

SHL126 Summertime Brain food – 22 June 2023

ROB MOORE: Hello, everyone. And welcome to Student Hub Live. You're here with Rob Moore, and I'm back in the study shack in Leicestershire. And it's a nice, sunny day today. So great to have you all with us.

Today's session is going to be looking at how we keep our brains active during the summer. So quite a few of you will have just finished your exams or your end of module assessments and you're looking forward to starting in October. But we've got these months, and what can we do about it? So we've got some suggestions for you today and we've got some expert guests who can give you some hints and tips. So today, we are joined by Mark and Matt, who are looking after the chat. And they'll be answering your questions and giving you some advice and some links to follow. So ask them whatever you like. You'll recognise their names because they've got SHL in front of their names.

And as always, we've got Heidi with us. And Heidi is going to be bringing your messages and thoughts and telling us what you're thinking. So Heidi, who have we got today?

HEIDI MCCAFFERTY: I just want to point out. If you were with us on Tuesday, you will have seen my dog in the background. She is real. She just doesn't move. She's just constantly on the sofa. So if you think I've got a toy or something, that is Martha. She's alive and well. She's just having a good snooze.

OK, so lots of hellos to get through then this morning. Hello to Yana. Yana is joining us from North Wales and is studying early modern Europe for her history degree, which sounds really interesting.

Kelvin will be transitioning to level three this October studying D310 Counselling and Forensic Psychology, Investigating Crime and Therapy, which sounds fascinating. And Jenny from Manchester is actually studying the same as Kelvin. So they've connected this morning, which is great.

We've got Sarah in Manchester studying design thinking. We've got Beverley, who's studying Environmental Science Level II, and is joining today to find some study tips, which sounds great. A big hello to Alex and Rachel. We've got Denise in Wales. We've got Eileen joining us again in Glasgow. I think you were with us on Tuesday, Eileen. So lovely to have you with us back today.

And Rochelle is joining us in France. And we've got Alex, who's still in his holiday cottage in Wales. Just had a full Welsh breakfast and a Biscoff lemon milkshake to start the day. So it sounds delicious. Alex is firing on all cylinders.

We've got Fateh. Good morning to you. We've got Mary in Norfolk. And we've got Tracy in the garden in Whitley Bay, and Sally is in Somerset. So loads of people joining us today. Lovely to have you all with us.

ROB MOORE: Oh, fantastic. And oh, it'd be nice to be working in the garden today. That's where I'm going to be once we've finished. I'll take my laptop back and outside with a deckchair.

So there are a number of ways that you can all get in touch with us today. You can join in on the chat pod or you can email us at studenthub@open.ac.uk. Or you can join in with our Twitter feed and our Facebook pages. So lots of ways to get involved.

The widget at the moment is a multiple choice question. And we want to know whether you've been involved with any of our OpenLearn courses. Yes, no, or didn't know they were there. And then the ticker question, what we want you to put in the chat is if you've taken part in OpenLearn, which ones did you do, how did you find them, and which ones are your favourites? And they'll be popping up later.

So to start the session today, I've been joined by Ben and Patrina. They are our OpenLearn experts. So welcome both. It's lovely to have you with us. And great opportunity to share your knowledge and experience of this great platform.

So I'm going to ask you a few questions as we go through. So the first question is going to be to you Patrina. What is OpenLearn, and how much does it cost?

PATRINA LAW: Great question, Rob. Thank you. Well, of course, OpenLearn is completely free. I mean, just completely free. It's a free learning website, and it's been running now for about 13 years. And it has everything on it from short courses to videos, educational interactives, articles, ebooks. So you can study in lots of different formats.

And yes, it's the university's - or I like to think it's the university's jewel in the crown. And it's open to everybody. So not just Open University students, but it's open to the whole world. And just to put that into context, because it's free and it's open to everybody, we have over 12 million people looking or studying with Open Learning every year.

So it is completely free. And the reason it's free is because - in case you're wondering, why does the Open University spend my money on making all this stuff for free? Actually, the University has a royal charter, and part of that royal charter is that we must make learning available to the community at large. So it's that element of it that means that we really have to give something away for free.

But it does pay for itself because OpenLearn is everywhere for everyone. You can search up information on your phone. You might find yourself inside an article or a course on OpenLearn.

A proportion of people who discover OpenLearn go on to become Open University students. So that's the thing that, if you like, pays for itself. So we don't have to charge people to use it because some of them will become our students. So there's that sort of business side of it as well. Although, that's not its core *raison d'être*. Its core *raison d'être* is a social mission.

And on OpenLearn, you won't find sort of - well, you might find some pretty heavy, full-on material. But actually, our job in the team is to bring a little of everything we teach out in the open. And we do that to try and - the team are brilliant at making things feel really topical. We have great academics that work with us to bring their research into the open as well and make things fun.

It's about learning with a bit of fun. You have no start and finish dates. You can study at your own pace and you can pick and choose what you want to do. So if you might, on a full - if you're on a full-on chemistry degree, it doesn't matter. You can go off and study other things. And for some of those things, you would get a free certificate or a badge.

So yeah, lots of different ways of looking at it. Or if you've just got five minutes, just go in and have a look at some videos if you just want to swot up on a subject.

And not only do we have these fabulous pieces of our core curriculum made exciting - in fact, a lot of stuff on OpenLearn - and it comes onto OpenLearn before it makes its way into the curriculum as well, some of the really interesting things. But we've also got a lot of material on there that supports your career choices as well. So lots of general skills about communication, how you survive in an office environment, teamwork, resilience. So yes, so a lot of sort of general workplace employability skills, which are immensely popular with University students, actually.

ROB MOORE: Wow, that sounds fantastic. And so what does a typical OpenLearn student look like? Have we got such a thing as a typical OpenLearn student?

PATRINA LAW: No, we don't, actually. We run these big surveys every few years to try and get a sense for who's looking at OpenLearn. Why are they looking at OpenLearn? What do they want? You just can't pigeonhole them.

And we had to come up with a series of profiles to just try and make sense of who these people are. Because, actually, a third of everyone looking at OpenLearn is a student in some form. Most of those are not Open University students. Only 3% of people using OpenLearn are the Open University students. But you imagine 3% of several million - many millions of people a year, that's still a lot of students.

So we know we have a third of people who are looking at it are students. We know, roughly speaking, a third of people are looking at it purely from the perspective of their own professional development. Particularly, that was very important during the pandemic.

And then, also, from the pandemic perspective as well going forwards, we have now got quite a large chunk of people who are teachers and educators. So about 20% of people using the platform are teachers or educators in some form, either upping their own skills as how to teach online, or finding material to give to their students. Because everything on OpenLearn is released under a so-called Creative Commons licence, so it's free to use.

So we've got that 20% core group working in education, that 30% core group who call themselves students of all ages, and then there's everybody else. We've got kids at school. Lots of secondary schools now using the platform. We've got octogenarians. People wanting to support their children with their homework or their grandchildren with their homework. People just wanting to swot up on a particular skill or subject matter.

So I can't tell you who they are because they're everybody. And they are everyone around the world. So 60% of that 12-14 million are not in the UK. 40% of them are in the UK. So it's a real international set of learners.

ROB MOORE: Wow. It sounds like a real public service that we're providing and giving access to. Thank you for that. I mean, that was a great introduction, Patrina.

I'm going to get to Ben and ask you a question, Ben. So I'm a tutor. And when I look at my students' records, there's a little flag that tells me if the student has done Being an OU Student, which is an open badge course. So what is an open badge course, and why do we want to know about it as tutors?

BEN WOOD: OK. Well, yeah, the badge courses, there's around 80 of what we call badge courses on the site. Around about 1,000 courses in total, 80 of them are digital badges courses.

Now, those badges are probably more around sort of core skills, professional development, as Patrina said. There's a lot of people who come to OpenLearn looking for career development skills and things around communication in the workplace and soft skills and that kind of stuff. And that is really where a lot of our digital badges lie.

And the difference between those and the other courses, the other 900 or so courses, is that these are all 24 hours of study. And to complete the course on these, there are a couple of quizzes included. So you need to complete the quizzes and then get to the end of the course. And as well as your statement of participation, which all courses deliver, these also come with a digital badge. So the digital badges get displayed on your learner record.

And as you say, Rob, yeah, tutors can link to that. It's on your - linked up to your OU student profile. And so your tutors can see that you've completed any number of courses.

Now, the one you highlighted, obviously, Being an OU Student, is - to use the jewel in the crown phrase, it's been a huge addition to being on OpenLearn. It's been on there for a number of years now. I think around about 60,000, 70,000 OU students have enrolled on that course. And it really is the introduction to OU study. It's the what, where, why. It prepares you for what you're going to face, how you're going to study online, where to find everything you need to know, and obviously, updating that regularly. And all tutors are encouraged to encourage all their students to take it. It really is a great grounding for starting your journey. There's obviously a lot of things which I'm sure we will come on to that will help people induction to the OU. But that course is the one that we would say, if you do one thing, if you're a first timer, a new student taking a course, then Being an OU Student is the one that you should take. And equally, so all the other courses, what you complete on OpenLearn, the courses you complete, the badges you earn, yeah, display on your student record, which is great. So you can show your tutor that you've studied something. If there's a particular area that you want to discuss or that you want to show that you've read around a subject, again, it displays. It's sort of a way of demonstrating your learning. It goes way beyond just OU students, of course. We know that a lot of people share their learner profiles and you're able to do that now. You can share your learner profile on LinkedIn, for example. So it's not just with tutors, but it's employers and prospective employers as well that people can take these badged courses and show the rest of the world, look, this is an area I've got a passion in. This is how much I've learned around and under my own steam read around a subject. I've earned these badges. So yeah, a great way of demonstrating learning. And in return, those people, when it's not a tutor, when it's external, when it is a prospective employer, the badge contains that data. It's not just a copy of a certificate. It's something that links back to the Open University that says, yeah, this is an OpenLearn course, it was created by OU academics, and it carries that weight. It carries that authority with it. So yeah, I'd say around about 80 of the courses are digital badges and they really are a wide variety. Yes, there's a lot that are really sort of core competencies. There's a lot around the science, English, maths courses. But it really is quite diverse as well. If you want to know what it's like living on the International Space Station, there's a badged course around that. If you want to develop your communication in the workplace, there's a digital badge that will deliver on that as well. So yeah, a really diverse bunch of courses, but they all follow that same pattern. They are these broken down into eight sessions. It's a total of around 24 hours of learning, a couple of quizzes, and then, yeah, you get your digital badge, which you can share and demonstrate your learning and be a student, a new student, particularly on the Being an OU Student course, looking for employment or working just to demonstrate your career development is the badges deliver an awful lot. So the certificates are great, but the badges, they contain that data. They come with all that information in there. It's a great way of demonstrating what you're up to with tutors, employers, family and friends, if you wish. People just like to share their badges. It's - yeah -

ROB MOORE: Great if you're like me and you have to demonstrate your continual professional development, a great way to use it for that. So we're going to come to Heidi in a moment just to look at what you've been saying and what you've been voting on. But yeah, Being an OU Student, one of my favourite parts about that is it teaches you to speak the language of the Open University. It is a bit like speaking another language and it takes you a while to get your head around the jargon.

And the other thing that's great is it tells you where to find all the really interesting stuff, like how to get your student discount card and how to get a free McFlurry from McDonald's and your discount on Amazon. So there's all really nice things in there as well. So Heidi, if we have a quick look at what's being said, because I know students have been telling us about their experiences so far.

HEIDI MCCAFFERTY: Absolutely. Yes, sorry, Rob. Yeah, I'm really excited by that Ben just saying there that there's a course on what it's like living on the International Space Station. Because I've been obsessed with the ISS for ages and I've got the app on my phone, where I watch it go over. So I'm definitely going to look that one up. I've been studying with the OU for years and years and didn't know that existed. So that's really exciting. Thanks for that, Ben.

Yeah, so lots and lots of people commenting in the chat about different OpenLearn courses that they've done. So Pamela is studying OpenLearn Spanish over the summer. So hopefully, you'll get a chance to practise that in person, Pamela. I don't know if you've got any plans to do any travels to Spain.

Sally loved the OpenLearn creative writing course. Andy loves that OpenLearn courses are free. Beverly started beginner's Latin. So that's a bit of a challenging one I imagine.

Jenny in Manchester did the teaching maths course on OpenLearn and are now doing chemistry. Jenny's an online tutor for home educated students. So loves learning new things that she can then pass on to her students.

Deborah is currently studying critical thinking in psychology on OpenLearn in preparation for an upcoming module. Rochelle, who's joining us in France, says that she did the course Being an OU Student. And Leah has just finished Preparing for Your Digital Life in the 21st Century, and now doing an Introduction to Computers and Computer Systems. And Kelvin shared that he's done lots of courses with OpenLearn and OpenLearn Create and absolutely loves them.

I do have a quick question as well, if that's OK, Rob. It's come in from Amit, who's asked, which is the most recommended OpenLearn course to take? I know that's a really tricky question, but perhaps one we can put to either Patrina or Ben.

ROB MOORE: Well, the answer to that is very easy. It's starting your own small business. It's an OpenLearn course I wrote a few years ago. So everybody should check that out and get me up the ratings. A bit of self-promotion there. So Ben, I mean, I've asked you this question and I know what your answer is, but what is the most popular and the most recommended OpenLearn course?

BEN WOOD: Well, yeah, as you said, we talked, obviously, earlier. And recommended is a tough one, because, obviously, there's 1,000 to choose from and everyone has got completely different interests, completely different needs. So I don't think we would ever say this is the course that you need to go and do on OpenLearn.

In terms of popular, there's some that have been at the top of the list for a long time, that have got real longevity and have always been popular. We have a course on bookkeeping and accounting, which would appear to be the free course on bookkeeping and accounting. Because every year, it has thousands of people who enrol on that. There's a couple that were mentioned, actually. Some of our English courses, creative writing, that is, again, incredibly popular.

But probably our highlight at the moment, we have a course called - there's Understanding Autism. That is incredibly popular. And that, again, remains one of the most visited, most enrolled on and completed courses that we've got.

And some people will have seen this one. The course that we did with Martin Lewis and the MoneySavingExpert team. So the MSE Academy of Money, that was a few years ago, just before just before lockdown. And obviously, probably more important than ever before for people and ways to manage your finances, look after personal finances. That's full of really useful information, really practical advice, and obviously, from someone who is incredibly well respected. And yes, that's an example. We do a few of those courses where we work with external organisations. It's written with partners within the OU. There's OU academics within FBL that have worked with Martin and his team on that, but it comes with the MSE stamp of approval. And again, over the three years, I think, since that's been on the site, that's been up in the top five most popular courses.

So yeah, there isn't anything that we can say I would absolutely recommend. I mean, personally - you mentioned yours. I've not I've not written a course, but there's one recently updated on the business of football. If that's your thing, if you're a football fan, that's a really fascinating course to look into, particularly since the actual playing of the game is pretty much at an end for the summer. So that's another way just to get your football fix. So that's that personal recommendation from me.

But yeah, those that we mentioned are incredibly, incredibly popular courses. And it's really whatever you want. So we would recommend that you dive in there, look at the free course catalogue. It's extensive. And we've done a few online social media events where we said, tell us - log on, tell us three things about yourself, and we will recommend you the perfect course. And that's been really good fun to do and you get some really obscure things that people have said. So three things about me, I like hiking, I enjoy travel, and I've got two cats. Some of that not quite as relevant, but we'll pick up on what's on there and we've recommended courses, and that's been really a fun thing to do.

But I'd say, yeah, dive in, look at that course catalogue. Whether it's related to your module, you can use your module code as well. If there's a module you're interested in or study, you can use your module code to find the associated courses on OpenLearn as well.

But yeah, just have a look around. You'll be you'll be amazed what you find on there. We always say there is something for everyone and that's absolutely true. So yeah, just dive in.

And if you are completely stuck, then follow us on the social media channels. And by all means, drop us a message and say, yeah, I like these three things, what should I study? And I'm sure one of our team will find something for you.

ROB MOORE: And I think that's really important that we can dive in. We're not - we don't have to go in necessarily with a purpose in mind. We can go in and we can explore what's there. And you don't have to complete the whole 24 hours. You can go and have a taste and you can jump around.

We did have a question from Amit about, will you still be able to use OpenLearn after graduating? Well, the good news is you don't even have to be studying to use it. It's there for absolutely everyone.

What happens is that if you are an OU student already, you've already got an OU account, so you can use that to go in. If you're not an OU student, then you can create a free OU account and that will give you access and keep track of what you do. So the good news is you've got permanent access and it will never go away.

So a couple of things from those of you who've answered our questions. How many of you were aware of OpenLearn? So 78% of you were already aware or have used it. Oh, 81 now. It's jumped up since I last looked at the figures. 11% haven't, and 8% didn't know about it. So 8% of you will now be going and searching for OpenLearn.

And then we asked you the types of things you've been looking at. So we've built up a word cloud that represents some of the topics that you've been exploring. And as we can see, psychology is coming out really highly on that list. Mathematics - I've got to say, if you're a parent who struggles to help your children do their maths homework, some of the maths OpenLearn courses we've got are brilliant to help you get your head around so that you can help the rest of the family.

OK, so just moving on. So Heidi, have we got any other questions we haven't covered yet?

HEIDI MCCAFFERTY: We do. Yeah, we have another question. So are there a maximum number of courses that you can take on OpenLearn?

ROB MOORE: Ooh, I suppose it's how many computers have you got. Patrina, I'll pass that one to you. Is there a limit? Are we monitoring how many people do?

PATRINA LAW: No, we do have people who are addicted to earning badges and certificates though. They appear from time to time. But no, there's no limit at all.

And actually, if you look at your OpenLearn profile, it will log all of the courses that are in progress, how many courses you've completed, whether they've got certificates or badges associated with them. So you've got a permanent record there of all the ones you've taken. And for everything that you've completed on OpenLearn, you can mark it as private or public. So you don't have to share with everybody on your profile what you've studied. You can keep as much of that hidden as you want.

And also, if you are an Open University student, there's a section in the OpenLearn profile, the My OpenLearn profile called - which is your OU record as well. So you've also got your Open University study record in there too, which, by default, is hidden. It's private. But if you want to share that you have - or make public that you've studied certain modules or entire qualifications, you can.

So there's a URL that will be associated with you and your profile. So when you're applying for jobs or moving around at work or want to show your boss something, you've got everything you've studied there, both formally and informally on OpenLearn, to share. And as I say, you can switch things on or off. But yeah, the sky's the limit. You can study as much stuff as you want to.

ROB MOORE: Brilliant. I've got to say, it is a bit of a rabbit hole if you go in. And I was addicted to those short animations, lots of short animations that are on OpenLearn. And you've even got your own YouTube channel with a lot of these, though.

I love the 60-Second Adventure series that is narrated by David Mitchell. Taking some really complicated ideas and breaking it down in 60 seconds. And so anybody's that's watching, if you haven't seen those before, just type in 60-Second Adventures and then OpenLearn into Google. You will find some amazing animations.

So back to Ben for a second. So Ben, it's not just about study. There's lots of games and things in there as well.

I've played a few games in my time. I've done the PhotoFit activity and some of the others. Is there a really popular game at the moment that's coming through? Because I know there's - you've got a web link, haven't you? You've got a list of your top favourite games as a team.

BEN WOOD: Yeah, we have. We've got some really popular ones. And the one that you mentioned there, yeah, PhotoFit Me, that's always been a really popular one. And I think a lot of people have fun making a PhotoFit of friends and family just to see what they'd look like should they ever need to appear on Crime Watch, that kind of thing. But that's a good, fun one. And Photographic Memory as well is another one

that is always really popular. Whenever we post back that on social media, we tend to get a lot of replies people telling us how well they've done and whether their memory is good or absolutely terrible.

And Driven to Distraction. There's a couple that we've got, which are a roundabout around the subject of driving and concentration and whether the use of even a hands-free phone, how much does it actually impact your concentration on the road. So yeah, that's a really good one, where you're put into a sort of simulation driving down the road and various things happen around you. So things to spot and then the quiz at the end. And it's while you are driving and trying to memorise a shopping list that you're being given over the phone call and then did you spot everything that happened. And watching that back when you're not trying to remember the shopping list and realising that - without giving too many away should people want to go and do it, but you realise that Superman crossed the road in front of you and there are various things that are blatantly obvious when you've got full concentration. So there's some really, really interesting stuff that's on there.

Yeah, interactive games we tend to call them. They are games. They are fun. If you want to go on and just have - you've got 10 minutes and you want something different to go and play and entertain yourself, they're there.

But obviously, like Patrina said, everything is created for - with some sort of academic edge to it. So even though you're going on and having fun, there will be a purpose to it. There'll be a point there, a message there. It may link to an article. It might link to some of the courses that we've done.

And you mentioned parents looking for something different to keep people entertained. We've got, yeah, a collection. There is a link, like I said, to our 15 favourite interactives, which is a really good one. I think you might be able to share that later on with people. That's just putting all the ones that we enjoy the most in one place. But rest assured, if you want to point your children towards that and think that's going to keep them occupied for a few hours, 15 different games to play.

There's definitely some learning in there as well. There's one that's called Behind the Reputation, which is looking at historical figures. It is a game, but obviously, there's a little bit of learning in there about who was Queen Elizabeth, who is William Shakespeare. There's some really, really fun stuff.

And like with the animations that you love, we've got a really good creative team that make these things visually brilliant, really good fun to play, really simple to play as well, but yeah, with that educational angle to everything that we do. So yeah, go on there, enjoy it, and find yourself accidentally learning while you're there, which is a fantastic thing to do.

ROB MOORE: Accidental learning, you can't beat it. Now, that's fantastic.

So we've come to the end of that first topic now. And I'd just like to say thank you to Patrina, because I know Patrina has to leave us now. Ben staying around to answer your questions after the break and helping us through the next chat as well.

So thank you, Patrina. Enjoy the rest of your day. And really appreciate you spending time with us today.

PATRINA LAW: Thank you for having me. It's been great.

ROB MOORE: Thank you. And we'd like to welcome Alessandro. So Alessandro's come to join us today to talk about his work with the BBC and our collaboration with the BBC. Welcome, Alessandro. Hopefully well today.

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: Hello. Hello. Good morning. Hope you can hear me all right, yes?

ROB MOORE: Yes, nice and clear. Nice and clear.

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: Thank you, Rob.

ROB MOORE: I was just going to say, before we get into the chat, we've changed the widget and we're asking you to identify which of the programmes listed are collaborations between the Open University and the BBC. And if you are aware of any, which are your favourite programmes and why? So we're going to be looking at those later.

So Alessandro, the Open University has been working with the BBC for many years. I remember as a young ankle snapper many years ago seeing the BBC Open University programmes at 5 o'clock in the morning. We've come a bit of a way since then and we've developed our content a little. So what's changed now? What's different now?

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: Well, what is different now is that it is a well-established collaboration which is growing constantly. We co-produce programmes that are broadcast across all the different channels of TV, but also on radio. And it is really growing. In association with each new programme, we also produce some what we call online content, which is presented on the OU Connect website, whereby viewers can go and find some materials about the programme, but also, they can find links to the curriculum and the modules offered to students which are related to the programme and the topic areas covered by that particular programme.

On OU Connect, there is also access to other programmes that we produce, not for broadcasting but for what we call BBC Ideas. So these are short videos about specific topics. So about leadership, we recently produced one about the do's and don'ts of representing yourself in court, for example. And these are short videos and animation, 5-6 minutes long, whereby viewers or learners can find ideas which hopefully will encourage them to want to discover more, including going to the pages of our formal curriculum and the modules where they can actually translate their interest into actual study.

We produce every - so for every academic year, we produce some statistics about what happened over the past - the previous 12 months. We do that in October so the statistics we have still relate to the '21-22 academic year. But if we look back at that year, we had 327 million viewing and listening events.

ROB MOORE: Wow.

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: We had 232,000 print requests. So viewers who actually wanted to print some of the materials that they found there. And we had in excess of 600,000 visits to broadcast pages on the OU connect site. So in terms of traffic that is generated on the back of those co-productions with the BBC, this is really, really growing dramatically. Obviously, over COVID, a bit like for OpenLearn, these came to a different - this traffic was a different magnitude. But we seem to be able to maintain that level of attention and attraction.

So watch this space. This coming Monday, for example, 26th of June at 7 o'clock on BBC2, you can see - you can watch, if you want, the fifth episode of a programme called Parole, which is a programme - it was the first series of six episodes about the parole board, so what happens behind the scenes. And it's been extremely successful, so much so that the BBC has now commissioned a second series, which will go into production after the summer.

So a lot of things are happening. Obviously, you can find these programmes advertised normally on the BBC channels and TV Guide. But if you go to the OU Connect website, you can find tracks about what was produced in the past and what the links to actual curriculum and modules on offering are.

ROB MOORE: OK, lovely. I know we've got a few questions coming in. Heidi, what's popping up in the moment? What are we - what is the audience asking about at the minute?

HEIDI MCCAFFERTY: Yeah, audience guests are sharing a bit about some of the different shows that they've enjoyed the most, which is great. So we can touch on those in a bit. But yeah, we've got a question from Pamela. So Pamela doesn't have a TV licence and doesn't want one. Does it mean that she misses out on watching these collaborations?

ROB MOORE: Oh, Alessandro, what - I could have a guess at that one, but so what do we offer to guests who haven't got a TV licence?

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: Well, if you don't have a TV licence, you cannot, obviously, watch the programme on TV. We cannot broadcast the programme on computers online, but you can still go to the OU Connect website and find short videos or abstracts of the programme with all the information about it. Unfortunately, that is not something we can work around.

ROB MOORE: And I'm guessing that's the same for any of our guests who are not based in the UK and can't access the BBC programmes.

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: Well, that is - unfortunately, it is true. These are programmes that are broadcast by the BBC. So you need to have access to the BBC TV in order to watch them.

ROB MOORE: Excellent. So Heidi, did you want to talk us through the programmes people have been watching and which ones are their favourites at the moment?

HEIDI MCCAFFERTY: Yeah, absolutely. So Beverly has said that her favourite was the most recent OU-BBC collaboration with Sir David Attenborough, which was Wild Isles. So I'm not sure if anybody else was able to catch that, but absolutely phenomenal. I know that it was years of filming of that one and they just got the most incredible footage.

And then Sally watched Inside Our Autistic Minds earlier this year. So Sally has autism and said that this one was a really great one for her to watch. And I just had a quick Google and that one is on iPlayer. So yeah, they're the two favourites that have come out so far.

ROB MOORE: Excellent. And we're going to have a look at the widget at the moment and see how many of the programmes you've recognised. In terms of the support material, it's really interesting to see how the programmes were created, where the data came from. And quite often, you're pointed in the direction of further study, perhaps an OpenLearn course or an Open University course where you might want to explore it.

So I think, yes, we can have a quick look at your results now. And Dirty Rotten Scammers. And I think all of those are actually collaborations with the OU. So you're allowed to vote for as many as you like. They are actually all collaborations. So any of those, when you see them advertised, you will find them and information about them on OU Connect and you can go further into it.

So Alessandro, which is your personal favourite? So of all the collaborations you've been involved with, which is your favourite and why?

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: Well, first of all, I work for the Faculty of Business and Law. So I work on the co-productions of the BBC with the faculty of Business and Law. Other media fellows representing other faculties help on co-productions about other subject areas. So my choice will have to be about business and law programmes.

We recently, in February/March, we launched a short series of three episodes about women which changed - which made a change in Scotland. So a programme about the role that some iconic figures had in Scottish life. It was a programme that was very successful. It was broadcast by BBC Scotland, not across the UK.

But it received very good critiques. I think it was extremely fun to produce. And BBC Scotland invited the academics to Edinburgh for the initial preview. The last episode of the series was launched on the 8th of March, which was International Women's Day.

So that is one of the favourites which I have. But there is a whole suite of programmes as well produced with our business academics which tries to cover - across different programmes tries to cover the changes within British society and the economy since the year 2000, first through the glitzy years of around the turn of the Millennium and then across through financial crisis at the end of 2008-2009 and then later on. And again, we produced a couple of very well-received programmes. One was about the demise of Topshop and the demise of Peter Green as an entrepreneur.

And another one was about the changes that have taken place and where we are left, actually, after those 15-20 years today. We are still building on that. There is a new programme, which is in production, which unfortunately is looking at what is going on at the moment, which is not particularly positive from an economic standpoint, but it helps us understand key changes and the drivers of change. So it helps make sense of what is going on. So I strongly encourage you all to watch these programmes and then try to see how the background of our academics, the particular take on these topics that are academic are taken, how that can be different from mainstream contribution that you can find elsewhere.

ROB MOORE: And as a business school tutor, I'm often recommending students to go and look at these programmes and see how they can apply what they're learning to the discussions that are being had. I'm going to come to Ben and Heidi in a minute and ask what their favourite collaborations are. So I'll give you a few seconds to get yourselves ready. And I'll just say what mine are.

I'm going back a few years. I used to love Rough Science. And that's a science programme about basically cobbling together scientific solutions. And it had some OU science tutors actually presenting with Kate Humble. That's probably my favourite one going back a few years.

And then we had things like Bang Goes the Theory. So I like the sciencey ones. Heidi have you got a favourite one that rings a bell with you that when you watch it you think, yeah, I'm part of the group that helped develop that?

HEIDI MCCAFFERTY: I would say - so I'm obsessed with space and I'm obsessed with the sea. So the two things I'm just absolutely obsessed with. So I would probably say Blue Planet. I just think that the footage that was gathered for that was just absolutely phenomenal. They're just astounding.

And there is such a sense of pride I find as well at the end when you watch these incredible productions and then you see the names of the academic consultants. And there's been quite a few times I think, oh my gosh, I know that person. I've been in a meeting with that person. That's amazing. So yeah, it's really exciting. And then seeing the OU bits at the end.

So yeah, amazing. Amazing collaboration between the OU and BBC. But Blue Planet, I think, is probably my personal favourite.

ROB MOORE: Oh, I know what you mean. Roz Crone who works a lot with Lucy Worsley on some of her productions was a guest on Student Hub Live quite recently. So it's quite nice when you're watching the programme, exactly as you say, oh, I've worked with that person, that's lovely.

So what about you, Ben? What would you say is your favourite? Which one stands out to you?

BEN WOOD: I'm all about true crime. So you know, Crime Scene Investigates I think that series was called. Yeah, I love that kind of stuff. I love seeing how the police can go in and pick up things and how

they can find out so much information from the tiny scrap of DNA and place people at the scene of a crime. So yeah, when those series are on They're. The ones I immediately look out for and jump into. And yeah, I'm sort of disappointed, because obviously, a lot of the broadcast content used to be on OpenLearn before it got its own platform, as Alessandro said. So yeah, we used to do a lot more and develop - we were a bit more involved in developing the content and I got to see it all come onto OpenLearn before the series went out and got to play all those games and watch all the videos and stuff. So I have to wait like everybody else these days and log on to Connect for that. So I wait eagerly to see what the next ones are going to be as well. But yeah, crime scene for me.

ROB MOORE: Yeah, fantastic. And I know that the team have been putting links into the chat to take you to all of these resources sites. Roz actually worked with Lucy on a podcast called The Ladykillers. I don't know if you captured that one. I listened to the entire series driving in the car recently, where they investigate female murderers or female murderers. And - they have to be female if they are murderers.

But they're looking at historical murders and the way that women were treated in Victorian time. So some really interesting stuff there. But yeah, if you like your true crime, the podcast The Ladykillers is well worth looking at.

So Heidi, any other comments from the guests at the moment? Anything that's been asked or said?

HEIDI MCCAFFERTY: Yeah, a couple of comments, and then I've got a question as well. So Alex was just picking up on the discussion, the chat around Inside Our Autistic Minds. And Alex says, "As an autistic individual, it was interesting to view it through a different point of view."

And Kelvin, who has said that he has tonnes of different courses on the go - Kelvin, I don't think you sleep or rest. But Kelvin's put a list of the favourites. So he said my favourites of late have been Forensics the Real CSI, Wild Isles, David Harewood Psychosis and Me. I didn't watch that one, but I must watch that because it looks really interesting. And then Greta Thunberg a Year to Change the World. So that was to name a few, Kelvin said.

And then we've got a couple of questions. So I'll just start off with the first one. So Rochelle said - and I think I know, I might know the answer to this one - did the OU work with the BBC on a mathematics programme with Hannah Fry? I think she might be referring to Magic Numbers, but I think Alessandro is probably better placed to respond to that one.

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: I think the answer is yes, but I cannot say that 100%. Because, as I said, I represent business and law and I'm not fully aware of all of the programmes that are developed by the other faculties. But the name, if it is Magic Numbers, the answer would be yes.

ROB MOORE: I remember the programme, and I must admit, I can't quite remember myself whether we did or not. So some great resources out there. Some great opportunities to take your TV viewing a little further.

You see, television can be good for you. Television can be educational. And it's that opportunity to obtain those extra insights that you gain. So you watch the programme, you enjoy it, you can find a little more. And again, I love the fact that we can support our children's learning. We can go and get the printable resources. So you can request printed material to be sent. You can buy printed material. But there are lots of free downloads that you can print yourself. So lots and lots of things that can be accessed and used through the collaboration.

So Ben, do we get a lot of links from OU Connect back into OpenLearn. So does that natural link exist?

BEN WOOD: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah we've always had a really good relationship with the broadcast team. And I'd say that concept used to be long gone on OpenLearn. So yes. Yes, still anything I think that is on Connect obviously links back to the OU to relevant modules. As you said, everything all kind of links up. Those modules link back to OpenLearn. So yeah, there's definitely still a link between the two. And like I say, if you're enjoying any one of those series, historically, there will be content still available and open and link to things. Like Blue Planet, we've got plenty of stuff about the environment, about aquatic mammals, and articles that sort of date from the times of those series that are still historically on the site. And so yeah, if you're enjoying the co-produced series, and even if there's not a direct link back, there will be some. But yeah, we'd love OpenLearn to be the next thing you think of after enjoying that programme and visiting the Connect site. And then if you want to know a bit more, we're your next resource. But yeah, there's definitely links between the two.

ROB MOORE: So we're looking at those tips and hints for keeping your brain active during summer. Also, tell us if you've just finished your exams or your EMAs. What do you do when that big relief comes in and you finally hit the Send button 2 minutes before the cutoff point and it's all gone and now you're thinking, oh, what do I do now till October? What do I do to my next module starts?

And that's what we're going to try and cover in this next half hour. What sorts of things can you do? So Heidi, have we got any suggestions yet? Is anybody coming up with things that they like to do during this break, this holiday period?

HEIDI MCCAFFERTY: Yes, absolutely. I just want to apologise. My cat's just woken up behind me and I think might be throwing up. So I do apologise if anybody can hear that or if you can see that. That's really the worst timing possible.

So yes, back to professional mode. So Deborah, "I will be reading a specific book during the summer break." So that's critical thinking for students by Roy van de Brink-Budgen. I probably pronounced that wrong. And then Eileen hopped in the chat and said that she's also ordered that book recently. So she's also going to be reading that one over the summer. I haven't heard of that one, but it sounds very interesting.

And Kelvin, busy Kelvin, a long list of things that Kelvin is going to be doing. So revising theories, methodology, research studies and concepts, reading many books, looking into research I missed out on reading, potentially studying more on OpenLearn or future loan courses - that's what we like to hear - and preparing for his DE 200 exam resit and writing book reviews. So Kelvin has got an extremely busy summer ahead.

My colleague Mark - just to make you aware if you're not looking at the chat at the moment, Mark's put some great OU volunteering opportunities in the chat. So I recommend you go and have a little look at that, the links in there. And then we've got a question for Alessandro and Ben. So Deborah says, is OpenLearn open for school students or do they have to be 18 years or older?

ROB MOORE: Good question.

BEN WOOD: So I shall pick up on that one. Yeah, so yes, school students absolutely. To create an account on OpenLearn you have to be 13 years or older.

But that is to create your own user account. We know there are younger learners than that whose parents have created accounts for them and obviously they can monitor their access. It's connected to their email addresses. But no, as long as you're over the age of 13, yeah, you can create an account. And it's something we really are encouraging a lot more in secondary schools.

We recently worked on a schools hub in fact. So we had previously - it was kind of a home learning club that was created during lockdown, actually. All four of the OU faculties contributed to it and put forward the content they thought was best suited for home learning secondary school age students.

And recently, we've taken all of that and we've reviewed it and actually turned it into what we now call in a schools hub and all the categories have been redefined. So whereas previously it was all around OU module subjects, now it's all done by curriculum subjects. So secondary school students can go in there, and without wondering, well, what does that actually mean, that's not a subject I recognise, they can see everything very clearly. So English, math, science, the humanities, religious studies, whatever it might be, it's all curriculum subjects that are on there. There is 400 or so items in there, say things that we've talked about again from courses to articles and videos and documentaries, things like that are all mixed up in there.

And we're also developing something around the EPQ as well for secondary school students. And if people are aware or have students who are doing EPQs, there's going to be an EPQ platform as well, which is linked off there, which is, again, specific content and there's some tools that have been developed to talk students through that. So yeah, it's a really key part of what we're looking to develop with OpenLearn at the moment is to tap into that market.

We know there are younger learners that are interested, but not enough. We want it to be something that secondary school teachers are aware of that can be used within lessons to support the students. There's so many things that they can do, be it further reading or whether it's actually even brought into the classroom. So Yeah, absolutely. So all the content we think is definitely secondary school suitable.

And you'll find on our courses as well a simple guide. There is three levels. There is 1, 2, and 3. Level 1 being introductory and 3 being advanced. We think they're all probably pretty accessible, but 3 may be slightly harder to understand some language or some prior knowledge needed on the courses.

But certainly, the introductory level courses, yeah, we don't think anyone should have any problems with. It's accessible. It should be easy to understand and easy to use.

So yeah, long answer there. And the very short answer to that is yes, secondary school students absolutely very welcome. And yeah, go on to OpenLearn and search Schools Hub. I'd say that would be your very first port of call.

ROB MOORE: Fantastic. And I noticed that a couple of people were thinking about critical thinking, critical learning. There are some specific resources on OpenLearn that look at critical thinking as well. So some tips, some ideas, and well worth looking at those.

Heidi, you mentioned that somebody was doing the catch up on the study that they didn't manage to do during their module. We would love to think, as OU tutors, that every student reads every element and does every activity as they do the studies, but we know that life happens and you can't always do every element. So yeah, I love the idea that this is that point where you can catch up on perhaps those bits that weren't critical for the TMA so you might have put them to one side. This is the point to go back and have a go at them. And so I've tried to - Heidi, have you done an OU course with us?

HEIDI MCCAFFERTY: Oh, well, I did all of my undergrad with the OU. I did all of - I did my BA Hons in Literature with the Open University, which took me five years. And then I have - I've done quite a few OpenLearn courses and I've kind of dipped in and out. And it was actually an informal course that I did that then sparked my interest.

Because I wasn't sure what to do for my master's, and then I did a criminology related free course. And after doing that, it made me realise I definitely want to go on and do postgraduate study. So then I finished that, graduated from that a couple of months ago. So then, yeah, that was the impetus to do two years of postgraduate study. So for me, it was sort of a major deciding factor and then going on to do post-grad.

Because it's a huge commitment, isn't it, when you start, whether you're doing undergrad or post-grad. And you think, I'm going to commit all these years of my life and all this investment financially, and you want to make sure that it's the right course for you. And OpenLearn and FutureLearn is fantastic for that and giving you that initial kind of taste of what the course is going to be like.

ROB MOORE: And getting that sense of what's coming up and being prepared for it is fantastic. I noticed we got a comment in the chat about somebody taking a digital detox and hard books only, which is a great idea. If you're an OU student, if you're actually registered on a module with us, you can actually book out physical books from the OU Library as well. So if you're on your detox, that's a great idea. I think Ben's got something to say about that. Yes, Ben?

BEN WOOD: Yeah, absolutely. We've got, again, another collection that we put together recently, which is all based around outdoor learning. So you can take a digital detox. And oddly, for an online learning platform, we're also encouraging people that they can do the same.

There is a collection. If you look for - I think if you search again outdoor learning, something along those lines, but you'll find that on OpenLearn. And it's things where, yes, you need to do a little bit of reading online before, but it encourages you to get outside and do some of those things. There's activities.

And we've got one of our courses which is called Citizen Science, which is about getting out there and recording what you see in your neighbourhood in the wildlife. And it's animals and plants. And we've got courses around astronomy, how to view the night sky. So yeah, if you are looking for digital detox and you're looking for some ideas, we can help on that as well.

So it does seem strange for an online learning platform to say, why don't you switch everything off for a week. But if you do a little bit of prep beforehand with us, yeah, there's plenty you can still do and still work towards earning a badge or a certificate while you do it as well. So yeah, digital detox is definitely - we're on board with that as well. Yeah, great idea.

ROB MOORE: Excellent. And Alessandro, we - I'm checking my memory's correct on this, but we work with the BBC on Springwatch and Autumnwatch, et cetera, and there are quite a lot of surveys involved there. So how would guests get involved with some of those activities, so some of the surveys and the data collection with Springwatch?

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: Well, as you say, there is a lot of that and there is a lot of interest in getting the voice of the viewers and the learners. So the OU Connect website provides a link to the BBC. The BBC website in turn has links to OU Connect. So the time during the summer detox or not detox is an opportunity to explore the different ways of getting involved and interact with either side of the partnership and it is strongly encouraged.

Also, as I said, if I can follow on that, when we launch new programmes, when the BBC starts broadcasting a new programme, they are usually series of episodes. So if you go to the website, you can see what is coming up over the next weeks, month, and you can make sure that you are not going to miss out on the next episode of the series. So strongly encouraged to do it. It is a way to see what is being produced. It is a way to put things in the diary and plan for the future.

ROB MOORE: Excellent. And I'm sitting here thinking, summer is coming, we finished our studies, we're going off on our holidays. So can I ask the guests, in the chat box - so those of you write in the chat box. Tell us what you take away on holiday with you to help you relax. So this isn't - I don't want TMAs. I don't want things like that you're having to write. But what do you take away with you to keep your brain active on your holiday.

And then my guests in the studio - I'll come to you first, Heidi - what do you take on holiday with you to keep your brain active? Because I really struggle to completely switch off. I like to be doing something. So what is it that Heidi does to keep her active when you're chilling?

HEIDI MCCAFFERTY: I love podcasts. So I do listen to a lot of podcasts. You'll very often find me in the garden with a podcast and walking the dogs. It was actually Leah - just to credit Leah - that is doing the three-week digital detox, and says, only hard copy books allowed. So I can definitely relate to that. And when I go on a holiday, I do like to take a hard copy book.

I also - I was always anti-Kindle and anti kind of digital books. I was kind of old school in my approach. I thought, no, because you can't beat a real book. So I resisted it for a long time, and then I did get caught out when I was in America the last time and I didn't have a book on me. So I downloaded the Kindle app and then I really fell in love with it. And it works really surprisingly well on the phone. So yeah, I have kind of crossed over into the digital e-book market, but really like it.

So yeah. And there's lots of others in the chat that are talking about books and reading and doing that when they're in the summer. So yeah, I'm with them on that one.

ROB MOORE: Well, apps and the Kindle is great if you're looking for some of the classic books, some of the Dickens, or I'm a sucker for Sherlock Holmes. But all of those tend to be free to download as well. So it's a really economic way to take material with you.

So Ben, what about you? What is it that you do to help you chill and relax when you're on your break? What do you take with you?

BEN WOOD: Same as Heidi. I've got two dogs that come with us. So yeah, they're a great way to relax. Get out in those big long walks. And a trip to Norfolk this summer coming up again. We've just sort of discovered that in the past couple years. So down to Norfolk and the Coast, and that's beautiful down there.

So walking and the dogs. And I do like a podcast as well. Podcasts everywhere with me these days. So yeah, some just random things that you can find that are great. Just sort of interviewing, I love just hearing people talking. So comedians, celebrities, actors, sportspeople, anything that's sort of a podcast chat show if you like, where you can just learn a bit about people and see where the conversation goes, much like this, is great.

And the other one's a little bit embarrassing I suppose for a grown man maybe, but I still love playing football manager. That's my other world that I go to. So when I'm on holiday and I've got nothing to do, don't need to worry about watching TV of an evening or there's no TV maybe even some of these places to go and stay. And then, yeah, I fire up a game of football manager and immerse myself in a completely other world where I'm a very well-paid and very successful football manager. Yeah, so that's my switch-off from the real world.

ROB MOORE: So before I ask Alessandro the same question, can I ask everyone in the audience just to think about, what would you take on a long flight to keep you occupied? So you're there, you're strapped

in, you can't move for four or five hours. What will you take with you to keep yourself active, keep your brain going? So put your thoughts in the chat box.

And Alessandro, what do you do to keep your brain active when you're on that downtime? What is it that keeps you going?

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: I like reading. I read a lot. And I love the - although we are talking about a digital offering here, but I like the physicality of books. I like that. And I actually make good use of the OU's library. The last time I was in Milton Keynes, I took five or six books along and I'm planning to go through those during the summer.

I tend to be a bit erratic in my reading. So I read more than one book at a time. I keep them on my bedside table. I start on book, read through a few pages, then I start another one. But I like that. I like - and the fact that I do that in my time off, in my leave time gives me the freedom to do it like that based on the spur of the moment.

But it does keep me going. It keeps my, as I say, make my brain working without any stress, without any need to necessarily achieve something. But it's a journey of discovery, and I do like that.

And then I also try to think about next - I like reading but I also make the most of what being an academic with the OU offers in terms of opportunity of learning new things. So I take that time as a time when I can think about what to study next. So I explore different areas, different subject areas, and I enjoy that. I enjoy that a lot.

ROB MOORE: And I think Heidi has got a question for you, Alessandro.

HEIDI MCCAFFERTY: Yeah, so we touched on earlier a little bit about how people very often use - and I was saying in my example I use this as well. That OpenLearn is a great way of finding out what you want to do, whether it's undergraduate or postgraduate. And Deborah said that she's doing the same at the moment, so for her postgraduate study. She's thinking of doing a master's in law and is about to embark on some OpenLearn courses first to make sure that it's something that should be interested and aware of what's involved.

Now, that's a big thing, master's in law. I have looked into that one. It looks absolutely amazing, but quite daunting. So I thought Alessandro would be the best person to come in on this and give some advice on perhaps what OpenLearn courses you'd recommend for Deborah?

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: Ooh. As a matter of fact, the qualification, the degree in law was redesigned a couple of years ago and new modules are coming on stream over the next 12 months. So some exciting, especially a level 3, so the final year of the undergraduate qualification they are coming on stream. And I would say, look - watch that space. Look for what is going to be published to students and look for the OpenLearn courses that will be produced to showcase what the actual modules are.

Whenever we produce and launch a new module as part of the formal curriculum, we produce also an OpenLearn course that provides an introduction to the course, showcases some units of the actual module. And by looking at that, you can develop a feel for what the new module is. So I would certainly look at those. Especially if you're planning to go for the master's degree, look at the new level 3 courses, which are going to come mainstream in '23-24, and see whether that can give you some ideas about what you might achieve.

If you go to the OU Connect website, I mentioned earlier on a programme that we co-produced not so long ago which is about the parole board. Have a look at the approach which is taken, the particular perspective which has been taken in the programme, because it gives an idea of what approach to

studying law and what type of areas you may come across when you do actually the degree. So try to collect as much information, as much ideas, and then have a look at all the new production, all the new curriculum which is going to be launched. Does that help?

ROB MOORE: That's really good advice. And it's nice to know that each new module will have something on OpenLearn. Maybe not immediately, but there will be something on OpenLearn so that you can have a taster. That you can see whether you like the subject and the sort of depth that it goes into. I think that's really good advice.

Ben, if I'm right, and I'm testing my memory here, I'm sure there's a module on beginning postgraduate study on OpenLearn. I can't remember the title of it off the top of my head. I'm not - you as the encyclopaedia can remember it.

BEN WOOD: And even the encyclopaedia here is just clicking through to the page to check he gets the title right. Yeah, so we've got an OU student induction section on the site, and under our main headings, there is the study link. And within there, there's one specifically for OU students induction. And the Being an OU Student course we mentioned earlier is part of that.

And yes, there's a couple of courses on there. So there is Succeeding in Postgraduate Study, which is one of our badged courses, as we mentioned earlier. So 24 hours of learning in there. And another one on taking your first steps into higher education as well. So people who are completely new to study, that's included in there as well. So yeah, there's definitely courses to help you on your way in, whether it's your very first time studying or say postgraduate or undergraduate, there's resources there to help you.

ROB MOORE: Fantastic. And I know I recommend courses a lot. What I wanted to talk about for the last few minutes, really, is we are just into summer. The barbecues have all been lit, the deckchairs are out, but - I don't want to wish the life away, but autumn will be appearing before too long. And what sort of things can students be doing to help prepare them for the new module start in October? Because a lot of our modules start in October/November. So what could they be doing, not immediately, but later in the summer?

I mean, one of the things, of course, is that they can come along to Student Hub Live. We have a session on the 19th of July, where we are looking at how to help students make that transition from level 1 to level 2, or from level 2 to level 3. And we're going to be talking to some tutors about what are the different expectations.

Because they are - we cover different things at different levels. So we just wanted to have a chat with some tutors about if a student's just completed their level 2 study, what's going to be different? What's going to be - how do they have to adapt for the next year? So that's what I would recommend. Not just because me and Heidi will be there, but obviously, that's a bonus.

But Ben, anything else that in terms of helping prepare with study skills? So I know there's a study skills section. Do you know which is the most popular one on study skills?

BEN WOOD: Ooh, that's - off the top of my head, as a study skills course or content, no, not 100% certain. As I say, Being an OU Student towers above everything else, that's for sure. I mean, what I'd probably say, actually, is we found useful in message that we've put out before is to say to people, yeah, during the downtime, maybe don't necessarily come looking for something. But if you say take a bit of time and think about what it was you wanted to refresh. Was there any areas that you struggled with or any particular sort of study skills that you found particularly hard before?

Make some notes. Take that offline time, put some notes down, and then come and see what we've got to offer. And I think the things that people have typically turned to - things like time management, we've got resources and there's articles on there that discuss how to plan a bit better, how to manage your time. There's exam prep. We've got courses on things like note taking as well. So simple skills. It's not necessarily the big things, but those things that you think, actually, I'd like to be a bit better at that next year.

Confidence in forums as well. We've got a course again sounds quite niche, but building confidence in using online forums, that's a great one for OU students. And again, just helping people get a bit more confident with the technology or a bit more confident about how and where to share comments and thoughts, things like that.

So that's what I'd say. We've got that section has got an awful lot in there. Yeah, just take some time, think about what it is that you not necessarily struggled with, but is there something you would like to be better at? And then, yeah, come and have a look into in that study school section. You'll be surprised at how far reaching it is.

Even if it may only be a couple of those little animations. Yeah, the study skills tips around time management. It's boiled down into a 60-second really easy to absorb little nugget of information. So it might be as simple as that. You might say time management is what I want to do, and what better way to better manage your time than to spend 60 seconds learning how to better manage your time, yeah?

So yeah, that's what I would say to do. Take some time off, think about it. And then come and find what you want.

ROB MOORE: I often refer students to the essay writing, the report writing, how to create an argument. So the postgraduate study, I think, is an excellent resource and I recommend it to all my level 3 students as well. And of course, we have the Help Centre with and the library with special sessions on doing research and referencing. So perhaps not the first thing you think about as you come into the summer, but definitely to help you get back on track. So Heidi, any last questions or points from the chat?

HEIDI MCCAFFERTY: I just wanted to pick up on a point that Alex made. So you asked earlier about what people take with them on a long flight to keep them entertained, and I really liked Alex's response. So it depends on the flight. If it's young kids screaming, then maybe a sedative. If it's the ideal flight, then a notepad, pens, and a selection of photos on the phone or in hard copy form, and maybe try and write something creative. I thought that was some great advice there for people if they are going on long flights this summer.

But yeah, so Alessandro was talking earlier then about the new masters programme that's being developed around law. And one of the questions, how long do the OpenLearn courses take to produce in comparison to very large suites of programmes like the masters?

ROB MOORE: That's a good question. I've got a bit of an answer. But Ben, did you want to try first? Length of time?

BEN WOOD: Yeah, sure. Alessandro may know a bit more than me being more directly involved in them. I believe the process is when a module is introduced, it is, as you mentioned, it's built in that an OpenLearn course has to be developed from it. We have a really nice graphic that says a tasty slice of everything we make is available for free. And so you will always find the module on there.

So I think, typically, I think around about six months or so is probably fairly standard for a course to come from that initial meeting with the academics, with the media fellows, and yeah, for the academics to go

away to pull which bits of the module. It might be I think a certain area or a little bit of everything across the module, whichever way they want to attack it. And then, yeah, to get that written up and bring it to our team, our team of editors, who then convert it into the courses that you see online, work with our creative teams to make it look nice and insert all the extra images and the quizzes and the videos and the content that makes it really sort of pop out and come to life.

Yeah, I mean, typically, I would say probably around about six months. Some rattle through really quickly. Some I know have been in production a lot longer than that. But yeah, probably, on average, six months from idea to arrival on OpenLearn, I would say. I don't know if that matches your experience, Alessandro?

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: Well, I have to say I couldn't hear all that was said and I couldn't really understand all of Heidi's question. But -

ROB MOORE: Oh, I think we've lost Alessandro.

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: Of a proper -

BEN WOOD: That explains it.

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: Hello? Can you hear me? Can you -

ROB MOORE: Yeah, don't worry, Alessandro. We'll -

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: - a lot. So I haven't been able -

ROB MOORE: OK.

ALESSANDRO SAROLI: Can you hear me?

ROB MOORE: I think we've lost Alessandro at the moment. OK, so we've come to the end of the session anyway. So unfortunately, we're not going to get the answer there. So I'd just like to say thank you to everyone today. So thank you to Ben, Alessandro, and Patrina. And as always, Heidi, it's been wonderful working with you today.

Just a couple of points to bring up. We've got some sessions coming up over the next month or so. On the 27th of June, we have our FASS event, our speed dating event where you'll get to find out about all the new arts and social sciences modules that are being available. Followed in the evening by our end of the year party hosted by Isabella. And I'll be there in the background cheering you on.

We've got a session looking at how modules are created with the faculty of Business and Law. And on the 4th of July, we're looking at a session that focuses on studying with limited access. So this is if for some reason you can't access the internet for an extended period of time, what options have you got? And we're going to use the example of how we work with our prison students to show how our modules are adapted so that even if you can't get full access, you can still carry on studying.

And then we've got a range of study sessions in Adobe Connect for you to look at as well. And 29th of July is the moving up - sorry, 19th of July is moving up to the next level. So all looking fantastic there.

Can I just encourage you all to fill out the feedback form? So the feedback form is there. There's a link on the website, and I'm sure somebody will pop it in the chat box now as well.

The feedback is really important because we need to know what you want to hear about, what you enjoy, which elements you want more of, which elements you want less of. So tell us and we'll be able to adapt these sessions for you. And it really does help us when we go asking for studio time and time to get together, your feedback is what makes all the difference. And I've just been told the feedback form is in the chat box.

So thanks again to everyone. You've been fantastic. And thanks to everybody who's contributed in the chat box. It's been great spending the morning with you, and I look forward to seeing you all at the next session. Thank you and good bye.