

# What are SHL workshops?

- Studenthublive is non modular and focuses on study skills relevant to higher education
- This means all sessions are skills based and are not subject based. We cannot provide subject/faculty related sessions
- SHL workshops do not take the place of tutorials provided by your modules
- All events are always advertised on our website along with studenthome news, social media channels and careers sources
- All events are bookable; workshops do fill up as they are popular

# Online workshop basics

- 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 (*may not be accessible on some mobile devices*) and from <http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/>.

# Today's workshop

- This is going to be a structured workshop to help you start preparing for your remote exam
- We'll look at some of the key features of remote exams
- We'll give ideas on ways to approach the exam itself
- We'll give some generalised tutor 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



# Inclusivity

- We welcome all students at our workshops. Please do be aware that they can be very busy and some students may struggle with the non scripted nature. Slides are available to download within the live session and from the event page on the [studenthublive](https://www.studenthublive.com) website to follow along or prepare for what will come up.

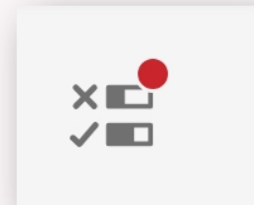
# Please

- 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 so we would not be able to make the recording available

# 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*



# Your hosts today!



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.



Margaret Greenhall teaches science at first and second year courses. She is a specialist in studying skills having taught creative problem solving, memory and speed reading for many years.



# Preparing for exams and demonstrating skills in a high pressure situation

# Important!

- In this session we can not give any module specific advice
- If you are doing a remote exam please look very closely at the information provided by your own module for specifics
- Please make sure you read <https://help.open.ac.uk/remote-exams-and-icmes>
- <https://help.open.ac.uk/exam-arrangements-booklet>

# First thoughts

- What are you most looking forward to about your upcoming exam?
- Please use the poll pod available and let's see what people think!

# Why have an exam?

- It's your chance to show your understanding and make sure you have a good handle on your learning **of the given module**
- (most of) you are carrying on studying and will invariably use the skills from this module again
- Exams test whether you know information and whether you can apply it in context

# Practicalities

# Timing

How long have you got for your remote exam?

- 3 hours
- 4 hours
- 8 hours
- 12 hours
- 24 hours
- 2 days (48 hours)
- 3 days (72 hours)
- Other time
- No idea!

# Time to complete

- Each OU exam is designed to be completed in 3 hours. This means you should aim to complete in roughly that amount of time (longer if you normally have additional requirements that have been discussed and agreed with the exam board).
- You can take longer if you wish **if you have access to the paper for longer**
- It is worth planning to complete in 3 hours as that may help you to focus and get it completed

# Time management poll

- What have you done so far to make sure you will be available when your remote exam paper is? Please use the poll to say.



# Time suggestions

- Book day off work
- Arrange child care
- Arranged to go to mum / dad / friend's quiet house / flat

# What could impact you?

- Is there anything that might impact your concentration on the day of your exam?
- Please use the poll pod provided and we'll try and provide some suggestions

# Space suggestions

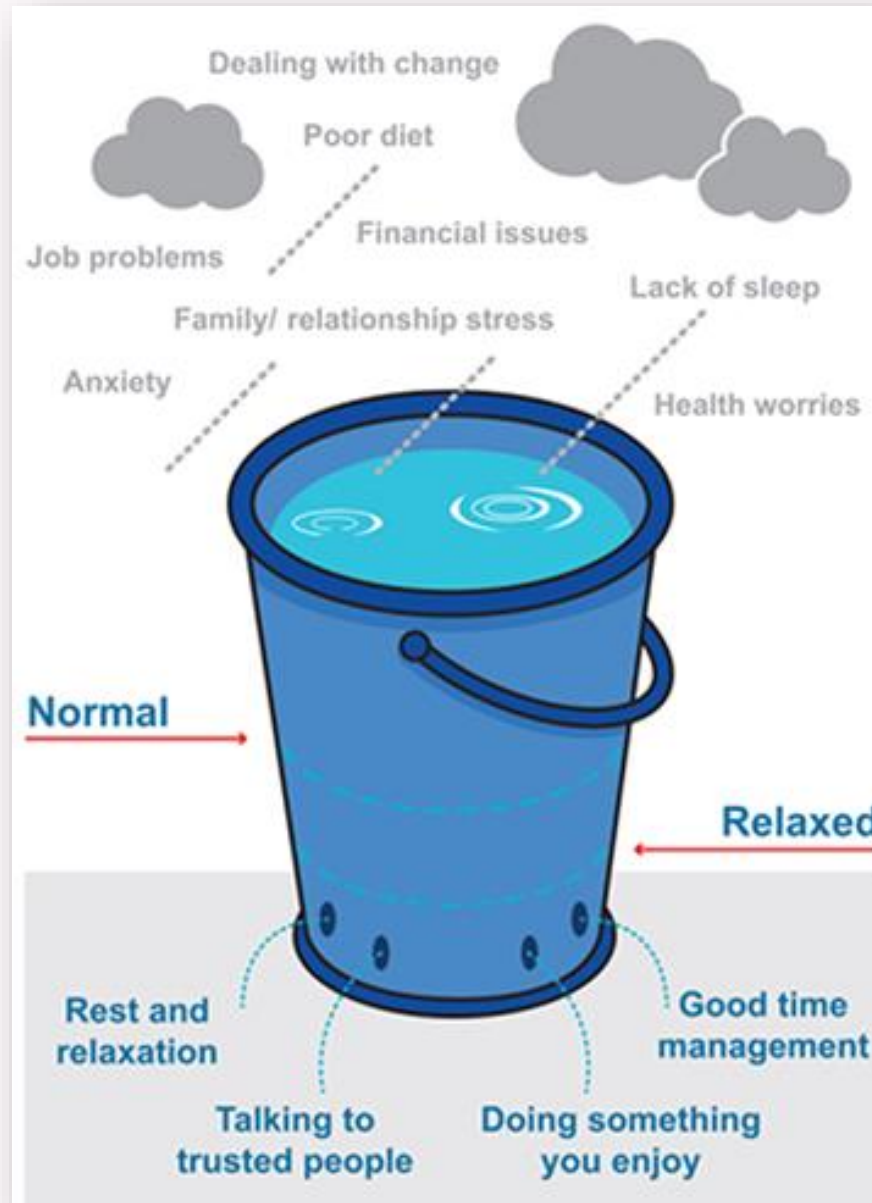
- A separate closed room unless absolutely impossible
- Ideally somewhere with a desk / table and space to write and focus
- A private space where you won't be interrupted
- **Boundaries!**

# People space suggestions

- Think about what you would have done if you had been going out to sit the exam normally e.g. child care would have been arranged, time off work would have been booked
- How much of this can you still do?
- For instance is someone able to care for a child whilst you complete the exam or can they sleep / entertain themselves for the time you need

# Well being

# Managing stress 1



# Managing stress poll

- What things can you do to dissipate stress during the exam (allow the water to flow out of the bucket)? Please use the poll pod to say and let's see what ideas we all have that may help each other

# Help available

- <https://help.open.ac.uk/mental-health-support>
- Student support team
- Disability support team
- Open University Students Association
- Tutor (module related)
- Carer network
- Family / friends

We can't provide all the answers now but please do make use of help available 😊



# Revision ideas

# Knowing what you need to know

- Do you know when and where to get information about your remote exam style and content?
- Do you know what is expected of you?
- How can you most effectively process and prepare to retrieve knowledge?
- How can you focus on demonstrating the right learning outcomes (not everything!)?
- How are you going to effectively communicate what you know...?

# Remembering...

- Is difficult!
  - Needs a context
  - Needs a purpose
  - Has to be active
- 
- So think about what is important and focus on that. Don't just remember facts for the sake of it, why are they important?

# Source of information

- Information from the module team about the exam
- Past exam papers
- Specimen exam papers (SEP)
- Module learning outcomes
- Chapter / section summaries
- Tutorials

# Using available papers

Have you looked at past exam papers for your module?

- Yes (have got and worked through)
- Yes (have got but not worked through yet)
- No (keep meaning to get)
- No (my module doesn't have past papers)
- No (my module is brand new this year)

Have you looked at the specimen exam paper (SEP) for your module?

- Yes (have got and worked through)
- Yes (have got but not worked through yet)
- No (keep meaning to get)
- No (my module doesn't have a specimen exam paper)
- No (I don't think I need to)

# Past papers

- No answers are provided to past exam papers

# Look for themes

- What is your module about? Does it have some key themes that are introduced at the start, maybe in an audio recording or a key document from the module team chair?
- Use this to make sure you know what is important
- The exam is going to be testing your overall understanding of the whole module but you won't be expected to know every word

# Prioritise

- Exams have limited time so what is the most important thing that you will need to convey?
- How *can* you answer a question even if you don't know exactly?
- Can you apply the information you know? If you can only regurgitate it in one format then this won't help



# Why is it important?

- You may have crafted a wonderful series of essays in preparation with plenty of time with your module content with you BUT how much of this can you recall or write in the exam setting?
- Which bits are most important?
- There is a big difference between a 1000 word essay constructed over a series of hours with material to hand and a 500-1000 (~700) word essay written in a short period for an exam
- It still needs to be planned!

# Exam strategies

# Approaching the paper

- Have you considered which approach you will take to complete the exam paper? Please say your ideas about this in the poll provided and let's see what suggestions there are

# Scoping

- What is in and out of scope?
- Do you understand what to focus on?
- Do you know how you need to answer the question?

A common exam technique is to just write everything you know in the hope that something will be relevant.

Think about the sentences that can "compromise" your ability to demonstrate your understanding.

# Using the SEP

- The SEP will set out the structure of your module's exam and show you how many questions there will be, whether any are optional and what mark allocation there is
  - It may also show you a worked through example of how to approach 1 or more questions
  - It may also give example answers to some of the questions that are in it.
- Use it to test yourself

# What types of question are there?

- If there are short answer questions worth a few marks then these will probably involve specific facts or definitions
- There may be also a need to apply those facts in the context of your module
- If there is an essay you will need to include more relevant information showing understanding overall
- Remember key elements like structuring correcting, grammar and spelling as well as appropriate academic writing

# Module materials poll

- Do you plan to use your module materials during the actual exam?
  - Yes
  - No
- Have you thought of *how*? Please use the short answer poll provided to give some ideas

# Having a strategy

- Given for this remote exam you will have access to your module material consider carefully how you might use it **effectively**.
- It will not be effective use of time to start at the beginning and just read until you find something relevant or just search randomly
- Be strategic – you need an idea of what you are looking for



# Remember the module

- Perhaps obvious but what is the module about?
  - French writing will have different skills to French listening
  - An exam reporting on your work experience or a case you have worked on will be different than a series of specific factual questions.
  - Don't mix up information from different modules if you are studying more than one or have studied others previously – you are being assessed on your understanding of **this** module

# Discussion activity

- There will be 2 specific questions in chat pods for you to explore some of the elements we have discussed further.
- *The best thing I have done so far to revise / prepare for my exam is...*
- *To do the best I possibly can in my exam I am going to...*
- 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'

# If things go wrong with the exam

# Special circumstances

- It is really important that you complete a special circumstances form.
- This allows you to explain to the Module Results Panel (MRP) how **you** have been affected by unexpected circumstances.
- Without that information the MRP will know nothing about what has happened to you.
- Help > special circumstances
- **It is your voice, at that meeting.**

# Take home message

- An OU exam will be a new experience for many but you can prepare for it
- You will need to set boundaries to allow you to have the best chance in your exam
- Exams are about coherently conveying the information that is relevant
- Put yourself in the best place mentally and physically
- Prepare well so you know what your exam consists of and then plan effectively to do the best you can

# Feedback

Please complete the feedback form that is available at

<https://forms.office.com/e/JqB0Vm7d9z>

This is immensely valuable to provide information on how studenthublive is beneficial to students as well as to help us plan our future programme

(Please remember that as explained earlier studenthublive is non modular and we cannot provide subject based sessions- sorry!)



23 May 7pm Mastering essay writing (Advanced)

30 May 7pm Creative note-taking

6 June 7 pm Beginners critical thinking

8 June 11 am Support for carers

13 June 7 pm Intermediate critical thinking

20 June 7 pm Advanced critical thinking

27 June 7 pm End of year party

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

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

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