

# 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?

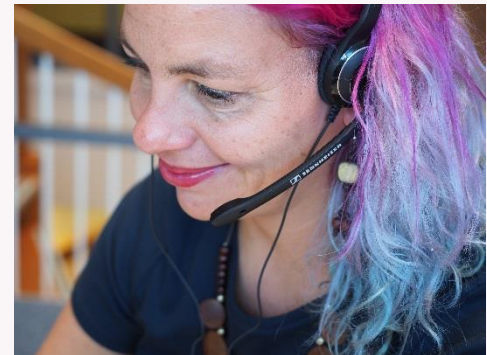
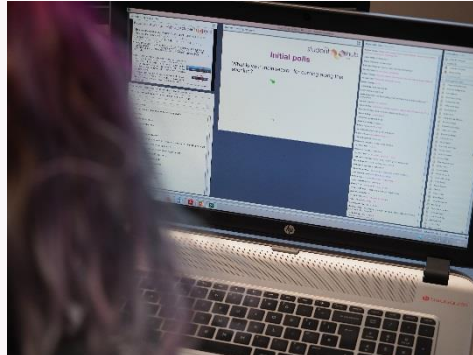
- Arts
- Languages (English & other)
- Social sciences
- Business and law
- Science
- Engineering or technology
- Maths
- Health sciences
- Education
- Sports
- OTHER

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

- No (I'm brand new!)
- No (but have listened to one or more recordings)
- No (didn't have time)
- No (wasn't aware of before now)
- Yes any 2020
- Yes any 2021

# 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



Karen Foley is a lecturer at the OU, head of student hub live and chairs Y032. She also tutors in social sciences, psychology and science.



HJ was an OU student and is moderating the chat



Zoe works in online services at the OU and is a technical genius

# Workshop

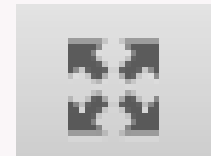
- This is going to be a structured workshop to help you get thinking
- We'll look at what is meant by essay planning, including some different styles and methods, as well as key points for what needs to be included
- Then we'll give some tutor advice
- You'll also get the chance to discuss things with others in the chat and using polls

# 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



# 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.



# Initial polls

What is your main reason for coming along to this 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*



# 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.

# First thoughts

Have you ever written something long?

- Yes
- No

# First thoughts

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

- Yes
- No

## Scenario and poll

Imagine you have just been told you have won a prize and will have 30 minutes in an Amazon\* warehouse to take as many items as you can fit into a shopping trolley.

When you get to the warehouse you will have 30 minutes to look at the layout and stock list.

What will you do to plan?

- 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

\*other warehouses are available!

# Our ideas

- You may want to think about your priorities in terms of what will fit into the trolley
- You need to know where items are located
- 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?

# 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.



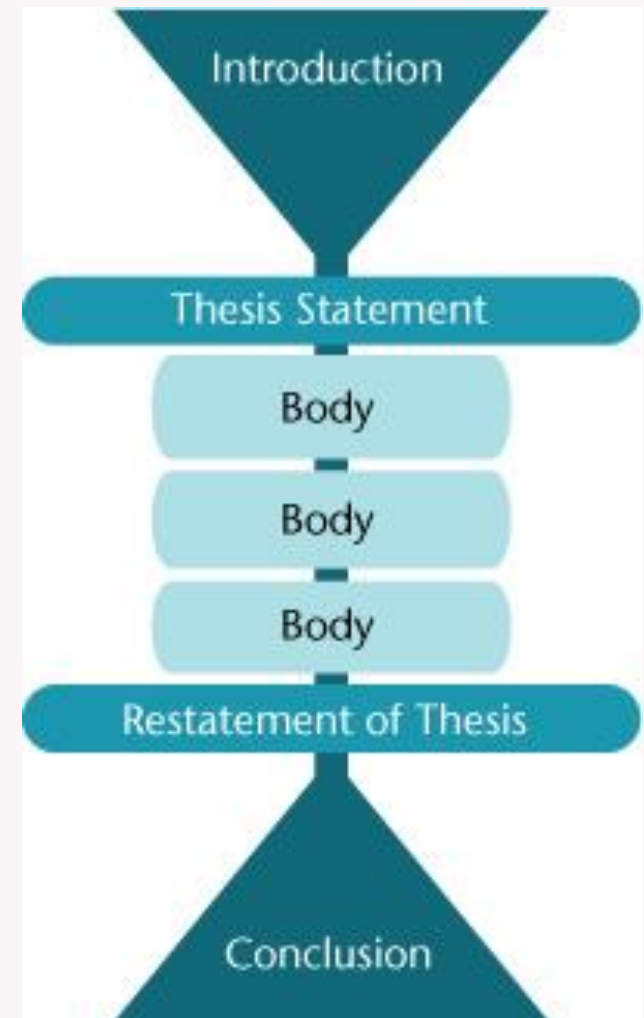


# Example

- 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



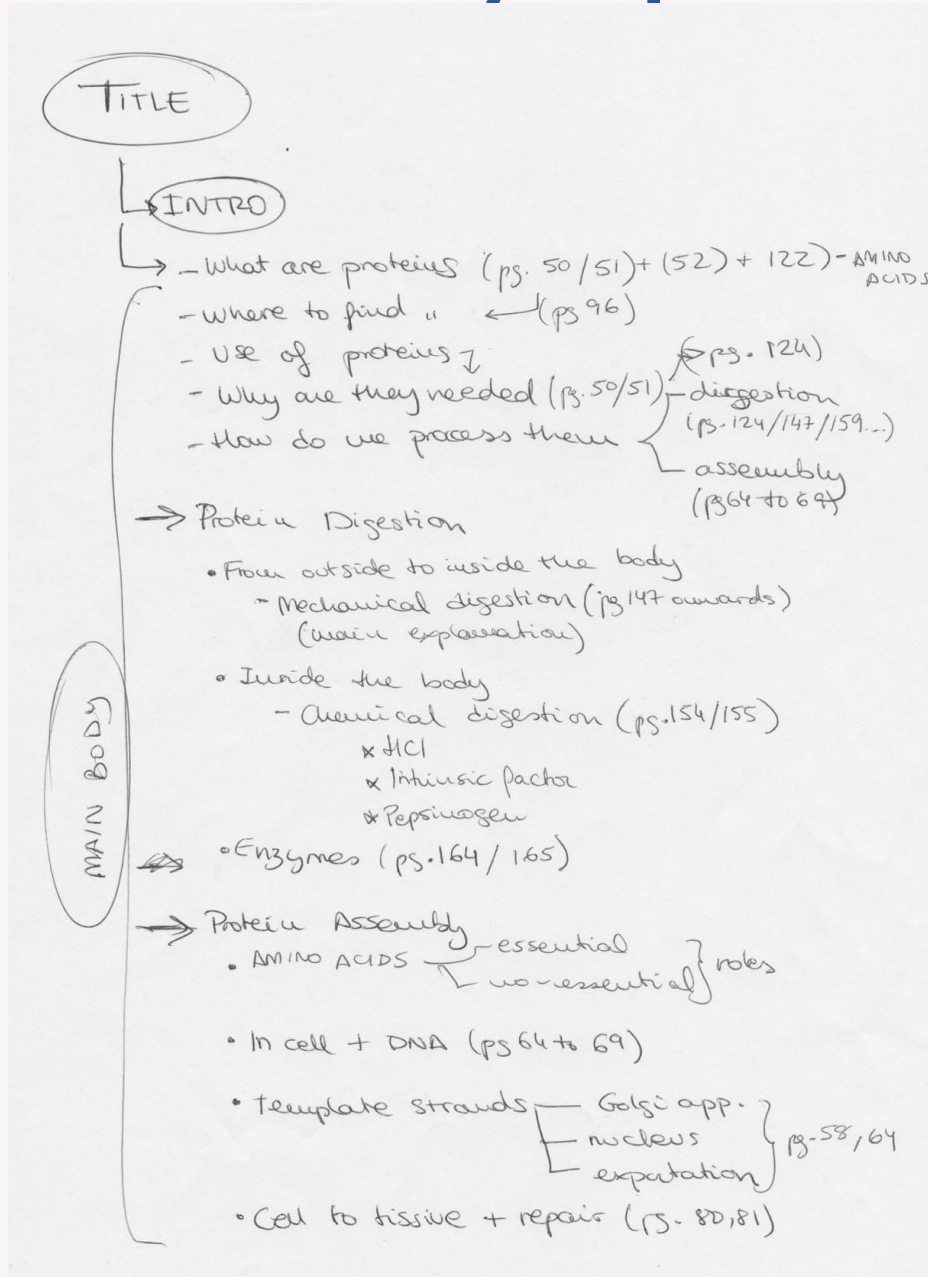
# Answering the question you've been given

- 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!

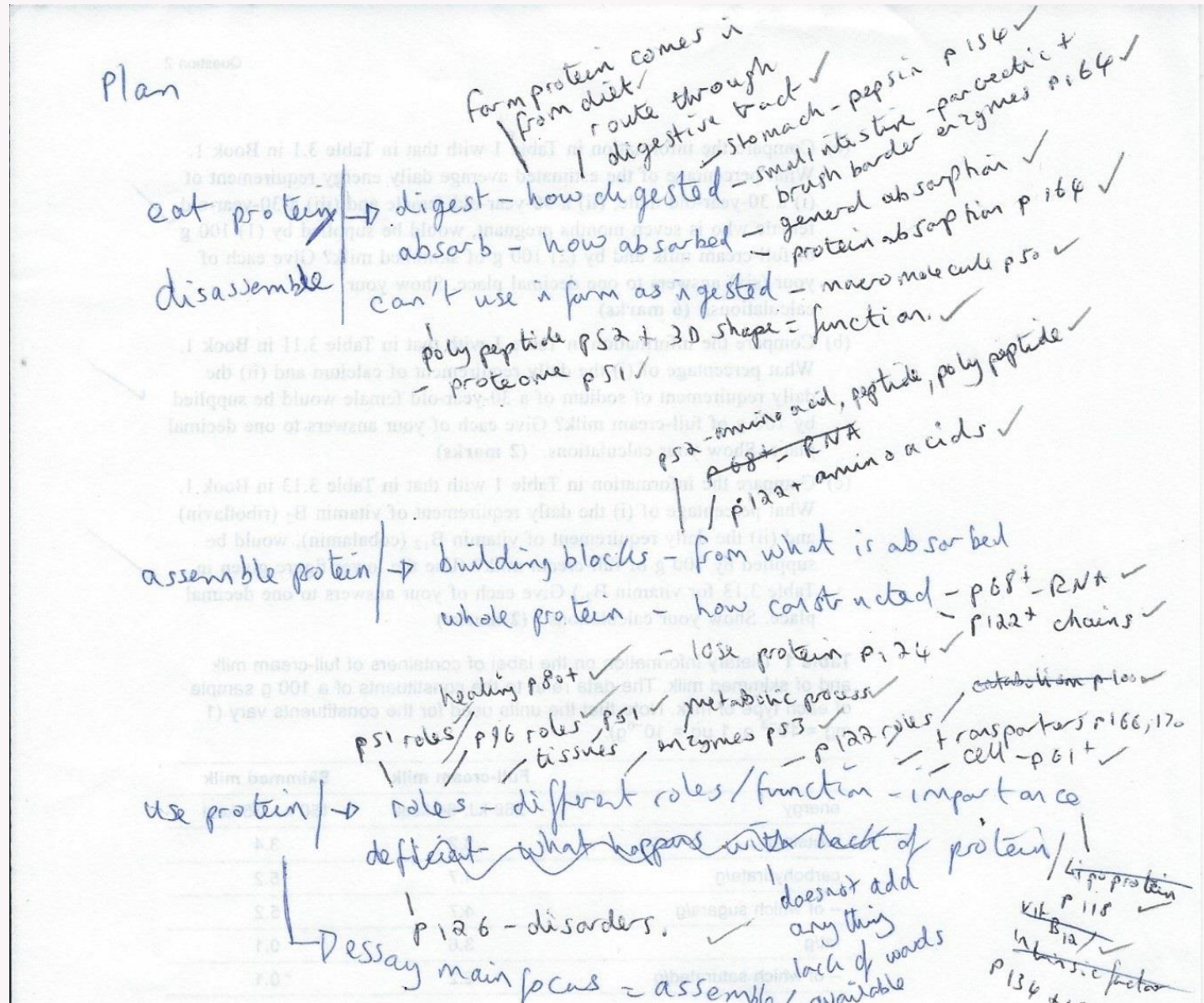
# Types of plan

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

# List style plan



# List style plan



# 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

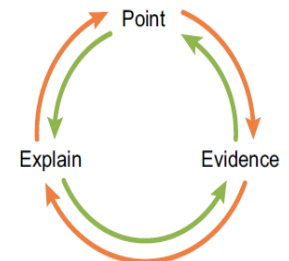


# The PEE rule

## Skills box 3.2 The point explanation evidence (PEE) rule

The idea of the PEE rule is that a paragraph has three main components: point, explanation and evidence. The paragraph should start off with a point. This is then followed by an explanation about why that point is relevant, and, finally, evidence that supports the point (see Figure 3.5 overleaf). The order of the two Es can sometimes switch, depending on what you are trying to do with the paragraph.

- Point – this is the main point you want to make, or it may be a point that someone else has made.
- Explanation – this expands on the point and links it to the evidence, explaining what it means in the context of the discussion.
- Evidence – this may be facts, opinion or some sort of support for the point.



# 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 is the main thing you will take away from this session?



Details and booking  
information from  
[http://studenthublive.open  
.ac.uk/](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)

