Jodie Hello. Welcome to OU Students’ HQ and we’re here today to talk to you about managing your study over Christmas. I'm Jodie, I work at the office here and I'm also a first year OU student.

Steph I'm Stephanie Stubbins and I'm deputy president of the Students Association and I'm a level 2 business student.

Amy Hi I'm Amy and I work in the community team and I'm not a student.

Steph Yes. Shame on you ((laughs)).

Jodie So Steph you've got some helpful tips that you're going to share with us today is that right?

Steph It is.

Stay Organised

Jodie And I hear the first one is helping to stay organised?

Steph Yes so to stay organised you could create a study plan. You could list your priorities and deadlines and you could set yourself goals, breaking things up into tasks and creating those ‘to do’ lists so that you can mark off what you’re achieving as you go along. Anything like that will help.

Creating dedicated study time

Jodie So your next is all about creating a dedicated study time.

Steph Yes, so work out when your productive time to study is. For me I like studying late at night until silly o'clock in the morning, which is when I'm more alert – which doesn't say much about now but...Also removing distractions, anything that distracts you remove it from your area.

Jodie So I'll take my PS4 out of my bedroom is what you're saying.

Steph Yes, mobile phone out of the way. Also plan your study slots so if you decide you're going to do an hour study, two hours study, tell family and friends you need that time to get your studies done and you don't want to be interrupted – that's distraction as well. Also it's good to have your own study space. Some people have desks,
some people study in their living rooms, their coffee area, make sure you've got everything you need around you. And routine can motivate you, so planning those study slots is a good idea to create that dedicated time. And decide what is your effective study time. Some people they can study three or four hours in a row. Some people just need to do it in smaller slots.

**Staying motivated**

Amy: Steph you have a tip about staying motivated, how can we keep everyone motivated?

Steph: Well what motivates you? What motivates the students out there? It varies from student to student. But I think it's important to stay positive, remember why you're studying that will always help you to feel more motivated. Do nice things in between studying, it's not just concentrating on your study you need to make sure you feel good in between those times. For me personally I like to create a ‘to do’ list, mark off what I'm doing as I go along and seeing that being marked off makes me feel more positive about what I'm doing. I also like to have new stationery, any excuse for new stationery. So if I've got new stationery to use that will keep me motivated. And again what I said before about a study zone area, having that area of planning can also motivate you. And of course, more important, reward yourself – more stationery for me personally but…

Amy: Chocolate.

Steph: Chocolate for you. And don't forget the students out there that are studying similar over Christmas. Talk to other students. There will always be someone that's going through what you're going through at Christmas.

Amy: So I'm hoping this is going to be a yes, can the students still have fun while studying?

**Can students still have FUN?!**

Steph: Of course they can. Fun is really important. Also having fun, taking breaks, recreation, having time out, it helps to destress. It's not always easy to work through your studies so again regular breaks, which I've mentioned before, but make your study fun. Something I like to do is 25 minutes of study, a five minute break, maybe repeat
two or three times and then like do something for an hour, an activity, something creative. Having those breaks, doing something in between helps my focus and retention and concentration – all good things obviously to make your study fun as well as your fun in between. And if you've got a hobby, if you like to read, if you want to go out for a walk, if you want to spend some time with family, do it in between your studies. It’s important to have fun and recreation. And a proper time away, proper time out is important so fun is just as important as your studies.

Amy  Awesome take that on board.

Our Christmas plans…

Jodie  So talking of having fun and recreation during your study what will the Students Association be doing over Christmas?

Steph  We’re going to have a Facebook event page which you'll find on the main Students Association page where you can post pictures, messages to other students or share your experiences over Christmas. We’re also going to be hosting two events on the day through Adobe Connect. One is going to be between 12 and 2 which will be a non-festive chat. So students that just don’t want to hear about Christmas, they might not be celebrating Christmas, they just want to come and have some normal student chat, come in between 12 and 2.

Amy   Friends.

Steph  And then at 7 – 10 at night, which will be the fun bit, it'll be a festive chat, everybody’s welcome, even those who don't do Christmas but we will be chatting about what we’ve been up to, Christmas themes, or anything that you want to talk about. So you can find all this information out on the Students Association website or on the Facebook page, also looking on the OU Students Association community group, which is on Facebook. And don't forget Twitter.

How can students get more involved in 2019?

Amy   How can students get more involved next year and get more involved with the community and meet up with other students?
Steph: Well make 2019 your year where you get more involved with the Students Association. There's societies, there's clubs, meet-ups, social media – you find Students Association students everywhere on social media. There are forums where you can find them on the Association's website. And of course there's volunteering opportunities, roles coming up in the New Year. Also keep an eye out we're hoping to host a New Year quiz in the first week of January, so watch out for details. And don't forget to give us your ideas in 2019 – what would you like the Association to do for you? Let us know. Leave messages on the social media places or send us an email. You'll find a 'contact us' button on the website. And have a happy Christmas.

Amy: Great. Have a lovely Christmas.