

Busting some myths around academic integrity

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[MUSIC PLAYING]

ISABELLA HENMAN: Good morning, and welcome. My name is Isabella Henman, your host for today. This is our Student Hub Live broadcast, entitled Busting Some Myths about Academic Integrity. And we're running this special session because often, students say to us, well, we don't really know what academic integrity means.

Often, people might be relatively new. People might be from different backgrounds. And they may be just thinking, I'm not really sure, and I'd like a little bit of help. So I've got a number of guests with me today who are going to be sharing some of their ideas and some of their suggestions. And hopefully, we're going to give you some really good ideas.

Now, in terms of some practicalities, you can interact in the chat. You can chat as much as you like. And Student Hub Live is about community. So we do welcome talking about snacks, about animals, about the weather and all things. And when I come to Avril in a moment, she's going to let me know what has been discussed.

If you find the chat is moving a little bit too fast for you, then you can see there's a little pin button, and that will stop it. And so you can read it. And then, when you press the pin again, you can scroll back down.

And just for practicalities and safety reasons, please don't share any personal information in there. You've got your first names there. Please don't share other things like phone numbers, email addresses, personal information, and that and so on, just to make sure everything's OK.

So I said I was going to be coming to her, so Avril has been looking at the chat so far. So what have we been talking about so far? Avril, hello? Oh, I don't think Avril can hear me, which is a real shame. But I know-- I was told a few things-- so I know, for instance, people have been talking about fingerless gloves. Now, these are my very special recycled cashmere fingerless gloves, which I only use for things like this. They're so cosy. And I know people have been talking about snacks. And before we started, I was talking to the different guests. And we were sharing what we'd had for breakfast.

So I think there was Crunchy Nut cornflakes. There was crumpets. There was coffee. No, I don't really do coffee. But there was different things. So if you do want to share, we like discussions about chocolate, as long as it's dark chocolate. But just so I know, is Avril able to hear me yet? Can Avril share anything?

AVRIL MOORE: I can.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Lovely, Avril.

AVRIL MOORE: Hi Isabella. So we have got loads of fabulous people in the chat this morning. We've obviously had to have the discussion about weather. So we have got Kim in Shropshire. She's wearing

lots of layers. People are suggesting the Oodie is the way forward, for sure, when it's this kind of weather. Get that on my Christmas list.

And we've got Carol in the very wet Scottish borders. But I think the prize so far has got to go to Sawari from Stuttgart, who, it's this beautiful, lovely, mild day out there, and it's sunshining.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Oh, we are jealous.

AVRIL MOORE: So yeah.

ISABELLA HENMAN: It was raining on my way into the studio this morning. I had my windscreen wipers going brrrr, super, super, super fast. So thank you. So Avril I'm going to come to a number of times. Avril is sort of my bridge to the chat.

But I've also got Joe, and I've got Amy in the chat. And they're going to be answering your questions along the way, as well. And you can see pictures of them now. They won't be live on camera, but they will be answering questions. And we may have a few other members of the team, as well.

So my first guest today is John. And John is basically going to be known as reassuring Uncle John, otherwise known me, because I keep thinking of it, as fluffy Uncle John. But John, tell me, why do you want to be known-- when we're talking about academic myths and academic integrity, why reassuring Uncle John, John?

JOHN WOODTHORPE: This came from our earlier discussion when we were preparing. And I was trying to get across the point that this shouldn't be terrifying to the majority of students, that students should be reassured that we want to support them. We want to help them to find out what good academic practise is and to learn things like referencing and quoting and how to use sources in your assignments.

So most students get a bit worried about all of this. Rather than let that fear grow, we want to try to reassure people that the university wants to support you, wants to help you. There's a very small minority that deliberately try to cheat. And we try to find those and deal with them.

But for the rest of the students who are wanting to do their own work, we want to support you in that. So it's that reassurance that I wanted to give.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Right. Thank you, John. And I think that's quite an important thing, isn't it? Because you're talking about the support to help students do things. Now, I know that I'll probably come back to this a number of times during the day, but this idea that, as soon as you start, you suddenly know everything about academic integrity. You know how to write. You know how to reference. That's not really true, is it, John?

JOHN WOODTHORPE: No, absolutely not true at all. And that's why we try in a lot of our teaching materials to provide that kind of guidance. Now, if you're doing your first module, your first undergraduate, stage 1 module, we don't expect you to be perfect.

I've chaired such modules. I've tutored on such modules. And generally, right at the start, you're really impressed if people are trying to reference. And you're not getting worried about the fact that they haven't put the quotes exactly in the right places or the italics or commas or whatever.

It's the fact that you're doing it that shows that you're engaging with the process, that you're learning what to do. And we want to help reinforce that and help you to improve.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Absolutely. And I think, even if we take this a little bit of a step back almost-- so you can see that we've got a question across the bottom of the screen. Where would you go for support in writing in your own words?

And in actual fact, we're talking about referencing. But we don't actually want to talk about referencing yet, do we? Actually want to talk about writing in your own words. So what does that mean to you, John?

JOHN WOODTHORPE: It means that you have read around the subject. You've thought about what you're being asked to do. And you then write what your thoughts are on it. You might have made notes on it. But you don't just reproduce those notes. You provide your own interpretation, your own thoughts. This is my understanding of the things that I have learnt. And so it's as if you were explaining it to a friend or a member of the family.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. And actually, thinking about that, so there's your understanding. But bear in mind that it's your understanding as a university student, isn't it, John?

JOHN WOODTHORPE: Yes, exactly. So you're going to be looking at what the questions are asking you to do. You're going to be making sure that all of the time, you are answering the question as far as you possibly can.

And you're going to use words that will address those particular issues. But they are not going to be copied straight out of the sources that you have read, whether that's the module materials or anything else that you've seen in other places, books or online.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yep. So it's interesting. Because I was trying to run a tutorial, I think it was last week. And I put in something like this. And I essentially said, what's the relation between twingle-wangles and wingle-wolks? And students looked at it. And they went, we don't know what you're talking about. But that's because sometimes, that's how we look at terminology. We see this word, twingle-wangle or whatever it is, and go, oh, my gosh. That's really scary, isn't it? That's a piece of terminology. I don't know what it means. I can't use that word. But if twingle-wangles or wingle-wanks is part of your module, you use those terms, don't you, John?

JOHN WOODTHORPE: Yes. Yes, absolutely.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Though, obviously, they won't say that. Because I've just made them up. But it's that using terminology, isn't it, John?

JOHN WOODTHORPE: Yes, yes. You have to remember that this is a university, and we are expecting things that aren't just casual conversation. We're expecting things that analyse the subject and, depending on what your module is, might require you to do extra research to put together a report or to solve some equations and do all sorts of things that you wouldn't necessarily have to do outside of the

university. And all of that, whether it's numbers, words, sounds, pictures, reports, anything like that, should be your own work.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah, so that's an interesting thing. So you mentioned equations. Now, I know, John, you're involved in maths and computing. And we may have some students here that are thinking, but how do I do that in any different way? Because it is-- it is the answer. So can you tell us a little bit about how you would demonstrate writing in your own words when it comes to maths and computing, John?

JOHN WOODTHORPE: That's a really important point. So often, there is a right answer for a lot of the things that might be asked. But the important aspect of a lot of those questions is not actually getting the right answer. It's explaining the things behind the process that took you to the answer that you gave. So it's not just a matter of saying 2 plus 2 equals 4. It's explaining the steps that you took to get to that particular point. If it's a computer programme, if it's a series of mathematical equations, it's pointing out the various things that the question will ask you to do to show your thinking, to show your working, rather than just giving the answer, double underlined and rule off, as my old maths teacher at school used to say.

So there's-- I have given marks, I have given high marks, for questions-- for answers where the numerical answer has been wrong just because of a tiny slip towards the end of it. But the explanation and the working that's been shown has convinced me that the student knew exactly what they were doing and just made a silly mistake. So they lost a few marks.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah, so that's an interesting point. Because I know with some of my students, I say, yeah, you've got it right, but I don't know how, so your workings. Or equally, sometimes I'll say, yeah, you're right. You're right. This is where you've gone wrong.

But I can give the marks for the bits that are right. Because I can see the understanding. And that's what we're trying to convey, this idea about what's gone into here, not what have you read and what's over there?

And we've had a question come in from the chat where a student has said, when I'm making notes, how do I actually make them in a way that demonstrates my understanding? Can you give us a little bit of an idea about that, John?

JOHN WOODTHORPE: It depends very much on the subject area. And I'm from a STEM background, and so I'm used to things that are perhaps more numerical-based, more direct fact rather than interpretation. But we still have a need to write reports.

I suppose things like when you are making your notes, if you are using direct quotes, indicate them in your notes. And then look at them later when you come to do the writing up and see, do I actually want to use that quote as it is, in which case, I must indicate that it's a quote and reference it? Or am I just using that to direct my thinking? And when I use the information that's in that, I will rewrite it. I will say it how I would say it, and I will interpret it in the light of the question that I've been asked.

There are other folk that you'll be talking to later who are better placed to talk about more essay-based things. And there's some help on OpenLearn for people who want to learn more about writing in their own words. And indeed, that's also in the Student Help Centre.

So there's plenty of places to go and look, depending on your subject area. And I'd certainly recommend some of the OpenLearn content, which does try to split things down into different subject areas so that if you're an art student or a social science student or a computing student, there's things there that try to put it into context for you.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah, I think that's a key thing-- the context for you. And when you said earlier about that idea about the quotes, I know I've had students in the past who've said, oh, well, I didn't realise that I'd copied. Because I just put that information in my notes. And then I used my notes. And I assumed, because they were my notes, they were OK.

So it's this idea about not actually copying anything ever into your notes so that then, your notes are genuinely this contextual part of your understanding. So you mentioned those OpenLearn courses, and I think we can show a couple of those on screen at the moment so people can see what we're talking about.

So OpenLearn is a bit of a sister part to the university. So there's All My Own Work-- Exploring Academic Integrity, which you can see at the moment. The links are available from the event web page. And you can work through these. These are free courses that you can do online.

And there's lots of different pieces of information. And there's also the Developing Good Academic Practise. Now, I know some of my students in some of my modules actually get pointed to looking at some of the parts of this so they get the understanding.

Because it goes back to what we were saying earlier in this, that you need to develop it. You need to actually think about it. It doesn't just suddenly come. I wish it did. I really wish we could just say to all of you, here you go. You can just do it. But it's about applying your knowledge.

Now, we asked the, where would be the main place you would go for support in terms of writing in your own words earlier? Avril, what kind of things have been coming? What have students been saying to us?

AVRIL MOORE: So we've had quite a few different options in the chat. First of all, what I do need to say, there's a lot of love for John's jumper in the chat and his very reassuring words. So that definitely needs to be fed back.

Julie and Holly would ask their tutor for support. And Marie goes to the library for her support. And there's also been a book mentioned called Cite It Right, which some people have come across. Mark is saying that he's really thinking this session is going to be really helpful for the next assignment that he's got coming up, which is great. And then Amy's just reinforcing the message that this is a skill, and people aren't going to be perfect straightaway so to use the resources that are there.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Absolutely. Yeah, I think that's the key thing. There's lots of resources. That's what John was saying about being reassuring Uncle John. Because we want to reassure you. Honestly, what John was saying earlier about this idea that there are some students who are very naughty and do try and cheat, we're not assuming that anybody watching us wants to cheat.

You want to demonstrate your understanding. You want to show how brilliant you are. And how do you show how brilliant you are? By conveying that understanding. What's in there? What's gone in there? Get it out. Explain.

That's why what John was saying earlier about explaining to somebody else-- explaining to a member of the family, explain to the dog, explain to the cat, whoever. If you can explain things, it helps, the same way as what we're trying to do today, actually.

Because we could say, yes, we work for the university. We're tutors. We're module team. We're whatever. We know what academic integrity is. But actually, how do we convey that? We're not just restating that s that you can read in the courses. We're trying to explain it in a way that helps.

So John, I know that you've also said to me a little bit about-- you said to me when we were discussing planning about not fretting the small stuff. Could you tell us what you mean by that, John?

JOHN WOODTHORPE: It goes back to what I said earlier about if you are using quotes and you're giving a reference, don't get too carried away by absolutely having the italics and the quotes and things in the right place. But also, don't get so bogged down in all of the details, in all of the minutiae, that you forget to answer the question.

That's the absolute key part. You can have wonderful use of external resources, perfect quoting, and so on, and yet you haven't answered the question. That has to be the key. And everything else is secondary to it, that you are looking at the question, you're addressing it, and you're answering it in your own words.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. And that's quite interesting. And it reminds me we've got an image to show you here, which is this idea about not getting confused. So this image should show the idea of the wood and the trees.

So I selected this one because you could look at this image, and you may see a wood, a forest overall. Or you may look at it. And you may see some individual details. You can see individual trees. You can see little blades of grass. You can see-- I don't know what that white thing is in the middle. I'm not really that sure.

But sometimes you get so fixated on looking at that tiny blade of grass, of trying to work out exactly where the comma is in your reference, that actually, you don't step back. What's the forest? What's the question? What are you demonstrating with that?

Now, that might resonate with some people. Sometimes when I use metaphors, they help some people. They don't others. But I think that's this idea. So John, does the wood and the trees thing, does that resonate with you at all?

JOHN WOODTHORPE: Well, with someone whose surname means "wooden village," then, yes, I'm very familiar with those kinds of things. But yes, more seriously, it is the stepping back, that looking at the overall picture, making sure you've answered the question, knowing where you want to go, to mix the metaphors again.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah, I think that's the idea. Sometimes, I know when I used to write essays-- I haven't had to write anything for a while like that-- but even when I'm planning, so when we were thinking

about this session, what do we want to do? What's the message we want to create? And what's the message we want to convey-- sorry, not create?

So we talked about that, John, didn't we, and what would we like to get over? So actually, we talked about busting some myths about academic integrity. Now, we haven't actually defined it, have we? So John, can you define academic integrity for me?

JOHN WOODTHORPE: If you look online, you'll see all sorts of official definitions. And we're actually having a bit of a debate internally in the university about which words we should use. I'm more comfortable with good academic Practise as a terminology, which, again, brings in what you were talking about earlier, that it's not perfect from the start. It's like playing a musical instrument or learning to drive a car. You pick it up gradually as you go along.

So I'd say it's being honest with yourself. It's being honest with your tutor. It's being honest with the university and the teaching materials and knowing that, whether you've got a good mark or not, you've done the best you can with it.

So it's your work. It's not other people's content that you've taken from somewhere, from an essay mill site or another student or anything like that. It's a sort of do to others as you would be done by. What would you like other students to be doing?

Would you like them to be cheating on assignments? Would you like them to be getting unfair help? Because effectively, as I think one of the chat comments has said, that devalues your own degree if you're trying to behave with academic integrity.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Absolutely. And I think that's the important thing. I know when I did my first degree with the university, I was so proud that I could do things. And I was so determined to demonstrate my understanding. Because I wanted to go, look, you know what? I said earlier about all being brilliant. That's what we're trying to do.

And we know you're brilliant. We know you are. You know you are. Sometimes you need somebody to tell you you're brilliant. But sometimes it's working out, and how can you demonstrate your brilliance?

You may not feel brilliant today. Particularly, if the weather's been a bit manky, you might be feeling a little bit low. But take the good things. Take the little steps. Think about lots of things. Think about the understanding. How can you demonstrate that?

Now, John was talking about not fretting the small stuff. And he mentioned referencing earlier. And I'm going to come to my second guest, Jess, now. So Jess has got the really, really exciting job of talking a little bit about referencing.

So students always ask us about referencing. But often, students go, well, they think they have to know everything about referencing to begin with. That's not really true, is it, Jess?

JESSICA PINCHBECK: Absolutely not, no. So when students come to us at access or level 1, we don't expect them to know how to reference. Some of our students might not even know what referencing is. And that is absolutely fine.

As John said, we're here to support you and to develop these skills. So it's our job at the OU to develop the skill of referencing and to make sure, by the time you leave us, you can effectively referenced by the time that you graduate.

For anyone that doesn't know what referencing is, it's when you acknowledge other people's work, and you provide the reader or the person that's marking your assignment with enough information that they can go away and they can locate the sources that you've used. So plagiarism is what happens when you don't reference correctly. That's when you might submit an assignment that contains work in there that isn't your own, and you haven't indicated that appropriately to whoever's marking it or whoever's reading it.

So referencing is one aspect of developing good academic Practise, which John was talking about earlier. So referencing is one skill that forms part of a wider good academic Practise that you will develop throughout your studies with us. It's an essential skill that we want you to learn at university.

There's a great video on the library website. So if anybody's worried about plagiarism, then do have a look at that. And it will talk you through how you can avoid plagiarism. And also, don't be scared of referencing. Everybody sees referencing and thinks, [GASPS]. But actually, it's easy.

And that's what you'll discover as you move through your studies. Your module materials will guide you on how to reference appropriately. On a very basic level, as John's mentioned earlier, if you take something word for word from another source, you need to pop it in quotation marks, and you need to make sure that you reference the source afterwards so that whoever's marking it knows they aren't exactly your words.

And even if you follow John's steps and you write things in your own words, your own interpretations, again, just acknowledge the original source that you're interpreting that from. And if you follow those two easy steps, you won't go far wrong.

So in reality, reference is something that we teach the basics of at access and level 1. It's important that you understand why we need to reference. So that's the key thing, not that I have to but why do we do that? Because it adds integrity to your work.

And whoever picks up your essay-- so if I'm writing an essay and, Isabella, you pick it up and read it and you think, oh, I want to learn more about that study that Jess has mentioned there, you can look in the reference list. And then you can go away and do some further reading and find out a little bit more about that.

It's not, like John says, you're not going to get referred for an academic conduct case if you've got a comma in the wrong place or a bracket in the wrong place, as long as you've indicated on your work where there's a quote or where you've paraphrased. And that's absolutely fine.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Right. So you've given us loads to start off with, Jess. So I'm just going to pick up a few things about that. So often, students say to me, oh, but I've not got very good marks on this assignment because I didn't reference properly.

Now, going back to what John was saying, the referencing-- yes, there will be marks for referencing, but it's not the be-all and end-all. The writing in your own words and demonstrating your understanding is far more important, isn't it, Jess?

JESSICA PINCHBECK: Exactly, yes. So you probably haven't been penalised for poor referencing. But if you haven't referenced appropriately or you've used lots and lots of direct quotes, then you're not showing your own understanding. So that's really important.

The paraphrase and the interpretation, that's what's going to gain you the marks. Because you're actually showing that you've taken on board. You've absorbed it, and you've interpreted it, and you've been able to talk about that in your own words rather than just use the words or ideas of someone else.

ISABELLA HENMAN: If you're taking on board, absorbing, and using someone else's words. I probably didn't get that exactly, but I was trying to use Jess's words there. So we're talking about things, but what is often a challenging thing is there's terminology.

So there's academic conduct. There's integrity. There's referencing. There's these words, these terminology we're using today. But it's how you use them, how you explain them. And again, what we're doing today is explaining the concepts to you, the same as if you were writing an essay on what is academic conduct, or what is academic integrity, and what is referencing?

We're actually demonstrating that to you today in this kind of-- well, we kind to talk around it. Yes, I'm going to use certain people's words. Yes, we will point you to things. And we've got-- Jess mentioned the video.

Unfortunately, we can't show you the video. But it's actually hosted on the library Being Digital site, which you can get to from the OU library. And hopefully, we can show you the front page of that at the moment. It depends.

There are certain things we can show and certain things we can't, unfortunately. But the library is the host of all of the information about referencing. They also do live sessions. They do live sessions explaining about referencing and explaining about the concepts.

So going back to some of the practicalities of what Jess said earlier, there's actually two parts to referencing. Physically, there's the in-text citation, and there's the end reference. The exact format of that is going to change depending on your module.

And I know people are probably going to go, ah, but I thought I got it sorted in my previous module. In the reality, if you're going and writing for a journal-- I remember when I'd write for journal, oh, well, we've got a different referencing style there. So I had to change the referencing.

So you'll see we actually had a question for you on the screen, which is, have you ever used a referencing tool? So some of you may be thinking, actually, I don't even know what you're talking about. So Jess, could you actually tell us, what is a referencing tool?

JESSICA PINCHBECK: Yeah, of course. So referencing tools, or they're sometimes called bibliographic management tools-- I think sometimes, that's how the library refers to them-- so they're digital referencing tools. And they're basically software that you can download, and you can store all your references in there.

I've just completed my PhD, and I used a tool called EndNote. And I found it really useful. So you read a journal article. And what you can do is you can download that, and it will store it in the referencing tool. You can attach the PDF, so you've got the full article there if you want it to.

And then, there's different ways that you can use these tools. Some people just use them as a very useful storage tool, so you can store all your references in one place. And some people use the more advanced functions, which can cite your references as you go along. And then it will produce a referencing list at the end of your assignment.

And what you can do is you can change the format of the referencing. So some of you might know that, across the university, we use the Harvard Cite Them Right style. So you'll be able to click Referencing Style, Harvard Cite Them Right, and it will amend all your references to that particular format.

It's not something that you have to do, use a bibliographic tool. But if you're quite digitally literate, then it's a good way to be able to store and organise your references. The library provides a training session. So there's a Introduction to Reference Management Tools. It's on the library website.

So if you think that that sounds like something that you might like to do, then go and have a look on the library website and have a listen to their introduction. So there's EndNote. I know some colleagues prefer Mendeley. There's all different software that you can use and download them.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Thanks, Jess. I know I used to use RefWorks, which was the software that the university provided. And then, when it changed to Mendeley, I think I had something like 30,000 references that I had to export that I had built up over the years. And I was like, oh. Have I really read that many articles? Crump. That seems absolutely loaded.

I'm not saying you're all going to have 30,000 references. Please don't think that. It was just I was doing quite a lot of research. If you're doing a PhD, you'll do things. And we may well have people here who are actually at level 3, who are doing dissertations or even postgraduate.

So when I was doing my master's, I'd have to do what we called a mini review or a mini dissertation. And by the time you get to level 3 in masters, you're going to be using a lot more external sources. So where Jess was talking about adding the PDF and stuff, it just makes it easier. It's so nice, actually, Jess, isn't it, having a tool that just does it all for you?

JESSICA PINCHBECK: Well, it was brilliant. Because another thing I was going to mention today is, actually, time management. And what happens is I've also been an academic conduct officer. And a lot of the cases that I see coming to me are just where students have run out of time, had to rush, and not completed their referencing properly.

So my advice would be to make sure that you do your references as you go along. And actually, if you've got a bibliographic tool, it kind of does them for you as you go along. So it means that you don't have that mad rush at the end getting all your referencing sorted.

It's not something that you have to do, but it's something that you can think about. And like Isabella said, if you've used references years ago, and you think, god, what was that article that I read about so-and-so? So you can actually search within your tool.

So I'll think, oh, I read a really good article about injuries in netball. So I'm from a sports background. So I might type in my search injury and netball, click on it, and it will bring that particular article up. So I haven't got to search for hours to try and find something that I read years ago.

So I use it like that, as well. Because my memory's going a bit. I can never find things that I've previously used. But it was a lifesaver for my PhD, definitely. So definitely, I think, level 3, postgraduate, really useful.

At level 1 and level 2, it might be something that's just an extra burden, something that you just feel is more stressful. So just have a think about how you want to use it and whether it's something you want to think about.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. Reality is we offer all sorts of tools. The university's got lots and lots of things. You don't have to do them all. It's just being aware of them. I think one of the things when we were talking about this, and a couple of things you've mentioned, I wanted to bring in, too, the idea of cultural differences in referencing, Jess.

And I know that-- I remember attending a training thing once. And they were saying that in some cultures, it's believed to be offensive to the original author not to use that author's words. Now, can you explain a little bit about how we operate as a UK university in terms of that culture, Jess?

JESSICA PINCHBECK: Yeah, absolutely. And you're right. And I think cultural differences, where people have come from cultures where, like you say, it's disrespectful. They're very used to copying verbatim out of textbooks, and that shows respect to the original author.

Within the UK, that would have to be in a direct quotation. And we try to avoid using lots of very lengthy direct quotations. As John said, that doesn't show your own interpretation and understanding. So also, sometimes, referencing can be quite difficult when English isn't a first language for some speakers. So you have the additional challenge there, as well.

And I think if referencing is something that you struggle with due to those reasons, then speaking to your tutor is key to try and get some additional support in there if you're finding things difficult. There's also additional guidance for referencing in different formats, so accessible formats of referencing if people have particular needs. And again, do discuss those with your tutor.

But, as well as cultural differences, we also find that students that come to us at credit transfer-- so I don't know if we've got any credit transfer students here with us today-- but transferring across at level 2 and level 3, they might not have gained the skills.

If you're coming in at level 3 with the OU, you haven't had the module materials from level 1 and level 2 that really scaffold your referencing skills and build on those. So again, we often find that credit transfer students need a little bit of extra support, as well, when they come to us at level 3.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Great. Thanks, Jess. And I like that scaffolding term. It reminds me back to what John was saying at the start about supporting. Now, a scaffolding supports. And we're not saying to you, go off. Reference. Know how to do it immediately. We're saying, to be an effective academic, to be an effective undergraduate student, postgraduate student, whatever, demonstrating your understanding, part of that is academic integrity, and it is referencing.

There's lots of bits involved. Again, I wish I could just magically whiz it into your brain so it all made sense. We're talking from years of experience here. I'm not trying to be facetious in any way or anything like that, but I know it took me absolutely ages.

And I remember-- and I think I mentioned this to you, Jess, when we were planning-- I remember doing essays before I had access to a computer, so going back quite some way. And I used to have to have the different bits of information from the different articles.

And then I'd move them around. Then I'd go, well, which article was that from? Well, I can't remember where it came from. Because I didn't reference it correctly because it was on a piece of paper, and the reference was somewhere else.

So you just have to remember this idea of tools can help you with that. But even when you're doing notes, for instance, at the start of the notes-- and I think one of my access students told me this the other week--

they would actually say, this is from topic 3, section 2. So they'd know all the notes were from that bit. So it's much easier to manage things.

So Avril, haven't come to you for a while. What kind of things have been talked about in the chat? Have any students used a referencing tool?

AVRIL MOORE: Yeah. Actually, we've had a few mentions. So Sawari has used EndNote that Jess was talking about. Ian mentions Zotaro. And Holly uses Mendeley. And Ian was saying that they all have their pluses and minuses. I think people will probably find benefits to one type or another, depending on how they like to use things.

Cindy and Rachel are saying that they've found the SHL events really useful, and they've been important to help them start on the right foot. So I think we've got quite a good engagement with things that they're doing.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Lovely. It sounds like everybody's being very serious in the chat. Is there no talk of snacks and chocolate anymore? Or were you just ...

AVRIL MOORE: We've pretty much gotten to the fact that those ginger biscuits are a good one. Chocolate hobnobs, as well.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Oh, yeah.

AVRIL MOORE: But we're talking about all these lovely academic things at the moment.

ISABELLA HENMAN: We're sensible. That's good. I'm very impressed.

AVRIL MOORE: Well, it's going to be lunchtime soon. So hopefully, we'll start getting some lunch suggestions, as well, would be great.

ISABELLA HENMAN: And you were doing so well about keeping everybody in track. And I've therefore managed to get everybody to go off talking about chocolate and cake. Oh, we haven't even mentioned cake.

AVRIL MOORE: No. Well, a vote's just come in for Caramac, which I'm with you there. That's a strong one.

ISABELLA HENMAN: We don't talk about Caramac. Oh, they've been talking about John's jumpers, apparently. Yes, John has lovely jumpers. I'm very jealous of John jumpers. Then that was why I called him fluffy Uncle John. Because every time I've spoken to John, he's had a different jump on. And I was like, oh, they're lovely and cosy.

And I said if I was there, I would be going up and stroking his jumper if it was nice and warm-- very inappropriate. You're not supposed to touch people if they don't ask you, but I'd stroke his jumper.

Anyway, going back to talking about academic knowledge-- not academic knowledge, academic integrity. I got distracted. I'm too busy thinking about John's jumper.

Right, I've got Jess with me now, so my third guest. And Jess, we've been talking about referencing, and we've been talking about how it's actually different for different places and different modules and so on. You've actually experienced that. It's-- oh, sorry, not Jess.

Sorry, my brain's gone. That's because I was thinking about the jumpers. Sorry-- Zoe. Sorry, Jess. You were all ready to talk to me. Sorry. So Zoe, you've had different experiences of-- oh, talking about jumpers, I'm so sorry, I'm just thinking about jumpers-- academic integrity, referencing.

So you've had different experiences of referencing. Zoe, I'm going to shut up. You please, convey information, not me. Oh, you're muted. I distracted you so much.

Thanks, Isabella. I was just saying that I always have to have chocolate when I do a TMA. It's how I get through a TMA. So I'm with all the chocolate chat.

ZOE FENN: Yeah, As a student, I went from writing a 15,000-word law dissertation to going back and studying a level 1 science module. What I found really difficult is, within 15,000 words, you can talk around the subject. You can use contested definitions. But then, when you're suddenly asked to write a definition in one or two sentences, you think, well, the book's done this so well. How can I possibly write it any better?

And then I had to talk myself down and think, actually, what I'm not being asked to do is write this definition better. What I'm being asked to do is say what I understand by it. And it's only by saying what I understand by it that I can submit that to my tutor. And my tutor can tell me whether what I understand is right or whether, maybe, I've got it a little bit wrong somewhere.

And that's how I can learn about whether what I've internalised-- it's not going to be the same as the book, it's going to be quite close to the book, hopefully, if I've got it right-- but I can understand whether I've got that concept and I've learned that concept. So I found it very, very different.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. And I think that's really interesting. So it's this idea of using your tutors-- we'll come back to that in a moment-- but you trying to convey your understanding. And part of the assessment is you're conveying your understanding, and then you're getting somebody saying to you, yes, OK, you've conveyed that correctly.

That's the ideal, isn't it, that you have conveyed it correctly? But it's a learning experience. And none of us will ever do something absolutely perfectly first time through. Sorry if you think you're going to. I don't do things perfectly even now, as you can tell.

But this idea of conveying your understanding but applying it to the context. So you said, this is the difference between postgraduate law, undergraduate science, and actually going, right, which brain am I putting in today? I probably should have put a better brain in today because then I wouldn't have got so distracted with John's jumpers.

But I always think of that. Because especially if-- all of us do lots of different things. There's this idea of multitasking. And many of you are working or caring or volunteering or all sorts of things, alongside your study. So right. Which brain am I putting in today? I'm putting in my study brain. Right. What's my study brain going to do today? Probably it's going to go, ahhh.

But when it's done-- it's taken some nice, deep breaths, it's thought about that lovely picture of the wood and the trees, and it's thought about a babbling brook and thought about all nice things-- how are you going to convey? So how do you put your study brain in, Zoe? That's a bit of an interesting question for you.

ZOE FENN: For me, I think it's about-- when I think about referencing and citing, I think about how I'm going to show you what I understand. And if I write something from the book, that doesn't tell anybody what I understand.

But I also like to think that I'm not the first person who studied the subject. I'm only a student. And lots of many cleverer people have studied this subject. So it's really important that I acknowledge that, actually, when I'm writing something, that these ideas haven't just popped into my brain from somewhere, that I've got them from somewhere, and I've got them from what somebody else has written. And for me, when I reference and I write things, it's important to understand where my understanding has come from-- have I've taken it from here or there-- and to know that I'm not the first person that's ever thought about this--

ISABELLA HENMAN: Sorry--

ZOE FENN: --and make sure that-- sorry.

ISABELLA HENMAN: I'm being told jokes from the chat, which is really inappropriate.

ZOE FENN: Oh, brilliant.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Because I'm trying so hard to pay attention to you. And then, apparently--

ZOE FENN: Oh, go on, tell me one.

ISABELLA HENMAN: --people are lightening the mood about walking into a bar and saying, ouch, it was a Milkybar. Sigh. I'm so sorry, Zoe. People are not paying attention to you. They should be. But I think your idea about this-- what did you say-- about it suddenly dropping into your head?

ZOE FENN: Yeah.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. That's such an interesting one. And like we said earlier, I wish I could just go zoomp and zap it into your head. If you go back when we were doing our fresher session, when I was talking to Gina, and she says sometimes students think that when they register-- they click that button or they make the phone call and they say, well, I've registered for the module-- suddenly, somehow all magically goes zoop, pah-ching, and appears in your head, and you suddenly know how to do everything. Sorry that it doesn't work that way. It is a Practise. It's a learning process, isn't it, Zoe?

ZOE FENN: Absolutely. I think in that learning process, I just want to understand that I'm building on what's gone before. So I'm kind of building blocks. And I've learnt things from different places.

And some of that's common knowledge, so I don't need to reference that. But where I've learnt something really interesting from a specific place, it's really important that other people should have the opportunity to go and find that out for themselves, as well.

ISABELLA HENMAN: And it's this-- almost ask yourself the question, so if you started your module in October, go back, what did, September, you not know that you now know? Because if you now know it, you've learnt it from the module. Therefore, strictly speaking, you should probably reference it somewhere along the line.

There might be certain facts, if you now know terminology, if you're doing history and some dates or some key people, you've learnt them from somewhere. So you need to reference your module materials. It's part of academic integrity, but it's also, if you've got it wrong-- and I had this, actually, as a bit of an aside. In one of my modules-- one of my early modules, actually, a master's level-- we were asked to use a particular article. And we referenced it, and we gave the information. And what we hadn't been told, if I remember this correctly, is that article had been withdrawn and changed or something.

There was something wrong. So by the fact we referenced the information, we were saying, this is where we've got it from. We weren't giving wrong information. But it had come there.

Now, I'm not saying that you're going to often have articles that are wrong. But sometimes articles do get withdrawn. Sometimes researchers find, actually, sorry, this wasn't quite right, or yeah, OK, we presented it this way. We found out something different. So it's about academic integrity. And it's about an idea of study community and building on what's come.

Now, I'm going to do a slightly more serious thing with you, Zoe. Now, we've mentioned academic conduct. And Jess was earlier saying she'd been an academic conduct officer. Now, we just wanted to give people a brief overview of what happens in terms of the academic conduct process. So Zoe, can you give us a little bit of an overview about what actually happens to people's TMAs when they submit them?

ZOE FENN: Of course. So when people submit a TMA, it's run against two systems that we use. One is called Turnitin. And Turnitin looks at all the other information that's publicly available on the web. So it's looking at books, journal articles, and websites.

And there's another piece of software called Copycatch. And Copycatch will contain information from students who studied the module before and students who are studying at the moment and compare all of those to see if there are students who are writing the same thing.

Maybe somebody's picked something up from a student who studied a previous year and did a really good essay. Or maybe two people are working alongside each other, which is always great until you submit the same essay. So those tools help us to understand where students might be picking up information.

But it's absolutely not about the software. The software is just a tool, and it's just a guidance. So what happens next is those software reports go to, usually, the module chair or another member of the module team. And it's the module chair who will make a decision as to whether that assignment might contain plagiarism or not. So there's always a human check before it even gets investigated.

ISABELLA HENMAN: And that's a good thing. And it's not just with essays, is it? I know in one of my modules that sometimes, there's certain key things like a definition. So modules often have a glossary. If you are asked to give a definition of something, don't just copy the glossary definition.

Yes, it may explain it for you. But it's about your understanding, where Zoe was saying she wants to know she's understood. So there's going to be words, there's going to be key words, terminology. But it's changing it around and making it clear that you understand. It's your writing. You haven't copied it from somewhere else.

And again, that goes back to this idea of being careful when you do your notes. If you ever copy information from your module into your notes, unless you're very good at remembering what you were doing at that point, and I'm not, I will use-- if I was doing it, I would use the notes to write.

And I know students do that. They use the notes to write. And they're going, well, they're my notes. But they're not. Because I've copied them earlier. So that's that kind of idea about the academic conduct process.

So all TMAs, all work, is actually scanned, isn't it? And then if something happens, you'll know. And you always get the opportunity to give your side of the story, don't you, Zoe?

ZOE FENN: Yeah. So if you're writing something like a definition, then it might come up in Turnitin that, actually, what you've written is quite close to the module materials. But the chair, when they're looking at the work, will know what the module materials say. And they know to expect certain terms are going to be in there if you've defined the concept properly.

So it's their decision, then, that, actually, you've conveyed your understanding by rewording that. And you won't get picked up for an academic conduct investigation for something like that. Even if you did, the next stage is where it goes to an academic conduct officer. And the academic conduct officer will do the more detailed stage of the investigation.

So they will drill down into the reports to say, what's happened here? What have you done? Where have you got the information from? Is it reasonable that you have paraphrased that enough? Or is it verbatim from somewhere?

And what the academic conduct officer can do is they can decide, actually, that referable wasn't really a very good one. So they're going to dismiss that and take no further action. They might give you a warning, or what we would call an informal caution at the moment, to say, we do appear to have picked up some references from somewhere. Be very careful, and don't do it again.

You'll often be sent for study skills support. So study skills support will be a one-to-one session to help you go through your essay, go through some of the things you might have done wrong, and help you to think about how you could change what you're doing in the future, which might be, as you say, maybe changing the way you write things into your notes.

I always try to write from-- when I'm writing a TMA from my notes, I always try to reword it into my notes and then reword it again when I write the essay. Occasionally, I will copy something down, and I'll highlight it or something to show that I've copied that from the module materials.

And then maybe I'll talk about it with my other half or even tell my dog about it just to say I don't really understand this. What I think is this. And sometimes just talking it aloud helps.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. That talking aloud is a really useful thing. Now, some of you listening or watching maybe thinking, but I'm not used to this. So there are plenty of guides out there. So where John was saying earlier, we give you support. We want to help you.

So there's a link that's coming up, the How Do I Use My Own Words, which is from the Student Home Help Centre. In fact, you can have a look at it now. So this is part of the Student Home Help Centre, where there's lots and lots of really useful information in there. It's explaining things, explaining what we mean by paraphrasing.

Now, it's actually an interesting point, paraphrasing. This came up when we were planning. So in some places, paraphrasing is just switching a couple of words around and isn't viewed to be acceptable, whereas paraphrasing, if you step back and how it's explained there, is actually rewording into your own words but using the relevant terminology. So it's actually quite an important thing to be aware of. It's not just switching things around.

Now, going back to what Jess said earlier about time management, often, when I've had students who've had any kind of academic conduct case, they've said, oh, but I didn't have time, so I left it too late. Please don't leave it too late. You're never going to do the best possible job if you're rushing it at the last possible moment.

Because you're not going to have the time to go, step back. Right. Do I understand? Can I explain it? I always used to set myself false deadlines. If my TMA was, say, due on a Wednesday, I would want to have it done by the Monday so that then, if something happened, I'd still have a bit of chance to go, go away.

It's not fresh in your head, so it's not you know what you're saying, but you're actually reading what you've actually said. And then you go, oh, actually, you know what? That's not explained very well, or that is very close to the module website.

So Avril, what kind of things have been coming up in the chat? Have we, other than the really, really cheesy joke earlier, what kind of useful tips or information have we been sharing?

AVRIL MOORE: We've had some great tips, actually. Christopher's one, I'm not sure how practical--

ISABELLA HENMAN: Despite your wonderful mic, Avril, you're on mute again.

AVRIL MOORE: Oh, no. Let's see.

ISABELLA HENMAN: It's because you-- you're back. I can hear you now.

AVRIL MOORE: You can hear me? Oh, great-- lovely. Yeah, I'm not sure how practical this one is, but Christopher has said that his best life hack would be to replace your brain with a sponge, and then the information will soak in faster. So I think we can get some of the colleagues around the uni working on how to do that.

A little bit more easy to implement, Cindy and Diane use mind maps and spider diagrams and lots of different-colour pens to keep track of all the different things. And then we've had a lovely message in from Lawrence, who is really pleased that he's joined the session today.

He said he got a credit transfer from Switzerland. And his previous university had very different referencing structure. So he's found that adapting to the way that we do things at the OU has been a struggle. But he finds this session really, really is helping him. So that's great, Lawrence. And then Ann talks to her dogs, and they go to sleep. So a little bit of a double bonus there that--

ISABELLA HENMAN: Oh, they go to sleep.

AVRIL MOORE: --she gets the info out, and the dogs go to sleep.

ISABELLA HENMAN: [LAUGHS] But hopefully, Ann, it's really helpful for you getting it out. Now, I know, I've just got to say, because your mic is so wonderful, every time I look at you, Avril, I think you're going to break into an amazing song or even do the shipping news for us.

AVRIL MOORE: Well, it's hard not to. I mean, I did think I said to you earlier on, I feel like I'm kind of on the set of Live Aid, and I should just be going, (SINGING) There's a world outside. It's hard. It's hard not to. But Shipping Forecast, I'm probably not quite so au fait with. But it might happen.

ISABELLA HENMAN: We just have to do these little asides here. Because we're talking about referencing. We're talking about academic integrity. And you know what? They can sound really serious. They can sound really scary.

What we really want you to do, the reason why we got John in first-- reassuring, fluffy Uncle John with his jumpers-- is because it's not designed to be scary. Yes, we've just taken you through the academic conduct process. And the reality is everybody does have an academic conduct process. Yes, they do. But the vast majority of students are conveying that wonderful information that they know. They're explaining-- you, you are explaining, everybody that I'm talking to at the moment-- you're explaining. You're getting what's in here. You're explaining it out. You're showing how brilliant you are.

Give yourself time to show how brilliant you are. Make sure that you've actually stepped back, looked at the guidance. Yes, OK, the minutiae of referencing once you get on. Yes, OK, there's specific orders. There's specific pieces of information. That's not the key message.

The key message is writing in your own words to demonstrate your understanding, not somebody else's, and then referencing with the in-text citation and the end reference. That's what you're starting with. You're not getting worried.

And I know I was talking to one of my students last week who was really, really worried. And they said, oh, I've read about academic conduct now. And I think I've plagiarised my TMA, and I'm really, really upset. And I said, no. You're not going to have done that.

Most of the time, if you're thinking about it, you haven't. Just because you've used a couple of pieces of terminology doesn't mean that you've plagiarised. It means that you've used the relevant terminology, which is great.

Anyway, right. I have another guest with me. I've got Laura with me now. And Laura has the most fantastic title. She's part of the Students Association. But when we see her title-- hopefully, we'll show it up now-- it sounds like you've got a really posh job, Laura. So why are you here talking to us about academic integrity?

LAURA MARULANDA-CARTER: Yeah, no. Thank you very much, Isabella. So my role is VP education on behalf of the Students Association. So I'm a student volunteer. So like many of you on here, I'm a student, too. So I've gone through this process a few times now. I'm a little bit of a die-hard academic. I'm not going to lie to you guys. I'm on my fourth degree now. I love it. I absolutely love doing research and learning more.

But in my role, my major responsibility is representing the student voice. And that works at different levels throughout the organisation. So I sit on things like Senate. But I also have a look at things like academic misconduct and make sure that it's aligned to what the students need. And actually, it's a supportive process.

So that's a large part of my role. And I'm here just to be here as that student rep but also to help with anybody that's in the chat that's got any questions and also any lessons I've learned over time, as well.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Great. So you mentioned lessons, Laura. What would you say lesson number one that you've learnt as a student, in terms of academic integrity? There you go lesson one, and take it-- academic integrity.

LAURA MARULANDA-CARTER: Yeah, that's great. So for me, I would say when I very first started doing research and putting together things like referencing, we found it, as a group, really difficult to try and understand some of the reasoning behind it. And somebody explained it beautifully to me.

And they were like, you are joining an academic community. That's what you're ultimately doing. And in that community, there's etiquette. There's rules. John called it Practise. I could refer to it as etiquette. But it's kind of the rite of passage.

Now, when you're in higher education, that's part of that journey that you go on. It's not simply a qualification at the end. It's that journey that you take to it. And these are those additional skills that you learn along the way.

So if I were to say that there was that lesson learned, it's that remember it is a community, which means that there's other people. And I know a few of the others have said it that have gone through the same process, as well. So that's why you have the tools and techniques. So they're all there. And everyone is there to help you along the way.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Right. You've mentioned this journey. In nearly every session I talk about, I talk about the study journey. You are all on your own study journey. We can give you lots of ideas, but it's your journey.

Sometimes, you will be feeling that you're at the top of the tree, from our original image. Or if we have an image sometimes I use in some of the sessions, you imagine a pathway across some hills. Are you at the top of the hill? Are you at the bottom of the hill? Are you just sort of starting out, or are you somewhere along the line?

Everybody is on a journey, and your study journey is your study journey. So it's about conveying your understanding and getting some of that understanding. So that's why we have different guests. And Laura was saying what she's learnt and also what other students have learnt. So what would you say, Laura, is the main question about academic integrity that students come to you with?

LAURA MARULANDA-CARTER: Yeah, often, it comes down to different rules on different modules for, perhaps, different areas. And I think you've already mentioned it, Isabella, it's really important to point out that there's no single rule across the whole community.

So whether you're writing journal articles in one industry, perhaps, even if it's one paper versus an article or a journal that's part of a whole series of them, there's often changes to it. And there's often upgrades. So I will say, generally speaking, it improves over time.

But again, I often get asked things like, how do you keep up? How do you do this? And it's also important to mention that, actually, the OU has put together so many great resources to make that easier.

So we do have Cite Them Right. We do have lots of different videos, tutorials, everything to get you closer to that. But yeah, I'm often asked, it's always different. And I wish I could say with my magic wand that it's the same. But sadly, I can't see that being the case.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Oh, thanks, Laura. Now, Rachel has said that she currently feels that she's at the bottom of the hill, but she's got some really good hiking boots. And more importantly, she's got some really good snacks. So that's a great idea. So I'm glad that the metaphor is working for some people. But it's just this idea, isn't it, that we are on a journey. We're learning. Now, all of the guests today have been saying about that, and I've been saying about that, is that it is a journey. It is a study journey. And I was conscious when Laura was just saying there and talking about the resources, I know sometimes people say, but I don't have time to look at all of those resources.

Now, what I would say to you there is sometimes, do you have time not to look at some of them? So what I mean by that is, are you going to spend lots of really, really panicked moments at the end trying to work out which reference it was on? Or have you actually got time to spend 10 minutes having a look at one of the Being Digital resources or one of the things and going, right, OK, I'll get my references in place to begin with.

So sometimes it's an idea of you put a little bit of time in to learn something to begin with. And then it helps. I know that if you think about the archetypal IKEA instructions and that kind of things-- other brands are available-- but how many of us just go, oh, that's OK, I can build that chest of drawers, and they don't read the instructions?

So I'm not saying that people aren't reading the instructions. But often, we have a tendency to jump in. I know I have a tendency to jump in. And I'm really bad with that.

Because I need to go, no, step back. You know what? I've actually got to do what I'm telling other people to do-- very bad sometimes. But do you ever find, Laura, that you do that, you just want to jump in without actually reading the instructions?

LAURA MARULANDA-CARTER: Of course. Of course. I think everybody gets so excited. And if you're anything like me, you've chosen your module, your course, for a reason. It's because you're super excited about it. And this is almost, for many people, just that add-on. They don't always understand why that needs to be the add-on.

What I will say, though, is that, like most things, it's a 66-day rule. So it takes 66 days for any person to break a habit. And it also takes 66 days to create a new habit. Now, 66 might sound like one too many.

But what I will say is that over time, that actually becomes very quick. Imagine 66 references. You could do that in a handful of your first set of TMAs.

So as you're going through that process, like you said, Isabella, it's finding your process. Over the years, I've tried all the different tools. And actually, as it happens, now, I just kind of build it into my note-taking. So for me, my approach is very much like, as I'm taking the notes or doing my reading materials, I'll literally just add in the citation in my work as I'm writing notes, so it's all together. I will then put the author-- sometimes I don't even put the year, I'll just put the author-- and then I'll create a little URL link to where that source is. Now, that could be on OU's library. It could be something I found online. And then I do all of my references.

There'll be a point where I'll be like, my brain's hurting as I'm doing my TMA. I need a bit of a task to do so I feel like I'm doing the TMA. And then I'll often spend that 30 minutes being like, my brain's switched off. I can't write anymore. But actually, I could sit and just add in all of the references as I was doing my note-taking.

So we all need to find our own process. And that's what this session's hopefully going to give people, a little bit of inspiration to do a find your process, what works for you.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Absolutely. And it's what works for you. I can say things. Laura can say things. John said, Jess said, Zoe said. Avril's saying things. But the idea is you need to work out your own process. That's why we've been saying it's a learning journey, and it's a process.

I know I sound like I keep going on about the same things, but it's this idea that, often, people get worried about things because they expect it to be perfect immediately. We don't expect things to be perfect. If you remember something that Jess said is when you first come, we don't expect you to know how to reference. It's our job to teach you. So there's lots of different ways that you can look. And it's fantastic we've got people here engaging today. Because that means that you're actually spending a little bit of time thinking about that.

Have I got those boots? Have I got the snacks? Am I ready for that journey? Or am I actually trying to walk up the hill in flip-flops? If you're trying to walk up the hill in flip-flops, you're not really well prepared. So try and think about the best way to do things.

And as a side, I saw a fantastic picture of somebody who'd made a mini pair of Furby flip-flops for a cat yesterday. But that's not relevant. But anyway, that just reminded me.

So going back to some sensible things, so Laura, because you're involved in the Students Association, sometimes I imagine you get students who are quite worried coming to you about things and saying, oh, I just don't know or anything. So can you think of an example where a student's come to you worried about something to do with academic integrity? And what did you do?

LAURA MARULANDA-CARTER: Absolutely. So often, students will come to us when they think that they've already made a mistake. And they're in that window where they've already submitted, but they haven't necessarily got their grades back yet.

And that can actually cause a lot of anxiety for people when you are really stressing. You think you've made a mistake. And what I will say is that, over time, it's all about working out how to build on that anxiety so that it's not there later.

So we obviously refer them to Student Study Skills. And we also encourage students to create their own communities in their modules. It's highly likely that if you felt like that, some other people do, too. So it's a good opportunity to share that and being able to build on, OK, well, what do I have to do next?

And another set of students will come to us if, obviously, it has been flagged, so if they have, for whatever reason, they have been flagged up by Turnitin or one of the Copycats, and they're going through an investigation. And again, that can be quite a trialling time for students, especially going through that process.

And like I say, here at the Students Association, we're all about providing you with the support. So we do have individual representation. We obviously are across different areas of the organisation so that we are making sure that we're limiting when that happens.

And having a session like this and being here today and attending this or watching it back on the recording, that's your first step. You guys are already doing what you need to be doing. And like I said, I'm always preaching to the converted.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah, but it's a good thing. Because we're talking about this as if we know everything. Now, I know I've lost marks for referencing in my work before. And I should know what I'm doing. But I can still do it.

But what you have to sometimes remember is don't fixate. Don't fixate on referencing as the be-all and end-all. Understanding is far more important. And also, bear in mind, with that study journey, some of you are gently crawling along at the bottom of the hill. And that is fine.

Sometimes you're going, you know what? I can just about manage. I'm making progress. It's really slow. I'm actually shuffling along in my flip-flops because that's all I've got access to at the moment. And that's fine.

There may be some of you that actually have disabilities. You may have mental health challenges. Even if you haven't got mental health challenges, a lot of us at the moment, when it's rainy in the winter, we all get a little bit down.

But what I would say to you, and having spoken to some students about this, is don't fixate on that. Start to build yourself tools. Start to build yourself strategies about how you are going to do the best job you can do.

On your study journey, where do you want to get to? Do you want to get up to the top of the hill?

Fantastic if you do. Or do you just want to get a little bit further? As long as you're getting a little bit further, don't compare yourself to other people.

And actually, that's probably an important thing for, Laura, you to come in on, isn't it? Because often, I imagine you've found students that do compare themselves to other people sometimes?

LAURA MARULANDA-CARTER: Absolutely. And sometimes they-- I've always said it, you are your worst critic, at times. So when you are learning something new and you haven't mastered that skill yet, you do give yourself a harder time.

And actually, when you compare to others that have gone through either the same journey, not every student has been through that same process. Not every student, perhaps, is even studying an area where some-- I've often found-- I'm envious of those that are studying English because they go through so many references because they do significant amounts of reading.

And actually, it can be quite intimidating seating for students if you're in an area where, perhaps, you're new to doing academic reading. So actually, you're spending a lot of time learning a small number of journal articles well, then having to go-- and that's the difference, I guess, between breadth and depth. So I often find that, yes, students will feel a little bit like-- a bit like a lost sheep-- I don't know, I don't know. But this person seems to be doing it so well. And actually, how can we learn from each other? And that's what's really key. It's about sharing these experiences so that people improve. And I know that somebody else mentioned it as well-- it is scaffolding. It's learning over time. That's what's key.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah. And Student Hub Live is about the community. One of the reasons why we have chat is because you're sharing ideas. And it's not saying, look, I'm great. I know how to do this. But I did this, and it helped. Or you know what? I've been trying this, and it's not working. Can anybody give me any tips?

So as if by magic, Avril, I know you've been managing the chat here, and you've got things. So are there any tips? Is there anything that's been coming up in the chat that you want to share?

AVRIL MOORE: Yeah. I've had a hard time getting the picture of cat flip-flops out of my head. But I've tried to put that to one side. So we've got Ann, she tends to do her referencing as she goes along. But a great tip, I thought, was that she puts the question on a sticky note so that she can take it and put it everywhere she's looking, in all the materials that she's looking at. So that's really brilliant, I think. Sawari's come up with a great idea. She said that she likes to exchange ideas with others on her course. And to help them do that, she's actually set up a study room for her classmates, an online study room, so they can pop in and out of that, which is fabulous, I think. The importance of reading the question and rereading the question and just kind of making sure you've actually understood what the question is asking you is something that quite a few people have brought up. And there was an acronym that I'm not going to repeat on here that--

ISABELLA HENMAN: Somebody being naughty, I think, yes.

AVRIL MOORE: Could have been a bit fruity, yes, I think. Yeah, but some great advice going on, absolutely.

ISABELLA HENMAN: But you know what? Acronyms, while I was originally at medical school, I still remember the very, very naughty acronym to remember the cranial nerves. And I'm not going to say it on here.

AVRIL MOORE: Save it for another one.

ISABELLA HENMAN: But let's just suffice to say, medical students were very fruity with their ways of remembering. But I actually remember the acronym. I can't necessarily remember what it was about. But however many years later, I can still remember it.

So also, the things like that and about what helps you and what we're trying to get the idea about is myths about academic integrity. One of the big myths is that you have to be perfect straightaway. Another myth

is that referencing is just exactly one thing. And another myth is you will automatically fail if you don't get your referencing right.

So what I want to do is I want to have a little bit of a roundtable discussion now with all of my guests. So I'm going to come to them one by one. So John, what would you say is the biggest myth that you hear about academic integrity? You've changed. [LAUGHS]

JOHN WOODTHORPE: [LAUGHS] I wondered if you'd notice. And if we do ever meet in real life, you have permission to stroke my jumper.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Fantastic.

JOHN WOODTHORPE: What was the question?

ISABELLA HENMAN: The question, because I got very distracted, as well, the question was, what's a myth that you've come across about academic integrity?

JOHN WOODTHORPE: I think the one that I've talked about already, and that others have mentioned, that you have to be perfect, and you really need to make sure you get everything precisely right. Otherwise, you will be in trouble.

This isn't a sort of police-- you're not breaking the law. You're not going to be punished immediately for a tiny little mistake. You're going to be supported. We want to help.

So it's more a sort of a feeling that you see in a lot of students that the whole point of this is to punish students rather than to support them. There are serious consequences of deliberately breaking the rules. But most people don't deliberately break the rules.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Right. Thank you, John. And you were being really sensible. And I was busy trying to work out what was written down the side of Santa's spitfire there. And I think I saw it. [LAUGHS] I get distracted easily.

But you know what? That's a reality, isn't it? We all get distracted. When we're supposed to be doing something sensible, something serious, we can get distracted. As a little bit of a hint, if you get distracted by the YouTube rabbit hole, turn off YouTube. Turn off those notifications.

If you're like me and you go, oh, I'll just go and check this, or I just wonder, focus. Focus. Focus. Anyway, I'll try and focus. Jess, what's your biggest myth that you want to dispel or that you've heard about?

JESSICA PINCHBECK: Yes, similar to John, really, I think there's a myth that students think as soon as they start university, they should be able to reference. And that's just not the case. We don't expect students-- access, level 1-- to come in with referencing skills. Referencing is a skill that we will look to develop over the duration of your study with us.

And there are different expectations at different levels. At level 1, if you're struggling, you'll be offered study skills support. There's scaffolding within the module materials, lots of resources to be able to help you. So it's that you don't have to come in at level 1 being able to reference. We will teach you. We will help you.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Because at the end of the day, you're coming in to learn. You're coming in to learn content. So you're coming in to learn skills, as well, aren't you, Jess?

JESSICA PINCHBECK: Exactly. And all our students will come from different backgrounds. So some students might come in from an A-level background. They might have studied at another module somewhere. And so they're coming in, and they probably can reference. There will be students that have been out of education for a long time. And they've never done referencing before. There'll be students that have come from college courses where referencing might not have been a skill that was taught. So it's our job to get everybody at the same level by the time they graduate.

And even now, like you've said, I can't reference off the top of my head all the time. I have to think, oh, well, how do I reference that? That's a strange source. And I'll go away, and I'll look up, and I'll think, right, that's the way to do it. Or I'll be using something from a website. And I think, well, there's no author on there, or I can't find that.

So it's just about-- thinking, well, actually, is this a worthy source? If there's no author on it and things are ambiguous, should I be using this source in the first place-- so that's something that we haven't really brushed upon today-- but also, as well, looking at the sources that you're using, as well.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah, actually, that's a really good point. Thank you for bringing that up. In some of my modules, students do something called we call the prompt analysis, which is to evaluate the validity of a source and whether it's any good. So is it objective? Is it relevant? Is it timely?

Zoe, because you were mentioning about academic conduct and things earlier when you said you've been a student, what have you found to do with that, in terms of knowing whether your source is any good. Sorry. I should have given you a better question.

ZOE FENN: [LAUGHS] That's fine. I think it's looking at, actually, looking at how other people use references. Have other people cited that source? How reliable is the journal that the source is coming from?

So you can actually learn about referencing from watching other people reference. And you can learn about how good your sources are from that, as well. So I would expect if a source is 10 years old and it's only had a couple of citations in other places, I'd be quite wary about using it.

But if it's fairly new and it's only had a couple of citations, it's been a journal article that's been published within the last six months, then I'd be looking at, actually, what are they citing? Are they citing reliable information? Are they coming from a reliable source? Is it a reliable journal? So you can use referencing and how other people have used referencing to understand whether you can trust your sources, too.

ISABELLA HENMAN: [AUDIO OUT] question come in relevant to that, Zoe. It's, can we use biased sources if we acknowledge they're biased? Do you feel qualified to answer that, Zoe?

ZOE FENN: I would want to turn that over to my academic colleagues. So I think John or Jess is probably a better place.

ISABELLA HENMAN: John or Jess, which one of you wants to answer that one?

JOHN WOODTHORPE: I have actually done that when I was a student, in a literature review, picked out ones that I thought were good sources but also identified ones that I thought were deeply, deeply dodgy because what I was doing was applying a critical judgement on the subject that I was doing the literature survey for. So in that context, I think it's perfectly OK to say, here's a quote from this source that demonstrates just how dodgy it is.

ISABELLA HENMAN: In one of my tutorials, I mention to students, if you're using, for example, a tabloid newspaper reporting on exactly the same thing as a reliable source, technically, they've got the same background information, but it's how they convey it. Do they use sensationalist logos-- dun-duh-dun!-- that kind of way that tabloid newspapers are trying to do, or even tabloid-- or whichever other ones. I'm not going to mention some of them.

But it's about, you can use bias. It's acknowledging it and recognising it. I suppose it could be a bit more challenging if you don't recognise its bias. And just as a little point here, we've been talking about journal articles and things like that.

If you're accessing level 1, you probably won't be using lots of journal articles yet. You're probably going to be using your module sources and your module website or the books and that. So don't worry. And don't think you've got to go somewhere else.

You've got the information, but you're still weighing it up. You're going, OK, which piece of evidence is more useful for my context? I think it was Jess was talking about the context earlier, the what am I actually trying to do? What is my purpose?

Now, if I just step back a little bit-- because I was doing the myths-- and Zoe, sorry, you're not going to get away with it. What was your biggest myth? I gave you a different question. But what's the biggest myth about academic integrity, Zoe, that you want to bust?

ZOE FENN: I think the biggest myth that I've heard is about the process. Because people think that if they've been picked up for plagiarism, it's because they've been picked up by a piece of software and that they've just been unlucky, tripped over a piece of software.

But at the Open University, it's not just the software we rely on. If you're contacted by an academic conduct officer, then that's already been through two people. So the chair will look at it, and the academic conduct officer will look at it. And we will.

The first port of call, particularly at level 1, is to look at study skills. And it's only really going to go to an academic conduct officer if the case is really severe or if it's been repeated a lot of times. So you're never, ever going to be assessed just on a piece of software.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah, and I think that's an important one. And I know somebody mentioned essay mills earlier. But there's also various help sites. We don't want to place any credence on them today because they're not a good way. They don't demonstrate your understanding.

My bust is don't just go to the internet to find your answers. Because you run the risk of going down a very poor path. You won't automatically, but there are people that share answers online. They don't spend the time reading the module information.

They don't do things, and they just google it, or any other browser, any other search engine. But they go, and then they copy what they found. That's not demonstrating good and effective academic Practise. And if you keep doing that, that's where Zoe was saying that it's showing.

And I have, sadly, have seen students before who have repeatedly done the same thing. And I remember one student saying to me, well, so what? I copied it from a website. And? I was like, but you just admitted to me that you've copied it. It's not yours. You're not demonstrating. Anyway, so myths. Laura, what's your biggest myth that you want to bust?

LAURA MARULANDA-CARTER: I think for me it's that you're not alone. And I can't emphasise that point enough. You're not alone when you're going through your note-taking, going through that process. And Zoe just mentioned it, as well. There are so many good examples out there.

Now, if you are a level 1 student, look at the course content. It's been cited. You can learn from the person that's already put that together. And you can see how they're using the sources.

Sometimes they quote. Sometimes they're paraphrasing. So you can learn from literally just the syntax, the language, that you can see from your course content.

And if you are at those higher levels, especially if you're level 3 or even the postgrads, find a good journal article. Ask your tutors. Ask those questions. Get a really good one.

Because when you do and somebody's done a great literature review, the way that they've actually used the citations, the way that they've referenced, can really help you in your language to adopt, as well. So re-emphasising that you are not alone.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Right. Thank you, Laura. Now, we've had a question that's come in, which is, if you're using only a few sources, and you're referencing them repeatedly, how do you practically do this? Now, I'm guessing, Jess, that might be one for you. Because you were talking about referencing earlier. So for instance, this is often our level 1 students, isn't it, where they're just using the module materials. So do they reference each and every time? Do they do a general bibliography? Have you got an idea for them there?

JESSICA PINCHBECK: So different modules will follow different remits on how you reference the module materials. And that will depend upon whether they are hard copy books or whether they're online sources. If you are referencing the same chapter, it would only appear once in your referencing list. If you're referencing several different chapters, then, obviously, each chapter would be a separate reference. So that's quite a general question. It would have to be more specific. It's fine if you're at level 1 and you're using the same source several times. So again, each time you do use something from that source, you would put the author and the year in brackets. And don't worry if the same source comes up. But obviously, you wouldn't have to-- every time you refer to that in your text, you don't have to put a separate reference in the reference list.

And it depends upon what your modules do. So some modules might have a bibliography, which is where they want everything that you've read in the bibliography at the end of the module, even if you haven't referenced it in your essay.

I think most modules tend to ask for a reference list, which you only put the reference in the reference list if you have cited it within your TMA. So my advice really would be to look at your assessment guide. In your assessment guide, there should be a section on referencing. And that should tell you exactly what the requirements for your particular module are.

So in sport and fitness, we wouldn't request a separate reference for each web page of the study materials. So if you're referencing Pinchbeck, whether it's section 1.2 or section 1.4, you would just have that once in your reference list. But different modules will have different requirements.

So my top tip would be to have a look in your assessment guide. See what the specifics are. If you're still unsure, then contact your tutor and say, I'm using this quote here and this quote here. Does that appear twice in my reference list? Do I need separate references, or can I use the same one?

And I know different modules, some, if it's an online, module, will just want the Open University reference in. And some modules will reference the specific author that's written that particular section. So again, it's just about looking at exactly what your module asks for. I don't know if John wants to add anything to that because he teaches in a different area than I do.

JOHN WOODTHORPE: I was going to say check with your tutor, as well, Jess. Because some of these things get very module-specific at times. And like you say, it does depend whether you're at the start of your career with the OU or whether you're doing your final project module or something like that. There will be different expectations of you. And your tutor will help.

Isabella, if I could just add a couple of tips, I suppose. One is when I was a student, I had lots of friends who were historians. And the comment that I heard most often when they were writing their essays was that they spent the last several hours looking for the one perfect quote that would make the essay.

Don't do that. There is not one perfect quote or anything like that that will show that you have really understood everything. It's not what you quote. It's what you say yourself.

And the second point is, and I'm sure Jess would agree, academic conduct officers are real people, and they want to help you. They're not in it to punish students. They're in it to try and help students learn what they should be doing.

The whole academic process, academic conduct, is student support. It might not feel like that when you're at the other end of it. But do remember that the academic conduct officer, if one contacts you, is a real person. And they're doing this to try to help you.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Yeah, absolutely. Thank you, John. That's a really, really important point. Because you all want to demonstrate your understanding in the way that you're understanding. Right. Now, we've only got a couple of minutes left, so I want to come to Avril one last time. What has been-- is there anything left over in the chat? Is everybody just wanting to go off to do lunch?

AVRIL MOORE: We have got a couple of things in about the order that you should reference things in. So should it be each separate paragraph quoted as A, B, C, et cetera, or should you do separate reference things for part 1, part 2? So I don't know if there's any quick takeaway on that.

ISABELLA HENMAN: The key one is look at your module guidance. Very much, look at your module guidance. Because, as Jess said, in your assessment guide in the module guide, there will be a section. They are different for different modules.

And that bit about the author-- so some of my modules are the Open University. Some are named people. It will always tell you in your module. So check. And use your tutor. Anything else, Avril?

AVRIL MOORE: Yeah, just again, a lot-- a lot-- of love for John's jumper. That went crazy when he came back on screen. I think people are just putting in very much that the library there. It's a really good resource for anything.

I think a lot of the times now, like you said, we tend to head to the internet when, actually, just across the road there, we've got a fantastic resource of anything that we need. Lots of people asking their tutors for help and, really, turning to snacks. At any point where things get tricky, turn to a snack.

ISABELLA HENMAN: Absolutely. Have your study support, your study support in whatever format, if that's stroking your dog, stroking your cat, going for a walk. We do other sessions on that. We did resilience. We're doing well-being in January.

But putting yourself in the best position to do your best job, demonstrate how great you are. Remember, you're on a journey. You're on a study journey. We don't expect you to know everything to begin with. What we do expect you to do is to learn, to demonstrate your learning, so to make sure that you're using your tutor, asking your tutor.

That's what we're here for. We're not just here for the very occasional, oh, by the way, I need an extension. Get in touch with us. Ask us questions. Sometimes we will point you to where the information is already provided. Use your tutorials. Read the guidance.

Now, just as we finish, we do have a survey. So in the chat, there will be a questionnaire just to find out your experiences about today, experiences about the session, how you found it, so that we can always do the best job possible for you.

So I just want to summarise, from my perspective, some of the things that I've heard. So you're not just coming in knowing everything. You will start to learn. We're here to support you. We genuinely are.

There's lots of resources out there. Engage with them. Spend a little bit of time thinking about them. And then work with them. Because what you're doing-- you're brilliant. Remember, you are brilliant. You are an OU student. You're fantastic. And you want to do the best job.

And the biggest myth about academic integrity is that it's just all suddenly there. You're on a journey. That journey may have those wonderful boots. You may be somewhere up the hill. You may be shuffling.

We like snacks. And my best thing is use the chocolate. Because that always helps me. Thank you very much for listening today. And I hope you've had a great time.

[MUSIC PLAYING]