The Open University

News from your University

OpenMinds

Sweet success for Andrew

From OU student to award-winning confectionery entrepreneur

OpenMinds 2024

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News and Events
Read the latest news on events, appeals and projects

Further Learning
Continue your learning journey with The Open University

Share Your Story
Read inspirational alumni stories and share your own

Update Your Details
Change your details, view your qualifications and much more

Get started today
alumni.open.ac.uk

Alumni website
alumni.open.ac.uk

Giving website
giving.open.ac.uk

Recognising our donors
giving.open.ac.uk/recognition

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Make sure you never miss a thing!

One of the best ways to keep in touch with your University is by email. It's easy, just email **alumni@open.ac.uk** with 'Stay connected' and your name and PI Number to make sure you receive all the latest news, events, exclusive invites and offers, fundraising appeals, campaigns and other ways to get involved.

Your University is tackling the **most important issues** of our time

I'm delighted to have the opportunity to contribute to the 2024 issue of OpenMinds which stars one of your fellow alumni Andrew Newlands, founder of the multi-award-winning Monty Bojangles confectionery company. It was while he was developing his brand that he chose to study for a BSc (Hons) in Psychology with us, graduating in 2010. You can read his story on pages 8-11.

As one of our alumni, you will know us well as a teaching institution, but you may be less aware of our work as a research university. As one of the largest universities in Europe, we do world-class research but a bit differently and, for over 50 years, we have been using our research to transform lives across the four nations and globally. Our research, highly respected and valued by governments, employers and professional bodies, informs our teaching, and citizens of the world, locally and internationally, changing hearts and minds on key issues.

I chose to join The Open University because of our capacity and potential to create substantial positive societal change through our research. The eagerness of both our staff and students to engage in collaborative efforts with industry, charities, governments, and local communities was evident right from the beginning of my journey at the OU.

OpenMinds Live 2024

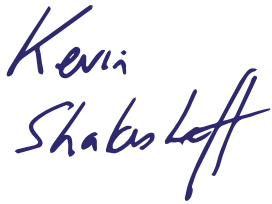
On 24 April, we will be hosting the next OpenMinds Live online event which is our opportunity to bring to life some of the most exciting articles from this magazine. Follow the link below to find out more and reserve your space.

Secure your place today
www.bit.ly/openmindslive24

This issue highlights the work colleagues and I have been doing across the University to ensure our research addresses the most pressing challenges of our time through our Open Societal Challenges work, that is to turn our brightest minds to some of the most pressing needs of our time in Sustainability, Tackling Inequalities and Living Well. 2024 will be an exciting year for this work and I look forward to sharing more with you in the coming months.

You can find out more on pages 40 and 41.

OU students and alumni inspire us every day – I hope, in turn, the OU continues to inspire you and to make you proud. Thank you for being a valued member of the OU family.



Professor Kevin Shakesheff
Pro-Vice-Chancellor
(Research & Innovation)

Visit the OU website
www.open.ac.uk

Open Societal Challenges
www.bit.ly/opensocvid

Celebrating Gold in the Teaching Excellence Framework

The Open University has been awarded an overall Gold rating in the Office for Students Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

The TEF recognises high-quality teaching and student outcomes in higher education and 2023 was the first time the OU has submitted to the TEF.

Learn more
www.bit.ly/gold-tef

Meet **OU graduate and founder** of award-winning chocolate brand, Monty Bojangles

BSc Psychology graduate Andrew Newlands is founder and Managing Director of Monty Bojangles, the award-winning chocolatiers taking the confectionery market by storm. Named after his beloved cat and inimitable mascot, Andrew's brand of fantastical fun and uncompromising taste is fast becoming a household name.

The company's impressive international growth earned Monty Bojangles the prestigious King's Award for Enterprise; International Trade, which Andrew collected at Buckingham Palace in April last year. Andrew shares how being part of the OU family has helped elevate his entrepreneurial spirit.

Where it all started

Andrew realised from a young age that he wanted to create products that sparked desire. His first enterprise provided pubs and clubs in South London with online social networks, nurturing a community and converting partygoers into regular customers. Andrew then turned his hand to product design and project management for big brands, feeding his fascination with capturing the imagination of consumers.

"I left school after my GCSEs with this feeling of needing to work things out for myself," Andrew remembers. "I tend to get an idea in my head and obsess slightly until I figure out how to make it happen."

In 2005, Andrew registered with The Open University to study for a BSc in Psychology. Still immersed in growing his business, committing to a degree course was a big step.

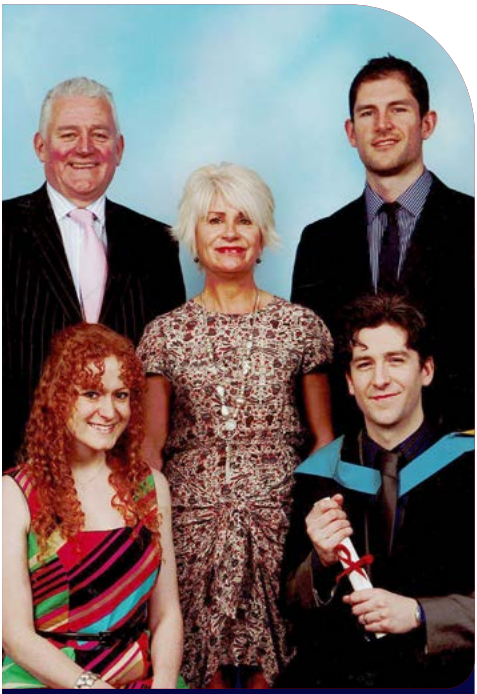
"When you start a business, you don't know how it's going to turn out. I wanted to make sure I had another career option that I would find equally satisfying," Andrew explains. "Psychology is a remarkable toolbox to take into the world and I knew that it would equip me well for whatever I went on to do."

Three years into his Psychology degree, while consulting for well-known confectionery brands, Andrew fell in love with the world of chocolate and set about developing a brand of his own.

"I wanted to offer consumers something different in, what I felt, was becoming a very serious space," Andrew reflects. "Chocolate is made to be scoffed! Of course, it's of vital importance to know the provenance of your ingredients and understand the flavour notes – at Monty Bojangles we truly care about our credentials – but let's not forget that chocolate should be fun."

© Paul Upward Photography

> I can't think of a better way to unlock a new path than studying with the OU.
>
> **Andrew Newlands**
> OU graduate and founder of Monty Bojangles



Andrew Newlands with his wife Sarah and family at his OU graduation ceremony, April 2011

Hear more from Andrew
www.bit.ly/montyb

Andrew, a self-confessed chocoholic, looks to that special moment of anticipation when you unwrap your favourite treat for inspiration.

"We all deserve to be a little bit naughty sometimes," says Andrew. "Those simple pleasures are to be cherished, and that's why I do what I do."

The catharsis of study

With the business gathering pace and demands on Andrew's time piling up, he found sanctuary in his studies.

"As a creative, with deadlines looming, you're under pressure to come up with something amazing. When there's a mental block, it's tough. I found that OU learning gave me a safe place to retreat from the stresses of work, giving my brain time to escape and reset. Invariably, after a study session, inspiration would hit – it felt like essential catharsis."

Over the course of Andrew's OU studies, he and his wife Sarah started a family, and launched Monty Bojangles – two major life events, which drew heavily on his available time.

"That experience taught me a lot about setting realistic expectations. I was forced to adjust my approach, to accommodate the changes that were happening in my life. In doing that, I plugged into the reasons why I was studying," Andrew reflects. "It wasn't about going after a certain level of attainment. I wanted to learn new things, enrich myself and be nourished by a subject I found captivating – I think that's a concept that can also be applied to business. You've got to love what you're doing."

© Paul Upward Photography

Monty Bojangles team celebrates receiving the King's Award for Enterprise in International Trade 2023, from the Deputy Lieutenant Colonel Ray Wilkinson, along with The Worshipful the Mayor of Croydon, Jason Perry

Skills for success

Andrew's passion for his craft has delivered incredible results. Now a multi-million-pound operation, Monty Bojangles boasts 48 Great Taste Awards, with products firmly placed on the shelves of major supermarkets and independent retailers across the UK and beyond.

"I undoubtedly developed skills throughout my studies, which helped me succeed in business. I'm certain that I'm a better project manager as a result of my time with the OU," says Andrew. "One of the best things about the OU is that you can succeed alongside being a professional in another capacity. I could feel myself becoming stronger, more confident and more capable with every year of study. I didn't have to wait to use those skills - I could apply them immediately, which is an unparalleled benefit of the OU."

For anyone else itching to follow their dreams - whether that's returning to study or setting up a business - Andrew has this advice:

"I can't think of a better way to unlock a new path than studying with the OU. Get yourself a killer qualification from the comfort of your own home, with the credibility of the OU brand – take it from me, that's priceless!"

Exclusive OU alumni discount

As a member of the OU Alumni Association, we are delighted to share an exclusive promotion code with you for Monty Bojangles.

Follow the link below and use code **MONTYOU15** to get 15% off a 2 x 150g gift pack. Ten delicious flavours are available. (Valid until 10 April 2024).

Explore the range
www.bit.ly/mbdiscount

FASS Forward

More information
fass.open.ac.uk

As newly appointed Executive Dean, I am pleased to be leading the Faculty into an exciting future of new opportunities. We announced the creation of our new School of Creative Industries and welcomed our first students through The Open College of the Arts.

Our curriculum continues to evolve, with new short courses, qualifications and modules expanding our range of subjects, with further curriculum in development for presentation throughout 2024. Our partnerships and consultations with the BBC and other broadcasters brought incredible series such as *Windrush*: *Portraits of a Generation* to your screens, and award-winning content online. Our research goes from strength to strength, with groundbreaking research projects making a real difference to the world, and a new generation of doctoral students developing their skills.

Professor Adrienne Scullion
Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Fresh thinking brought to the fore

Staff and students within our School of Social Sciences and Global Studies (SSGS) share ideas on the world we live in, as well as teaching and research highlights, in *Local & Global*. The fourth edition of the digital SSGS Magazine has been re-branded, re-named, with fresh thinking, approaches and perspectives to tackle the societal challenges facing us all.

Read the magazine
www.bit.ly/localglobalmag

Decolonising how peace is taught in Africa

How can local peace knowledges and values be used to decolonise peace education?

Led by Professor of Geography Parvati Raghuram, the Decolonising Education for Peace in Africa project (DEPA) has sought to answer that question over the past four years through an ambitious research programme of 15 projects, spanning 12 African countries. Current peace education materials are largely produced by national and international organisations and do not use local resources, pedagogies, or are not based on local knowledges of peace.

DEPA fills that gap, working with a diverse range of conflict-affected communities, including; internally displaced populations in Nigeria, migrants experiencing xenophobia in South Africa, marginalised refugee youth in Kenya, and women and girls in Ethiopia. Arts methods such as storytelling, photovoice, dance and soundscapes are used to explore community knowledges of peace and the findings utilised to create formal and informal teaching materials in a range of educational settings and subjects. Insights gained from across the project are being used to build a decolonisation learning framework, and Open Educational Resources for use in Africa and beyond.

Learn more
www.bit.ly/depa-org

A selection of materials used in project workshops held in 2023 in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi

New courses for professional development

A suite of new online short courses for professionals in Psychotherapy and Counselling launched in October 2023, designed and written by Professor Naomi Moller, Head of Psychology, and Dr Andreas Vossler, Deputy Director of Teaching (Counselling). The four 25-hour long courses are designed for counsellors, psychotherapists, and trainees to advance their skills, and were developed with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and approved by the Counselling and Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body, with a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) certificate awarded upon successful completion.

Dr Donna Smith, Senior Lecturer and Staff Tutor in Politics, consulted on a new online *Reporting on Migration* course by the Migration Observatory at Oxford University for the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ). Designed to help journalists ensure their work is accurate and based on a clear understanding of the complex challenges relating to migration, the course is presented by the NCTJ's Journalism Skills Academy.

A new online course *Practising with care in mind: Learning from professionals and Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children*, jointly developed by Professor of Cultural-Developmental Psychology Sarah Crafter and the University of Northampton, is available for social care professionals who work with Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and separated or lone migrant young people. The course grew from the findings of the Children Caring on the Move research project, which explored how separated migrant children made sense of care relationships and caring practices, and can be added to CPD records for social workers, and is available to anyone working in the field.

Explore short courses
www.bit.ly/counsellingsc

Celebrating FASS innovation

New Generation Thinker

Dr Dan Taylor, Lecturer in Social and Political Thought, is one of ten researchers chosen to be a "New Generation Thinker", bringing fresh thinking to a range of topics on the world around us. Chosen through a competitive process by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and BBC Radio 3, Dan is receiving training and development with the AHRC and a year's mentoring by BBC producers, appearances on the *Free Thinking* programme, and is working on episodes of *The Essay*.

Animated film shortlisted

A short animated film about Euripides' tragedy *Medea*, produced for the OU Classical Studies third level module *Greek and Roman Myth* (A350), was shortlisted for a Royal Television Society Yorkshire Award. Lecturer in Classical Studies Dr Christine Plastow and Professor of Classical Studies James Robson were consultants for the film, produced by Fettle Animation Ltd and voiced by actor Angela Griffin.

Watch the animation
www.bit.ly/medeaanimation

FBL Focus

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

I am very honoured to have joined the OU as Executive Dean for the Faculty of Business and Law. For educators, there has never been a more exciting time! As technology increasingly impacts the higher education sector, the consequences for consumer choice, delivery, learner engagement and competition are profound.

For wider UK society, having a working population that can think and act differently around opportunity - and can confidently find opportunities in uncertain environments – is the foundation of an entrepreneurial economy. FBL will continue to be a responsive and inclusive agent of positive change in Business and Law as well as an increasingly innovative education leader internationally.

Professor Mark Durkin
Executive Dean, Faculty of Business and Law

Schools celebrate anniversaries

Founded in 1983, The Open University Business School (OUBS) proudly marked its 40th anniversary last year with a series of events including one that brought its valued alumni community together face-to-face for the first time since the pandemic. OUBS celebrated its 110,000 alumni, including more than 28,000 MBA alumni, across 125 countries, along with being part of an elite group of just 1% of business schools worldwide which are triple accredited.

The Law School marked 25 years of teaching law to over 60,000 students with a special visit from the Attorney General, Victoria Prentis KC MP (pictured below), who spoke with students about pursuing a career within government. During this online and in-person event, which attracted nearly 200 attendees, she discussed diverse routes into law and shared the story of her own professional background, giving a fascinating insight into her role as top legal advisor to the Government.

Watch the event
www.bit.ly/attorneygentalk

Criminal Justice Clinic shortlisting

The Criminal Justice Clinic, based in the Law School's Open Justice Centre, sees students research and advise on live criminal cases while being supported by supervising tutors. The clinic was shortlisted in the LawWorks and Attorney General Student Awards 2023 for 'Best new pro bono activity'. Run by LawWorks with the support of the Attorney General, Victoria Prentis KC MP, the awards recognise and celebrate the outstanding pro bono work undertaken by law schools and law students across the UK.

Learn more
www.bit.ly/openjusticecentre

First OU policing graduates

The first two cohorts of officers who successfully completed the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship, part of a partnership between the OU and North Yorkshire Police, graduated at the Harrogate degree ceremony in October 2023. This programme, which offers both theoretical and practical training for graduate officers, has been a huge success since it launched in 2020 with more than 300 new recruits joining the force through OU pathways.

Jo Lambert, the Teaching Director in the Department for Policing, based in the Business School, said: "These graduates started their programmes at the height of Covid-19. They trail-blazed the new qualification, learning while we learned. We're delighted senior members of North Yorkshire Police, including the Chief Constable, joined us to mark this milestone."

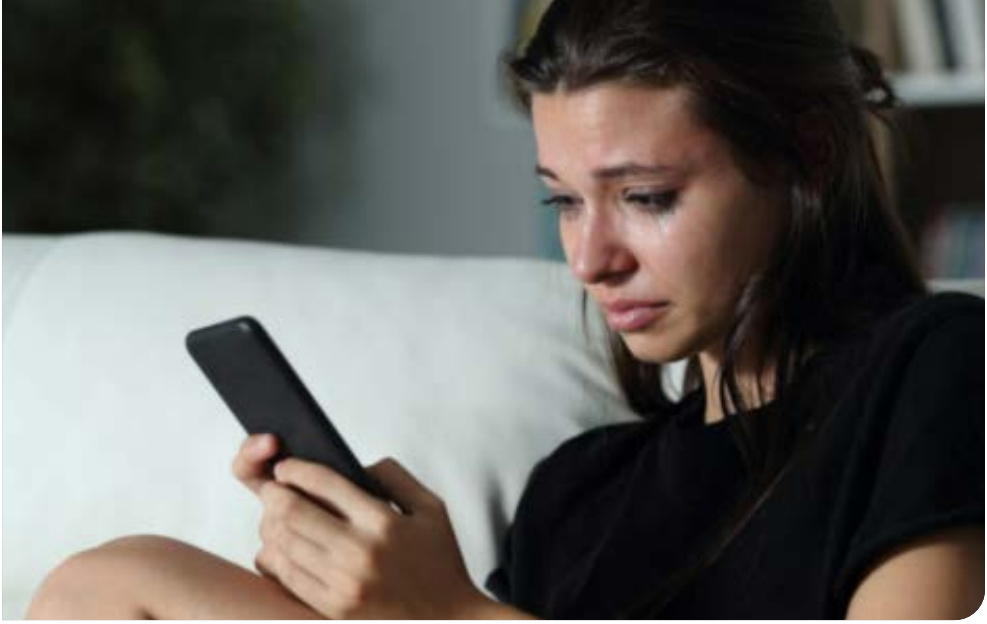
Learn more
www.bit.ly/policinggrads

Further funding to improve police investigations

The Centre for Policing Research and Learning, based in the Business School, received another year's funding (£600,000) to continue work alongside the police to improve the way rape and sexual offences are investigated.

The team worked on the learning and development workstream for a report which was used to develop a new national operating model for police forces, funded by the UK Home Office. Their work is focused on three main areas – improving the training of 'first responders' to provide them with more specialist knowledge; supporting officers' wellbeing and resilience; and helping police forces to adapt to change.

Learn more
www.bit.ly/policingresearch



OU research reveals shocking level of online violence against women and girls

Olga Jurasz, Professor of Law, led the UK's largest ever study into societal attitudes and experiences of online violence against women and girls (OVAWG), with the research revealing shocking results.

The first report of its kind surveyed 7,500 adults via YouGov and showed more than one in ten women in England have experienced online violence, with this figure increasing among those aged 16-24 and LGBTQ+ women. It also found that, of those women who have experienced online violence, more than one in ten said it later progressed to offline violence. Online anonymity, ease of getting away with it, and misogyny, top the most commonly perceived reasons why people commit online violence against women and girls.

The OVAWG research project forms part of the University's Open Societal Challenges Programme, featured on pages 40 and 41, which aims to tackle some of the most important societal challenges of our time through impact-driven research. As part of this, Olga and colleague Dr Kim Barker launched the Observatory on Online Violence Against Women, whose work unites expert bodies and social media platforms to fight digital abuse.

Learn more
www.bit.ly/ovawg

Double delight in AASCB awards

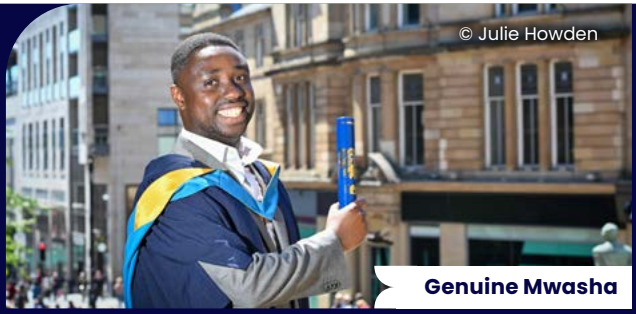
MBA graduate, Zoë André-Lawson (pictured), was honoured in the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AASCB) Class of Influential Leaders 2023. This recognises those whose inspiring work serves as a model for the next generation of business leaders. Zoë, a senior scientist for Johnson and Johnson, used the skills from her MBA to develop a bitesize online course specifically for women who wish to re-enter the workplace after a career break.

The Business School was also recognised in AACSB International's Innovations That Inspire member spotlight programme, which highlights impactful institutions creating value for tomorrow's business world. The accolade was awarded thanks to pioneering work by academics in the OU's Centre for Policing Research and Learning and the Department for Policing Organisation and Practice.

Learn more
www.bit.ly/aascb

Student Stories

Graduate's charity helps Tanzania's poorest



Genuine Mwasha

Genuine Mwasha was inspired to start Scottish-registered charity The Roof of Africa during his Bachelor of Law Honours degree.

Genuine was abandoned as a child and was living between children's homes and the streets of Tanzania from the age of two.

"My law degree from The Open University has empowered me to fight poverty and injustice, and this is critical for my charity" says Genuine, who now lives in Edinburgh.

"The Roof of Africa provides two meals a day to the children from the poorest families and provides food parcels and financial support to families so they can stay with their children. We are also providing sanitation and water projects to these families."

Moreover, the charity provides free education to over 120 children at its school in Tanzania.

Find out more about Genuine
www.bit.ly/genuinemwasha

The only UK and Ireland comparative policy research and knowledge exchange initiative

PolicyWISE (Wales, Ireland, Scotland and England) is a unique UK and Ireland comparative policy research and knowledge exchange initiative. We aim to improve how governments and academics work together in and across the nations to solve policy challenges. Established in summer 2023 with funding support from Dangoor Education, PolicyWISE creates the space, shares ideas and insight to help policymakers focus on evidence informed solutions. All our work is UK and Ireland by design, supporting policymakers and researchers across the nations, recognising the need for an approach that highlights the importance of understanding divergent approaches to common problems.

In November 2023, we launched our website at an event in London with academics from The Open University, alongside renowned writer and broadcaster Professor David Olusoga, for a landmark occasion to celebrate the recent broadcast of *Union*, a new OU/BBC partnership series. The panel included historians who were able to bring alive the history of union and disunion between the nations of the UK and Ireland and draw comparisons with modern policy challenges.

PolicyWISE's strands of work include a rapid response capability, supporting policy analysis with governments, parliaments and wider policy community. The programme takes a cross-national approach, based within The Open University and working with partner universities in each nation. PolicyWISE is a partner of choice for collaborative and comparative projects. We develop OU research expertise, driving impact and knowledge exchange through our partnership with the Open Societal Challenges Programme.

The initiative also produces regular snapshot 'Wise in 5' guides to public policy issues across the UK and Ireland, which highlight OU research. These help audiences be PolicyWISE in Five (takes just five minutes to read). Finally, using our distinct focus and skills we deliver impactful training for audiences to learn how a comparative policy analysis will benefit their work.

Learn more about PolicyWISE
www.policywise.org.uk

Dewi Knight, Director of PolicyWISE and former Welsh Government specialist adviser

Modern Welsh identity and the cultural heritage of unheard communities

Wales Residents Engaging in Art, Culture, and Heritage (Wales REACH) is a programme for people in Wales to explore connections with local and cultural heritage: restoring landscapes of memory, activating pride of place, and sharing living histories, all through the medium of creative arts.

With funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, people in the five participating communities — residents of Somali, Arabic, and Yemeni heritage in Butetown, Cardiff; post-industrial Sandfields, Port Talbot; older people with low incomes and poor transport links in semi-rural Pembrokeshire; Welsh-speaking Duffryn Nantlle, Gwynedd; and learning disabled people in Rhondda Cynon Taff, Vale of Glamorgan — worked with the project to co-design learning programmes tailored to the heritage that matters to each community. Led by the OU and Amgueddfa Cymru, partnering with housing and community organisations, these activities are planned for summer 2024. They will bring communities together through the creation of spectacular shared memory works around three themes that emerged from co-design: environmental injustice and restoration, *hiraeth* and the recovery of lost stories; and what it means to be Welsh in a plural nation.

Hands-on encounters with museum treasures, sites of historical interest, and intangible heritage stories will ignite passion in unheard communities for Wales' cultural and natural inheritance. Participants will reflect on heritage discoveries creatively, culminating in physical and digital exhibitions of the art produced — a celebration of empowered peripheral voices and a riposte to place-based stigmas.

Wales REACH is a national extension of the award-winning Blaenau Gwent REACH project funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) in 2021.

What is Hiraeth?

Hiraeth is a Welsh word which refers to nostalgia and longing, especially in the context of Wales and Welsh culture.

Career confident graduates

Improved resources

We've been conducting lots of research over the last few years to make sure we're giving our alumni the right skills to become career confident graduates. The skills include:

- **Tools, resources and help with decision making**
- **Job search strategies and gaining experience**
- **Describing experience and skills**
- **Networking**
- **Overcoming career barriers**
- **How to research and apply for postgraduate study**

More alumni get help to achieve their career goals

The word is out, 49% more alumni turned to the OU's Careers and Employability Services for help to achieve their goals last year, on top of a 62% increase the year before!

We've upscaled the support we provide using a combination of professional expertise and digital technology. Innovations for alumni include the Graduate Futures Programme, the Graduate Futures Skills Award and the AI-powered Navigate Your Future activity pathway, an automated sequence of activities tailored to the user's input, designed to make goal setting and action planning easier. Over 400 participants started Navigate Your Future on the first night of its launch.

Our experienced careers team can help you navigate your future for up to three years after you qualify. If you qualified more than three years ago, you can still access a wealth of resources in the 'Careers' section of the Help Centre, including CV and application skills, confidence building activities and advice on navigating societal barriers due to factors such as ethnicity, disability, sex and gender, and economic background.

New bespoke alumni programme and skills award

Almost 800 participants took part in the Graduate Futures Programme in April and June 2023. Each programme covered three days of essential careers skills sessions including networking, postgraduate study, figuring out goals, navigating career roadblocks, interviews and job search strategies.

"Engaging and informative. Really useful tips and recommendations," said one participant.

The Graduate Futures Skills Award also proved a hit, with a total of 1,728 Level 3 students and alumni registering in 2023. It runs several times a year to boost the skills and confidence of soon-to-be and new OU alumni. Participants work through the materials at their own pace and on completion gain a digital badge on their OU Academic Summary, also displayable on CVs and LinkedIn profiles to prove to employers that they're engaged in their own futures.

Your gateway to career confidence

If you graduated with The Open University in the last three years, you can access a wealth of alumni careers support, including AI-powered CV review and interview tools, skills building activities, downloadable guides and more via 'Successful transitions to career confident alumni' under the 'Resources' tab on OpportunityHub:

Explore the OpportunityHub
www.bit.ly/ouopphub

If you graduated more than three years ago you can still access a wide range of advice, guidance and self-help resources here:

Careers on the Help Centre
www.bit.ly/oucareers

OU careers support in Wales

The GO Wales employability programme provides targeted employability support for underrepresented students and graduates in Wales, of all ages, to help them develop their confidence and improve their employment prospects.

GO Wales Programme
www.bit.ly/readyforworkwales

Plus, The National Enrichment Programme is a successful collaboration between the OU in Wales and all 12 colleges across Wales. It is designed to enrich the educational experience of college learners by enhancing transferrable skills, aligned with the demands of employers and universities.

National Enrichment Programme
www.bit.ly/nationalenrichment

Professor David Olusoga

The Open University and the BBC

For over 50 years The Open University and the BBC have worked together; co-producing hundreds of hours of programming and bringing learning to life for millions. In 2022/23 our programmes were viewed or listened to 318 million times. All OU/BBC co-productions support faculty curriculum priorities, providing numerous examples of programmes examining a range of key social issues including those in health, social care, sustainability and education.

Find these OU / BBC co-productions and more at https://connect.open.ac.uk

Union with David Olusoga July 2023

Follow David Olusoga as he traces the events, the people and the forces that have transformed four separate nations into a single state, the United Kingdom.

Supporting Curriculum

BA (Honours) in Social Sciences
BA (Honours) History
BA (Honours) History and Politics

OU Academic Consultants

Dr Helen O'Shea
Professor Gerry Mooney
Dr Dan Taylor

Take an audio journey www.bit.ly/uniondavid

What They Really Mean For You October 2023

This series explores what energy conscious technologies, such as heat pumps and electric cars, really mean for you.

Supporting Curriculum

Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)
BA/BSc (Honours) Design and Innovation
BA (Honours) Environmental Studies

OU Academic Consultants

Professor David Humphreys
Dr James Warren
Dr Gareth Neighbour

Take our NetZero quiz www.bit.ly/wtrmfy

Image © Wall To Wall Media / BBC

Planet Earth III
October 2023

Presented by Sir David Attenborough, Planet Earth III journeys to the far reaches of our planet. This eight-part series follows some of the world's most amazing species, telling extraordinary stories that are dramatic, thrilling, funny and sometimes heart-breaking, but always full of hope - we see how science and technology has advanced, but also how our planet has changed.

Supporting Curriculum

BSc (Hons) Environmental Science
BSc (Hons) Natural Sciences (Biology)

OU Academic Consultants

Dr Miranda Dyson
Dr Vicky Taylor

Explore animal habitats
www.bit.ly/planetearth3

Image
© BBC Studios / Barrie Britton

Once Upon A Time In Northern Ireland
May 2023

This award-winning series looks back at the conflict using intimate, unheard testimonies from all sides, exploring the period 25 years on from a peace agreement being reached.

Supporting Curriculum

BA (Honours) Social Sciences
BA (Honours) History and Politics

OU Academic Consultants

Dr Philip O'Sullivan

Watch exclusive interviews
www.bit.ly/onceuponni

A Special School
Series 2, January 2023

Cameras return to capture the reality of life in Britain's biggest Special School. A compelling observational documentary that shows what's possible when boundaries are pushed.

Supporting Curriculum

BA (Honours) Education Studies (Primary)
BA (Honours) Social Work (Wales)

OU Academic Consultants

Leigh Worrall
Dr Wendy Turner

More from staff and students
www.bit.ly/aspecialschool

The Women Who Changed Modern Scotland February 2023

From Shetland to Shettleston, women have shaped modern Scotland - its laws, its culture, its outlook - but their stories have often been written out of history. In this series Kirsty Wark sets the record straight.

Supporting Curriculum

Bachelor of Laws (Honours) (LLB)
BA (Honours) History

OU Academic Consultants

Dr Kim Barker
Dr Helen O'Shea

Watch interviews
www.bit.ly/bbcmodernscot

Discover more

OU Connect is our dedicated broadcast site designed to inspire audiences to find out more and to explore the subjects and topics featured in our OU/BBC programmes. The site highlights the expertise, skills and passion of those behind the scenes of our co-productions, for example experts, programme makers and contributors, and of course OU academics. There is a variety of engaging content including animations, short videos, interactives, articles and high profile interviews – all of which are produced in collaboration with our academics who have consulted on the programmes.

Explore the content
www.bit.ly/bbcpartnership

Short films and videos for curious minds

BBC IDEAS

The OU is continually adding to content on BBC Ideas, which is an excellent way to highlight OU research in relation to societal challenges and has a wide reach amongst younger audiences. Our 56 videos have had over 6 million views to date. Recent examples include:

Help someone struggling with their mental health

It's not always easy to know what to say or do when someone else is struggling. Discover five ways you can help.

www.bit.ly/bbcideasmh

The endangered languages that are fighting back

Many of the world's 7,000 languages are under threat. But some are experiencing a revival – find out why.

www.bit.ly/bbcideaslang

Five things you really need to know about AI

Terrified, excited or just bewildered by artificial intelligence? Here's what you really need to know.

www.bit.ly/bbcideasai

STEM Spotlight

More information
stem.open.ac.uk

I am delighted to share with you the latest headlines from the STEM Faculty. Our research groups are pushing the boundaries in fields ranging from artificial intelligence to sustainability. We are keen to take every opportunity to connect the excitement of their work to our curriculum and external engagement activities. Our aim is to equip society to deal with tomorrow's challenge.

We're continuing to foster our dynamic learning environment where our students and alumni excel. The OpenSTEM Labs recently celebrated its 10th anniversary and has played a part in changing the way scientists and engineers of the future are educated. And our BBC partnership is inspiring millions across the globe, igniting a desire for learning.

Professor Nicholas Braithwaite
Executive Dean, Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

CyberCamps for Girls and Young Women aged 13 to 19

Recognising the national skills shortages in CyberSecurity experts and the challenge that fewer women than men become CyberSecurity experts, the OU has teamed up with Cisco – a global Silicon Valley based technology corporation to launch CyberCamps for Girls and Young Women during 2023/24.

The OU is a leading Cisco partner, having already worked together for the previous 18 years, teaching over 20,000 OU students.

With over 1,000 already signed up, CyberCamps is aimed at Girls and Young Women aged 13 to 19. This project is supported by female CyberSecurity experts from all corners of the UK and is entirely distance based. Offered as a collection of short, industry ready courses, each participant can collect digital badges, to evidence their participation, as well as prepare for professional accreditation.

Please share this opportunity with your networks
www.bit.ly/cybercamps

OpenSTEM Labs awarded Queen's Anniversary Prize

The Open University's OpenSTEM Labs have been awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize. Granted every two years by The Monarch, the Queen's Anniversary Prizes recognise outstanding, innovative work by UK colleges and universities that deliver real benefit to the wider world through education and training. The prizes are the highest national honour awarded in UK further and higher education.

> This award is a fitting tribute to the efforts of the team and we look forward to further developing OpenSTEM Labs in conjunction with our new OpenXR Studios, bringing the power of virtual reality and augmented reality to distance learning.
>
> **Professor Nicholas Braithwaite**
> Executive Dean of STEM and a founding Director of the Labs

Founded in 2013, the OU's world-leading, multi-award-winning OpenSTEM Labs are changing the way scientists and engineers of the future are educated by making authentic laboratory experiences possible online, and at scale.

Being online, the Labs allow students from anywhere in the world and virtually 24/7 to participate in experimental work, interactively, via the internet, as if they were in the laboratory. The OpenSTEM Labs are helping to tackle the nation's STEM skills shortages, as well as helping to address key international challenges. They also ensured students were able to continue learning throughout the pandemic. Furthermore, each year they support over 100,000 hours of student learning from anywhere in the world. The OpenSTEM Labs are embedded into 32 modules across all six Schools in the OU's STEM Faculty.

Learn more
www.bit.ly/osl30seconds

OU stalwart receives New Year Honour

David Sargent (pictured), long term employee of The Open University in Ireland was listed in the 2023 King's New Year Honours list, receiving a British Empire Award for his services to higher education and to charity. Employed by The Open University for over 35 years in various roles, David has been a life-long supporter of education, particularly adult learning. David grew up in Tigers Bay in North Belfast during The Troubles where there were many socio-economic challenges and precious few opportunities. Educational attainment was rarely a priority, and economic advancement difficult. Joining the OU with meagre qualifications, David fell in love with the ethos of the University and resolved to gain a third level education himself, accomplishing this goal in 2002 with a Bachelor of Science degree.

Learn more
www.bit.ly/davidsargent

Weston Open Living Lab

The Weston Open Living Lab was founded in 2022 with generous support from the Garfield Weston Foundation to develop nature recovery education. It is both a physical outdoor and an online digital lab, supporting research, skills-development, and lifelong learning to address the critical issues of climate change and biodiversity loss.

It has been a busy year for the Living Lab, with spring and autumn tree and shrub planting for the riparian (riverside wet woodland) ecosystem restoration programme. Ten wildlife cameras have been installed across the riparian and urban woodland areas, which have captured plenty of images of wildlife already, including many birds, squirrels and foxes, as expected. They have also captured different species of rodents, deer, badgers and a buzzard — highlighting the often-hidden species of urban wildlife — and some interesting behaviour in video-mode. Acoustic loggers are also being installed. The Lab has been selected to join a new national project: BIOSCAN. It aims to measure the genetic diversity of flying insects across the UK and, to this end, we make monthly collections in the riparian woodland and floodplain meadow site.

Work has started to install environmental sensors. These walk-up platforms will host meteorological sensors and digital 'phenocams' for monitoring vegetation phenology.

Learn more
www.bit.ly/openlivinglab

Gaining confidence and credibility

> The OU offers me the opportunity to gain confidence and credibility for my life and career, which develops my passion and enthusiasm for my research. I am proud of being a PhD student in the OU, and I can foresee an optimistic future ahead of me.
>
> **Shuang Ao**
> **PhD Student**

Shuang Ao, a PhD student in Knowledge Media Institute (KMi), is researching 'Building Safe and Reliable AI systems for Safety Critical Tasks with Vision-Language Processing'. In a world increasingly powered by AI, ensuring the safety and reliability of these tasks is paramount. If AI falls short in safety-critical tasks, consequences of wrong decisions can put human lives at risk. Shuang believes this can erode trust in AI predictions. Her research delves into enhancing trustworthiness and reliability of deep learning models.

Shuang was a linguistic specialist in Singapore for three years. After studying theories in machine learning, she switched her career from theoretical to computational linguistics. Wanting to pursue a PhD, she was rejected due to her non-computational background. Finally, she found the OU. She was amazed with its openness, accessibility, and support.

Thinking of returning to study?

Our prospectuses explore the subject areas and help you choose your course.

Find out how you can continue your learning journey with the OU
www.bit.ly/requestaprospectus

Welcome to **WELS**

More information
wels.open.ac.uk

I am always inspired and humbled by the work of colleagues across my home Faculty. The stories on these pages demonstrate how personal and far reaching our work in WELS is, and how it can have positive impact on many lives.

From our award-winning nursing students across the four nations of the UK, to fostering safeguarding in a sport diploma with learners in 70 countries, and building greater cross-cultural understanding through our language short courses, the impact of our Faculty's teaching, research, students and graduates is without bounds.

Dr Klaus-Dieter Rossade
Executive Dean, Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies

OU secures £5.8m to build extended reality studio

The OU has secured funding of £5.8m from the Office for Students to develop extended reality studios, Open XR Studios, to expand its teaching and learning with augmented and virtual reality. Open XR Studios will feature state-of-the-art equipment to capture, reproduce and render 4D imagery. It will deliver immersive and reality-embedded learning to students in their homes, which will enable the OU to create authentic contexts for skills development.
This piece of work is a collaboration across faculties, led by the Faculty of WELS and the Institute of Educational Technology.

Learn more
www.bit.ly/openxr

Nursing success for The Open University across the Nations

Lois Gaffney

Grace McAleer

Nathan Weir

OU Nursing alumni made waves at the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) Nurse of the Year award ceremonies in 2023.

Lois Gaffney, a first-class honours graduate in Adult Nursing, won Nursing Student of the Year at the RCN Scotland awards. Lois was recognised for her nomination to the Council of Deans Student Leadership Programme, bringing placement learning back to her hospital, and supporting colleagues on a workforce wellbeing group.

In Northern Ireland (NI), Grace McAleer, an OU pre-registration nursing alumna, won Student Nurse of the Year. Her nomination focused on her commitment to addressing the gap in health care provision for people in Northern Ireland impacted by female genital mutilation (FGM).

Nathan Weir, another OU pre-registration nursing alumnus, was named the Chief Nursing Officer Rising Star. Nathan is leading a relaunch of the peer support in-reach team in a unit at Craigavon Hospital.

Dawn Ferguson was also recognised at the RCN NI awards, for initiatives including helping the OU and Southern Regional College to develop a pre-registration nursing programme, to better prepare people for careers in health care.

Learn more
www.bit.ly/triplesuccess

Transforming lives in Zimbabwe

The SAGE project (Supporting Adolescent Girls' Education) recently published their outstanding results and outlined recommendations for phase two. SAGE's aim is to provide the world's most marginalised girls with a quality education so that they can secure a better future for themselves, their families and their communities. Over five years, the project has supported more than 13,400 out of school adolescent girls, with 75% improving their literacy and numeracy scores. The research will support practitioners, inform policy makers and contribute to the global debates about community-based learning.

Learn more
www.bit.ly/sagezimbabwe

SAGE is funded by UK aid, through the Girls' Education Challenge. The consortium was led by Plan International.

Making care relational: new toolkit launched

Dr Manik Gopinath and Professor Mary Larkin launched a new toolkit at the House of Lords in May 2023, aiming to help practitioners implement a 'relational care' approach to care. Relational care, an evolution of person-centred care, prioritises the wellbeing of all involved and emphasises building strong relationships and recognising interdependence. This free resource provides guidance for staff, leaders, and providers looking to adopt relational care.

Free online professional development courses will be available on the OU's OpenLearn platform from March 2024.

Learn more
www.bit.ly/carer-toolkit

Safeguarding diploma scores success

The FIFA Guardians Safeguarding in Sport Diploma, which was developed with experts including academics from the OU's Faculty of WELS, is proving to be a soaring success with learners from 70 countries attending the first in-person residential workshops.

In a milestone moment, the workshops saw learners take their next step on the journey to becoming part of FIFA's first ever group of lead safeguarding officers, as a core component of the FIFA Guardians Safeguarding in Sport Diploma, designed to strengthen and professionalise safeguarding standards in football.

The pioneering programme is leading the way in adult and child safety in sport and, in a show of commitment to improving safeguarding across sports in general, open versions of the courses are available via the OU's OpenLearn Create platform for anyone in sport who wants to improve their safeguarding knowledge.

Explore courses
www.bit.ly/fifacourses

Did you know ?

The OU now offers courses in **Artificial Intelligence**. The School of Languages and Linguistics have introduced short courses covering the historical, ethical and social issues around the use of AI and language technologies. These programmes add to the wealth of language and culture short courses on offer - you can take your pick from Spanish, Italian, German, Welsh, French, and Chinese, with beginners Arabic coming soon. Find out more about our short courses and microcredentials on pages 38 and 39.

Skills for work, for study, for everyone, for free

OpenLearn is the home of free learning from The Open University, providing accessible education for all, from free courses to articles, interactives, videos and podcasts. There are around 900 courses to discover, designed to support learners in their work, study and across a wide variety of subjects.

The last 12 months saw 180 new pieces of learning content added to OpenLearn, as diverse as a collection of articles on the UEFA Women's World Cup, to a free course on *Agatha Christie and the Golden Age of Detective Fiction*.

Both proved popular and contributed to the 9 million visits to the site, and the 890,000 course enrolments, but despite attracting almost 2,000 enrolments itself in little more than six months, the 'whodunnit course' still didn't make the 'most popular' list.

The perennially popular *MSE's Academy of Money*, created in partnership with Money Saving Expert, was joined in the top 10 by courses on autism and ADHD, *Being an OU student* and *Supporting children's mental health and wellbeing*, while *Do you have a photographic memory?* was the number 1 non-course item.

The resources collated for Ukrainians settling in the UK and Ireland, some of which have now been translated into Ukrainian, have reached more than 110,000 people and in September 2023 received international recognition by way of an Open Education Award for Excellence.

Dive in and start learning
www.openlearn.com

OpenLearn awards its 250,000th digital badge

Among the range of free courses on OpenLearn, there are now more than 80 badged courses for learners to enrol on. Badges demonstrate interest in a subject, evidence of professional development, or a commitment to studies, and are awarded for completing all sections of a course and passing the assessments. The badge and Statement of Participation are downloadable from your OpenLearn Profile and can be shared on students' social media and displayed on LinkedIn or other e-portfolio platforms.

These badged courses typically consist of 24 hours of learning, focus on employability and include quizzes designed to demonstrate students' progress, cover a range of core subjects and professional competencies essential for the modern workplace.

They are unique, in being the first open educational resources with digital recognition. In 2023, OpenLearn issued its landmark 250,000th digital badge.

These courses, of which the subjects range from forensic psychology to communication in the workplace, surged in popularity at the peak of the pandemic, as people sought to develop and demonstrate new skills. Several badged courses were among those selected by the UK Government to support furloughed workers, through schemes such as the Department for Education's free digital and numeracy training tools and Scotland's My World of Work, and continue to be championed today.

> **The world of education is constantly evolving, and the trend of bite-size learning has evolved to meet the fast-paced, on-the-go nature of modern life, allowing learners to fit studies around busy schedules. Digital badging is a technology that has emerged alongside this trend and is having a significant impact on education.**
>
> **Dr Patrina Law**
> **Head of OpenLearn**

Discover more
www.openlearn.com/badged-courses

Discover new skills with an OU short course or microcredential

96%

rated the skills they gained on a microcredential as good or excellent.*

In demand subject areas include:

- Artificial Intelligence
- Counselling
- Digital marketing
- Business Management
- Digital transformation
- Creative writing
- Photography
- Video editing
- Agile Leadership and Management
- People Management
- Project Management
- Python Programming
- Special Educational Needs
- Sustainability
- Languages

Find the right course for you
www.bit.ly/oumicrocredentials

**Microcredential End of Course survey, summer 2022*

The OU has a wide range of short courses, designed to help you build a new skill set, discover a new hobby, or give your career a boost; along with microcredentials, which are designed to help you quickly build in-demand career skills and knowledge.

Created with the academic excellence you've come to expect from the OU, many are also endorsed by industry partners, providing a focus on developing skills you can apply straightaway.

When Julia Pennacchia was on a gap year from studying an undergraduate degree at a traditional 'brick-built' university, she took on a placement in a small procurement team. She soon realised she needed to improve her skills for the workplace and looked to the OU for a solution.

Many courses take from just 10 hours to complete. They're open to everyone, so whether you want to upskill yourself, your team or even a family member, take a look at our course pages and find out more.

I needed to upskill quickly to be able to do the job I was doing. I knew someone who had studied with the OU and had a great experience, so that gave me the confidence that the short courses would be that same high quality. I found what I was looking for easily and signed up to start straight away. I was lucky that my employer also thought it was a great opportunity and agreed to cover the cost for me.

The course was 100% online, which meant I could access it on my phone or my laptop, in the mornings, evenings, or whenever I had the time alongside my work and personal commitments. That flexible style of learning meant I was learning on my own terms. I wasn't pushing myself to do too much at once, getting burned out or bored, and this made it much more manageable for me.

Short courses are a great way to fill a skills gap quickly. As I move through my career, I will definitely be returning to do another one in the future.

From the very start of the course, I was learning things that I could put into practice straight away. As a result my manager started to give me more responsibility which in turn improved my confidence. This was a huge benefit to me in my work.

Julia Pennacchia

Can research be made more open?

At The Open University, our social mission - to be open to people, places, methods and ideas - comes first. It's what attracts the boldest global thinkers to join us to tackle some of the world's most critical challenges. We work with organisations, policymakers and people from all walks of life, on research that transforms lives. We believe innovation starts from the ground up in close collaboration with the people living through challenges. By bringing people together, we build inclusive research that empowers communities in the UK and worldwide, and gives them agency in driving positive societal change.

This challenge-led and open approach to research is in our DNA and it is this approach that underpins our latest research strategy 'Open Societal Challenges' (OSC). The OSC Programme has been created to galvanise the University's collective research strengths to bring about real-world change. The OSC Programme functions through a community of researchers to address three crucial societal challenges facing people across the globe: **Sustainability, Tackling Inequalities,** and **Living Well.**

OPEN SOCIETAL CHALLENGES

Here's just three of the challenges in action...

Sustainability **Urban tree database**

Aiming to make urban tree data more accessible to the public and improve the management of urban trees. The project seeks to provide valuable information for researchers and tree managers, help people connect with their environment, reduce conflict over urban trees and improve urban environments for all.

More information about this project
www.bit.ly/urbantreedatabase

Tackling Inequalities **Changemakers**

Improving young adults' understanding of making political and social change, using Wales as a case study. The project aims to develop educational resources to improve understanding, engendering active citizenship.

More information about this project
www.bit.ly/oscchangemakers

Living Well **Transforming Pain Management**

Developing a suite of self-logging tools for patients to record and treat pain, sending live data into medical records for improved care, analgesia, and valuable medical research.

More information about this project
www.bit.ly/oscpain

The future of Open Societal Challenges

Our connection with the wider OU community, in particular to you as our valued alumni, is vital to the success and depth of the OSC programme and we are keen to engage with our alumni on real-world issues that matter to you. Beginning in spring 2024, we want more voices to have a say in our research and as such, will be running an Open Societal Challenges Competition - Challenge Us! to find the most exciting research ideas tackling real-world problems.

Explore more of the Open Societal Challenges
www.bit.ly/ou-osc

The Open Futures Fund

Providing futures full of hope and opportunity

For The Open University, 2018 was a significant moment in its mission to keep education open to all. The launch of the Disabled Veterans' Scholarships Fund marked the very first step towards the creation of The Open Futures Fund in 2020 – a range of scholarships that break down the barriers to higher education.

> Through the scholarship and bursary opportunities of the Open Futures Fund, we give people access to the transformational power of education.
>
> Together we are changing lives forever.

Lurraine Jones
Director of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Over the years we have seen the range of scholarships continue to grow thanks to the incredible generosity of the OU family. Thousands of alumni and supporters have come together and stood side-by-side with The Open University to help launch scholarships for disabled veterans, unpaid carers, Black students, young people who have been in the care system, and those seeking sanctuary from persecution and war.

For so many students a scholarship is more than just being awarded free higher education. To them, they see their scholarship as a vote of confidence, an affirmation that people do believe in them, and they are determined to succeed because of the faith shown to them by the OU family.

Scholarships are a truly special kind of gift that can take our students to the places and careers they dream of. The extraordinary and exceptional kindness of donors embodies the heart of everything that we all stand for as a part of the OU – being open to people, places, methods and ideas.

To me, alumni like you are magicians making people's dreams come true! I wish to offer you the biggest thank you for the opportunity I've been awarded. Thank you for making this possible and for giving me something so positive in my life.

Mariia
OU scholarship recipient

In 2023 the unwavering determination of the OU family to continue to change lives saw a remarkable 135 scholarships awarded, taking the total number of scholarships since 2018 to over 500.

As October 2023 saw 135 students take the very first steps on their OU journeys, we continue to see so many other scholarship recipients transforming their lives as they continue with their studies, with some graduating and ready to begin the next exciting chapter.

All of our students are on their own individual journeys, however, they all have one incredible thing in common – they're rewriting their futures thanks to you, our wonderful OU family.

Mark Parsons, Head of Alumni Fundraising shared this message of gratitude: "Thank you so much to the OU family for all your support in helping to transform lives and rewrite futures for so many."

Hear first-hand from scholarship recipients
www.bit.ly/ou-thankyou

The Open Futures Fund

569

scholarships awarded since 2018

Scholarships	Total recipients	2023/24 recipients
Disabled Veterans' Scholarships	312	50
Carers' Scholarships	132	20
Black Students' Support	97	49
Sanctuary Scholarships	24	12
Care Experienced Scholarships	4	4

Gregg Stevenson
BSc (Hons) Sport, Fitness and Coaching - 24 Royal Engineer Commando Veteran and OU alumnus

©Burnley Express / SWNS

Student Stories

The Open Futures Fund

Thank you for changing my life through the power of education

Whilst coming under hostile fire on foot patrol in Afghanistan, an improvised explosive device (IED) exploded beneath Gregg, resulting in him losing both of his legs. Gregg lost the only career he ever wanted and had to rebuild his life whilst coming to terms with the severity of his injuries.

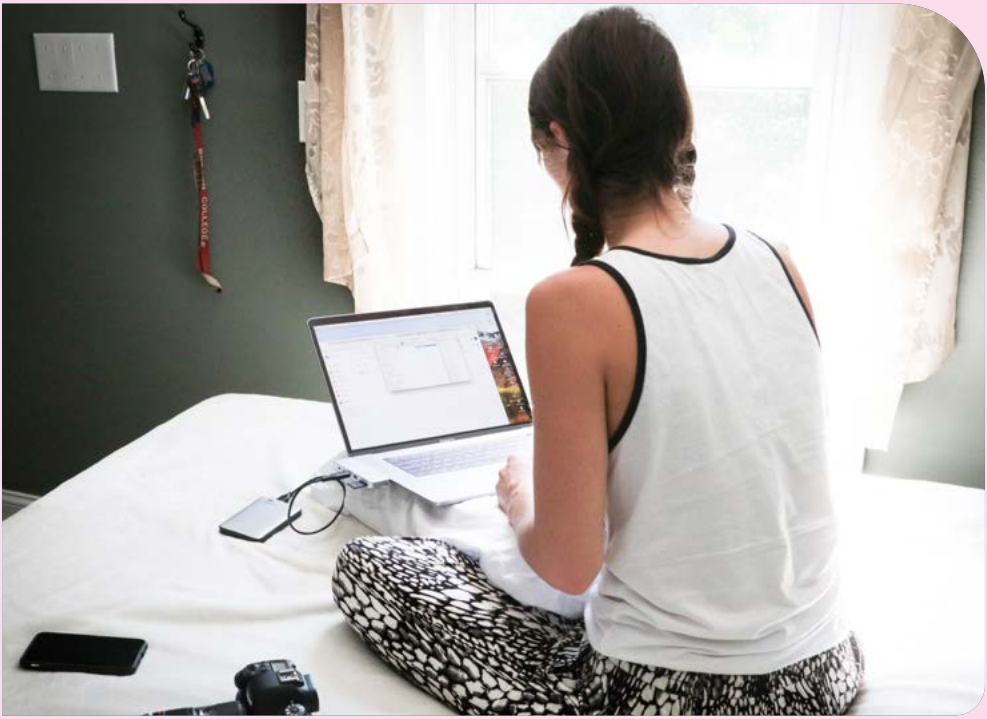
Thanks to the OU family, Gregg was a recipient of a Disabled Veterans' Scholarship and graduated in 2022 with a BSc (Hons) in Sport, Fitness and Coaching.

Gregg says "I can't praise this scholarship programme highly enough. I love the way the OU embraces everyone and is so supportive of disabled veterans like me."

Gregg is now working as a mental health practitioner with NHS Operation Courage, the veterans mental health and wellbeing service, and training for the Paralympics 2024.

> I'll never forget that I owe all of these incredible opportunities to wonderfully caring and thoughtful OU alumni.

Read more stories alumni.open.ac.uk /stories



Empowering young people who are care experienced

In 2023 The Open University (OU) and the John Lewis Partnership (JLP) came together to launch the Care Experienced Scholarship, providing OU education to young people aged 25 and under who have experience of being in the care system.

As the UK's largest employee-owned business, the 75,000 people who work for JLP are known as Partners because they own a share of the business and have a say in the running of the organisation. We are delighted to be working with them on this transformational educational programme.

JLP was founded on the belief that when you raise everyone up and give them access to the same opportunities and living standards, society thrives and so does business. This belief makes JLP and the OU perfect partners as we both share strong social missions focused on providing people with access and opportunities.

The Open Futures Fund

Care Experienced Scholarship

JLP's Building Happier Futures programme supports people who have experience of the care system. The programme has three ambitions:

1. Be the employer of choice for young people who are care experienced.
2. Support children in care to equip them for happier futures through partnerships with the voluntary and charity sectors.
3. Raise awareness of the inequalities faced by those who are care experienced, empowering them to tell their own stories in their own words.

There are 108,000 children and young people living in care in the UK. Some of our brightest and best national talents are care experienced, but they may not have access to the same opportunities as those who can call on family for help. This is why, thanks to funding from JLP, The Open University has established the Care Experienced Scholarship.

JOHN LEWIS & PARTNERS

This is only the beginning of our work and we remain committed to tirelessly working to support the care experienced community to achieve all the wonderful things they deserve.

Ceira Thom
Head of Learning, Inclusion and Belonging, John Lewis Partnership

In 2023 the first four students started their studies.

Together we are committed to supporting the care experienced community.

Find out more about the Care Experienced Scholarship
www.bit.ly/carescholarships

108,000 young people are growing up in the UK's care system

Care leavers are over **2.5 times** more likely to apply for health & social care courses

71% of care leavers who graduate from university are in employment, further study or a combination of both.
18 months after graduation

Compared to **77%** of non care leavers

Only **14%** of care leavers go to university

compared to 47% of young people who didn't grow up in care

A discrepancy that has hardly changed in a decade

Breaking the Care Ceiling Civitas report September 2023

Don’t miss out!

Are you receiving emails from us?

Are you receiving emails from us?
If you’re not, make sure you write your email address on the tear off contact details slip with this magazine, or email **alumni@open.ac.uk** with **‘Stay connected’** and your name and PI Number.

This way you’ll never miss out on anything and be one of the first to hear about the latest news, events, exclusive invites and offers, fundraising appeals, campaigns and other ways to get involved.

Get in touch today
alumni@open.ac.uk