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**Open University and Global Knowledge launch new postgraduate certificate in IT service management**

*Leading IT players in higher education and industry training to address ‘most pressing’ skills gap in IT*

A ground-breaking collaboration between The Open University and Global Knowledge, a worldwide leader in IT and business skills training, has today launched a new Postgraduate Certificate (PGC) for IT Service Managers (ITSM). The Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Professional Practice (IT Service Management) combines existing Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL®) best practice education with modules developed by The Open University. It aims to support ITSMs increasingly important role and asks them to assess how they apply what they learn in the workplace.

The certificate will benefit both employers, by focusing staff development on broader business objectives, and individuals, who receive a transferable academic qualification that recognises experience gained through the existing ITIL® best practise publications, but in a way that demonstrates capability in the workplace.

The importance of finding a new approach to ITSM education can be seen in research published by e-skills UK that found professional (postgraduate) ITSM skills will be the most pressing learning need in the IT industry over the next decade [1]. The report estimates that of the additional IT skills required by the UK PLC up to 2020, 40% will be in service management. Yet whilst some sections of the IT industry are starting to mature, service management has remained an area with little scope for practitioners to prove their worth through robust academic qualifications. ITIL® is the worldwide ITSM standard, owned by the Cabinet Office that provides best practice guidelines but does not require the individual to prove they can apply them in the workplace.

Kevin Streater, Head of IT Industry Engagement at The Open University: “Despite it being the skills set IT employers demand most of all, service management has for many years been one of the least covered topics in higher education. At the same time industry certificates don’t always convince employers of their successful application. By combining an existing training infrastructure with an independent and robust academic pathway, The Open University and Global Knowledge are bridging the gap between individuals getting certified and organisations seeing the benefit.”

Allan Pettman, UK Managing Director at Global Knowledge: “ITIL® remains important and as the IT industry continues to mature we need to develop it even further to demonstrate the professionalism in ITSM that is required for broader organisational success. With this new postgraduate certificate we are enabling employees to demonstrate they can apply what they have learnt in their day-to-day role and the tangible difference it has made to their organisation. They also get a more transferable qualification within a recognisable academic framework that proves their capability to existing and prospective employers.”

Ben Clacy, Chief Executive of The IT Service Management Forum: “The e-skills figures from last year represent a growing awareness of the value of ITSM skills in industry, but also a need to improve the profession’s underlying personal development programmes to better reflect the changing nature of the role.”

“The 100,000 ITSMs working in the UK today are integral to the success of their organisation, with the resource and responsibility to strategically embed technology to best achieve business objectives. This is a huge change in role and requires modern ITSMS to be great communicators, people managers and strategic thinkers. This must be reflected in how we develop this and future generations.”

The new PGC builds on Global Knowledge’s ITIL® training curriculum with modules jointly developed by The Open University’s Business School and Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology. The certificate provides students with full Open University and Global Knowledge tutor support throughout the one year course, and recognises their existing ITIL® experience. The certificate can also be counted towards a Masters in Technology Management, an MBA or other Masters level learning programmes.

This initiative from The Open University and Global Knowledge represents a new model for innovative commercial and academic partnerships that can be rolled out across industry to address critical skills gaps in other areas.

Whilst IT continues to interact with the rest of the business, it has created a need for IT Professionals to develop a more ‘rounded’ set of business competencies. Global Knowledge has aligned its portfolio to IT skills standards in order to help organisations develop the skills of their workforce. They offer learning programmes in areas such as Project Management, enterprise architecture frameworks (including TOGAF) and Business Skills for IT Professionals – which is part of its ‘building performance’ series.

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**Notes to editors**

1. Figures come from the e-Skills UK Technology Insights 2011 report. The specific figures relating to ITSMs are from page 70 of <https://www.e-skills.com/Documents/Research/Tech-Insights-2011/eskills_2011_TechInsights_UK.pdf>
2. The Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Professional Practice (IT Service Management) is made up of two Open University modules and is designed to be completed over 12 or 18 months:

* **Continuing Professional Development in Practice (UYL810**) – This six-month module is for people with a professional qualification (degree or professional equivalent) and who have undertaken at least 150 hours of continuing professional development (CPD) over the last three to four years. In this case the 150 hours of CPD will come from participants’ achievement of ITIL® Foundation v3 and ITIL® Intermediate v3 (please see Appendix A for details of how this time is broken down). Participants will need to provide proof of this as part of the module (those with ITIL® v2 will need to take the bridge and upgrade courses before commencing UYL810). Through two assignments and an end-of-module assessment participants will reflect on the key themes that have emerged for them from their ITIL® Foundation and Intermediate studies and the impact that this has had on their work. They will then identify and plan appropriate development opportunities and the future direction of their learning through continuing professional development and evaluate ways in which they can share their learning in their organisation.

<http://www3.open.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/course/u810.htm>

* **Improving your Practice (BYL834)** - The starting point for this module will be the completion of the Managing Across the Lifecycle course with Global Knowledge. Participants would then complete a further 120 hours of Service Management related CPD of which at least 90 hours must be eligible Global Knowledge courses. The remaining 15 hours of additional CPD can be made up from a number of Service Management related CPD sources. As part of the qualification, participants will need to provide proof of completion of these 120 hours CPD and the Managing Across the Lifecycle course. Participants will also complete a Reflective log which acts as a mechanism for recording and reflecting on the impact that the various development activities have had on their practice

1. **About The Open University**

The Open University (OU) is the largest academic institution in the UK and a world leade**r in flexible distance lea**rning. Since it began in 1969, the OU has taught more than 1.7 million students and has more than 264,000 current students, including 18,000 overseas. Regarded as Britain’s major e-learning institution, the OU is a world leader in developing technology to increase access to education on a global scale. Its vast ‘open content portfolio’ includes free study units on OpenLearn, which has had more than 21 million visits, and materials on iTunes U, which has recorded over 50 million downloads.  The OU has a 41 year partnership with the BBC which has moved from late-night lectures in the 1970s to prime-time programmes such as Frozen Planet, Bang Goes the Theory, James May’s Big Ideas and The Money Programme.

1. **About Global Knowledge UK**

Global Knowledge provides IT and business skills learning to both public and private sector companies and organisations across the UK. Its core training is focused on Cisco, Juniper, Microsoft, VMware, Citrix and best practice. This includes ITIL® Service Management and PRINCE2® which is tied into business process improvement, project management, business analysis and leadership development.

Flexible and tailored learning programmes incorporate e-learning, instructor-led, virtual delivery, mentored and collaborative learning at training centres, on-site and online, enabling customers to choose when, where and how they want to receive training programmes and learning services.

Founded in 1995, Global Knowledge employs more than 1300 people worldwide. Corporate headquarters are located in Cary (USA), Canadian headquarters are in Toronto and EMEA headquarters are in London. The company is owned by New York-based investment firm MidOcean Partners.

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

1. **About The IT Service Management Forum**

The IT Service Management Forum (itSMF) is the independent and internationally recognised forum for IT Service Management professionals. Its membership provides a forum to exchange views, share experiences and participate in continuous development and promotion of best practice and standards; all of which in turn deliver significant value to businesses.

1. ITIL® is a registered trade mark of the Cabinet Office
2. IT Infrastructure Library® is a registered trade mark of the Cabinet Office