

# What are SHL workshops?



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

# Online workshop basics



- Polls are anonymous to other participants but the chat box will have your logged in name associated with your comments during the live session.
- All online sessions are recorded and available to view on catch up on a public facing website.
- Slides are available to download during the session and from <https://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/content/am-i-too-old-age-just-number-17-sep-2024>

# Today's workshop



- This is going to be a structured workshop to discuss studying whatever your age based around quotes from interested OU people
- We'll look at what is involved in studying and consider where age plays a factor (if it does)
- There is a lot of interaction so please be ready to answer polls (questions) or add to chat pod during the session
- The session has been designed to allow time to discuss with others in a small group although this is dependent on numbers as there is a maximum for the process to work

## Please be aware



- These sessions are large scale
- They are very busy
- There is lots of interaction
- They are not the same as other tutorials
- You can maximise slides on your own screen by clicking the icon



# Inclusivity



- We welcome all students at our workshops.
- Please do be aware that they can be very busy and some students may struggle with the non scripted nature.
- Slides are available to download within the live session and from the event page at <https://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/content/am-i-too-old-age-just-number-17-sep-2024> to follow along or prepare for what will come up.

# Please



- Do NOT share any personal information in the chat pod during the session.
- On the recording names will be anonymised to user number.
- However, if you type anyone's full name or any other personal information in the chat pod it can be seen by everybody and it would also show up on the recording so we would not be able to make the recording available after the session.

# What do you want to learn?

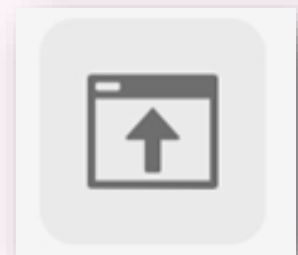


Using the short answer poll provided please say what you are hoping to learn from today's session

(If you are on a mobile app remember you need to tap into the polling option)



To come back to these slides after completing a poll click on the share pod slides icon



**Am I too old for this: age is  
just a number?**



## Quote to begin



“Learning new things can open doors to new worlds where you can do more than you ever thought possible ...whatever your age!”

**What age do you feel?**

# First thoughts word cloud



Many of us feel an age which may not be the age we actually are. **What age do you feel like?** We will be building a word cloud to see what ages are the most common.

You need to give the number as a digit e.g. 21 or 35 - if you press the space or enter button your entry will be sent through and may not be what you intended! Look for the box that says enter word here to add your number.

# Feeling older than your age?



- Like a child – always wanting to be older?
- Life stresses bearing upon you?
- Feeling mature (in a good way)
- Identifying with people of a different age.

# Feeling younger than your age?



- Preferring a different (past) point in our lives.
- 'Forgetting' we have aged
- Not wanting to age.
- Identifying with people of a different age.

## Quote 1



“keeping your brain active at all ages is important, and we probably have to make more of an effort to do that as we get older – we have to seek out new challenges, because a lot of what we do is likely to be familiar and routine.”

# Familiarity poll



- Do you see familiarity and routine as a good or bad thing?
- In the poll pod provided please say your ideas about this and whether you feel familiarity is useful for study, or not.

## Quote 2



“You’re definitely not too old for this! We are privileged to support a wide variety of students of all different ages. As long as you have the commitment and dedication, we can provide the support and education to enable you to succeed.”



# Why are you studying?



Please select from the options for the main reason(s) you are studying with the OU at the moment:

- New career / job
- Support existing career / job
- Self fulfilment
- To help family (e.g. homework)
- Another reason (can say in chat)
- No specific reason

# Why would this be relevant?



- Knowing why you are studying and having a goal transcends age – it is about the individual and whether they can / will achieve what they want to
- It also helps to find ways to overcome barriers to achieving your goals

# Data

About OU students

# OU data 1



- 181 480 students studying with the OU in 2021-2022
- (the next closest was University College London with 46 830)
- 67% of new OU undergraduates are over 25
- (33% of new OU undergraduates are under 25)

# Data collection poll



Please select from the (anonymous) poll which age range you fit in to so we get an idea of the age range present:

- <25
- 26-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

# **Study preferences and building connections**

## Quote 3



'You are never too old to do something that you enjoy, that you're passionate about, that you've always wanted to do. Your happiness and fulfilment are worth investing in regardless of your age. You only live once!'

# Work with your passions



- Study is meant to be enjoyable, although there are times when it may not feel that way.
- The previous quote mentioned finding something you are passionate about.
- For many people study is their passion.
- This may be the subject, the opportunities, the engagement or something different.



# Does age impact preferences?



- When we ran this workshop last year one thing that came up was about where people study and who they study with.
- It may be that you prefer to study with others face to face.
- Alternatively it may be that you like studying with others but through a body doubling or other online mechanism.
- Others may want to be completely alone when studying and not want to discuss at all.

# Preferences poll



- Based on the points in the last slide about face to face, online or alone - in your ideal study world where and who would you study with? Please add your ideas to the short answer poll available.

# Meeting with others



- The open university students association organises social opportunities across the university – please look up information at <https://www.oustudents.com/>
- You can also ask in tutor group or module forums, or in study sites whether others may wish to meet up physically or online.
- Please note that the OU is a distance university so the university itself is not the main organiser for people to meet up.

# Making digital personal



- Some people, young or older, may feel that online learning is bereft of social opportunities.
- They are available if you respond to the invites and opportunities.
- We (studenthublive) are about academic community.
- Modules have forums where you can engage with others.
- Internships exist in some schools and faculties – see opportunityhub

# Connections poll



- Have you found any other ways of making connections with other students within your module or outside this? Please do share in the poll provided so we can all be aware of what there could be.

# Back to age

# Being influenced by others



- Another thing that came up previously was the idea that some generations could be highly influenced by the voices of others.
- Some suggested this was due to the impact of social media whilst others felt it was newspapers or television.
- Some of our feelings about whether we are too old to study may be based on what we think others think of us or what our chosen media says.

# Where do you get your news?



- Please use the poll pod provided to indicate where you get most of your news from. If you feel able to add your age as well we can maybe see if there are any patterns



# Whose choice?



- Will you let others dictate whether you feel you can study at your age?
- Maybe something to think about....

# It's never too late!



- We hear this sometimes from students who are studying later in life than others (whether this is real or perceived!)
- How can studying later in life than may be traditional be viewed as a positive?

## Quote 4



“As we move through life we gather a library of experiences and knowledge – use this as a benefit to study, rather than seeing our age as a barrier.”

# Considering the library



How full do you consider your 'library of experiences' is at the moment?

Please select from the options provided

- Bursting
- Full
- Reasonably full
- There are some gaps
- There are loads of gaps
- I'm still on one book not a library

# Organising the library



- Consider what is in your library of experience and regardless of whether it is bursting or has gaps consider what experiences will be useful for study
- Then think about making use of them
- An unread book might look good but you are never going to be able to use what's in it

## Quote 5



“the expertise and experience (especially in time management) of older students more than compensated for any rusty skills or hesitancy in the online world.”

# I haven't got the experience



- We hear from some students that they don't feel as if they are old enough or have enough experience to be able to do justice to their studies.
- See this as a positive – there is so much scope to learn and mould your journey, without preconceived ideas!

# Small group activity



- Discuss as a group what is the main benefit that your age brings you for study.
- There will be people of different ages so consider what kinds of themes there might be
- Please bring back a few points that you can share with the rest of the group.



# Useful points for breakouts



- We suggest you use the first couple of minutes to introduce yourselves and get used to the room. Choose a volunteer to keep the discussion on track and feed back to the main room
- If you want to speak you will need to activate your microphone **once in the room and you see the option available**



- Breakout groups work best if people engage and contribute and discuss
- There will be ~10 minutes for the breakouts overall – we'll send regular reminders to let you know how long you have got left

# Breakout activity



- Discuss as a group what is the main benefit that your age brings you for study.
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**This session is  
currently in  
breakouts (small  
groups).**

**The recording will be available after  
the session has finished at  
[https://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/  
content/am-i-too-old-age-just-  
number-17-sep-2024](https://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/content/am-i-too-old-age-just-number-17-sep-2024)**

# Alternative activity



- There will be 2 specific questions in chat pods for you to explore some of the elements we have discussed further.
- How have you helped ensure age is not a barrier in your study?
- What are you going to work on to help prevent age being a barrier in your study?
- You are welcome to add your thoughts and we will then pick up some of the themes and talk through them.
- Chat does have names on but the recording will be anonymised so you will appear as 'user number'

# Take home message



- We are an open university open to all
- We have students of a wide range of ages and everyone has something to offer
- Regardless of your age you have something to offer and you have skills from your life overall
- Working out how to apply these is how you can avoid age being a barrier

# Feedback



Please complete the feedback form that is available at

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

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

(Please remember that as studenthublive is non modular we cannot provide academic module / subject sessions- sorry!)

# Selected Upcoming events



## • 24-27 Sep Freshers week events

- 1 Oct 11am Tuition: making the most of your tutor and tutorials
- 8 Oct 11am **Student hub live: 10 years helping you thrive**

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