

Freshers - Friday night social - 22 September 2023

ROB MOORE: Hello, everyone, and welcome to Student Hub Live, The End of Freshers Week. This is our social event, and it's great to have you all here with us tonight.

So hopefully you've managed to get to some of the earlier events with Isabella, and you've had a great time. Well, the rest of the team is here to say hello tonight. And we've got quite a few things to get involved with. So hopefully, you've had some emails and you've got some things prepared. But we're going to kick straight off, and I'm going to ask Heidi to tell us, who have we got in the chat, Heidi, and what are they talking about already?

HEIDI: Hello. Good evening, Rob. And hello to everybody that's joining us. This is my first time doing one of these. I did the fresher shows this week, which were really fun, but this is my first freshers social event. So you're going to have to bear with me, OK? So hopefully, I'm going to get everything right.

I'm new to this as well, if that makes you feel a bit better as a fresher to the OU. So my name is Heidi, and I've studied with the OU previously. So I'm a former student. I studied for six years with the OU.

Absolutely love it. And I now work here. So I know exactly how you're all feeling. I know about the early apprehension when you first start with your studies.

So I want to say some hellos this evening. So we've got loads of international students joining us, which is fantastic. So Najibullah is joining us from Afghanistan. We've got Susanna, who is joining us from a very rainy Normandy, in France. And Rochelle is also in France. Hi to you, Rochelle.

Allison is in Georgia, in the United States. Allison says, it's almost 2:00 PM. So a bit early here, but may make a mocktail. And it sounds good. It's so great to have you with us, Allison. I've spent loads and loads of time in the US. So it's great to have you with us.

We've also got Elle, who's joining us from Warwickshire. We've got Helen, who's joining us from Glasgow. And Dale has got a chow mein on the way, which sounds nice. Me and my son actually got fish and chips this evening. So I've already had my takeaway. So we went out in the rain to go and get that. It was absolutely delicious.

And Serafina, I just want to say a huge congratulations to you because Serafina - such a beautiful name - passed their driving test on Tuesday. The weather was horrendous that morning, but there was a huge rainbow across the road as they drove back to the test centre and they will never forget it. So lots of people congratulating Serafina in the chat. That's fantastic. Yay.

[APPLAUSE]

So thanks so much for joining us. If you find that the chat is moving a little bit fast, by the way - because it does go through very quickly sometimes - in the top right hand side, there's a little pin. If you click on that, it will slow the chat down for you. And then, as the show goes on, you'll find that we've got some really fantastic widgets and really nice interactive bits for you to get involved with. So do feel free to have a little play around with those when they come on the screen. But enjoy the show.

ROB MOORE: Excellent. Thank you for that, Heidi. And it's great to meet so many of you. Keep writing in the chat. Just bear in mind that this is a public forum. So don't put any personal information into the chat. So no phone numbers, no emails, anything like that.

So as I said, I'm Rob I'm one of the presenters on Student Hub Live. And I'm also a tutor in the Business School. And we'll introduce you to some of our guests now. We've got a couple of other members of Student Hub Live with us. We've got Jay and we've got Margaret. So Jay, say hello.

JAY RIXON: Hello.

ROB MOORE: Hello.

JAY RIXON: Good evening, everybody. It's great to be here. It's really good fun.

ROB MOORE: So Jay is going to be taking us through the mocktails in a little while. And Margaret is another of our presenters. And Margaret is going to be doing some memory exercises with us. So say hello, Margaret.

MARGARET: Hi, everybody. And nice to be with you tonight. It's raining here, as well, in Rosendale.

ROB MOORE: So we're here in Leicestershire, and it's starting to get a little dark. So the lights may have to go up at some point.

In the chat, you've already been talking with Cat and with Rafa. And I'm sure we've got images - I think we've got images of Cat and Rafa to show you. There we are. And they're the guys that are answering your questions, trying to keep on top of the hundreds of messages coming in. So give them lots of grief and lots of things to do. Tonight is very much a social, relaxed evening. So have fun.

And our final two special guests have taken over the far side of my study shack. So I'd just like to introduce you to the Orcs. Hello, Orcs. Give us a wave.

So the Orcs have come along to just basically make sure we stay in check. And we've been accused of being too nicey-nicey. So they're going to make sure that we get some gremlins floating around tonight because we all like it when things go slightly awry.

As we said, lots of things to get involved with and lots of opportunities to get involved with the chat. So we're going to start off and we're going to ask you to get involved with us in the widget. So you're going to see a widget. A widget is just one of our little tools that you can interact with us on. And there'll be a widget there with five of our names on there.

And what we're going to do tonight is, as we go through, I'm going to tell you four facts - four truths - that are things that have happened to four of our Student Hub Live team. And we're going to get you to vote and say which person it applies to.

And then, when we get to the end, and when we've done the activity, we'll see how many of you actually got the name right. So the first truth I'm going to throw out is one of our team - and it could be me - you've got a choice of me, Margaret, Cat, Jay, or Rafa. So they're the names you can vote for.

So one of us, when we were on holiday with our better half in America, we were walking along the street and we pointed out a British telephone box. And the better half turned and said, I bet that cost a fortune. That must really be expensive. And this scruffy urchin standing next to them said, that's all you Brits really worry about, isn't it? It's the cost of things. You're focused completely on money, and really gave them a telling off.

It turned out that that scruffy urchin was Willie Nelson, and they got told off by Willie Nelson. So which of us is that a truth for? So you've got the names there. You can vote just while we go through this next activity. And we'll come back and we'll tell you who that was at the end.

So while you're thinking about that, we're going to move on. And it's time for Jay. And Jay is going to take us through her favourite non-alcoholic drink. And I'm going to get the Orcs to make it as well at the same time, Jay. So we'll see their version at the end.

JAY RIXON: OK.

ROB MOORE: So I'm going to hand it over to you. And hopefully you can talk us through this delicious non-alcoholic cocktail.

JAY RIXON: Thanks, Rob. Brilliant. OK. So we're going to make a non-alcoholic cocktail. Where I'm in Buckinghamshire, it's getting a little bit dark. It's not quite the summer sun maybe we'd hoped for or the Indian summer. But what we're going to do is make a cocktail anyway. So I've got my cocktail shaker ready here. I have got some end of summer strawberries ready to go here.

Of course, I've got a glass ready to go. The little straw is just for added fun. And of course, what you always need for a cocktail is a snazzy little umbrella. So I've got those there as well.

And then for a bit of vintage fun, I may or may not use it, but this is an old - I think it's my grandmother's - this is an old mixer. So the more you push down on it, the more it will mix. And then I've got a little bit of honey because who doesn't like a little bit of sweetness? And then I've got a little bit of lime just for that final touch, that final flourish.

So because we're on Student Hub Live and I didn't want the sound guys to absolutely hate me, I'm not going to use a blender. But if you wanted to, you could use a blender. What I've done is I've got a sieve, a good, old-fashioned sieve. So all I did beforehand is I smashed a few strawberries through that sieve. So I'm just going to smash a few more ever so slightly off camera. And because strawberries are really soft and quite gooey, they go through the sieve really easily.

And then what I've been doing is, in my little pot - and I'll tell you what - when you smash the strawberries, they smell great. So in my little pot, can you see it? I think the Orcs would like this because it looks a bit bloodthirsty. I've got my strawberry mixture here. And I put a tiny bit of sugar in there because as the sugar and the strawberries hit, they do something called macerating. So they start to break down, which is a bit like when you make jam and you add lemon and pectin and everything like that.

So what I'm going to do is add all of my lovely strawberry mixture to my cocktail shaker. Here we go. So adding in the mixture now. That does look a bit tasty for the Orcs, doesn't it? And then, over here, I've got some ice and I've got some lemonade. I've got my lemonade all ready to go, and I've been pre-chilling it. So I'm just going to pour that. Of course, laptops, ice, and water definitely mix.

So I'm just swirling that around as I make it. And now what I'm going to do is just add my honey for a little bit of sweetness. Now, honey is quite sticky. So actually, if you ever want to utilise it, it's great to have a hot spoon near you. So dip it in some hot water. And then just dip your spoon in the honey and it will glide right off. But I thought that probably wasn't the most health and safety conscious thing I could have done this evening.

So I've got all of my ingredients in there, but my tiny little squeeze of lime. So I'm going to put one squeeze of lime in now and then I'm going to put one squeeze of lime in later. So I'm going to put my lid on. And ordinarily, I think, you shake your cocktail until the outside of your shaker has got condensation on it. But again, so that the sound guys don't hate me, I won't do that. I'm going to swirl. What's the phrase? Shaken, not stirred or stirred, but not shaken?

And so I have got a little strainer on the top of my cocktail shaker. So initially, I might do a little bit of straining. Let's hope the lid doesn't pop off. But I'm sure we've got a Student Hub Live blooper reel somewhere. So that would be quite helpful. So I'm just straining it off again. I think the Orcs are going to like this because it looks a little on the red side.

ROB MOORE: Yeah, the Orcs are saying they've got their own version of your ingredients, which we'll see in a minute.

JAY RIXON: OK, have they now?

So what I might do is just top up with a little bit more lemonade and a little bit more ice. I'm going to pop my straw in. I've got a little bit of lime that I've pre-cut. I'm just going to slide it on the side. And then, obviously, to finish, I've got a strawberry, which I've pre-cut. Let me pop the straw there so you can see it camera-side.

Now, the question is, do we go orange umbrella or do we go pink? I'm going to go pink. And then, just to finish, for that extra pop of green, just a tiny bit of lime juice in there. OK. Now, for the big taste test.

That's good. Even if I do say so myself.

Rob, do you want people to take pictures and send them in, if we can?

ROB MOORE: Oh, that sounds like a great idea. Cat, if you can drop the email address in, we can perhaps get some pictures by the end of the session. Just because you've not got nothing else to do, sat there answering all the questions.

JAY RIXON: Sorry. Landed somebody in it. But I'll take a photo of mine for posterity, and we can compare and contrast maybe on some of our platforms. But yeah, it's a good taste. It's a good recipe. So it'd be fab to see other people, their creations and how they decorate it and how they finish it off and what their top tips are as well.

ROB MOORE: We can get a board made up of all the cocktails people have made tonight. So yes, if you send them in, then we'll get your pictures on. So excellent. Thank you. And I think the Orcs want to show us their slight variation. So I think - there we go.

So first of all, what is it they - instead of a strawberry - there we are, they're the hearts from little furry animals. So little cats and mice. They're dropping them in. OK, I think that's enough hearts, Orcs. And then, instead of strawberry juice - there it is - we've got the congealed blood of hobbits. Love it. Hold it up, guys, so we can see what you're doing. Oh. And we mix that in.

There we go. And we mix that in with the distilled tears of the hobbit's family after you've extracted the blood. And there we've got it. That's the Orcs' version, which you then stir with a gangrenous finger bone. And they've called that a Hobbito, which this particular one, due to the nature of the congealed blood, is a Bloody Mary.

So thank you, guys. And if you wanted to make a slightly less bloodthirsty version, you can, of course, use strawberry jelly that's been mixed up with raspberry cordial and lemonade and little jelly hearts. So thank you, guys.

And thank you, Jay. That was brilliant. But if anybody wants to make the Orc version as well, we're always into some horror or Halloween mocktails that can be used at the end of the month.

Heidi, have people been telling us about their favourite mocktails as well? What have they been saying?

HEIDI: Yeah, they have. So Jane actually just asked the question, what's the Orcs favourite drink? So hopefully we've answered that one for you Jane.

ROB MOORE: A bloody Mary.

HEIDI: A Bloody Mary. That's it, exactly.

So Ellie said, not going to lie. The last thing I thought I would see was Orcs drinking mocktails tonight. Ha-ha. So yeah, a little unexpected for some of our guests.

ROB MOORE: They're non-alcoholic unless the hobbits have been on the beer because then it's a sort of inference. Sorry. Carry on.

HEIDI: So Catherine says, Jay, that drink looks delicious. I've got all the ingredients at home, lemons from my tree, too. So I'll be making this later. Yum. So home-grown lemons. Delicious. Really nice.

So Emma said, I would have had strawberries if I hadn't snacked on them all day already. Oops. So then, our guests have also been sharing with us what they've got - what they're drinking this evening. So Samantha says, I have a pre-mixed gin and lemonade in a can. I'm a classy Welsh girl. I love that. Suzanne says, I have a gin and tonic. And Rebecca and Holly Rae both have got wine. Rebecca actually says, I've got wine from a box tonight. Sonny has just had a cup of tea at the moment, but is going to have a mocktail shortly.

A few of you are enjoying a glass of prosecco. And actually, my colleague Cat has been talking about something called Zerozecco, which I presume is a non-alcoholic prosecco, which I might try because I don't ever drink alcohol myself. So I might try that one.

Melissa has got Lucozade. And Thomas is enjoying a cold beer. I'm a bit boring. I've just got water this evening. I didn't even make myself a cup of tea. That's how disorganised I've been.

ROB MOORE: I'm going to pretend I'm sipping vodka. But that is water.

HEIDI: Out of a big glass like that, goodness me, you're not going to be standing by the end of the show, Rob, if it is.

[LAUGHTER]

ROB MOORE: I might be coherent by the end, though. Thank you for that, Heidi.

So we're going to come in a minute to the widget to see who you've voted for for that story. So we're going to see whose story you thought it was. So which of our team got verbally abused by Willie Nelson on holiday?

So Margaret, you look like you're the person that's most likely to upset Willie Nelson. But oh, no, actually, you're wrong. It's our Cat. Cat, on holiday, was walking along, and yeah, Willie Nelson started to question her perspective on money, shall we say. So thank you for that. So that's the first of our truths. We're going to reset that widget now. We're going to let you vote again in a minute.

The next truth is, one of our team had a dog who had surgery on a hip and was given a metal hip. And every time they went on holiday with the dog, it was setting off the alarms in the airport - the security alarms - causing a great deal of fuss and lots of hassle getting the dog around. So which one of our team had a dog with a replacement hip that kept setting off metal detectors? You can vote. And it's one of the five of us again. So we'll come back and have a look at that in a moment.

We're now going to come onto Margaret. And Margaret is going to be giving us some hints and tips on memory. And I think, Margaret, you want people to write something in the chat to give you something. So if you'd like to explain that to them.

MARGARET GREENHALL: OK. Hi, everybody. I don't even know who Willie Nelson is. So that definitely wasn't my story.

[LAUGHTER]

Anyway. A lot of the time nowadays, you can just use gadgets to help your memory. But there are occasions like, say, you're giving a presentation or you've got an interview or something like that, where you need to just rely on your memory and it can be quite daunting.

So what we're going to do tonight is we're going to look at a technique called the loci technique, or the journey technique. And it was actually invented by the Romans way back thousands and thousands of years ago. They actually banned their senators from taking speeches in. And so they used this trick to cheat, to keep going and talking and talking and talking.

So first of all, I need your help. So in a few minutes, I'm going to use a list of random words. So I'd like you to, in the chat box, choose a word that's a thing, something you can pick up. So a noun. Something solid that you can pick up. Like, my little things there, but not, obviously, my little things there. So we're going to get far more than we need. So Heidi is then going to pick 10 and give them to Rob.

And then Rob is going to give them to me, and see then if I can put them in the memory technique, and then see if I can remember them. So we'll see how it goes. OK. It's a lot of stress this to try and do it live. We'll have a go.

So what I'd like you to do is do it along with me. And I'll explain the journey technique. You develop your own journey. So if you want to start putting those words in the chat, Heidi will start collecting them and choose the 10. So it'll be fairly random. I have no idea what you're going to come up with tonight. So we'll see how it goes.

So the idea of the journey technique is that you take something you know really, really well, and you can go around with that in your head reliably every single time without getting it wrong. So my journey I've chosen is the journey around my lounge. So I go into my lounge through the door from the hall. So that's my first stop. I stop at that door. The next stop is the pictures that my dad drew. There's a little nice one of a doorway in Durham.

Then there's the sideboard cupboard that my daughter bought to put all her craft things in. Then there's the doorway into my kitchen. Then there's the hideous cupboard my husband got one day when he escaped to IKEA, and it's absolutely disgusting. It's been there 25 years and still hasn't gone. Then I've got some gym equipment. Then I've got the doorway into this room.

And then I've got a really nice cabinet that me and my daughter chose. We've got better taste than my husband. And then a chair. So I've got 10 things on that journey round. And I can do that in my head reliably because I know what's in my room.

So what I want you to do is pick something like that that you know really well. So it could be like I've gone round a room. It could be going from room to room within your house. It could be a journey you do, travelling from one place to another, say, from home to work or home to school.

And what I want you to do is try and find 10 things on that journey, where you could stop and have in your head you know you're stopping there. So I'm going to give you - and you can write things down as well while you're doing it to get it in your head. And once you've got it in there, you can keep using it and using it again. So there's a bit of effort here, but then it's kind of a strategy you can keep using every time you need to remember stuff.

And what we're going to do is I'm going to have a go at remembering 10 things with my journey. You're going to have a go at remembering those same 10 things. I'm going to have to repeat mine live. But luckily, you're just going to have to be able to vote whether you've got seven or more of them. So you're in a bit of a safer situation than I am. OK.

So when you've done your 10 words, Heidi's going to tell them to Rob. And then Rob's going to come on the screen and tell me. So I'm now going to give you a minute of silence to try and do your own journey. So something like around my room or around your house or from one place to another, and everybody's

going to keep quiet while you do it. And it's going to be very difficult to keep Rob quiet for a minute. So we'll see how we get on.

ROB MOORE: Oh, goodness me!

MARGARET GREENHALL: See, look, he's already talking.

ROB MOORE: Sometimes what I get from my colleagues, I don't know.

[LAUGHTER]

So I'm now going to change all these words to make them really hard.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Oh, you probably will, as well. He does stuff like that. Right, I'm stopping now. I'm going to stop talking. So you've got a minute to try and work out your journey of 10 things.

ROB MOORE: OK. So do you want me to read through the -

MARGARET GREENHALL: No, you're supposed to be quiet, Rob! I told you you couldn't keep quiet for my minute, didn't I? I told you. That was a minute of silence, Rob. OK?

Oh, we managed to do it. Well done, Rob. Congratulations.

So once you've got your journey of 10 places - you may not have had time in that minute to get it completely done, but have another go at it later on your own if you didn't get time to get it completely done. You then, as you've got the thing you want to remember, make a really good attachment between that thing that you've got and the thing that's in your journey.

So I'll give you an example with the first word, and then you have to do it with your room, not my room, in your journey - but I'm not going to tell you how I'm doing the other nine words. But you need to do it along with us. You can write the words down as well if you want to help you out a bit. I'm not allowed to write.

So I'm not going to put my hands up there. It looks really silly. But I'm going to write anything down, I promise you.

And I'll just talk you through the first one. And you need to try and make sure there's movement there, that's a bit silly, and if you can do colour in your head. If you're not somebody that sees pictures in your head, make a sound to do with whatever you've done. I don't tend to hear things in my head too much so I go with images and movement.

So I'm ready with the first word. Rob, give me the first word.

ROB MOORE: The first word - now, am I allowed to talk again?

MARGARET GREENHALL: Yeah, you can talk now.

ROB MOORE: It's notepad.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Notepad, OK. So in my head you can see I've got my eyes shut because I'm doing a bit of imagination. I'm imagining that door into the lounge being converted to a massive notepad, one of those reporter ones. So I'm putting a lot of detail in there, and imagining myself flipping it open. So I'm getting some movement in there as well as making it silly because it's a huge, big notepad.

Now, I'm not going to tell you what I do with all the others, but that's how you should do it. You make it really silly, have movement in there, and something you're going to really attach to the place. So I'm thinking in my head, I'm seeing this notepad where that door would be.

So let's have the next one then, Rob.

ROB MOORE: Pumpkin.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Pumpkin, OK. That's a nice one, pumpkin. OK. Right. So if everybody could join in. So now you want to put the pumpkin doing something silly in that second space. So I'm going to keep quiet while I do mine. OK. I've got pumpkin. Next one, Rob.

ROB MOORE: It's pen.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Pen, OK. Pen, OK. Now, see, I'm smiling, because I'm doing something silly with the pen. And that's always good if you can add a bit of humour in there. That's good. OK, so I've got pen.

ROB MOORE: So now, what's coming up?

MARGARET GREENHALL: All right. I don't know. What have you got next?

ROB MOORE: All right. So the next one, combine harvester.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Combine harvester. OK. Combine harvester. [LAUGHS]

ROB MOORE: Oh, you guys are good. I like these. [LAUGHS]

MARGARET GREENHALL: OK. I've got to stop laughing enough to do the memory thing. OK. All right. What's the combine harvester going to do? So you try and think of something silly the combine harvester is doing in that position. Not any of the other positions. Just that one position, so you can walk around and get them all in the same order. OK. Right, I've got combine harvester. Next one.

ROB MOORE: Pepper grinder.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Pepper grinder, OK. Pepper grinder. OK, pepper grinder. Right. And what's that going to do? Oh, dear, that's making me sneeze, that one. Right, next one, then, Rob.

ROB MOORE: Umbrella.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Umbrella, OK. Umbrella, OK. Right. And what's the umbrella going to do? OK, umbrella. Yeah.

ROB MOORE: Mobile phone.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Mobile phone, OK.

Now, if you've got something that can involve people, you can actually have somebody doing something on that phone. So you can get somebody you really know and really like ringing you up on it if it's something like a mobile phone. So I'm going to do that. OK.

OK, I've got that one.

ROB MOORE: Yes, this is the one that made me laugh because I don't even know what it is. A croissant jelly cat toy.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

[LAUGHTER]

ROB MOORE: I don't know who put that in.

MARGARET GREENHALL: I know what that is.

ROB MOORE: Was that one yours? Now, you know what that is. Good.

MARGARET GREENHALL: All right. Well, I'll just have to take what I've got. OK.

ROB MOORE: Croissant jelly cat toy.

JAY RIXON: Brilliant.

ROB MOORE: You guys are evil. You ought to be up here with the Orcs.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Jelly cat toy. OK. Goodness knows what that really is. But I've just made sense of it as well as I can. OK.

ROB MOORE: Chicken nuggets.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Chicken nuggets. OK, chicken nuggets. Oh, they're making a mess on the desk. Right, OK. Chicken nuggets. OK, right.

ROB MOORE: So if they're making a mess on the desk, put them in the fruit bowl, which is the last one. Fruit bowl.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Fruit bowl. Fruit bowl, OK. OK, I think I've got it.

ROB MOORE: And that, you'll take.

MARGARET GREENHALL: OK. Right. I have no idea whether I've got those or not. I'm really scared about doing this. This was not a good idea. Oh, dear. Right.

So we give it a few seconds between doing it and actually trying to remember it. So what I'm going to ask you to do is, before I start doing it, those of you doing it along with us at home, see if you can write down as many of those 10 as you can remember. And then, once you've had a little chance to do it yourself, then I'll do it. OK. So I'm going to give people a chance.

So you can talk in this bit, Rob. It's OK. But if people want to write down what they think the 10 are.

ROB MOORE: Oh, I can talk again now?

MARGARET GREENHALL: Oh, you can talk. Yeah.

ROB MOORE: You wait till I come on your show.

[LAUGHTER]

What we're really interested in is to see how many of you can actually do this. If you've tried Margaret's technique, we're very interested to see if it works for you, if you've not tried it before. Or if you haven't tried Margaret's technique, how did you get on just trying to remember them? I know my memory is not that good. That's what your computer is for. So you don't have to remember stuff.

And mind you, I always forget where I've put it.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Right. OK, I'm going to give it a go. Are we ready? So Rob, don't tell me I've got some right until we've done them. Oh, the Orcs are going to count it for me, are they? OK.

ROB MOORE: OK.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Oh, dear, I don't know whether this is going to go right or not. So the first thing on the list was a notepad because my door was a big notepad. And then we had a pumpkin. That was on the pictures that my dad drew. So I added it into one of the pictures my dad drew. And then we had a pen. So somebody was writing on the sideboard with a pen, which was making me smile.

Then we had a combine harvester. Oh, what did we have on the next - a pepper grinder. And then - what's on the gym equipment? Oh, I've lost that one. Oh, Jay's going to get it. She's putting her hand up. We'll get it off Jay in a minute. I've lost that one.

Then we've got the mobile phone. Then we've got the croissant jelly cat. Then the chicken nuggets. Then the bowl of fruit. Now, which one did I miss? I missed - let me see if I can see the gym equipment. Oh, the umbrella. Umbrella. I've got it now. Umbrella.

JAY RIXON: Yes.

MARGARET GREENHALL: So how did I do? Did I get them right?

ROB MOORE: You got them all right. You went back and got the umbrella. So that was it, all 10. Well done.

MARGARET GREENHALL: So you can see, even in that very, very stressful environment - because it's terrifying being in front of loads of students doing this - I managed to get the 10 of them. So there should be a widget coming on screen for you to vote whether you got seven or more. And if you'd like that as a

technique, tomorrow, go back over your 10 items, your 10 spaces in your room. Don't think about the list of 10 words. Just go back round your room.

And you can use it as many times as you like. Just make the first thing really, really different and really memorable.

So I think what we'll do is we'll go to the next item. And then, when the results come in from the little widget, Rob will let us know because it'll take a few minutes for those results to come in. So there we go. I'm very pleased. I just had one thing. But because you can walk around the room and get back to that, I could walk around back to that cabinet and think, oh, it was an umbrella, stopping the rain getting on to the gym equipment to answer that one.

So it's there in your head, where sometimes it's just not there.

ROB MOORE: See, I liked your explanations, the fact that your dad drew a picture and you added a pumpkin in. So that was adding the depth, for me, I think there, seeing how you did it and how you brought it to life. So what we'll do is, while we're giving people the opportunity to vote on that, we'll just go back to our truth.

So whose truth was it? Who had a dog who had a metal hip? So let's see who you thought it was. And most of you thought it was Jay.

JAY RIXON: Oh.

ROB MOORE: Well, actually, no, and last. Again, it's the person who's in fourth place. It's Rafa. So Rafa, his dog Cindy had a metal hip. And every time he tried to fly with his dog, he was getting into all sorts of trouble with security, trying to prove that his dog wasn't smuggling anything dodgy.

[LAUGHTER]

So that was good. So Heidi, have we got comments on how people have done with the memory test? Are we in a position for that yet?

HEIDI: Yeah. Yeah, we have. It's so much better, I think. Margaret, I am so impressed that you have just done that live, as you said, with everybody watching. Like, the pressure on you to get all of those right. So well done.

And actually, I need to credit Hannah. Hannah was our guest that came up with the brilliant croissant jelly cat toy. So well done for that one, Hannah. I thought that was brilliant. Very unusual.

ROB MOORE: I want to see what one is. I don't know what one is. I want a picture.

MARGARET GREENHALL: No.

HEIDI: We need a picture. Yeah, we need a visual for Rob so he can see what it is. But yeah, people in the chat are doing absolutely - they did so well with this. So Kerry got nine. Missed umbrella, as well, like you did, Margaret. Just at the end, you remembered that one.

Kirsty says, oh, my word. Remembered all 10 with that technique. So shocked. Thanks for the tip.

Rochelle says this is a brilliant technique of remembering things. Stuart says, I got 10 out of 10. I was taught this by my art teacher in school. And Catherine says, love the technique. I have a visual mind. Perfect.

Samantha says, will this be repeated after all the gin is consumed? It'd be quite interesting to see whether people are quite as good at recalling these after they've had a couple of drinks, I think.

JAY RIXON: Oh, dear.

HEIDI: And Rachel says, these work well for me on my journey to work because the combine harvester was a field and the pepper grinder a pub. So that was nice and easy to remember. So yeah, really impressed with how people have done. Really, really good.

ROB MOORE: Yes. I think we might revisit this at the end and see how many people get back at the end. So make sure we don't lose the list of items. We'll keep that up.

MARGARET GREENHALL: Oh, no. I'll do it again.

[LAUGHTER]

ROB MOORE: We will see. We will see. See, I've got a good chance of getting them all right because I've got it written down in front of me.

Right. So our next truth that we're going to throw out - so this truth - we'll reset the widget again. So this is one of us when we were much younger, and we had our first car. And we were driving down the motorway. You can tell how far back we're going because the motorway was quite quiet. And we broke down. The car just stopped.

And I've got to say, this might give you a hint that it's possibly not Heidi because it was before the days of mobile phones. We didn't have a phone and we were not able to call for help. So standing there, looking at the car. What's going on? Won't start. All of a sudden, a car pulls up. A chap gets out. Are you OK? Yeah. Car won't start. Has a look. And went to the front of the car. Says, oh, your alternator hasn't been connected. So somebody had been working on the car and forgot to connect the alternator. So the battery had run flat.

And because of the sort of car it was - it happened to be a Mini - the battery was in the boot. So extra long jump leads were needed. And it just so happened that the guy who stopped was an auto mechanic who had a set of extra strong jump leads. Started the car, and off we went. But at the time, nobody else was passing. Just one person stopped and just happened to have exactly the equipment that was needed to get the car going again.

So that's a true story for one of us. So have a vote, and see who you think that story applies to out of the five of us. And we'll come back and have a look at that in a moment.

So while you're thinking about that, we're going to move on to our caption competition now. So you were asked to send in some ideas and put some captions to some photographs of study buddies or something else, just add a caption that you think is funny. And we want you guys to vote for the best one. OK. So I know that Heidi, you know who've sent all these. We won't give the names yet. But would you like to talk us through the captions on the screen, Heidi?

And then there is a link in the chat to something called Slido. Are you OK to explain what people need to do with that, Heidi?

HEIDI: Sure. And actually, I've memorised all of these. I'm not using a list in front of me. I've used Margaret's technique. So all of this is off the top of my head. No, I'm joking. I'm not that good. OK, let's go through our captions, then.

So image number 1, have we got that one available? Fantastic. Image number 1, here we go. So shall I say who these are from as well, Rob? Would you like me to say who submitted these?

ROB MOORE: Yes, let's say who they're from as well.

HEIDI: Absolutely. OK. So here we've got image 1. And the caption is Thriller. And this is Emma C. and her black dancing cat. So hopefully you can all see that one OK. Excellent.

On to number 2. Image number 2. So this is study snack. This is Olivia and her black hungry pooch. What a super cute dog. Lovely.

And caption 3, we've got a pumpkin. We've got Chloe O. and Pedro, the pumpkin, in this image.

And on to number 4. Oh, look at that beautiful cat. I love those cats. They've got such amazing fur, haven't they? So 4 is Figs. That's the caption. And the information that I have is cat. I don't know if that means cat as in "the" cat, or cat as in my colleague cat. I don't know if it's Cat's cat or it's just a cat. But either way, it's absolutely gorgeous.

And we're on to caption - oh, look - OK, the caption, we've got image 5, Milly, Rob. Not you, Rob, is it? A different Rob?

ROB MOORE: Oh, yes. That's our Milly.

HEIDI: Oh, this is your Milly, Rob?

ROB MOORE: It is.

HEIDI: Lovely. OK. On to caption 6. So Pauline and her many cats. And it says here, Congratulations for being chosen faculty rep in the Faculty of Business and Law. Brilliant.

And then on to number seven. Oh, look. This is Mikey. And this is Rafa. So this is Rafa's dog, is that right, Rob? So Rafa is our colleague.

ROB MOORE: Yes.

HEIDI: Oh, look. Look at Mikey.

ROB MOORE: I think there's a bit of Photoshopping going on there, though.

[LAUGHTER]

HEIDI: He looks very comfy on the sofa. Right, we're on to 8. Bella and Peaches. Oh, my goodness me. Look at this. Look at this gorgeous dog. Mucky Peaches. Lovely.

And then onto number 9, procrastination buddies. This is Rochelle and her teddies. Lovely.

And on to number 10. This is, Muuum, nap time. And this is Emma N. and her support cat Twirl look at little Twirl.

On to 11. Thanks fur your help. This is Chloe N. and Black Kitty.

And then 12, Pauline and her - oh, this is Pauline again. So Pauline submitted this one as well. This is Pauline and her many cats. And this is Pauline, who's the faculty rep in the Faculty of Business and Law. And then on to 13, we've got Lori's Rainbow. Laurie and Rainbow Teddy.

And then onto our 14th one. We've got Danielle and Brian. And this is Brian reporting for duty. Look at Brian. Oh, my gosh, a little Frenchie. Brian is divine. As you can tell, I am absolutely obsessed with dogs. I don't know if you can see on - I know we've got the caption on the screen at the moment - but I've got Martha behind me.

So Martha was being very strange this week in one of our shows this week. I don't know if you can see her behind me there, but she's all cuddled up. I took her out for a walk earlier in the pouring rain. So yeah, she's having a nice sleep behind me.

So for our captions, we are going to ask you to vote for your favourite. And one of my colleagues is going to put the link to something called Slido in the chat. And there you can vote, either 1 to 14, for your favourite caption. And then we're going to be revealing the winner.

So let me just check. I think that should now be in the chat by now. Yeah, Rafa has put that in the chat.

So here's the link to that.

ROB MOORE: Is it three images you can vote for?

HEIDI: Yeah, when you go into Slido, it will ask you to put in your top three - that's right - when you go across. So you can go and submit which three are or your top favourites.

ROB MOORE: Excellent. So can we have a quick run through them again, just as a reminder of the 14? So if we just run from the top to bottom, that'd be great.

HEIDI: I sure can, yep. Number 1, Thriller, Emma C. We've got study snack here, Olivia and her black hungry pooch. We've got Pumpkin, Chloe O. and Pedro the pumpkin. We've got Figs. The next one, we've got Millie, which is Rob's. We've got Pauline and her many lovely cats.

We've got Rafa's Mikey as number 7. We got Bella and Peaches - mucky Peaches - number 8. Number 9, procrastination buddies, Rochelle and her teddies. Number 10, we've got Emma N. and her support cat Twirl.

Number 11, we've got Chloe Anne and Black Kitty. At number 12, we've got Pauline and her many cats. And number 13, we've got Laurie and Rainbow Teddy. And then 14, we've got Danielle and Brian. Brian reporting for duty.

ROB MOORE: Excellent. So we'll give you a couple of minutes to put your votes in. We'll give you just two minutes to do that. Then we'll have a look at who you've chosen, who you've picked as the winner. But before we do that, I just want to show you, the Orcs didn't get theirs in time because we know what Orcs are like. They don't stick to a timescale. But they did send one in. And this is the Orcs' version. This is their zombie hedgehog, looking for beetle-y brains on the deck. So the zombie hedgehog. You can't vote for the zombie hedgehog, but there we go, crawling around in the dead of night, looking for various things to nibble on.

So while we're letting you vote on your favourite caption, we'll just tell you whose truth it was. So if we can have the widget up for the latest truth. So which one of us is the car driver that was miraculously saved? And you all think it's me. Obviously, you knew me when I was younger. But that wasn't actually my story, though it could have been. Actually, it was Margaret. It was Margaret whose brother had tried to fix her car and forgot to connect the alternator. And miraculously, somebody came along that just happened to have exactly the right equipment on a quiet road in the middle of the night and got you going.

Go on, Margaret.

MARGARET GREENHALL: It was even funnier than that because the van pulled up in front of me, and on the side of the van it said, Vehicle Electrical Repairs. And I was only 22. And I very briefly said, I think it's something electrical. And actually, I cannot believe - and there was no other cars. It was a quiet, dark, wet night in November. And it said, Vehicle Electrical Repairs, and then drove off in the night.

ROB MOORE: Somebody was definitely looking after you that night, Margaret. Definitely. So fantastic. Heidi, have we got votes in? Do we know who's won yet?

HEIDI: Yes, we have. We have a few little technical issues going on in the background so I can't see live who they are. But Angela, our wonderful producer, has just sent me through the winners. So we're going to go 3, 2, 1. So coming in third is image number 2. So image number 2 was - I'm going to quickly get my - because I haven't memorised it-- study snack, Olivia and her black hungry pooch.

And then we have got in second place - oh, apparently 2 and 3 are tied. OK. So 2 and 3 are tied. So in joint second we've got image 1. And image one was Thriller. Emma C., and her black dancing cat. And then in first place - drum roll - is image number 4. And that is Figs, the beautiful cat. There we are. So that was everybody's favourite one.

ROB MOORE: Excellent. And we've got some Student Hub Live goodies on their way to the three people who've sent those three images in. So thank you, everyone, that took part in that. It's great. I can't believe I didn't win. Plenty of plugging there, but we didn't win. But that's OK.

So before we move on to the next one, I'm going to give you our final story. So our final story, it's another dog story because we do like dog stories. So one of our team was walking along Sandbanks Beach, in Dorset, actually, just in front of Harry Redknapp's house.

So if you've been watching any of the TV programmes with Harry Redknapp and when he talks about his house at Sandbanks, this took place just in front of his house. And walking on the beach, giving the dog some exercise - it was a dog beach, so perfectly OK to be there. And of course, they're allowed to run off and run free.

Halfway down the beach, this person looked behind, thinking, where's the dog? And all they could see was the back legs and tail of the dog sticking out of somebody's bag. They were munching their way through somebody's barbecue meat. So they'd gone into the cool bag and, basically, buried the way into the bag and they were munching through raw sausage and burgers.

Apparently, the person was very understanding. And as they walked away and looked back, he was quite busily putting the burgers and sausages onto the barbecue that was lit because the rest of his party were actually in the sea, playing on some inflatables. So obviously the dog didn't impact too much on the barbecue. So that's a true story for one of us. So have a think about who that's going to be. Which of the five of us is it?

And we'll tell you the answer after the next activity.

So the final activity we've got is slightly associated with study. And this was me playing around with artificial intelligence. I gave it a bit of a try because we've been hearing a lot about ChatGPT and generative artificial intelligence. And we've actually got a session coming up on this soon. But I thought I'd see, what can it do to help me? So I went to ChatGPT. I actually used it in Bing. And I asked it to describe the way that five different animals would study.

And we're going to show you them. And I want you to have a look at these. And then I want you to vote, and there should be a widget on this, where you can vote and say, which of these best describes you? And then, once you've voted, we want you to explain why this suits you best.

So if we can have the slide show up. So we're going to work through, which of these five animals best describes your study approach? Are you a bear - strong, independent? You like to do things your own way, confident and determined, solve problems, but sometimes you can go off on your own and tend to be a bit stubborn and not take advice. So if that's you, vote for bear.

Or the second one is, are you a sloth? Are you relaxed, easygoing? Do you avoid the stress? You calmly work through all the content. But there's a danger that you might procrastinate, that you might let things get in the way and go off and think about other things. Or maybe you don't get things done in time. But you're very good with change and adapting as things alter.

Or, and the next one is, are you a bee? Are you the hardworking person? Are you the type of student who likes to work with others in groups, and really busy, and you get things produced as quickly as possible? But sometimes you can be overwhelmed by the amount of work that you do. But the bee can be very good at organising and tends to do things by list, and to create proper plans for doing things. So if that's you, vote for the bee.

Or are you-- and I can't remember which one comes next-- are you the owl? Are you the wise, curious, detailed person? You like to focus in. You like to know the nitty gritty. Do you like to generate your own solutions? Are you a perfectionist that can sometimes spend too much time on individual details?

Or the last one - I think this is my favourite - are you the dolphin? Are you somebody that likes the fun? Are you creative? Do you like to come up with new ideas? So great to be creative and inventive, but sometimes shiny things can get in the way and can distract you and lead you off.

So if you can have a think for a couple of seconds, which one of those best describes you? And then you can vote for it. And then, in the chat, just tell us why you think that style suits you.

And there's a reason I brought this up. It's not scientific. There's no research behind this. It's just me in an afternoon having fun with ChatGPT, that also produced the images. So great fun. But it's really to bring out the point that we're all different in the way that we study.

And as tutors, we like to work with all these different styles. We can work with people that are detail focused. We can work with people who like to sit back and go with the flow and just do things at their own pace. And we can work with people who are really independent. We need to be adaptive to your style. There's none of those styles that I would say is particularly good or particularly bad. They've all got their strengths and weaknesses. But it's quite useful to know what you're like as a student because then, you know what you need to adapt to get you through and how to cope.

So I think the Orcs have been asked this question as well. So I asked the Orcs who they were. And as you can see, the Orcs didn't like my nice cutesy pictures. They have got their pictures, which are basically Orc-ified animals. So Orc 1 was an Orc bee. So busy. They're the ones that really like to capture their prisoners and take them off and work together.

And Orc Number 2, we've got the Orc-dolphin creative. And I dread to think what they've been creative in and what they've used their creativity for. Oh, creative drinks and Hobbitos.

So thank you, Orcs, for taking part in that.

Heidi, have we got some votes? Have we had some comments?

HEIDI: Yes, we have. Well, it started off that we seem to have a lot of bears. As you were reading through those, we had lots and lots of bears in the audience. But it's now changed slightly. So we've got the most amount of owls. We've got 37% of our students are identifying with the owls' characteristics.

And we've had a few people comment. So Holly Rae says, I'm definitely both the owl and the dolphin.

Pauline says, I'm a mixture between bear and dolphin. Jamie Lee, I'm a mix between the bear, owl, and the dolphin. So it's expanding.

ROB MOORE: Oh, right.

HEIDI: Caitlyn says, always definitely dolphin. Amalie says, I'm a mixture of bee and dolphin. And then Rochelle, Christine, and Sophia says, I'm a bit of all of them.

I think I personally identify with the bear, certainly with the stubbornness. That's the key word. I think, if you ask my son, I think that would be the adjective he'd use to describe his mother. And certainly when it comes to my studies. So yes, I think I identify with the bear personally.

ROB MOORE: So if we could just have a quick look at the votes on the screen, that'd be great. So this is how you've all voted. I think, personally, if I was going to vote, I'd be there as the dolphin, the creative person that gets distracted by shiny things. That's definitely me. I really have to focus and make sure that, if I'm trying to achieve something, that I don't allow myself to go off at an angle.

And Cat is sitting there, laughing in the background because Cat tries to keep me under control when we do these sessions. And she knows how easily I go off chasing shiny things. But it's always great fun because we always come up with things that make us laugh. So that that's fantastic.

There was a bit of a sensible point to that. As I say, it's not the fact that we just wanted to have a pure laugh. It's to get you thinking as we move forward because we want to know what your worries and your concerns are. As you're coming towards the end of freshers week and you're about to start your modules, share with us the sorts of things that you've picked up this week so far. Is there anything that you're a little bit worried about? Have you got any concerns as we move forward?

Because what we're going to do in a moment - I'm just checking - and I can't believe it, I'm actually on time, and without having a clock in front of me. Once we've finished this activity, we're going to give you the opportunity to ask us some questions or tell us what you're feeling or how you're approaching your studies coming up.

And so that's the final activity we're going to be going into. So have a think about any questions you might have. And Margaret, Heidi, and myself will try and answer anything that we can. And if we can't get you an answer, we'll make sure we get an answer to you outside of the session.

So I'm just going to finish with the last of the truths. So if we can get that last widget up. Whose dog ate the barbecue? And how have you voted? I can see that you actually tied between me and Jay. And yeah, I've got to say, it was my dog Millie that you saw in the earlier picture. She was there with her tail stuck out of somebody's cool box, having eaten or chomped through most of the barbecue food.

And as I said, the guy just waved us on and quite happily, put the meat straight onto the barbecue. I'll say the rest of his guests on the beach didn't know about it. So what they didn't know can't hurt them. That's what I say.

So thank you. Those were all the activities we got planned for this part of Freshers. And now we're going to come over to you and get your thoughts and comments.

So Heidi, what are people saying in the chat? Have we got any thoughts on how they found Freshers so far? Have they enjoyed the sessions with Isabella?

HEIDI: We've got people that are being really brave actually and sharing some of their main concerns. So Jamie Lee says that failing terrifies me. So Rob, why don't we just have a bit of a chat about this and unpack that term about failing and failure? Because this is something - it's a word that I've heard a lot this week - that it's something that our students are scared of. But let's talk a little bit about that.

ROB MOORE: That's a good idea. So, failing. I've been a tutor with the OU for, goodness me, 21 years now. The number of students that have actually failed is, you can probably count them on the fingers of your hands. In 20 years, the number of students I've actually failed is very, very low.

And most students don't fail because they fail at the assignments. One of the things to be careful of is that you don't try and bite off too much. Be realistic. We do lots of things about time management and about how to structure your study time. And I think that's really important. So be realistic about what you're doing. Make sure you've got time to do it.

One of the reasons I love working for the OU is they are so good at helping you to succeed. We are unique in universities because we don't demand entry-level qualifications before you come in. We will allow you to demonstrate your ability based on the way you are now, not the way you were at 18. You can move forwards based on what your current level of ability and understanding is.

Now, some people say, well, I was no good when I was 16. I didn't get any qualifications. Well, that doesn't matter. Some of my best students come to the OU at the age of 54, 55, having never sat an exam since they were 15 - when they failed miserably - and they were outstanding. They're brilliant. So the past history is not a measure of how you're going to perform moving forwards.

We are also - and I'm quite proud of this - we're very good at helping people to ramp up. So you can go from a very low entry level straight up to really high-quality university study within your first year. That's what we're good at, helping you to make that transition.

So if you're coming into your first module in October and you're thinking, oh, I've not done something like this before. I didn't do very well when I sat my exams back at school. Don't let that dictate where you're going to go because we allow for that. What we want you to do is put the effort in, follow the process, get involved, and you will have those skills and the abilities as we move you forward.

And I would say, this isn't an idle boast. We've got millions, literally millions of students, who can testify that this is what we do. So don't think about failing. I think the biggest challenge is not whether or not you're capable. It's about, can you structure your time? Can you make sure you give yourself the opportunity to do the work that's needed? And if you can, then you'll find that's a lot better.

I don't know if I've answered that, Heidi.

HEIDI: Absolutely. Yeah, I think that's brilliant. Yeah, a brilliant response. Actually, Alan would like to know, before we move on to the next question, what modules do you and Margaret teach on, Rob?

ROB MOORE: OK. So with me, I'm in the Business School. So I teach on the Introduction to Business Studies. I teach on Innovation and Entrepreneurship, which is fantastic. I love that one, Marketing Strategy and Supply Chain Management. So I do a range of modules.

Margaret, which are the modules you teach on?

MARGARET GREENHALL: So currently, S112, which is the Combined Science Course. We have geology, physics, chemistry, ecological sciences. And then also S206, which is the moving on from that in the ecological sciences. And then previously I taught on U116, which is a combined science and social science course. So there's lots of essay writing in that one.

And then way back a long time ago, I used to teach on what was described as probably the hardest course in the University, which is SMT356, Electromagnetism. So my students used to debate whether it's Electromagnetism or Quantum Mechanics was the hardest of all the physics courses. But there was too much maths in that, and I blew my brain as well. So I prefer teaching first- and second-level students. So basically, sciences. And my background is as a chemistry lecturer at other universities before, as well as working for the OU. So lots of different things.

ROB MOORE: Excellent.

So Heidi, what are the questions have we got coming through?

HEIDI: Yeah, ready for the next. So Kerstin says, I'm concerned about getting my student loan in time.

ROB MOORE: Yeah, this can be an interesting one. As tutors, we don't get involved with this. But it is something that the Student Support Team can help and advise you on. In terms of it coming through in time, there is a - again, this is more anecdotal than I can, I can't actually say this is definitely the case - but from students that I've had, there is a period where they will accept students while the student loan is being arranged. But it's not an accepting them in time. It's about seven or eight weeks after the start of the module, I think.

So I wouldn't like to be quoted on that figure. But I know that it is a bit of a crush at this time. So there is a certain allowance in time made, but the student loan does need to be arranged fairly quickly.

If you have any trouble at all, and this goes for any issues that you have, our Student Support Team is fantastic. When you go to your StudentHome page, there's a form there to allow you to contact the Student Support Team. So if you have any concerns at all about your study - outside of the module materials, I'll come back to that in a second - but any concerns about your study, contact the Student Support Team. They will be able to advise you and help you in specific areas.

There are lots of questions that you will have, and they're all different, but the Student Support Team is fantastic.

If it comes to a question about your module and the actual study materials, that will be the tutor that you talk to. But for anything else, the Student Support Team are absolutely fantastic. And so don't forget. Go and get in touch with those if you have any questions.

HEIDI: Ready for more, Rob?

ROB MOORE: Always ready for more.

HEIDI: Excellent. Great. What's really nice is you were just talking there about getting in touch with Student Support. And Christine says, something I'm finding weirdly strange and difficult is the huge amounts of support. I've gone from 42 years of no support to an unmeasurable amount in just a few weeks. It's overwhelming, but in a really good way. So that's really nice to hear that.

And another lovely comment that Tally made. It's taken years, but I'm now starting to fully understand that failure is actually just giving up. Not passing a module doesn't have to mean failure. It's just a hiccup. Learn from it and go again. That's such a brilliant perspective, Tally. I absolutely love that. So moving on to another question, then, Stuart said, is the only -

ROB MOORE: I think, before we just move on from that, I'd just like to say the thing about the failure and the giving up, your tutor is there to help. So whatever your issue, whatever your problem, talk to your tutor. I always say to my students, the only problem I can't help you with is the one you don't tell me about. There is lots of advice we can give. We can give you hints. We can give you tips. We can help you if you talk to us, and if you talk to us early enough.

Don't wait till it's hopeless before you talk to your tutor. As soon as you think things are going slightly off the rail, drop your tutor an email and ask for a chat. And we're really good at helping identify the different options to help you through. And different solutions for different people. But all tutors will have seen almost everything that you can conceive of. We will have seen it before.

And I have lots of sayings. One of my sayings is, life happens. In the course of your degree, life is going to happen. And when it does, talk to us. There's lots of things that we can do. The only thing we can't help is the student that doesn't talk to us because if you don't talk to us, we can't. There's nothing we can do.

So carry on with the next question, Heidi. I just wanted to get that one in.

HEIDI: Yeah, absolutely. So Stuart asks, is the only time we meet students and tutors at graduation? Or are there any opportunities offered to meet physically during the module learning?

ROB MOORE: Yes. Since COVID, our tutorials have mainly gone online now. So there are a very few exceptions, but all of our tutorials happen online. And that's where you will meet your tutors.

So for example, in my module on B100, Introduction to Business Studies, we have tutorials where I bring my group together and we get to talk. And if they're happy to, they can put the video on. I always say that

the more videos the students share, the smaller my face is on the screen. So that's a bit of incentive to share their videos.

But if you get the opportunity to go to your tutor group tutorials online, that is where you'll get [AUDIO OUT].

HEIDI: Rob, I am so sorry to talk over you, but we've lost your sound, Rob. You're muted. So we can't actually hear what you're saying at the moment. So while we try and get that back, I just want to respond to one of the questions that came through because it's something that I experience myself.

So it's all around time management. And we're all very much in the same boat with that. So Melissa says that she's got some concerns about falling behind. Gita says, the amount of work reading and assignments. Now, I know when you first start out, it really is very daunting. It's a very frightening time. And you think, how on Earth am I going to fit this in?

As I mentioned, I myself was an OU student for six years. I did my degree in English literature and absolutely loved it. But my son was just a tiny baby when I started out. And I did it because it was something to keep my mind alert, and I wasn't quite sure what I wanted to do in life. So you will definitely find that, over time, you will really hone those organisational skills. And it's just about taking it one day at a time. That's the real key.

It's very easy to get overwhelmed. But there is so much support from the Open University. And I fell so in love with the place that I ended up coming here and working here. So I've been here since 2012. So really lean into that support and use the support that's available.

So hopefully we've got Rob back now and we can hear Rob. Can you hear me, Rob? Can we hear you? No. OK.

Well, this is fun. Rob, I can't hear you. OK. So we're having some technical issues with Rob. Hopefully I'm not speaking over you, Rob. If I am, then somebody can mute me and they can shut me up.

OK, Margaret, why don't I pop a couple of questions to you while we try and get Rob's sound back?

MARGARET GREENHALL: Brilliant, yes.

HEIDI: So Caitlin says that I'm mainly concerned about finding some friends while studying. Can you talk us through a little bit about that process for students for perhaps connecting with others and finding friends?

MARGARET GREENHALL: It's not that easy with everything being online, I have to say because we've got lots of rules about what we're allowed to share. So isn't easy. The main thing is to take part in the forums that are available to you. So that's where you start to meet students.

Also, in Student Hub Live, if two of you send your email addresses and say you want to meet after you've chatted in our chats, then we'll connect you up. But it's really about the forums and also the tutorials. The tutor will often give you time in the tutorials to have a chat with each other. So that's where you can get to know each other.

And a lot of students do join a lot of OU Facebook groups as well. So we can't police those, but we do have a lot of our students joining the Facebook groups as well, special ones for the OU.

HEIDI: Fantastic. Thank you, Margaret.

And I believe we've got Rob back. Hooray.

ROB MOORE: Apparently, you got me back with some echo now.

HEIDI: We can hear you.

ROB MOORE: I'll have to shout to the Orcs and ask them to turn the TV down on the other side of the cave.

Thank you for that, Margaret. I think what I actually did was I think I trod on the microphone cable and pulled it out. But there you go. This is the joys of Student Hub Live -

HEIDI: I could hear a little pop.

ROB MOORE: - which means I missed the last question. Hopefully, it was all answered fully.

HEIDI: Yes. Yes, Margaret answered that one for us. Yeah, about making friends. One of our guests was a little bit apprehensive about making friends and how to meet people and connect with people.

ROB MOORE: Did you talk about the forums at all? We had a session this afternoon for our carers. We had a special event for our student carers. And one of the suggestions there is, if you go to OpenLearn, there is an OpenLearn module specifically on making best use of forums. And that's where you should be looking to build up those relationships with other students in your group. So it's a great way to get to know people.

As tutors, we're always amazed that some groups absolutely fly. You get groups that just chat about absolutely anything, and they have a great time. And we get other groups that are quiet as mice, and they don't talk to each other. So if you want to, get stuck in and use your forums effectively.

When I was a student with the OU, we used to run self-help groups long before the internet. And we used to meet up in people's houses and hotel bars and things and have our meetings there. So that was great.

Am I right in thinking, Heidi, we've got a picture of some cocktails that have come through?

HEIDI: Have we got some pictures of cocktails that have come through? I'm not sure, Rob. Have we?

ROB MOORE: Yes, we have.

HEIDI: Have we got them up on the screen? Oh, OK. Yeah, we're going to have a picture up on the screen here. Wonderful.

ROB MOORE: So this is Chloe's mocktail. Well done, Chloe. And I like the glass as well. Excellent. So thank you for that.

Oh. So people in the chat are saying they want to swap details. We don't do that here. But apparently, if you go to the Open University Student Association and ask to contact somebody, as long as you both go and ask to be contactable, they will put you in touch with each other. What we don't do is we don't share anybody's personal information.

So if you go to the OUSA - O-U-S-A, Open University Students' Association - they will be able to set you up and make those contacts. I'm not sure exactly how that works. But if you go to the Student Association page, you'll be able to find that out.

HEIDI: Rob, can I ask you another question? Alan said, was it Millie that pulled your microphone out? Have you got Millie under your feet? Can you blame Millie, or was it actually just you?

ROB MOORE: No. Unfortunately, we lost Millie last year.

HEIDI: Oh, I didn't realise, Rob. Oh!

ROB MOORE: Yes. But she was well known for eating microphones and earphones and things.

HEIDI: How old was she, Rob?

ROB MOORE: Sorry?

HEIDI: How old was she?

ROB MOORE: She was 11.

HEIDI: Oh, 11. Oh, good age. Bless her.

ROB MOORE: An old good age, absolutely. Absolutely. Looking after us.

HEIDI: Bless her.

So yeah, we've got lots of other questions in the chat, Rob, if that's OK.

ROB MOORE: Absolutely.

HEIDI: Lauren, this is a great one, so I'm concerned about doing two TMAs at the same time as I'm doing two modules. So I actually did this as well. So when I was doing my literature degree - so I've got BA honours in literature, and the OU then changed it to English literature. So I did a lot of, I loved it, I did a lot of text that was translated.

But in order to get the qualification of literature, I needed to finish within a specific set of time. So I compressed my last two modules. And I did creative writing. And then I did Shakespeare because I absolutely adore Shakespeare. And I thought, I can't possibly graduate with a literature degree without having immersed myself fully in Shakespeare, which I absolutely adored.

But that was a busy time. It was a busy time. But it was definitely doable. So have we got any advice or guidance for Lauren, Rob, on working on two TMAs at the same time when she's doing two modules at once?

ROB MOORE: And I think this comes back to the discussion we had earlier about being realistic in what you can do. So we give students advice and say that, if you're studying a 60-credit module over nine months or a 30-credit module over six months, you're looking at somewhere between 12 and 16 hours of study to do that module. That's not a bad estimate. And that 12, because everybody is slightly different. This is why we can't say it will take you exactly this length of time, but 12 to 16 hours is a reasonable estimate for you to do everything that is in the module, carry out all of the discussions, and write all of the assignments.

If you're doing two, you've obviously got to double that to between 24 and 32 hours a week. If you can't commit to that amount of time and you want to do two modules, something is going to compromise. You're going to either end up skimping on the reading or not taking part in all of the activities. So unless you're doing the monthly degree as a full-time degree, then it's perfectly doable. But if you're working full time, you have to ask yourself the question, have I got the amount of time to commit to this?

And I've had students that have done it, and they've done it successfully. And I'm going to bring Margaret back in a minute. So Margaret, get ready. But what I've found is that students who are trying to do a full-time job and two modules at the same time can be successful, but they're always running from one point to another. And it's always about trying to juggle the things, rather than enjoying it.

Your degree is supposed to be fun. It's supposed to be enjoyable and it's supposed to help you grow, rather than be something you've just got to get through.

Margaret, do you have a similar experience?

MARGARET GREENHALL: Yeah, quite a lot of students, when I'm doing the first-year course, also do the other one that goes with it, to do the whole of the first year in one year. I think the main advice is to always read the TMA as soon as you've just finished the last one. So when you're studying, you've got the TMA in your head. It makes it much easier to do the TMA, rather than all the reading, then read your TMA, and do it. So think of it as a continuous process as you read the TMA before you start to do the work.

And the other thing is keep in touch with the tutor. We do have a lot of flexibility. If you end up going wrong and dropping one of your balls in you're juggling, just talk to them and tell them what's happened. The worst thing you can do is bury your head in the sand and not talk to your tutor about it.

If we know what's going on - we can see that you're doing the other module - if you're saying, look, I need an extra two days because this one's come in on Tuesday and that one's due in on Thursday, and I've just got to get to work as well, I've got two kids, et cetera, we're people. We've done the same ourselves. And sometimes I've even had to ask for extensions myself as a student. So we've been there.

But as Rob is saying, if you're realising - being realistic is really important as well - if you're realising it's not working, talk to Student Services again, and try and work a plan with them. And sometimes it may be accepting the fact that, yes, you can pass both courses, but you're not going to be able to get a fantastic grade on both courses.

ROB MOORE: Yeah. And I think you've got to manage your expectations as well. If you're scraping through doing six or seven hours of study a week instead of the 12 to 16, can you really expect to get the best grade you possibly can? But, again, if you're not working or you're working part time, then it's perfectly doable.

So when it comes to the two assignments at the same time, that's about planning. Read ahead. Don't let an assignment be a surprise. You get your plan at the start of the year. You know when things are coming up. You can see what the pinch points are going to be. Work around them.

I had a student ask me for an extension once because they were unexpectedly getting married, which made me smile. You don't unexpectedly get married. You plan it for months. So if you've got big things coming up during the year, work around them.

I've had plans with students, where they've got things in early or we've delayed them and they've put them in late, but we've talked about them well in advance because they've known things have been coming up, like operations or a baby is due, or a wedding. But we talk about it well in advance. These things don't suddenly crop up.

I mean, you will have things that you don't expect. But planning is the key. And Margaret's advice about reading your TMA early is really important. Students who do all of the study - so most assignments come at the end of a section. So you'll have a period of study, with an assignment that asks you to talk about what you've been studying. If you wait till the end of that period of study to read your assignment, you then have to go back again to figure out what it was talking about.

So as a tutor I would say to my students, read the TMA before you start the section because then you can start to pick out and highlight the key things that you're going to want to include in your assignment at the end. And that will apply whether you're doing one or two assignments at the same time.

When you've got two assignments due at exactly the same time, it's a really difficult one. I always avoided doing it as a student because it was just too much for my brain to handle, to be honest. But make sure that you keep them separate in your own mind. And this might sound daft, but when you send them in, send the right one in. The number of times we have students who send in an assignment for the wrong module and they end up with 0 - it's not funny. And there's not a great deal we can do about it.

And the way you do this is make sure you keep your thinking separate, but also think about how you label your files. If you call your assignment TMA01, and you call the assignment for both courses TMA01, how do you know you've sent the right one in? So think about how you're naming it. And put your course code

in. And also use the word "final." So TMA, put B100 TMA01 Final. That way, you know when you send it in, you've sent in the final version of the TMA01 for B100.

And that's not just if you're doing two modules because I've had students who've sent me in TMA01 from a module that did three years before because it still sat there in their computer, and they've just clicked, send in TMA01. So naming conventions are quite important. And think about how you're going to make sure you send the right thing in.

HEIDI: I've got a tip there, actually. Can I just hop in there, Rob?

ROB MOORE: Yeah.

HEIDI: So I have a tip. So with the TMAs, so that was something that was always a big concern of mine, about accidentally submitting the wrong one. And it's exactly as you said. It's that version control. And when you've got so much going on and you've got so much going on at work, and when I submitted my dissertation, I had an 8,000-word dissertation for my postgrad and I submitted that in September, it was September of last year. Goodness me, I can't believe it was this time last year.

And the fear when you have spent - I think I worked on that for a year and a half - and that concern about, please, please, let it be the right one. So what I used to do was I would save it on my desktop, but then I had a specific USB stick just for the very final TMAs. So I could just go through that mental process of making sure, anything that ever needs to get submitted is only on the USB stick. Don't add anything from the desktop. And that way, that really helped me with version control. So hopefully that might be a useful tip for others as well.

ROB MOORE: Excellent. I think we're coming towards the end of the show now. We've had some fantastic questions and we've really enjoyed hearing from you all. We hope you've enjoyed it. And you're just about to start on a really exciting adventure. Your HE study is going to really change your life as you move forward.

We want you to enjoy it. And we want it to make a real difference as you go forward. So keep in touch. And make sure that if you've got any questions, you talk to your tutor or to somebody in Student Support. Once we finish this session, we're going to ask you to fill out a feedback form. Feedback forms are great. So somebody asked me a question earlier, how often do these socials happen? Well, they happen three times a year at the moment, the two Freshers Weeks and at Christmas. And we might do one at the end of the year next year.

But we put on our events in response to the things that you ask us for. And that's what the feedback form is there for. So tell us, if you've enjoyed the social and you want more of them, tell us. If you never want to see me on screen again, tell us. That's fine. We're happy with any feedback. But the feedback form is your way to tell us what you want us to do.

So when you get the chance to fill it in, it'll only take you two or three minutes, but it makes a massive difference to what we do moving forwards.

I'd like to just - a quick shout out to some of the events we've got coming up. So we've got events regularly throughout the year. So next week, on the 26th, we've got a session on Making the Most of Your Tutor and Tutorials. That's 11 o'clock in the morning, on the 26th. The 27th, we've got How to Improve Your Academic Writing. And on the 28th, we've got Exploring Generative AI and How it Can Impact on Your Study.

And then, in October, we've got the OU Essentials Quiz. So Heidi and I will be back for that one. And then we start looking at SA planning and a range of other activities coming up.

So if you want to see the full list, go to the Student Hub Live web page, and they'll all be there. And remember to subscribe if you want to know what's coming up. The subscription lets you know about all of the events and lets you book.

And so I'm just having a quick check, if there's anything else from the team to say. No. So all I'd like to say at this point is thank you to everybody who's joined us. Thank you to Rafa and Cat, who have been manning the chat magnificently.

Orcs, well done. I think I've got to go and find some dead animal to feed you in a minute and get my cave back to normal.

Margaret, thank you. And Heidi, a pleasure, as always. It's been great.

And a big shout out - because we don't do it often enough - to Andrew and Angela, who were keeping us under control in the studio. So thanks, guys. And it's been great. We look forward to seeing you at the sessions in the future. And yeah, make those mocktails and send us some pictures.

Thanks, everyone, and see you soon. Bye-bye.