

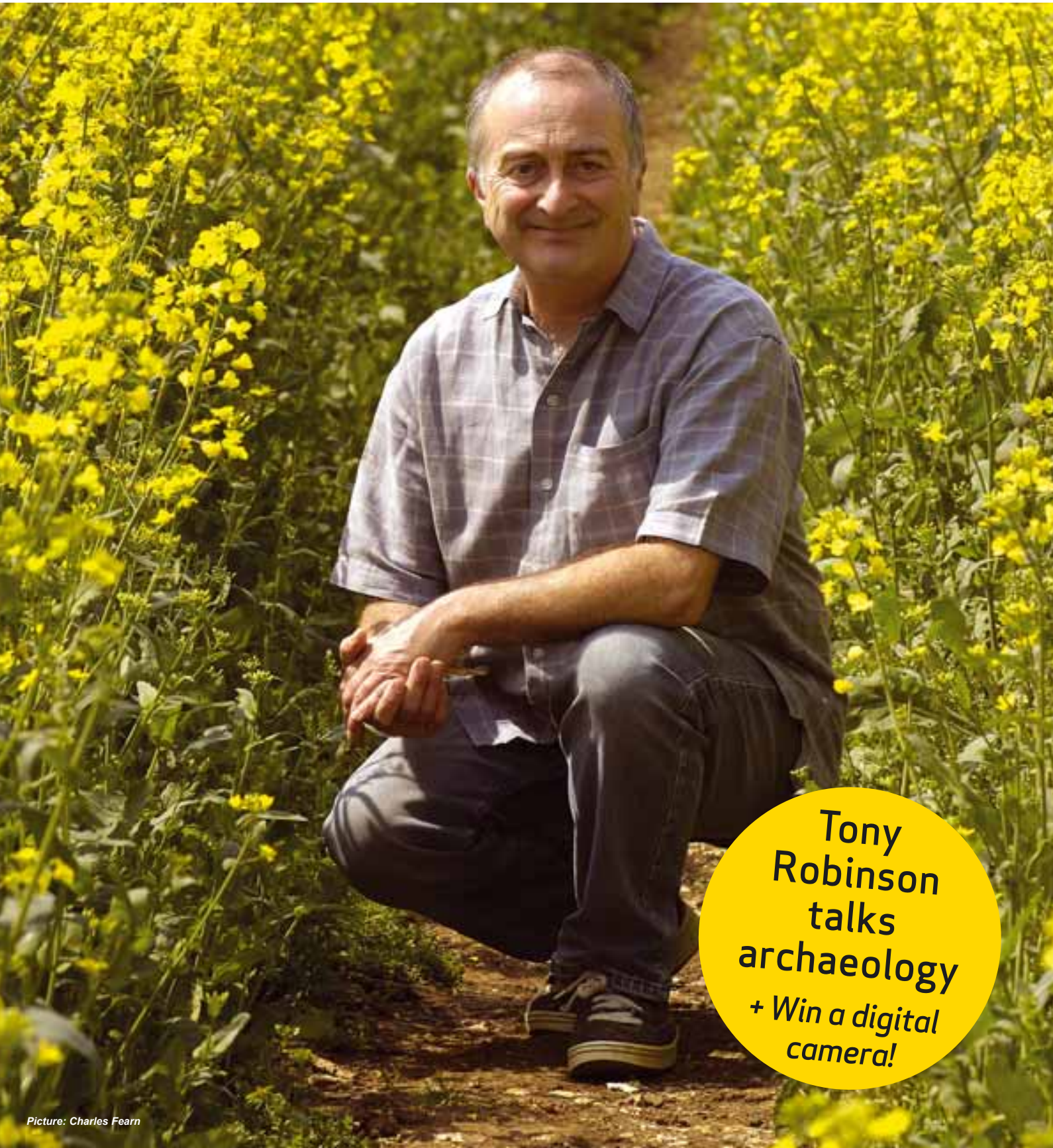
# sesame



The Open University

Reaching the OU community worldwide

Spring 2007 Issue 233



**Tony  
Robinson  
talks  
archaeology  
+ Win a digital  
camera!**



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comment

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# Under the spotlight



**I**n this issue of **sesame**, we launch a new series of investigative articles. Our first focus is on high street banks. This was prompted by a letter we received (published in issue 231) from an OU graduate who was turned down for a graduate account by the Royal Bank of Scotland. Are OU students and graduates being discriminated against by our high street banks? Turn to page 13 to read the outcome of our investigations.

As well as informing and entertaining you, **sesame** is also here to provoke debate and campaign on your behalf. This new series has been launched to do just that. So if you have any issues you want us to explore, or any opinions on articles that appear as part of this series, we welcome your thoughts. You can contact us anytime using the numbers and addresses on the left of this page.

It's interesting that a letter prompted the launch of this series. This highlights just how important the letters pages are to this magazine. Some magazines struggle to receive enough letters for each issue but we get hundreds – evidence of just how vocal and passionate you all are! In this issue, there's the usual mix of questions, criticisms, praise and sharing of experiences. Remember to keep those letters coming in.

Speaking of being vocal and passionate, in this issue, we also feature an interview with Tony Robinson in which he hits back at critics of *Time Team*. Turn to page 14 to read more.

Enjoy!

Tracy Archbold, Editor



## IN BRIEF

**New Dean for HSC**

PROFESSOR Shirley Reveley has been appointed as the new Dean of the Faculty of Health & Social Care. A former OU student herself, Shirley joined the OU as Director of Nursing in March 2005, before which she was Head of School of Nursing & Midwifery at St Martin's College.

**New number for SRS**

THE Student Registration and Enquiry Service (SRS) has a new phone number – +44 (0)845 300 60 90. The new number means that calls are charged at the local rate.

**OU students nominated!**

OU students are waiting to hear whether their business idea will scoop a prize in the Scottish Institute for Higher Education's Business Plan Competition. Each year, the institute runs a series of master classes, competitions, and workshops and conferences for students to help develop their entrepreneurial skills. The winner of the competition will be announced as we go to press. Visit [www.sie.ac.uk](http://www.sie.ac.uk) for results.

**OU game wins award**

THE OU has won the best online game award in the prestigious British Interactive Media Awards. The award was for the Kitchen Konundrum game, developed as part of the younger students campaign. The game can be seen at [www.open.university.co.uk/five](http://www.open.university.co.uk/five)

**Travel plan with the OU**

THE OU, in partnership with Transport for London, has launched GT013 *Introduction to travel planning* – the first national vocational course specifically designed to meet the needs of travel planners. Visit [www.open.ac.uk/courses](http://www.open.ac.uk/courses)

**Issue 232 competition winners**

HELEN Sillito from Sunderland was the lucky winner of the laptop competition we ran in the last issue.

Lorraine Batchelor, Shirley Fone, Eva Kulichova, Rachel Lawrence and Sue Ruth all won family tickets to the Brontë Parsonage Museum.

# Help inform future students

**W**ANT to have your say on The Open University? Then make sure you take part in this year's National Student Survey.

The survey, which is now in its third year, gives you the chance to share your thoughts on the quality of your course and the OU. The results of the survey are then used to help inform future students and also

to provide feedback to the University.

If you are a final year undergraduate in England, Wales or Northern Ireland or some HEIs in Scotland, you may already have been contacted by Ipsos MORI, an independent research company, inviting you to fill in the survey online. Or you can go direct to [www.thestudentsurvey.com](http://www.thestudentsurvey.com) – it only takes five minutes to fill in.

# Come fly with the OU

RAF personnel with remote postings or operational deployments will now find studying much easier thanks to a new partnership.

The RAF Foundation Degree Consortium, a partnership between four universities and the RAF (with support from Foundation Degree Forward), have launched two foundation degrees for RAF personnel in business, and leadership and management.

For more information email [fsim@learning-forces.org.uk](mailto:fsim@learning-forces.org.uk) or visit [www.learning-forces.org.uk](http://www.learning-forces.org.uk)



The consortium was launched in January this year at RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire

# Event heralds POWER successes

REFUGEES have spoken of the empowering effects of OU learning at an event to celebrate the early successes of the 'POWER' programme for refugee learners.

The programme – a joint collaboration between the OU, City of Westminster College and Paddington Development Trust – aims to support London's refugees and migrants in developing workplace skills.

A selection from the first cohort of students to benefit from the programme attended the event, hosted by the OU in London. Among the speakers was Fidaa Mahmoud who was born in Sudan and

recently gained a qualification in health and social care. She said: "The idea for someone such as myself to sit in a huge amphitheatre alongside students who speak perfect English is a scary one. But this programme allowed me to study with people who are in the same boat as me."

She went on to praise the support offered by OU tutors, adding: "It was a very empowering experience because I can say to myself 'I'm getting out there and I can compete with others in the UK workplace'. It really makes me strive to move forward."

# Fresh perspectives

**A** NEW BBC FOUR series from the same team behind the award-winning *African School* is airing in April/ May. It will aim to capture the daily lives and concerns of the students and teachers of two ordinary Indian state schools.

The 10-part *Indian School* series will highlight some of the challenges that face education, children and their teachers and families in 21<sup>st</sup> century India, and is co-produced by the OU.

The stories range from the success of the school cricket team, auditions for the school play, the uncertain excitement of first romance to the pressure of critical exams.

**Challenging circumstances**

The Open University's Helen Yanacopulos, a senior lecturer in international politics and development, said: "The series will give a fresh perspective on India, bringing everyday life in the 'real India' to a wider audience in Britain. It will dispell the common misconceptions of India as a country that principally knows chaos and trouble.

"As with *African School*, the series will take a matter-of-fact, unsentimental and often humorous approach. This lightness of touch will come from the voices of the characters themselves – from their wit and wisdom when dealing with the extraordinary and often challenging circumstances, which for them are just part of normal life."

**Please check TV listings for confirmed transmission time and date.**



# Turbulent and inspiring

THE turbulent and inspiring history of Paris is to be explored in a new three-part series, co-produced by The Open University and the BBC.

In *Paris*, which is due to air in April, Parisian art historian Sandrine Voillet invites viewers to join her on a fascinating journey through 400 years of the city's tempestuous history, delving into the art, literature, music, films, design and architecture that have made the city what it is today.

From the opulent court of the Sun King Louis XIV, to the infamous Moulin Rouge heyday of the early 1900s, to the hedonism of the 1960s, Sandrine reveals the stories behind the famous city. Some of its best known characters are also profiled, including Catherine de Medici, Voltaire, the Marquis de Sade,

Victor Hugo, Pablo Picasso, Ernest Hemingway, Coco Chanel, Miles Davis and Josephine Baker.

Xavier Hassan, head of French at The Open University and advisor on the programme said: "Following the steps of Sandrine, a young museum curator, I am sure many viewers will discover new secret places and stories hidden in the heart of one of the most beautiful cities in Europe.

"The programme is both entertaining and informative, achieving a good balance between serious content and a friendly delivery: Sandrine's friendly tone enhances the expertise of her explanations provided throughout the three episodes."

**Check TV listings for transmission times and dates.**



## Review roadshow

TOGETHER with Brigid Heywood (PVC, Research and Staff) I've recently been meeting OU staff, students and associate lecturers as part of a 'regional roadshow' on the Student Support Review. The Review will determine the future nature and organisation of learning support to enhance your experience as an OU student.

This exercise goes deep into the University. It may be the most fundamental review since we were founded. Our student support model has worked well for the past 37 years, and it's one of the reasons we have been at the top of the student satisfaction league table for two years running now. So changing it is a serious business. But the world is a very different place now, and we are planning for at least the next 15 years.

### Transforming world

Our student base is changing as we reach further into disadvantaged groups. The curriculum is changing as we attend more to students' vocational and career needs and the government's skills agenda. Teaching and communication media are changing by the day. The rest of higher education is learning fast how to do flexible learning at a distance. Can we depend on our model in this transforming world?

In the locations we have visited as part of this roadshow, everyone wants to engage in the debate, which is very encouraging. The talk is about the value of face to face tuition, how to get the best out of ICT and how to bridge the digital divide. Will they say the same in the next place I visit?

I would encourage you to look at [www.open.ac.uk/student-support-review](http://www.open.ac.uk/student-support-review) and let us have your comments. And watch out for a message from your region about future events as seats are allocated on a first come, first served basis.

**Will Swann**  
Director, Students

## A law unto himself

**P**ROVING that 'lifelong learning' is no mere slogan at the OU, student James McCulloch has become the country's oldest law graduate of 2007 – at the age of 83.

The retired accountant and chartered company secretary gained his first degree, in economics, in 1950, but after a long and successful commercial career he opted for study as a retirement activity to keep him mentally challenged.

"I had already taken an A level in law at a local college and the next stage was university, but I didn't fancy sitting with the boys and girls."

He was not deterred by law's reputation as a 'difficult' subject although he admits that he found it a burden on his memory. "It meant going over and over the material. I used to aim for a long revision period," he said. "It was very challenging, but I enjoyed it very much."

And he is full of praise for the law programme and the support he received. "There is always someone available to give an answer. I am not computer-literate, so I

did have to call for help on a couple of occasions.

"That was another advantage of taking the course – I would never have got a computer otherwise."

Having bagged his degree after five years' study James, who recently became a grandfather for the first time, doesn't intend to rest on his laurels. "I have it in the back of my mind that I would like to read up on the history of the development of equity," he said.

Professor Gary Slapper, who helped found the OU's law programme which now has 5,000 students, said: "We do have law students in their 70s, 80s and 90s, but not necessarily taking the degree.

"Someone who studies law later in life is better equipped than an 18-year-old to absorb the significance of law.

"Law is a subject of so many aggregate parts. Once you have acquired legal knowledge and skill, everything you say, everything you think, is improved. Especially if it is accompanied with such a rich and seasoned experience of life."

## OU is treading the boards

**T**HE Open University in the South East will be working with three regional festivals this year in a drive to encourage more local people to consider OU courses.

The Charleston Festival, Brighton Festival and Chichester Festival Theatre will all be providing opportunities for the OU to meet people at local cultural events and to help them find out how they can succeed at university-level adult education.

### French writer

As part of the Brighton Festival on 5 to 27 May, the OU will be supporting a talk by French writer Bernard-Henri Levy on Thursday 24 May.

At Charleston Festival on 18 to 28 May, the University will chair a number of events and debates.

At the Chichester Festival Theatre, the OU will be sponsoring the Theatre's Preview Ticket Scheme which provides dramatically reduced priced tickets for the first three performances of every production.

For further information on all festivals log onto [www.brighton-festival.org](http://www.brighton-festival.org), [www.charleston.org.uk](http://www.charleston.org.uk) and [www.cft.org.uk](http://www.cft.org.uk)



A scene from a previous year's Brighton Festival

## Italian honour for OU lecturer

ANNA Proudfoot, lecturer in Italian in the OU's Department of Languages, has been awarded the Ordine della Stella della Solidarieta Italiana (Knight of the Order of the Star of Italian Solidarity) – one of Italy's highest honours.

### Delighted

Anna, who is the course chair of the brand new L195 *Andante* course, was



Anna is pictured here collecting her award from the Italian Ambassador to Great Britain, Giancarlo Aragona. Picture: Salvatore Mancuso

given the award for her contribution to Italian culture and language.

"I am honoured to have been given this award as it recognises the importance of the Italian language," Anna told *sesame* magazine. "It comes at the same time that The Open University has also recognised the importance of Italian by launching its first Italian course in November this year. I've taught Italian for over 20 years to undergraduates and to adult students and I'm delighted to be able to continue to promote Italian language and culture at The Open University."

## Your say on gender equality

THE OU is drawing up a new scheme in line with forthcoming legislation to ensure gender equality across the University – and needs your help to do it.

Data and information are being gathered to inform the University's first Gender Equality Scheme, a new policy that every public authority must legally have in place by 30 April. The draft of the OU's Scheme is available at [www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity](http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity) and the University welcomes your comments.

The OU's head of equality and diversity, Derek Child, said: "We have been gathering detailed data in terms of gender breakdown for students and staff. We have a long history of developing policies and practices that support gender equality. Our student admissions policy is unique among other universities with most courses having no entry requirements. In drawing up the scheme we will be assessing the effects of our policies and practices on men and women, and identifying areas of under-performance or under-representation of our students and staff by men and women and looking to find reasons for the differences."

Email your comments by 2 April to [strategy-equality-voice@open.ac.uk](mailto:strategy-equality-voice@open.ac.uk)

## Cosmic excitement

THE OU's Professor Colin Pillinger and Dr John Murray have both spoken about their excitement upon seeing images taken by Nasa's Mars Global Surveyor spacecraft, which suggest that water has flowed on Mars within the past five years.

Colin Pillinger, leader of the Beagle 2 Mars project, said: "Without water there's no life, so this is highly significant and like everything on Mars, absolutely tantalising. These pictures show that something, probably water, flowed down those gullies recently and then presumably evaporated away, leaving what seem to be mineral deposits behind. What this tells us is that if you want to look for life, this is the place to look."

Other news is that the OU's Dr Andrew Ball was one of three members of a Study Science Steering Group which helped to define future scientific objectives for two possible missions to the Moon. The first of these mission concepts, MoonLITE, would deliver an orbiter to the Moon. The second, more ambitious mission would take the form of a soft lander to perform *in situ* dating of lunar rocks using the K-Ar technique, which draws on CEPSTAR's capabilities in analytical geochemistry.



# Every little helps!

**T**HE Open University has become a partner in Tesco's Clubcard Deals scheme. This means that people who might not normally be able to afford a course will be able to use points towards the cost of any full- or part-time OU course.

The OU is the first university to broker such a deal. Nick McCormack, chief executive of Tesco Freetime, said: "We're delighted to be working with The Open University to offer our customers the opportunity to put Tesco vouchers towards higher education. The OU's 'earn while you learn' programme provides a great opening for our customers to achieve valuable qualifications."

OU Vice-Chancellor Professor Brenda Gourley said: "Any large-scale drive of this kind has the huge benefit of saving on advertising costs whilst reaching a massive and diverse population of potential students."

"Students in turn gain access to Open University courses without incurring any debt."

Ellen Cocking from the OU Careers Advisory Service said: "Wonderful idea! Being able to pay for part of a course is a great feature and will certainly raise the profile of the OU. Tesco is advertising its graduate vacancies to OU students which indicates they do value OU study."

If your friends or family are Tesco shoppers and are interested in redeeming their points towards an OU course call +44 (0)845 366 6057 or log onto [www.open.ac.uk/new/clubcarddeals](http://www.open.ac.uk/new/clubcarddeals) for further information.

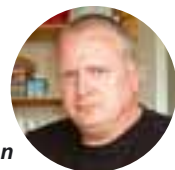


## VOX POX

We asked OU students via the OU Life Screensaver what they thought about the Tesco news. Here's just a selection of responses

"WHAT an inspired idea! At last something worth saving them for. Brilliant. Well done."

**Perry Tatman**



rewards will be at a disadvantage. I suspect that there will be others like me, who will change their habits to benefit from this at the expense of other reward schemes."

**Tony Lewis**



increasingly dominated by one commercial company, and our freedom of choice increasingly restricted. I am not happy with them encroaching upon education as well."

**Quintin A. Blane**

"I THINK the partnership scheme with Tesco is brilliant news. I look forward to being able to use my Clubcard to pay for my next course."

**Richard Tanner**



"I AM most unhappy about this link. I have no problems with companies trying to make profits (I have my own business and my 'profit' is what I get paid!) but I am becoming increasingly concerned at Tesco's march through this country and across the world."



**Edwina Wakley**

"I WOULD be interested to know if anything similar is being pursued with other reward schemes."

Those who may not have the opportunity to collect Tesco



"I BELIEVE that Tesco is already dangerously close to taking over our lives: retail, insurance, financial services

**Dean Marshall**

"THIS has got to be one of the best things that I have seen Tesco introduce to get people back into education. I am registered disabled and on a very low income, thus no funds to further my education. I currently shop at Asda, and assuming that I pass my first course towards the end of this year then I will seriously consider shopping at Tesco instead."



# Riding the same roller coaster

**T**HERE'S a curious parallel between the kinds of activities and preoccupations that both adolescents and their mid-life parents indulge in when they hit a particular life-stage, writes **Hilary Lawson**, associate lecturer in the Faculty of Health and Social Care.

Both teenagers and people in mid-life can find themselves wanting to be prised away from restricting family roles, engage in exciting new risk-taking behaviour, experiment with different work roles, explore sexuality and new relationships, or want to discover and understand exotic cultures.

While conducting some research on the adolescent's emerging sense of who they are and who they want to be, the parallels between this adolescent search for identity and the one that hits people in the vague period we call 'mid-life' became startlingly obvious and my research took a detour to interview the parents as well as their teenagers, and also others hitting the mid-life stage.

### Crisis or review?

Life reviews can happen at any stage, and can be triggered by any number of different events: redundancy, a relationship break-up or the death of a parent.

But there can be something peculiarly urgent and energising

about the review brought on by mid-life: a sense of time running out often produces a need to do some serious thinking about who we are and what we want to get out of life.

But is this necessarily a 'crisis'? Mid-life has been neglected as a focus of informed research but there are plenty of myths about it. These are invariably wrapped up in neat but negative phrases such as 'empty nesters', 'grumpy old men', 'mid-life crisis'.

Open University students often have fascinating stories to tell about the effects on them and their families of taking up studying for a degree. As a tutor with The Open University I have heard many students' stories of study precipitating re-evaluation of lives and identities.

How have you experienced hitting 40 or 50? I am currently drawing together stories of mid-life – both negative and positive – from a variety of different sources. If you are interested in writing an account of anything between 100 and 1,000 words on any aspect of hitting mid-life and the changes it brings, or if you would like to complete a questionnaire, please email [midlifestories@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:midlifestories@hotmail.co.uk)

Accounts can also be sent anonymously if preferred to MidlifeStories, PO Box 5095, Brighton BN50 9QS (but please tell me a little about yourself such as age, gender, location, work-role).

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### Why no mortarboards?

WHY does the OU not have mortarboards at its graduations? Some of us (I know this from conferencing) would like to wear one. Is this political correctness?

**Stephen Sinclair**  
Chester

### TONY BARKER, HEAD OF THE AWARDS AND CEREMONIES CENTRE IN STUDENT SERVICES, REPLIES:

WE do have hats approved as part of our official academic dress. These are either a mortarboard or a bonnet according to the award. However, by convention these are not worn at degree ceremonies.

This rule has been in place right from the start and so has nothing to do with any current vogue for political correctness or other transitory fashion. It is rather that, as Lord Perry once noted: "Would we have gowns and hoods, a mace, all the trappings of medieval universities which had been copied by the modern ones? Amongst the staff of The Open University there were some who felt these trappings should be swept away." In the end, it was agreed that approved academic dress would be a part of the University but it was also decided that the theme of 'daring to be different' should also be reflected somehow.

### Moroccan students

I AM glad that you highlighted the problems caused when five

Moroccan students were refused entry into the UK (*sesame*, issue 232). I hope Dr Gupta obtains an apology for the students from the British Consulate and that this matter is pursued so that in the long term, better relations will exist between Britain and overseas academics for the benefit of all involved. I know that many of your readers and students will consider what these students had to encounter a disgrace, although they were visiting for legitimate research reasons, and hope that the OU will extend sincere apologies on behalf of its British students for the way they were treated.

**Tracey McCann**  
Mid Glamorgan, South Wales

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

THANKS for your note Tracey. Once we get an update on Dr Gupta's attempts to get an apology, we'll publish it in *sesame*.

### Black dog article

AN article appeared in the last edition of *sesame* about depression among students. This generated much feedback. Below is just a selection.

I WAS pleased to read in *sesame* (issue 232) that most OU students with mental health issues have enjoyed a very positive experience studying with the University. I too have a mental health issue, bipolar disorder in my case, and I cannot speak highly enough of

the OU and what it has done to enable me to succeed in my studies.

My advice to those who feel they've had less support would be – please don't give up on the OU. Loads of support exists for students with mental health issues; it is just a question of accessing it. A call to the student support team at your regional centre might be a good starting point. You'll be amazed at what might be available for you.

**Mrs Gaynor Purdom**  
High Wycombe

AFTER reading your article in *sesame* on the 'black dog' it made me realise that I am not as alone as I thought. The pride and satisfaction of being notified you have passed your course goes a long way to calm the 'beast' for a spell but the effort that is involved in getting to that point is sometimes more than one can cope with.

When I decided to start with the OU I did the 'right thing' and enrolled in a taster course to get the idea of what being an OU student would be like. I know that you don't want to scare people off studying, but the shortness of the course meant that I only saw a small part of the support that is available to me (something I am just beginning to realise after reading the article). The next course I enrolled in and the course I am currently studying count towards a certificate in computing, which I

hope will bring a light to the end of my particular tunnel.

**Kimberley Shepherd**  
Falkirk, Scotland

### Exams

SOME of you took exams late last year and as a result, we had a number of letters on this subject. Here's a selection.

AS one of many students who must be feeling that nine months of hard work throughout the course is pointless given the fact that a lower grade in the end of term exams or course essay determines the overall course result, is it not time to reassess the OU's bizarre system of calculating overall course results?

Having achieved an average of 85 per cent throughout the year but unfortunately receiving 65 per cent in the course essay, I would have settled for a grade 2 as an average, but a grade 3 does not reflect the quality of work produced throughout the year, just one uncharacteristically lower result. Would it not be a greater incentive to students to keep going when course work gets harder and essays more challenging if they knew that their hard work would be rewarded in their final result?

**Paula Simpson-Parry**  
Lincoln

### JENNY BULL, HEAD OF EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT AT THE OU, REPLIES:

CONTINUOUS assessment and the end of course examinations/assessment, are designed for very different purposes. The tasks that make up the continuous assessment component are as much about teaching as about assessment, and they are completed by students in 'home' conditions where there is ready access to materials and other forms of assistance. This is not the case for the examinable component.

In addition, different learning outcomes and skills are being assessed in each component. Examination and assessment boards take such differences into account in determining results, and have some discretion in setting the requirement for certain grades of pass: for example, boards can, and often do, set a higher threshold for continuous assessment than for the examinable component.

I WAS flabbergasted in 2005 when just prior to Christmas I received my course results, only to discover that I had failed my exam for AA314 by some considerable margin, achieving a very meagre 31 per cent. Having attained an OCAS score of 79 per cent, with my last two TMAs attracting 90 per cent and 92 per cent, you can imagine I felt somewhat bewildered, not to say aggrieved.

I soon discovered that I could not question the result. I could not see the script or even ask someone to take another look and found it amazing that I had absolutely no recourse but to retake the examination in 2006. Can you comment on these circumstances?

**C Goodall**  
Edinburgh

### JENNY BULL, HEAD OF EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT AT THE OU, REPLIES:

WE agree that all students should receive feedback on the examination or examinable component. Students on most courses can access a performance profile online at the same time they access their course result on StudentHome. This can give information on the relative strengths and weaknesses of their responses to individual questions, how they performed in relation to the rest of the cohort on the course, and generic feedback prepared by the relevant board.

Returning examination scripts to students would not enable

them to see where they went wrong since scripts are not marked with the intention of providing feedback to students.

IN the winter edition of *sesame*, Geoff Barr complained that it took too long for his LXR122 results to be sent to him.

It is not just a question of marking the assignments; there are various quality assurance processes to be undertaken before results are released, including monitoring of marking, consideration and determination of standards of achievement by Examination and Assessment Boards, and formal approval of results. Over 130,000 results across over 400 different courses went through these processes in a period of about two months last year, with the majority of results being available by 12 December – well before Christmas dinner!

**Elodie Vialleton**  
Lecturer in French, Chair of LXR122  
**and Jenny Bull**  
Head of Examinations and Assessment

### Success story

NEARLY three years ago I wrote to *sesame* to tell you about being accepted at the London School of Economics. On the 14 December I attend[ed] my graduation ceremony to receive my MSc in New Media, Information and Society, which I passed with merit.

My first degree is technology so I did not have a social science background, so having to write social science essays was very different to anything else that I had done with the OU.

I firmly believe that the foundation that the OU gave me really made all the difference to my success. Studying at a traditional university is very different from the OU. I don't think OU students realise how much

effort goes into the materials that we receive. In my first few weeks at LSE I had to fight with 120 other media and communications students for books on the reading list and then go [and] photocopy the required sections! Very stressful when there are only four or five books.

I'm applying to the LSE to study for a PhD. None of this would have been possible without the OU.

**Martin Garthwaite**

### eTMAs

WITH reference to your article (issue 232) on paperless TMAs, I completed the course T308 *Environmental monitoring, modelling and control* in 2005 and it used the eTMA format. Prior to this all my courses were studied in the old fashioned way. The eTMA is by far the best system and should be used throughout OU courses wherever possible. It has many advantages – it reduces waste, paper usage, and expensive ink cartridges.

It also removes the uncertainty of the postal system and permits students an extra few days to meet TMA deadlines. Tutor comments are also easier to decipher on marked assignments. Maybe the introduction of increased postal charges has hastened the introduction of eTMAs. In my view electronic delivery should have been introduced years ago.

**Robert A Mckerrell**  
Kilmarnock

### Gone but not forgotten

IN issue 232's Vox Pox, Willem H. de Boer suggested that what distinguished The Open University was the lack of lectures. This cannot necessarily be the case as this came out at about the time the University announced that the OU television programme (as opposed to University-financed programmes such as *Timewatch* and *Journeys From The Centre of the Earth*) were ceasing to be broadcast, to be replaced by DVDs for the individual courses. I for one will miss them. Where else could you come up with programmes (to give some examples) about the problems of the Advanced Passenger Train project, the music of Handel, the performing of the play *Medea* and the contrasts between various places of worship?

These programmes served rather as the public lectures that some universities run: anyone could attend, simply by watching them. I can see the point of providing the programmes directly to people who need them, particularly as you had to remember when the programmes were to be broadcast to take advantage of them. Nevertheless, it was these programmes which introduced me to the University. They may be gone but they are not forgotten.

**Aidan Wightman**  
Whitley Bay

### STAR LETTER

#### Benvenuto Italiano!

HURRAH! The OU does listen to students' requests. About three years ago there was a letter in *sesame* from a student who wanted the OU to start an Italian beginner's

language course. He asked all other OU students interested to write. I did so. Imagine my delight when I saw the cover of the winter *sesame* (232) and read the article about the new Italian course beginning next year.

What is more it couldn't have come at a better time. All being well, I will finish my BA (Hons) in Humanities just in time to be one of the first to follow it! So here is one very satisfied customer.

**Fredericka Beets**  
Comines, France

Please send your letters to:  
Letters to the Editor, *sesame*, The Open University,  
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# High street banks

In this issue, **sesame** launches a new series where we get our magnifying glass out to investigate issues close to your hearts. In the spotlight are high street banks

IT'S good news for OU students who want a graduate account. But a **sesame** investigation into the availability of student accounts for OU students hit a brick wall.

**sesame's** investigation into our high street banks' relationship with the OU was triggered by a letter from graduate Claire Reilly (published in issue 231) who appealed for help after the Royal Bank of Scotland turned her down for a graduate account. RBS told her that her OU degree was 'not acceptable'. It said that, to qualify for its graduate account – which offers benefits such as free overdraft facilities and discounts in major stores – graduates must have studied full-time and therefore the offer excludes those with a degree from the OU.

So **sesame** got on the phone to find out how other high street banks treat OU students and graduates. There was good news and there was bad news ...

#### Graduate accounts

As you will see from the results below, we found that the majority of high street banks we approached offer special accounts to anyone with a recognised degree, regardless of whether their studies were full- or part-time. The notable exception to this was the Royal Bank of Scotland.

#### Question: Can I have a graduate account please?

- NatWest** "We offer graduate rates to anyone with a degree, regardless of whether that has been achieved through distance or centre-based learning."
- HSBC** "Yes, certainly – if you have a recognised degree, you're eligible for a graduate account."
- Lloyds TSB** "You need to be in permanent employment or have a job offer but if you have a degree and you meet those criteria, you can open a graduate account."
- RBS** "Our policy does specify that this account is only for people who have completed a full-time degree and therefore part-time students, such as those who studied with the OU, are not eligible. You would not be eligible as an OU graduate."

we spoke to which discriminates against OU students in this way. They said their original response to Claire's letter 'still stands'.

#### Student accounts

It was a different story with student accounts – the high street banks we contacted insisted applicants must be studying full-time to qualify. They argue that part-time students don't need special treatment because they are considered more able than other students to earn money.

#### Question: Can I have a student account please?

- Halifax** "We offer student accounts to people who can prove they are full-time students – I'm afraid that's the downfall when you're an OU student."
- Lloyds TSB** "We need to see a UCAS certificate for proof of entry on a full-time course before we can offer a student account." When she was told OU students did not have UCAS certificates, she said: "I'm afraid that is the prerequisite of us opening a student account."

**NatWest** – When we investigated this in February, it clearly stated on its Student Account web page: "Open University courses DO NOT qualify for the Student Account." Since we started working on our investigation the wording on its website changed. We called the student helpline to see if there has been a change on policy and were told: "If you're on a full-time higher education course for over two years, you can get a Student Account."

Rebecca Rosenthal, President of the OU Students Association, said: "Those banks that insist on treating OU students differently from students who attend traditional universities are being really short-sighted. As consumers, we're all becoming more proactive and choosing to give our business to the companies that offer us the best deal – whether buying gas, an ISP or choosing a bank account. We believe there's a great opportunity here for banks to access customers from an OU audience that is now more than two million strong."

**What's your experience of banking as an OU student? Are there any areas you want us to investigate in this new series? Let us know by emailing [sesame@open.ac.uk](mailto:sesame@open.ac.uk)**

**sesame** went back to RBS to point out that it is the only big name





## SMALLER BITES

I AM always thrilled to browse through the courses available for OU study, but this year I have been disappointed to find so few 30-point courses on offer in the arts and humanities section.

I still have a catalogue for 2003/2004 in which 16 30-point courses are offered in humanities. This year I could only find six, four of which are classical language courses.

In other disciplines, such as science, technology and education, there appears to be much more flexibility, allowing students the opportunity to study slowly, or take two or more different courses in one year.

Presumably there may be other humanities students who may not feel inspired by the 10-point level 1 courses, but do not have the time or perhaps the cash to stretch to 60 points every year. A 60-point course requires a considerable commitment of 15 hours per week. Half that time, an hour a day, might be manageable and attractive to people with busy work and family responsibilities.

If 30-point courses are to be phased out in humanities, might some students have a shortfall at the end of their degree?

**Rosemary McEwen lives in Bath with her husband Andrew and baby Miranda. She began her studies ten years ago and after a long gap, completed A215 Creative writing last year.**

**Do you have a gripe or would you like to share something interesting? Send us an article of no more than 200 words to The Editor, sesame, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA or email [sesame@open.ac.uk](mailto:sesame@open.ac.uk) Include contact details and a daytime telephone number. We pay £50 for each contribution used.**

# Punchy populariser

*Actor, historian, archaeologist, storyteller, OU honorary graduate – there are many ways in which you could describe Tony Robinson. sesame talks to the man himself to discover more*



***Time Team has made archaeology accessible to ordinary people. Was this your aim from the start?***

When we created *Time Team*, we very much set out to make archaeology accessible to all. Interestingly, all our experts had a background in archaeology in the community so they're all insistent that the discipline shouldn't just be locked away in the ivory tower of academe. After all, archaeology is seen by many as the 'ordinary people's history', so we should all have the right to have access to it and to understand it.

***What advice would you give to anyone who wants to delve further into archaeology?***

I think archaeology is rather like acting in that you shouldn't do it unless you really, really want to. You need to be willing to squat in the freezing cold for hour after hour, doing your back and knees in to get precious little results week after week. If that doesn't deter you, then it's the job for you! I think it's terrific that the OU is starting an archaeology course (A251 *World archology*). *Time Team* ignites people's interest in the subject but many might simply not be at that place in their lives where they are able to do a full-time course. So this course gives them the opportunity to develop an interest that *Time Team* started.

***A lot of academics have got on their high horse about Time Team, accusing it of 'dumbing down' archaeology. What's your response to that?***

The whole show has been controversial among academics, especially the *Time Team Big Dig* we did last summer. There's been this implication that we've been doing some kind of irrelevant and minimalist archaeology simply to promote a TV programme. But I wish those academics who criticised us would check their facts first. What we do is rigorous scientific archaeology to the highest of standards, producing extensive results. In fact, I'd say that not only have we encouraged people to study archaeology and understand how invaluable it is, we've also made a contribution to the discipline of archaeology itself. Of course we get a few things wrong. We're human. But when we do, we do so under the spotlight of the camera and are honest enough to keep those moments in, whereas most academics have the luxury of hiding their mistakes!

***Much of your work involves bringing difficult subjects to life for people. Is this a conscious aim of yours?***

It isn't a conscious aim; it's more a sub-conscious one. Like the vast majority of OU students, I didn't go to university at 18 or 19. For some, the reason for this might be insufficient support at home, lousy teachers or, in my case, just being a lazy student who didn't want to do any work! So in the back of my mind, I've always been this punchy populariser who's thought to himself: "Look, there's an awful lot of knowledge that I don't have, either hidden away in books I don't know about, or described in vocabulary that's totally alien to me. So now I want to find out stuff." And because I'm a storyteller by nature, I have this desire to share this knowledge with other people.

***Another subject you've explored recently is care for the elderly in the Channel 4 documentary The Trouble with Old People. What was your aim with that documentary?***

I think my aim was to simply talk about a subject that I didn't think was given enough time by both our political masters and media commentators. Both my parents suffered from dementia at different times so I met an awful lot of people in a similar situation to me. I wanted to talk about the kind of issues that I talked about with them such as the guilt that they felt; the lack of information they had; their feeling of disempowerment and, by and large, the low quality of care the elderly receive in this country. When people talk about the elderly, it's usually about their 'management'. I don't hear much talk about how we can make the elderly happy; it's more a case of "Let's make sure they don't set fire to themselves" or "Let's ensure they've taken their medication and don't starve to death". But is this really the best we can offer to the generation who fought the Nazis? I think it's far more interesting to, for example, think about what educational opportunities we can offer to people in their 80s and 90s instead of parking them in front of the television.

***You received an honorary award from the OU in 2005. How did you feel about this and did you enjoy the day?***

Absolutely terrific. I've received other honorary degrees but to get one from the OU – well, it's like my spiritual home. It's funny because Harold Wilson once said the OU was his greatest achievement, and possibly my greatest achievement comes from when people tap me on the shoulder and say: "I wouldn't have read history, archaeology and so on if I hadn't seen your programme". So I feel the OU and I are complete soul sisters.

***Finally, what projects have you got in the pipeline that OU students should look out for?***

I'm currently working on a five-part Channel 4 series on the history of the law. In fact, as part of my research, I'm currently reading *English Law* by the OU's very own Gary Slapper!

I haven't trodden the boards in earnest for 10 years yet theatre is my whole background. I was predominantly a theatre actor before *Blackadder* came along when I was 38. So I'm looking forward to doing my live show – *Cunning Night Out* – which is touring the country this year (go to [www.mickperrin.com/tr\\_2006\\_dates.htm](http://www.mickperrin.com/tr_2006_dates.htm) for more information on dates and how to get tickets). I know people are interested in my life and the work I've done so I wanted to create a one-man show that would be funny, free-flowing and take a stream of consciousness approach while also addressing questions people have asked. And of course, if people aren't interested, they can stay away!

Who would you like to see in the hotseat next? Send your suggestions to **sesame**, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA.



# Love is in the OU air

Not only does the OU offer people a world of opportunities, in some cases, it has also led people to their soul mates. We talk to three couples who met their partners while studying with the OU

## ♥ Cyber love

MICHELLE Baker and David Harries met online via FirstClass and are still going strong despite living 300 miles apart.

Dave, 37, never expected to meet the woman he'd eventually propose to while studying ED209 *Child development* but that's just what happened when he started chatting to Michelle through the FirstClass 'Meeting Place' forum.

"Michelle was going through a bit of a rough patch so, as well as trying to cheer her up, as a former solicitor I was also giving her some legal advice. I had once studied the course she was studying at the time – DSE212 *Exploring psychology* – so we had that in common too".

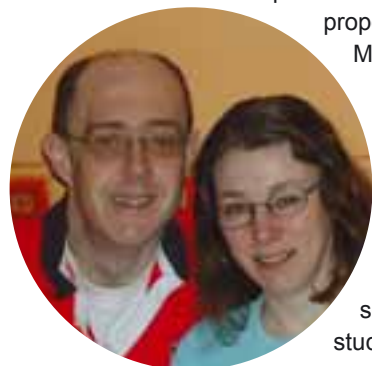
After a few months of chatting in cyberspace, David suggested meeting up face to face and when they did, the feelings were mutual. "From the moment we met, we knew there was more than just friendship there," said Michelle.

### Petrified

The distance between them – Michelle lives in West Sussex and David lives in Wales – could have been a problem, but by taking the time and effort to see each other at least once a month, their relationship went from strength to strength.

Their first Christmas together confirmed their feelings even more. So much so, in fact, that David decided to propose just a couple of months later. "I was absolutely petrified about

proposing to Michelle," he admits. "We were just about to do some studying



when I sprung the ring upon her. She was astonished and started crying! I felt a little bad about distracting her from her OU revision but it was a special occasion." They are now planning to get married as soon as David is able to move closer to Michelle.

Both of them are still studying with the OU, with Michelle having just started EK310 *Research with children and young people*. "I'm in my fourth year of studying with the OU," she says. "I'm at home a lot as I suffer from arthritis so mobility is very difficult. I got to the point where I said 'my brain won't give up even if my body does'. Once my youngest son is at school full-time, I'm hoping to work in education."

David, who has been studying with the OU since 2003, is currently an operational manager for an oil company but is hoping to eventually find work in the psychology field.

## ♥ A geological wedding

CINDY McChlery, 36, met Iain Hendy, 39, while they were both studying for a BSc in Geology. They married in October 2006.

Cindy and Iain are part of a great set of friends who all met during a special summer school. It wasn't until Cindy graduated in 2003 and went to Durham University to study for an MSc in Engineering Geology that she began to see more of Iain, who only lived 40 minutes away at the time.

### Proposed

Still just friends at first, they would meet up to go hiking and enjoy geology trails. "Our friendship really helped us with our studies," said Cindy. "We were able to really support each other as we were both studying the same discipline."

Eventually, their friendship developed into a relationship and on Valentine's Day last year Iain, who is now a team leader and paramedic, proposed. "It was very



exciting planning the wedding day," said Cindy, who has a business in property management.

"When it eventually arrived, the day was fantastic, really nice. It was an old textile mill in the Cotswolds and all our OU friends came. My mum even pinned OU alumni badges onto the train of my wedding dress!"

The geology theme was also reflected on the day, as Iain and Cindy's friend and OU earth sciences graduate John Knowles explains: "The wedding reception was held at the Egypt Mill Hotel in Nailsworth, Gloucestershire and all guests were given a sample of agate to remind them of the day. Microscopes were however not provided in order to identify the minerals and crystals. Rather appropriately for former geology students, the disco that followed played a good selection of 'rock' music. After the disco, graduates treated the uninitiated to stories and memories of OU residential school."

## ♥ First impressions

BARBARA Durbin from south Wales fell for her husband Steve in 1985 while they were both studying an OU foundation course.

When Barbara first met Steve during a tutorial, her first impressions of him were that he was a "bit of a Mr Know it all". A few years later, she was married to that Mr Know it all!

After meeting briefly during tutorials (when Barbara formulated her flattering first impression of Steve!) they had their first proper conversation during a summer

school in Bath. "Steve was sitting in one of the public areas reading a book I'd just finished the day before," remembers Barbara. "In fact, I still remember the book – *So Long and Thanks for all the Fish*. I asked him if he was enjoying it and the conversation went on from there really."

### Competition

They really hit it off, discovering they had a great deal in common, and became very good friends. But they eventually lost touch for a few years until Barbara bumped into Steve while she was taking her children to school one day. "A car pulled up next to me and it was him! We only managed a brief chat. A couple of weeks later, Steve turned up on my doorstep after trawling the electoral register to find me!"

From then, their relationship flourished, with both of them gaining their qualifications and taking them a step closer to their dreams. When they got married three years later, the package was complete.

They've been married for eight years now and Barbara has just completed a Masters in Education with the OU and Steve is studying for a Masters in Business Administration. "The OU is almost a lifestyle," says Barbara. "We sort of have a competition going on to see who can get the most letters after their name!"





# Meeting your needs

Over 9,000 students with a disability or additional requirements study with The Open University each year; more than study at all other UK universities put together. **Maxine Phillips** of the Office for Students with Disabilities provides this round-up

If you're someone who has a disability or additional requirement for study, below is an overview of how The Open University can help make your studying experience as enjoyable and as stress-free as possible.

## What services are offered by the OU?

The OU provides dedicated services to meet the needs of all students with additional requirements arising from a disability, specific learning disability or medical condition. As well as support and services offered by the OU's regional centres, it also has its own access centre, disability advisory services (which has a mental health, dyslexia and visual impairment adviser), curriculum access and an office for students with disabilities.

Together they undertake needs assessments for students to decide the best support packages while also providing training to OU staff who support students. They also work to make the curriculum more accessible for all students, providing a wide range of practical support for study at home, tutorials and residential schools as well as delivering advice and guidance to students.

The OU also has its own Audio Recording Centre where 200 volunteer readers come and make audio versions of printed course material, from which around 1,600 print disabled students benefit annually.

## What support can a student studying at the OU expect?

First of all, advisers are there to let you know what is available to you while you're studying and to tell you how to get any support you might need. Once on your course, support comes in many forms and addresses many additional requirements.

### Alternative formats for your course materials

The OU has audio recordings of the printed materials for over 100 courses, ranging

from the introductory Openings courses to postgraduate arts and level 3 maths. Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) files are also available for hundreds of other courses, and audio recordings or PDF files might be useful if you have difficulty using printed material – for example if you have a visual impairment or dyslexia or just find handling books difficult.

Also available are written transcripts of any audio components of the course, tactile diagrams for some courses and hundreds of courses where the books have a spiral comb binding so that they lie flat on the table (useful for scanning) and are easier to hold.

### Residential schools

For residential schools, support can be provided in the form of an assistant (perhaps to help at meal times, moving around campus, note-taking or practical work), equipment (such as radio aids and scooters) and specialist support such as sign language interpreters and lip-speakers for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Special diets can also be catered for.

### Equipment

There is a huge range of equipment designed to help students with different disabilities or additional requirements to study; from low tech solutions such as coloured overlays that might help dyslexic students, to high tech solutions like screen-readers which read out electronic text on your PC or adapted hardware if you can't use a standard PC set up. The OU has a pool of individual items to loan to students while they are studying (such as radio aids for people who are hard of hearing and digital voice recorders for people who find it difficult to take notes) and an access technology loan scheme which provides a more comprehensive package such as PCs with appropriate hardware adaptations, software and training. Students eligible for a disabled

students' allowance will need to obtain equipment and training via that allowance.

### Tutorials

At tutorials, you may benefit from flexibility about the venue, and the provision of assistants and equipment as appropriate.

### Examinations

The support does not stop once you've reached examination time. Examination papers are also available in certain alternative formats, and you may be able to have extra time, or an exam at home, depending on your circumstances. All alternative arrangements for examinations have to be approved by the University.

### Flexibility and support

The OU method of studying naturally lends itself to adapting your study to methods and patterns that suit you. If your disability, specific learning difficulty or medical condition means that you need to take a break from studying for a while, there is a certain amount of flexibility that can be offered. For example if a period of ill health means you have to stop studying for a few weeks, it is often possible to hand an assignment in after the deadline (after discussion with your tutor) or you could stop studying the course for a while and resume when your health gets better.

And finally, there's the support from people at the OU, and even other students. Not all disabilities require a practical solution, but just someone to provide guidance, support or simply someone to talk to. Each OU regional office has experienced advisors who are there to let you know the options available to you or talk through any difficulties you may be having. Your tutor is another source of support. The OU's student conferencing system has various disability related conference groups where you can chat to other students who may be in similar situations or can share ideas.



## Moving forward

The OU is committed to meeting the needs of all students and is always working to improve what can be offered to students with a disability, specific learning difficulty or medical condition by continually training staff and tutors, setting standards and pushing the boundaries in developing new services.

Always looking to improve on the services it offers, the OU has unveiled a raft of actions to increase access and services to students with disabilities.

Launched as part of the University's equality and diversity strategy for the next five years, the Disability Equality Scheme commits the OU to tackling a number of areas where disabled students say they still face difficulties, among them:

- More precise and accurate information about what's required of students in course descriptions. "There is a lot about what they will learn but they need to know what they need to do to learn those things," said Angela Schofield, director of the OU in the East of England, who chaired the steering group that produced the scheme.
- A more accessible curriculum, with accessibility 'designed-in' from the start, so students don't get halfway through a qualification and discover they cannot complete it because they are unable to study one or more of its compulsory elements. Said Angela: "Course progression can be a problem. We need to be thinking about accessibility in advance rather than trying to

bolt it on afterward, and that includes thinking about less obvious forms of disability."

- Continued efforts to make teaching more accessible, especially at venues which do not belong to the OU. 'Some students continue to experience difficulties, and there is a need for better signage, lighting and information about access and facilities,' states the steering group.

Extensive consultations with students, staff and other experts that went into the scheme's preparation also identified a need for standardisation of best practice in print communications, better signposting on where students will find the wealth of support information that is already available, more support with software and hardware for those students reliant on their computers in order to be able to study, and more staff development to ensure all those that students encounter in their studies understand the issues they may face.

For more information on the services offered, talk to your regional office or log onto [www.open.ac.uk/disability](http://www.open.ac.uk/disability)

Read the Disability Equality Scheme in full at [www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity](http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity) It is also available in large print or alternative formats: contact the Equality and Diversity Office by phone +44 (0)1908 652566, minicom 01908 653074 for details.



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research

# Hustle and bustle

**Yvonne Cook** explores the findings of an in-depth OU study of eight contrasting English markets to find out how they are used by their local communities

**T**HE humble street market has been part of British life for so long that we tend to take it for granted. But we are neglecting a key resource, according to a new study carried out by Open University social scientists and published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. It says markets play a vital role in allowing all groups in the community, but particularly older, low-income and marginalised people, to meet and mingle.

It calls for a national market strategy to reverse a lack of investment and a decline in local markets over the last 20 years, and to support the key government agendas of combating social exclusion and regenerating town centres.

Sophie Watson, Professor of Sociology at the OU, with the assistance of David Stoddert, research fellow, conducted an in-depth study of eight contrasting English markets to find out how they are used by their local communities, and what factors helped or hindered their success. The

**“The long-established Jewish traders spoke of helping the new Asian traders settle into the market”**

markets studied were Lowestoft; Ludlow; St Helens; Preston; Rotherham; Milton Keynes; Ridley Road, London; and Islington farmers’ market, London.

“Markets ... potentially offer opportunities not only for local economic development and employment, but also for ... the mingling of different cultures and the building of a sense of local community,” says Sophie. “There is a growing interest in the use of markets as focal points for local regeneration and community initiatives, but little is known as to why some markets succeed – economically and socially – and others do not.”

### Crucial role

The researchers discovered that markets play a crucial role in the daily lives of many older people, particularly older women, who use them as a place to meet friends and acquaintances, sit and chat. Families with children also visit markets to meet and greet as well as to shop – Islington farmers’ market even provides opportunities for children to sample food. Markets also provide a key site for the mixing of different cultures in the local community, particularly where there is a diverse racial and ethnic mix of traders. At Ridley Road market in London, for example, the long-established Jewish traders spoke of helping the new Asian traders settle into the market, explaining the customs and practices of market life.

Researchers were also struck by the strength of the relationships between shoppers and market traders which, they say, “differed



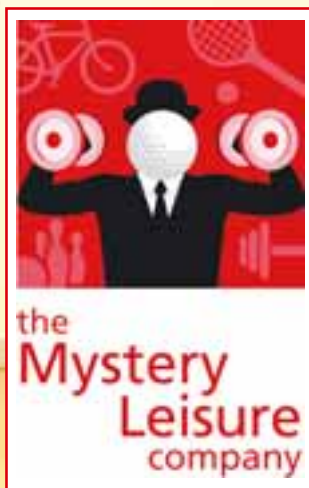
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markedly from the experience of going to a supermarket'.

Many shoppers said their main reason for going to the market was their daily or weekly interaction with the traders. And

traders said they "kept an eye on" long-term customers. 'In this capacity, they act as focal points for the community for passing information about a local person's health or state of their marriage,' say researchers. In Rotherham, a long-established trader, whose stall was located close to the 'form' where the older people sat, described how her 92-year-old father had only recently stopped spending time there every day, and how she always offered older people tea and water, and attended to their needs. "All the traders do the same," she said. In the deprived areas of St Helens, Rotherham and Lowestoft where there is a concentration of people on benefits, the markets serve to include high numbers of disabled people in the social life of the community. However in many local authorities 'markets rarely appear on the political

radar', according to the study. Following a period of expansion in the 1980s and 1990s, markets have often been seen as merely an income generator and have suffered from lack of investment and strategic planning.

The report concludes that there is an urgent need for a markets strategy at national and local government level. Although current planning guidance acknowledges the economic value of markets, it says 'there is little emphasis on the role of markets as social and public spaces'.

'Markets could play a crucial role in helping to deliver many of the national government's agendas – especially those which concern healthy eating, sustainability, social cohesion and the building of communities. The lack of connection of these political priorities into policy on local markets represents a significant lost opportunity.'

*Markets as sites for social interaction* is published for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation by The Policy Press. For details go to [www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop](http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop) and do a keyword search.

### WHAT MAKES MARKETS A SUCCESS?

What makes a market function as a successful 'social space'? According to the research, the essential factors are:

- Features to attract visitors to the site – products to fit local community needs plus the unexpected to provide interest;
- Opportunities to linger – cafe(s) or food van(s) on or near site;
- Good access – public transport links are most important, followed by vehicular access and parking
- An active and engaged community of traders



# Residential schools

Residential schools offer students the opportunity to gain practical skills while making new friends and study partners. **David Dwyer** from the OU's residential schools team answers some questions

#### What is included in my course fee?

The full cost of the residential school, including tuition, meals and accommodation are included in your course fee. Travel to and from the venue is not included.

#### Where can I get more information on my venue plus travel, accommodation and arrival times?

Detailed travel and venue information together with your school start and finish times can be found at [www.open.ac.uk/residential-schools](http://www.open.ac.uk/residential-schools). All venues offer a vegetarian option at mealtimes.

#### I can't attend my residential school; what can I do?

Contact the residential schools team immediately using the details at the end of this article. You may be able to transfer to a later school or participate in an Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) where available (see below).

#### Can I be excused from attending?

Students can no longer be excused from attending a residential school. It is essential that you attend the school or, where available, participate in the Alternative Learning Experience.

#### What is an Alternative Learning Experience?

In exceptional cases you may find that it becomes impossible to attend your residential school. ALEs take many forms and may involve a written assignment, an online project or computer conferencing. ALEs deliver the same core learning outcomes as the residential school. However, they usually require a considerable amount of time and effort and cannot deliver the breadth of learning opportunities offered at the school.

#### How do I request additional support?

For advice on support available contact the learner support team at your regional centre. Once you have told the University that you need additional support you will receive a booklet and a Facility Request

Form 2 (FRF2). The information you supply on this form ensures that you receive the right facilities and support for your school. Please make sure you tell the residential schools team in good time about any additional support you may need, since some arrangements cannot be made at short notice.

#### Can I stay an extra night at the start or end of the school?

If you need to stay an extra night at the beginning or end of your school contact the OU team who represent the venue you are booked at. An additional charge is made.

#### Can I bring friends or family to my residential school?

Family or friends are not normally permitted to be resident in accommodation booked by the OU. Residential schools are intensive academic programmes that typically run from 9am to 9pm each day. They do not allow for much free time to be spent with friends or family.

#### I will be arriving late/leaving early from my school, what must I do?

Attendance for the full duration of the residential school is compulsory to obtain credit for the course. If you will be arriving late or leaving early contact the coordinator for your venue. It is very important that you let us know your intentions or you may fail the course.

#### I'll be attending an overseas school; will you arrange medical/travel insurance?

No, if you are attending a school outside your normal country of residence, adequate medical insurance must be taken out before attending the school. In addition, residents of the European Economic Area are entitled to the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). UK residents can apply for an EHIC at the Post Office, online at [www.ehic.org.uk](http://www.ehic.org.uk) or by telephone on 0845 606 2030.

#### Do I need a visa to attend my school?

If you're not an EU national you may need

a visa to attend your residential school. If so please ensure that you apply for it in good time.

For more information log onto [www.open.ac.uk/residential-schools](http://www.open.ac.uk/residential-schools), call +44 (0)1908 653235 or email [residential-schools@open.ac.uk](mailto:residential-schools@open.ac.uk)



### DIARY OF A RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

Julian Onions enjoyed a week on the SXR103 residential course so much he wrote a diary about it! Log onto [www.open.ac.uk/studentweb/sxr103/P6.shtml](http://www.open.ac.uk/studentweb/sxr103/P6.shtml)

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*Rory McCormick*, Second-year undergraduate, University of Bristol.



# The perfect home

**Peter Taylor-Whiffen** talks to Clinton Greyn, a successful actor who turned his sights to the world of architecture to build his perfect home – all thanks to the OU

**T**HOUSANDS of people's lives have changed after studying with The Open University – but only one student's OU education took him away from being a Hollywood star.

But that was then and this is now, says Clinton Greyn, who starred in a number of 1970s Tinseltown movies and TV shows including *Dr Who*, *The Champions*, *The Protectors* and *Howard's Way* before switching his focus to art and architecture.

And his learning has borne fruit, as the now 70-year-old actor is about to move into a bespoke new six-storey building in London's fashionable Bayswater that he part-designed himself. "I thoroughly enjoyed my time in Hollywood but in the end I wanted to come home where I developed my interest in architecture."

Clinton has actually owned the plot, a former Second World War bombsite, since the 1970s, having bought it with the proceeds of a movie career that included starring alongside Peter O'Toole and Michael Redgrave in *Goodbye Mr Chips*.

Clinton began studying architecture with The Open University in 1979 "because I rather felt in the shadow of my friends' BAs and MAs and thought I should have my own qualifications.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the studying," he adds. "I did it for eight years and not only do I still have the course books, they were so good I still refer to them from time to time."

The Swansea-born actor made the most of the OU's flexible learning options when he was appearing in plays such as, by a neat coincidence, *Educating Rita* – as tutor Frank – Willy Russell's play based around The Open University.

But it was Clinton's own OU course that took a latent interest in architecture to a whole new level. "I was always interested in the visual aspect of architecture and what was pleasing to my eye, but the course provided me with the 'why' I liked certain things. And it really did change my whole outlook, as the knowledge I learned then has provided a basis for so much of what I've achieved since."

## Highly vociferous

Always a fan of modern architecture – his favourite building is Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater at Bear Run, Pennsylvania – he also used his new-found knowledge, and further studies at London's City University, to defend the genre against die-hard traditional conservationists. "My degree coincided with the rise of the conservation movement and the Prince of Wales' growing articulation against modern architecture," he says.

"Conservationists had no time for modern architecture and dismissed all of it, which incensed me. Of course there are thousands of old buildings so wonderful that they must be preserved, but there are many wonderful modern structures too. The conservationists refused to see that, so I decided to get into the movement and undermine it! And I did – with the knowledge that the OU had given me. It wasn't about saying one form is better – it was to do with recognising it's about good architecture and bad architecture through the ages."

Clinton's self-admitted 'highly vociferous' views have become well known on the modern architecture circuit, so much so that he has been appointed director of the Twentieth Century Society and secretary of Docomomo, an international organisation concerned with protecting modern buildings.

But it was creating his own modern space that became Clinton's passion during

the 1980s and 1990s. He wanted to build his own Fallingwater.

"I had to be patient, though," he says. "We had a few issues with the developer, so got another one, and we had to wait for the right time to do it. But to get the space I wanted, the crucial thing was to get the right architect. I knew the sort of thing I was after and no-one seemed quite right. But then I saw the Hempel (a five-star hotel built in 1997 in Craven Hill Gardens, a couple of streets away from Clinton's own site), and wanted the man behind that to design my house."

That man was Australian architect Russell Jones, who led and inspired Clinton with his thoughts about and eventual design of the actor's new home. "I wanted minimalist, which people who don't know me might find surprising as actors are supposed to hoard things," said Clinton. "Of course Russell designed it and was in charge, but I had a big input and not just as a client, but as someone who knew something about the modern architectural movement. We didn't always agree of course but it was very exciting, having discussions and arguments on the aesthetics of taps!"

## Friends with tutors

The finished project will be a commonhold, with Clinton living on the top two floors and selling the two two-level apartments below. His own apartment is already complete but he's waiting for the common use areas of the building to be completed before he moves in.

So is it shaping up as he expected? "I have to admit that some of it is smaller than I anticipated," he laughs. "Buildings always look bigger on plans than they do when they're finished. I've had to get rid of about a quarter of my collection of books, which is a shame. But having said that some of it is much, much better than I expected. It's my own space and I can't wait to move in."

And Clinton is certainly sufficiently satisfied not to try such a venture again – at least not for a while. "I'm quite happy just to live in it and enjoy it."

And the Open University legacy continues to be a tangible part of his life. "I'm still friends with some of my tutors, even now," he says, underlining this by adding: "In fact, I'm seeing one of them tonight. So I've had a continuous link with the University ever since I picked up that first book all those years ago."

Clinton still treads the boards. He was acclaimed in recent years for his role at London's National Theatre as Danish physicist Niels Bohr in Michael Frayn's thought-provoking play *Copenhagen* about a meeting between Bohr and Nazi Werner Heisenberg.

And once again he returns to where his own interest began to shape his future. "When I was in Hollywood I loved the buildings – Los Angeles has some of the best modern architecture in the world," he says. "But The Open University is where I really began to learn about the history of the whole movement. That study showed me it wasn't just about rows of white houses. Everything I've done in the last 25 years I can trace back to that course. It changed my life."

**"I've had a continuous link with the University ever since I picked up that first book all those years ago"**

**"Clinton's self-admitted 'highly vociferous' views have become well known on the modern architecture circuit"**

Clinton is pictured outside 'his own Fallingwater'





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# The electronic age

The electronic Open University has finally arrived – read on to find out how this will affect you

**T**HIS year students will see a big shift away from letters and paper documents towards email and internet. This will affect all your communications with the University with key changes including receiving emails instead of letters, and key documents, such as the assessment handbook and timetable for your course, will only be available online.

### What do I need to do?

#### Think StudentHome

The StudentHome web portal, [www.open.ac.uk/students](http://www.open.ac.uk/students), is your first port of call for any information you need about your course or about the University in general. From StudentHome you can quickly access:

- The assessment handbook for your course, which gives general rules and regulations for completing and submitting work and explains the result grades

- News for everyone on your course, or in your region, or in your subject area
- Your personal records, containing all the information the University holds about you, including your study history
- Your course timetable – with all the key dates such as TMA (assignment) deadlines, tutorials and exam dates.

StudentHome also has a wealth of information under the heading Study Support. If you want more help with electronic technology, you'll find two items particularly useful – the 'Computing Guide' and 'Using your PC for Study'.

#### Tell the university your preferred email address

If you haven't already done so, you should let the University know what email address you'd like it to send all your personal communications to. You can do this via StudentHome. It can be the email address you have been given by the OU – if you

don't know what this is, go to StudentHome where you will find your email box. But many students find it more convenient to have messages sent to a personal email box that they already use regularly.

#### ...and remember to check your emails

Important messages from the University or your tutor, which may require you to take some action, will be sent by email. You will need to check your chosen email box from time to time for these messages. But if you forget – or if you have a problem with your email box – you can go to StudentHome where all the emails sent to you by the OU in the last 30 days will be listed.

The OU is also offering students who are out and about a lot a mobile/PDA version of StudentHome that they can access via their mobile phone or Blackberry.

#### Don't panic

You don't need to rush out and buy a personal computer to carry on studying. Unless you have signed up for a completely online course, you will still continue to receive your study materials through the post.

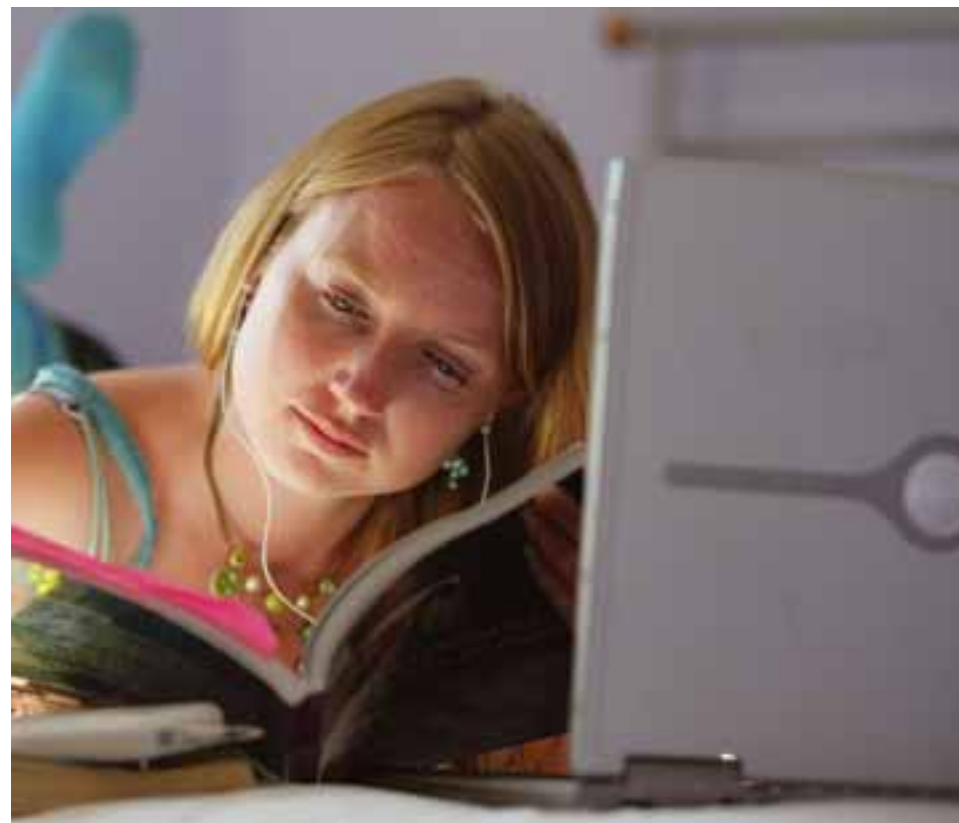
All you need to do is to be able to go online for short periods at regular intervals – generally no more than once a week – to check your email box and StudentHome.

The electronic systems are straightforward to use and designed to make communicating with the OU quicker and easier. You can get information such as your exam dates much earlier; or if you find your allocated tutorials aren't convenient, you can search online for others that are more convenient. And going electronic will help to cut down the amount of paper that goes in your recycling bin or wastepaper basket.

But if you do need help, you can pick up the phone and call your learner support team at your regional centre.

Finally, if you are one of the very small number of students for whom online access is impossible (for example, those with certain disabilities) then you should contact the University and alternative arrangements will be made for you.

Check your emails and StudentHome at least once a week to ensure you don't miss important messages





IN BRIEF

**Artificial intelligence uncovered**

A BRAND new level 3 course has been launched to explore the fascinating area of artificial intelligence. In the first half of M366 *Natural and artificial intelligence*, students will explore both traditional and modern approaches to artificial intelligence. The second half will investigate the theory and applications of neural networks and evolutionary computation.

**Course starts: October 2007**

**Registration closes: 7 September 2007**

**Get arty**

THE AXR272 *Art history* residential school is taking place in July this year. It places an emphasis on looking at actual works of art with teaching being structured around guided visits to prominent London galleries and museums. Topics covered range from the art of the Renaissance to contemporary art and 'non-western' art and artefacts. The course will benefit both students currently enrolled on art history courses and those who are relatively new to the discipline.

**Course starts: July 2007 (see <http://css2.open.ac.uk/resschools> for exact dates)**

**Registration closes: 11 May 2007**

**Computing foundations**

THE Open University has launched a brand new foundation degree – *Computing and its practice* – which aims to enhance the skills of those already working in entry-level IT. Students who complete the course will gain a nationally recognised vocational qualification from the OU and Microsoft whilst improving the skills they bring to the workplace.

**New Openings course**

A NEW Openings course has been launched – Y163 *Starting with psychology* – which will explore several areas of psychology including how we are shaped by our biology, thinking, important relationships and membership of different groups. It considers some of the ways that psychologists gather their evidence and the type of work that they can do. The course will start in November.

More courses online at [www.open.ac.uk/courses](http://www.open.ac.uk/courses)

# The science of health

The Health Sciences Programme is launching a new 30-point level 1 course later this year

**S**DK125 *Introducing health sciences: a case study approach* has been produced by a multidisciplinary team from biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, epidemiology, and health & social care. It highlights the science underlying the causes, diagnosis and treatment of some major diseases and disabilities, and explores their impacts on individuals and societies worldwide.

Suitable for those with a wide-ranging interest in health sciences, or for those who are (or want to be) working in a health-related occupation where scientific knowledge is important, SDK125 uses a mixture of text, web-based material and interactive animations and videos.

**Compulsory course**

Seven case studies are presented on major topics in global public health. They are: access to clean water in an overcrowded and polluted world; psychological and biological approaches to pain; alcohol and its effects on physical and mental health; the science, risks and benefits of mammography screening for early breast cancer; chronic obstructive lung disease due to smoke pollution;

tissue repair and recovery from trauma; and the causes and consequences of visual impairment in developed and developing countries.

If you haven't studied for a long time, an Openings course is recommended first to build up your study skills. SDK125 will help you to use ICT-based learning methods and to interpret data in graphs and tables. No previous science or maths is assumed, other than basic arithmetic. The estimated average workload is eight hours a week. Each case study ends with a block of online computer-marked questions and there are four 'short' TMAs, each in its own study week (i.e. no other set work). The final exam paper in June is answerable in two hours, but you get up to three hours to complete it so you're not under time pressure.

SDK125 is the compulsory course in the 60-point level 1 Certificate in Health Sciences, and contributes to the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences for students sponsored by their employer. You could progress directly to courses in the Diploma in Health Sciences at levels 2 and 3, or count it towards a BSc.

**Course starts: 29 September 2007**  
**Registration closes: 7 September 2007**

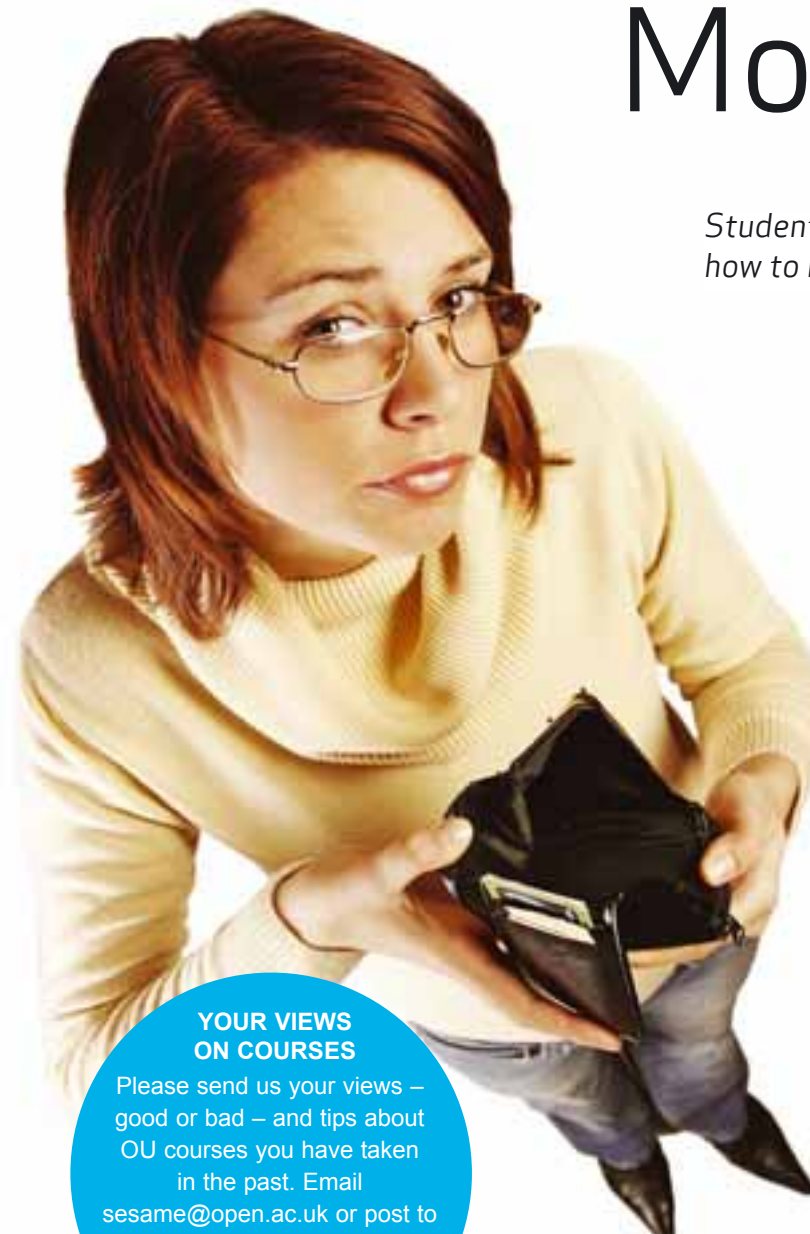
Nurses are pictured here reading mammograms, one of the topics explored in the course



More courses online at [www.open.ac.uk/courses](http://www.open.ac.uk/courses)

# Money talks

Students are beating a path to the OU's door to learn how to make sense of your money



**YOUR VIEWS ON COURSES**  
Please send us your views – good or bad – and tips about OU courses you have taken in the past. Email [sesame@open.ac.uk](mailto:sesame@open.ac.uk) or post to Course Views, sesame, Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA

**D**B123 *You and your money: personal finance in context*, the OU's first financial literacy course, has proved so popular that the University has brought forward the second course presentation from November to May 2007 to cope with numbers wanting to sign on.

The course attracted 1,450 students – three times more than the University's official forecast – for its first presentation in November last year.

And course chair Ian Fribbance says the success of *You and your money* has sparked interest in financial literacy education across the higher education sector, with other universities also launching their own courses. "Six other universities have actually adopted the course

**"The first TMA had a submission rate of over 90 per cent, which is really encouraging"**

textbook, *Personal Finance*, as their course text," he told sesame.

He added that students are discovering that finance is not the forbidding subject that many had feared. "The course material seems to be really enjoyed by the students and the first TMA had a submission rate of over 90 per cent, which is really encouraging."

The 30-point *You and your money* combines practical personal finance – issues such as choosing a mortgage, planning for retirement, savings and family finances – with an overview of the wider social and economic background. Students are given financial planning tools to help with personal budgeting and financial planning, not only during, but after, the course.

**Course starts: May 2007**  
**Registration closes: 13 April 2007**

## STUDENT VIEWS ON YOU AND YOUR FINANCE

"I WANTED to do the course because I was fed up with hearing and reading about things like mortgages and pensions without being clear about basic details, and so not being able to make informed comments or decisions.

To have these things explained with a historical context is very interesting and I am becoming confident that

I understand the reasons why things are as they are, and perhaps will be able to understand how the economics of personal finance will develop and change in the future."

**Jane Hadfield**

"THE sort of fundamental information provided about personal finance in DB123 is so important (and

empowering) that a course like this should be compulsory for everyone! I can see myself becoming more confident about my finances because the course is helping me to think about them in a clearer, much more structured way."

**Caroline Beattie-Merriman**

"I LIKE the video clips on the CD, where experts talk about

different matters, as this can help bring the subject to life. For example, in the clips on debt, I felt that they were talking about real people with real problems, as opposed to dry statistics. The course does help you to think about how changes in society impact on the individual, and vice versa."

**Gill Harding**



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\* Internet connection required - standard fees apply. Works with AOL when using an alternative Internet browser. Speeds up Broadband connections up to 2Mb. Speeds up web browsing and sending/receiving of emails only.

# Win a digital camera and a free course!

Have you been thinking lately about enhancing your camera skills? If so, **sesame** magazine is giving one reader the chance to do just that – and win a first-class digital camera to boot because in this issue we're giving away an Olympus digital camera and a free place on the brand new digital photography course. We do spoil you!



## THE CAMERA

The **Olympus μ [mju:] 770 SW** is the world's first compact camera that's water-proof, shock-proof, freeze-proof, crush-proof – perfect for busy OU students who are rushing from pillar to post!

You might expect a product that's as tough as this to look like the camera world's answer to Arnold Schwarzenegger. But in fact, with a stylish metal casing that's available in three attractive colours (dark blue, titanium grey and mocha brown) it looks rather chic and sleek.

It also boasts 7.1 megapixels of power and a bright 3x optical zoom. Its built-in BrightCapture Technology means that you can capture atmospheric evening shots, while previews on the 6.4cm HyperCrystal LCD display are up to four times brighter than usual.

## THE COURSE

Our lucky winner will also win a FREE place on the October 2007 intake of **T189 Digital photography: creating and sharing better images**. The level 1 course is ideal for those who are both new to digital photography or are looking to sharpen their photographic skills.

Running over 10 weeks, the course gives you the chance to learn about different aspects of photographic techniques as well as the technology behind digital photography. Each week, you will be asked to carry out a practical photographic activity and also get the chance to share your work with other T189 students.

Although you don't need to have had much experience with a computer, you'll need to install software and get an account with an internet service provider (ISP) before the course begins. (Please note that Olympus does not officially endorse this course.)

For more information go to [www.open.ac.uk/courses](http://www.open.ac.uk/courses) and do a search for 'T189'.

## THE REQUIREMENTS

Please fill in the form below and send it to: Photography Competition, **sesame**, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA. The deadline for entries is 30 April 2007. The first form drawn will win the prize.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ PI Number: \_\_\_\_\_

To be kept informed of all the latest news from Olympus, please tick here:

To be kept informed of all the latest course news from the OU, please tick here:

**TERMS & CONDITIONS:** Competitions are open to all readers except employees of The Open University and Olympus. Prizes must be taken as offered and are not transferable or exchangeable for a cash equivalent. Winners will be the first entry with all required details that is drawn after the closing date and will be notified within 28 days by email, post or telephone. Entries are taken as acceptance of these terms and conditions. The name and town of the winner will be published in a future edition of **sesame** magazine. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.



# World is your oyster

*Studying a subject in humanities can lead to a range of different career paths. If you play it right, the world can be your oyster*

If you are studying on a humanities course with the OU you will be studying subjects related to arts, languages or history, from certificate up to masters level. You may combine a range of courses, or go for a named degree. Whatever you are doing this article will outline the options available to you and give you some things to consider.

## Skills gained

Students who study humanities gain a wide range of skills, some of which are specific to the subject they are studying, e.g. the ability to study a foreign language, and others that are more transferable to a wide range of contexts, including employment.

## English

- English is a flexible subject that opens up a wide range of career choices.
- The skills you develop such as written and spoken communication and critical thinking are highly valued by employers – see the interview with Logica opposite.
- Contrary to popular opinion, teaching isn't the main occupation of English

graduates. More go into general management, the public sector, research, publishing and the creative industries.

## Languages

- Many language graduates go into careers where their languages are an asset, or where there are opportunities to use their language skills in the future. Very few become translators or interpreters.
- Language skills are generally in short supply, but are valued by employers, so knowledge of one or more can be an advantage in finding employment after your OU course. The impact of having language knowledge has been estimated as increasing your salary by between 8 and 20 per cent, depending on how central languages are to the role.
- Combining language study with courses that are more vocational, e.g. business or IT, can help to make students more employable. Gaining work experience is equally valuable.

## History

- Like English graduates, a significant percentage of history graduates go on to further study and many do vocational training in areas as diverse as law, accountancy, journalism and IT.
- History graduates who have gained employment-related skills and experience will gain an edge in the job market.
- Famous history graduates include: John Inverdale, Gordon Brown, Lionel Blue, Michael Mansfield, Salman Rushdie, Neil Tennant, Steve Coppel – and even Prince Charles!

## Further study

Around 25 per cent of graduates nationally who study humanities go

on to further study. Options here include taking your subject or an element of your study further, or taking a vocational course – teaching, law, social work, and librarianship are popular options. Some graduates will opt to take some time after their degree to gain some work experience, then opt to do this later. The OU offers a range of postgraduate courses; see [www.open.ac.uk/courses](http://www.open.ac.uk/courses) for more information.

## What job?

There are few careers that specifically demand a degree in a humanities subject, and it is a fact that around 60 per cent of graduate jobs are open to any discipline. Many humanities graduates go on to use their communication skills in areas such as journalism, teaching and marketing; their research skills in social academia, librarianship and information management; and their generic skills in areas such as the arts and media, local and national government, human resources, law, finance, the armed forces, charities and social welfare.

Don't feel you have to fit a particular pattern – as you can see there isn't one! Your career interests, experience and determination to succeed are more likely to be the determining factors in your choice of career, rather than your subject.

If this has made you think more about your future and where to go from here, the OU Careers Advisory Service will be able to help you. See its website at [www.open.ac.uk/careers](http://www.open.ac.uk/careers)

Further information can be gained from the Graduate Prospects website: [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)

*Are you a student or graduate who would like to share your career experience and tips with other sesame readers? If so please email [sesame@open.ac.uk](mailto:sesame@open.ac.uk) or write to Career Tips, sesame, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA.*

# Company profile



**Gary Argent,**  
UK Graduate  
Recruitment Manager,  
LogicaCMG



## Tell us how LogicaCMG's graduate programme works

The graduate development programme lasts for about 12 to 18 months. It consists of a series of modules which help develop the softer business skills that are so important in a large, customer facing organisation like LogicaCMG, and is designed to complement and build on the experience graduates gain within their business. The programme includes a number of courses along with other learning tools such as mentoring and coaching schemes. Graduates are involved with real projects from the very beginning, so the roles are very customer facing.

## What qualities do you look for in applicants?

We look for a wide range of skills for the graduate programme. Technical skills are clearly very important for our graduates – after all we are an IT consultancy. But we also place a lot of emphasis on teamwork, communication, the ability to plan and prioritise, and to bounce back and re-group if things go wrong. Some commercial awareness is important, along with an understanding of the principles behind effective customer service. Industrial experience is a plus, especially if you have spent some time working in the IT industry in the past. Flexibility is also important – our work is very varied and our customers are spread all around the UK (and all over the world).

## How does LogicaCMG work with the OU?

We are keen to build stronger links with the OU. Currently LogicaCMG has an entry on the Careers Services' Virtual Employment Fair. We recruit about 150 to 200 graduates each year, but we do not receive many applications from OU students, so I hope this article, our input into the fair, and other initiatives we hope to undertake with the Careers Advisory Service will help us

to reach the wider range of students that the OU has to offer.

## Do any OU students or graduates work for LogicaCMG?

Yes, we have OU graduates working for LogicaCMG. One of our employees who is an OU graduate is featured on the careers website as a case study – Joce Rakower-Butelet. We also have people with the organisation who are currently undertaking OU study.

## What advice would you give to sesame readers about getting their foot on the ladder of their chosen career field?

Your initial contact is very important. Think about how your CV can make you stand out from the crowd. If you're filling out an application form, try not to leave questions blank and avoid giving short, one sentence answers. It's acceptable to cut and paste 'standard answers' into an application form, but double check your copy – you would be surprised how many applicants tell us how much they're looking forward to working for Microsoft! Finally, please take the time for a basic spell check and ask someone to proofread your application for sense and appropriateness.

## How did you get into the job/career you are currently in?

I joined the company in 1991 after completing a degree in computer science at King's College London. I have worked in a number of different areas but in 2000 I changed direction to work in the central induction team, helping new graduate and senior joiners during their early days in the company, and visiting other companies who had been acquired by Logica to help with the integration process. In March 2004 I took over as UK graduate recruitment manager in LogicaCMG, where I am now working hard to prepare for the next season of recruitment.

## CLICK TO A NEW CAREER

THE Careers Advisory Service has launched its new online vacancy service for OU students and graduates. Students can now search for vacancies by type of work or geographical location, and can register on the system to be notified by email when new ones are added.

More employers are placing vacancies with The Open University as they realise the benefits of attracting OU students who can offer skills and experience as well as qualifications.

Students (and alumni who have an OU log-in) can access the vacancies by clicking on the link on the careers website homepage ([www.open.ac.uk/careers](http://www.open.ac.uk/careers)) or via the 'Online Vacancy Service' link on the sitemap or A-Z. From here you can go directly to the site by clicking on the first 'submit'.



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# Weird science

Science students take note of the following attractions and destinations

**T**HE National Space Centre in Leicester is the largest museum in the UK dedicated to space exploration. With a range of interactive exhibits, numerous space objects including Blue Streak and the Soyuz spacecraft, and regular events, it's not only a great day out for the family but also offers some interesting material for level 1 students in particular to get their teeth into. Cost: £9 (student rate). Call +44 (0)116 261 0261 or go to [www.spacecentre.co.uk](http://www.spacecentre.co.uk) for more information.

Educational and great fun to boot, **Techniquest** in Cardiff Bay, Wales, is full of items such as rockets, electric cars and hot air balloons, all twitching for you to get your hands on them and experiment! It also has the bonus of being based in a location which has been revamped to offer top quality hotels, restaurants, bars and shops in a waterside setting. Call +44 (0)2920 475475 or log onto [www.techniquest.org](http://www.techniquest.org)

The **Natural History Museum** in London is always a popular visit for science students and, what's more, entry is free! It's particularly useful for geography/earth science students thanks to its Earth Galleries (which include the EarthLab where you can get your hands on rock and fossil specimens). Call +44 (0)20 7942 5000 or log onto [www.nhm.ac.uk](http://www.nhm.ac.uk) for more information.

**The Deep** in Hull is home to an impressive collection of sea life, all housed in a stunning new building overlooking the Humber. Students doing any environment course, in particular S330 *Oceanography* and S180 *Life in the oceans*, would particularly benefit from a visit. Cost: £7 (Student rate). Call +44 (0) 1482 381000 or log onto [www.thedeep.co.uk](http://www.thedeep.co.uk)

Log onto [www.big.uk.com](http://www.big.uk.com) to find your nearest science museum.

## City spotlight - Edinburgh

EDINBURGH is home to a range of science attractions. Steeped in geological history, students can learn a lot just by walking around the city streets, from the remains of volcanoes in its 'Seven Hills', to its world-famous example of a crag and tai.

It is also the city that James Hutton, the founder of modern geology, called his home. Hutton Memorial Garden sits on the original site of Hutton's home and now houses a collection of significant rocks from Scotland that are linked to his work, including the Clashach sandstone.

Also in Edinburgh is Our Dynamic Earth, one of the most popular science attractions in the UK, offering lots of galleries covering a range of scientific areas. A recent addition is FutureDome which explores the possibilities of our planet's scientific future.

Call VisitScotland on 0845 2255 121 or log onto [www.edinburgh.org](http://www.edinburgh.org) for more information.



Win a family ticket to visit the National Space Centre! Email [sesame@open.ac.uk](mailto:sesame@open.ac.uk) with the subject 'Space' and we will add your name to a hat. The first person to be picked out on 30 April wins!

## Overseas spotlight - Spain

SPAIN is a very popular holiday spot for many people. But while you're enjoying the sun, sand and sangrias, make sure you take a moment to visit some of its amazing natural scientific sites.

The Teide National Park in Tenerife is a real gem for geoscience students with a landscape that is shaped around the biggest volcano in Spain - Teide - which last erupted in 1798. Not only is the site fascinating from a geological perspective, it is also home to unique plants and animal species.

The Cabo de Gata National Park in Andalucia is also a real find with its volcanic rocks, plus a bird and marine reserve. As well as its stunning coastal area, its lunar-like natural formations of volcanic craters and lava columns make for fascinating viewing.

On the western edge of Granada in Andalucia is the Parque de las Ciencias, where science students can enjoy over 270 interactive activities spread over two exhibition buildings, as well as a planetarium, tropical butterfly house, the Observation Tower and the Astronomy Garden.

For more information visit [www.tourspain.co.uk](http://www.tourspain.co.uk)





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**IMPORTANT INFORMATION** An administration fee of £20 applies to every new membership. Restrictions on access apply to some memberships, check the website or speak to an operator for full details. Lines are open 8.30am-8pm Mon-Friday, 9am-5pm Saturdays and 11am-4pm Sundays.

# OU Student

Edited by

*R. Rosenthal*

Rebecca Rosenthal

The official publication of the Open University Students Association

## Letter from the editor...

### A fond farewell

IT'S been almost a year since I was elected as President and took over as editor of this publication. And here I am, as OUSA prepares to celebrate 30 years of 'all in membership' and 25 years of its charity, preparing to hand over the reins to someone else. Whilst the previous year has been an amazing whirlwind of an adventure, I will certainly be sad to leave an environment that contains so many talented and giving individuals.

#### Taken steps

Sad I may be, but also immensely proud to be a part of such a successful organisation. This year not only have we seen and been a part of developments in terms of fees and financial support, but we have also taken steps ourselves to recognise regional and national diversity. We have supported wholeheartedly the openlearn initiative, acted on behalf of students within the Student Support Review and promoted individual feedback, both practically and ethically, and offered our local units the opportunity to open up their branch conferences on the FirstClass system. The development of the University's Virtual Learning Environment has seen us engaged in issues affecting students and developing our own all-important strategy for virtual development – not to mention our new (and continually to be improved!) website. We have begun to address the issue of ethnic minorities within our own ranks as well as the general student

population, recognise prisoners as a unique and diverse group of students, and take forward issues affecting students with disabilities to the heart of the University itself. In such an important educational climate, we have begun to raise our profile outside of our own castle, and promote ourselves as the group of people to be considered on central issues affecting part-time students, as well as to further develop our relationships with external organisations. But of course we still have many challenges ahead of us – read the article by Vice-President, Education for how you can contribute to an important debate.

It would be impossible for me to list all our achievements this year here, but none of it would be possible without a fantastic team within OUSA, all passionate about higher education for part-time students, and passionate about their own roles within a huge organisation.

#### Thank you

Leaving an organisation that I have given a large part of my life to over the past six years may pull a few heart strings, but I certainly have a lot to thank it for. A change in family circumstances and the presentation of new opportunities means that I leave with not only the valuable friendships I have made over the years, but also a large amount of new (and often interesting!) vocational skills, but more importantly they are transferable skills.

You too can tap into this network of students and opportunities – opportunities available to you regardless of geographical location, disability, previous work experience and qualifications – we pride ourselves in providing 'something for everyone'.

A huge thank you to all those students I have met over the years who have

made me feel welcome at residential schools, degree ceremonies, branch meetings, Regional Forum meetings and of course all of those late night 'bar' meetings! Good luck with your OU studies.

*"A huge thank you to all those students I have met over the years who have made me feel welcome"*

*"The development of the University's Virtual Learning Environment has seen us engaged in issues affecting students"*

**REBECCA ROSENTHAL**  
**OUSA PRESIDENT**





## IN BRIEF

### Financial Support

MANY students in England do not realise that even earning up to around £25,000, they may be able to claim financial support\* towards study costs and course fees. Financial awards can be claimed towards the cost of purchasing a pc, and OU students may also see the development of broadband packages soon. Don't delay, see if you are eligible today! Many students are losing out on valuable funds towards their study costs because they assume they will not be eligible.

*\*Such financial support is dependent on the rules for financial support set by each of the funding bodies in the UK (England & NI, Wales and Scotland).*

### openlearn

HAVE you spent any time in the openlearn website yet? At the time of writing, over 210,000 separate visitors have accessed the site, and the newly refurbished website boasts around 16,000 visitors a week. The openlearn website provides free and open educational resources for learners and educators around the world and the OU expects even more visitors now its new website makes viewing materials and joining in discussions more accessible. Be a part of educational history and join in – half the users to date have been from outside of the UK!

### “Power” Programme

ON 7 December The Open University hosted an event within the London Regional Centre to celebrate a successful three way partnership with the Paddington Development Trust and City of Westminster College through the “Power” programme. The aim of the programme is to equip refugees and migrants in central London to gain employment via progressions through English language, vocational skills and qualifications. The project works with individuals of all ages who want to develop language skills and employment opportunities. The event celebrated the success of the first group of students and expansion to a second, much larger cohort of learners.

## Conference – 30 years ‘all in membership’, 25 years of OUSET

OUSA's annual conference will take place on the weekend of 13 - 15 April. OUSA representatives will come together from all over the UK, Republic of Ireland and Northern and Southern Europe to debate issues of relevance to Open University students and their representative organisation.

1977 saw the important development of ‘all in membership’ for OU Students. Previously, OUSA had a process of membership where students ‘buy in’ to the Association, often leaving many groups of students disadvantaged and unrepresented. ‘All in membership’ has meant that OUSA has been in a position to represent all OU students, regardless of their income, geographical location and ethnic group.

Conference this year will be celebrating 25 years of the existence of the Charity OUSET (Open University Students Association Educational Trust). OUSA has helped hundreds of students complete their studies with the OU by giving them grants from OUSET, which often relies on donations from local and regional fundraising events. Last year OUSA launched their awards for original fundraising ideas by individuals or groups. For further information visit the website [www.ousa.org.uk](http://www.ousa.org.uk)



*Pictured are some of OUSA's Honorary Life Members who have done important work over the years*

## Coming soon...the Official OUSA Bear

OUR first OUSA branded Official Bear is being launched as a new product at OUSA's Conference 2007 being held at Warwick University over the weekend of 13-15 April. Retailing at just £9.50, don't miss your chance to purchase one at the event. Alternatively, after Conference, they will be available for sale at [www.ousa.org.uk](http://www.ousa.org.uk) (click on OUSA shopping).



## Residential School Training

ON 17 – 18 February OUSA held its annual training event for residential school and degree ceremony co-ordinators. This event helped to train our representatives to effectively support students at residential schools, where they provide the service of supporting students, being a point of information, facilitating entertainment events and general services such as producing membership cards, information about OUSA and goods from our company.

At graduation ceremonies, our representatives attend to provide you with goods to commemorate your graduation, as well as being points of contact for event information and OUSA's services.

If you wish to receive more information about becoming a residential school representative or assisting at degree ceremonies, then please contact the OUSA Office.

## It's catching on Fast!

OU students are catching on to the fact that the NUS-OUSA Associate card is generally accepted wherever a student discount is advertised so it doesn't take long to get the initial £10 fee back. In fact some students claim they won't leave home without their card as it's an instantly recognisable student ID and dozens of others have recently contacted the OUSA office because their much prized cards expired on the last day of 2006 and they want to know how to get a new one.

The good news is that the 2007 card is available now and welcomed at many more agreed outlets as explained in the information booklet that is despatched along with new cards. You can request an application form for a card from the Associate Card Hotline on 0870 423 5001 (make sure you mention that you're a student of The Open University), or you can download one directly from [www.nusonline.co.uk/associate](http://www.nusonline.co.uk/associate). For more information about the card access the OUSA website at [www.ousa.org.uk](http://www.ousa.org.uk)

## IN BRIEF

### Students in prison

WHILST OUSA recognises that this is a sensitive issue in terms of the access students resident in prisons may or may not have to our services, OUSA recognises that these students represent an important, and diverse, group of Open University students. At the time of writing, Louise Woosey, Vice-President, Equal Opportunities, will be heading a project to look at what services OUSA can provide for these students. It is thought that part of the service provided will include a newsletter specifically targeted towards those students.

### Get your gifts!

OUSA is pleased to announce that its Presentation Gifts 2007 brochure featuring prestigious products such as crystal, commemorative jewellery and clothing, including the ever popular graduation t-shirt, is now available. Students who are graduating this year please note that if you register for your ceremony less than four weeks before the ceremony date, we will be unable to include your name on the graduation t-shirt.

A full range of merchandise can be found at the OUSA shop at [www.ousa.org.uk](http://www.ousa.org.uk)

Donations from the profit on sales are made to The Open University Students Educational Trust (OUSET).





# Dates for your diary

If you would like to see your event advertised here, please contact the OUSA Office. Deadline for the next issue of *OU Student* is 27 April.

## Central Events

OUSA Conference 13 – 15 April, Warwick University.

## Local Events

Altrincham & Sale Branch *Second Tuesday of every month*, 8.30pm, Famous Old Porterhouse, Stamford New Road, Altrincham. Details Edna: edna@fdsnorthern.com

Bath Branch *Second Wednesday of every month*, 8pm, Crystal Palace Tavern, 10 – 11 Abbey Green, Bath. Details Nina: ndh46@student.open.ac.uk

Belgium Branch The new committee are currently planning a range of social events to make your study experience even more enjoyable. These will be posted in the FirstClass forum as soon as they are available. Details Mike Deverell via FirstClass.

Bournemouth & Poole Branch *First Thursday of every month*, 8.30pm, Grasshopper Pub, Poole Road, Lower Parkstone, Poole. Details Neil Walking: neil.walking@ntlworld.com Web: [www.bournepooleousa.co.uk](http://www.bournepooleousa.co.uk)

Brighton, Hove & Lewes Branch *First Monday of every month*, 7.30pm, Cricketers Pub, Black Lion Street, Brighton. Details Colin: colin.piper2@virgin.net

Bristol Branch *First Wednesday of every month*, 8.30pm, Horts City Tavern, Broad Street, Bristol. Details Kate: 0117 955 1992. Web: [www.ousabristol.org.uk](http://www.ousabristol.org.uk)

Cambridge Branch *First Wednesday of each month*, 8pm, Panton Arms, Coronation Street, Cambridge. Details Peter: plc38@student.open.ac.uk

Cheltenham Branch *Second Wednesday of every month*, 8.00pm, Norwood Arms, Leckhampton Rd, Cheltenham. Details Chris: ceb8@student.open.ac.uk

Chippenham Branch *Second Monday of every month*, 7.30pm, Pheasant Public House, Chippenham (corner of A4 & Hungerdown Lane). Details Pauline Lock: paulinelen@pau-lin.freemove.co.uk

Doncaster Branch *First Wednesday of every month*, 7.30pm, Salutation Inn, South Parade, Doncaster. Details Andrew: aje269@student.open.ac.uk

Dorset Branch *Day and evening meetings*, relaxed atmosphere. Details Natasha: nes4@student.open.ac.uk

Exeter Branch *Third Wednesday of every month*, 7.30pm, Mill-on-the-Exe, Exeter. Details Margaret: margaret@margaret35.wanadoo.co.uk

Glasgow & West of Scotland Branch *First Tuesday of every month*, 7pm, Trader Joe's, Hope Street, Glasgow. Details Catherine: 0141 339 7906.

Gloucester Branch *First Thursday of every month*, 8.00pm, The

Fountain Inn, Westgate Street, Gloucester. Details Andrew: 01453 757445.

Guildford Branch *Thursday 29 March*, 7 – 9pm, Pottery painting, the Potty Paintbrush, Guildford, followed by drinks at the Bar Ha Ha. *Thursday 26 April*, 7.45pm, Pub quiz, the Sovereigns, Woking. *Thursday 24 May*, 7.45pm, meal at Strada Restaurant, Guildford. Details: guildfordousa@yahoo.co.uk Web: [www.guildfordousa.org.uk](http://www.guildfordousa.org.uk)

Gwent Branch Details Celia: cpw73@student.open.ac.uk or 01633 483423.

Haverfordwest Branch *First Thursday of every month*, 7.30pm, Haverfordwest Cricket Club, Dale Road, Haverfordwest, Pems. Details Mair Kromrei: gmk64@open.ac.uk or mair.kromrei1@btinternet.com or 07880 767266

Huddersfield Branch *Third Wednesday of every month*, 7pm, Huddersfield University, Howard Wilson Building, Room HWG03. Details Helen: hb2598@student.open.ac.uk

Ipswich and Bury St. Edmunds Branch Details: [www.ousa.suffolk.org.uk](http://www.ousa.suffolk.org.uk)

Kendal Branch *First Monday of every month*, 7.30pm, Brewery Arts Centre, Kendal. Details Brian Wright: 01539 621567.

Lancaster Branch *Third Wednesday of every month*, 7.30pm, Bar of Gregson Institute, Moor Lane, Lancaster, Details Sybil: smr456@student.open.ac.uk

Liverpool Branch *Second Thursday of every month*, 8pm, The Pump House on Albert Dock, Details Janet: jpark@tiscali.co.uk

London Region Branch meetings: London South Branch: *Saturday 12 May*, 11am - 1pm, Croydon College, Fairfield, Croydon. London North Branch: *Sunday 6 May*, 1pm, Regional Centre, Hawley Crescent, Camden. *Social events:* *7 April*, 12pm, Lunch, The George Inn, Borough High Street SE1 1NH. *Coffee mornings first and third Thursday every month.* Details: [www.ousalondon.org.uk](http://www.ousalondon.org.uk)

Manchester Branch *Second Tuesday of every month*, 7.30pm, Lass O'Gowire, Charles Street, Manchester. Details Alan: 0161 292 7209 or al.kinsey@tiscali.co.uk

Newbury Branch *Second Monday of every month*, 7.30pm, The Canal Bar (7.30pm) followed by The King Charles (8pm), Newbury. Details Rebecca: rc3354@student.open.ac.uk Web: [www.ousa-newbury.rsmithers.net](http://www.ousa-newbury.rsmithers.net)

Northampton Branch *Second Wednesday of every month*, 8.30pm, The Fish, Fish Street, Northampton. Details Cristina: 07796 471908 or acc254@student.open.ac.uk

Oldham Branch *Second Saturday of every month*, 2.30pm, Toby Carvery (Chadderton Park Inn) on Broadway, Oldham. Families (including children) welcome. Details: Michael: 07786 924758.

Oxford, Abingdon & Witney Branch *Fourth Thursday of every month*, 8pm, Rosie O'Grady's, Park End Street, Oxford. Details Tracey: ta85@student.open.ac.uk Web: [www.ousa-oxford.org.uk](http://www.ousa-oxford.org.uk)

# Dates for your diary

Plymouth Branch *Third Tuesday of every month*. Winifred Baker Court, Addison Road, North Hill, Plymouth. Details Pat: ousaplymouth@yahoo.co.uk

Portsdown Branch *First Wednesday of every month*, 7.30pm. Toby Carvery, Copnor Rd, Hilsea. Details Val: vam44@student.open.ac.uk

Rochdale Branch *Last Thursday of every month*, 7.30pm, Millers, Hollingworth Lake, Littlebrough, Details Gill: gill@kilshaw94@freemove.co.uk

Sheffield Branch *Last Tuesday of every month*, 7pm, Ruskings, Tudor Square, Sheffield. Details Lucy: lc2935@student.open.ac.uk

Southend Branch *First Thursday of every month*, 7.45pm, Alexander House, opp Southend Victoria Railway Station, Southend-on-Sea. Details Albert: albert.beaven@blueyonder.co.uk

St Helens Branch *First Wednesday of every month*, 8pm, Charlon Brasserie, Barrow St, St Helens. Details John: 0151 493 1266.

Stockport Branch *Second Thursday every month*, 8pm, The Unity pub, Wellington Road, Stockport. Details Jane: jane@isparp.co.uk Web: <http://aips.mine.nu/ousa>

Weald Branch *Third Wednesday of every month*, 7.00pm, The Humphrey Bean Pub, Tonbridge High Street. Details Norman: wealdousa@yahoo.co.uk or 07967 245939 Web: <http://www.wealdousa.org.uk/>

West Cumbria Branch *Last Thursday of every month*, 7.30pm, The Howgate Inn (on the A595 between Whitehaven and Workington). Details Tony: parkerstbees@aol.com

York Branch *Third Wednesday of every month*, 7 – 9pm, St Johns College, Lord Mayors Walk, York. Details Elizabeth: ebc34@student.open.ac.uk

## EDUCATION MATTERS

### The virtual world

I've long been a fan of the internet and for many years now have used it not only as my primary method of communication but as my preferred medium for study, however over the New Year period my wonderful World Wide Web came crashing down around my ears when I lost my connection for nearly the whole month of January. As it happened I was between courses (though I did have some prep work it would have been useful to have access for) so the impact on my education was not as significant as it could have been, but it did make me stop and think. What if I had been mid course? I mean I'm not talking a couple days or even a couple of weeks without access here, but nearly four whole weeks. What if I had actually been on that web applications course that I'd thought of doing over the winter? Four weeks out of a 12 week course is a long time and the chances of being able to catch up from it can have serious repercussions. And much as I like to think I'm an individual I appreciate that I am not unique. If I can lose my connection for so long then it can happen to other students too; which poses the question – what happens if a student can't access their course materials for a significant period?

#### No simple answer

Can they change presentations? Can they plead special circumstances come exam time? Can they have their money back? The truth is there isn't a simple answer to any of these questions (well apart from the "can I have my course fees back?"). It depends on the course, the time of year (in the sense of how far through the course you might be) and possibly it depends on which way the wind is blowing at the time – which

on reflection is quite worrying. Now I'd like to make it clear here that I don't have definitive answers to any of my questions because posing hypothetical questions to someone at the other end of the phone when the whole set up is designed to deal with concrete problems and situations is fraught with difficulty, and while the person I spoke to did their best to try and help, the best they could come up with was that every circumstance would be taken into account should the need arise. Reassuring, but not definitive.

So should I be concerned? The University is making its continued push forward with the Virtual Learning Environment, more and more courses have at least an online element, and while I understand that I make my choice to study online completely voluntarily, the choice to do so or not is becoming more and more difficult for many as our University moves into its e-business/e-learning future. While I understand the arguments put forward about the University having to change and adapt if it is to survive in an increasingly competitive higher education market, I also know that in the virtual world as in the real one – life happens.

I'll be copying this piece to my blog and your views, comments, thoughts and particularly your experiences would be appreciated. <http://ousavped.blogspot.com/>

**POLLY POLLARD**  
VICE-PRESIDENT,  
EDUCATION, OUSA





# Are you an early bird?

ALL OU students in Jersey and Guernsey have been written to by the University informing them of changes to OU fees for local students. Up until 31 July 2007, students in both Jersey and Guernsey will be able to pay the standard UK fee. The UK Government has stipulated that non-UK residents who are not UK taxpayers are not entitled to benefit from the lower UK fee, and so are required to pay the full cost of their studies. Financial support

may still be available, and students in these areas are asked to contact their Local Education Authority. However, as a special one-off concession, students in the Channel Islands will still be able to study at the UK fee level, even for courses starting after 1 August 2007, provided they have actually registered for those courses by 31 July. Details of all 2007 courses can be found by logging into [www.open.ac.uk/courses](http://www.open.ac.uk/courses)



St Aubins, Jersey

**OU Student**, the publication of the Open University Students Association, is edited by the OUSA President. Most of the articles are written by students of the University. It is produced on OUSA's behalf by the Communications department of The Open University. Editorial enquiries and contributions should be addressed to: Als Ryan, Open University Students Association, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6BE. Telephone: +44 (0) 1908 652026 Fax: +44 (0)1908 654326 Email: [ousa@student.open.ac.uk](mailto:ousa@student.open.ac.uk) OUSA website: [www.ousa.org.uk](http://www.ousa.org.uk)

## IF YOU WANT INFORMATION ABOUT OUSA PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM

### NUS - OUSA ASSOCIATE CARD

Join hundreds of other OU students in gaining specially negotiated and other student discounts with your NUS - OUSA Associate card. The card costs £10, and many students have reported they have recovered the cost of their card within the first few months of ownership through the discounts gained! The NUS-OUSA Associate card will provide you with a valid national student ID which will give you access to the widest range of student discounts across the UK. So if you want to save money on everything from films to music, from clothes to art gallery tickets, from sports to haircuts then make sure you get your card now. This card is also valid identification for OU exams. For further information contact the Associate Card hotline 0870 423 5001 or see the websites: [www.nusonline.co.uk/associate](http://www.nusonline.co.uk/associate) or [www.ousa.org.uk](http://www.ousa.org.uk)

Link, Disabled Student Link or Student Academic Link (circle area of interest).

### REPRESENTATIVES AT RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

If you are interested in being a rep at residential schools in the future, please tick the box for a recruitment pack and application form.

### DISABLED STUDENTS GROUP

This group is open to all those disabled students interested in helping OUSA to achieve its equality policy. Please tick the box if you are interested in receiving details of how to register with the Disabled Students Group.

### GRADUATION CEREMONIES

Tick the box for details of how you can represent OUSA at an OU Graduation ceremony.

### OUSET DONATION

OUSET, The Open University Students Educational Trust, is a registered charity, administered by OUSA, and is designed to help Open University students in financial need. Its funds are almost entirely generated by donations and fundraising activities of fellow students. Any donation is welcome.

### REPRESENTATIVES ON CENTRAL COMMITTEES

If you are interested in representing your fellow students on Open University central committees and boards, please tick the box.

### SUPPORT LINKS

Tick the box for further details about becoming a Student Support

Please allow 28 days for delivery of all OUSA Services.

## ORDER FORM

OUSA information is recorded on computer. OUSA is registered under the Data Protection Act.

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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I include a donation to OUSET.

Please send completed form and enclosures to:

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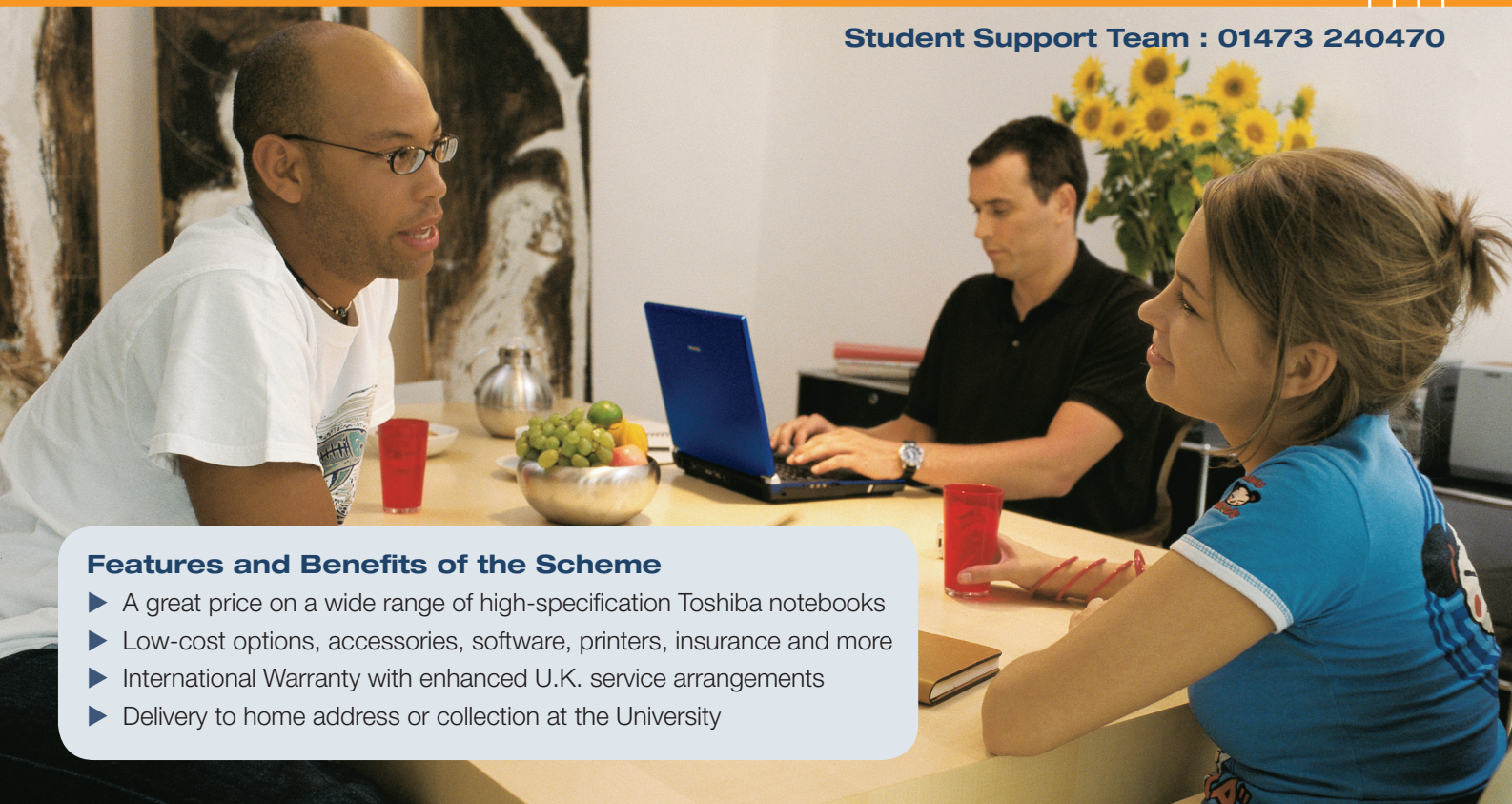




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