

# student hub live is the OU's live online interactive platform to support academic community



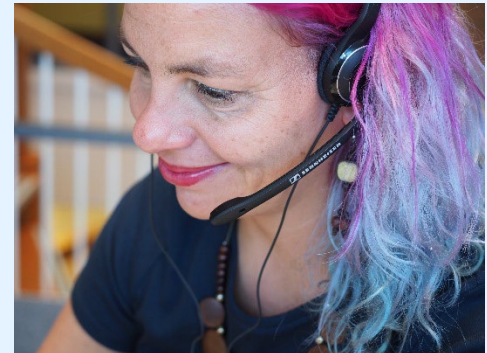
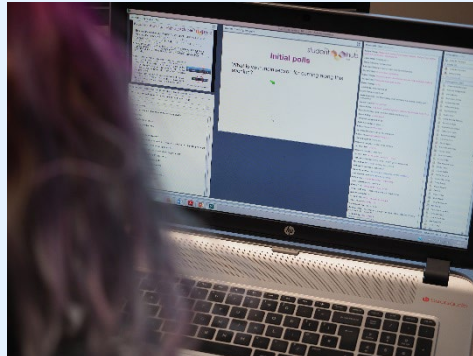
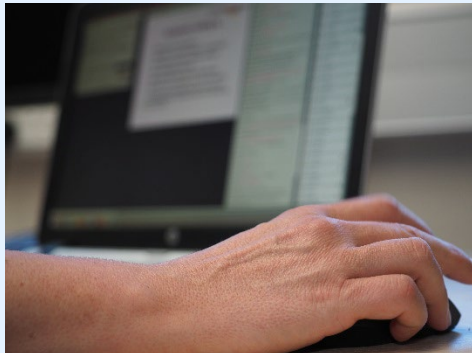
Margaret Greenhall is a study skills specialist. She tutors on science courses including SM123, S112 and Environmental science S206. She is also studying geology. Her hobbies are rowing, baking and Lego.



Nicky Mee is a lecturer in business and language. She is a keen quizzer and animal lover with a 'mini-zoo' at home. In her spare time Nicky enjoys swimming, cycling and studying and studying a Law degree at the OU.

## What are student hub live online sessions?

- All student hub live sessions are non modular and focus on skills relevant to study at university level
- 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 (*not accessible on mobile devices*) and from <http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/>.



# Workshop



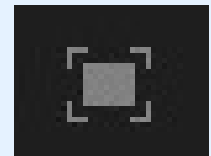
- This is going to be a structured workshop to help you start thinking about essay planning
- It is not subject related as we have people from all over the university on the session
- There is a lot of interaction so please be ready to answer polls (questions) or add to chat pod during the session

# Session purpose

- **Is for:**
- Covering general advice about essay planning
- Giving some ideas for how to plan
- Provide a space to share ideas and connect with other students
- **Is not for:**
- Telling you what you HAVE to do
- Providing any module 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
- Chat may be off topic – that's OK
- You can maximise slides on your own screen by clicking the icon



# 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

# Planning Short Written Answers



## This was our advert...

- It can often be the smaller chunks of work that make a huge difference to your marks. Many questions are short written answers of a paragraph or two but it takes a lot of skill to get your points across in a small number of words.
- This session looks at the stages you need to think about when planning and writing these answers. We'll look at the preparation stage which includes analysing the question. The writing is then in three stages – writing a draft, editing and checking.



# Short answer questions (SAQs)

- 50 – around 700 words
- Word limit can be advisory or mandatory
- Some courses allow 10% over
- Can be under but risk missing points
- Check what counts as a word
- Variable marks

# First thoughts poll

- How do you approach short answer questions?

# Referencing help



- The library runs excellent sessions on referencing and SHL always sends students to their resources (we are not able to run sessions directly about referencing ourselves)
- <http://www.open.ac.uk/library/training-and-events/the-why-and-how-of-referencing>
- Live sessions are advertised on <http://www.open.ac.uk/library/>

# RACE

- Reword question
- Answer the question
- Cite evidence
- Explain the evidence



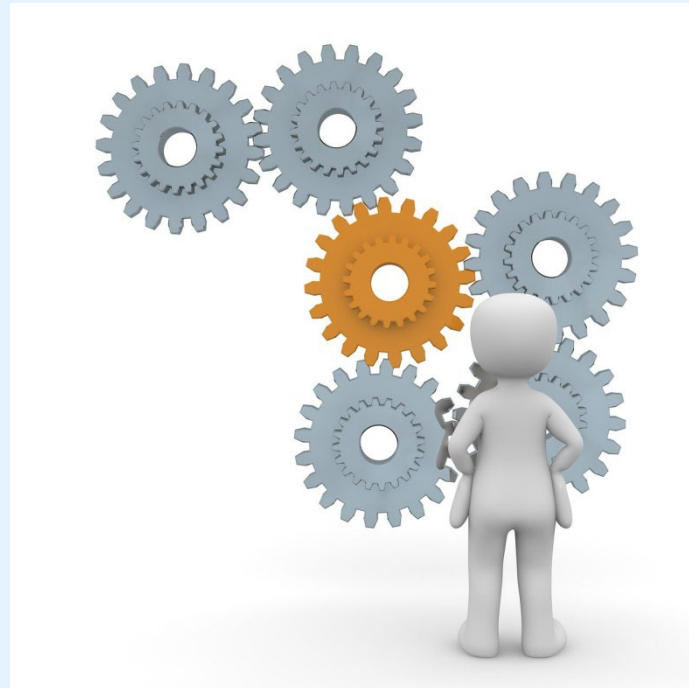
# ACES

- ~~Reword question~~
- Answer the question
- Cite evidence
- Explain the evidence
- Selective answer



# Why plan?

“If you don’t know where you are going, you’ll end up someplace else.” Yogi Berra



# Why plan?

- It helps structure your answer
- Gives you time to consider alternatives
- Helps check that you've answered everything
- Identify connections
- Makes writing clearer



# SAQ answer stages

- Preparation
- Writing
- Editing
- Checking





# Poll

- What do you think are the biggest reasons for losing marks on a short answer question?

# Reasons for losing marks



- Not answering it
- Not answering all parts
- Starting too far back
- Getting off topic
- Not enough depth
- Too long
- Lack of focus

# Preparation

- Analyse the question
- What is the task (process verbs)?
- What level of depth is expected?
- What is the topic?
- What is not the topic?
- Understand the criteria
- What is the marker looking for?

# Analyse the question

- What am I being asked to do?
- When does it need to be done by?
- What information do I need?
- Where is that information?
- What do I not need?



# Analyse the question - Parts of a question



- **Process words** – tell you what is expected for the flow of the information
- **Topic words** – tell you what your content must relate to
- **Criteria** – give the boundaries

# Drawing tools



- Process words
- Topic words
- Criteria

Add a dot under the words in the question

# Identifying the parts



- *Business*

What are GANTT diagrams, and why

are they useful in business planning?

(150 words)

Red process, blue topic, green criteria

- *Law*



Briefly describe what is meant by an \*\*\*\* legal system and an ???? legal system.

Also, still writing in the third person, state one reason why either the \*\*\*\* system or the ???? system is better.

(100 words)

Red process, blue topic, green criteria



# What resources would you need?



- *Psychology*

Using your own words, describe what is meant by each of the terms \*apple\* and \*orange\*, and provide an example of the use of each term in psychology, drawing on the material presented in *Investigating Intelligence*.

- **60 per cent** of the mark for this assignment
- **Word limit: 100 words for each description (200 words in total)**

Red process, blue topic, green criteria

- **How would you approach planning for this?**
- a. Outline the process of photosynthesis and illustrate your answer with an example from Block X, Part Y.
- Your answer should be in your own words using simple language suitable for a general readership.
- You should include an in-text citation and reference to the module materials.
- **(15 marks)**
- *(Question 3(a) has a word limit of 300 words. Include a word count at the end of your answer.)*

# Answering the question

- Read the question before you read the topic
- Read it out loud
- Identify the key words
- List the topics you must cover
- List any topics you could cover

# Poll



- How would you make notes on what to do for a short answer question?

# Writing



- Quick list of everything that could go in
- One point per sentence
- Write a rough draft
- Keep your eye on word count but OK to be over at this stage

# Poll



- How would you structure your answer?

# Structure



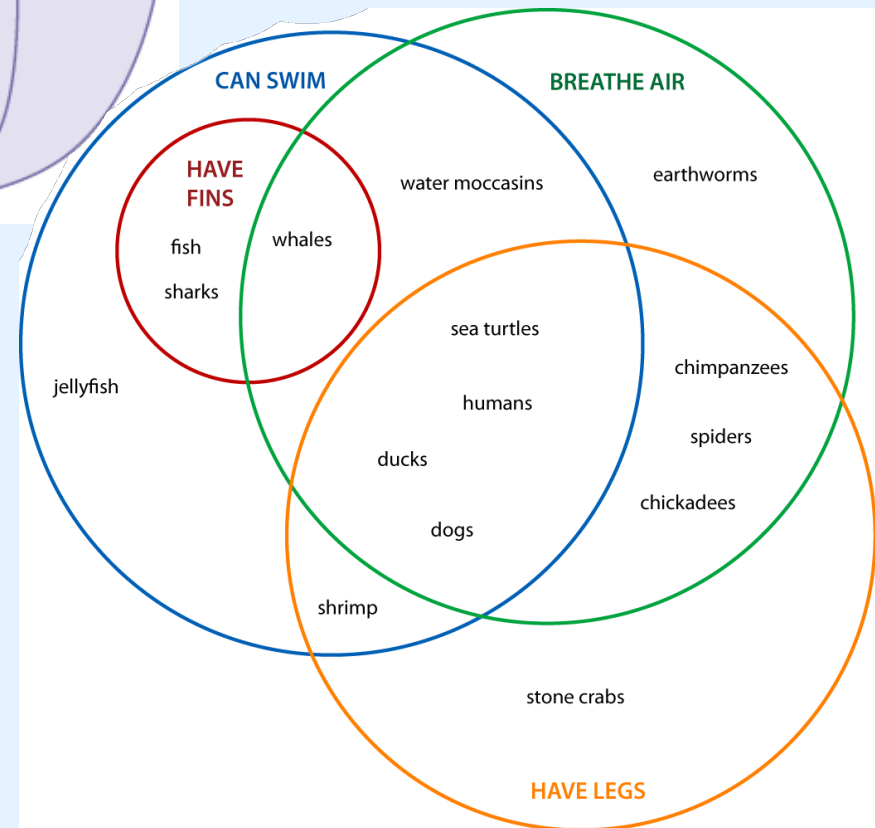
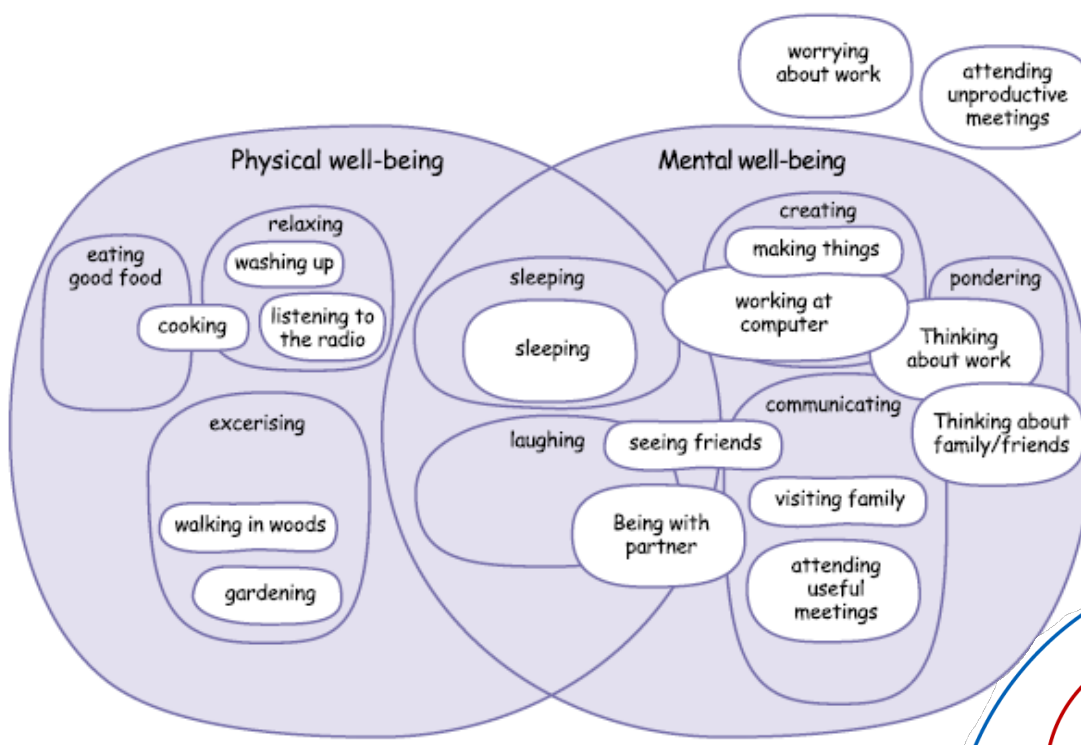
- Same order as the question asks
- Point, Evidence, Explanation
- Small paragraphs
- Medium length sentences (20-30 words)
- For longer pieces mini introduction and conclusions (1-2 sentences)
- Do not repeat the question

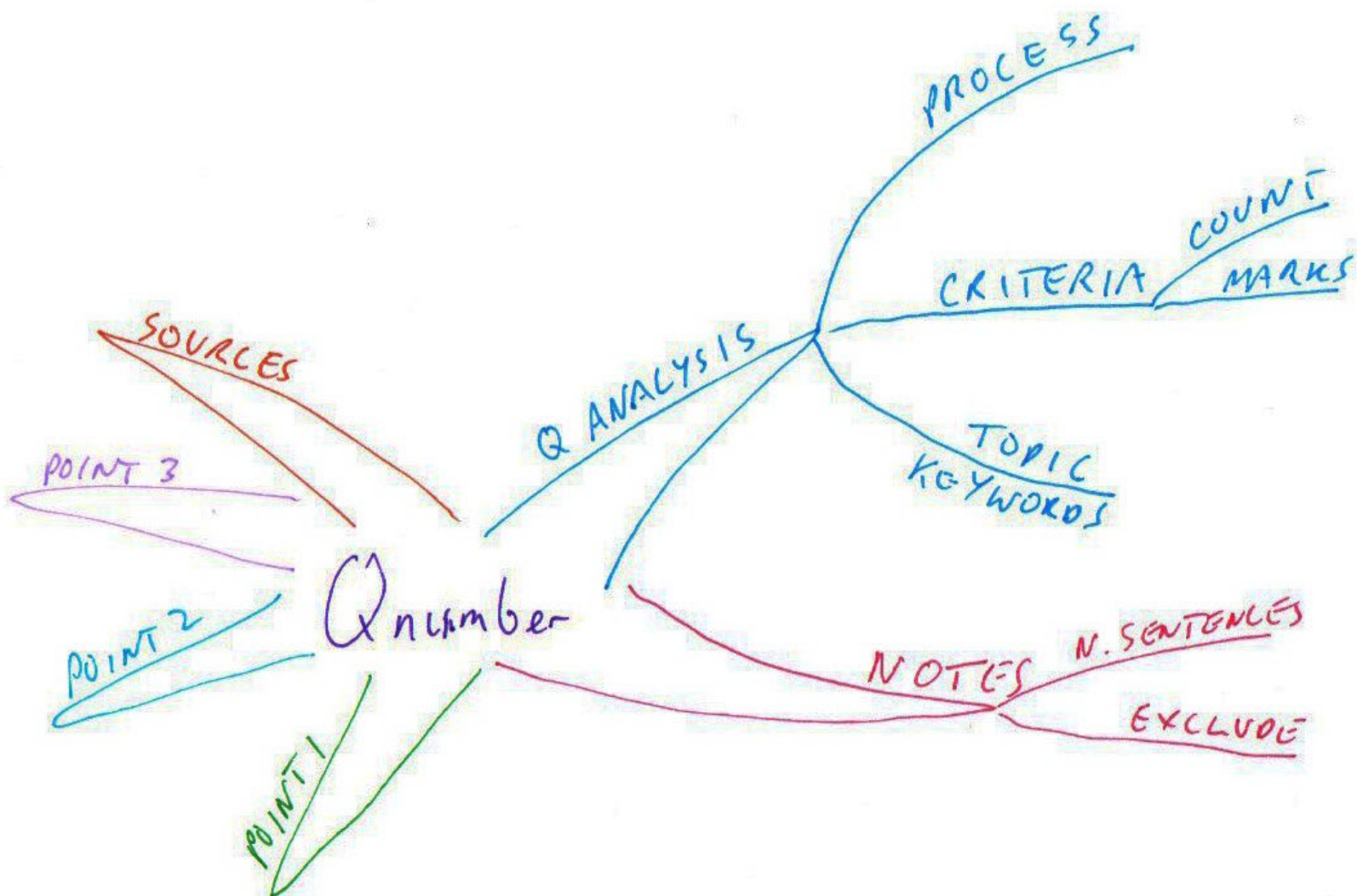
# Planning

Question number	
Process words	
Topic words	
Criteria:	
Number of words	
Marks	
Est number sentences	
Definitions	
Point 1	
References and links to content	
Notes	



# Bubble and Venn diagrams





COURSE  
D. OF DINOSAURS  
ABC

Q2  
DIFF FROM CRATER LOCATION  
SALT WATER UPSTREAM  
INSIDE 13-04 DELTA  
ROUND  
LOTS OF DATA RIVER BEND

COMMUNICATE  
SELECT  
PREPARE  
10 WORDS  
ENGAGING TITLE  
500 WORDS INC. CAPTION  
OWN WORDS  
NEWSWORTHY  
60 MARKS  
FIGURE  
NOT WHOLE TOPIC  
GEO. TIME  
NOAH  
DINOSAURS  
GLOBAL WARMING  
~20  
HAS TO BE ONE OF TOPICS  
AS IF JUST PUBLISHED  
DATE OF RESEARCH

# Planning styles poll



- What types of plans have you used?
  - Simple list
  - Series of relevant page numbers / topics
  - Mind map
  - Spider diagram
  - Flow chart
  - Post it on a whiteboard
  - Venn diagram
- Other – put in chat

# Poll



- Which type of plan are you going to try out and why?

# Poll



- What's important when you edit?

# Editing

- Reread the question
- Green/amber/red the content
- Keep a copy of the original
- Delete any unnecessary parts
- Have you missed anything?
- Is there enough depth?
- Do you have enough evidence?
- What mark would you give it?

# Checking

- Spell/grammar check
- Are the sentences the right length
- Does it make sense?
- Does it tell the story?
- Are any numbers right?
- What mark would you give it now?
- Have you answered ALL parts?



# Your thoughts



- There will be 2 specific questions in chat pods for you to explore some of the elements we have discussed further.
- *I AM SUCCESSFUL WHEN WRITING WHEN I....*
- *THINGS I'M GOING TO EXPLORE WHEN ANSWERING QUESTIONS.....*
- 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



- Take time to plan
- Read and analyse the question before reading the course material
- Separate out your points
- Always edit and check
- Revisit the question

# Feedback please



- Please use the following link to provide feedback to help the studenthublive team to continue to improve what we do

<https://forms.office.com/e/c15E5Wa21d>

# Selected upcoming events



- 07 Nov 11am Mastering essay writing
- 12 Nov 11 am Cyber security – safety online
- 14 Nov 7 pm Creative problem solving
- 21 Nov 4 pm Studying with disability
- 26 Nov 11 am Wellbeing for carers
- 28 Nov 7 pm Memory and Learning
- 03 Dec 7pm Power Reading (90 mins)
- 05 Dec 11 am Learning from feedback
- 10 Dec 11 am Keeping motivation
- 18 Dec 6.30 pm Christmas Party (90 mins)

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