

# Pre session polls

What level of study are you?

- Access
- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
- Postgraduate

What would you consider is your main area of study?

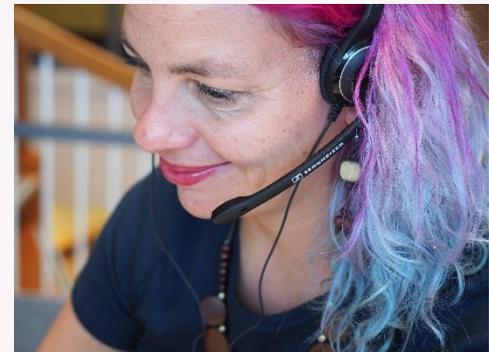
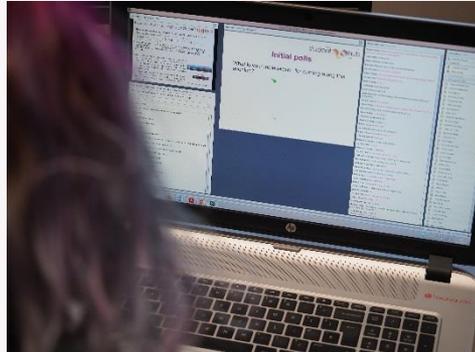
- Arts
- Languages (English & other)
- Social sciences
- Business and law
- Science
- Engineering or technology
- Maths
- Health sciences
- Education
- Sports
- OTHER

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

- No (I'm brand new to SHL!)
- No (but have listened to one or more recording)
- No (didn't have time)
- No (wasn't aware of before now)
- Yes any post summer 2021
- Yes any earlier

# What are student hub live online sessions?

- All student hub live sessions are non modular and focus on skills relevant to study at university level
- Polls are anonymous to other participants but the chat box will have your logged in name associated with your comments during the live session.
- All online sessions are recorded and available to view on catch up on a public facing website.
- Slides are available to download during the session (*not accessible on mobile devices*) and from <http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/>.



# student hub live is the OU's live online interactive platform to support academic community



Isabella Henman is an essay writing aficionado and skills trainer and has been the main student hub live online speaker since 2017. She tutors in science and health sciences at Access to level 2.



Rob Moore works on a range of under-graduate and post-graduate modules for the Open University Business School. Rob's passion is in making live online sessions fun and effective.

# Workshop

- This is going to be a structured workshop to help you get thinking
- We'll look at what is meant by essay planning, including some different styles and methods, as well as key points for what needs to be included
- There is a lot of interaction so please be ready to answer polls (questions) or add to chat pod during the session
- You'll get the chance to discuss with others in a small group / or alternative discussion activity (dependent on numbers)

# Session purpose

- **Is for:**
- Covering the basics of essay planning
- Give some guidance about ways to plan effectively
- Provide a space to share ideas and connect with other students
- **Is not for:**
- Telling you what you HAVE to do
- Providing any module specific advice

## Please be aware

- These sessions are large scale
- They are very busy
- There is lots of interaction
- They are not the same as other tutorials
- You can maximise slides on your own screen by clicking the icon



# Please

- Do NOT share any personal information in the chat pod during the session
- On the recording names will be anonymised to user number
- However if you type anyone's full name or any other personal information in the chat pod it can be seen by everybody and it would also show up on the recording

# Initial poll

What is your main reason for coming along to this session? Please choose the option that fits for you today:

- Study skills for current module(s)
- Study skills for future module (s)
- Connecting with other students
- Gain new ideas
- Responding to recommendation from tutor
- Curious about what studenthublive is

# Essay planning introduction

## This was our advert...

Writing complete and effective essays requires careful planning. This workshop, aimed at Access and Level 1 students, introduces the planning and writing process. We will discuss the structure and key components of an essay, and you'll learn how to include these elements in your plan. Examples of plans will be showcased, and we'll show you how to scope and order your material. You'll also learn how to plan your paragraphs so that each one addresses a key element of your essay and builds towards a coherent argument.

# What do you want to learn?

Using the short answer poll provided please say what you are hoping to learn from today's session

*(If you are on a mobile device remember you need to tap into the polling option)*



*To come back to these slides after completing a poll click on the share pod slides icon*



# First thoughts

Have you ever written something long?

- Yes
- No

Now, did you plan what you were going to include in that long piece of writing?

- Yes
- No

# Why plan?

- It allows you to structure your work and know what you need to do.
- It also ensures you cover all parts of the question.
- It saves time in the long run randomly writing information that isn't relevant.
- But... plans can change and don't have to be perfect.

# Scenario and poll

Imagine you have just been told you have won a prize and will have 30 minutes to purchase as many '**non essential items**' as you can in that time (you *will have someone with you who will hand over the payment card*).

You will be taken to the shopping mall in an hour.

What will you do to plan this session?

- Please use the short answer poll to identify your aim here and say what you need to do to make sure you are as effective as possible

# Our ideas

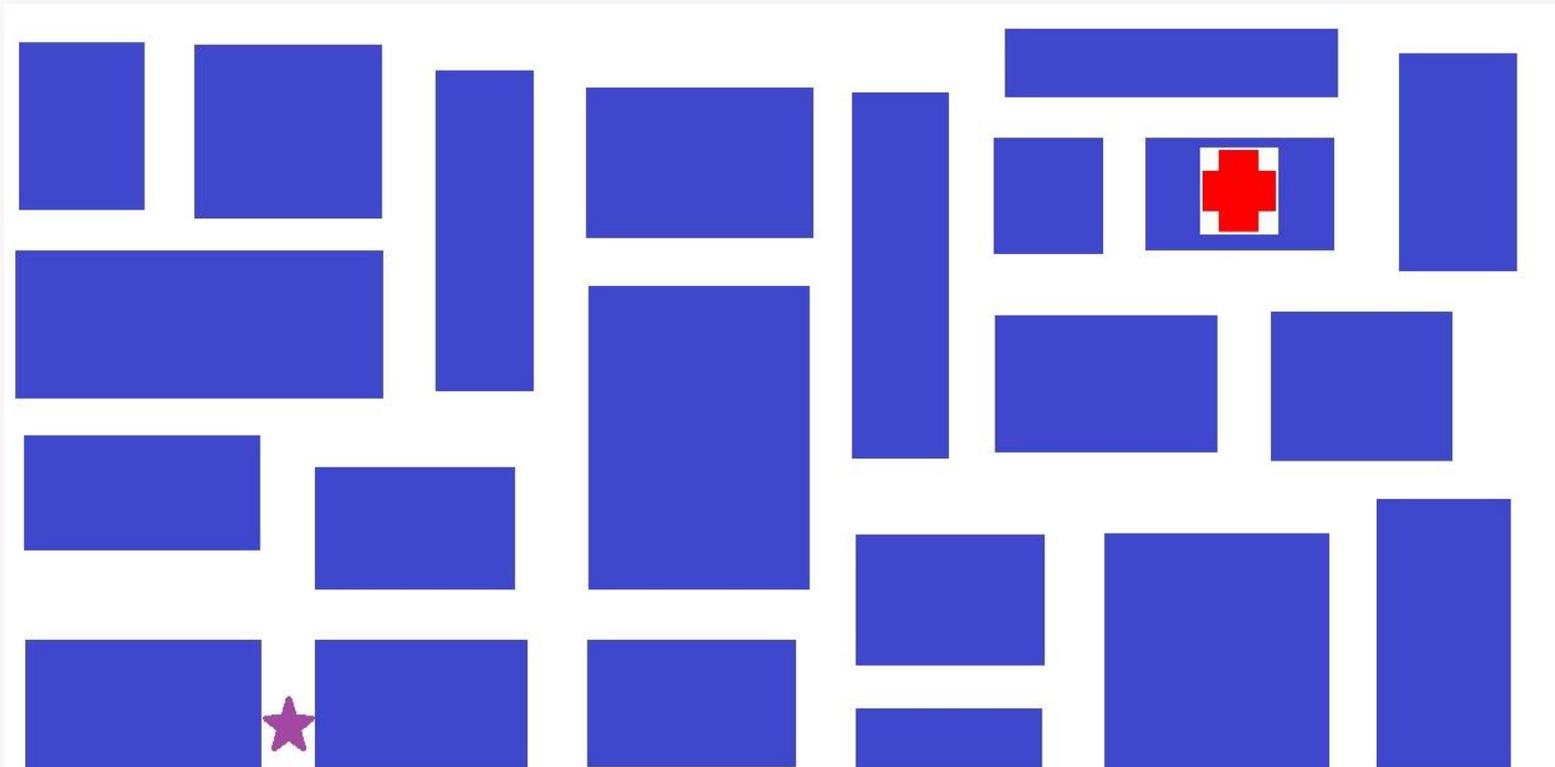
- How much is on the payment card – e.g. what is the budget?
- If you are wanting the best pair of jeans that you can try on, you'll want clothes that you can get in and out of easily to try them on, and do it quickly
- You will need to know where in the mall / shop you need to go to get what you want
- You may want to plan the order of your trip to make sure you get to the places you want to
- You may want to write a list, and you may even prioritise it

# Why do we ask?

- This is planning overall. You need to think of a purpose and what you need to do in order to achieve that purpose
- Most people will have written something long at some stage but without a plan it might not have been as effective and efficient as it could have been.
- An essay is similar, think what you need to achieve - what is your remit?

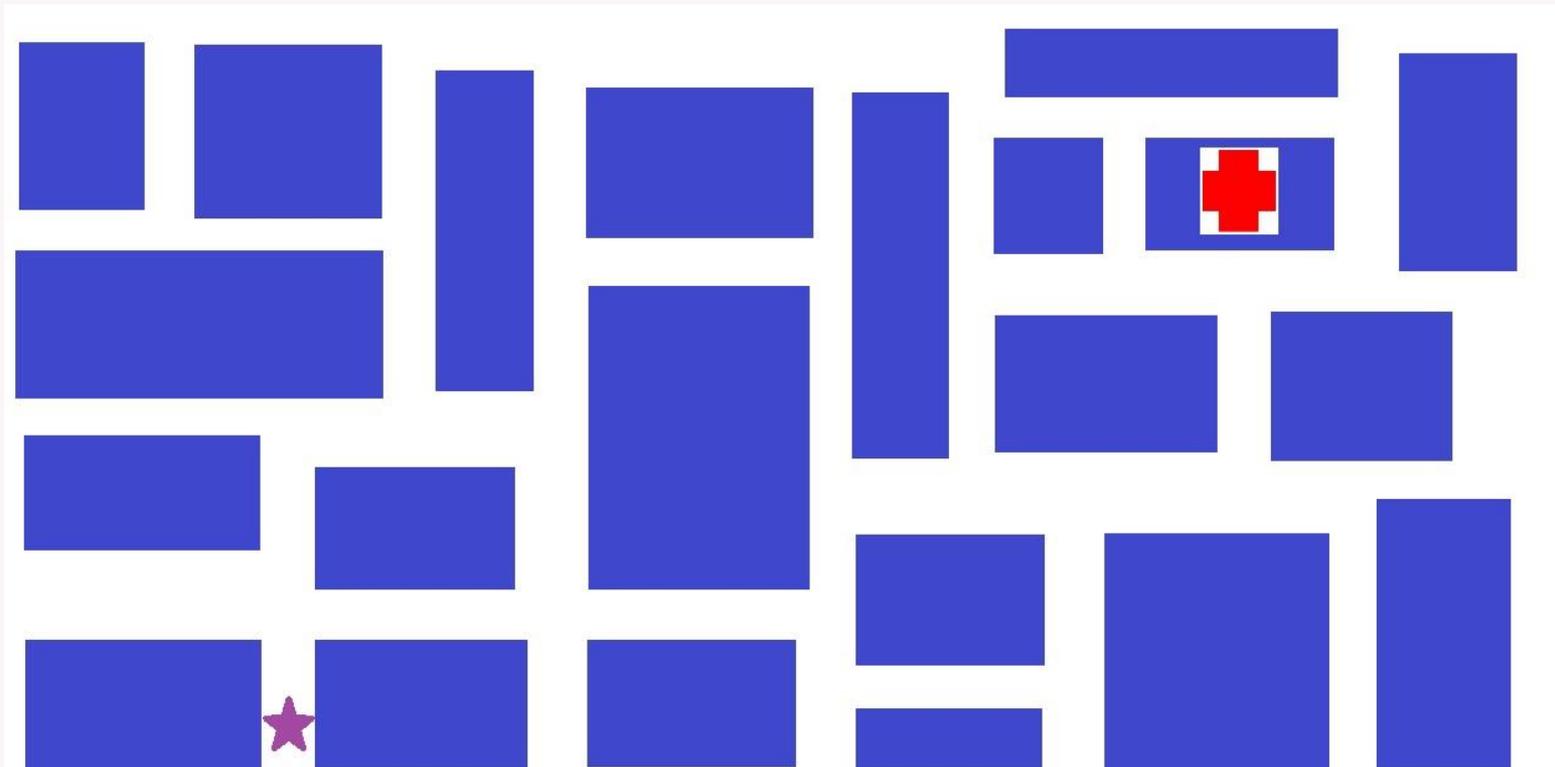
# Activity

Look at this simple road map and look whether you can find a route from the purple star to the red cross using the white roads only (blue blocks are buildings).



# Activity

Now think about anything that might affect the route taken. Please use the polling pod provided to suggest any ideas



# What was the point?

- The idea was to show that there are lots of different ways to get from the start to the finish so you have to think about which you are going to take
- However not all ways are logical or neat – and that is important for essay writing
- Your plan needs to prepare you as effectively as possible for writing the essay

# Example

- Using cake!
- Both were cake (and tasted great 😊) but one worked much better as it was planned and not rushed and had the right bits go into it in the right order.

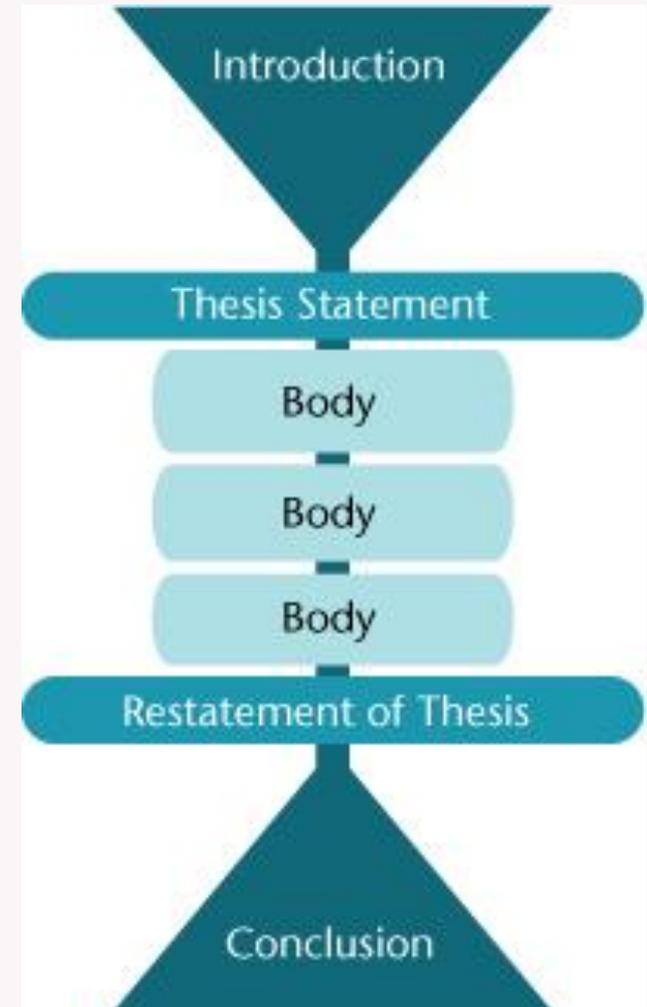


# Example

- Be prepared
- There is a quick and efficient way, and also a sloppy way
- You can put all the ingredients together and get a cake but the best cake will be ordered and organised so it does the best possible job

# Academic essays

- Have a particular structure (introduction, paragraphs and conclusion)
- Each paragraph needs to include some evidence from the module material and is a building block in answering the question.
- The introduction and conclusion frame your paragraphs



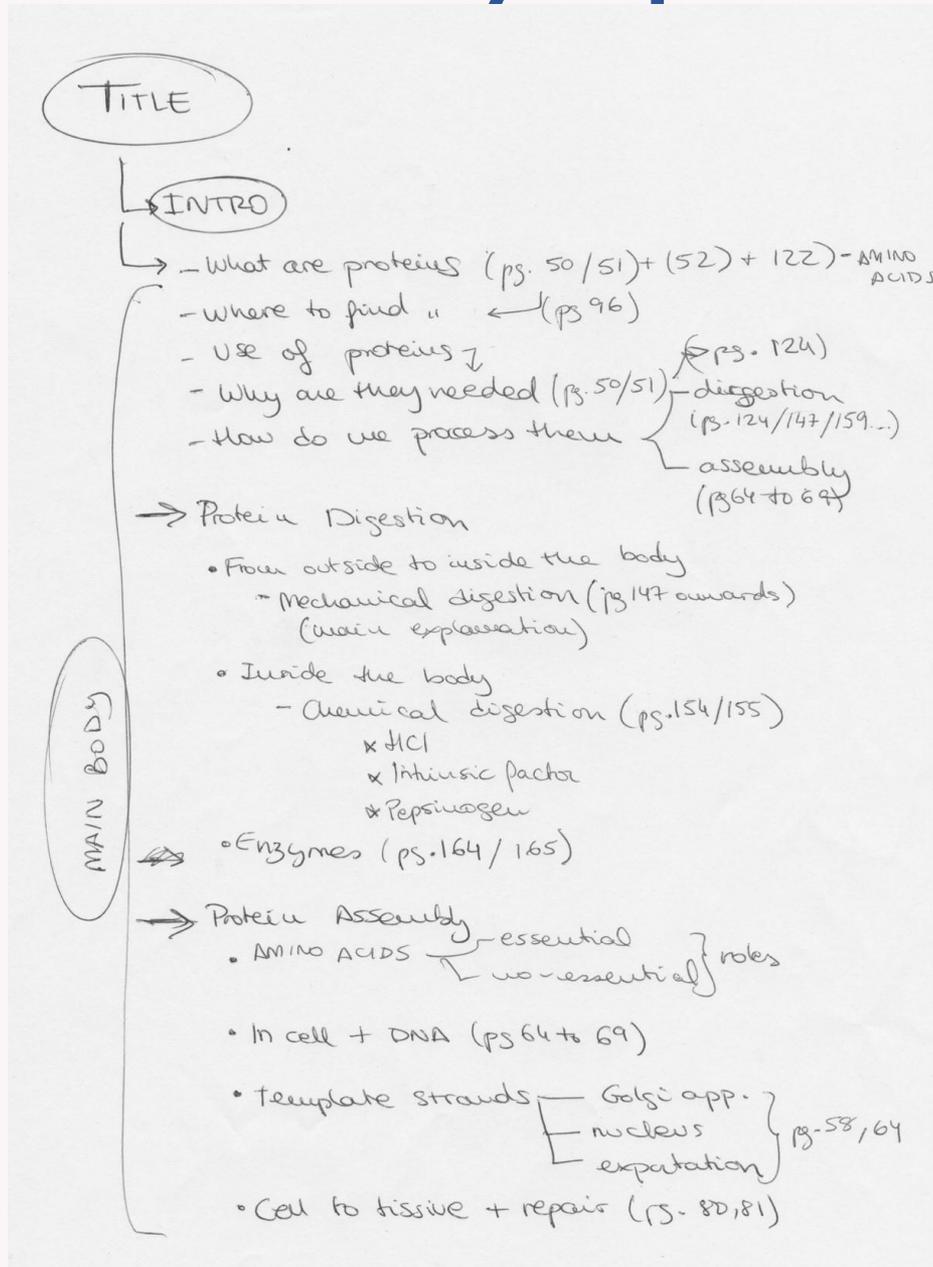
# Answering the question you've been given

- Ideas to help:
  - Read the question - Read out loud
  - Note the key words - Underline
  - Make a list of the areas you **need to** cover
  - Make a list of any areas you **could** cover
  - Understanding what the question is *actually* asking (process and content words)
- Consider making the instructions into a question that you then know you have answered – but do not reframe or change the question!

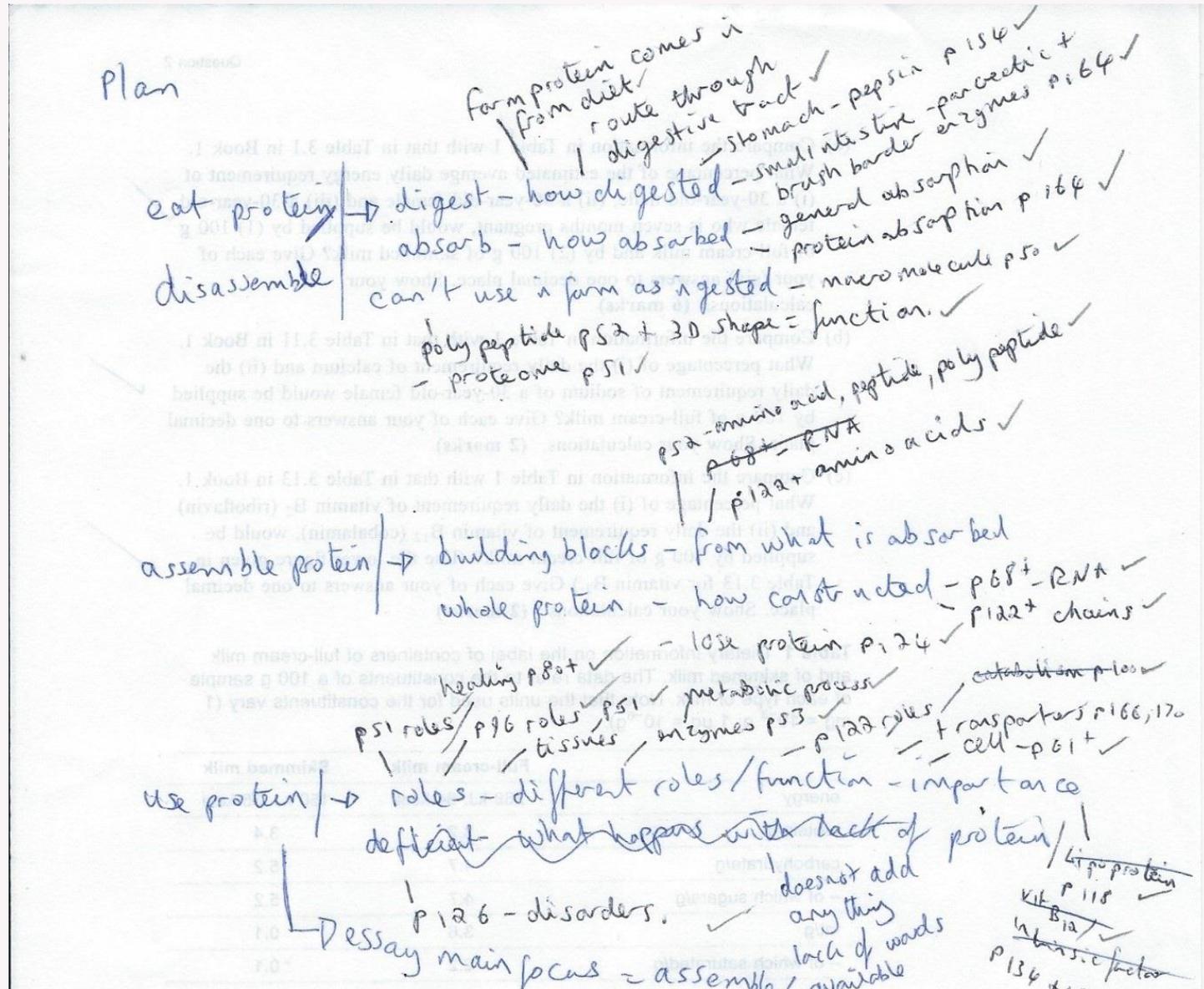
# Types of plan

- Simple list
- Series of relevant page numbers / topics
- Mind map
- Spider diagram
- Post it on a whiteboard

# List style plan



# List style plan



~~Lipo protein~~  
~~vit B12~~  
~~trans.c factor~~  
 p134 x

# Examples of plans

- Those were a couple of examples and whilst specific to a topic (as a plan should be!) show *how* the question would be answered and give some facts
- A plan should have enough information that someone else with a similar amount of knowledge could pick it up and write the essay from it
- It needn't be grand or look snazzy, but it needs to show what will be included and how the question is tackled
- Start with the body of the essay.....

# Planning the body of your essay

- Think about how many "things" you need to cover (by reading the question and student notes)
- Think about the wordcount you have
- Decide therefore how many paragraphs you can include
- Prioritise the things you need to cover
- For each "thing", identify evidence from the module material
- Think about how it relates to answering the essay question
- Think about which order each "thing" may appear in to have the greatest impact

# Planning the introduction and conclusion

- Now you know what you are going to say, how can you prepare your reader?
- Introduction: Are there key terms, parameters, what will you cover and broadly how will you conclude?
- Conclusion: How does all the evidence you have included address the question

# Question time

- If you saw this image about a film – what do you think the film might be about? Please use the short answer poll to give your ideas



# Clues!

- Don't be afraid of giving away some clues – your introduction does need to give a very good idea of content
- This is your chance to say how you are addressing the question (not just restating the question and saying you are answering it – HOW)
- You are also making it clear to your reader why your selected approach is a sensible one

# Discussion activity

- There will be 2 specific questions in chat pods for you to explore some of the elements we have discussed further.
- *Things that will help me plan my essay are...*
- *I may find it hard to plan because...*
- You are welcome to add your thoughts and we will then pick up some of the themes and talk through them.
- Chat does have names on but the recording will be anonymised so you will appear as 'user number'

# Take home message

- An effective plan will take into account what is being asked and will work out how to answer this most effectively
- The plan will give a good indication of how you are answering the question, not just restating the question and indicating that there are questions
- *We will talk more about types of plans and how you structure the information you want to include in the advanced session*

# Final poll

What do you feel are the main things you will take away from this session?

- Better understanding of today's topic
- Better understanding of the place of study skills within university study
- Enthusiasm for my studies
- Enthusiasm for my skills development
- Feel part of the university
- Feel part of SHL

If you have any other feedback please send to [studenthub@open.ac.uk](mailto:studenthub@open.ac.uk)



- 1 Mar 11am Developing your essay planning
- 2 Mar 11am Introduction to essay writing
- 8 Mar 11am Developing your essay writing
- 9 Mar 11am live broadcast - Interpretating and using other people's theories and facts**
- 15 Mar 11am Intro to critical thinking & writing
- 22 Mar 11am Developing critical thinking & writing
- 23 Mar 11am live broadcast - Whose idea is this anyway?**

Details and booking information from  
<http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/>

Past student hub live online study skills sessions [here](#)

Visit us at <http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/> and subscribe for events as they are announced. Send us feedback at [studenthub@open.ac.uk](mailto:studenthub@open.ac.uk)

