepared for this one as well. I like to be prepared, like some of the people out there. OK. So my answer was, I'm not much of a cake eater and I don't eat chocolate either. But something that I actually do enjoy doing is just to do something that has absolutely nothing to do with study at all, so I can completely switch off from it and do something completely different. So if I have completed a piece of work or completed an assignment, my way of actually, say, rewarding myself is to go for a walk, watch a film, read a book, go and visit a friend, something like that. But it's not study-related.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah.

RICHARD PEAT: This is where the water comes to help me.

ISABELLA HENMAN: It does, doesn't it? Yes, I think because I deliberately didn't mention it again because I get a bit obsessed talking about cake and chocolate. But, yes, my motivation-- and I thought I'd bring that one in later. But, no, I'll bring it in. Yeah, my motivation, my reward is often cake and chocolate-related. But, actually, the idea of going out for a walk is quite a good one. So, Alex, if I come to you to talk about motivation, so there's the two sides of it-- what motivates you and what kind of reward do you have? So perhaps you could share a little bit about that for us, Alex.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: I reward myself with food.

ISABELLA HENMAN: You are muted at the moment. Now you're there.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Better?

ISABELLA HENMAN: You're back. You're back, yes.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Fabulous. I'm like you. I tend to reward myself with food. I tried not to so much this year, because when you're doing quite a lot of assignments fairly rapidly, that's a lot of food. [LAUGHS] But, yeah, I do the going out for a walk, as well. I reward myself with doing activities that have got absolutely nothing to do with uni. Yeah, and just giving you-- taking the time. To give yourself a k on the back when you're done, as well, can also be a really good reward.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. And that was about recognising that you've achieved something. I think sometimes you can get-- you said about the multiple different deadlines and things, and you can get so caught up with, I've got to do this, I've got to do this, that sometimes you just sort of forget, well, actually, look at how much I have done.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Yeah. I definitely did.

ISABELLA HENMAN: How do you do that?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Yeah.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Well, I just take a step and go, I need to actually reward myself for finishing this, not move straight on to the next thing and just pile it all on. Yeah, definitely scheduling in time for downtime was really important.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. And, Rehana, you were talking as well, weren't you, about having that relaxation time. So, Rehana, do you have a particular reward? Are you like Alex and I? Are you a food reward or are you a nice, good person like Richard and has a non-food reward?

REHANA AWAN: I try not to reward myself with food because, as Alex said, when you're doing a lot of work, it can get quite-- well, you can pile on the pounds, can't you? So I try to get fresh air, actually. That

is my main thing is trying to get outside, get fresh air, or going to the gym, or maybe watching guilty pleasure TV-- that kind of thing that nobody else wants to watch because it's so bad, but it's so good. So they're the sorts of things that I do, or also reading. Because when I study, I find that my brain is all about reading the text, or the work, or the research that I should be reading about. But then I might go, actually, I get to read a chapter of my book that I'd really like to read. So there's loads of different ways that you can reward yourself.

But the thing is to reward yourselves is actually to make sure that you do do that. Because you are doing something really amazing. You're working really hard. You're studying. You're possibly managing family, and work, and other commitments. So do reward yourselves when you study, because you deserve it.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. And I think going back to were talking about having that reflective journal early on, weren't you. And I think maybe put something in that reflective journal and say, remember to reward yourself. I think, yeah, it's a really interesting one for me to think about. Because I think reflecting-- I never used to do reflection, Rehana, at all. I just used to go, why would you do that? It's not learning. So if we actually think what is useful about-- if I can even say it-- what is useful about reflecting, Rehana?

REHANA AWAN: So, on all sorts of levels, reflection is a really good skill. And I know people go it's just navel gazing. It's just looking inward and thinking about yourself. But actually, by thinking about who you are, what it is about you, what it is that makes you happy, makes you sad, makes you a good student, hinders your studies-- all of those sorts of things can help you to develop, to be a better student or to think about the reasons.

For example, I was just-- a friend messaged about being addicted to their phone. And, actually, if you reflect on the reasons that you're addicted to your phone-- and I think you're being addicted to your phone is quite a strong thing to say. But the phone is quite a key part in your studies and it can really cause a distraction.

So if you think about what is it-- so it's the idea that you get absorbed in something, it takes you away from your day to day. And the algorithms are designed to make you addicted. But if you reflect on why you're doing that-- is it avoidance tactics? Is it that you're finding what you're doing is quite difficult? You can actually then start to think about strategies to overcome those difficulties and that addiction.

So when I'm going to sit down to study, I'll make sure I leave my phone in a different room. So reflection can help you to identify where you are, where you would like to be, and then what you need to get there. And that's all by thinking about who you are, what you're doing, and how you're doing it. And you can do that in the context of your learning, as well.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Great. Thank you. That's really useful. I know this is changing the topic slightly, but we've had a question come in which I think would be a good one to go to Alex for because it relates back to we were talking about tutorials, Alex. And Kaylee has said, "Will I benefit more from attending the live tutorials or can I get what I need from recorded?" So as a student, what would be your advice there, Alex?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: There's actually benefits to both. So if you watch the recorded ones, you can either watch them on a faster speed or a slower speed, or you can pause parts. So sometimes they can be easier to follow, but then you won't get the interaction with the other students. So if you attend the live ones, you can interact with your tutor. You can interact with the other students. So there's definitely benefits to doing both. So definitely some of the classes I did do both for the same class. I would go to the live and then rewatch it recorded.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Excellent. Thank you. And I think, yeah, I remember when I was a student, I was in an international group and we were all in different places. So some people, it would be 7 o'clock in the morning, some people, it would be 8 o'clock at night, and some people would be the middle of the day. So I think having that recorded was really useful. Because, depending on the time, some of us would be really tired or not. And, yeah, going back and watching again-- because you get something different out of it.

Now, we know we asked earlier-- we put a widget up about whether people were intending-- this is so hard to say-- intend to attend tutorials. So, hopefully, we can show the results of that one. And, actually, I think the results here look really, really encouraging. So 94% of our people say yes, but there's a few people that are not sure. So hopefully, Alex, you've given them quite a good plug about what would be good about going to tutorials there.

So I know there's one other thing that we discussed when we were planning, Alex, which we were both really keen to mention and we haven't said yet, which was about the OU email address. And we remember we had lots of discussions about this because of finding it. Now, in OU Ready, which has been mentioned a couple of times, it does mention about things like student discounts. And part of the student discount is getting the OU email address for students, isn't it, Alex? Tell me why you found it so useful to get that.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Well, yeah. All the discounts that you apply for on the websites, you need the OU email address for. And also, I think you use it to access Office 365, as well. So it's definitely a useful thing--

ISABELLA HENMAN: Can you explain a bit about that?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: --to get. Offices is your free access to Microsoft Word, Excel, and all those other programmes that you'll need to create your assignments. You just get your email address and password, and you should be able to just log straight in.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Excellent. Yeah. And I think we're not saying that the world is run by Microsoft. But if you can get free software-- because I know we didn't used to be able to have that and people were saying, oh, crumbs, it's so expensive to buy the software. But the fact that it is available for free is actually quite a useful thing. Did you use any of the other things like the-- I think there's a learning journal type thing in there. Did you use anything like that within your Office 365, Alex?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: No, I don't think so, only the stuff that I needed for assignments. But I know lots of people do.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. And, again, that's the good thing about the fact that we're all different, we all have different things to do. So we were talking about rewards earlier and things. And I think, Heidi, if I go to Heidi, there's been a number of people sharing what their rewards were. And maybe you could share what yours is first, Heidi, and then do what other people are sharing.

HEIDI: Mine is definitely food. Definitely, definitely food with no hesitation, so chocolate as well. I love chocolate and I love cake. But I guess I could be virtuous and say, I like to go out and have fresh air, but actually, I just want to sit and eat a bar of Galaxy as my reward. But Laura is the same. She said, "I have chocolate with me right now. Nothing wrong with chocolate." I agree, Laura. Very, very good advice. Eleanor says, "I love birdwatching. So I try to have all of my work done in time to go on a walk while it's still light outside. It's great because as a built-in deadline. There's no way I can change when the sun sets." So I think that's a really good one. And watching the birds is lovely. I've got a mirror here, actually,

Eleanor. And I put all of the bird feeders out. I've got lots of greenery in my garden and I've got woods behind me. I'm so lucky, so I can sit and watch all of the birds. And it is lovely. It's a lovely way to pass some time, isn't it?

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. In the summer, I always take my computer outside. And, in fact, I think Alex got a number of my tutorials last year where I was in the greenhouse or was in the garden or something. But there's some sparrows that live locally. And they make me laugh so much because they just chat away to each other all the time and they just keep going.

And I heard them this morning. I was like, what's going on? And they were in the corner of the drainpipe just having a discussion. I don't know. Do sparrows discuss? I'm not sure. But it's been really useful today. Even though we had the technical problems to begin with, we had some useful ideas. If I was to summarise, I think Rehana's idea about reflecting-- even though I said, I'm not so good at myself-- hopefully, you'll take on board Rehana's ideas about this idea of reflection. And Richard's exhortation to have a good look around, see what's there, look through things, reach out, contact people-- if you're not sure who to contact, contact your student support team.

And Alex's ideas of it doesn't matter if you've got gaps in your knowledge-- it doesn't. We all feel guilty. We all feel bad. We all have such a tendency to be down on ourselves sometimes, especially when you think, I don't know. I can't find my way around. I'm not quite sure where to go. I don't really know what I'm looking for. But the information is there. Have a look around.

Now, I'm going to give a little task to each of my guests. If you could summarise in one sentence, what you would like your take home message to be to our viewers-- so that's one sentence. I'm going to be quite strict with this one. So I'm going to come to you first, Rehana. What would you like to say?

REHANA AWAN: I would say, you're not alone and reach out for help if you need it.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Thank you very much, Richard, what about you?

RICHARD PEAT: Don't expect to be firing on all cylinders straight away.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Thank you very much.

RICHARD PEAT: Learn.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Alex, what about you?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: I would say, be "scave," which is be scared, but brave.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Oh, fantastic. Say that word again.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: "Scave."

ISABELLA HENMAN: Did you say "scave?"

ALEX FITZPATRICK: I use it with my children all the time. Yeah, "scave," so mixing--

ISABELLA HENMAN: Brilliant.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: --being scared of being brave at the same time.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Wonderful. And what about you, Heidi? What would be your one sentence take home message for everybody?

HEIDI: Just take it one day at a time. It will all be absolutely fine.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah, thank you. And I think I'd summarise that, as well. We're all on a learning journey. Chocolate helps that, see. Because I'm the presenter, I get to have more than a sentence. But that's OK. So chocolate supports the learning journey. Go out, look at your world. Honestly, I'm a strong proponent. I might be saying about chocolate, but I love being outside.

Make the use of the fresh air. If you can study outside when the weather's OK, study outside. We're all on a learning journey. It is a journey. You don't have to be perfect. Please don't expect yourself to have to be perfect. We've exemplified that very well today with the technical issues, and different things, and whether or not we can do the answers or not. But hopefully, we've given you some really good ideas about how you can find your way around. And I hope that you really enjoy your OU study.

[MUSIC PLAYING]