

Neurodiverse community - Starting out effectively

Starting notices

Who we are, ground rules and practicalities

This was our advert...



Whether starting out or continuing the student journey, neurodiverse community learners can experience both opportunities and challenges. In this first workshop in our new year series we will have a guest who will discuss their own experiences. There will be plenty of opportunities to consider what ways you can capitalize on your potentially different ways of thinking and also some things to be aware of to help you start your new year of studying as you mean to go on.

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-starting-out-effectively-5-september-2024>

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-starting-out-effectively-5-september-2024> after the event to revisit if needed



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 may not be able to make the recording available.

Today's workshop



- This is going to be a structured community workshop to help you consider some things as you start out your study year.
- Charlotte 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 suggest things based on experience and you can decide which aspects work for you.

Comfort break scheduled



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

Initial poll

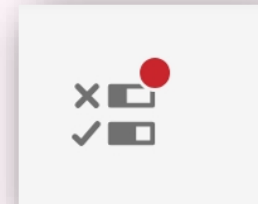
The same one starts each workshop 😊

What do you want to learn?

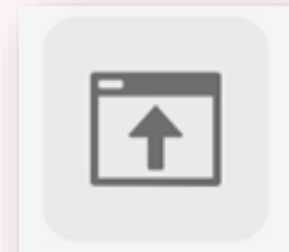


Using the short answer poll provided please say what you are hoping to learn from today's session

(If you are on a mobile 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



Neurodiverse community starting out effectively

Neurodiverse community events

Practicalities and who is involved today

ND community events



- This workshop is the first in the new 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 and OU staff who are autistic, have ADHD, dyslexia or dyspraxia; identify as neurodivergent or who have an interest in these areas
- If you would like to be involved with future events then please contact us at studenthub@open.ac.uk

Session format



- Each of these sessions will talk to a student guest about their experiences of studying.
- This will include relevant questions about how neurodivergence impacts them and their study.
- There will be experience led suggestions for how to manage specific situations.
- Today's session is about considering some of the strategies and methods that can be helpful to form good foundations for the new study year

Isabella Henman – me!



- I am the presenter of the workshop and events for the SHL ND community.
- I have been an OU tutor since 2005 and have led the SHL workshops since they began in 2018.
- I have an active interest in supporting students with various challenges and have undertaken specific training relating to neurodiversity.
- I am not an expert but I am interested and continually update my knowledge.

Today's student guest



- Charlotte is our student guest today
- She works in counselling and has just finished level 2 and is starting level 3 shortly.

Terminology - 1



- Terminology today has been taken from the University's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Inclusive Language & Image Guide.
- This states that "Neurodiversity relates to the fact that no two brains are exactly alike" and "Neurodivergent/neurodivergence: this term is used for people whose brains function differently from what is considered standard or typical, and this can be in one or more ways."

Terminology - 2

- 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



Getting in to today's workshop

Sharing experiences from student guest and you

ND diagnosis / identification word cloud



- Using the option to type in where it says enter word here **'what is your neurodivergence?'**
- 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 (so it won't make sense if that one word is not the whole answer).
- A word cloud is built up with common answers being larger so we can see if there are patterns

Enter word here

Charlotte Q1



- Please tell us about your background as an OU student and within the neurodiverse community.

Diagnostic process



- Lengthy
- Lots of tests
- Did go private
- Expensive
- Initial shock then denial

Poll question 1



- As a question to everyone – If you have a diagnosis, has this changed you or what you do?
- Please use the short answer poll pod provided and we will see whether there are any themes that we can draw out
- Don't worry if you don't feel able to answer but do have a look at what others say as this may give you some ideas

Charlotte Q2



- How did your study and learning change when you had your diagnosis?

Learning about yourself



It is important that as an individual you learn about yourself.

- What works for you.
- What does not work for you.
- How you maximise effectiveness.
- Recognising some this may be ND rather than personality or choice.

You will always be the best person to know about yourself but being open to ideas and alternative strategies is something that is beneficial for all learners.

Linear preference



To Do List

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



Everything is not immediate



Learning takes time



For many people study is new and for some a diagnosis or awareness may also be new.

Please give yourself time to learn strategies and to consider different possibilities.

It is not about changing everything and 'you being wrong' but it is about learning and considering areas that could be adjusted to help you to learn more effectively.

Medication



- We recognise medication is a potentially contentious subject and one that different individuals have contrasting experiences of.
- We also recognise that medication isn't always available or the other impacts of the medication are not positive to individuals.
- We also know that, as Charlotte has said, for some people medication can make a big difference.

Poll question 2



- As a question to everyone – if you have chosen to take medication for your neurodivergent condition – how has this impacted you?
- Please use the short answer poll pod provided and we will see what comes out.
- Please don't feel excluded or judged if you have not or cannot not take medication (or have and can) – this is about sharing experiences.

Charlotte Q3



- What are some of the things that you have recognised are most helpful for you when you are trying to manage your study?

Plan



Use apps



- Charlotte uses glean, endel, mindmaps, Grammarly, scholarly
- See what works for you.

Communicate and build rapport



Take notes effectively



- Notes are for a purpose and a key student skill to develop
- We did a session on effective note taking – access slides and recording through <https://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/content/effective-note-taking-15-aug-2024>

Practicalities



- Work out own time management and prioritisation.
- Make own study planner and download module study planner.
- Consider other responsibilities and what others can help with.
- Designated study space so know physically where you will be studying.

Use the Library



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Attend sessions



- Tutorials
- Studenthublive workshops
- Library sessions
- Watch recordings if can't attend live

Make use of support



- Whilst you are an individual and know about yourself, there are others who are experts in specific areas and can provide support.
 - Disability support team for specific support on the declared disability.
 - Student support team for general support areas including exam arrangements and reasonable adjustments.
 - Module tutor for factual information and how the assessment works on the module.

Unexpected things happen!



- It's life!
- Prepare to be flexible

Poll question 3



- Have you got any strategies that you have found have worked for you when studying?
- Please use the short answer poll pod provided and we will see what suggestions there are that we can share together and build upon

Comfort break

We will now have a 10 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

Welcome back

We will continue with the 2nd half now 😊

Motivation 1



Motivation 2



Motivation 3



Motivation 4



Motivation 5



Motivation 6



Poll question 4



- Do any of those motivational images inspire you or is there something else that is more effective? Please share your ideas in the poll pod if you feel able.

Charlotte Q4



- This session is (loosely) for those starting out on their study journey, whether as brand new students or in a new student year.
- If you could go back to your starting self who was beginning the OU study journey what would you say?

Really Plan!



Allow time

- Give time for re-reading and editing and checking.



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



- From studenthome under the services 'I' on the left click on services for disabled students which takes you to <https://help.open.ac.uk/browse/disability> then the link that says how to get disability support and funding covers the DSA

Poll question 5



- If you have applied for the disabled students allowance please tell us about any of the support you have received
- Please use the short answer poll pod provided and we will see what had been provided.
- Hopefully this will encourage those who may not have considered applying to see what could be provided.

Working with strategies



- Note that not all suggestions are going to work for everyone but it is worth exploring some if you struggle.
- All of the strategies mentioned have worked for other students at some points so they could work for you.
- Some of you will take medication to manage symptoms and that can be a personal decision.
- Everyone is unique which means strategies are unique

Tutor relationship



- Tutors are there to support students to succeed on the specific module that they are registered on.
- If as a student you have declared a disability to the university the allocated tutor will see a 'D' marker on the student record.
- Tutors **do not** see the complete record of any and all conversations you as a student may have had with the disability or student support teams.

Charlotte Q5



- At this point most students starting in the 24J cohort won't yet have a tutor allocated. Until nearer to the start date of the 5th October (for most modules)
- When you do get your tutor allocation Charlotte how do you explain your circumstances to your tutors so that they can support you as effectively as possible?

Further questions



- What further questions or points would you like to raise?
- Please use the chat or poll pod and we will see whether we can suggest something, or just share experiences.
- Please remember we can not provide individualised advice but there may be another student here who may have had similar experiences and may be able to share strategies or techniques.

Take home message



- Everyone whether neurodiverse or neurotypical can benefit from carefully considering their own situation and what does and does not work.
- Every single person has strengths but also weaknesses
- Honesty with yourself and others will help the learning process.
- Be kind to yourself!

Would you like to be involved?



- If you would like to share your experiences and take part in future studenthublive sessions then please get in touch (ask for it to be sent through to me Isabella Henman)
- I will also be introducing a suite of sessions more broadly for disabilities so if you or any other OU student you know might like to be involved please contact us
- studenthub@open.ac.uk

ND events this year (24-25)



- **29 Jan** 11am progressing effectively
- **09 Apr** 11am Planning to complete your module with success
- **10 Jun** 11am Reflecting and consolidating learning
- **Note all ND workshops are now 11-12:15 due to popular demand for longer sessions 😊**

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

Disability events this year (tbc)



- 21 Nov 4pm session 1 probably starting out
- 28 Jan 11am Session 2 probably progressing effectively
- 03 Apr 11am Session 3 probably Planning to complete

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/Z1nLvJuw26>

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

Selected Upcoming events



- 10 Sep 11am Managing high intensity study
- 12 Sep 11am Resilience: planning for success
- 17 Sep 4pm Am I too old for this? Age is just a number
- **24-27 Sep Freshers week events**
- 1 Oct 11am Tuition: making the most of your tutor and tutorials
- **8 Oct 11am Student hub live: 10 years helping you thrive**

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