

Appendix A

Research instruments: interviews, experience sample, diary protocols.

First interview (on-line or telephone) (March)

Warming up.

1. What has your experience of distance learning been like so far? What do you enjoy it?
2. What is your study goal?

Environmental

Life

3. Tell me a bit about your background or your circumstances?
4. What are your daily routines?
5. Can you tell me about your experience with your mental health which may occur whilst you are studying or doing other activities?
6. How does your mental health impact on your daily life?
7. Can this change from day to day or over a period?
8. Before you started studying design, have you designed or created anything?

Space

9. Tell me a little about the places and spaces you use for studying.
10. Do you use the same space for your studies or prefer using different spaces?
11. Which Social Media or Online Study Groups do you use for your studies or for other reasons?

People

12. Who lives with you?
13. How do you engage with them whilst studying?
14. Do you talk to friends, family, peers or colleagues about your study, and if so, why or why not?
15. What study support do you get from the people you talk with?

Self-esteem

16. Would you describe yourself as a confident person?
17. How confident are you with your studies?
18. How do you feel when someone criticizes you or your work?
19. How do you react to criticism (of your work)?
20. From the different activities that you do at work, at home or when you study, which ones make you feel good about yourself?

Skills

21. How do you organise your study? Talk me through a typical day that involves studying.
22. Do you sometimes get into a 'flow', a state in which you easily come up with ideas and solutions, if so how?
23. What are the most difficult and the most enjoyable aspects of studying at a distance?
24. Have you been able to work out some of these difficulties by yourself or have you asked people around you to help?
25. What positive behaviours have you developed to help you study?

Systems

26. What support, if any, do you receive for your mental health (OU or wider)?
27. And how to you go about asking for support?
28. Can you give examples, when you might ask for help and the sort of help you might ask for?
When you do reach out, who might you ask?
29. How do you communicate with those supporting you?
30. Is the support sufficient?

Interviewer introduces themselves (background, motivations, experience)

Let me tell you a little bit about myself...

Let me talk you through the rest of the study (experience sample, diary study, final interview)

Do you have any questions about myself or the study?

Closure activity: Interviewee and interviewer both share a favourite image, video or song and talk together about what makes it their favourite.

Experience sampling using Smartphone message service (April)

Scheduled prompts to mobile phone 3 times a day over a week split into 2 in the moment experiences and a reflective end of day recording (4 questions each). Timing needs to be agreed between interviewer and participant.

First and second prompts during the day (in the moment experience)

1. Are you studying at the moment?

Yes

2. What are you studying?
3. How do you feel about what you are studying?
4. What do you think about what you are studying?

Or

1. Are you studying at the moment?

No

2. What are you doing at the moment?
3. How do you feel at the moment?
4. What are you thinking about at the moment?

Third end of day prompts

1. What study related work or other activity have you been doing today?
2. What aspects have you been struggling with most today?
3. What (or who) helped you most today?
4. Would you have liked any additional support today?

Diary study using Smartphone - format to be agreed between both parties (May)

Timing and format to be agreed between interviewer and participant, and to facilitate more of a conversation (message thread, or actual phone call - recorded) between interviewer and participant.

One message thread a day over 10 days (expecting that participant does not work on TMA every day):

Have you been working on your TMA today? If participants reply with 'yes' then prompt:

1. Describe and show us what you have done.
2. Has anything noteworthy happened?
3. What was it?
4. When did it happen?
5. How did you feel about it?
6. What questions did you have and could not answer?

Aim at collecting 7 entries over 10 days, describing how they have progressed their TMA project work.

Second interview (on-line or telephone) (June)

Structured around Lister's taxonomy of environmental, skill and study related factors, but more selective and responsive to the experience sample and diary study.

Skills-related

1. What skills do you think you have gained during the module?

Study skills

2. Have you made any changes to how or when you study throughout the module, can you explain what they were?
3. Have the changes helped?
4. What did you enjoy about studying design?
5. Did you sometimes get into a 'flow', a state in which you easily came up with design ideas and solutions?
6. What were the most difficult aspects of studying design?

Social study skills

7. Who did you ask for help with developing your design skills?
8. Have you ever hesitated to ask for help?
9. How did you share what you did/designed and learned from others on the module (Forums, ODS Social Media, Tutorials, other)?
10. Did you find it easy to share or did you hesitate to share, what and why?
11. Did you connect easily with other students?
12. What was your preferred way to communicate (talk, write, draw, online, face to face)?

Self-management skills

13. How did you manage your mental health while studying?
14. Did you have any warning signs or actions (triggers)?
15. How did you deal with it or them?
16. Have you received any training for controlling your symptoms?
17. Do you think you controlled your symptoms well?
18. Give an example of a coping strategy that worked well for you.
19. Can you think of any tips or tricks you would give others with a similar condition?
20. Are there times when your mental health condition allows you to do things well or better than you anticipated?

Study-related

21. How do you prepare for or approach an assessment?
22. Can you think of an assessment you really enjoyed completing and why?
23. In general, what types, kinds or aspects of assessments do you find enjoyable and what kind are challenging?

24. Did you have/use additional or special support for completing assessments with your tutor or someone else, like a learning advisor?
25. Do you make use of an advocate?
26. If you do, how do they support you with your studies?

27. Did you read through the tutor feedback when you received your marks back?
28. Were they helpful?
29. Did you ask your tutor to clarify any points from the feedback?
30. Did you make use of extensions?

31. How would you describe the relationship with your tutor?
32. Can you share an example of excellent support from your tutor that might help other students?
33. What did you like or not like about tutorials, face to face or online?
34. What did you think about the module content?
35. Did you find the topics easy to engage with?
36. Which learning materials did you most enjoy studying (website, read, watch etc. book, etc)?
37. Were you able to access all the resources?
38. Were there too many resources or not enough?
39. Which resources did you use regularly?
40. Were there any resources you chose not to use, why did you not use them?
41. Did you take part in any extracurricular activities like engagement or career events?

Attainment and retention

42. Describe what you think you have achieved in this module?
43. Are you pleased with your marks, why or why not?
44. If not, what do you think could help you improve your marks?
45. Which module are you planning to study next?
46. What are you looking forward to in the next module?

After you have met your study goal

47. What are your plans after graduation?
48. Will you continue further with your studies?
49. Have your modules made you more aware of the career opportunities in design?
50. Which field of design do you see yourself going into after you graduate?

Closure activity: Interviewee and interviewer both share a favourite image, video or song and talk together about what makes it their favourite.