

Sesame



The Open
University

Your student and alumni magazine

Autumn 2009 Issue 242

LEARN CHINESE

New beginners' language
course from the OU



Graduate
Special

COURSE RESULTS

A selection of the
2008 course results

iSPOT

Embrace nature
with new OU website

SMOKING

OU academic
talks tobacco



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Welcome



WITH THE MAJORITY of degree ceremonies having taken place around the UK and Ireland, we've decided to dub the autumn issue of *Sesame* a graduate special.

We have spoken to some of the freshest additions to the OU alumni from around the UK and Ireland. You'll find a selection of graduates in the People section, revealing their reasons for studying with the OU and

what getting a degree means to them. Also included as part of the celebrations is a rare insight into an OU degree ceremony held in one of Her Majesty's prisons. We also look at this year's recipients of honorary OU degrees – a diverse selection of individuals who have provided exceptional contributions or services to areas such as arts and sciences, education and culture, and to the educationally underprivileged.

Many of you will already have seen some episodes of the new BBC/OU co-produced science series *Bang Goes The Theory*. We chat with some of the team who have helped shape the show thus far, both behind and in front of the camera, including some of the OU academic advisers and hands-on presenter Dallas Campbell.

Autumn also sees the launch of the OU's new language course, *Beginners' Chinese*. As the title suggests, it's an introduction to the language of a nation where development has been rapid in recent years. Also included in this issue are the 2008 annual course results (p22); a look at iSpot, the OU's brilliant new nature website (p8); and an interview with Professor of Social Marketing, Gerard Hastings, recently awarded an OBE for services to healthcare, to find out his thoughts on tobacco (p38).

Whether you are reading a print copy or online, we hope you enjoy this issue of *Sesame*. Afterwards, why not let us know what you think? You can contact the team at sesame@open.ac.uk

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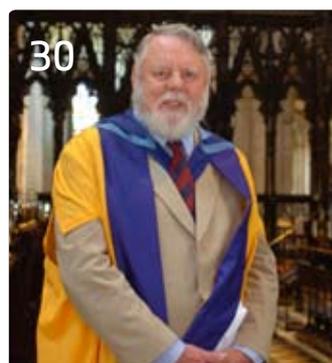
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Update

All the latest news from The Open University



Professor Gourley with the Prime Minister

Political heavyweights line up to eulogise the OU

High praise for OU

Top politicians Brown, Cameron and Mandelson lead accolades

● WITH A GENERAL Election less than a year away, The Open University is coming in for high praise from the country's top politicians.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown, in line with an announcement in June of £7.8m of funding to enhance the OU's national role, said: "The success of distance learning, pioneered 40 years ago by The Open University, has been nothing short of a revolution for higher education.

"It has opened the doors to a whole new audience of students who have not only seen academic success but

reaped the wider rewards learning brings."

The Prime Minister, a former OU tutor, also hosted a special reception at 10 Downing Street in June to mark The Open University's 40th anniversary.

And Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, Lord Mandelson, writing in the Guardian, said: "The blinding flash of inspiration at the heart of The Open University lay in the way it challenged the idea of what a classroom is.

"Forty years later, powered by the internet and online learning, it is an idea that has come so completely of age that it is easy

to forget the trail The Open University blazed."

Not to be outdone, Conservative leader David Cameron chose the impressive surroundings of the OU's Library at Walton Hall to deliver a keynote policy speech at the end of May.

He prefaced his speech about bringing in sweeping change to politics by saying: "I think The Open University is something of an example in the success that change and modernisation can bring.

"Some of the best innovation in the world... we have through The Open University."

Disabled students will benefit

'Student bedroom' assessment

Donation enables new Access Centre resource

● THANKS TO A donation from a founding member of the OU Computer Sci-Tech and Space Society (OUCSTSS), the OU Access Centre has a new assessment room.

Based at the Walton Hall campus, the resource resembles a 'student's bedroom' setting, the idea being to provide an environment similar to that in which a student lies on a bed for the majority of their study time due to their disability.

The assessment room, named the Sharpey-Schafer Room in the donor's honour, was formally opened with the donor's family and members of OUCSTSS in June.

For information on the Disabled Students' Allowance, see www.open.ac.uk/disability/disabled-students-allowance.php

For more information on donating to the OU, see www.open.ac.uk/fundraising



PHOTO: ROY BIRD

OU's Africa initiative

TESSA project wins top award

Up to 200,000 teachers will benefit



Leadership Award for the OU's TESSA project

● THE OU'S TESSA (Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa) project has been awarded the Leadership Award by the e-Learning Africa Awards for Exemplary Open Educational Resource (OER) Practices at a ceremony in Dakar, Senegal.

TESSA is Africa's largest teacher education project, working to improve the quality of teacher education across sub-Saharan Africa by using new technology, in particular the idea of 'open content' or Open Educational Resources. Innovation is at the heart of

the TESSA project, as it is allowing teachers in remote areas, who would otherwise have to travel to education centres far away, to use high-quality materials from their own classroom.

Empowering teachers to develop their skills in this way is proving a huge success. Freda Wolfenden from The Open University said: "We expect that up to 200,000 teachers will be using TESSA resources by the end of 2010. TESSA is playing a major leadership role in exploiting new technology to support teachers, many of whom work with large classes in remote rural communities."

See www.open.ac.uk/fundraising to find out more about supporting this project.

Introductory courses prove a big success

100,000th Openings student

Dad Robert now working towards BSc

● ROBERT WILTSHIRE, A father of two from Cornwall, is The Open University's 100,000th Openings student.

Openings courses are short introductory courses covering a broad subject area and designed specifically to bridge the gap between further and higher education. Robert, 44, who is a full-time dad, decided to embark on the 10-point *Introducing environment* (Y161) course when his two sons George and Joseph began full-time education.

He said: "The Openings course looked like a really good way of getting into studying again. In fact, it helped me learn how to learn. The biggest thing is that the course gives you the confidence to know that you can do it and faith in the system."

Having completed the course, Robert is now studying *Working*



Robert with eldest son George (photo taken by four-year-old Joseph) with our environment: technology for a sustainable future (T172) as he works towards a BSc in Natural Sciences.

Openings courses cost £115 but are free if you are on benefits or have a household income of less than £16,500. For more information call +44 (0)845 300 6090 or visit www.open.ac.uk/openings

Student satisfaction survey

OU rated highly

Students content

● FOR THE SECOND year the OU is in the top three higher education institutions (HEIs) in the UK for student satisfaction.

According to the latest National Student Survey published in August, 94 per cent of students said they were satisfied overall with the quality of their course.

More than 9,000 OU students participated in the survey and a total of 155 HEIs across the UK and 117 further education colleges (FECs) in England took part.

As the UK's largest university and provider of part-time education, The Open University has been at the forefront of the ratings since they were introduced in 2005.

The survey results will be published on the Unistats website on 29 September at www.unistats.co.uk

Just in...

Corporate manslaughter

GLOBALLY, MORE PEOPLE are killed each year at work than are killed in wars.

How the law responds is important, and the UK's new Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act is a significant improvement on earlier legislation.

In a special podcast, Professor Gary Slapper, Director of the OU Centre for Law, reflects on a number of major cases such as the Southall rail crash, which heightened public anxiety.

The new legislation creates a dedicated offence to cover companies that cause death – and Gary discusses the application and implications of the new law and what it could mean for corporate manslaughter.

To listen to Gary's podcast log on to http://podcast.open.ac.uk/pod/oubs_alumni#

Social Sciences website

THE SOCIAL SCIENCES Faculty has launched its own subject website, giving information, advice, resources and support to students. The site acts as a department noticeboard featuring news, forums, blogs, course tasters, careers advice and announcements about curriculum changes.

It aims to help students plan their study towards a chosen qualification, as well as providing resources relating to individual subject development, good academic practice and an understanding of the relevance of social science to a career.

Any student registered with the OU is able to access the site, <http://learn.open.ac.uk/site/socsci-prog>



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Department of Languages honours

More awards for the OU

University makes an 'outstanding contribution'

● THE OU'S DEPARTMENT of Languages has won two prestigious European awards. The European Awards for Languages are given annually by CILT, the National Centre for Languages.

This year CILT recognised the achievements of the OU's Department of Languages with a special prize, commenting: "One institution stands out for consistently delivering projects which take language learning one step beyond. That's why this year we are presenting the first ever European Award for Outstanding Contribution to Language Learning to The Open University."

Two projects from the department were submitted for this year's European Award for Languages – the Languages in iTunes project, which shares



The OU languages team pick up their European Languages awards

French and Spanish resources through iTunesU; and Andante, an Italian course for distance learners centred on a course website and a range of online activities.

The Andante project also received the Italian Embassy Language Prize. Judges said:

"As a distance learning provider, the OU strives to find ways to encourage independent learning and to foster collaboration, both between tutor and student and among students themselves. The Andante project does this with flair."

Three generations of family make visit

Latest Legacy Tour

Insight into the OU and its work



Katrina, with daughter Mary and mum Margaret, on a Legacy Campus Tour

● THREE GENERATIONS OF the Farthing family took part in the latest Legacy Campus Tour at Walton Hall in June – mum Margaret, who has a BSc (Hons), daughter Katrina, who has an MSc, and granddaughter Mary, who is just eight months old, so not quite old enough yet for an Open University course...

The tour is designed to give alumni and friends interested in supporting the University by

leaving a gift in their will an insight into the organisation and its work.

One guest said: "The day has reminded me of why I am so enthusiastic about the OU."

If you would like to know more about supporting the University with a gift in your will, or would like to be invited on a future Legacy Campus Tour, contact Karen Hart, Legacy Officer, on 01908 659141 or k.l.hart@open.ac.uk

Second year in a row for OU

Student wins nursing award

Winner Avril praises colleagues and tutors

● FOR THE SECOND year running, an OU student has won the Royal College of Nursing Student Nurse of the Year Award in Northern Ireland.

Avril Montgomery picked up the award – which recognises and rewards excellence in professional education – at a ceremony in Belfast in June.

Avril said: "It has been a challenge to ensure a work-life balance throughout the past two-and-a-half years and returning to study again in my life. However, I have enjoyed the whole experience."

Avril works at the Antrim Area Hospital and is a third year student at the OU. She was nominated by her hospital ward manager for leading an infection control project.

Just In...

Educating Rita returns

IN CELEBRATION OF The Open University's 40th anniversary year, staff and students from the OU South East are staging a revival of Willy Russell's life-affirming play *Educating Rita*. David Heley, Openings Manager and South East tutor, has directed this fresh adaptation, which incorporates live music, and it will tour to a number of venues across the region, culminating in a celebratory performance at Crawley's Hawth Theatre on Friday 13 November. For further information and tour dates visit www.open.ac.uk/events and select Crawley.

More young students

THERE HAS BEEN a 36 per cent increase in the number of 18- to 21-year-olds turning to the OU for higher education.

Christina Lloyd, Head of Teaching and Learner Support, said: "More young people are now choosing to stay at home and study, and continuing with their part-time jobs in order to avoid the kind of debt that comes with traditional institutions and tuition fees. This year's surge in numbers could also be due to the wider economic downturn, with more people choosing to stay in education rather than seek out job opportunities."

Emma Pye, 21, spent two years at a conventional university and then transferred credits to the OU.

She said: "It was much cheaper with the OU as I could complete my degree whilst living at home.

"Because I wasn't earning, the OU paid 75 per cent of my tuition fees, and there was a great choice of courses. I didn't have to start my degree again from scratch."

New nature website

I spy with my little eye...

Have you ever spotted a plant or animal in the flesh and wondered what it was? Thanks to a new OU website, now you can find out. Simply post photos of flora and fauna to the iSpot website and experts or fellow users will identify them

● ANYONE WITH EVEN a passing interest in the natural world around them will be fascinated by The Open University's new iSpot website (www.ispot.org.uk).

The site enables everyone, from casual observers to experienced wildlife watchers, to create and share personalised photo albums with like-minded people.

Jonathan Silvertown, the OU's Professor of Ecology, who is leading the project, said: "Have you ever seen a bird, an insect or a plant that you didn't know the name of and wished you had someone there to tell you what it is? Or you know the name but you want to share the excitement of discovery with someone? Well, that is what iSpot is all about. It's a place

"We have a course you can take, too. It's called *Neighbourhood nature* (S159) and is specially designed for anyone who wants to take their interest in natural history a step further."

The website also enables anyone who enjoys nature programmes to get off the couch and take a more active interest. There will be keys on the site to enable users to identify plants and animals they have photographed.

These allow users to input as much information about the organism as possible and ascertain how closely these match possible species.

Keys will be available for both PCs and phones. A link to Google Maps also enables users to see where else the

"iSpot is a place where you can get help putting a name to wildlife you have seen and share your observations"

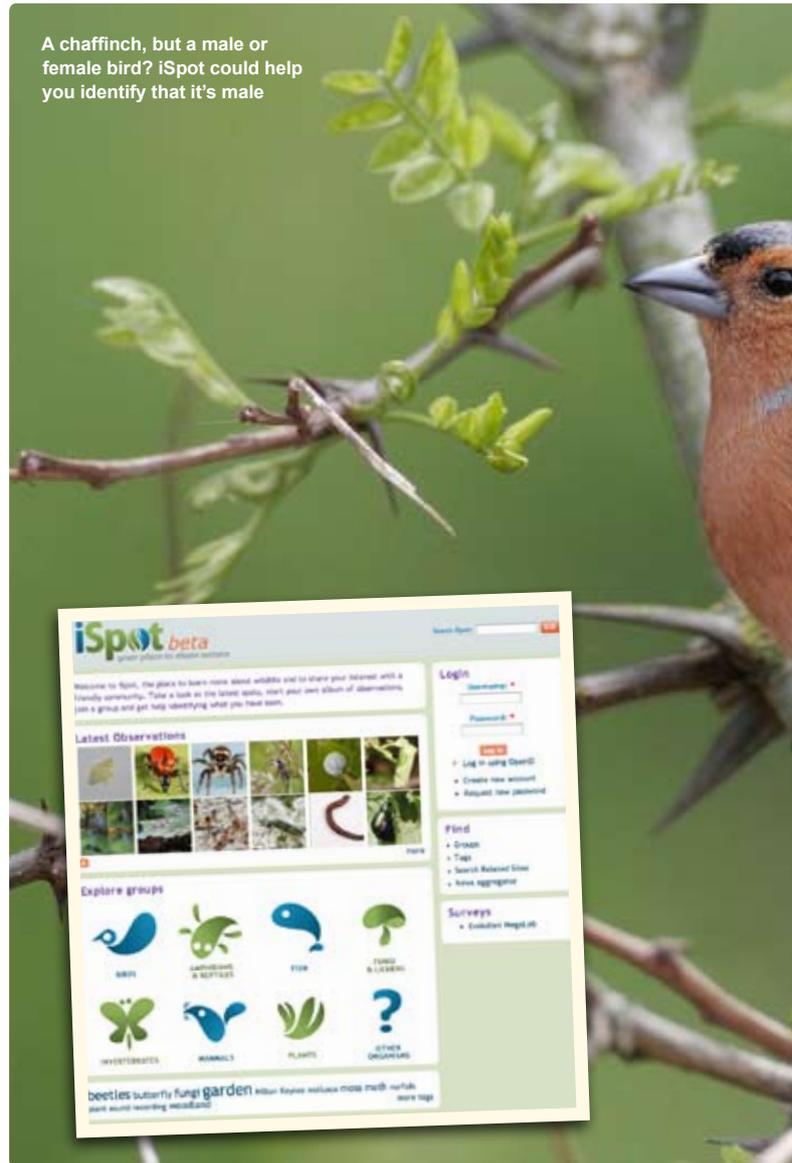
where you can get help putting a name to wildlife you have seen and share your observations with others.

"Take a picture with your camera or mobile, if you can, and upload this to iSpot, or describe what you saw, and the friendly community of iSpotters will help you. Putting a name to a creature is the key to learning more about it and sharing your interest in nature with others.

species has been spotted around the UK.

And a team of 10 regional-based mentors are on hand to provide online support. The mentors will encourage local wildlife enthusiasts, both novices and experts, to use the website as a forum to record their observations and share their knowledge or promote support for local wildlife activities.

A chaffinch, but a male or female bird? iSpot could help you identify that it's male



The website also complements other more specialised sites, because users can take their interest further having developed a community of users with similar interests.

In creating the site, a wide range of experts and potential users were consulted. This was to ensure that all information provided by the public is checked thoroughly and that members of the online communities interested in biodiversity can be confident of the site's accuracy and integrity.

The Open University is working alongside 14 other institutions to develop iSpot as part of the Open Air Laboratories (OPAL) initiative. The site is part of the

University's Biodiversity Observatory which is funded through OPAL's grant of £11.7m from the Big Lottery Fund.

The website is also supported by a number of experts who wish to introduce beginner naturalists to a supportive community of experts and other enthusiasts.

The regionally based biodiversity mentors also aim to widen the appeal of nature to people who hadn't previously considered it as a hobby.

The Biodiversity Observatory will next year be encouraging the public to get involved with the data collection for the Open Air Laboratories National Biodiversity Survey. There will also be links to other surveys across England.

www.ispot.org.uk



With iSpot you can identify animals and plants using your mobile phone



Can you identify this water-based creature? It's a Great Crested Newt



Maybe you'll find the rare British flower Corncockle (*Agrostemma githago*)



Water vole are rare due to decreased habitat and the predatory American mink

Course connection Neighbourhood nature (S159)

This 10-point course neatly complements the iSpot website, allowing anyone with an interest in nature to develop their scientific and observational skills.

It is targeted at anyone, whether they live in the city or countryside, who is interested in studying the plants and animals that live in their neighbourhood. Students are introduced to the different types of habitats in the UK, their characteristics and what type of organism can be found living there.

The course involves carrying out a small amount

of field work in a local public open space, before collecting the observations and entering them into the iSpot web database. Once they have been entered into the site, there will be help available to identify what you have seen.

The Level 1 course is designed for people who are new to studying nature and no previous scientific experience is needed. [Registration closes on 13 November for a November start. Call +44 \(0\)845 300 6090 or visit \[www.open.ac.uk/courses\]\(http://www.open.ac.uk/courses\). Quote Sesame in any correspondence.](#)

PHOTOS: MIKE DODD / SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY

We've got mail!

If you'd like your letter or email to *Sesame* to be considered for inclusion in the Letters pages, email sesame@open.ac.uk or write to *Sesame*, The Open University, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA. Please include your name, address and daytime telephone number. We reserve the right to edit letters. Letters will be permanently available to read online at www.open.ac.uk/platform

CHOOSING A CAREER PATH

I am glad to be a part of the OU during its ruby anniversary. I have decided to take up the rest of the time to complete my degree by studying full time, which should be in time for the 2012 London Olympics. I would like to share with you an extract from my blog on my experiences of the OU:

"When I started to enrol I had a choice of career paths that I wanted to take and two subjects that I was considering. One where I could improve my writing career, and the other which was my chance to revive an old childhood dream when I wanted to be an astronaut or a scientist.

"I also needed an inspiration for a science-fiction thriller. The Open BSc gave me the ability to study two subjects in completely different areas - ie, Literature and Physics. So I took it up to expand on my talents in both areas. I know what I want to do and how to get it, and to make it happen involved a change of career. I decided to become a scientist and go back to my career dreams. So as of now I am on sabbatical. I will return to writing sometime in the future. First I need to get out and explore the world. A good writer has had great adventures, a bad writer has gone nowhere!"

I think the last line has a message that fulfils the OU's mission as in it's motto: Learn and Live. You have to learn how to write a decent adventure that will enthrall your readers.

CHARLIE KEEBLE (via email)
Charlie's blog: <http://ackeebleuk.spaces.live.com/>

NOT SO APPEALING...

Although I completed my BSc profile in 2001, I have 'kept my hand in' by continuing to study OU short courses on a fairly regular basis.

One thing puzzles me, though. If I submit a TMA and this is returned with a low score, if I feel aggrieved by the mark I am told that I should return the TMA to my tutor for appeal. Perhaps I am missing something, but can anyone imagine the tutor admitting that their original mark was inaccurate and should be changed?

Surely an appeal against a TMA mark should go to another person dealing with the same subject? What do other students think about this?

BARRY LEES,
GREENOCK, INVERCLYDE

Lottie Flook, Manager, Complaints and Appeals Office responds: The TMA is initially queried with the tutor to allow them to reconsider the score awarded in light of the student's concerns. If the student

remains dissatisfied after the tutor has responded to the query, an appeal can be raised via the Complaints and Appeals Office (complaints-appeals@open.ac.uk). This is then referred to an experienced member of the faculty for review.

Within both processes the tutor or re-marking body may retain the original score or award a higher or lower score.



HONORARY GRADUATE?

How do I nominate someone for an OU honorary award?
ROCHEL GERTNER, LONDON

Jo Durward, Student Services Manager (Ceremonies) and secretary to the Honorary Degrees Committee responds: All members of our staff

RELIGIOUS STUDIES DOWN UNDER?

In the summer issue of *Sesame* I noticed that an MA in religious studies (A880) is being offered as a new course. I live in Queensland, Australia but between 1993 and 1999, when I lived in South Wales, I was successful in gaining a BA(Hons) and thoroughly enjoyed the course. It is because of that experience that I would be pleased to study with the OU again. Is it possible?

MARIE MURPHY (VIA EMAIL)

Joanna Farmer, Business Manager, Student Registration and Enquiry Service, responds: Thank you for your interest in A880 and for your positive comments about studying with the OU. Unfortunately, this particular course is not available in Australia; it's currently offered in the UK, Republic of Ireland and EU study areas only. However, to find out which courses are available for worldwide study, visit www.open.ac.uk/worldwide



and currently registered students are eligible to make nominations and are strongly encouraged to do so. There are a number of criteria under which your nomination might fall. These are: Services to the University; Services to the educationally underprivileged; Work in areas of special educational concern to the University; Academic and scholarly distinction; Public Services; Services to the Arts and Sciences; Exceptional contribution to education and culture.

Nomination forms and details of those who have received honorary awards previously are available from Jane FitzGerald in the Awards and Ceremonies Centre at Walton Hall (01908 652903 or email j.fitzgerald@open.ac.uk). The closing date for nominations is Friday 25 September. Nominations are for awards to be conferred at degree ceremonies held in 2011.

GRADUATION DATES

Now there are so many courses ending in the summer rather than October, isn't it time the OU began to have more degree ceremonies later in the year to



reflect this? I hope to graduate next May (2010) when my final course is finished but will not be able to attend a ceremony close to home until April 2011!

LINDA MOORE, VIA EMAIL

Jo Durward, Student Services Manager (Ceremonies) responds: The Open University has traditionally held a main season of degree ceremonies in the months of April, May and June. This was timed to fit in with the majority of graduates who received their results in late December.

Several years ago, three additional ceremonies (one in continental western Europe and two in London) were added to the programme for September to cater for graduates receiving their results in June who did not wish to wait until the following year until receiving their results. However, the University

recognised that its ceremony provision in September did not cater for graduates based in the north, who were unable to or did not wish to travel to ceremonies in London or Paris. Therefore an additional ceremony at Bridgewater Hall in Manchester has been added to the September 2009 programme to cater for a wider geographical spread of graduates. There are currently no plans to introduce additional ceremonies at other times of the year.



A REAL PAIN!

In response to Martin Clayton's letter in the Summer issue of *Sesame*, in which he laments the lack of technology within the exam hall. This is not an issue which is restricted to the OU. I recently completed my philosophy degree through a London University (three years full time and heavily focused on essay writing), which insisted on

internet submitted, typed essays (I produced a total of 36 2,000-plus-word essays) and was very much technology-centric. To cut a long story short: after three years of typing, our hands were ill-prepared for our archaic exam experience. And let me tell you, eight three-hour long written exams in the space of two weeks is a lot of writing. My handwriting is sloppy at best: let's hope "phenomenology" and "falsification" were recognisable and illegibility didn't affect my final grade
ASTRID CHRISTIE, VIA EMAIL

Jenny Bull, Head of Examinations and Assessment, responds: It is a question of security and logistics, in particular. In 2008 more than 96,400 examinations were arranged in more than 450 centres. Even our smaller centres often accommodate dozens of students at a time and supporting computing equipment, power supplies, software, etc. is not feasible. Ensuring the security of the examination process raises different issues with PC-based examinations from handwritten and we are not in a position where this is scalable.

CEREMONY JOY

I attended the Cheltenham graduation ceremony on 29 May and it will be a day that I will remember with a sense of pride for what I have achieved but also in belonging to the organisation that is The Open University.

One of my guests was an alumna of Oxford University and she has attended graduation ceremonies both at Oxford and Oxford Brookes Universities. She was very impressed by all the effort that had gone into making the OU ceremony what it was, from having music before the opening of the ceremony to sharing a glass of something with graduates and their guests afterwards.

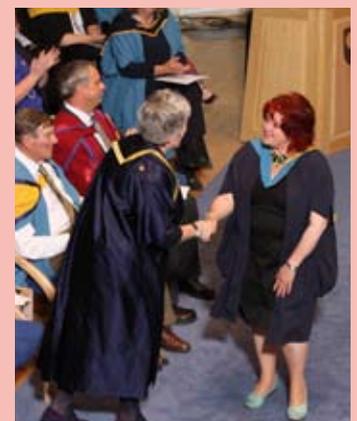
For my part, I would like to say a big thank you to Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor Brigid

Heywood for her warmth and friendliness – she even had time to discuss the subject dear to many women's hearts... shoes!

It is these little touches that turn what could be a very stuffy occasion into one which gives a genuine sense of belonging to a friendly worldwide community.

So for those who are still writing those TMAs or cramming for exams, keep going! The sense of achievement at the end of the long road is incalculable and you will have the pleasure of attending a graduation ceremony that I am sure will go down in your memory, as mine has for me, as being one of the best days of your life.

PAULINE LARDER, BA (HONS), VIA EMAIL



Pro-Vice-Chancellor Brigid Heywood with Pauline on her graduation

TV feature

Weird science

OU/BBC co-production *Bang Goes The Theory* has jump-started popular science on TV. *Sesame* speaks to some of the academic team behind the show...



Bang Goes The Theory presenting team: Dallas, Liz, Yan and Jem (left to right)

● IT LAUNCHED WITH a bang in July. Open University scientist Dr Janet Sumner called it “one of the most exciting multiplatform broadcast projects that the OU has ever been involved with”. So why is the new BBC One science series *Bang Goes The Theory* such a big deal?

In the first place, said Janet, who is the Broadcast and Learning Executive heading up the OU’s side of all joint BBC/OU Science and Technology broadcast projects, it’s a landmark for popular science on BBC One.

“There have been fantastic science shows on the BBC in the past, but it’s been a while since there’s been a peak-time science show on the BBC

whose aim is to be as fun as it is educational,” said Janet.

For example, some of the things we’ve seen include creating a water-powered jet pack; looking at the problem of burping cows; and how to fry an egg in newspaper.

“One of the hallmarks of really brilliant academics is that they can explain their subjects simply”

“The type of experiments being demonstrated on the show are fun and a bit wacky,” said Janet, “but they are all backed up by serious science.”

It’s a big commitment on the part of the BBC, with *Bang* debuting with a 10-part series and a second series of six

programmes planned. It’s a huge undertaking for the OU, too, with a host of academics from different departments acting as consultants.

“From Science alone there are 17 people from The Open University, counting myself,

contributing to the show,” said astrophysicist Dr Stephen Serjeant, who leads the OU’s Science faculty’s academic team on *Bang*.

“We needed so many people because there is a very wide range of science involved – everything from evolutionary

biology to cosmology – so we have to cast the net wide. The OU has a lot of world-class research in the areas which the programme is covering.

“As academics, we have to get the science right, as does the BBC, and we both want to make the science to be accessible for the audience.

“So many people think ‘science is inaccessible; it’s complicated’, but it’s not true. Science is about curiosity and finding out about the world.”

Although the show is aimed at a popular audience, science students shouldn’t assume it’s beneath them. The presentation is simple not the science itself, explained engineer Dr Ian Johnston, who leads the *Bang* academic team from the OU’s Maths, Computing and Technology faculty.

Ian said his own passion for science was inspired, partly, by BBC science broadcasting in the 1970s – programmes such as *The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures*, *The Great Egg Race* and, of course, *Tomorrow’s World*, to which *Bang Goes The Theory* has been compared.

“Some of the items on *Bang Goes The Theory* are Level 3 in terms of the science, but Openings Level in terms of the explanation. The science is serious, the underlying principles of the experiments are serious, but the presentation is accessible and approachable,” he said.

OU academics work with the BBC production team, including BBC science experts, at key stages in the production process, starting with the initial outline of ideas, which may be no more than a few paragraphs.

Then again at the scripting stage, which is sent to the academic team for comments. Academics then view rough and final cuts of the show.

Working on *Bang* is also educational for the academics, said Ian. There's no room for waffle or academic jargon. For example: "The BBC asked me for about 20 to 30 words explaining why the amount of carbon in steel changes its properties. People spend years studying this area, and I have to find 30 words which will explain it to someone who has never thought about the subject before, and be acceptable to a metallurgist at the same time! It really tests your understanding of your subject.

"I think one of the hallmarks of really brilliant academics – and I don't include myself among these! – is that they can explain their subjects simply."

The interdisciplinary nature of *Bang's* academic teams means the same subject can be explored from different perspectives – chemical, physical, environmental, engineering, for example. But it also means the academics get an insight into areas outside their own discipline. "One of the things I've learnt," said Ian, "is that scorpions aren't insects!"

OU academics are featured in videos about the series at www.open2.net/bang, where you can also take the *Bang* interactive science challenge, and lots more. For science experiments that you can try at home, visit www.bbc.co.uk/bang You can post science questions and get answers from science experts.

www.open2.net/bang and www.open.ac.uk/platform



If you witnessed a crime, do you think you'd recall the events accurately?

Eyewitness

Can I get a witness?

A new OU/BBC series investigates the intricacies of being an eyewitness to a crime...

● AT ANY ONE moment you could find yourself witness to a crime. It might happen in only a matter of seconds but what you see could be key to unlocking who did what, when and how. But how accurate is your memory?

Despite the advent of forensic science, eyewitnesses still play a crucial role in solving crimes, often providing the only clues that police have. Yet mistaken eyewitness identification is estimated to cause 60 per cent of wrongful convictions.

This ground-breaking new OU/BBC series, *Eyewitness*, stages a series of full-scale mock crimes and investigations, using members of the public as crucial witnesses. It shows how getting accurate information from witnesses involves a sophisticated understanding of how the memory works, the

power of prejudice, and why who we are determines how we understand what happens to us. It examines what makes a good or bad witness interview and, with the help of experts, probes the psychology of witness performance.

The series also gives an insight into how police investigations are carried out, and looks at crucial witness input in some real-life crimes.

Graham Pike, academic consultant to the series and Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the OU, said: "Using cutting-edge research techniques and expert analysis, *Eyewitness* will provide an insight into police investigative procedures and discover how to unlock the memory of a witness."

***Eyewitness* is coming soon to the BBC. Check listings for details.**

TV round-up

Latest news

OU/BBC TV
COMING SOON...

HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY



BBC Four
A landmark new series presented by historian

Diarmaid MacCulloch explores the development of Christianity and what it now means to be a Christian.



SYRIAN SCHOOL

BBC Four
Following in the footsteps

of African, Indian and Chinese School, the team travel to Damascus to document the experiences of schools in Syria.



HISTORY OF SCOTLAND

BBC One
Part two of the highly

acclaimed series presented by Neil Oliver goes out on BBC One in Scotland this autumn. Viewers elsewhere can see it on BBC Two the following spring.

Broadcast schedules, where available, are liable to change. Check TV listings for up-to-date details.

The OU/BBC website www.open2.net has information about all OU/BBC series. You can also discuss issues raised in programmes in the online forums and follow up a topic of interest with more in-depth information.

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Days 1-3 ♦ Sightseeing in New York

On **Day 1** we depart London for New York. Our tour of the 'Big Apple' on **Day 2** includes Central Park and Fifth Avenue, before we enjoy a cruise around Manhattan. With your free time on **Day 3**, perhaps visit poignant 'Ground Zero' or see a show on Broadway.

Days 4-7 ♦ Washington to the Mid-West

On **Day 4** we travel to Washington for a two-night stay at the Phoenix Park Hotel. Our tour of this elegant city on **Day 5** features the White House and Capitol Hill. On **Day 6** we leave Washington on the *Capitol Limited* for the journey over the Allegheny Mountains to Chicago. On **Day 7** our city tour visits the site of the St Valentine's Day Massacre and Al Capone's headquarters.

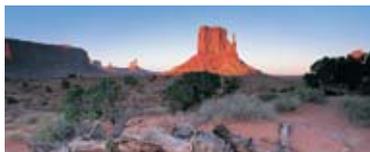
Days 8-11 ♦ Denver and the Rockies

Day 8 sees us boarding the *California Zephyr* for a journey across the plains of Iowa and Nebraska and on **Day 9** we arrive in Denver. On **Day 10** we explore the Rocky Mountain National Park, Big Thompson Canyon and Estes Park. We travel along the *Denver and Rio Grande Railroad* and into the Rocky Mountains to Grand Junction on **Day 11**.



Days 12-13 ♦ Monument Valley

On **Day 12** we board the *Durango and Silverton Railroad* for a journey past breathtaking canyons and emerald-green rivers to the Wild West town of Durango. We drive through Navajo country and the rugged landscape of Utah's Monument Valley to Flagstaff on **Day 13**.



Days 14-16 ♦ Grand Canyon & LA

On **Day 14** we head along the legendary Route 66 to Williams to join the *Grand Canyon Railway* to the Grand Canyon to see one of the world's most awe-inspiring sights. We arrive at South Rim and main view point of the Canyon. You are free to spend **Day 15** at leisure. On our return to Flagstaff we join the *Southwest Chief* to LA. We tour the main attractions of Hollywood on **Day 16** before boarding *RMS Queen Mary* for a one-night stay.

Days 17-21 ♦ San Francisco, Alcatraz & home

On **Day 17** we board *Amtrak's Coast Starlight* to San Francisco. We visit the inspiring Golden Gate Bridge and the infamous island of Alcatraz on **Day 18**. On **Day 19** you are free to explore, perhaps visit Chinatown or spend a day in Sausalito. We transfer to our flight on **Day 20**, arriving in London on **Day 21**.

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Dallas Campbell interview

The scientist's apprentice

Dallas Campbell is one of the presenters of the new OU/BBC science magazine show *Bang Goes The Theory* – a show for anyone remotely curious about life, the universe and pretty much everything...



Dallas Campbell

● AS ONE OF the four presenters on the new BBC/OU co-production *Bang Goes The Theory*, Dallas Campbell is exhilarated by his burgeoning career as mad scientist. Dallas, an actor, writer and director, believed that art and science couldn't mix and so his love of science bloomed late. His love of drama has seen him appear in *Casualty*, *Holby City*, *Moll Flanders* and *The Warp* – the 29-hour theatre epic which made it into the *Guinness Book of Records*.

For those who haven't seen the show yet, what is *Bang Goes The Theory*?

It's a brand-new science magazine show on BBC One, where we basically look at all different kinds of science from neuroscience and astrophysics through to psychology – so the whole gamut. We get our hands

dirty, go and test things out and experiment. Most people say, "Are you the new *Tomorrow's World*?", which we're not – we're much more hands on.

As one of four presenters, do you have areas of speciality?

We sort of do. My special skill is being the non-scientist, so I get to ask the questions the viewers might like to ask. Dr Yan Wong isn't going to be in

"We don't want to it to be too lowbrow or highbrow – in fact, no brows at all!"

the studio but he's our resident expert – so if you have a science question, Yan is the guy to ask. Liz is has a wildlife background [a Masters in Wild Animal Biology] and Jem is an engineer and has an aeronautics degree.

Who is *Bang* aimed at?

The show is designed for everybody. We're not a specialist show. It's a show for

kids to watch, families, people who don't think about science at all. But we also want to create something that people who are interested in science will get something from. We want it to be as inclusive as we can, we don't want to make it too lowbrow or too highbrow – in fact, no brows at all!

What's the most interesting experiment you've been involved with on the show?

I did an interesting piece about brain training using an MRI scanner. With MRI we can actually see the brain working. I had to do a series of IQ tests and with MRI bits of your brain literally light up depending on what you are doing. I also did a piece about lie detection and also nuclear fusion. And Jem has been building a vortex cannon, which can knock over a house, and he also created a pair of Spiderman gloves to climb up walls!

Were you interested in science when at school?

I was terrible at science – I had absolutely no interest. Well, actually that's not true. I was interested but was just not very good at it. At the time I was very into art and I thought art and science couldn't mix; that you couldn't be interested in both

subjects. Then I had a revelation in later life when I realised that you don't have to be a scientist to be into science and to revel in the joy and excitement of finding things out and experimenting.

Art and science do combine with sci-fi – are you a fan?

I think my big revelation was Douglas Adams and *The*

Hitchhikers Guide To The Galaxy: I remember being entranced by the level of wit and his turn of phrase. Even though it's not a science book, he was a huge science and technology fan. A lot of his enthusiasm, which is dripping in the pages of his books, rubbed off.

What about sci-fi films and TV – do you like them?

Yeah, of course. I like good sci-fi though, I don't like bad sci-fi. *2001: A Space Odyssey* is a work of art and I love *Alien*. I'm not obsessive though. It's not like I go to the conventions. Although I do have a friend who was in *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* so I have been!

***Bang Goes The Theory*, BBC One, Mondays at 7.30pm**

Course connection

Exploring science (S104)

What is causing global warming? Why are some countries plagued by earthquakes or volcanic eruptions while others suffer none? How do drugs work? How does the sun provide energy for life on Earth? How do plants and animals evolve? Might there be life elsewhere in the universe? This course explores these and other fascinating questions while developing important scientific concepts and skills. [Registration closes 16 December to start January 2010. Call +44 \(0\)845 300 6090 or visit www.open.ac.uk/courses for more information. Quote Sesame in any correspondence.](http://www.open.ac.uk/courses)

Courses

The latest information on new and exciting courses

Languages

Beginners' Chinese

With China's rapid rise on the world's economic stage, it's never been a better time to learn the nation's official language. And now you can, with a new introductory course from the OU...

● CHINESE IS CURRENTLY spoken by one-fifth of the world's population and is one of the six official languages of the United Nations. The rapid growth of China's economy is being matched by a growth of interest in learning its official language, Mandarin Chinese.

Many people assume Chinese is a 'difficult' language, but it's more accurate to say it's 'different' from the languages most of us learnt at school.

"*Beginners' Chinese* takes students to around GCSE standard in Mandarin within a year," said course chair Dr Kan Qian.

"Chinese is a very different language from English and other European languages," she said. "The grammar is easier – there are no verb tenses, no verb conjugations, no noun genders. You can pick up the grammar quite quickly, so that gives you more time to concentrate on the tones and the characters."

Tones – high, low, falling-rising or falling – are an essential part in speaking Chinese. If you say a word with the wrong tone it can completely alter your meaning, so that 'mother', for example, becomes 'horse'! Fortunately Mandarin Chinese has only four tones, and it is "quite forgiving", said Dr Kan. "If you get the tone wrong, do not worry because the



context and your body language will usually make your meaning clear."

Naturally, *Beginners' Chinese* includes lots of audio

"The course takes students to GCSE standard in Mandarin within a year"

practice, and not only through listening to CDs. There's a new online language tool available on the course website, which lets students record their own speech, play it back and compare it with recordings made by native speakers. And there are more than 20

hours of synchronous (real time) tutorials – some face to face, some online, using the new Elluminate communication tool (see p43 for more on Elluminate).

There are also word searches and visual puzzles to make getting to grips with Chinese characters more fun. By the end of the course, students should be able to recognise 400 to 500 of the most frequently used Chinese characters and be able to use 200 to 300 of them to write

simple notes and messages. Students will learn how to use a standard keyboard on a home PC to type in Chinese script. "No one can become a master calligrapher in 11 months," said Dr Kan. "Students are taught the stroke order of characters – certain strokes are written first – but they're not tested on it. When they come to submit their assignments, students can choose whether to handwrite or word process them."

By the end of the course students should be able to cope with spoken Mandarin in a wide range of practical situations such as shopping, socialising and getting around. And they'll also have an insight into aspects of China's fascinating culture and history. **第一步 *Dì yī bù: Beginners' Chinese* (L197) begins November 2009; registration closes 16 October. Call +44 (0)845 300 6090 or visit www.openuniversity.co.uk/chinese for further information. Quote *Sesame* in any correspondence.**

The Open University in London is running free taster sessions for absolute beginners in Chinese, Italian and Welsh on Thursday 24 September from 5-7pm at its offices in 1-11 Hawley Crescent, Camden Town, NW1 8NP. No need to book, just turn up.

New courses



President Obama seen here lending a hand to conservation volunteers

Environmental issues

Saving the planet

Time to be responsible about the environment

● US PRESIDENT BARACK Obama has called for “a new era of responsibility – a recognition that we have duties to ourselves, our nation, and the world. Duties that we do not grudgingly accept but rather seize gladly.”

His words neatly put into a global context a new OU course, *Environmental responsibility: ethics, policy and action* (TD866). The 30-point postgraduate course puts responsibility at the centre of all we do, said Mark Smith, Senior Lecturer in Politics and International Studies. “Responsibilities, obligations

and duties are commitments we are now more willing to embrace. This is different from how personal responsibility was understood in the Thatcher and Reagan era, when neo-liberal ideas framed policy,” said Mark.

“It is widely accepted that the most effective outcomes are delivered by partnerships between political authorities and local communities, citizens, NGOs, environmental movements and private corporations. All of these actors are explored in TD866.”

Hurry! Registration closes 30 September for a November start. Call +44 (0)845 300 6090.

Law and order

Crime time

New course snoops into the issue of crime...

● CRIME AND HOW to respond to it are big concerns, whether at local level (e.g. street crime) or 21st-century global concerns (e.g. human trafficking and cyber-crime). This course asks critical questions to help you better understand the trends in crime and crime control.

A Level 3 course, *Crime and justice* (DD301) is of professional relevance for those who work for, or wish to work for, the agencies of the criminal justice system, or for organisations concerned with the care and resettlement of offenders, civil liberties, human rights, social justice, victim support, crime prevention, community safety and conflict



Understand crime and crime control

resolution. Course team chair Louise Westmarland, Senior Lecturer in Criminology, said: “This is one of the only criminology courses in the country to address issues of international significance. Crime without borders and justice beyond boundaries are trends that are not only cutting-edge intellectually but also hugely stimulating to study.”

Hurry! Registration closes soon for an October start. Call +44 (0)845 300 6090.

New science course

World of microbes

Beer, bread and Black Death?

● WHAT HAVE HOSPITAL superbugs got to do with beer? Both involve microbes.

Since the birth of civilisation humans have had an uneasy alliance with the microbial world. These single-celled creatures have brought us Black Death, flu pandemics and hospital superbugs, but at the same time they ferment our beer and wine, and help our bread rise.

New Level 1 course *Empire of the microbes* (S171) provides an introduction to microbes, explaining their importance in disease and environmental issues and their role in making and spoiling food. Course chair Professor

Charles Cockell said: “*Empire of the microbes* is the first comprehensive course to provide a background in microbiology for health professionals, environmental scientists, planetary scientists or anyone with an interest in understanding the important role of microbes.

“Despite our technological advances, diseases such as the swine flu pandemic show how important microbes continue to be in the modern world. This course provides a foundation for understanding how microbes work and their many and diverse roles.”

Registration closes 13 November for a start later that month.

Design and ponder

Think outside the box

Creative ideas for the 21st century



U101 will change your way of seeing and solving complex problems

● DO YOU 'THINK outside the box', do you have a creative and playful attitude to life? Then new course *Design thinking: creativity for the 21st century* (U101) could be right up your street.

The course looks at common principles of design and ways of thinking that lead to ideas and creative solutions.

Course team chair Peter Lloyd anticipates that the diversity of people who sign up will add to the strength of the course, as there will be a lot of engagement and interaction between students as it progresses.

"The course will give a good grounding if you are considering a career in design," he said, stressing that "technical ability will not be as vital as critical thinking ability" as a starting point for the course.

This 60-point Level 1 course presents in February 2010 with registration closing on 12 December. Call +44 (0)845 300 6090. Quote Sesame in any correspondence.



GCI image of a virus particle

Course updates



Online learning

A range of new 30-hour online courses is being launched by The Centre for Professional Learning and Development (CPLD).

They include: *Becoming an effective project manager* (GB015); *How to use coaching at work* (GB035); *Time management for you and your team* (GB057); *Working across cultures* (GB061); *Using VLEs [Virtual Learning Environments] in my teaching* (GE020); *Learning to lead* (GE024)

– this course is for teachers who, or aspire to hold, school management responsibilities.

For more information on any of these courses, visit www.openuniversity.co.uk/cpd or telephone +44 (0)845 300 8848.

Educational development

A new masters level course exploring the crucial link between education and development presents for the first time in November.

Education for development (ET821) examines many issues and challenges of education in developing countries, and will be of interest to teachers, people working in development management and for NGOs.

"The course will be delivered globally and we anticipate that half of our student numbers will come from outside the UK," said course manager Tessa Holden. "And many will be from developing countries. This will give the potential for interesting interactions within the course. The course is entirely online and will make full use of VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) tools such as videos, forums, Elluminate [see p43], and extensive online study materials to provide a rich and varied learning experience for students on the course.

"Of course, we are trying to face the challenges of delivering this over variable bandwidths in different countries, but we are sure we will achieve that," said Tessa.

ET821 is a 30-point course in the Masters in Education and the Masters of Global Development Management programmes. Registration closes 30 September for a November start.



Nature in your backyard

Neighbourhood nature (S159) is a new short course that will provide you with observational and basic scientific skills so you can discover the animals and plants in your neighbourhood.

Senior Lecturer in Biological Science David Robinson said: "The course is aimed at beginners – all you need is enthusiasm for learning about the natural world."

See pp8-9 for more. *Next start for S159 is November, with registration closing on 13 November.*

Graduate interview

Radio active

How one student's studies have helped him secure a much sought-after job at a world-renowned laboratory working on a particle accelerator...



Julian Brower (inset) and part of the ISIS particle accelerator (above)

● **BEFORE STUDYING** Physics and Astrophysics at the OU, Julian Brower felt his lack of a degree was holding up his career progression.

Four years later, and on the eve of graduating, Julian has beaten 76 applicants to a prized job as a radio frequency engineer on the world-renowned ISIS particle accelerator based at Rutherford Appleton laboratory, near Oxford.

Julian, 47, works in a team which is responsible for accelerating ISIS's proton beam – called a pulsed-neutron source – used by scientists from all over the world to examine objects' atomic make-up.

Julian said: "In the past I was very good at my job but when I went for a better one, I couldn't

go any further because I didn't have a degree.

"The OU was the only suitable way for me to get over this and it was the only one that

"My OU degree has been so important to me and it is so relevant, so appropriate and so up-to-date"

allowed flexibility. It was wonderfully suitable for my type of life. This job at ISIS, part of the Science and Technical Facilities Council, came up and it was an ideal way in. I was accepted on my engineering background as well as the experience in physics. They wanted someone who had knowledge of both – and that made a big difference."

During the course of his work at ISIS Julian is dealing

with physicists and engineers at a very high level, while project managing and repairing large pieces of equipment in the main beam line.

This involves constantly checking specifications of the proton path in the accelerator as well as modifying, upgrading and improving designs, to keep the beam operating 24 hours a day for three months at a time.

In addition to having experience in both engineering and physics, Julian said his Open University degree also helped set him apart from the other applicants for the job.

He said: "They say people who come from the OU system are a different calibre. The fact they have completed a course says more about them than any interview could.

"Open University students are quite amazing people to do that. Time is a very valuable commodity.

"It shows immense strength of character to complete a degree."

As *Sesame* went to press, Julian was set to complete his

BSc (Hons) Open degree with a predicted 2:1 in September.

And the study material has been relevant to his day-to-day work. On one occasion, Julian was seeking a discontinued course book called *Radio-frequency engineering* (T327).

A few days after contacting The Open University library, Julian was told he could have the book for free because it was no longer needed as course material.

Julian added: "The book related to my work on the accelerator. An awareness of radio frequency engineering was critical and this was a complete course in RF.

"The OU course is very structured, whereas text books dip in and out, and have assumed knowledge.

"In general my Open University degree has been so important to me and it is so relevant, so appropriate and so up-to-date. The whole thing fits perfectly within the environment I am working in."

Course connection Science starts here (S154)

Are you interested in studying science and considering distance learning? Are you worried your maths might let you down? Did you miss out on science in school? *Science starts here* is specifically for students who have done little or no science before, and whose maths is rusty (or non-existent!). Exploring the role that water plays in sustaining life – from the journey of a glass of water through the body, to the effects of pollution, this 10-week course provides a gentle introduction to the basic maths and scientific vocabulary needed for *Exploring science* (S104). [Hurry! Registration closes soon for an October start. Call +44 \(0\)845 300 6090 or visit \[www.open.ac.uk/courses\]\(http://www.open.ac.uk/courses\) for more information. Quote *Sesame* in any correspondence.](#)



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Course results 2008

Below is *Sesame's* guide to the results of a selection of the 30- and 60-point courses that ended in October 2008. They do not include results of other completion periods earlier in the year and some very low

population courses.

Don't be put off by a low pass rate, as results vary from year to year and an aggregate figure gives little guidance to any individual's chance of success.

Key to abbreviations

- Fin Reg** Number of finally registered students on course
- Freg E/ECA (%)** Percentage of finally registered students examined/submitting end-of-course assessment (E/ECA)
- Freg pass (%)** Percentage of finally registered students who passed
- E/ECA pass (%)** Percentage of those examined/submitting end-of-course assessment who passed

A103, DD100, DD121, M150, MST121 and MU120 have continuous assessment only on the course. The figures in the pass columns reflect those who passed on continuous assessment, and are not comparable with courses within an examination/ECA.

Course Code	Fin reg	Freg E/ECA (%)	Freg pass (%)	E/ECA pass (%)	GRADE			
					1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)
A103	2027		68.1	74.4				74.4
AZX103	585	92.5	69.6	75.2				75.2
A200	1578	64.4	59.3	91.9	13.3	31.0	30.9	16.8
A210	812	68.5	62.6	91.4	10.6	26.4	34.7	19.6
A211	594	58.8	56.6	96.3	16.3	41.5	29.5	8.9
A214	401	73.3	67.1	91.5	13.6	23.5	37.4	17.0
A216	712	67.6	64.7	95.8	12.3	34.1	33.1	16.4
A217	544	66.5	60.8	91.4	9.7	46.7	24.6	10.5
A218	339	70.5	66.1	93.7	10.0	38.9	35.6	9.2
A219	703	69.4	64.7	93.2	16.0	33.6	34.0	9.6
A296	418	55.7	49.8	89.3	35.6	22.7	19.7	11.2
A297	521	57.8	49.7	86.0	32.2	22.6	15.9	15.3
A396	123	70.7	67.5	95.4	23.0	40.2	18.4	13.8
A397	260	70.4	67.7	96.2	18.0	47.0	23.5	7.7
A430	79	63.3	59.5	94.0	18.0	40.0	30.0	6.0
A433	120	71.7	70.0	97.7	15.1	48.8	24.4	9.3
A811	64	81.2	79.7	98.1	19.2			78.8
A813	65	86.2	83.1	96.4	12.5			83.9
A817	110	83.6	83.6	100.0	35.9			64.1
A823	61	85.2	85.2	100.0	13.5			86.5
A824	68	82.4	72.1	87.5	5.4			82.1
A827	74	86.5	86.5	100.0	34.4			65.6
A840	108	64.8	61.1	94.3	8.6			85.7
A841	78	70.5	46.2	65.5	3.6			61.8
A847	45	73.3	66.7	90.9	18.2			72.7
A850	110	66.4	55.5	83.6	15.1			68.5
A851	52	80.8	76.9	95.2	14.3			81.0
A857	47	89.4	83.0	92.9	26.2			66.7
A860	58	65.5	60.3	92.1	7.9			84.2
A861	54	87.0	79.6	91.5	10.6			80.9
A870	56	66.1	60.7	91.9	8.1			83.8
A871	46	91.3	71.7	78.6	16.7			61.9
AA300	242	68.2	56.6	83.0	2.4	26.7	30.9	22.4
AAZX300	58	72.4	65.5	90.5	2.4	26.2	23.8	38.1
AA302	322	74.2	73.0	98.3	15.9	39.3	31.8	11.3
AA305	329	76.9	72.9	94.9	19.8	36.0	29.2	9.9
AA306	727	77.7	75.5	97.2	12.0	31.2	39.1	14.9
AA307	419	72.8	66.8	91.8	8.5	30.8	34.4	18.0
AA308	281	64.4	60.9	94.5	12.2	46.4	26.0	9.9
AA309	490	76.7	73.5	95.7	11.7	30.1	42.0	12.0
AA310	492	76.4	74.6	97.6	20.7	33.2	33.0	10.6
AA312	649	79.0	72.1	91.2	13.1	34.1	28.8	15.2

Course Code	Fin reg	Freg E/ECA (%)	Freg pass (%)	E/ECA pass (%)	GRADE			
					1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)
AA315	523	82.6	78.8	95.4	13.2	38.2	32.6	11.3
AA317	328	74.4	69.2	93.0	13.9	30.7	34.8	13.5
AA318	271	75.6	72.0	95.1	17.6	42.0	22.0	13.7
AA810	171	74.3	69.0	92.9	12.6			80.3
AD317	294	80.6	77.9	96.6	9.7	42.2	35.4	9.3
AS208	226	74.3	71.7	96.4	13.1	31.5	38.1	13.7
AT308	391	84.9	83.6	98.5	10.5	38.6	39.2	10.2
AXR272	242	91.3	82.6	90.5	11.3	53.8	22.6	2.7
B120	1813	65.2	59.6	91.4	5.9			85.4
B201	738	59.9	52.2	87.1	17.0	17.0	31.4	21.7
B202	926	56.8	52.2	91.8	5.1	25.3	28.5	32.9
B300	471	65.8	46.5	70.6	1.9	24.8	24.2	19.7
B324	140	62.9	47.1	75.0	5.7	27.3	29.5	12.5
B615	413	74.8	60.5	80.9				80.9
BZX615	84	63.1	46.4	73.6				73.6
BZXN615	50	80.0	70.0	87.5				87.5
B680	760	49.5	30.7	62.0	6.1	26.3		29.5
B700	402	76.6	65.9	86.0	1.0	21.8		63.3
BZX700	95	66.3	56.8	85.7	1.6	20.6		63.5
B713	548	84.1	69.5	82.6	3.7	23.4		55.5
B820	494	80.0	62.6	78.2	1.5	6.8		69.9
BZX820	76	72.4	59.2	81.8	0.0	7.3		74.5
B821	279	81.7	66.7	81.6	7.0	20.2		54.4
B822	270	87.0	84.4	97.0	1.3	8.1		87.7
B825	138	83.3	77.5	93.0	0.9	20.0		72.2
B830	396	88.9	85.9	96.6	2.8	15.6		78.1
B854	50	76.0	72.0	94.7	2.6	34.2		57.9
BU130	341	54.5	50.1	91.9	11.8			80.1
D315	593	65.3	59.0	90.4	8.3	20.9	31.0	30.2
D319	215	76.3	73.0	95.7	9.8	39.0	39.6	7.3
D820	274	62.4	54.7	87.7	5.8			81.9
D830	145	82.8	78.6	95.0	10.8			84.2
D844	267	75.7	74.5	98.5	13.9			84.7
D850	86	64.0	53.5	83.6	12.7			70.9
D860	102	85.3	83.3	97.7	6.9			90.8
D864	91	82.4	75.8	92.0	1.3			90.7
DA204	379	60.7	49.3	81.3	3.5	27.4	32.2	18.3
DD100	2784		61.7	68.4				68.4
DD121	2087		63.2	68.7				68.7
DD200	233	73.8	70.8	95.9	18.6	47.1	22.7	7.6
DD202	612	63.6	57.2	90.0	13.4	35.2	25.2	16.2
DD205	410	78.3	76.3	97.5	13.1	34.6	39.9	10.0

Course Code	Fin reg	Freg E/ECA (%)	Freg pass (%)	E/ECA pass (%)	GRADE			
					1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)
DD303	1150	78.8	74.1	94.0	7.4	43.5	34.2	8.8
DD304	415	84.1	82.7	98.3	10.0	46.7	33.2	8.3
DD307	1526	72.1	68.3	94.8	17.4	34.2	29.6	13.6
DD308	336	81.2	76.8	94.5	8.4	35.9	39.6	10.6
DT840	318	74.5	66.0	88.6	8.0			80.6
DU301	630	76.8	71.0	92.4	7.2	32.6	36.2	16.3
E123	1395	77.2	57.8	74.8				74.8
EZL123	97	78.4	37.1	47.4				47.4
E124	1170	78.5	62.3	79.4				79.4
EZL124	71	76.1	49.3	64.8				64.8
E230	251	71.7	63.7	88.9	7.8	29.4	36.1	15.6
E243	528	71.0	68.2	96.0	6.9	34.9	41.3	12.8
E301	612	77.6	71.1	91.6	12.6	28.6	33.1	17.3
E303	351	70.9	67.8	95.6	18.1	30.5	33.7	13.3
E801	320	71.9	52.8	73.5				73.5
E804	236	75.4	63.1	83.7	1.1			82.6
E841	154	70.1	59.1	84.3	0.9			83.3
E844	178	82.6	73.6	89.1	4.8			84.4
E845	156	82.1	69.9	85.2	3.1			82.0
E848	129	77.5	69.8	90.0	6.0			84.0
E849	371	83.3	77.9	93.5	2.9			90.6
E859	226	91.6	85.0	92.8	1.4			91.3
E891	637	86.2	79.4	92.2	1.3			90.9
ED209	3099	61.2	54.1	88.5	12.9	23.9	32.9	18.8
ED840	421	81.5	65.3	80.2	2.3	17.5		60.3
EK310	560	77.5	66.8	86.2	2.5	32.9	39.6	11.1
H804	45	91.1	84.4	92.7	22.0			70.7
H806	50	80.0	76.0	95.0	7.5			87.5
K100	1551	63.6	60.6	95.2	17.5			77.7
KZX100	327	51.4	49.2	95.8	16.7			79.2
K113	330	95.5	93.9	98.4	8.9			89.5
KYJ113	96	69.8	64.6	92.5	7.5			85.1
K115	160	71.9	69.4	96.5	7.0			89.6
K204	829	68.3	58.1	85.2	6.7	26.0	28.1	24.4
K207	122	77.9	76.2	97.9	4.2	29.5	40.0	24.2
K208	396	74.5	71.2	95.6	5.8	33.9	47.1	8.8
K216	339	95.3	94.1	98.8	9.9	33.7	39.9	15.2
K221	234	64.1	59.8	93.3	24.7	26.0	32.0	10.7
K224	208	90.9	83.2	91.5	2.1	27.5	30.7	31.2
K225	300	65.3	59.0	90.3	3.6	24.5	36.2	26.0
KYN225	61	91.8	78.7	85.7	0.0	21.4	33.9	30.4
K260	381	61.4	54.1	88.0	4.3	21.8	32.5	29.5
K269	509	75.6	67.4	89.1	4.7	29.9	36.4	18.2
KYN271	58	98.3	98.3	100.0	0.0	8.8	42.1	49.1
KYN275	156	91.7	85.9	93.7	6.3	18.9	37.1	31.5
KYN276	155	92.9	91.6	98.6	0.7	18.1	51.4	28.5
K303	353	70.3	62.3	88.7	3.6	27.8	34.7	22.6
K307	207	63.3	53.1	84.0	0.8	11.5	29.0	42.7
K309	614	75.9	66.0	86.9	5.2	27.9	22.3	31.5
K311	395	73.4	69.4	94.5	7.2	19.7	40.0	27.6
K315	390	95.9	91.8	95.7	6.1	16.8	35.3	37.4
KE308	373	82.3	72.9	88.6	8.1	35.8	21.2	23.5
KE312	619	81.3	72.2	88.9	3.8	25.2	34.4	25.4
L120	668	62.9	59.0	93.8	16.9			76.9
LZX120	315	59.7	56.2	94.1	19.7			74.5
L130	230	67.8	64.8	95.5	19.9			75.6
LZX130	106	66.0	60.4	91.4	24.3			67.1
L140	751	62.3	58.6	94.0	18.2			75.9
L192	845	56.2	53.6	95.4	28.2			67.2
LZX192	491	52.5	49.7	94.6	24.0			70.5
L193	363	57.6	54.5	94.7	28.7			66.0
LZX193	208	62.0	60.1	96.9	29.5			67.4
L194	808	57.7	52.2	90.6	23.2			67.4

Course Code	Fin reg	Freg E/ECA (%)	Freg pass (%)	E/ECA pass (%)	GRADE			
					1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)
LZX194	494	56.7	53.0	93.6	21.1			72.5
L195	884	61.0	57.9	95.0	38.4			56.6
L203	124	76.6	74.2	96.8	26.3	33.7	28.4	8.4
LZX203	52	65.4	63.5	97.1	23.5	41.2	29.4	2.9
L204	294	75.9	68.0	89.7	16.1	31.4	31.8	10.3
LZX204	135	74.8	70.4	94.1	27.7	35.6	20.8	9.9
L211	365	72.3	66.8	92.4	6.4	34.5	39.0	12.5
LZX211	145	69.7	63.4	91.1	12.9	31.7	34.7	11.9
L310	278	77.3	66.2	85.6	3.3	33.5	40.0	8.8
LZX310	89	64.0	59.6	93.0	5.3	35.1	40.4	12.3
L313	97	73.2	63.9	87.3	15.5	33.8	33.8	4.2
L314	238	81.9	76.1	92.8	8.7	47.2	30.8	6.2
LZX314	62	69.4	59.7	86.0	30.2	39.5	16.3	0.0
LB160	487	61.2	56.1	91.6	15.8			75.8
LXR122	237	91.1	74.7	81.9				81.9
M150	1457		61.9	68.2				68.2
M208	729	69.4	64.3	92.7	31.4	31.4	17.6	12.3
M248	643	62.2	54.6	87.8	26.2	24.2	18.8	18.5
M249	424	79.0	74.1	93.7	34.3	27.2	21.5	10.7
M253	203	69.5	69.0	99.3				99.3
M255	693	59.0	51.4	87.0	23.0	23.5	20.0	20.5
M256	528	77.8	72.5	93.2	10.7	26.0	32.4	24.1
M257	456	69.7	61.0	87.4	15.1	28.0	23.0	21.4
M336	348	71.6	65.8	92.0	24.5	38.6	21.3	7.6
M338	199	66.3	59.3	89.4	15.9	34.8	22.7	15.9
M343	341	73.0	66.0	90.4	26.1	32.1	18.5	13.7
M346	235	77.4	69.4	89.6	11.0	27.5	26.9	24.2
M359	533	68.1	57.0	83.7	6.9	20.4	27.3	29.2
M362	227	70.5	64.8	91.9	16.2	28.7	28.7	18.1
M363	196	65.8	65.3	99.2	20.2	33.3	29.5	16.3
M364	273	79.5	76.6	96.3	8.3	37.3	40.1	10.6
M450	224	79.5	74.6	93.8	12.4	33.1	29.8	18.5
M820	179	54.2	47.5	87.6	15.5			72.2
M821	65	83.1	63.1	75.9	7.4			68.5
M823	89	77.5	67.4	87.0	13.0			73.9
M827	49	57.1	44.9	78.6	10.7			67.9
M828	48	77.1	68.8	89.2	10.8			78.4
M835	52	78.8	76.9	97.6	17.1			80.5
M836	50	88.0	82.0	93.2	13.6			79.5
M865	274	71.5	59.1	82.7	1.0	25.0		56.6
M873	68	77.9	61.8	79.2	5.7	32.1		41.5
M876	70	70.0	48.6	69.4	2.0	20.4		46.9
M882	63	73.0	69.8	95.7	6.5	19.6		69.6
M883	53	79.2	73.6	92.9	7.1	26.2		59.5
M885	56	87.5	76.8	87.8	12.2	20.4		55.1
M886	68	75.0	69.1	92.2	0.0	33.3		58.8
M887	64	82.8	75.0	90.6	18.9	15.1		56.6
M889	120	64.2	54.2	84.4	2.6	29.9		51.9
MEYL624	171	67.8	66.1	97.4	6.9	34.5	31.9	24.1
ME625	133	72.2	69.9	96.9	3.1	40.6	37.5	15.6
ME626	74	85.1	82.4	96.8	7.9	47.6	27.0	14.3
ME825	50	82.0	74.0	90.2	4.9			85.4
MEXR624	74	89.2	89.2	100.0	9.1	56.1	24.2	10.6
MSXR209	229	85.2	81.7	95.9	26.2	37.4	28.2	4.1
MS324	247	60.7	50.2	82.7	22.0	29.3	17.3	14.0
MS325	311	53.4	51.1	95.8	42.2	24.7	17.5	11.4
MST121	1526		61.1	70.2				70.2
MST209	861	60.4	56.9	94.2	29.8	30.0	19.0	15.4
MT262	370	65.7	62.7	95.5	29.6	27.6	25.1	13.2
MT365	405	81.0	78.5	97.0	20.4	31.4	26.2	18.9
MU120	1369		66.2	72.9				72.9
S104	1433	60.7	55.3	91.0	7.9			83.1
S151	586	45.4	44.0	97.0				97.0

Courses Results

Course Code	Fin reg	Freg E/ECA (%)	Freg pass (%)	E/ECA pass (%)	GRADE			
					1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)
S180	746	38.7	36.7	94.8				94.8
S186	673	39.4	37.7	95.8				95.8
S189	350	13.1	12.9	97.8				97.8
S193	442	61.1	60.4	98.9				98.9
S194	557	34.6	32.3	93.3				93.3
S196	243	72.0	71.2	98.9				98.9
S197	503	57.7	55.9	96.9				96.9
S199	105	53.3	49.5	92.9				92.9
S204	478	52.7	43.1	81.7	13.9	27.8	26.6	13.5
S205	370	55.7	48.4	86.9	31.1	18.4	24.3	13.1
S207	482	63.5	53.3	84.0	15.7	25.2	23.5	19.6
S216	496	61.7	54.4	88.2	10.8	20.9	31.4	25.2
S250	507	74.0	71.0	96.0	11.7	34.1	31.2	18.9
S260	724	59.8	52.6	88.0	13.2	29.8	26.6	18.5
S278	318	74.2	68.6	92.4	17.4	22.9	29.7	22.5
S279	344	68.0	61.9	91.0	15.4	32.1	29.9	13.7
S282	457	60.2	50.8	84.4	22.9	23.6	22.2	15.6
S283	405	68.6	65.7	95.7	18.7	29.9	28.8	18.3
S320	490	67.6	56.7	84.0	8.8	21.1	29.9	24.2
S330	396	69.2	55.6	80.3	12.0	22.6	19.7	25.9
S339	444	79.3	67.8	85.5	17.0	30.1	26.1	12.2
S342	165	61.8	51.5	83.3	23.5	20.6	20.6	18.6
S344	209	55.5	49.3	88.8	24.1	31.0	16.4	17.2
S366	376	63.0	55.9	88.6	8.4	32.5	27.8	19.8
S377	295	50.5	38.0	75.2	10.1	26.8	20.8	17.4
S381	276	59.1	52.9	89.6	17.2	41.7	22.7	8.0
S802	52	73.1	69.2	94.7	23.7	23.7		47.4
S804	58	89.7	65.5	73.1	15.4	9.6		48.1
S807	64	73.4	68.8	93.6	31.9	46.8		14.9
S809	84	75.0	67.9	90.5	22.2	38.1		30.2
SA188	1095	32.8	31.4	95.8				95.8
SD226	1954	67.4	63.8	94.7	9.9	25.4	37.6	21.7
SD329	446	65.7	55.2	84.0	25.6	25.6	22.2	10.6
SD805	155	74.8	67.1	89.7	3.4	32.8		53.4
SEH806	71	88.7	87.3	98.4	9.5	23.8		65.1
SK120	298	61.1	59.4	97.3				97.3
SK121	347	66.0	64.3	97.4				97.4
SK183	1043	35.1	34.1	97.3				97.3
SK185	966	51.8	50.1	96.8				96.8
SK195	797	52.6	51.7	98.3				98.3
SMK184	143	40.6	38.5	94.8				94.8
SMXR359	101	88.1	81.2	92.1	29.2	46.1	11.2	5.6
SMT359	316	62.7	50.0	79.8	20.2	15.7	24.2	19.7
SXG390	163	79.1	74.2	93.8	18.6	34.1	31.0	10.1
SXM390	64	75.0	75.0	100.0	29.2	35.4	22.9	12.5
SXN390	115	67.8	59.1	87.2	10.3	29.5	34.6	12.8
SXP390	89	69.7	69.7	100.0	29.0	38.7	17.7	14.5
SXR103	798	89.7	85.0	94.7				94.7
SXR205	145	85.5	75.9	88.7	21.8	31.5	23.4	12.1
SXR207	224	92.4	86.2	93.2	23.7	35.7	22.7	11.1
SXR216	146	84.9	78.1	91.9	12.9	30.6	32.3	16.1
SXR260	316	88.9	81.0	91.1	18.1	35.2	26.7	11.0
SXR270	215	87.9	86.5	98.4	29.6	39.2	22.2	7.4
SXR339	239	92.5	86.6	93.7	6.8	36.7	35.7	14.5
SXR342	52	84.6	75.0	88.6	29.5	38.6	20.5	0.0
SXR344	90	77.8	70.0	90.0	47.1	27.1	12.9	2.9
SXR375	88	80.7	75.0	93.0	8.5	39.4	25.4	19.7
SXR376	99	90.9	81.8	90.0	4.4	41.1	27.8	16.7
T121	124	75.8	74.2	97.9				97.9
T172	512	64.1	62.5	97.6	27.4			70.1
T173	393	62.3	56.5	90.6	17.6			73.1
T175	950	67.7	62.3	92.1				92.1
T206	480	72.1	66.2	91.9	10.1	30.3	30.9	20.5

Course Code	Fin reg	Freg E/ECA (%)	Freg pass (%)	E/ECA pass (%)	GRADE			
					1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)
T207	256	68.0	59.4	87.4	10.9	30.5	25.9	20.1
T209	620	73.5	65.0	88.4	12.1	28.5	26.1	21.7
T210	240	66.2	64.2	96.9	17.6	34.6	32.1	12.6
T211	443	64.1	63.0	98.2	32.0	35.9	13.7	16.5
T214	340	66.5	63.2	95.1	18.6	29.6	33.6	13.3
T216	332	57.5	55.1	95.8	6.8	43.5	26.2	19.4
T224	580	64.0	57.8	90.3	9.2	28.0	28.3	24.8
T226	61	86.9	86.9	100.0	28.3	58.5	11.3	1.9
T305	386	74.6	66.3	88.9	15.3	26.7	24.7	22.2
T306	226	65.9	63.3	96.0	10.1	51.0	20.8	14.1
T307	615	80.0	78.9	98.6	18.3	34.6	32.3	13.4
T308	203	75.9	68.0	89.6	20.8	31.8	22.1	14.9
T320	413	62.2	52.3	84.0	10.1	25.7	24.5	23.7
T324	292	75.0	69.2	92.2	5.0	41.6	25.1	20.5
T356	115	77.4	70.4	91.0	16.9	31.5	28.1	14.6
T357	204	78.4	67.2	85.6	12.5	27.5	28.1	17.5
T450	183	83.1	73.2	88.2	16.4	37.5	18.4	15.8
T455	139	80.6	78.4	97.3	14.3	21.4	38.4	23.2
T837	47	74.5	61.7	82.9	0.0	22.9		60.0
T840	111	72.1	60.4	83.8	3.8	40.0		40.0
T846	98	79.6	62.2	78.2	1.3	26.9		50.0
T862	51	80.4	74.5	92.7	7.3	26.8		58.5
T863	66	87.9	77.3	87.9	8.6	44.8		34.5
T882	48	81.2	81.2	100.0	2.6	56.4		41.0
T883	104	74.0	71.2	96.1	1.3	14.3		80.5
T889	116	92.2	91.4	99.1	6.5	63.6		29.0
TA212	290	72.4	65.2	90.0	21.0	38.1	18.1	12.9
TU870	119	80.7	75.6	93.8	22.9	57.3		13.5
TU871	124	77.4	65.3	84.4	9.4	39.6		35.4
TU872	57	71.9	50.9	70.7	0.0	17.1		53.7
TU874	41	95.1	87.8	92.3	10.3	59.0		23.1
TU875	57	77.2	71.9	93.2	9.1	50.0		34.1
TXR174	186	94.6	90.3	95.5				95.5
TXR220	158	94.9	91.8	96.7	28.7	43.3	18.0	6.7
TXR248	117	92.3	86.3	93.5				93.5
U211	884	65.7	60.2	91.6	19.6	28.6	31.3	12.0
U212	1265	71.8	67.0	93.4	5.0	24.0	47.5	17.0
U213	529	69.4	64.3	92.6	13.6	34.9	25.6	18.5
U216	773	73.5	70.4	95.8	7.0	27.3	38.6	22.9
U316	493	76.3	73.4	96.3	10.9	49.2	28.2	8.0
W100	1896	55.2	47.7	86.4				86.4
W200	1107	64.7	51.7	79.9	8.0	12.6	30.7	28.6
W201	679	75.1	58.0	77.3	6.1	22.0	25.5	23.7
W222	126	74.6	69.8	93.6	19.1	18.1	28.7	27.7
W300	387	83.7	58.4	69.8	6.5	14.8	21.9	26.5
W301	421	80.0	56.8	70.9	9.8	29.7	22.6	8.9
Y164	51	56.9	49.0	86.2				86.2
Y154	239	55.6	46.0	82.7				82.7
Y156	556	57.7	52.9	91.6				91.6
Y157	395	60.8	54.7	90.0				90.0
Y158	348	56.6	49.4	87.3				87.3
Y159	486	56.2	50.2	89.4				89.4
Y160	522	61.1	55.7	91.2				91.2
Y161	369	66.4	61.8	93.1				93.1
Y162	483	63.8	58.6	91.9				91.9
Y163	1002	57.1	51.9	90.9				90.9

People

Graduate
Special

Everything to do with you, from inspirational stories to fascinating interviews

Graduate special

Graduation 2009

Across the UK, Ireland and even further afield, OU students have been celebrating at their degree ceremonies. In this special People section of *Sesame*, we meet some of the OU's newest graduates...



Megan Leach – just one of an estimated 6,500 OU students who have attended degree ceremonies this year

● **THROUGHOUT 2009** 27 Open University degree ceremonies have taken place at 18 locations, including the UK and Irish capital cities, as well as further afield in Versailles, France. In total, an estimated 6,500 students from 31 countries will have donned the robes and collected their awards, watched by around 24,000 friends and family. Joining them were 31 honorary graduates (see pp30-31) from a variety of fields, some well-known faces from the

TV and arts, others honoured for achievements less in the public eye.

Graduating students are of all ages, all walks of life and all have their own reasons for choosing to study. Of those that graduated, some will embark on further study to progress their careers, change direction or, in some cases, just to satisfy their desire to continue learning. The following pages of this special People section of *Sesame* will give you a taste of the people

who chose to study with the OU, their reasons why, and

“I would quite often fall sleep on the sofa with a book. I remember writing my final assessment until 5am!”

what gaining a degree means to them. We begin with 27-year-old Megan Leach who graduated in Gateshead...

GRADUATING STUDENT

Megan Leach completed her Open University BA (Hons) in English Literature in only three

years – half the time normally taken by part-time students. She did so while working full time, teaching Key Stage 4 children in Dudley, West Midlands, who were at risk from school exclusion. At the same time, she also did volunteer work with young people.

She said squeezing everything in was tiring. “I would quite often fall sleep on the sofa with a book. I remember writing my final assessment until 5am – I had a courier come to collect it.”

In her final year of study Megan, who originally comes from the north-east, moved from Dudley back to County Durham, where she works with excluded children.

She has now decided to qualify as a youth worker rather

than a teacher, so she has begun a second OU degree in childhood and youth studies.

She said: “Open University study is addictive. I just can't stop myself. After this I am thinking about doing a Diploma in Psychology, and maybe one day a Masters degree.”

Graduate special

OU graduates 2009



From pregnancy to warships: a selection of this year's graduates tell us their stories of OU study and what it means to them to graduate...



● MANDEEP GILL celebrated his 26th birthday on the day of his graduation at Birmingham. He is pictured here with his mother, brother and twin sister, who herself is finishing her studies to be a paediatric nurse.

Mandeep completed an Open Degree, which meant he was able to choose various modules that completed his Bachelor of Sciences.

"I did an Open Degree because I wanted to study two separate courses that were not really related," explained Mandeep. "They were criminology and

international affairs – both subjects that I wanted to learn more about."

Studying with The Open University gave him the flexibility to study while also working as a social worker in the area of child protection.

Despite studying for the "pure enjoyment", Mandeep is now beginning teacher training in September.

"Studying with the OU made me realise how much I enjoy learning," he said. "This has steered my motivation to share my knowledge and teach future social workers."

"Studying with the OU has steered my motivation to share my knowledge and teach future social workers"



"I asked if I could leave the hospital just to sit my final exam"

● PAULINE MURFIN TOOK up OU study after stopping work due to ill-health. Despite having to take course books with her to hospital, she always finished her assignments on time. In her final year, Pauline had 10 operations and failed her final exam. "I asked if I could leave the hospital just to

sit the exam and I sat it with my drip in my arm," she said. "I didn't tell the University how ill I was because I didn't want to make a big thing of it." When the OU found out afterwards, they arranged for Pauline to resit her exam at home. The award-winning student graduated at Gateshead.



● PETTY OFFICER TONY Daly obtained his OU degree while on active service with the Royal Navy. He studied on board a warship and sat exams at sea. Tony, 29, said: "I started studying with the OU in 2004, and along the way I've studied on board a warship deployed in support of current operations, and also whilst land-based out in the Middle East." Tony graduated in Cardiff.



● MUM-OF-THREE Jane Mulqueeney was so dedicated to her OU courses that she even took her books into the labour ward. During her six years of study she had two babies and moved house twice – but still managed to get a first class honours degree. Jane, 38, has a provisional place on a part-time teacher training course starting next year. Jane graduated in Manchester.



“I would never have got the job if it hadn't been for my OU studies”

● **SINGLE MUM JANINE** Knight, 40, studied for a law degree with the OU while working full time and bringing up two children. “I left school at 16 to get a job, settled down when I was quite young and had a family,” she explained. “Sadly, my marriage broke down. I was in my 30s and I thought ‘it’s now or never’, so I decided to study with the OU.

“At the time I was working as a clerk at Sunderland City Council. A couple of years into my studies I applied for and got a job in the council’s legal department. I would never have got the job if it hadn’t been for my studies.”

She’s now working as a legal assistant and studying to qualify as a legal executive. Janine graduated at Gateshead.

● **MARIANNE NICOL**, 23, from Shetland, has achieved a first class honours BSc in psychology. But it’s not been plain sailing. Diagnosed with ME while at school, she completed her GCSEs but traditional further education was not a viable option. “I wanted to continue to learn so my school suggested I study for a degree with the OU. The flexible nature meant I could study from home and fit education around my illness.” Marianne’s ME has now subsided and she’s secured a job as a social care worker. She graduated at Glasgow.

● **MICHAELA FRIEND**, 28, was working full time as a community support worker but really wanted to qualify as a social worker. Her employer, East Sussex County Council, sponsored her to study part time and she achieved her degree in three years. “Because I was studying and working, it meant that every day I got to apply what I was learning in the classroom,” explained Michaela. “In some ways I think that’s made us better social workers because we constantly applied our theories as we were working.” She graduated at Brighton.



● **BROTHERS DAVID AND** Nigel Lambert graduated together at Manchester after supporting each other through their studies while living in different parts of the world. Both began studying IT subjects with the OU while serving in the Army, and carried on after re-entering civilian life. David, 42, was serving as a technical warrant officer and took one year off

study in 2003 while on active service in the Gulf War.

At 40, shortly before completing his degree, he left the Army and started a new career as an IT manager with Vitalise, a charity which offers respite care to people with disabilities. Nigel, 40, also began his OU degree while in the Army and carried on after settling in Germany where he is working as an IT engineer.



“I think learning is a very important part of life at any age” – Jean Sawyerr

● **IT WAS A** double degree for the academic Sawyerr family, as mum Jean, 82, and son Julian, 49, graduated together at the OU ceremony in Portsmouth. Jean, a former senior lecturer at King Alfred’s College (now the University of Winchester), received an MA in Education. Son Julian, an

electronics engineer, got his first degree with the OU in 1993, but returned last year to take an honours. “I came back to the OU in 2005 to study a course in music technology, and discovered I only needed to do one more course to convert my original degree into a BSc Honours.”

Fundraising

40th anniversary appeal

Graduate Special

To realise The Open University's visionary plan for worldwide equality in education, the OU has launched a new 40th anniversary appeal – and your help is needed...



Sisters Sharron and Davina Walter at the Brighton degree ceremony 2009

● AS THE OPEN University celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, a special OU 40th appeal has been launched – raising funds for key areas in need of support.

Generous donations have raised £196,000, including Gift Aid contribution (see below). In addition, the Government's matched scheme has generated an additional £65,000. This means that the 40th Anniversary Appeal has raised, at the time of going to press, more than £261,000.

Donations help the OU to widen access to education in many different ways. Here are just some of the ways donor support can help...

1. Helping students on low incomes

The OU's open-entry policy enables people with no previous educational qualifications to study with us

– many may also be financially disadvantaged. In fact, more than 38,000 students received financial support towards their course fees in 2008/09.

Donations last year funded 1,500 students to study introductory Openings courses. They also funded students needing emergency support during their studies for things such as course books, childcare and dyslexia assessments.



Making the most of your pound

As of 1 August 2008, every £1 you donate to The Open University could be worth £1.70. In support of the work that universities do, the Government is currently matching gifts to the OU. This increases the value of donations by 33 per cent until summer 2011 – **AT NO EXTRA COST TO YOU.**

For example for every £1 you give...

...we claim back the tax, through Gift Aid which adds 28p...

...the Government then adds 33 per cent (in this instance 42p)...

...increasing the value of your gift to £1.70*



*For more information on the matching scheme and how this is calculated, please visit www.open.ac.uk/matchedgiving



2. Supporting disabled students

The OU supports more disabled students in their study than any other university in the UK. The help offered includes: assistive technology; specialist equipment; personal support; alternative-format course materials; technical advice and needs assessments.

Donations also help to fund research and development of new technologies, such as the Digital Audio Project (see www.open.ac.uk/digitalaudioproject),

which is improving the format and quality of educational material for print-disabled students.

3. Improving education in developing countries

The OU has more than a dozen major overseas projects underway, with a long-standing focus in Africa. For example, the Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) project is having a profound impact on the future economic, political and personal journeys

of millions of children. TESSA brings together teachers and teacher educators from across Africa. Launched in 2005, it is a research and development programme creating Open Educational Resources to support school-based teacher education and training.

financial support greater than ever, we are appealing to you to join us by helping to make education available to anyone, anywhere in the world, no matter what their particular circumstances.

How you can help others study

Many alumni and friends already support the University by giving regular or one-off donations. With the need for

If you are interested in supporting the appeal, please do get in contact by calling us on **+44 (0)1908 655044** or by visiting our website and donating online at **www.open.ac.uk/donatenow**

Your details:

Name

Address

.....

Postcode

Student No

Here is my gift of:

£23.50 (worth £40 to the OU with Gift Aid and matched funding) Other amount £

I enclose a cheque made payable to **The Open University Donations Account**

I wish to donate by MasterCard/CAF card/Visa Delta/OU Visa/Maestro (delete as applicable)

If you are donating outside of the UK, please use a credit card. Donations by card are accepted in GBP only. The amount debited from your account may differ due to the exchange rate when the transaction is processed.

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(UK only) Please tick here to enable The Open University to reclaim the tax you have paid on your donations in the past six years and any future donations you make. You'll find more details about GiftAid at www.open.ac.uk/giftaid

Please tick here if you would prefer for your name not to appear on our annual donor list

You can also make your donation online at www.open.ac.uk/donatenow or call 01908 655044 SME09AC



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Graduate special

With commitment...

Graduate
Special

By the end of 2009, 27 degree ceremonies will have taken place across the UK and in Europe. In attendance at most will have been individuals bestowed with an honorary degree as recognition of achievements in their field. Here we look at some of the latest additions, including author Roddy Doyle...



The *Commitments* author Roddy Doyle attended the Dublin ceremony and received his honorary award for services to the arts

● IN APRIL THE Open University degree ceremony in Ireland took place at the Helix, an arts centre based at Dublin City University. Receiving honorary doctorates on the day were Brendan Tuohy, for his exceptional contribution to education and culture, and Irish novelist, playwright and dramatist Roddy Doyle, who received an honorary degree for his services to arts.

For those not at the Dublin ceremony but who like an amusing read, here is Roddy Doyle's speech in its entirety...

"I'm delighted to be here this afternoon in the midst of such

happiness, very pleased to be present at this celebration of your great achievement – and honoured to be the recipient of this – and I use the word in its Irish context – 'yoke'.

"I've known about The Open University since I was a teenager. Before the invention of proper daytime television, it was The Open University or nothing. I chose The Open University. When I was at home from school, sick or pretending to be sick, I sat and watched men with bad beards and corduroy trousers that even in black and white looked garish, as they filled the blackboards with symbols and numbers and

mathematical formulae. I hadn't a clue what I was looking at and I knew, even then, that I would never know what I was looking at. But it was on; it was telly and I was grateful for it. I think I remember other programmes, biology, geography – strange yokes working their way up tubes, rivers working their way down mountains. But it's the men at the blackboards doing the hard sums I want to pay tribute to today. Because I like to think it was those chalk-covered mathematicians who propelled me towards a career in words and literature. I am what I am because of The Open University.

"Today – especially today – there is one thing I love about The Open University. It's the word in its title, Open. It's the welcome, the invitation to learn – to enter, to return. It's an Open door, at a time when more and more doors are being very quickly slammed. Today, in Ireland, words that were long fought for – words like 'special needs' and 'disadvantages', and

for us, and it isn't even Irish. I've always thought there was something magnificent about that, the generosity of spirit and the sense of justice that went into its naming. Today, I think it's vital – an inspiration and a reminder. We're living in mean times – I think. But we don't have to. The Open in Open University should coax us, and provoke us – and perhaps shame us. So, I'm very proud to be honoured by The Open University, and very pleased that the event is taking place in DCU [Dublin City University] – another place that has Opened the door to many people more familiar with the sound of the door being slammed.

"Ireland being Ireland, I'm sure there are some among you who are saying to yourselves, 'He's being honoured today; God love him, he must be dying.' You're even trying to figure out the ailment. 'It might be a brain tumour, because there's nothing wrong with his lungs and he's talking a load of shite.' So, I just

"The Open in Open University should coax us, and provoke us – and perhaps shame us"

the basic rights that these words represent, are being made to fade away and disappear. Suddenly we're being told that there is no direct correlation between quality of education and class size. We don't have to listen too carefully to hear the sound of slamming doors. But the Open is still there, in Open University – it's there

want to assure you that I'm very well. I'm well able for solids and, more often than not, I remember to close my fly after I've been to the jacks. I've just finished a novel; it'll be out next year. It's called *The Dead Republic*. As the title suggests, it'll have a pink cover, and a girl with shopping bags trying to catch a taxi. I've just started an episodic

...and distinction

Here is a small selection of this year's other honorary graduates

story for the multicultural paper *Metro Eireann* about a Nigerian woman who is running in the local elections, for Fianna Fáil. It'll appear every week, starting next week, until after the elections in June. And I've recently been involved in Opening a writing centre, called Fighting Words, not far from here, very close to Croke Park. We provide writing classes for primary school kids, secondary school kids and adults – and it's free. It's our Open door. There's actually a magic door, a revolving bookshelf, that the kids come through every morning. It's free because we have a growing body of volunteers who give their time, and have the time of their lives while they're giving it. I'd love to volunteer. No formal qualifications are necessary, although, by all means, bring your degrees. If you're interested, have a look at our website – www.fightingwords.ie

"The contact details are there, and much of the work that's been done since we Opened in January. It's a lovely place, an invitation to children to express themselves, to create. And it just occurred to me, as I wrote that last, slightly pompous sentence, that it's possible a few of the children, confronted by all the words and sentences at Fighting Words, will be propelled towards careers in numbers and mathematical formulae. They don't know it yet – but they'll be because of The Open University.

"Thank you very, very much."



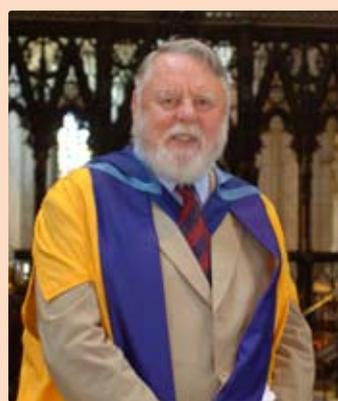
Professor Carol Ann Duffy attended the first Manchester degree ceremony of the year. The UK's first female Poet Laureate received her honorary award for services to the arts.



Kate Humble of BBC's *Springwatch* attended the Birmingham ceremony. She was awarded an honorary degree for work in areas of special educational concern to the University.



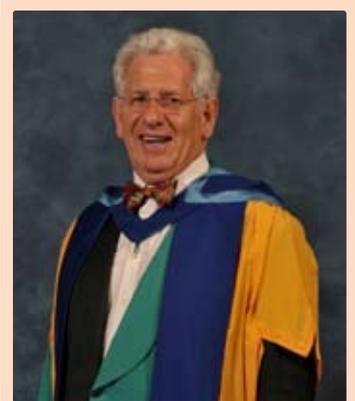
Author of more than 50 poetry books for adults and children, Roger McGough received his honorary award for services to the arts at the fourth London degree ceremony of the year.



Former Lebanon hostage Terry Waite attended the degree ceremony in Ely. He received his honorary degree for exceptional contribution to education and culture.



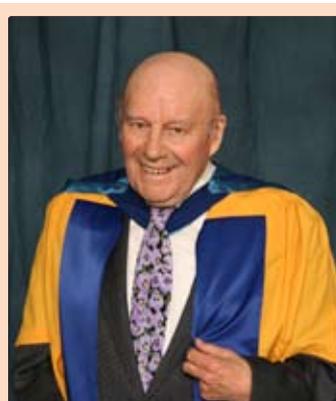
Shami Chakrabarti, Director of Liberty, attended the first degree ceremony of the year in London. She received her honorary award for exceptional contribution to education and culture.



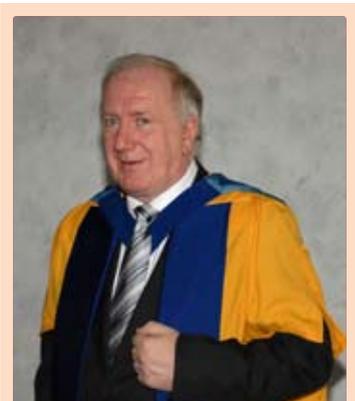
Dr Adam Hart-Davis, writer and broadcaster-presenter, received an honorary degree at the Torquay ceremony for exceptional contribution to education and culture.



Dame Stephanie Shirley was awarded her honorary degree at the Brighton degree ceremony. She was honoured for services to the educationally underprivileged.



Recording artist Julian Bream attended the Portsmouth degree ceremony. The classical guitarist received his honorary degree for services to the arts.



Brendan Tuohy was awarded an honorary degree in Dublin for exceptional contribution to education and culture. He is a fellow of the Institution of Engineers of Ireland.

Prisoner students

Learning to reform

Each year, OU degree ceremonies also take place inside UK prisons. How different are they from the other graduation days? Nigel Gibson of Student Services reveals all, with his account of this year's ceremony at HM Prison Swaleside, Kent...



ceremony but here we checked everything with the education manager and confirmed it as the men arrived in the chapel. We also explained to each of them the format of the ceremony.

Photography inside prisons is strictly controlled but an officer had permission to take some shots, so we gathered together for group photographs and then we enjoyed a buffet lunch. In a small room, rubbing elbows with men who might be spending the next 10 or so years in prison, we talked about studying and assignments and the frustrations we all find when doing a course. While some of the issues are specific to the environment, many are common to all students; time management, space to study, finding someone to talk to who understands what distance learning really means and complaining about word limits and referencing.

We also learnt a little about how much OU study can help prisoners. One man commented that completing *An introduction to the social sciences* (DD100) had given him a better understanding of himself and the society in which he did the things which led to him being in jail. A number also said that completing a course gave them the confidence and self-esteem which, in other circumstances, they might have been trying to find through less acceptable means.

Finally we congratulated the graduate again and packed the gowns and banner and were escorted back to the gate. Even though it wasn't bright sunshine when we left there is always a feeling that it's good to be out.

● ON THURSDAY, 7 MAY a team from the OU in the South East conducted a degree ceremony very different from the normal celebrations: no music, no cameras, no cheering family. We wore gowns, as did the graduate, but the box of gowns was searched on the way into HM Prison Swaleside. Swaleside is one of three prisons on the same campus on the Isle of Sheppey, and is a category B

through the prison to the chapel. Swaleside is built with the main corridors passing through the centre of the buildings, so it gives the impression of the archetypal gaol; lots of steel gates and very little natural light. With an OU banner the chapel became part of the OU for a few hours, and in the same way that any other degree ceremony is conducted the graduate was robed and presented to the

training and employment manager. The audience was made up of prisoners and staff and they clapped and cheered as enthusiastically as we might expect at any other ceremony.

In addition to the graduate, we also presented those students who had been awarded certificates and diplomas. In total the achievements of 12 men were celebrated. The prisoners and prison staff were surprised by the 'informal formality' and many commented that they hadn't realised how seriously we would take the preparations, even to the extent of checking how to pronounce each name and making sure we used preferred names rather than the name under which the student is registered.

We'd usually do this with individual graduates before a

“We wore gowns, as did the graduate, but the box of gowns was searched on the way into the prison”

establishment with a capacity of nearly 1,000 men, more than half serving a life sentence.

After being checked at the gatehouse we were escorted

regional director and a representative of the regional academic staff group. We were joined on stage by the governor and the education,

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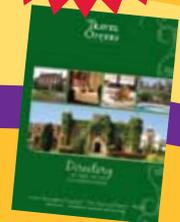
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Platform

Platform update

Find out what news, views and interviews await you on the OU community website – www.open.ac.uk/platform

Reaction to swine flu



Swine flu has been a global concern

● WITH SWINE FLU dominating the headlines throughout the summer months, The Open University's academics gave their take.

Lecturer in Economics Alan Shipman talked about the

economic consequences of a pandemic spreading through the UK, but advised against alarming forecasts. Dr Tom Heller, a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Health and Social Care, talked about the media

hype, noting that "if the general public is alerted on too many occasions to potential risks that prove to be unfounded, then what will happen if and when public health professionals really do have a message that needs to be taken seriously?"

Senior Lecturer in History Debbie Brunton blogged about why she's fed up with the media using the 1918 pandemic as an example, and Lecturer in Health Studies Kate Woodthorpe talked to *Platform* about worst case scenarios and how the health service would cope with high body counts.

To see a round-up of Open University experts' take on swine flu, visit the Your Subject area of Campus then click on Health

Author Philip Pullman slams new vetting laws

● PLATFORM TALKED TO Philip Pullman on the day news broke about new vetting laws which mean that anyone who has 'regular' or 'intense' contact with children has to pay £64 to sign up to the Vetting and Barring Scheme before visiting a school.

Pullman, who wrote the hugely successful *Northern Lights* children's book series, told *Platform*: "It's ridiculous that we have to pay £64 to get a moral certificate from the Government. The implication that someone like the author Shirley Hughes – there's no one kinder or sweeter – can't be trusted to be with children is ludicrous!"



Philip Pullman has visited schools to promote culture and literacy

To find out what else Philip Pullman said, visit the Campus section of Platform, then go to Your Subject, then Arts and Humanities

Student tells of award win

● A RECENT WINNER of an Adult Learners' Week Award, Claire Apps, spoke to *Platform* about how Open University study helped her regain the confidence she lost after being a victim of domestic violence.

She said: "The OU has helped my depression by giving me small achievable goals that have helped boost my confidence and self-esteem.

"I was shocked to hear I had won – I still can't believe it!"

The annual Adult Learners' Week Award recognises the achievements made by adults through education. **To read the full interview with Claire, visit the OU People section of Campus**



Street party fun

Beat the gloom and doom with a street party

● In a recent blog entry for *Platform*, Tim Smit, an Open University honorary graduate and chief executive of the Eden Project in Cornwall, said that our future well-being depends on finding a new narrative – and part of that new narrative is to have more street parties.

He used The Big Lunch concept, where people around the country were encouraged to eat, drink and laugh in the streets of Britain on 19 July, as an example. From the Celtic Gateway to the Humber Bridge, and from Aberdeen to Bodmin, thousands of streets took part in this glorious celebration of community spirit.

Tim said that it was "a small earthquake under the smug doomsayers and a rebel yell from all of those who believe a bright future is ours to make."

To see the blog entry, go to www.open.ac.uk/platform, click on Blogs then go to the Guest

Killer instinct



Louise Westmarland, Senior Lecturer in Criminology, explains how advancements in data management are enhancing police investigations...

● DUE TO MY interest in murder, or 'homicide' to give it a more professional description, I'm often found discussing the various methods countries employ to solve these crimes. One question I am often asked by police officers from around the world is, 'Tell me, is it true that in your country computers are used to solve homicide and that more than one detective is assigned to each case?'

This particular question came from a murder squad detective in a large US city where I was doing some fieldwork. He wanted to know if his 'clear-up' rate for homicide was anything like those in the UK, and what effect the appliance of science

of using computers to manage case data, the officers hunting a serial killer would write all relevant data on index cards, which would be kept in boxes, and filed according to their supposed relevance to the case. When it was revealed that Sutcliffe had come to their attention sufficiently to be recorded at least nine times, the celebration of his capture turned into blame. Why were vital clues missed, resulting in more women being killed? How could the detectives have been so unprofessional?

In fairness, this would not happen today. As a result of that case HOLMES (Home Office Large Major Enquiry

"More than 30 years ago the case of the Yorkshire Ripper caused a great deal of damage to the reputation of the police"

might have on it. He was amazed when I replied that a team of detectives might well be assigned to one particular murder (perhaps 30 people in complex cases) and that a computer system would 'tell' officers what to do at each stage of the investigation.

In a way this has relevance to the current debates about trust in public life, even though the source of the mistrust goes back to the 1970s. More than 30 years ago the notorious case of Peter Sutcliffe (aka the Yorkshire Ripper) caused a great deal of damage to the reputation of the police. In an age before anyone had thought

System) was developed at tremendous expense. It is a computerised storage and retrieval system that can index and cross-reference large amounts of complex data.

To a degree the US cop I met was right: it does 'solve' crimes – in the sense that it directs officers to leads they may have missed. In other words, if a maverick, gut-instinct-driven detective decides to follow one line of enquiry, to the exclusion of all other leads, the computer should alert the team to other possible avenues.

To some extent, therefore, the trust that was lost in the 1970s should be restored



because the computer system will ensure a fairer and more equitable pursuit of 'truth'.

The question might be posed as to whether the public prefers to trust computers or human instinct. Of course, being human, the detectives find ways and means to subvert and circumnavigate science, but as data management improves and the generation of detectives in the teams become more technologically intelligent, new systems will replace HOLMES. The ability to piece together all the data, to be able to search across other police force areas for suspects, and to have analytic computer programs will be transforming.

This said, machines can never replace human thinking. And in cases where murders are involved, professional ethics and the detectives' 'morals' are central to their investigations. One of the ways they operate is to construct 'life stories' for victims, suspects and witnesses, which are often based on the obvious dichotomy of 'good' vs 'evil'.

What can be said of future data storage and management

systems, however, is that they will make officers think about and have to justify their suspicions and gut feelings, rather than relying upon their own, perhaps flawed, moral values or prejudices.

Course connection Crime and justice (DD301)

With this course you'll explore crime and justice in global and local contexts – particularly the way they are being continually redefined by global economic, social and political change. Fear of crime and global threats contribute to an increasing sense of insecurity, with local concerns such as street crime accompanied by modern global concerns such as terrorism and human rights violations.

Hurry, registration closes very soon for an October 2009 start. Call +44 (0)845 300 6090 or visit www.open.ac.uk/courses for more information. Please quote **Sesame**.

Research

A round-up of the latest research news from The Open University

Investigating the Earth's past

Deep sea clues

OU lecturer joins ocean-based research team

● AN OU VOLCANOLOGIST has been selected to join a team of scientists and engineers on a two-month expedition drilling into an ancient area of sea floor.

This month Mike Widdowson, Open University Lecturer in Earth Sciences, has been selected to examine the 145-million-year-old volcanic rock at Shatsky Rise, 1,500 km off the east coast of Japan.

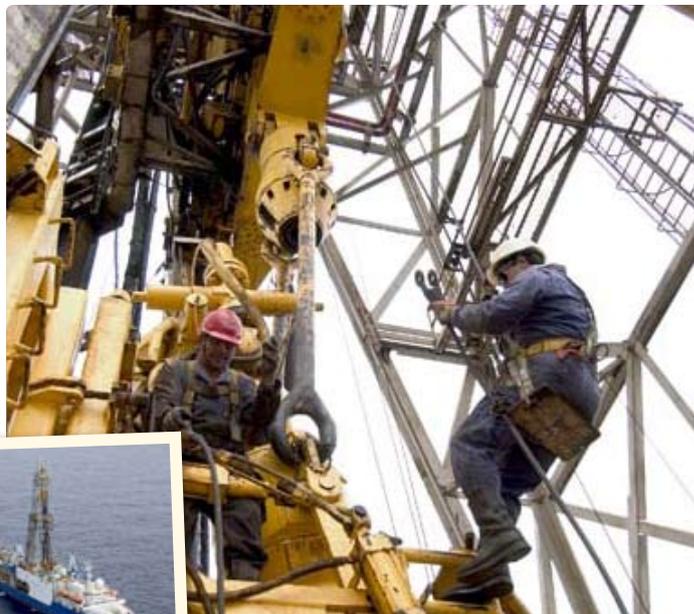
He's been chosen because of his expertise in flood basalt volcanism – huge lava eruptions, one of which may have been responsible for the extinction of the dinosaurs.

Mike will join the team on board the research ship

JOIDES Resolution, which will drill five holes up to 300 m deep into a volcanic region about the size of Japan.

Mike said: "I will be looking to see if the lava ever became emergent above sea level, building volcanic islands, and then subsided below the waves of the Jurassic ocean, or whether it always erupted below the ocean's surface.

"Using geochemical techniques developed at the OU, I also want to study historic gas eruptions and their possible influence on the ocean chemistry and the atmosphere, both in terms of their CO₂ and SO₂ content."



Onboard the research ship *JOIDES Resolution* (inset)

Other news

Leverhulme success

● PROFESSOR DENNIS Walder of the Arts faculty has been awarded a Leverhulme Research Project Grant of £140,826 for a three-year project. It funds two full-time PhD students. He will be working with Dr Yvette Hutchison of the University of Warwick, on the joint project entitled 'Performing memory: theatricalising identity in contemporary South Africa'.

Frogs mate by moonlight

● PHD STUDENT RACHEL Grant has discovered amphibians like mating by moonlight. Using the lunar cycle to coordinate their gatherings increases spawning success and reduces the odds of being eaten. Rachel believes understanding the breeding behaviour is extremely important given the global crisis among amphibian populations. <http://oro.open.ac.uk/17902/>

OU research repository

● A RESEARCH PAPER on how mobile phones and portable devices can lead to new perspectives and practices in learning has become the 10,000th item added to the OU's research repository – Open Research Online (ORO). A total of 7,000 people around the world visit ORO each week and it is now the eighth largest higher education repository in the UK. <http://oro.open.ac.uk>

European financial study

● THE OU HAS been awarded £1.3m by the EC to study the relationship between changes in financial markets, innovation and economic growth. The study will help inform EC policies that encourage innovation and equitable economic growth – the necessary foundations for surviving the current, and future, economic crises. <http://www.finnov-fp7.eu/>

Smoking gun

Gerard Hastings, Professor of Social Marketing and founder/director of the Institute for Social Marketing and Centre for Tobacco Control Research at Stirling and The Open University, discusses the impacts of smoking and tobacco...

● GERARD HASTINGS IS the first UK Professor of Social Marketing and founder/director of the Institute for Social Marketing (ISM) at Stirling and The Open University. He is also Director of Cancer Research UK's Centre for Tobacco Control Research. Through his research and the innovative application of social marketing, both nationally and internationally, his findings have had a significant influence on policies relating to alcohol, tobacco and the impact of advertising on dietary behaviour. He is a regular adviser to the World Health Organization and the Scottish, UK and European parliaments. He was recently awarded an OBE for services to healthcare.

Tell us about your interest in the subject of tobacco

Well, my interest is actually broader than tobacco, looking at health behaviours generally and the impact that marketing can have on these.

Health behaviour is important because more than half of premature deaths are attributable to our lifestyles – smoking, drinking, diet and so on. Marketing matters for two reasons: first, our key health behaviours are also the purview of powerful industries which use marketing to encourage us to drink lager or eat burgers; second marketers, at base, get us to do things – visit their shops, buy their products, wear their logos – they are influencers of behaviour and moulders of lifestyle and can therefore provide clues about how to

encourage healthy living. Social marketing takes in both these perspectives, looking critically at the harmful effects of commercial marketing on the one hand, and borrowing its precepts and techniques to encourage desirable behaviour on the other.

Tobacco comes into the picture because it is so lethal: one in two smokers who do not manage to quit die early as a result. No one concerned with health behaviour can ignore it. ISM's initial interest dates back to the mid-1980s with a focus on advertising and its impact on young people. Cancer Research UK funded us to do a series of studies on the links between tobacco promotion and teen smoking and this contributed to an evidence base that compelled the new Labour government to introduce a comprehensive ad ban in 2005.

Since then we have been conducting a longitudinal study of teen responses to the ban – and to other tobacco policies including the introduction of smoke-free public places in both Scotland and the rest of the UK and, most recently, the ban on display of tobacco at point of sale.

Having such a direct link with public policy adds a special dimension to our work. We have had to learn how to disseminate our research in accessible and convincing ways, recognise that politicians do not work to academic time frames and be prepared to defend our position against robust attacks from vested interests. The tobacco industry has threatened to sue



us on two separate occasions. **Is the reduction in passive smoking the only significant issue to do with the introduction of smoke-free public places in Britain?** Passive smoking is a serious problem and did push the government to take action. Before our pubs went smoke free it was estimated that one UK bar worker a week was dying from secondhand smoke, and this among a work force that is non-unionised, poorly paid and disempowered. If such levels of toxin had emerged from ceiling tiles or poorly cooked food, Trading Standards would have simply closed the offending establishments down. Instead, a special Act of Parliament was needed. This is as good a measure as any of the extent to which tobacco had succeeded in becoming

a normal part of our lives. Smoke free has also been a profoundly popular move – many seriously argue it was Jack McConnell's (the former Scottish prime minister) greatest success. A Cancer Research UK survey conducted in Scotland immediately after implementation showed that no fewer than 84 per cent of young people thought it was a law 'Scotland could be proud of'. It is this popularity that gives the lie to the oft-repeated calumny that smoke free has damaged business – it has not. Our research shows that, while a small number of old fashioned, male-dominated 'wet houses' have suffered, modern family and food-oriented ones have flourished. Pubs are having a hard time at present but this is driven by other factors – in particular the advent of



“It is now being predicted that smoking will disappear altogether within the next couple of decades”

dysfunctional pubcos and deep discounting by supermarkets – not the move to healthy, clean environments.

From a public health perspective smoke free's greatest contribution is as a symbol of the UK's move away from tobacco. Thanks to smoke free and a raft of other initiatives that give us one of the world's most comprehensive and radical tobacco control agendas, it is now being predicted that smoking will disappear altogether within the next couple of decades.

It's often discussed how much a burden tobacco-related illness is on the

NHS. What is the reality?

The economics of tobacco are both very complex and very simple. The complex version has to take into account the immense health costs, employment (a relatively minor issue because tobacco production is so highly mechanised), superannuation savings (few smokers live to collect their pensions) and tobacco taxation. The answer is reassuring: complex modelling, by the World Bank among others, has concluded that the disappearance of tobacco is as good for the economy as it is for public health.

The simple version rests on the fact that money not spent on

tobacco will simply be spent on other products and services, such as leisure activities, which are better for our pockets – as well as our bodies.

What has been the impact of banning tobacco advertising near schools and UK-based sports sponsorship?

Partial restrictions on promotion never work: it is like squeezing a balloon, with marketing budgets simply migrating from banned to permitted media. The most dramatic illustration of this is the banning of TV advertising for tobacco in 1965: this had no effect on total adspend, which increased remorselessly throughout the decade.

By contrast comprehensive controls on advertising, as we have in the UK, do have a powerful protective effect for young people, as our research

shows. Awareness of tobacco promotion, familiarity with brands and susceptibility to smoking have all reduced as a result. The effects are enhanced when other tobacco control policies such as taxation, pack labels and cessation services are enacted, as we have in the UK.

Are there lessons that can be taken from issues related to junk food, and the fight against obesity, and alcoholism?

Tobacco is unique in that it kills even when used as recommended by the manufacturer, and brings no compensatory benefits. The only sensible outcome is to avoid smoking altogether. Other products, such as energy-dense foods and alcohol, while they still present a major challenge to public health, require a more nuanced response.

In one sense, however, the issues are identical: public health has to take on the might of corporate bodies who will push their shareholders' interests over that of public welfare. The problems of obesity – which are set to outstrip those even of tobacco in future years – are a case in point. Our expanding waistbands are, at least in part, a result of unhealthy-food marketing. Junk food – or to use the technical term, food high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) – is being pushed at us as never before. But when ISM was commissioned by government to conduct the systematic review of the evidence base on food promotion and childhood obesity, which established this effect for the first time, our report became the subject of an avalanche of industry attacks. A rival review was commissioned claiming to contradict ours, academic hit men were hired to try to find fault with our work and our findings were lambasted on public platforms up and down the land (and around the globe).

All to no avail: our review withstood the onslaught and

Ofcom acted to limit the promotion of HFSS food to kids. But the fact remains that the HFSS food and promotion industries would not endure the slightest criticism or constraint of their efforts to increase shareholder returns.

In an important sense this is a good thing. The fiduciary imperative of corporations is there to protect the shareholder and the rest of society from corruption. As the banking crisis shows, however, it needs to be combined with careful and rigorous independent regulation. Left to their own devices corporations will wreak havoc.

Alcohol provides another evocative example. In the past 20 years in the UK a massive increase in alcohol consumption has been fuelled by excessive and deeply irresponsible marketing. New products like alcopops, toffee vodka and lemon meringue flavoured shots have been promoted by advertising in every conceivable medium, from television to Facebook to Premiership football. Ubiquitous distribution and dangerous pricing strategies that incentivise excess have completed a marketing nightmare. The result is the very obvious youth bingeing and drunkenness in our city centres and a silent explosion of drinking among the rest of us. While most of Europe has moderated its drinking and savoured its wines, we have sought oblivion and chased cirrhosis. The public health consequences are predictably horrendous. And all because the regulators went to sleep and the corporate dogs of war slipped the leash.

Isn't there a simple problem to do with tobacco companies in that they exist to make a profit – it's not as if they can diversify into similar markets, unlike energy companies (i.e. renewable energy), so will fight aggressively to survive? Yes. Public health will be under threat as long as tobacco companies remain in business.



“...yet we continue to license powerful multinational corporations to enrich themselves... it's like fighting malaria whilst breeding mosquitoes”

One of the paradoxes of modern life is that we know that tobacco is appallingly dangerous and addictive, we understand that it is a profoundly undesirable behaviour to which children are drawn and by which adults are trapped, and we enact policies to protect and help the vulnerable. And yet we continue to license powerful multinational corporations to enrich themselves by pushing in the opposite direction. It is like fighting malaria whilst breeding mosquitoes.

What are the obstacles in implementing a UK ban on tobacco products, and could you see it being successful? Banning tobacco is not the answer – though banning tobacco companies probably is. There have been enormous successes in weaning the British off tobacco, and smoking rates are a quarter what they were a generation ago. Nonetheless around 10 million people still smoke and nicotine

is powerfully addictive: simply cutting off their supply would be as impractical as it would be unethical. Instead we should think very seriously about how to take the profit motive out of the market. As long as companies can profit from tobacco so they will subvert and evade public health controls.

Certain cigarette brands have iconic status built up over a number of years and huge marketing budgets to try to maintain that status. How difficult is it for governments and campaign groups to counter this? In the UK brands do continue to drive youth smoking, but they are depleting thanks to the ad ban. If packs are put out of sight at POS – and ISM research is helping to ensure that they will be – and, crucially, the government forces a move to plain packaging, this depletion will accelerate. Furthermore, whilst brands are remarkably powerful, they are also vulnerable. Reassuring imagery

is being overshadowed by dire health consequences, and new generations are wising up to the tricks of big tobacco: cancer will beat the cowboy.

Smoking is often shorthand for 'cool' or 'sexy' when depicted in movies and to a lesser extent in TV. Do you think that iconography (think Humphrey Bogart in *Casablanca*) will ever erode? Smoking in films and other media is extensive – much more extensive than it now is in real life – and this does increase the appeal of smoking to the young. Screenwriters and directors need to recognise that they have power here and exercise it with responsibility. As other marketing channels are choked off there is a real danger that films and TV become one of the tobacco industry's last remaining routes to young hearts and minds – and lungs.

Find out more about the **Institute of Social Marketing** www.ism.stir.ac.uk

Course connection Marketing and society (B324)

B324 explores the theory and practice of responsible marketing. It examines the impact of established marketing techniques and practices on the promotion of social well-being and behavioural change. You will identify key ethical issues involved in marketing decision-making and the responsibilities of organisations to their stakeholders, including the wider community. Elements of marketing management (such as communications, research and planning) are examined within this wider framework. **Registration closes 9 April 2010 for a May start. Call +44 (0)845 300 6090 or visit www.open.ac.uk/courses. Please quote Sesame in any correspondence.**

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Scholar's address

Think of the children

As well as discussing services for children with disabilities in Eastern Europe, the inaugural lecture of Professor Monica Dowling (Director of Social Work Studies at the OU) examined international adoption

INTERNATIONAL adoption from China was one of two key themes raised by Professor Monica Dowling in her inaugural lecture *From Barnsley to Guangzhou: key themes for social work in a national and international context*.

Globalisation has contributed to China becoming one of the major countries from which children are adopted overseas. Opponents of international adoption argue it has a negative impact on child welfare systems in the countries from which the children are adopted, diverting resources from the needs of the many children to the few, and potentially hampering the development of domestic adoption and fostering. They also argue that the international demand for adoption may be increasing practices such as child abduction and trafficking. Furthermore, adopted children may experience identity difficulties as they get older.

Promoters of international adoption counter that individual children can be saved from growing up in an institution where some who have disabilities may deteriorate or



Children at the Xinhui Social Welfare Institute in China

There is also a pragmatic position that accepts that international demand and supply of children exists, and says the debate should be about the best way to regulate it. This fits well with the approach of the Chinese

established an international system of cooperation to prevent illegal traffic in children.

The Hague Convention stipulates that international adoption procedures should be set within an integrated child protection and care system – but efforts to achieve this goal should not be allowed to unintentionally harm children by delaying a permanent solution through inter-country adoption.

The issue for China and other countries developing their national welfare infrastructure is: how do they get the right balance between international adoption and developing welfare systems? The current situation in China is that the care system provides institutional care for large numbers of children throughout

the country who are abandoned because of the one-child policy. Family care such as domestic adoption and fostering are being developed but it will take considerable time and resources for these to be operational throughout China.

There are real indications that the Chinese government is committed to building a stronger welfare state. Not only will this have positive benefits for all children in China but it will enable the training of welfare staff needed to ensure high-quality care in the transition from institutions to domestic adoption and foster care.

“Globalisation can result in greater power imbalance and inequality between the richer and poorer countries of the world, and there is a risk that children adopted from poorer countries are treated as commodities by adoption organisations and potential adopters in rich countries,” said Professor Dowling.

“However, it offers opportunities for sharing ideas and understanding, exchanging of information, knowledge and expertise, and raising awareness and commitment of those in richer countries to improve the plight of children without parental care in poorer countries.”

Professor Dowling said future research at the OU will aim to benefit the lives of children not yet born by looking at what could work best in terms of practical procedures and policy frameworks for children involved in international adoption.

To see the Director of Social Work Studies at the OU's inaugural lecture in full, visit <http://stadium.open.ac.uk/berrill>

Opponents of international adoption argue it has a negative impact on child welfare systems

even die. Chinese people told Professor Dowling that they were pleased disabled children were adopted and taken to other countries because it meant they had operations they needed to survive – operations they were unlikely to receive in China due to poverty and lack of resources.

authorities. In May 2007 the Chinese government introduced more stringent eligibility criteria for international adoptions.

China and the UK are signatories to the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Inter-Country Adoption, which has

Support

How The Open University opens up learning for all

Teaching application

Look, talk, listen

A new online conferencing tool is set to make a host of OU courses more inclusive and collaborative than ever before...

● AFTER A YEAR of trialling, the University is now rolling out its replacement for the OU's own Lyceum conferencing tool. Some 10,000 students, across all faculties, will be using Elluminate by the end of this year and 20,000 during 2010. And the numbers are expected to grow as more and more courses take it up.

Elluminate provides a 'synchronous' learning environment – that is, one in which students and tutors can talk, text and exchange all sorts of information in real time – unlike a forum or email where people potentially log on and off at differing times. It's the closest thing the University has yet adopted to a face-to-face lecture situation online.

The OU has chosen Elluminate, a platform-independent environment adopted by an external company, because it is designed specifically for educational use, with a wide set of features.

Language and business students are likely to be familiar with Lyceum, which is being replaced by Elluminate on all courses that currently use it.

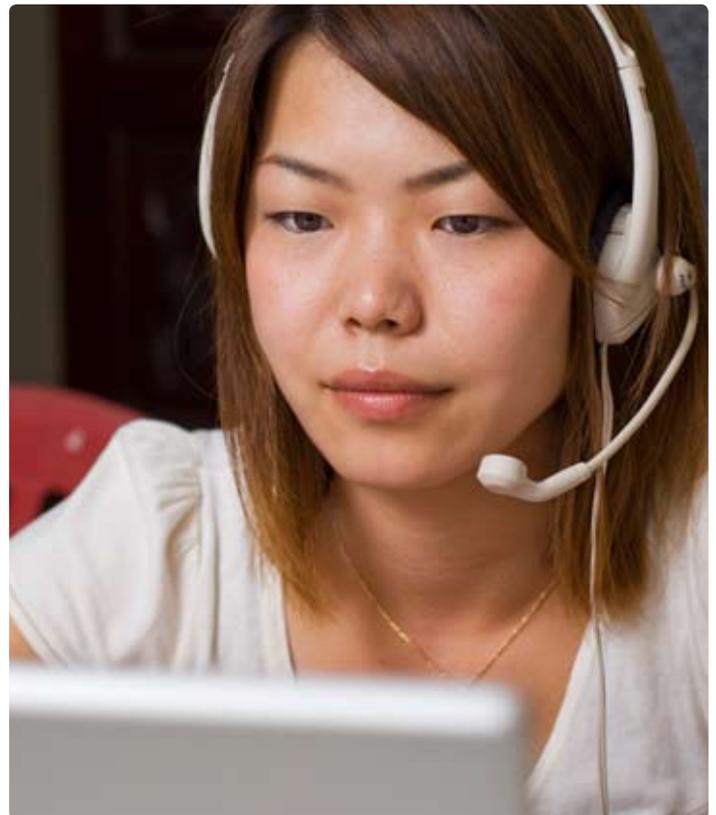
Elluminate opens up new possibilities such as application-sharing and synchronised web tours, explained Sharon Monie of the OU's Learning and Teaching Solutions unit.

"Lyceum's main focus is on audio conferencing chat and whiteboard, allowing co-creation of documents and concept maps. Elluminate builds on this. It allows tutors to share specific website content or even what is displayed on their computer with students. For example, it's been used to allow maths students to complete activities using the MathCAD [engineering calculation software] program.

Elluminate is the closest thing the University has yet adopted to a face-to-face lecture situation online

Students can work through examples, with everyone in the group seeing what is happening, even when they might not have MathCAD on their own computers.

"Students can also save a copy of everything in the session – whiteboard, text chat



Elluminate will improve interaction between students and tutors

and any files provided – to refer to later."

As well as scheduled Elluminate sessions which will feature in the course timetable, students can use the same Elluminate sessions provided

benefit students, and there are now courses in every OU faculty using it. If your course is one, you will be notified well before the start of the course. But, in almost all cases, use of Elluminate is optional – it's an extra tool available for students and tutors but you don't have to use it to complete your course.

Face-to-face tutorials will carry on as before, said Sharon. "Elluminate is not seen, at this point in time, as a replacement for face-to-face teaching. What it does allow is for more interaction between students and tutors. And it allows us to reach those students who, for whatever reason, can't travel to face-to-face tutorials."

to hold their own informal discussions at any time.

Will Elluminate be available on the course you're planning to study? If the course already uses Lyceum, the answer is yes, by the end of 2010. But it will be available for all courses to adopt, if they think it will

Teaching application

Illuminate in practice...



Illuminate is already aiding students

● ALAN DAVIDSON IS a tutor on the course *Fundamentals of senior management* (B713), teaching students based in Germany and Eastern Europe. He has been using Illuminate with his tutor groups for the past 18 months, in addition to face-to-face tutorials.

Alan said students find Illuminate easy to use and, although it's not obligatory,

“Students find Illuminate very easy to use because it's very intuitive”

more than half of his students regularly turn up to Illuminate sessions. And, he said, Illuminate offers more scope than the superseded Lyceum conference tool.

He said: “I record all my Illuminate sessions, so students who miss the session can play it back later.

“With a face-to-face lecture, once it's over, it evaporates. With a recorded session, students can listen and listen again, so they can really take in what's being said. That's particularly useful for students for whom English is not their first language.

“Illuminate allows you to give students handouts, just as in a face-to-face tutorial,

except that you send them electronically during the session. And Illuminate also sends the handout to students who are watching the recorded session, at the same point, so they can follow what's going on.

“Before, I used to post handouts on the tutor group forum afterwards for the benefit of those students who couldn't attend, but now there's no need as everything students need is wrapped up in one place in the recording.

“I usually start the Illuminate session with each student in turn on video, giving them 30 seconds to say “Hi” and mention anything interesting that's happened during the past month. And then we turn the video off and use the audio and whiteboard. I really like the whiteboard. When you use a flipchart in a face-to-face tutorial, the probability is that

at the end when you collect all the notes up, you can't read them. With the whiteboard, it is all neatly typed.

“The web tour facility is also very useful. If I want to show students something on the web I can click on to it, and whatever is on my screen appears on their screens too.

“Students find it very easy to use. Right at the beginning of each Illuminate session I run an introductory session and it lasts no more than five minutes, because it's very intuitive.

“Ironically, we seem to have more problems getting students successfully set up with their microphones and headphones.”



Using Illuminate: some tips

Plan ahead

Don't leave it to just before your first Illuminate session to set everything up. Once Illuminate is available on your course, a clear link to it will appear on the course website. Some time before your first timetabled session you should go in to check your computer configuration, download the Illuminate software, check your audio settings and set your connection speed. This will normally need to be done only once, before your first session. Illuminate works on Macs and Linux systems as well as PCs. There are no disks needed to load the software, you simply download it automatically from the course website.

Get a headset

While not absolutely essential, a headset is strongly advised to cut out irritating and confusing feedback for yourself and other participants. Even the cheapest sets costing around £5 are perfectly adequate.

Arrive early

It's a good idea enter the Illuminate room five or 10 minutes or so before the official start time for a session, so you know everything is working OK.

Get help

There are full instructions on setting up and using

Illuminate in the OU Computing Guide Online. Go to www.open.ac.uk/computingguide click on OU Online and then Audio Conferencing. There is also a link here to Illuminate's own website, www.illuminate.com, which has a support page for students.

For troubleshooting, go to the top of the StudentHome page and click on FAQs and then Computing Support. If you're still stuck, contact the Computing Helpdesk.

The OU Library also runs online training sessions in various information literacy skills, using Illuminate. See <http://library.open.ac.uk/services/libcourses/>



Be well connected

If you are having problems with Illuminate it may not be the software itself. It may be your internet connection. As data is flowing all the time with Illuminate, synchronous communication may be affected by factors you don't ordinarily notice when surfing the web. A connection to a fixed-line usually performs better than a wireless one. So if you have a choice between a fixed line connection at home and a wifi hotspot in a public place, choose the first. If you have no choice, ensure you set the connection speed correctly for your circumstances. Illuminate is capable of working even with a dial-up modem, proven in many installations worldwide.

Case study

Employee focus



Julie Russ,
Land
Management
and

Conservation Adviser
for Natural England

What did you study with The Open University?

I studied *Working with our environment: technology for a sustainable future* (T172); *International development* (U213); *The shape of the world* (D215); *Environment* (U216); *Physical resources and environment* (S268); *Understanding cities* (DD304); and *Environmental policy in an international context* (DU310). It took me seven years but I gained a first-class BSc (Hons).

What made you decide to study with the OU?

I had wanted to study for a degree for many years and the OU was the only way I could do so, since I could fit studying around working part-time as a secretary and bringing up a family.

How did you move from a secretarial to an environmental career?

I did voluntary conservation work for the Surrey Wildlife Trust for eight years, one day per week. I was a seasonal field surveyor for Thomson Ecology, working on a very large project in Essex. There I undertook surveys of great crested newts and reptile translocation work, which involved catching adders, grass snakes, slow worms and common lizards. The reptiles were then moved to a Wiltshire Wildlife Trust site.

What does your job role entail?

I work as a Land Management and Conservation Adviser for



“I wouldn’t have stood a chance of obtaining this job without a degree”

Natural England (www.naturalengland.org.uk), an independent public body whose purpose is to protect and improve England’s natural environment and encourage people to enjoy and get involved in their surroundings.

I shall soon begin a new role giving advice about conservation and the law to local authorities, e.g. whether development is likely to impact upon an SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), mitigation work and the law relating to protected species, such as bats and badgers.

Much of my environment degree is relevant to my current position, particularly managing the land, threats to biodiversity and climate change.

I anticipate some of the environmental law I learned about will also be relevant.

What appealed to you about this work?

Doing something to help conserve the natural environment. Being able to get out of the office, not being tied

to a desk all the time. The opportunity to use some of the knowledge and skills I obtained when studying for my OU degree. I don’t think I would have stood a chance of obtaining this job without a degree. Many people taken on at the same time as me (there were 15 positions in various locations in south-east England) have Masters – I do not, which shows that the OU must be thought of quite highly.

What advice can you offer to current OU students about getting into your career?

A career in the environmental field is extremely competitive and it will probably take some time to get the position that you want. Many jobs in this sector require you to have done a lot of voluntary work, and this is not easy if you have to earn a living. Do not give up though, you have to keep plugging away – even if it is extremely tiring and time consuming filling in those application forms.

www.open.ac.uk/careers

News

New employer statement of service:

Are you an employer, do you work in HR, or is your organisation looking to recruit? If so, check out the Careers Advisory Services’ new leaflet for employers, telling them how they can recruit OU students. Even if you haven’t got any vacancies right now, it tells you how you can promote your organisation to the OU community, cost-free. Have a look at: www.open.ac.uk/careers/employers/php

Get help and advice before applying for a job

A recent survey revealed that one in five people apply for jobs without any research. If you need help with any aspect of applying for a job, you can contact a Careers Adviser by telephone, email or face to face. Go to: www.open.ac.uk/careers and click on the ‘Contact’ tab at the top. Please note, this service is only available to alumni for three years after graduating.

Online careers forums

The Careers Advisory Service has run a number of online careers forums this year on topics as diverse as teaching, volunteering, science and law. There was also a public sector forum with employers from local government, the civil service and the NHS taking part – this forum had more than 250 discussion topics. All of the forums are still available to read at www.open.ac.uk/careers/forums.php

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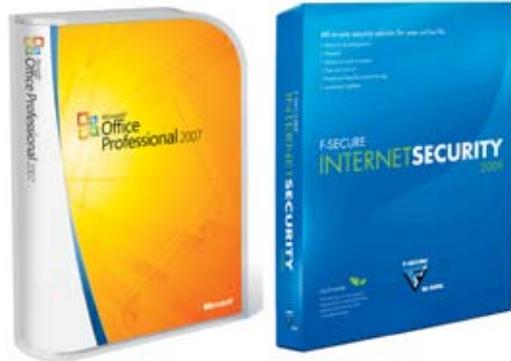


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