

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?

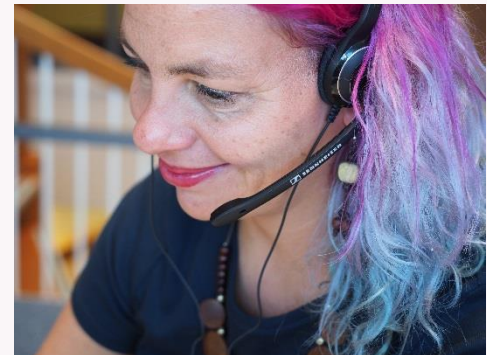
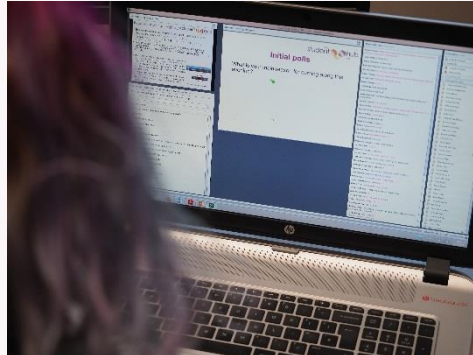
- Arts
- Languages (English & other)
- Social sciences
- Business and law
- Science
- Engineering or technology
- Maths
- Health sciences
- Education
- Sports
- OTHER

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 recordings)
- 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.

Register now for Student Voice Week 13-21 November 2021

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Feedback sessions, questions and answers activities, social gatherings, faculty specific initiatives, and much more.

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Don't miss out on making your voice heard!

Sign up at <https://community.open.ac.uk/student-voice-2021>

Workshop

- This is going to be a structured workshop to help you get thinking about putting plans into action
- We'll look at what is meant by essay writing, including some different styles and methods, as well as key points for what needs to be included
- We'll showcase ideas to give you different approaches
- You'll also get the chance to discuss things further

Session purpose

- **Is for:**
- Covering the basics of essay writing
- Give some guidance about ways to write effectively and at an appropriate level
- 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 writing

This was our advert...

This workshop for Access and Level 1 students or those writing essays for the first time (or the first time in years!) covers the basics of drafting and editing essays. We will focus on how to prepare an essay plan, using each reference effectively. The workshop will introduce tone of voice, writing objectively, and how to differentiate between evidence taken from the module materials and your own ideas when answering an essay question. It is helpful (but not essential) to attend or watch the Introduction to essay planning (beginners) workshop before attending.

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



Planning recap

- Effective essays are planned so that you have a clear idea of what you are going to do and can then know how to achieve that
- Any plan needs to have enough information for you or someone else with a reasonable grasp of the content to pick up and be clear on what is intended
- A plan is a road map of what you intend to do. It helps you to know what you intend to do and allows you to know whether you have done this
- You can also think of it as a recipe which makes it clear what is going to go into the essay and the order

First thoughts

How well do you plan your essays? Please select the option nearest to your approach!

- Like a military operation
- Like a supermarket shop on an empty stomach
- Like an escape from a hungry bear

Moving on

- We have talked about planning essays but this session is about the actual writing, so converting that plan into the final essay

Poll time

Which of the following aspects of the essay writing process is most important to you personally?

- Identifying the content
- Articulating how the content relates to the point
- Structuring overall
- Referencing correctly
- Editing
- Critical evaluation

Your learning journey

- Whilst there is content you need to cover within your essay, the way you do it and what you personally decide you are intending to maximise your effort on it up to you,
- At different points in your learning journey your focus may be on different underlying skills

Poll time

What worries you most about writing essays?

Please use the short answer poll to give your ideas and we will discuss some (and come back to others)

Hopefully!

- We'll cover ideas to address many of these issues,
- Remember your own module assessment guide as well as the studenthome help centre and library resources e.g
- Referencing your sources
<https://www.open.ac.uk/libraryservices/beingdigital/pathways/13/15>
- Quick guide to Harvard / cite them right
<https://www.open.ac.uk/library/help-and-support/quick-guide-to-harvard-referencing-cite-them-right>

Tone of voice

- Most essays are written in the third person
- You are writing, in your own words, about things that other people say and you are using your own view to decide what to include and why it is relevant
- You are not, unless specified, writing about your opinion, experiences or perspectives
- It is better to be clear than to forthwith and henceforth confuse and confuddle your reader with lots of sophisticated words that are entirely unnecessary

Tips and techniques



- You are the tour guide
- This is your terrain – you wouldn't say "in this tour we are going on a journey". This tour will....
- "this is important because...."
- There are lots of things here but notice this....
- This is very different compared to....
- While that was interesting, another area to look at is....

Using each source effectively

- In your essay plan you should have various sources of evidence
- That evidence needs to be linked back to the topic
- In your plan you should have considered what to include and in what order, but in writing the essay you can consider weight
- Use your words to convey importance and detail to emphasise points or to explain why certain parts are not included



Tone of voice

- There will be times when you are expressing your objective view about someone else's opinion
- And other times when you will be relaying what that opinion is
- And sometimes you will explain why that opinion is relevant



Activity – whos opinion is it anyway?



Have a read

When tissues are injured, the damaged cells release chemicals that trigger the sequence of events described as inflammation. It occurs in response to any type of injury, such as a blow or a cut, an insect bite, or damage caused by pathogens multiplying in body tissues. Inflammation has four characteristic effects at the site of an injury: swelling, redness, heat, pain.

Whose opinion?

- Listen to the different statements and then select whether they are quote, theorist opinion, personal opinion, or something else. These are all based on the text you can see.

Being clear you are addressing the question in the right way:

- These are the instructions that tell you what you need to do:
 - Describe
 - Explain
 - Critically analyse
-
- We strongly recommend the studenthome > study skills resources here - <https://help.open.ac.uk/understanding-the-question>

Poll time

If you saw this as an advert for a film what might it be about?



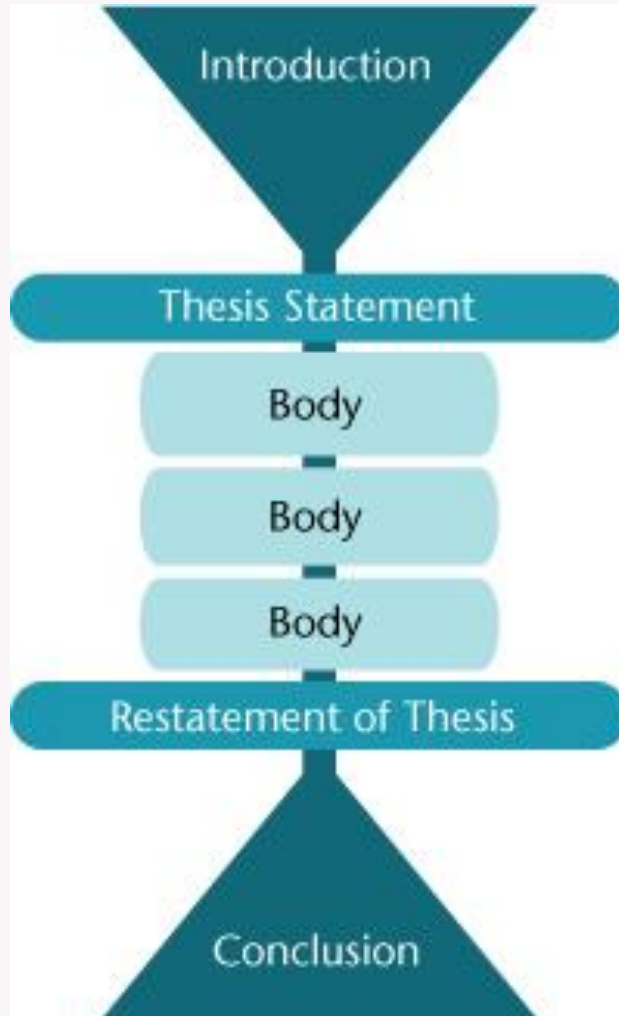
Why do we ask?

- You need to be clear in your essay what it is about,
- Your reader needs to have a clear idea and follow your thread.
- Sometimes essays meander or are misleading and don't cover what they say they're going to

Structure

- You can adopt a structure like this if you wish but the key is to ensuring that the essay funnels in important information.
 - So the introduction frames what is needed
 - then the information is covered before..
 - the funnel moves back out to summarise
- All words apart from the main content and argument should be framing and shaping essay

Structure



The thesis statement is what you aim to deliver in the essay and is a concise summary of this – usually one sentence

Pace and flow

Remember our tour bus example...

- The essay must continuously progress, or you are in the doldrums
- But a ride over lots of rapids without any sense of direction can leave the reader confused
- At times the pace can be fast, and at other times it can be slower (when you need a lot of detail)

Main argument

- You need to be clear what your main argument is
- Check the instructions, including process words
- Ideally, a clear central theme or tenet will run through your essay to make that main argument clear

Paragraph structures - PEE

- PEE

- Point – make it
- Evidence – support it with facts
- Explain – why the evidence is relevant

Tip – if you read the first sentence of each paragraph you should get a good idea about the flow of the essay. You should not begin a paragraph with evidence – it is important to introduce it and explain how it contributes

Discussion activity

- There will be 2 specific questions in chat pods for you to explore some of the elements we have discussed further.
- *Things I do well in my essay writing are....*
- *Things I would like to do better in my essay writing are...*
- 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

- Essay writing is a process and takes practice
- An essay is a story that communicates a topic in a structured way and all paragraphs relate to that topic, even though they may have their own mini topic

Final polls

What do you feel is the main thing you will take away from this session?

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- 16 Nov 11am Developing a good academic argument
- 23 Nov 7pm Developing your essay writing
- 30 Nov 7pm Creative note taking
- 7 Dec 11am Intro to critical thinking
- 14 Dec 7pm Developing Critical thinking

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

