

OpenMINDS

2019

NEWS FROM YOUR UNIVERSITY



The Open
University

50
YEARS

WELCOME

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HOW WE LOOK AFTER YOUR DATA

We are extremely proud of our global alumni community and the life-long relationship we have with each one of you.

The Open University is committed to taking care of your data and privacy.

The privacy policy clearly explains how we will manage and use your data to communicate with you as either a member of The Open University Alumni Association, or as a valued donor, or friend of The Open University. If you would like to find out more about how The Open University manages and takes care of your data please visit www.open.ac.uk/privacy to view our latest privacy policy.

We believe that our global alumni community play a crucial role in helping to shape the future of The Open University and delivering our mission of being open to people, places, methods and ideas.




We are excited to share this special bespoke sketch titled *The Gift* by world-renowned illustrator, Children's Laureate and Open University honorary graduate, Sir Quentin Blake, in honour of the University's 50th Anniversary.

What next?

Social media is a great way of keeping in contact. Why not join the OU social media community to share news and ideas?

 **Alumni website**
alumni.open.ac.uk

 **Giving website**
giving.open.ac.uk

 **50th Anniversary website**
www.50.open.ac.uk

 **LinkedIn alumni**
linkedin.com/groups/2385051

 **Instagram** [/theopenuniversity](https://www.instagram.com/theopenuniversity)

 **YouTube** [/user/TheOpenUniversity](https://www.youtube.com/user/TheOpenUniversity)

 **Twitter**
[@OpenUniversity](https://twitter.com/OpenUniversity)
[@OUBelfast](https://twitter.com/OUBelfast)
[@oucymru](https://twitter.com/oucymru)
[@OUIreland](https://twitter.com/OUIreland)
[@OUScotland](https://twitter.com/OUScotland)

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[/theopenuniversity](https://www.facebook.com/theopenuniversity)
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50
YEARS

PROUD OF YOU

I am absolutely delighted to share this special edition of OpenMINDS with you. Special because it's not every year we turn 50 and get the opportunity to make a big birthday fuss of you, our alumni, spread globally across 157 countries.

#OU50

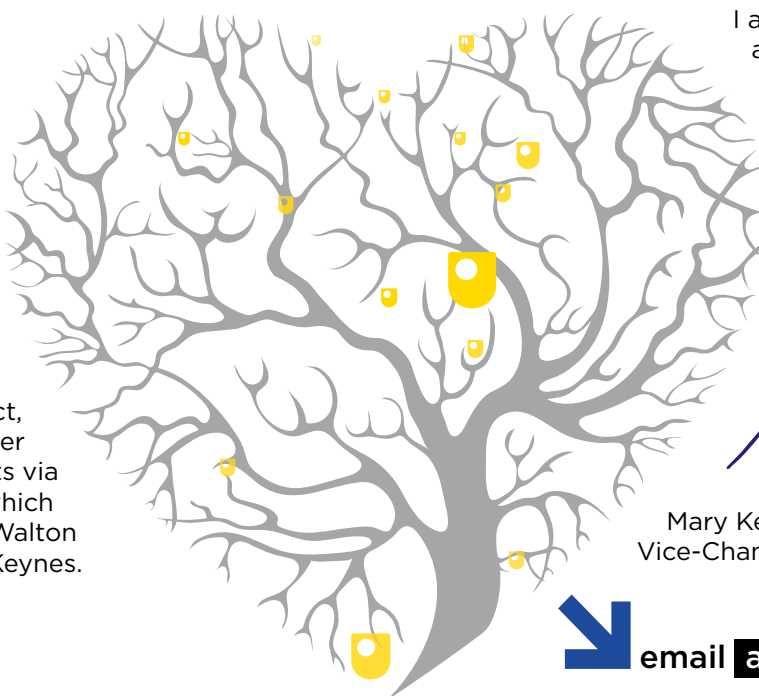
Fifty years ago, a radical idea was born: The Open University. A University ahead of its time. A University open to people, places, methods and ideas. An innovative University, united and proud of its heritage and the impact it's made in transforming peoples' lives. Your University. As Vice-Chancellor, I often say that I'm the proudest person on the planet. The very best part of my job sees me congratulating graduates just like you at our wonderful graduation ceremonies. The student stories of endeavour, passion and commitment, often whilst juggling caring commitments, a full-time job and life in general, never ceases to amaze me. Where do you get your energy from?

So, what can you discover in this edition of OpenMINDS? Well, as you leaf through it, perhaps Evelyn Lipmann's inspiring story on page 7 will spark your interest; or perhaps you'll be tempted to find out more about our world-leading research in the Faculty pages. For an update on our **Open up the Future** campaign, turn to page 22. And it's all supported through the kindness and generosity of people like you: our global Alumni family.

Alumni website

By visiting the Alumni website, you can read all about the special events planned and activities you can be involved in.

As a taster, perhaps we can tempt you with our exciting new donor initiative the **Tree of Learning** project, which will bring together our alumni and students via a stunning sculpture, which will be housed on the Walton Hall campus in Milton Keynes.



Fight for part-time gathers pace

In the previous edition of OpenMINDS, I mentioned our hope that the UK Government's Post-18 review of education and funding will respond to the strong case the OU, employers and others in the sector have made. As I write, the House of Commons Education Select Committee (England), strongly back many of the OU's points submitted in our written and oral evidence. In calling for the decline in part-time and mature learners to be a major focus of the review, the OU, the Education Select Committee, the Confederation of British Industry and Universities UK, have all sent a clear signal that now is a big opportunity to crack Post-18 student finance in England, broaden learning options and make progression routes for students more obvious. We will know more once the review is published in early 2019. Let's hope we see some real recognition of the importance of life-long learning!



Mary Kellett

A new year, a strong future

I am deeply humbled and proud to lead this phenomenal University. Thank you for being part of it. Please join us in celebrating our wonderful alumni, our incredible students and passionately committed staff. Many congratulations - and Happy Birthday!

Mary Kellett
Vice-Chancellor



email alumni@open.ac.uk

HAROLD WILSON'S GREATEST LEGACY



By Roger Dawe
Honorary
Doctorate
(2010)

I have had the unusual experience of seeing and admiring The Open University from a number of different perspectives over the 50 years of its history.

I was a career civil servant and was fortunate enough to work in 10 Downing Street as a Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, Harold Wilson from 1966 to 1970. It was Harold Wilson who launched the idea of the 'University of the Air' in a speech in September 1963 as Opposition leader. When he became Prime Minister in 1964, one of his top priorities was to set up The Open University.

It was clear that this was no easy task. The education establishment, including universities, were either opposed or at best lukewarm. Some Opposition MPs derided the concept as 'blithering nonsense' and another of Harold Wilson's 'wheezes'. Within Government both the Treasury and parts of the Education Department had doubts.



Harold Wilson and Mary Wilson examine course units with Vice-Chancellor Walter Perry and Sam Crooks



Jennie Lee

“And, I confess, even the Private Secretaries at No 10, who had attended traditional universities, at first wondered what it was all about. However, Harold Wilson took it forward as his personal project with

great assistance from the dynamic Jennie Lee, the Minister for Arts in the Education Department. Without their determination and drive I have no doubt that the OU would not have got off the ground.”

But the OU was launched, and I recall accompanying a very delighted Prime Minister to the Charter Ceremony at the Royal Society in 1969. It was at that event that Lord Crowther, the first Chancellor, declared that the University would be open to people, to places, to methods and to ideas – words which have echoed through the years since then.

In the 1990s, my wife, a State Registered Nurse, decided she would do a full OU degree. This was somewhat double-edged for me — on the one hand for seven years, “I can’t come out this evening as I am working on my TMA” became a common litany, but on the other, it brought home to me very directly the high quality of the University’s courses and support, the high level of satisfaction, and drive of its students.

When I retired in 2000, I was delighted to be invited to serve on the Council of the University as a member and then Deputy Chair for eight years. These were challenging but stimulating times working with the Chair, Chris Haskins, and the Vice-Chancellor, Brenda Gourley, to help guide the University through sometimes choppy waters, and to undertake new activities in the continuing development of the University. It also enabled me each year to attend Degree Ceremonies, where seeing the pleasure of graduates and their families was always a great delight.

The Open University, dismissed by some 50 years ago as a Harold Wilson ‘wheeze’, which would not last long, has become the country’s largest university. It has made a massive difference over the years to the lives of over 2 million students of all ages and backgrounds. Far from a wheeze, it is Harold Wilson’s greatest legacy.



Read the full story
alumni.open.ac.uk

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS: 50 YEARS AHEAD



Professor John Domingue
Director, Knowledge Media Institute

What will the OU look like in 2069? Of course, the honest answer to this is: "I've no idea". Predicting the future is a non-precise activity which gets about an order of magnitude harder for every 10 years one looks into the future. Nevertheless, below I've selected three types of technology which have the potential to radically change the nature and shape of our University in the next 50 years.

Data ubiquity, AI and self-hacking

Data science technologies including machine learning and Artificial Intelligence (AI) now play a large role in all our lives. We already use machine learning to predict if OU students will pass the next assignment, and module overall, with high accuracy. In the next 5 to 10 years I see the way we collect and aggregate data growing in two ways, both aligned with strong ethical and student consent policies. Firstly, data will be acquired from a wide range of sources including social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn and, with student consent, from wearable devices. Secondly, we will collect data related to available job opportunities from employers and government.

With this data we will be able to provide AI driven personal services. OU learning content will be shaped to fit a student's specific context and preferences. For example, automatically selecting and playing podcasts related to a pending assignment in the car, to generating tailored versions of course material, to simplifying revision before an exam.

Beyond 10 years I believe that the concept of 'self-hacking' will emerge. Israeli historian Yuval Harari said that at some point it is entirely feasible that AI algorithms will know us better than we know ourselves. An AI learning coach will send triggers, snippets and rewards to get the student in the mood to study.

Self-sovereignty, decentralisation and the DAO-OU

Self-sovereignty means that your online identity would be wholly owned by you and would not be reliant on any organisation such as Google, Facebook, Instagram, or even the OU. For example, your email address, pictures and online documents would reside in a place of your choosing with an address such as <your-name>.com. Any data you create whilst studying at the OU, such as your assignments, would be under your complete control – for example, stored in your favourite learning store.

Using blockchain technology, it will be entirely possible to decentralise the OU itself. With new blockchain platforms one can create DAOs (Decentralised Autonomous Organisations) which can run as a set of connected automated legal and financial contracts with no humans in the loop.

Blockchain:
A digital ledger in which transactions are recorded chronologically and publicly

A DAO-OU would act a little like the taxi company Uber. The OU in essence would become a wholly community-owned and run university. Suitably qualified academics and professionals would come together to create course materials. Associate lecturers would decide when, where and who they teach according to personal preferences and constraints. Students would define their own timetables and gain credit and payment for contributing through module testing and piloting, and for mentoring other students.

Brain Computer Interfaces and brain-to-brain communication

There have been some recent advances in what are termed Brain Computer Interfaces (BCIs). These are devices, which can be worn externally over the skull, or embedded directly within the brain, to receive input from or control computers through thought alone. One main area of use for BCIs is to overcome certain disabilities, including certain types of deafness, blindness and spinal injuries. There are examples of patients who, through thought alone, control robot arms to take a drink of water.

Within 50 years it may be that highly complex and abstract concepts are communicable via brain to brain communication. For example, the ability to understand a new language, to play a musical instrument or diagnose a disease from patient symptoms. This may lead to a new profession of Brain Tutor – teaching online through direct brain-to-brain connections.

As with all of the above and, as I mentioned at the start, I of course do not know where technologies will take us to in the next 50 years. I do know, however, that as a Director of one of the OU's research labs, involved in cutting edge initiatives that bridge technology and education, the journey will definitely not be a boring one.

➡ Read more kmi.open.ac.uk

OPEN DEGREES: FULFILLING A DESIRE TO LEARN SINCE 1969

Unique to The Open University, the BA/BSc Open degree is our most flexible degree programme because students can study any subjects, in any combination, enabling them to construct a personalised qualification that is right for them.

The OU's Open degree was the only qualification offered for over 30 years until named degrees were introduced in 2000. It remains the University's largest degree by student numbers and module choice.

The Open degree clearly demonstrates that the OU is still delivering on its mission to provide "a broader type of education than that provided by a usual degree" (Open University Planning Committee, 1969). It is a qualification that has evolved throughout its history to meet changing circumstances, yet it is as relevant today as it was in the 1970s. In fact, the Open degree has evolved from a single 'General BA' (as it was originally known), into a full programme of curriculum, which enables students to graduate with a Certificate of Higher Education Open, Diploma of Higher Education Open, a BA or BSc Open degree (with or without honours), a BSc (Hons) Combined STEM degree and, from October 2018, an MA or MSc Open postgraduate qualification.

However, the popularity and uniqueness of the OU's "open" qualifications have not only survived the test of time, but continue to thrive in a world where the development of graduates with future-proof, non-discipline specific skills is becoming increasingly important for employers. Students continue to demand — and value — having the freedom to design and achieve their own personalised OU qualification.



I selected the Open degree because of the flexibility it offered. I was able to tailor my degree to suit the needs of my employer and study subjects I was passionate about. ”

Mohammad Ali Salik, Open degree graduate



I can definitely see lots of benefits with the Open degree when it's linked to some management roles. I think one of the really nice things I like about it, is that it just provides you with the opportunity to demonstrate a wide variety of skills and gets you exposed to a lot of different specialisms and disciplines. ”

Anthony Takyi, Former Graduate & Recruitment Development Manager, Allianz Insurance

107,000

students have graduated with an Open degree over the past 50 years

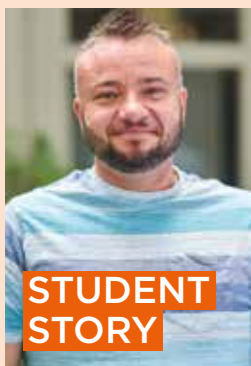
Each year around 300

different modules are studied by students working towards an Open qualification



Find out more

www.open.ac.uk/courses/open-qualifications



FINLAY'S NEW FUTURE

Finlay Games is studying for an Open degree. Finlay spent the majority of his adult life struggling with mental health problems and anxiety, and as a result, he developed issues with alcohol and drugs which he endured well in to his late thirties.

“When I found the OU in 2010 I'd just entered a recovery programme with Alcoholics Anonymous. I had been very unwell for a number of years and suffered from mental health problems. From as young as I can remember, I just didn't feel right.

As I grew up, it got worse and I did the silliest thing in the world – which was to start drinking and taking drugs to numb my feelings.

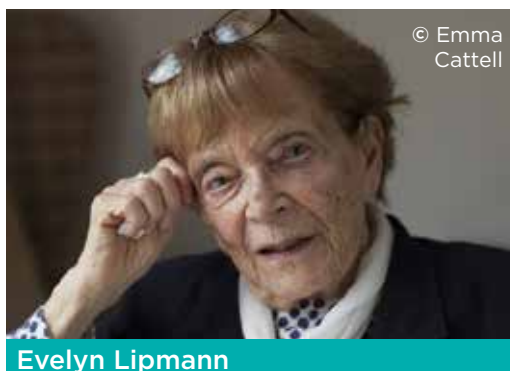
“In recovery, suddenly all of these opportunities were available to me. I could see a future for myself. I knew for the first time that I wasn't the daft, useless person that I thought I was, and so I started looking at some of the courses that the OU had to offer.

“From the beginning, I told my OU tutors about my mental health problems and the fact that I was a little concerned about studying. Then I came out as transgender as well, which meant that I would need time off for surgery and appointments. My OU journey has really helped me transition and helped me to rewrite all of the negative stuff that I've told myself over the years.”

THE REMARKABLE STORY OF AUSCHWITZ SURVIVOR AND OU GRADUATE EVELYN LIPMANN

The lives of hundreds of thousands of people have been transformed by their study at The Open University, but few can have valued it more than Evelyn Lipmann.

Evelyn, now 94, enrolled for a Humanities degree as one of our Pioneer students in the early 1970s to help put behind her the horror of the Nazi concentration camps. Decades later, she credits her OU degree with helping her rebuild her self-respect and heal some of the scars left by witnessing terrible suffering. It also finally gave her the confidence and strength to tell her story to the Holocaust Educational Trust.



Evelyn Lipmann

By the early 1940s, even that became impossible as Jewish people were ordered to move to specific areas of Vienna.

Then in 1943, the family were deported to Teresin in Czechoslovakia and later transported east to Auschwitz.

She survived internment in four camps – Teresienstadt, Auschwitz, Bergen Belsen and Salzwedel – before finally being liberated by US forces in 1945.

The smattering of English she had picked up pre-war from a neighbour secured Evelyn a job in the Property Control Office of the US Occupation Forces, and in 1947 she was able to fulfil her dream of joining relatives in England.

From the start, the OU was open to all, regardless of previous educational achievements. Evelyn, who had no qualifications, was enrolled on a foundation course in 1972 and was awarded her degree in 1979. Decades after being forced to leave school she was at last able to revel in the joy of learning.

“The OU made it possible for me to express myself so much more clearly. I never had any counselling after the war and was not able to talk before.”

Evelyn grew up in Vienna, but her childhood and education were cut short when the Nazis marched into Austria in 1938. She did what she could to carry on learning, sometimes at immense personal risk as a young Jewish girl.

➔ [Read more of Evelyn's story and share your own](https://alumni.open.ac.uk)
alumni.open.ac.uk



THE PAN-COMMONWEALTH FORUM: A JOINT CELEBRATION

The Open University will be co-hosting the ninth Pan-Commonwealth Forum (PCF9) on Open Learning with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) from 9-12 September 2019.

Celebrating COL's 30th Anniversary and the OU's 50th Anniversary year, the Forum will be held at the historic BT Murrayfield Stadium in Edinburgh. Over its history the PCF has been hosted around the world including South Africa, New Zealand, Jamaica, UK, India, Nigeria and Malaysia. The last conference was attended by over 500 delegates from 59 different countries, including 49 Commonwealth Member States.

The focus of PCF9 will be **Innovations for Quality Education and Life-long Learning**, and will discuss, debate and showcase how innovations are improving the quality of education and creating new spaces for life-long learning.

Sub-themes will run through the event programme, to include Opening up Education, Increasing employability skills, Equity and inclusion, and Technology. There will also be two additional areas of special focus – **Education for Girls/Women** and **Empowering Youth**.

➔ [For more information](https://pcf9.org) pcf9.org

FASS FORWARD



“ Arts and Social Sciences have always been at the heart of The Open University, and our students and alumni are at the core of what we do, driving our innovation to empower and transform individuals, culture and society. As we move into our 50th year, we are refreshing our curriculum to meet the demands of students seeking to qualify quicker, along with our dedication to the needs of part-time and life-long learners, with innovative courses like our new Honours degrees in Music, Criminology, and Economics, and partnerships such as that with Trinity Laban Conservatoire. ”

Professor Ian Fribbance, Executive Dean

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences comprises three schools:

- Arts & Humanities
- Psychology & Counselling
- Social Sciences & Global Studies

➤ For more information
fass.open.ac.uk

GRENFELL: UNFOLDING DIMENSIONS OF HARM

Academics from the Harm & Evidence Research Collaborative have been researching the Grenfell Tower tragedy. Professor of Criminology, Steve Tombs, has a long-standing interest in the incidence, nature and regulation of corporate crime and harm, and responded to the consultation by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. He works closely with organisations such as INQUEST and Hazards, and has been engaging with the public on the issues surrounding the tragedy. *Grenfell Tower and Social Murder*, a film dedicated to the continued struggle for truth, justice and recognition for all those who lost their lives, by Dr David Scott, Senior Lecturer in Criminology, won the Arts and Humanities Research Council's prestigious 2018 Research in Film Awards for *Research Film of the Year*. Their research has contributed to the new BA (Hons) Criminology, with new modules *Understanding Criminology* and *Investigating crime and criminal justice*.

➤ More information oucriminology.wordpress.com/2018/06/14/grenfell-mis-trust-contempt-and-the-ongoing-struggle-to-be-heard/



REMEMBERING PROFESSOR STUART HALL



Stuart Hall (1932-2014) was a much loved teacher and valued colleague at The Open University, where he was Professor of Sociology from 1979-1997.

Famously approachable and generous with his time, Stuart was one of the most celebrated public intellectuals of the post-war period, a leading figure in the New Left, one of the founders of cultural studies, and a major theorist of race and ethnicity. He is also widely credited with inventing the term 'Thatcherism'.

➤ Find out more about Stuart's life and work open.edu/openlearn



ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ACROSS THE NATIONS

You will see Arts and Social Sciences at The Open University across the whole of the UK, with colleagues in Scotland, Wales, Ireland and England working together on exciting developments in teaching and research.

In 2018, in partnership with The Open University in Scotland, the City of Glasgow College started piloting a new degree pathway, offering a BA (Honours) Open degree consisting of History, Social Sciences and Criminology within three years of study. Academics from across the Arts and Social Sciences are involved with several festivals in Northern Ireland, co-ordinated and organised by the OU in Ireland, including the Imagine Festival of Ideas and the Economic and Social Research Council *Festival of Social Sciences*, with discussions and activities ranging from staging works of art, migration, how people read, the economy, and the Good Friday Agreement.

OU students studying the *Making of Welsh History* module draw on Wales as a case study to explore themes that have shaped the modern British Isles, from medieval lordship and conflict, through to political protest and the rise of nationalism in an era of globalisation. Their dissertations include topics such as Owain Glyndwr, early modern medicine in Wales, Welsh seaside resorts, and Barry during World War II, and are now freely available online for the first time. They can all be accessed on Open Research Online.

Gareth Howells, who researched the impact of the McKinley Tariff on the South Wales tinplate industry 1880-1895, exclaimed that "This was the final module on my OU History degree, and by far the most enjoyable. I'd urge anyone to give it a go!"

STUDENT STORY

CELEBRATING SUCCESS



Antony Corrigan grew up in the care system. He struggled with education at school, feeling like he didn't know as much as the others in his class, eventually being excluded. While he made it through his A levels and on to university, he dropped out, and regretted doing so until seeing that he could work and study with the OU.

He graduated this year with a BA (Hons) Forensic Psychology, and has started his MSc. "Without the OU, I don't think I'd ever have done that, so I'm really grateful, and feel like I owe a lot to the OU."

'RED' HOT RESEARCH

The Reading Experience Database (RED), 1450-1945, housed and developed at The Open University is the world's largest database about reading habits. An online, open-access project with more than 34,000 entries, it has transformed public understanding of the history of reading. RED is democratising scholarship about the history of reading by encouraging members of the public from any location to contribute and use information about readers through history. RED attracts over 1,500 users each month from more than 135 countries and has inspired and provided expertise for partner projects in Australia, Canada, the Netherlands and New Zealand.

Following on from the success of RED, the team, led by Dr Shafquat Towheed, is part of the new €1 million Reading Europe Advanced Data Investigation Tool (READ-IT) project, which has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Joint Programme Initiative for Cultural Heritage.

“The new development work on READ-IT will allow us to produce brand new digital tools to examine and explain the reading history of people across the whole of Europe – and thereby return a hidden history of reading back to the European public.”

Dr Shafquat Towheed



Access these dissertations

oro.open.ac.uk/view/dissertation/A329.html



For more information

www.open.ac.uk/Arts/reading/UK

FBL FOCUS



“I’m delighted to introduce some of our high-profile alumni, along with some of the Faculty’s many achievements and successes. This is just a glimpse of what’s been going on over the past year and what the world-class, triple accredited Business School, and Europe’s largest Law School, are able to deliver.”

Professor Devendra Kodwani,
Executive Dean

The Faculty of Business and Law (FBL) comprises:

- The Open University Business School (OUBS)
- The Open University Law School (OULS)



For more information

business-school.open.ac.uk
law-school.open.ac.uk



NEW ONLINE LEARNING MODULE FOR THE ADVICE SECTOR

The Law School’s Open Justice Centre has developed a prototype online learning module in discrimination and human rights law training for charities. A five month collaborative project from January to May 2018, *Improving lives through online learning for the advice sector: Discrimination and Human Rights*, was funded by a £67,000 grant from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). The collaboration was with AdviceUK, the UK’s largest network of independent social welfare advice organisations.

Law lecturers Hugh McFaul and Francine Ryan, working closely with AdviceUK, reviewed current training resources around discrimination and human rights law, and identified training needs for those working across the advice sector by engaging with a range of social welfare advice organisations. This research informed the design of the prototype online learning module which was developed by the OU’s Learning and Teaching Innovation (LTI) and comprises five hours of learning.



Find out more

open.edu/openlearncreate/enrol/index.php?id=3300

LAW-MAKING IN SCOTLAND

At a time of political and constitutional uncertainty, it’s more important than ever that citizens are able to understand how law is made. The OU in Scotland, working with the Faculty of Business and Law, has released four new online courses aimed at improving public understanding of the law and legal institutions.

The courses – *The Scottish Parliament and law-making*; *Scottish courts and the law*; *Legal skills and debates in Scotland*; and *Law and change: Scottish legal heroes* – come 20 years on from the historic vote for devolution and are available free on OpenLearn, the OU’s informal learning website. “The law affects everyone and it’s important that people can understand not just the legal and political landscape but their rights as citizens. These new, free courses try to make it easy for people to build that understanding and at a time and place which suits them,” said Susan Stewart, Director of The Open University in Scotland.

“These new online resources provide a fantastic opportunity for those interested in law-making in Scotland to gain an understanding of Scots law and the legal processes which underpin it.”

Annabelle Ewing MSP, then Minister for
Community Safety and Legal Affairs

STUDENT
STORYOU STUDIES
WERE
FAYE'S VITAL
BUILDING
BLOCKS

Faye Banks is the Business School's current Alumni of the Year for challenging the perception of women in engineering. Studying while working, she earned an MBA from the OU following a Bachelor's Degree in Engineering and an MSc in Technology Management Engineering. This facilitated her life-changing career move from an apprentice to a highly qualified and decorated engineer.

Her accolades include being named UK Young Woman Engineer of the Year in 2004, becoming the Institution of Engineering and Technology's (IET) youngest Fellow in 2015 and being named in *The Telegraph's* Top 50 UK Female Engineers in 2016.

STUDENT STORY

TILLMANN'S
AWARDS HAT-TRICK

One of The Open University's greatest advocates, MBA alumnus Tillmann Henssler from Berlin, has received accolades from Pfizer work colleagues all over the world for being 'highly commended' in the OUBS Alumni of the Year Award 2018. This honour, coupled with his engagement with the disabled community, earned him Pfizer's 'Global Disability Leader Award'.

He was invited to the Pfizer Diversity Summit in New York where he was also recognised for his work with another award, 'Driving inclusion through Head, Heart and Guts Leadership'.

He said: "It was a wonderful opportunity for me to share my work with others and receive so many words of praise."

HERE'S TO
THE NEXT 50
YEARS, OU!

Rob White MBA alumnus
and Chairman of the
OUBS Alumni Council

What a great honour it is to be asked to write a few words to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of The Open University. The Business School, formed in 1983, is a much younger sibling by comparison but with the same core principles to allow anyone, irrespective of background, to fulfil their potential.

I head the Business School's Alumni Council. Working with OU staff, the Council's role ranges from curriculum reviews, to suggesting and organising events, to writing posts on our social media outlets and much, much more. But the Council is only as strong as its interactions with alumni, so we'd love to hear from you. There is always an opportunity to get involved either by attending an event, reaching out on social media, or perhaps one day in future, joining the Council.

50 years after the OU was founded, we stand on the precipice of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and access to quality relevant education is critical in determining the success of an individual, an organisation and indeed a country's economy. Open University, here's to the next 50 years, you've never been more relevant.



Bobby Seagull

BOBBY
BOOSTS
PERSONAL
FINANCE
COURSE'S
RATING

Television personality Bobby Seagull continued to ensure widespread coverage for the launch of a free online personal finance course for young people on the FutureLearn digital platform. Bobby and course producer Martin Upton, Director of The True Potential Centre for the Public Understanding of Finance (True Potential PUFIn) were heavily involved in publicising the launch of *Managing My Money for Young Adults*. There was a total audience reach of close to 52 million on radio, together with several television interviews, and wide print and online coverage.

Content has been refreshed and enhanced on this new FutureLearn version. The eight-week course, developed by True Potential PUFIn Centre and fully funded by The Chartered Accountants' Livery Charity, comprises eight bite-sized, video-based sessions of learning and quizzes.



[business-school.open.ac.uk/alumni/
community-network/council](https://business-school.open.ac.uk/alumni/community-network/council)



More information futurelearn.com

SPOTLIGHT ON STEM



“2019 is going to be a hugely exciting year for both the OU as a whole and for STEM too. We are looking forward to celebrating the incredible achievements of the last 50 years and we can't wait to see what the future brings! Today's way of learning has moved on dramatically as you will see from the stories in this issue, but the principles remain the same and we are committed to helping anyone with the desire to learn, to succeed.”

Professor Josie Fraser, Executive Dean

The Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) comprises:

- **Computing and Communications**
- **Engineering and Innovation**
- **Environment, Earth and Ecosystem Sciences**
- **Life, Health and Chemical Sciences**
- **Mathematics and Statistics**
- **Physical Sciences**
- **Knowledge Media Institute**



For more information
stem.open.ac.uk

OPENSTEM LABS

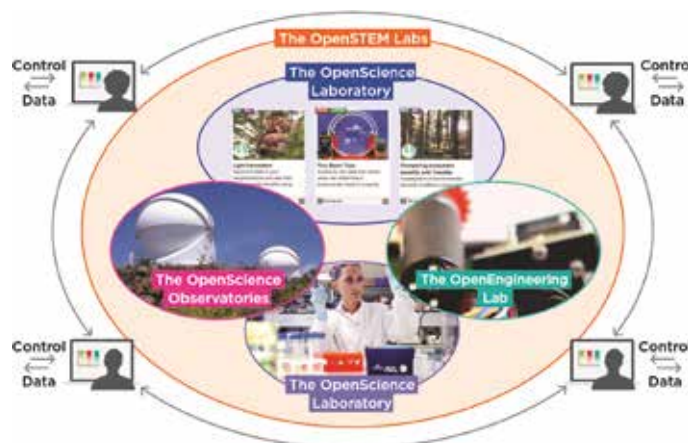
For half a century, the OU has been developing digital technology to enhance the learning experience of students. Our latest initiative has created the **OpenSTEM Labs**, an Internet of Laboratory Things, which is now an important component of The Open University's distance learning environment.

The **OpenSTEM Labs** challenge the traditional STEM pedagogical model of students and teachers being co-located in a lab during 'office hours'. We connect students to instrumentation, data and equipment for practical enquiries over the internet, where time and distance is no longer a barrier, providing access at any time, from any place.

Students and teachers connect to remote equipment and instruments via a web browser. This enables participation in experimental activities, sending real-time control commands, monitoring real-time performance and downloading data for subsequent analysis.

The journey started with the launch of the **OpenScience Laboratory** in 2013, with funding from the Wolfson Foundation, providing an authentic sense of place, with access to real data through authentic interfaces. We have since grown to include four other practical facilities, each with their own distinct identity.

- Through the **OpenScience Observatories** students with an interest in astronomy and space sciences operate our professional, remotely-controlled and robotic telescopes, COAST and PIRATE, as part of their studies
- The **OpenEngineering Lab** provides practical lab-based teaching at a distance, covering engineering, electronics, control, materials and robotics



- Our on-campus teaching labs provide reconfigurable learning spaces for various STEM disciplines and are digitally enabled, allowing us to connect students and teachers via live web streaming. Labcasts and Fieldcasts bring students close to the action – no matter where they are
- The **OpenNetworking Lab** offers a realistic network simulation environment via a web interface that can be accessed from any browser to support teaching of cyber security

The internet has enabled new ways of delivering science and engineering in the real world – from observing the universe using remotely operated telescopes to real-time monitoring of jet engines in service. The **OpenSTEM Labs** are thus providing authentic learning experiences in the context of the real world. In fact, we reckon you can now study OU STEM practically anywhere in the world.



Find out more

stem.open.ac.uk/study/openstem-labs



SPRINTING INTO SPACE

The Space Research and Innovation Network for Technology (SPRINT) will bring together academics from the OU and the Universities of Edinburgh, Leicester, Southampton, and Surrey. The SPRINT funding is part of an investment of £67 million through Research England's Connecting Capability Fund (CCF) in new collaborative projects, between universities and with other partners, to support world-class university commercialisation.



The OU has collaborated on some of the most exciting and inspirational space missions over the last 30 years, including Beagle II, the ExoMars Trace Gas Orbiter, and the Rosetta Mission. The expertise and techniques our space scientists have developed will play a vital role in supporting UK businesses to contribute to the UK space industry. ♥♥

Andrew Holland
Academic Lead and Professor of Electro-Optics



Find out more www.sprintnetwork.space

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP



The STEM School of Computing and Communications joined the Cisco Academy programme in 2003 and since then Cisco networking skills are at the heart of their postgraduate and undergraduate degrees. In excess of 10,000 Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) students have been through the Cisco NetAcad programme. A professional route in to the industry is offered by the *Networking Essentials* and *Cyber Security Essentials* modules which are part of the degree apprenticeship programme, soon to be joined by the *CCNA CyberOps* course. This is offered alongside modules covering the Cisco Associate and professional Routing and Switching accreditations as well as teaching Linux and Network Security.



Find out more www.netacad.com

FUTURE PREDICTIONS FROM OUR ACADEMICS



Claire Rostron

"I am a psychologist and neuroscientist with an interest in attention and motivated behaviour, in particular how sensory stimuli in our environment come to capture

our attention and drive us to engage in certain behaviours outside of our control.

My top predictions for the next 50 years are that we will recognise food addiction as a diagnosable clinical disorder, and understand the abhorrent metabolic processes underlying type 2 diabetes so well that we will be able to either prevent it or cure it."



Karen Olsson-Francis

"I am a Senior Lecturer in Environment, Earth and Ecosystem Sciences. My research focuses on studying the microbiology of the most extreme environments on

Earth, from the Dallol hydrothermal region in Ethiopia to the cold springs in the high Arctic, and also in space on-board the International Space Station. In the next 50 years, I predict that we will know if life ever existed on Mars."



STUDENT STORY

ENGINEERING SUCCESS

Mark Scaife is a Research and Technology Manager at BAE Systems Submarines. He began studying with the OU in 1995. "I'd always wanted

to study a BSc but due to family commitments was unable to go to university full-time."

Following the completion of his degree with the OU he was promoted at work. He began his MSc in Technology Management in 2013 and completed it in 2016, and is now applying his knowledge to transform how the business undertakes research and development.

"The Open University provided me with the skills to embark on an engineering career and has continued to support my personal and career development. I won't deny that studying has been a challenge – juggling work and home life with demanding academic study. I'm extremely grateful to the OU for the opportunities these studies have provided."

WELCOME TO WELS



“ In WELS we have a long history of bringing both academic insight and practical solutions to some of the world’s most challenging and fundamental problems – global access to education; health and social care education and development; language and intercultural understanding. Our research and teaching brings together distinct disciplines that enable people and communities to thrive in an increasingly complex, and often insecure and unequal world. ”

Dr Sally Hayes, Interim Executive Dean

The Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS) comprises three schools:

- **Education, Childhood, Youth and Sport**
- **Health, Wellbeing and Social Care**
- **Languages and Applied Linguistics**

 **For more information**
wels.open.ac.uk



In schools across the world, teachers are the most important determinant of children’s learning. However, 70 million more teachers are needed, and current teachers need more, and new kinds of support, to help them improve children’s learning and prepare them for fulfilled lives in the 21st century. The OU’s International Teacher Education and Development programme brings scalable life-changing learning to teachers across Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia reaching over two million teachers and millions of their learners.

World-leading resources, co-created by the OU and local partners, are placed directly in teachers’ hands. This is achieved through locally available technologies, such as videos of new teaching techniques on teachers’ own mobile phones. Working with teacher educators and headteachers builds contextually relevant support. It enables teachers and school communities to share successes and overcome challenges together in trying out these

HELPING PEOPLE TO THRIVE IN A COMPLEX AND UNEQUAL WORLD

Research in WELS is concerned with enabling people and communities to thrive in an increasingly complex, insecure and unequal world. It spans areas such as children and young people, health, language and literacies and transformative education.

We work both in the UK and in international development contexts to address serious challenges that our society faces today. This includes ensuring that excluded, vulnerable and complexly disadvantaged people participate in research that impacts their lives.

For example, the project Young Fathers, Relationships and Wellbeing examines young fathers’ experience of family relationships, their mental health and that of their partners and children.

new techniques in their classrooms. These stimulate and sustain new teaching practices, which improve children’s learning.

In Bangladesh, after a year, primary students’ ability to communicate using basic English rose from 36% to 70%. Collaboration with governments brings sustainable change across the system. As one teacher says, “I’m the classroom changer and I’m really proud of that.”

**STUDENT
STORY****RAISING
AWARENESS
OF
DEMENTIA**

OU graduate Gina Awad was described as average by her school teachers, something which has haunted her over the years. But her complete dedication to raising awareness of dementia within her home community of Exeter has seen her receive a string of commendations for 'outstanding work'.

As well as campaigning to raise awareness, Gina also studied a BSc (Hons) in Health and Social Care with the OU, graduating in 2017. Study, she says, has been the catalyst for everything she has achieved in the field of dementia.

"It was fear that prompted me to study dementia. My grandmother delivered creative arts classes in care homes and I used to accompany her to the sessions. I noticed that some people were very engaged in what was going on, but there were others who weren't. I was quite afraid, and I now realise they were living with dementia. I've always been interested in the human mind and it was a friend who first introduced me to the OU in 2009."

Gina says: "I'm passionate about raising awareness of dementia, which may touch all of us in one way or another in the future, and I feel that people everywhere – including those in government – are taking heed of what is the biggest health and social care challenge of this century."

**UNCOVERING THE
HIDDEN STORIES OF
PEOPLE WITH LEARNING
DISABILITIES****A new approach to learning disability services**

The Social History of Learning Disability (SHLD) group was set up in 1994 to look at the history of learning disability services. Originally led by our academics in the fields of health and social care, Professor Jan Walmsley and Emeritus Professor Dorothy Atkinson, the group was driven by the strong belief that people with learning disabilities are experts on their own lives and have historical knowledge, viewpoints and skills to contribute. This has been reflected in the group's inclusive publications, conferences and research projects, as well as close collaborations with a variety of self-advocacy groups, parent organisations and learning disability service providers.

This pioneering inclusive approach has supported the emerging learning disability advocacy movement and the development of person-centred services.

**LEARNING LANGUAGES,
TOGETHER**

An innovative distance learning programme sees primary teachers study French, Spanish, German or Mandarin, as well as learn and directly apply the skills to teach the language in their classrooms at the same time. Run by the OU in Scotland and Scotland's National Centre for Languages (SCILT), the scheme was designed to support the swift implementation of Scotland's language policy, which aims to enable pupils to learn two new languages in primary school. Since its pilot, the initiative has attracted much interest beyond Scotland. Student numbers have tripled in its second presentation when the Programme was also rolled out in Wales and Northern Ireland. Consequently, primary teachers can study with peers from different UK Nations, and investigate diverse policy landscapes and language teaching practices.

OUR NEW MA IN TRANSLATION

Our new post-graduate qualification is an exciting opportunity for our language students to develop their skills as translators, equipping them to work in the fast-growing translation services industry. Not only does the Programme offer students the opportunity to experiment with different genres, through practical and inspiring translation activities, they will also gain hands-on experience of using technological tools necessary to operate in this rapidly-evolving area, such as subtitling software, or cloud-based machine translation.



For more information, email la1-translation-masters@open.ac.uk

THE SIMPLE ACT OF CARING IS HEROIC

THE OU IS PROUD OF ITS CONTINUED INFLUENCE IN NURSING AND CARING

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF NURSING IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The OU recently celebrated ten years since its first student nurses graduated in Northern Ireland. Since 2008, over 270 nurses have qualified with The Open University and they are making a huge difference to patients' lives in hospitals and communities across Northern Ireland.



One OU student currently working in the Belfast Trust, and studying for a BSc Adult Nursing, is Steven Ryan. After starting his career as a bricklayer, Steven unfortunately had an accident and was unable to walk for two years. The care he received during this period from nursing staff inspired him to change direction in life and to start working in healthcare, with the ultimate goal of becoming a nurse. "I'm very proud to have the opportunity to study nursing with the OU," said Steven. "It has supported me in developing a career I am passionate about. I feel nursing helps me to make a difference, and it impacts positively on people's lives."

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WHO ARE CARERS

Caring affects one in eight of us, with 370,000 carers across Wales alone, who provide unpaid support to a friend or family member who, due to illness or disability cannot manage without help. Many OU staff and students are recognised in these numbers. A pack for student carers has been developed which includes organising home exams; flexible tutorial arrangements; support from tutors; and top tips from other student carers.

"My son is very unpredictable, and it was difficult to plan ahead," says Kate Blake, OU graduate and carer. "I'd have a week scheduled to do my assignment and then something would happen with him and I'd be tied up with appointments all week and wouldn't get my assignment done on time. My tutor was brilliant, he knew my situation and was able to give me extensions on my assignments."

NORTH-EAST SCOTLAND NURSING PROJECT

The OU partnered with NHS Grampian and North East Scotland College to deliver a project aimed at helping health and social care workers become nurses in the north-east of Scotland. Funded by the Scottish Government, the project aims to make

nursing education more accessible to experienced support workers.



Nurses play a critical role in our society and it's important that the nursing workforce is reflective of the communities it serves.

Projects like this help to widen access to nursing as a profession, making background no barrier to a career as a nurse. ♥♥

Susan Stewart,
Director of The Open University in Scotland

THE OU ACCESS PROGRAMME

Access modules provide the perfect introduction to distance learning and university-led study. Our study materials are designed to help refresh learning skills and build self-confidence.

Some of the first students who started with Access have now graduated and they shared their stories at a recent event in London. Colin, a disabled student, told the audience that five years ago he had almost given up completely. In 2013, he described himself as "Colin, wheelchair bound, dying and useless." His illness had become worse and his marriage had collapsed. He asked the OU for every prospectus and decided on Access. He is pursuing an Open degree and says he is now "Colin, OU student with a future."



Find out more

www.open.ac.uk/courses/do-it/access

THE GENERATION GAME

WHEN THE OU BECOMES A FAMILY AFFAIR

IRINI, EUAN AND ANNA

For some families, the relationship they share with the OU spans generations.

For the Henderson family, it started in 1974 with Irini enrolling with the OU. She received her OU degree in 1978 and her social science studies led her into local politics alongside her NHS work as a physiotherapist. She was elected to Milton Keynes Council in 1982 and served for 28 years, including periods chairing the Housing Committee, as leader of her group, and as cabinet member for social care.

The family moved to Milton Keynes in 1975, when Euan was appointed to a two-year lectureship in the Institute of Educational Technology. The OU was growing rapidly at that time, the temporary post was soon made permanent, and over the next 27 years he progressed to senior lecturer and then professor.

At first, he worked mainly on arts courses, starting with *Elements of Music*. A major change in his work began when he was asked to lead the development of *Accounting and Finance for Managers*, the second course for the new Open Business School (OBS).



Euan, Irini and Anna outside Walton Hall

Later, that led to the Vice-Chancellor asking him to take on the Acting Directorship of OBS for a year until the first dean was appointed.

He stayed with OBS for the next 15 years, focusing mainly on the creation of distance and open learning materials for NHS managers. He chaired the first course, *Managing Health Services*, and developed several more courses, leading to the OU offering certificates and then diplomas in the management of health and social care.

By a wonderful coincidence, Irini and Euan's daughter Anna joined the OU in

2016 as Head of Student Support for the Faculty of Business and Law, from which Euan had retired over a decade earlier. Last year she was appointed Director of Assessment, Credit and Qualifications, all aspects of the OU's work in which Euan had been much involved.

Other members of the family have also been OU students. Irini's American sister-in-law, who missed out on university education, completed a full OU degree. Her sister and a niece, both living in Athens, studied OU courses in creative writing. All are proud to be part of the OU family.

MARVA AND ADRIAN

Marva Rollins had always wanted to be a teacher, but it wasn't until her early thirties with three young children that she felt ready to pursue her dream – first completing a Bachelor's degree and then achieving a Masters through The Open University. She is a very active member of her local community in the London Borough of Newham, a Headteacher and a role model – not only for her teacher peers but for all young people in her community and beyond – showing them that your background, ethnicity and gender are not barriers to achieving success.



Marva Rollins

As a professional cricket player, Marva's son Adrian was at the height of his career when a sudden injury changed everything. Fielding close to the wicket for Northamptonshire, Adrian broke his wrist badly, forcing him to retire in 2003.

The OU was a natural choice for his studies as Adrian had already seen first-hand what a powerful impact OU degrees could have. "My mother has been an inspiration my whole life – she is an incredible woman and I owe everything to her."

Adrian initially signed up for a degree in *Childhood and Youth Studies* but soon discovered a love of mathematics and switched his path to work towards a BSc (Hons) Open degree. He says: "Without my qualifications I would not have been able to enter the teaching profession. I went on to complete my Masters of the *Arts in Education* in 2012, which has proven very useful in my career. The OU will change your life for the better."



When I decided I wanted to do a Masters I chose the OU because I knew that I could study independently and I felt confident that I could manage my time, I was new to teaching at that point, so I felt I could manage OU studies rather than having to physically attend lectures at a traditional university. I knew I could take my time, so if it took more than three years it wouldn't matter. ”



Share your story alumni.open.ac.uk

THE OU IS FOR EMPLOYERS TOO

ORGANISATIONS BENEFIT FROM THE OPEN UNIVERSITY

What did achieving your degree do for you? Help you develop the skills you needed for your dream job or let you venture down a path you never thought you could? Over the past 50 years we have helped thousands of alumni achieve their career potential and dreams, and we can do the same for organisations too.

Our higher and degree apprenticeship programmes, which we have been running since 2016, are a response to organisational requirements for increasing employee skillsets, staff retention and raising productivity.

Across healthcare our Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship, which is based upon our successful practice-based pre-registration programme, has helped more than 1,500 healthcare support workers register as qualified nurses since 2002 with a 91%



98% employer satisfaction for our higher and degree apprenticeship programmes

DfE's FE Choices Employer Satisfaction

student satisfaction rate. Nursing Associate Higher Apprenticeship, and shortly a Social Worker Degree Apprenticeship, have been designed to overcome the sector's staffing and skill shortage and increase in the quality of patient care through upskilling and development of existing and new healthcare support workers.

We have also recently launched our Policing Degree Apprenticeship designed to develop learners in to competent Police Constables, equipped with the necessary skillset, knowledge and behaviours.



Find out more

business@open.ac.uk

0300 303 0122

FIND YOUR FUTURE ON OPPORTUNITYHUB

As an OU graduate, you have strengths and skills that employers really value. With access to the full range of online resources, tools, workshops, support and guidance provided by the OU's Careers and Employability Services for three years after you graduate, we hope to help you become career confident.

Hundreds of employers all over the UK and Ireland are interested in meeting you. A new way you can connect with them is **OpportunityHub**, launched in late summer 2018. **OpportunityHub** is our online careers platform for OU students and alumni, showcasing work placements, internships and job vacancies. You will also find events such as online webinars and workshops, employer guest sessions and the online OU careers fairs **OU Online TalentConnect**, which runs several times a year. So log in to **OpportunityHub**, start tailoring your preferences, follow employers working in your area of career interest and access thousands of opportunities.

To register for **OpportunityHub**, all you have to do is search **OpportunityHub** in the Help Centre in your OU StudentHome page and follow the registration instructions for recent graduates.

OU IRELAND LEADS THE WAY IN VIRTUAL INTERNSHIPS

In 2018, The Open University in Ireland secured two virtual internships – the first of these type of internships for the University.



Gavin McGurran

With all the same principles as other work-based placement opportunities to gain vital industry experience, virtual internships differ in that they offer students the chance to work remotely. This means they can have a flexible working environment fitting their internships around their part-time studies and life commitments, and removing the need to travel.

Gavin McGurran, 31, from Bleary in Co. Down, is currently studying for a BA (Hons) in Business Management. He recently completed a ten-week Santander internship with Inspire Loyalty. The company provides loyalty programmes for independent hotels in the UK and Republic of Ireland, and incentive programmes for the travel industry.

Gavin's role was to support marketing of the loyalty products through communications to loyalty members, and to increase awareness of Inspire Loyalty as a brand.

As a result of his internship, Gavin is now employed full-time on a virtual basis with the company.

50 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT OPENLEARN

Have you visited OpenLearn, the home of free learning from The Open University?

If you have, you're one of more than 60 million visitors to the site since 2006 – that's more than the population of Canada and Australia combined.



For more than a decade we have been providing free courses, articles, videos, interactive games and activities, all written by OU academics, and covering subjects from accounting to zoology and everything in between. Everything is free to read, study and share by anyone around the world. So if you fancy brushing up on a bit of holiday French, exploring migrant experiences through our interactive game, or finding out about the language and history of baking, come and see what we have on offer.

To celebrate 50 years of The Open University we're sharing 50 things that you might not know about OpenLearn.

- Why do we give out content for free? The Queen told us to! It's written in our Royal Charter: 'Advancement and dissemination of learning and knowledge... to promote the general wellbeing of the community'.
- A little piece of every module offered by the OU is placed on OpenLearn for free.
- We're advocates of employability and have a range of free courses to give you the additional skills employers increasingly value.
- Learning on OpenLearn can now count towards Open University formal study through the new module *Making your learning count*, currently running as a pilot.
- Our most popular broadcast page last year was *Blue Planet II* with almost 700,000 page visits.
- We won an award for our digital badges and, since their creation in 2015, 12,042 digital badges have been awarded to learners.
- Our most popular interactive over the years is *Choose your own Philosophy Adventure*.
- We're championing Women in STEM and have an interactive and free course to help women return to their Science, Technology, Engineering or Maths career after a break.
- We're potty about Harry Potter (and so are some of our OU academics). Can you guess which Hogwarts house translates as Poufsouffle in French? Search for our article *Harry Potter and the Translator's Challenge* to find out.
- We have over 15,000 followers on Facebook and Twitter, check us out at [@ouopenlearn](https://www.facebook.com/ouopenlearn) or [@OUFreeLearning](https://twitter.com/OUFreeLearning) respectively.



➡ For the full list or to get started on your OpenLearn journey
open.edu/openlearn/OU50

YOUR TIME IS NOW

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY HAS LAUNCHED THE OPEN DIARIES, AN ONLINE SERIES OF SHORT DOCUMENTARIES

The Open University has recently launched **The Open Diaries**, a series of video diaries and interviews that will be seen across a multitude of digital and social media channels, aimed at revealing what life is like as an OU student.

Featuring eight students from different walks of life, the five minute diaries provide an opportunity for people to see what it's really like to study with the OU. We hear about the reasons they chose to study with us, the challenges they face and their achievements, specifically how their studies have already changed their lives. For the first time we are also featuring our tutors; Doug and Rehana lift the lid on the expertise they bring to their role, the support they provide and their pride in watching students transform before their eyes.

The Open Diaries take us on a number of journeys, from *New Beginnings* to *Making it Happen*, through *Exceeding Expectations* and *Striving for More*; and finally, *Always Learning*.

Take a look at **The Open Diaries** and rediscover how it feels to take that life-changing step. Here are just a couple of the inspirational stories from our "Open Diary" students.



CHLOE BURROUGHS

After finishing school, Chloe wasn't sure what she wanted to do next. "I saw myself as a good student until I went into Sixth Form. The responsibility for my learning shifted from my teachers to me, but I didn't realise this until it was too late. The workload increased but my effort didn't, I become disenchanted with learning."

"So, I did what every sensible young woman should do after failure – I moved to Barbados! I spent an amazing eighteen months there before coming back to the UK to start an office job – that was a shock to the system!

"I saw an advert on TV for The Open University and the next day I enrolled. I graduated in June 2016 and in the same month, I started a blog and business focusing on helping busy university students achieve higher grades with lower stress.

"The OU gave me my second chance at gaining an education, but it also sky-rocketed my confidence and gave me the opportunity to start a business I love. I earned while learning, so I graduated debt-free and I cultivated the discipline and drive needed to build and grow my start-up.

Chloe has recently left her job in order to focus on her business full time and it all wouldn't have been possible without the OU!

DANIEL REES

Daniel went through a particularly challenging and difficult time during his teenage years after he had to drop out of school as a result of bullying. He found himself at a crossroads and knew he needed to make a positive change in his life.

"Once I finished school, I started working full-time, jumping from job to job to try to find something that suited me," said Daniel. He now works as a full-time tube driver at Transport For London (TfL) but he had always longed to return to education.

"I was really excited to start learning with the OU. I thought this is my chance to finally get my degree," he explained. "It's so flexible, and an Open University degree is looked upon favourably by employers too, because you have to be very self-motivated and disciplined to complete it. Studying with the OU has really opened up my eyes to a new world that I would never have had access to before. It has really boosted my confidence and given me the confidence to start exploring other career opportunities."

Daniel is currently studying towards a BA (Hons) degree in Law.



For more information

www.open.ac.uk/courses/choose/the-open-diaries

47 YEARS OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY/BBC PARTNERSHIP

Over 47 years the OU/BBC learning partnership has gone from strength to strength. In the OU's 50th Anniversary year, we will build on the tremendous success of previous years and continue to reach and engage millions of people whilst delivering unique media assets for our teaching and learning. OU academics have always been at the core of the OU/BBC partnership providing their expertise on a wide range of subjects and you can find out more about their experiences on the Broadcast pages on OpenLearn.

In 2019 we have a range of inspirational programmes. The exploration of our environment continues with *Blue Planet Live*, and beyond Earth, exploring the solar system with *The Planets*. In the year in which we celebrate the OU's history, we'll discover who the UK



considers to be the key figure of the 20th Century in *Icons* and we will go behind the scenes of the Bank of England and Brexit.

The BBC will be helping us celebrate our 50th Anniversary and whilst we look back at some of the amazing programmes we have worked on together over the years, we're also looking forward to the future and to continuing to

bring learning to life on TV and radio, on digital and social media and via immersive technologies.



For more details about OU/BBC related content and print items, or to learn more about our amazing OU academic consultants who work on programmes

open.edu/openlearn/tv-radio-events

OU STUDENTS ASSOCIATION WELCOMES NEW PRESIDENT CATH BROWN

I am one of the OU's remaining "leisure students" – I joined in 2008. Back at school I chose maths over chemistry, so my first intention with the OU was to study chemistry. I was very familiar with the institution as my mum had studied maths with the OU when in her sixties.

Like many students, I started small... and then studying just expanded and took over my life! Since then, I've added engineering, physics, computing and even history and Classical Greek to the chemistry, and I have English language, modern foreign languages and creative writing planned for the future.

My involvement in the Students Association crept up on me in the same way; I started out moderating forums (largely because I wanted a chemistry forum to exist) and then set up the OU's student Chemistry Society. Then I started getting involved locally – the local Assembly, Regional Consultative Committee and then Central Consultative Committee.

In 2013, the then president, Marianne Cantieri, started something by inviting me as an observer to the Central Executive Committee. From then on, my card was marked. When the new role of Faculty

Representative became available in 2016, I stood for election for the STEM Faculty Representative role. The opportunity to satisfy my nosiness about everything in the University was irresistible! Then the ultimate step, a leave of absence from my job to stand for the role of Students Association President in 2018.

The duck picture? Well, in May 2018 I foolishly asked in the biggest OU Facebook group whether people would consider sponsoring me to dress as a duck (my Facebook icon is a duck) during the Students Association Conference. People said yes! And since it was all to raise money for OUSET (that's the OU Students Educational Trust, which helps people in financial hardship continue with their studies), I had to agree. So I spent 6 hours dressed as a duck on campus, on one of the hottest days of the year – but I raised over £1,000.



Cath Brown



For more information oustudents.com

OPEN UP THE FUTURE

ON THE ROAD TO SUCCESS: THE OU'S FIRST EVER FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

In 2015, The Open University proudly launched its first ever fundraising campaign: **Open up the Future**. The University, working in partnership with alumni, donors, friends and supporters, set itself the ambitious challenge to raise £50 million to coincide with the celebration of its 50th Anniversary.

The Campaign, having already raised £32 million, seeks to celebrate and propagate the work of our academics and raise funds to help our students succeed in their mission. The Campaign centres on one simple principle – one which has always come naturally to the OU – that of **Opening Up**.

The Campaign focuses on four distinct areas:

OPEN UP LIVES

We are using our knowledge and expertise in distance learning to deliver life-changing projects in developing countries. The rapid global growth of low-cost technology is creating exciting new ways of taking education to global beneficiaries. Around the world, our learners are able to use mobile phones, tablet computers and Raspberry Pi networks to access high-quality learning resources at any time, regardless of internet connectivity and reliable electrical supplies. Our international development work is already extensive but we aim to provide millions more teachers, healthcare workers and development workers – in Africa, Asia and beyond – with the resources that will help them support their communities in building brighter futures.

Over
2 million
teachers
reached

OPEN UP THINKING

Our radical ideas started with a university without classrooms, and since then we have continued to challenge existing concepts and find new solutions. Our cutting-edge, world-leading research covers every aspect of our lives, from using nano-particles to increase drug efficacy, to searching for answers in the space above. Our wide-ranging research changes lives, it helps people to walk after a stroke, it improves cancer detection rates and it builds cities that are sustainable, taking care of their communities and the environment.

72% of our
research is
deemed 'world
leading' or
'internationally
excellent'



OPEN UP MINDS

Right from the start, in 1969, we have inspired and enabled learners to make their dreams and ambitions a reality. We created the world of kitchen table learners and coffee shop students, midnight assignment submissions and lunch-break lessons. Now, we nurture life-long learning journeys by offering freely accessible learning materials via OpenLearn, and contributing to highly informative BBC programming. Through the power of unrestricted learning we aim to inspire curious minds everywhere.

7 million
OpenLearn
users each
year

OPEN UP OPPORTUNITY

We believe that where you start in life should not define where you go. Our mission, to make education open to all, is still as important today as it was in 1969. Nobody should be excluded from the chance to experience the transformative power of education. Therefore, we continue to fund scholarships and provide practical support for people from low-income or disadvantaged backgrounds, to help them fulfil their potential and achieve their dreams, for example supporting disabled veterans to access education.

54
scholarships
awarded
to disabled
veterans

As a university, we are dedicated to sustaining our mission of education being open to people, places, methods and ideas. We look forward to sharing new projects with you as we continue to **Open up the Future**.



Find out more about the Campaign
giving.open.ac.uk



1969

Following years of planning by Harold Wilson and Jennie Lee, The Open University (OU) was granted a Royal Charter on 23rd April 1969.

1970



The first buildings on the Walton Hall campus were opened by Earl Mountbatten of Burma. **Over 42,000 applications** were made for the 25,000 available places to study for the first year

1971



The first OU courses were launched, and the **first broadcast** was aired on 3rd January

1972



Dr. John McArthur was awarded a **Duke of Edinburgh Design prize** for the lightweight, plastic OU version of the McArthur microscope used for the first Science Home Experiment Kit

1973



The OU's **first graduation ceremony** was broadcast live on BBC2 from Alexandra Palace

The Queen visited The OU's Walton Hall campus in Milton Keynes

1979

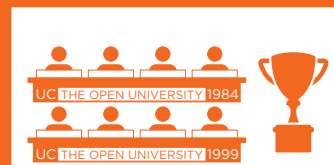


1980



Over 38,500 students had graduated with the OU by 1980, and 130 undergraduate courses were being offered

1984



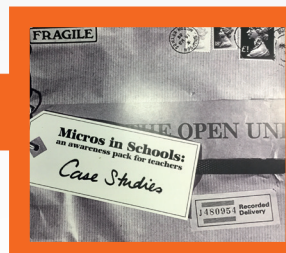
The OU won the popular ITV / BBC TV series **University challenge** for the first time

OPEN BUSINESS SCHOOL

1983

The OU launched the **Business School**

1982



The 1980s saw an expansion in the use of computers. The Open University launched modules on computing and study packs, including the **'Micros in Schools'** packs for teachers launched in 1982

1981



Over 6,000 television and radio programmes had been produced by 1981 through the OU / BBC partnership

1990



More than 20,000 tons of study material had been sent to students by 1990

1992

The OU launched a nationwide service to **validate the degrees** of other academic institutions



The OU launched its **iTunes U project**, which had over 1 million downloads in only 4 months



1994

Betty Boothroyd, Speaker of the House of Commons, succeeded as the fourth Chancellor of the OU



The OU's **Knowledge Media Institute (KMi)** was founded to create and study future technologies

1995



1998



The **25th anniversary** of the OU's first graduation ceremony and the 200,000th graduate

2000



The Library launched **Open Libr@ry**, providing OU students and staff with access to online journals and resources

2009



iSpot, the OU's social media site for identifying nature was launched

2008

2007

For the third time in a row, the OU was ranked **first** in the **National Student Survey**

2006

OpenLearn, the University's major new content initiative was launched, making educational resources freely available

2005



The award-winning OU/BBC series **Coast** began

The OU's iTunes U service reached **20 million downloads**, and Open Research Online, the OU's research repository marked its 1 millionth visitor



2010

The Queen awarded the OU a **Regius Professorship in Open Education**, recognising the work of Eileen Scanlon

2013



2014



The first memorial plaques were unveiled in the OU's **Legacy Garden** at Walton Hall

2016

The OU won a clutch of top awards including **four awards in three categories** of the 2016 Awards for Open Education Excellence

2017

The OU's Business School MBA was ranked **joint seventh** in the Global Online MBA rankings



2019



The Open University celebrates its 50th Anniversary - proud of opening up education for all and looking forward to inspiring more people to creating better futures.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY

A stunning celebration of the last 50 years and an inspiration for the future

As part of The Open University's 50th Anniversary celebrations a fantastic 'Tree of Learning' sculpture is being created. The tree will be installed on campus, later in the Anniversary year, and will burst into life with the addition of hundreds of individually personalised gold-coloured OU shields hung as leaves on the tree, creating a breathtaking sculpture.

Alumni, friends, supporters and those involved with the University are being invited to contribute to our 50th Anniversary Scholarships Fund – to recognise their support, a personalised shield will be hung on the tree. The shields will bear the name of donors, and the first year that they either enrolled as a student, or became involved with the University, sharing the part they play in the OU story. It's a fantastic way to be involved with an amazing creation that will inspire generations to come.

50th Anniversary Scholarships Fund

As part of our 50th Anniversary, we have created a special Scholarships Fund to ensure more vulnerable people who would otherwise not get a chance to study, have the opportunity to do so. We are raising funds to award 50 scholarships for carers and a further 50 scholarships for vulnerable people, ensuring no-one is left behind. The Fund will help mark 50 years of **opening up education for all**.



Artist's impression



Find out more about how you can help bring the 'Tree of Learning' to life. Request an information pack today

alumni@open.ac.uk
01908 653815
alumni.open.ac.uk



The Open
University

50
YEARS

OPEN UP YOUR ALUMNI WEBSITE



UPDATE YOUR DETAILS



EXPLORE FURTHER
LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



NEWS AND EVENTS



SHARE YOUR STORY

REGISTER TO:

- Update your contact details, view your qualifications and much more
- Read inspirational fellow alumni stories (and share your own)
- Discover what the OU is doing on social media and on TV
- Read the latest news on events, appeals and projects



Get started today alumni.open.ac.uk