

# Session advert



- Part of being a student, is knowing how to take notes that work for you. If you are new to study and want some tips on how to be effective when taking notes, or you have been studying a while and just can't seem to find a method that works – do come and join us. We will discuss different methods and share ways that work for different people.

# What are SHL workshops?



- Studenthublive (SHL) is non modular and focuses on study skills relevant to higher education
- This means all sessions are skills based and are not subject based
- 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.
- Sessions include interactivity in chat and polls – you choose the extent to which you want to engage
- 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/effective-note-taking-15-aug-2024>

# Today's workshop



- This is a structured workshop to help you think about notetaking and consider the best way for you to do this
- We use illustrations and examples to get you to consider options and what you could explore
- There is a lot of interaction so please be ready to answer polls (questions) or add to chat pod during the session
- We can not give module or subject specific advice

## 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 (this will hide the chat)



# 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 <https://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/content/effective-note-taking-15-aug-2024> to follow along or prepare for what will come up.

# Please

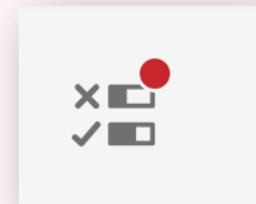


- Do NOT share any personal information in the chat pod during the session
- On the recording names will be anonymised to user number
- However if you type anyone's full name or any other personal information in the chat pod it can be seen by everybody and it would also show up on the recording

## 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 device 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





# Effective note taking

## Existing resources



- Student home help – how to take notes

<https://help.open.ac.uk/how-to-take-notes>

- Student home help – critically reading information

<https://help.open.ac.uk/critically-processing-what-you-read>

- Student home help–making notes online

<https://help.open.ac.uk/making-notes-online>

# First thoughts word cloud



- Using the option to type in where it says enter word here say **What is the first thing you think of when someone says note-taking?**
- Note that suggestions need to be a single word rather than a phrase / multiple words, if you press the space or enter button your word will go through (so it won't make sense if that one word is not the whole answer).
- A word cloud is built up with common answers being larger so we can see if there are patterns

Enter word here

# What are notes?



- Notes are traditionally short pieces of information which encapsulate the key themes, facts and ideas of a longer piece of writing or other medium
- They are for a purpose which may be different depending on the context – sometimes to remember something, sometimes to help do something (more on this later)

# What notes are not...



- Copied out information
- Long chunks of closely paraphrased information
- (Usually) fully written out sentences
- Static
- The same for everyone

# Cautionary tale



- Students who copy chunks of module text out as their notes have in the past fallen foul of good academic conduct regulations
- If you use 'your notes' to write a TMA answer but 'your notes' are actually copied out module text you are actually indirectly copying module text

# New to making notes for study?



- Would you consider yourself new to making notes for study (whatever that means to you)
  - Yes
  - No
- Please indicate with the poll pod available

# Why do you take notes



Sometimes we think we “should” take notes, but let’s consider why they are useful:

- A way to capture in brief form the important information so it can be reviewed later
- A way to process information and aid understanding
- A way to collect “things” in one place that may not be presented together (definitions or methods for example)
- A way to deconstruct or critically evaluate something



# What about you? Poll



- It could be one of those reasons but please use the short answer poll pod available to say why you take notes.
- We can then look to see if there are any themes.
- Don't worry if you aren't sure of an answer yet – you can have a look through what others suggest and it may give some ideas.

# Knowing what is important



- When you take notes, how do you recognise what is most important?
- Please use the short answer poll to give your ideas.
- Remember that this is about learning so don't worry if you don't know as yet, as we will pick out some suggestions and then go on to describe others

# Use clues for importance



- Remember the context of your notes e.g.
  - Preparing for a TMA
  - Helping you to remember something
  - Organising your thoughts
  - Questions for you to revisit
- All of these may require subtly different notes

# Don't worry!



- Note taking is a study skill and it does take development
- Please don't be frustrated or upset if it doesn't immediately work for you
- Try different methods and find one that works – just because it works for someone else doesn't mean it will for you (and vice versa)
- Identify what doesn't work and build on that

# Student suggestion



- A student at a past workshop said that they had different notebooks for purposes e.g.
  - TMA notes
  - General factual information
  - Themes that cross modules
  - Skills related information
- Could that be something that works for you?

# Great notes

- Are not a linear replication of the source
- Are written in your own words
- The source should be clear – is this someone's theory, an authors' interpretation, or your interpretation?
- Quotes can be useful but include a page number / reference
- Should show what is important
- Include relational information, links, similarities or differences



# Definitions



- When reading a piece of text there may well be bold words which in OU parlance means that they come up in the glossary. Many modules will have them hyperlinked to the glossary
- Why not write your own definition and start building your own glossary?

# Explanations



- As well as individual words that need defining, there may be the things that need explaining. This means making it clear how the concept or fact or theory relates overall,
- Your notes may want to include your own explanation of your understanding,
- Remember to include relevant terminology



# Paper...

- Traditionally notes are often done on paper



# Methods of making notes



- Written out text / lists
- Mind maps
- Spray / spider diagrams
- 'Brain dumps'
- Doodles
- Timelines
- System maps
- Flow diagrams
- Index cards
- Audio / video recordings

# Which have you tried? Poll



- Out of the suggestions which ones have you tried? Select as many as you have used in the past:
  - Written out text / lists
  - Mind maps
  - Spray / spider diagrams
  - 'Brain dumps'
  - Doodles
  - Timelines
  - System maps
  - Flow diagrams
  - Index cards
  - Audio / video recordings

## Other methods poll



- If you have any different methods of making notes that haven't been covered please share them in the poll available.

# Mind maps



- These can be a good way of identifying key themes and making links,
- They don't have space for lots of detail,
- Think of them as subheadings or themes
- <https://help.open.ac.uk/notetaking-techniques/mind-maps>

# Get creative



- Use colour, images, multimedia if that works for you
- Be careful that the creativity isn't the focus though – it is still about identifying the relevant information 😊

# Online notes – poll



- Assuming your module is entirely or largely online, how do you go about making notes?
- Please use the poll available to give some details about your methods and then we'll discuss some of those.

# Nothing wrong with a notebook!




- Even if your content is delivered online you can choose how you want to make your notes
- If doing them on paper works for you then keep it up
- However keep checking in on what is (not) working as you want to be maximally effective



# Use available module resources



## Activity 1.3 Thinking about your locus of control

 *This activity should take about 30 minutes*

One of the central ideas in the locus of control is the attribution of the source of the success or failure.

### Step 1:

Write down 3 things that you have wanted to do. If you want to, you could use your answers in activities you did in Block 1 about changes you wanted to make, or just think of other changes that come to mind.

# Check for note maker files



- Module > resources (if they exist)



## Topic note maker files

These are Word files that you may, if you wish, use to make electronic notes on each topic. Save these note maker templates on your computer and write your notes between the headings.

- These have a list of all of the subheadings in the topic and then allow you to make your own notes against those subheadings on your own computer

# Apps



- All students have access to Microsoft Office 365 for free  
<https://help.open.ac.uk/microsoft-365/accessing-your-ou-microsoft-365-account> and this includes OneNote
- Has anyone else got any apps they use that they can suggest to others? Please use the poll pod provided (or the chat pod) and we will see what we can help each other with

# Checking in with yourself



- Effective note taking was the title
- Do you check in with yourself to know whether you are being effective?
- What does effective mean to you?
- Do you know or do you hope?
- If you like to quantify success – marks / time / effort / reward
- If you like to qualify success – feelings

# Effectiveness poll



- What does effectiveness mean to you in the context?
- If you feel able please share what effective means to you in terms of making notes using the short answer poll pod available
- We will look for themes and ideas

# Additional questions



- Are there any outstanding practical or procedural questions that you might have about being an effective note taker?
- Please use the poll pod available or the chat pod and we will see whether we can suggest something, or maybe get ideas from each other

# Take home message



- Notes always have a purpose and a context
- Effective notes will be recognising both of these and extracting information that will help for the purpose
- Notes are never copied out information as that doesn't aid personal understanding
- Note taking is a skill and needs to be developed like any other skill

# Feedback



Please complete the feedback form that is available

at <https://forms.office.com/e/BNBVW3kgCh>

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 subject based sessions- sorry!)



# Selected upcoming events



- 22 Aug 7pm Get well prepared for your final assessment
- 3 Sep 7pm Managing your time better
- 5 Sep 11am Neurodiverse community – starting out effectively
- 10 Sep 11am Managing high intensity study
- 12 Sep 11am Resilience: planning for success
- 17 Sep 4pm Am I too old for this? Age is just a number?
- **24-27 Sep Freshers week events**

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