

KAREN: The Arts Hub was an online interactive event. And you're about and watch a session from that. But I wanted to explain to you how it all worked. You're about to see the video stream of the studio. But our audience participated online through chat and through interactive widgets. And those ideas were fed through into the studio from the social media desk. Of course, because you're watching it on catch up, you won't be able to do those activities. But I do hope that you enjoy the discussion that follows.

Hi, and welcome back to the Arts Hub. Well, it's been a fabulous morning so far. We've been doing lots of things. Our next session is with the library. But we've had a tweet from Regent's Libraries as well. We're having a caption competition with a chance to win one of a lot of 10 pound Amazon vouchers. So I'll just get Gerard to focus in on the picture that we're looking at. And they say, when you forget to return season five of *Queer as Folk* and are faced with your library fine. So thank you very much.

Perhaps the OU library can help them with that. Welcome, Helen and Nicola Well, what happens in situations like library fines?

HELEN: The great thing about an online library, Karen, is there are no fines.

KAREN: Oh, whew.

[LAUGHTER]

Oh, dear. Excellent. No. Thank you very much. So we're going to be talking about managing your digital presence to support your studies, a really important idea, especially in this context between modules. So I wanted to start by asking you both, why is it important to keep up to date with things between modules? Shouldn't we all go off and get a really good sun tan and maybe tidy our desks?

NICOLA: Well, that does sound great. And you definitely want to have some time to do that. But well, I'm guessing that most of the audience have chosen to study the arts, because they're really interested in the topic. So they kind of want to keep up to date anyway.

But if you need some other reasons, it can really help you with module choice. Because if you're keeping up to date, then you know which aspects of Arts and Humanities you're really interested in. So when you come to choose, you've got kind of a better idea. And it can really

help as well when it comes to TMA time, and you suddenly realise that you read something a few weeks ago that actually is really useful. So it cuts down on your kind of research time. It's really helpful for that.

And the brilliant thing about it is it doesn't take very long. And it can be done really simply by just going online and managing your digital space quite effectively. So you can do things like follow blogs or Twitter and Facebook to get alerts about events at museums and galleries and to find out about new research. So what we'd like to do is show you some of our favourites.

KAREN: OK, lovely.

NICOLA: But we'd also really love to know what our audience thinks, like who do they follow online?

KAREN: So tell us who you follow online.

HELEN: So we, in order to get people started, we highlighted the following. So we've got, for creative writing students, we've got the BBC Writer's Room Twitter account, because they tweet top tips on scriptwriting. They'll also link to their website, which has fantastic resources like screenplays. And they'll also tweet information about how to become a writer, that sort of thing. And so that's for creative writing students.

Also, for history students, we wanted to highlight a populist history Magazine called *History Today*, which actually, if you don't have a subscription to that, you can get it via the library. You just go to the library website and go to the library search page on the home-- go to the home page and go to library search. And then you can access our subscription. But as well as advertising their upcoming issues, what they will also do is they'll retweet lots of really interesting history research and history content. So that's a good one to follow.

I'm just reminding myself. The V&A.

KAREN: Oh, yes.

HELEN: So I love-- I mean, London's Victoria and Albert Museum is one of the greatest museums of art and design in the world. And their Twitter account is fabulous. The pictures that they tweet of their collections are just wonderful. So that's a really good one to follow. And of course, they will tweet about their exhibitions and their collections. And in fact, most museums and galleries will be on Twitter and Facebook. So, you know--

KAREN: I follow a lot on Facebook. And it's really nice, just bite-sized chunks of things coming through, breaking up the flow of other stuff. It's really refreshing.

HELEN: Yeah. Yeah. Exactly. So that's a good one to follow. I've highlighted as well BBC Radio Three. I think the BBC does Twitter really well. And it's worth following your favourite radio programme, I think. Because *In Tune* on Radio Three and also Melvyn Bragg's programme, *In Our Time*, on Radio Four. They have great Twitter accounts. So they'll not only publicise their upcoming programmes, they'll also retweet lots of really interesting content around the subject of the programme.

They also have podcasts I love podcasts. They're great for when you're doing the housework, when you're working out, or just on your commute. It's a great way to passively absorb information on a topic and just sort of let it wash over you. And some does go in, you know. You find that you do remember it. And also, a podcast recommendation I have is *Philosophy Bites*.

KAREN: Right. Yes, yes.

HELEN: Nigel Warburton, who used to work at the Open University, he produces this podcast. You just go to Google and just search for *Philosophy Bites*. You'll find his website with the downloads of the podcast episodes. So how many other departments do I have to cover? OK.

So, I would also say follow the arts faculty blog called OU Arts Matters. Add it to your feed reader. And you'll be notified when they put up a new blog article. And that's a good one.

And then finally, I really like a bit of humour in my Twitter timeline, on my news feed on Facebook. And a great one is Shakespeare Song on Twitter. And what they do is they take modern song lyrics, and they convert them into Shakespearean language.

KAREN: Oh, nice!

HELEN: So a previous tweet that absolutely cracked me up was, halt! The time of hammer is upon thee.

[LAUGHTER]

So those are just some really good starting points. So I don't know if you have any favourites, Karen? Or I mean, HJ and Rachel might have some favourites?

KAREN: Yeah. I like the galleries, actually. Because I like seeing-- I really like visual art. So I see those. And podcasts, *Thinking Allowed* I always think is absolutely brilliant. But it just strikes me that whilst I do a few things-- like often, Facebook I'll like things. You've been mentioning Twitter a lot. And I wanted to sort of talk a little bit about this. Because there are various ways people do things. And academically, Twitter, you know, is a lot more used, I guess, than Facebook.

But I know for a lot of my students in particular, they really, really like Facebook. And they use it. And I actually find Facebook more accessible to manage my own digital presence. What would your thoughts be on those platforms? And is there a difference? Because a lot of these accounts would have both of them, I imagine, with similar things.

NICOLA: Yeah. Yeah. Well, that actually brings you on nicely to kind of some top tips, actually, on things that you can do to kind of help with making sure that you stick with what you're comfortable with and not get overloaded. And one of them is to go with what you know. So if you are already a Twitter user, then it makes sense just to follow a few of those accounts. And they'll pop up next time you're on Twitter.

But if you prefer Facebook, then you can have a look for some arts-related accounts on there. There are quite a lot of groups that you can join and pages as well that kind of display stuff. And there's also a lot of OU groups on Twitter-- sorry, on Facebook-- which are fantastic. Because you can find, quite often, a group for each module.

So if you're looking to do your next module and you don't know which one to choose, you can have a look, see if there's a group. And in that way, you can find out a bit more about it from the people who really know. Because they've just done it. And yeah, so definitely go with what you know, I think.

There are a few other things you can do. Like if you happen to use a feed reader, you can add some accounts to there, or following in module forums as well. That's a brilliant way to keep up with what's going on. Because a fellow student might post something they found. And then you don't even need to go out and look yourself. It's there.

KAREN: So you mean by subscribing to the feed?

NICOLA: Yes.

KAREN: So it's all coming through to you, instead of having to go to each source all the time to keep in touch.

NICOLA: Yes. It just comes straight to your email now.

KAREN: Lovely. HJ and Rachel, I know people have sent in some of their favourites. What were some recommendations?

RACHEL: Well, obviously, most importantly the OU library.

[LAUGHTER]

KAREN: Oh, is Sam watching?

RACHEL: There's some links going around and some hashtags and things for the OU library. And so that's going around the chat room. I've also got a-- Petra said a digital art magazine. That's something that she's interested in. Sylvia was discussing more that she likes to save all of the information in the articles that she finds for her TMAs and to save all the information as well as she's going, all the relevant information. So that was quite useful. What have you got?

HJ: Just looking at what people are sharing. But I think, like, all the OU faculties and there's lots of different groups within the Open University to follow. So if you're interested in politics, politics has a group. If you're interested in classical studies, classical studies has a Twitter. And it's really interesting if you're a student that comes under that sort of thing to follow them, because you can find out all the interesting things that are happening within...

RACHEL: And blogs are becoming quite popular as well now, aren't they?

HJ: Yes.

RACHEL: Within this kind of environment. So you know, it's another way to look at the information, another way that is put. So that's another tip.

HJ: Yes.

KAREN: And HJ and Rachel, I'm going to ask if you can find out the arts Facebook page and put that--

HJ: Yes. Oh, definitely.

KAREN: On the resources page and also onto the newsfeed. That would be brilliant. OK, well, those are brilliant ideas. Thanks for that. I mean, it's all well and good. However, we all know that a lot of what we can read online can sometimes be really, really good. And then sometimes, it

can be not so good. So how do we make sense of this?

HELEN: Yeah. Yeah. No, it's true that anybody can publish anything online nowadays. And it's really quick to share something on Twitter or Facebook without checking the sources. So I think when you're reading something online, you have to have that critical eye to make sure you're not duped. But also, we do have some evaluation frameworks that we'd like to share that you might want to use. And these evaluation frameworks are just a way for you to quickly and easily evaluate what you see online and see whether you might want to follow up on it.

So the first one I've got here is WWW. And that stands for who, why, when. So who is publishing this information? Who owns the website? What authority or expertise do they have? Why are they writing this? Do they have any kind of hidden agenda or bias? And then when was it published? So when was it last updated? And then we--

KAREN: And why are those things important then? I mean, obviously online things tend to be a bit more immediate. They tend to have more source information that's more obvious. I mean, often like on my newsfeed, I'll see *Huffington Post*, so I might open that. Whereas if there's something from somebody else, I won't. So you sort of get the gist of who's publishing what and things. But why is this important in terms of, is it not obvious to people when things are published online, and by who? What sorts of things, in terms of how to look at that, are important? Do you see what I mean?

NICOLA: Yeah, well, I suppose-- I mean, like you said, you notice who is posting stuff. But not everybody does notice things. And quite often, stuff just gets kind of shared around. And sometimes eventually, the who posted it actually get completely lost, because it's been shared so many times that it's not obvious at all. So it's just-- it's a really good idea just to keep these things in mind, because it reminds you just to double check. And yes.

KAREN: And even within those sources, I guess there's this issue that sometimes, especially if you know something about a subject, you'll say, oh, yes. So that's in the *Huffington Post*. But this psychologist may or may not really know what they're talking-- do you see what I mean? So once you're actually within the article, is it also important then to look at this in terms of some of that content that's within that? You know, is it actually saying what it's supposed to be saying?

HELEN: Definitely. These frameworks, and we'll show you the other one as well, which is CAN, they're a great way to quickly evaluate any sort of research that you read, any journal articles as well,

as well as some of the websites that you come across in your daily browsing. So another one of our favourites is CAN.

NICOLA:

Yeah. So CAN is very similar to WWW. It makes you think about the same things but just uses different words. So it's kind of whichever you prefer, really. You don't need to use both. Just pick one that suits you. So you CAN is for credibility, which again, is the kind of thinking about who has posted this? Where is it coming from? Is it an organisation or a person? And how trustworthy are they?

And are backing up that their facts or their opinions? That's really important to bear in mind. And then agenda-- do they have an agenda or bias? Sometimes, that might be fine. That might be what you're looking for to present kind of two arguments. Sometimes, it might be really important that it's just a trustworthy neutral source. So bear that in mind. And obviously, that brings you on to the need. What do you need it for you, which is where you want to think about how trustworthy it needs to be.

KAREN:

Yeah. That's a really interesting point, actually. Because whilst you can imagine people think, oh, well, yes, National Gallery, et cetera, sensible information. But the point about actually having a diverse range of things is the beauty of being online. And it's about being able to actually say, I'm not just going to go with the most authoritative. It is-- the beauty of being able to publish anything surely is that anyone can have a say on it.

And I guess that's how you want to sort of structure your feeds, isn't it? So depending on what level of depth you want to actually be able to look at things, it's good sometimes to be able to hear people's views. But I guess what you're saying, Helen, is it's important to be able to recognise the extent to which those are sensible, I suppose?

HELEN:

Yes. You're right. Yeah, and actually going back a bit to structuring your feeds, a top tip I have is to use a tool like TweetDeck to organise your Twitter feed. So with TweetDeck, you have columns. And you choose what goes in each column. So I have a column for university library feeds, so I can quickly look and see what the university libraries are tweeting about and think about whether the OU library Twitter wants to tweet about a similar thing.

So students could set up a column for a particular module or a subject and just quickly scan down that feed and just learn that skill of knowing that you can't read everything that's out there. Just be selective, quickly taking the information and just sort of move aside the dross

and focus in on what actually you need at that point. So yeah, it's skill. But you can learn it.

KAREN: Yeah. You mentioned before, Nicola not being overwhelmed and actually managing time and things. How do you do that then? I mean, what tips would you give to people? Because I can imagine, you know, you set up all these things. You think, I'll read that later. And then I can never find it later. And I thought, where was that article? What advice would you give in terms of how you actually manage that balance between effectively being mobile-- often you're on your mobile looking at Twitter. You'd maybe have five minutes then. Maybe it goes. But these things are fluid. They're moving very, very fast. So how do you manage that, in terms of actually collating things that may be useful and managing your time, so that you have time to read the things that do matter?

NICOLA: Yeah, well, I suppose that comes down again to kind of using the tools, as Helen mentioned. So you can-- if you see something that you think is really useful on Facebook or on Twitter, you can save it for later. You can do that on most tools. So then when you do remember later to come back to it, you can go and have a quick look and see what you saved.

But I do think it's really important as well just to remember that this is all kind of extra stuff. So don't get too overwhelmed. If you feel like you're kind of drowning in the amount of information that's out there, just take a step back and don't worry about it. Just concentrate on your module materials. That's the important thing. And you can come to this when you've got a bit of spare time. You're never going to read everything, ever. So don't worry about it.

KAREN: What would you say?

HELEN: I would say, yeah. Be selective. And also maybe hone up on your searching skills. We've put a few links to activities on the resources page, on the Student Hub Live website, one of which is focusing your Google search. And another is about filtering information quickly. So if you work through, they're very quick five to ten minute activities and work on those skills on making sure that you get the result you want first time, and that you're a smart searcher I think.

KAREN: Yeah. Brilliant. Excellent. Well, thank you. That's been a really useful session, loads of advice there. Whenever we do these sessions, I always think, I must go away and sort that out, in terms of managing things. Because you can see really how useful these things have been. And in particular, I know we haven't spoken a huge amount about it, but this idea of podcasts. And there are so many podcasts now available. And often, you're in the car driving or around and listening to the radio. And I think, oh, I wish I'd actually managed my feed so that I could

have some things in there to listen to when I'm on the go and make the most of the things I want to be able to find time to get around to do, some really useful ideas.

I hope at home you found that useful. I hope there have been lots of tips there. And thank you for sharing those ideas as well. We're going to have a short break. And then we're going to come back to looking at specific modules. And we're going to start looking at creative writing next. So we will be back after a short video break. Don't forget to e-mail us any questions that you might have in particular about creative writing and then English literature, which are coming up next.

But now, we have a wonderful video about the library so you can see that it's not just invisible journal articles and finds. We're going to take you on a library tour now in this video. And you'll meet some familiar faces there as well. We'll see you very soon.

[MUSIC PLAYING]