Neurodiverse community – reflecting and consolidating

Starting notices

Who we are, ground rules and practicalities

This was our advert...

This workshop will provide the opportunity to reflect on a (hopefully!) successful year of study and consider what techniques and strategies could be adopted to build on this in order to make ongoing study even better. As with all neurodiverse community sessions we have a student guest who will be discussing their own situation and experiences. Honest reflection helps all students to know what to keep up and well as what might need changing.

A short comfort break will be taken midway through the session.

What are Studenthublive workshops?

- Studenthublive (SHL) is non modular and focuses on study skills relevant to higher education.

- This means sessions are skills based and are not subject based.

- SHL workshops do not take the place of subject and skill related 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 from the studenthublive online room.

- Slides are available to download during the live session and from the event page on https://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/content/neurodiverse-community-reflecting-and-consolidating-learning-10-june-2025

SHL is lively!

- These sessions are large scale

- They are often busy with lots of interaction

- They are not the same as other module-based tutorials

- You can maximise slides on your own screen by clicking the icon

- You can return to the recording from https://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/content/neurodiverse-community-reflecting-and-consolidating-learning-10-june-2025 after the event to revisit if needed

Today's workshop

- This is going to be a structured community workshop to help you consider study issues relating to neurodiversity, and keeping going to progress on your module.

- Andrea will be sharing her experiences and together you can consider your own

- We will not tell you what to do, nor what will definitely happen. We will discuss experiences and you can decide what may work for you.

Comfort break scheduled

- The workshop is scheduled to run 11-12:15 with a comfort break.

- I (Isabella) will make it clear when that comfort break will happen for those who are unclear.

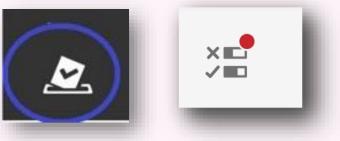- The slides do mention the presence of the break for those who like to be aware ahead of time.

student hub live

Initial poll

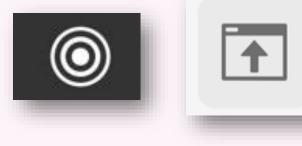The same one starts each workshop ☺

What are you looking to gain?

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

(If you are on a mobile app 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

Practicalities

Practicalities and who is involved today

Neurodiverse community events

- This workshop is the fourth in the 2024-25 year suite of events to support the Open University neurodiverse community.

- Each event will focus on a specific aspect of study and has been developed with the support and input of current OU students who are neurodiverse.

Session format

- Each of these sessions will talk to a student guest about their experiences of studying.

- This will include relevant questions about how neurodiverse issues impact them and their study.

- There will be opportunities for all attendees to consider their own situation and peer sharing of possible strategies.

- Today's session is about considering how to reflect on study and consider what works to take that forward

Terminology - 1

- Terminology today has been taken from the University's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Inclusive Language & Image Guide.

- This follows the social model of disability in which people are disabled or limited by society and provision, rather than a deficit-model approach whereby the person has a deficiency.

- https://help.open.ac.uk/browse/disability covers a lot of information about disability support.

- It is important to note that everyone is an individual and how one person describes their experiences may / not be how another does. Please be respectful of each individual's choice

Isabella Henman – me!

- I am the presenter of the workshop and events for the SHL neurodiverse and disabled community.

- I have been an OU tutor since 2005 and have led the SHL workshops since they began in 2017.

- I have an active interest in supporting students with various challenges and have undertaken specific training relating to neurodiversity and disability.

- I am not an expert but I am interested and continually update my knowledge.

Today's student guest

- Andrea is my student guest today

Getting into today's workshop

Sharing experiences from student guest and you

Neurodiversity word cloud

- Using the option to type in where it says enter word here '**what is the neurodiversity you have (whether diagnosed or not)?'**

- Note that answers need to be a single word rather than a phrase / multiple words, if you press the space or enter button your word will go through (if the disability it is multiple words please use the acronym or share in chat pod).

- Please add a new answer for each condition if you have multiple

- A word cloud is built up with common answers being larger so we can see if there are commonalities.

Enter word here

Andrea Q1

- Please tell us about your study experience and how neurodiversity has impacted that.
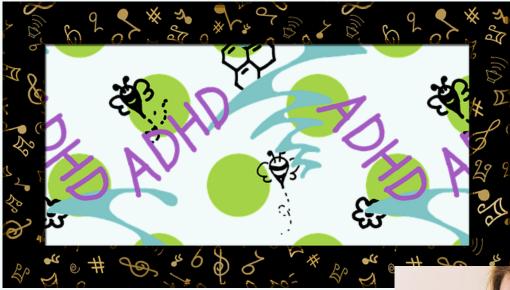
Varying student experience

South Africa and UK

'nature of the time'

- Would have to be special classes which would mark you out

- No research or understanding about neurodiversity

- Something wrong with you

- Lasting legacy – 'what is wrong with me?'

Hyperactive child

Poll for everyone 1

- Please use the short answer poll pod provided to answer the question – **how do you feel about sharing information about your neurodiversity**?

- This isn't about making anyone feel bad but just getting a feel about what experiences there are

- What would you like people to know about students with neurodiversity?

You are special!

Personalised achievement

Unique way of learning

- Come to terms with it

- Extra anxieties will then fall away as you can develop the method that works for you, not the one that others tell you!

Face the fear

- Face the fear and combat it!

Imposter syndrome

Poll for everyone 2

- Please use the poll to answer whether you doubt yourself?
  - Yes
  - No

- Now, if you have said you doubt yourself, please say **how** in the short answer poll provided

- Again it is not about making anyone feel bad but raising themes so that maybe others can suggest ways to help.

These workshops

- They are about community and realising you are not alone

- **I see you**

- **We see you**

- **You are not alone**

- **You are unique but there are also others who share some of those unique qualities** ☺

Comfort break

We will now have a 5-6 minute comfort break during which the recording will be paused. Please feel free to go and stretch your legs, visit the loo, grab a snack, make a drink or anything else you need to. The timer will count down until we come back
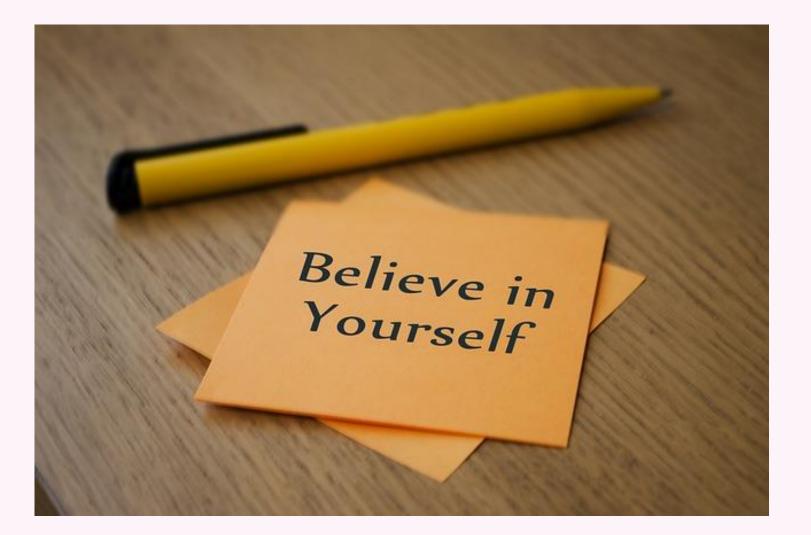
Andrea q3

- What strategies have you put in place to be able to help yourself and even be able to join and share in this session?

Know you can

Use computer

- MS Word and MS Edge
  - Read aloud
  - Highlighting tool
  - Note tool
  - Search tool for easy access to notes made or highlighted sections
- Using Apps that are designed especially for people with learning needs:
- Mind maps
- DSA: If you are part of DSA, talk to your needs accessor about computer programs to suit your needs. They will do a full assessment.

Music

Breathe

Think of the reward

Comrades' marathon

- 89Km race
- Supporting each other

Poll for everyone 3

- Please use the poll pod available to share **what strategies you have developed to help yourself and your study journey.**

- Hopefully we will all be able to take away some useful ideas.

Andrea q4

- You have mentioned DSA (disabled students allowance) please share your experiences of support and how it has helped

A reminder of sources of support

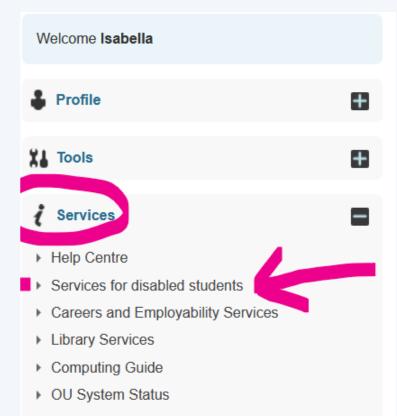Should you need any of them ☺

Disabled students allowance 1

- DSA
- https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa
- https://help.open.ac.uk/dsa-overview
- Please note that the OU can not apply on your behalf but all students who declare a disability are encouraged to apply for the DSA as it is there to support them.
- The OU also does not govern what is provided and cannot guarantee what would be provided.

Disabled students allowance 2

- We can not guarantee anything but do encourage you to engage with your disability support team. Contact them through the option from studenthome in the services option

- https://help.open.ac.uk/browse/disability

Study related costs

- https://www.open.ac.uk/courses/fees-and-funding/study-related-costs-funding

- Examples may be support with broadband, provision of a large white board, special overlays to support reading on screen.

- Note we cannot guarantee anything but it is worth exploring and asking – you never know ☺

OU community and support

- https://community.open.ac.uk/ showcases community within the OU (including studenthublive!)

- OUSA disabled students group have regular meet ups as well as other support

- OUSA have various events

- National support network

Andrea q5

- Moving and looking forward to your next module – what will you do to be as successful as possible?

Andrea's tips for success

- It's never too late
- Take on the challenge
- Speak to other people who have studied
- Get advice from student support
- Sign up for Student Hub tutorials
- Speak to your Tutor
- Be active in the Forums
- Join the OU Student Union
- Connect, connect, connect
- Don't be silent, ask for help

Hope is a dream deferred

Selected upcoming events

- 11 Jun   11am   Support for student carers community session

- 12 Jun   11am   Let's talk research – Q&A with librarians

- 24 Jun   7pm   SHL end of year party

- 8 Jul   4pm   Taking stock of what works

- 10 Jul   11am   Keeping motivation for study

For more information on all past and upcoming events, go to http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/

Feedback

Please complete the feedback form that is available at
https://forms.office.com/e/gBsN2xmig5