

# Flexibility and Innovation: Breaking down barriers

Dr Liz Marr, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Students

## **Innovation**

Technical change and the world of MOOCs, BOCs and SPOCs

## **Collaboration**

Working together and sharing learning

## **Flexibility**

Choice and diversity in delivery and funding

## **Progression**

Articulation and recognising prior learning



# Innovation

# Our mission: open to...



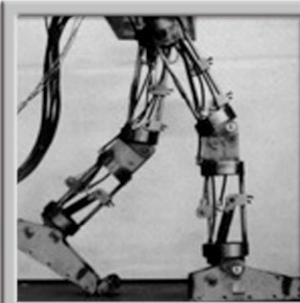
People



Places

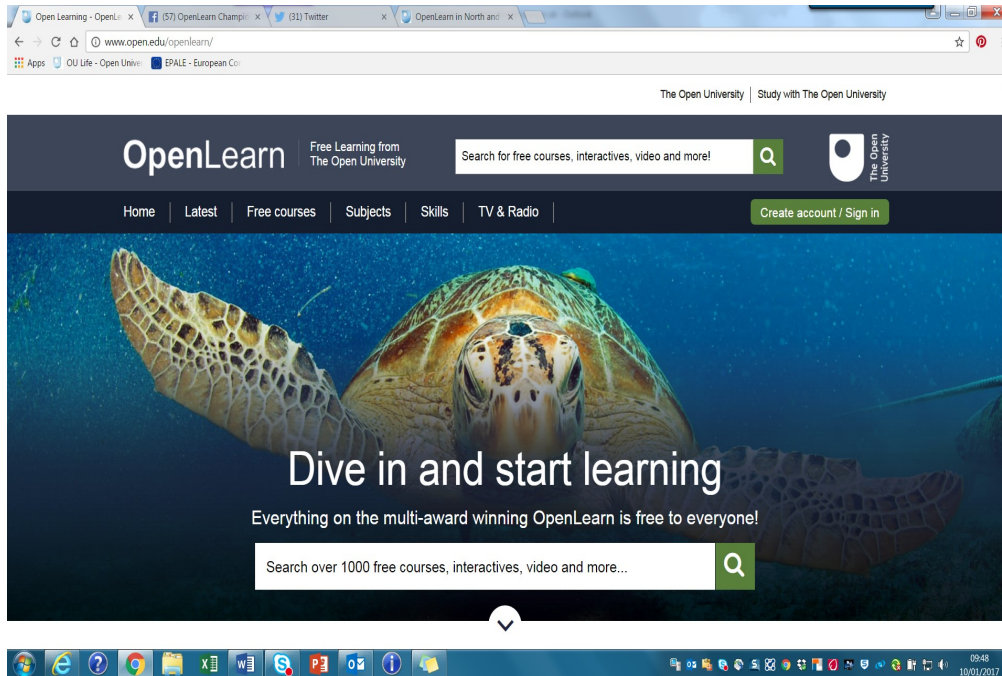


Methods



Ideas





## Reboot Your STEM Career



## Students in Secure Environments

The Open University's [Open Justice Centre's Law Clinic](#), has won the Best Legal Tech Contribution in the [Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards](#).



OU law students collaborate with prison learners to host radio show tackling legal issues (FE News, May 2019)

# Students in Secure Environments

**I'm hoping that with doing education that  
I'll be more employable, that I'll be more  
acceptable in the community, and it helps  
to rehabilitate me for getting out.  
Trevor, HMP Shotts**

Widening access and outreach  
award winner: The Open  
University.

The Open University has  
developed a secure virtual  
learning environment for  
students in prisons and secure  
hospitals

Photograph: Alicia Canter/The Guardian



# Collaboration

# Everyday skills in maths and English

Learn online for free and at your own pace



## Learn independently

OR

## Learn with college support

### Sign up on OpenLearn



Everyday Skills courses offer free and flexible online learning, ideal for anyone who wants to refresh and improve their everyday English reading, writing and/or maths ability.

**There is no initial assessment and you can choose the level that best suits your ability and aspirations.**

### Contact a partner centre



Sit an initial assessment at a partner centre. The centre will guide you to the most suitable course for your skill level, either a **Functional Skills qualification** or Everyday Skills courses.

#### Participating partner centres

The Bedford College Group • Middlesbrough College • West Herts College



### Free courses on OpenLearn

Everyday English 1 • Everyday English 2 • Everyday Maths 1 • Everyday Maths 2

Relevant topics will develop your communication and numeracy skills and support you to apply them in your everyday home and work life. Learn at your own pace and at a time that suits you.

### Gain recognition



Gain an Open University **Statement of participation and digital badge** when you pass an Everyday Skills course. Your achievement can be added to your employment profile and CV.

#### Formalise your learning

### Gain a qualification



With your Statement of participation, you can **choose to take an exam** when ready. Contact a partner centre to achieve a Functional Skills qualification in Level 1/Level 2 maths and/or English.

#### Functional Skills qualification



**By studying these online courses you will gain additional personal and professional benefits:**

- ✓ Support your children with homework
- ✓ Build your self-esteem and confidence
- ✓ Enhance your job prospects and employability
- ✓ Improve your communication skills
- ✓ Become confident in completing forms accurately.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/education-development/education/everyday-skills-maths-and-english>

# Reaching cold spots



...significantly fewer people from seaside towns and coastal communities can access higher education than those in other parts of England. There's been a 27% decline in the number of people in coastal constituencies accessing HE since 2011/12. Ninety per cent of this is down to the collapse in part-time HE, which declined by 64%.

*Professor Ian Fribbance in oral evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on Regenerating Seaside Towns and Communities*

# Disabled Veterans' Scholarships Fund



## THE DISABLED VETERANS' SCHOLARSHIPS FUND

Harnessing the full potential of our disabled veterans

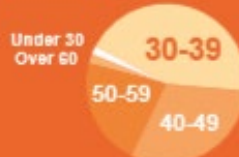
£ **1.8million**  
raised so far

**54** scholarships awarded

### Subjects



### Age



### Disability

**14** Physical    **21** Mental    **19** PTSD only

### Media Coverage



### Case study

“ I broke my back in the military, and felt unsupported as I lay in my hospital bed; I signed up then to study with The Open University, and completed two courses over the next few months of my recovery. The Open University helped me remain sane from the confines of my injury. ”

New Fund Scholar

### THE DISABLED VETERANS' SCHOLARSHIPS FUND IS KINDLY SUPPORTED BY:

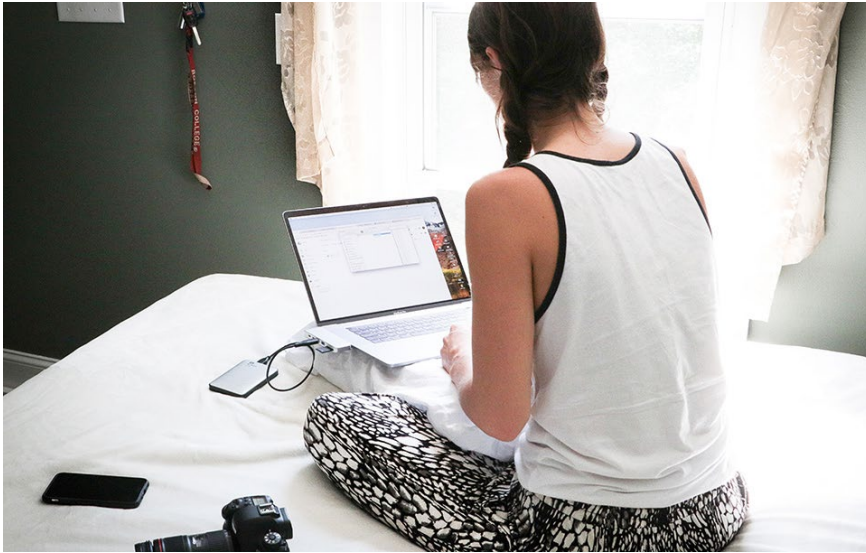
USF (The Soldiers' Charity)  
S&S Systems plc  
The Big Shave  
Funded by the Chancellor using LIGOR funds  
Constance Travis Charitable Trust  
Sir Christopher Coville KCB  
The Simon Gibson Charitable Trust  
Leflora UK  
The 'Let's Not Forget' Association  
PF Charitable Trust  
Queen Mary's Roehampton Trust  
The Trellis Charitable Trust  
The Veterans' Foundation  
The William Allen Young Charitable Trust  
The Worshipful Company of World Traders Charitable Trust  
AND OVER 1,100 ALUMNI, FRIENDS AND OU SUPPORTERS



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# Flexibility

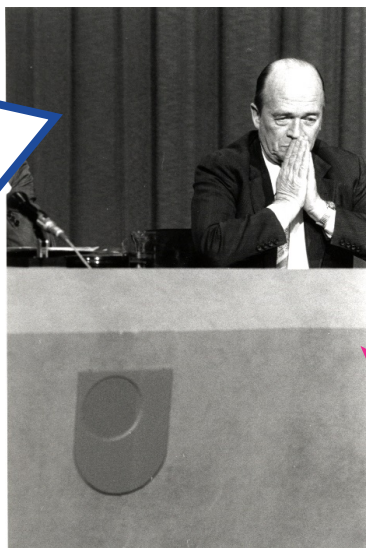
# How, where and when



## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDY AT THE OU

“The usual criticism...is that a student who has a free choice of courses that [he] can take credit for is liable to end up with what has been called ‘**a miscellaneous rag-bag of credits**’ – a second rate degree with no internal coherence.

Such people argue strongly that **teachers must determine the pattern of studies** that is most suited to the individual student and that direction of this kind is of the essence of education...”



WALTER PERRY, 1976

... Opponents of this view, on the other hand, argue equally strongly that a **student is the best judge of what [s]he wishes to learn** and that [s]he should be given the maximum freedom of choice consistent with a coherent overall pattern.

They hold that this is **doubly true when one is dealing with adults** who, after years of experience of life, ought to be in a better position to judge what precise studies they wish to undertake...”

“Open” qualifications continue to appeal to students who:

1

Wish to combine a set of subjects not catered for by The Open University's subject-focused degrees

2

Want freedom from having to take some of the compulsory modules associated with existing subject-focused degrees

3

Started off with the intention of a subject-focused degree but in the course of their studies have decided they wish to change their subject focus

4

Want to start with a range of subjects to see which ones they enjoy and wish to focus on at a higher level



# MAKE YOUR LEARNING COUNT

The Open University's innovative and flexible module, *Making your learning count* (YXM130), is a personalised way for you to count study from a range of open educational resources (OERs) and other informal and/or work-based learning, towards a higher education qualification...

Find out more ►

**Open educational resources (OERs), such as OpenLearn and FutureLearn provide valuable learning opportunities on a wide variety of topics and subjects.**

This innovative, OU level 1, module allows you to explore what you have learned from your chosen open educational resources (OERs) and other informal and/or work-based learning, whilst developing the skills you need to be a successful student. The subjects studied are chosen by you, making this a truly unique and personalised learning experience.

This module can be studied as a standalone module or counted towards a number of Open University qualifications, including:

- **BA/BSc (Hons) Open degree**
- **Diploma of Higher Education (Open)**
- **Certificate of Higher Education (Open)**

These qualifications allow you to continue studying a range of modules across different subjects, tailoring your qualification to meet your own personal or career-related requirements.

“This module was a great idea and I loved the diversity of it. I think all students would benefit from starting with this module. The skills I have learnt are very useful. I feel ready now to tackle the rest of my degree. I think I can cope with whatever challenges I have to face.”

## KEY FACTS

- 150 hours of self-directed learning
- Subjects chosen by you
- Delivered entirely online with support from an OU tutor
- Informal assessment tasks designed to develop study skills
- 1 Tutor-marked assignment (TMA)
- End of module assessment

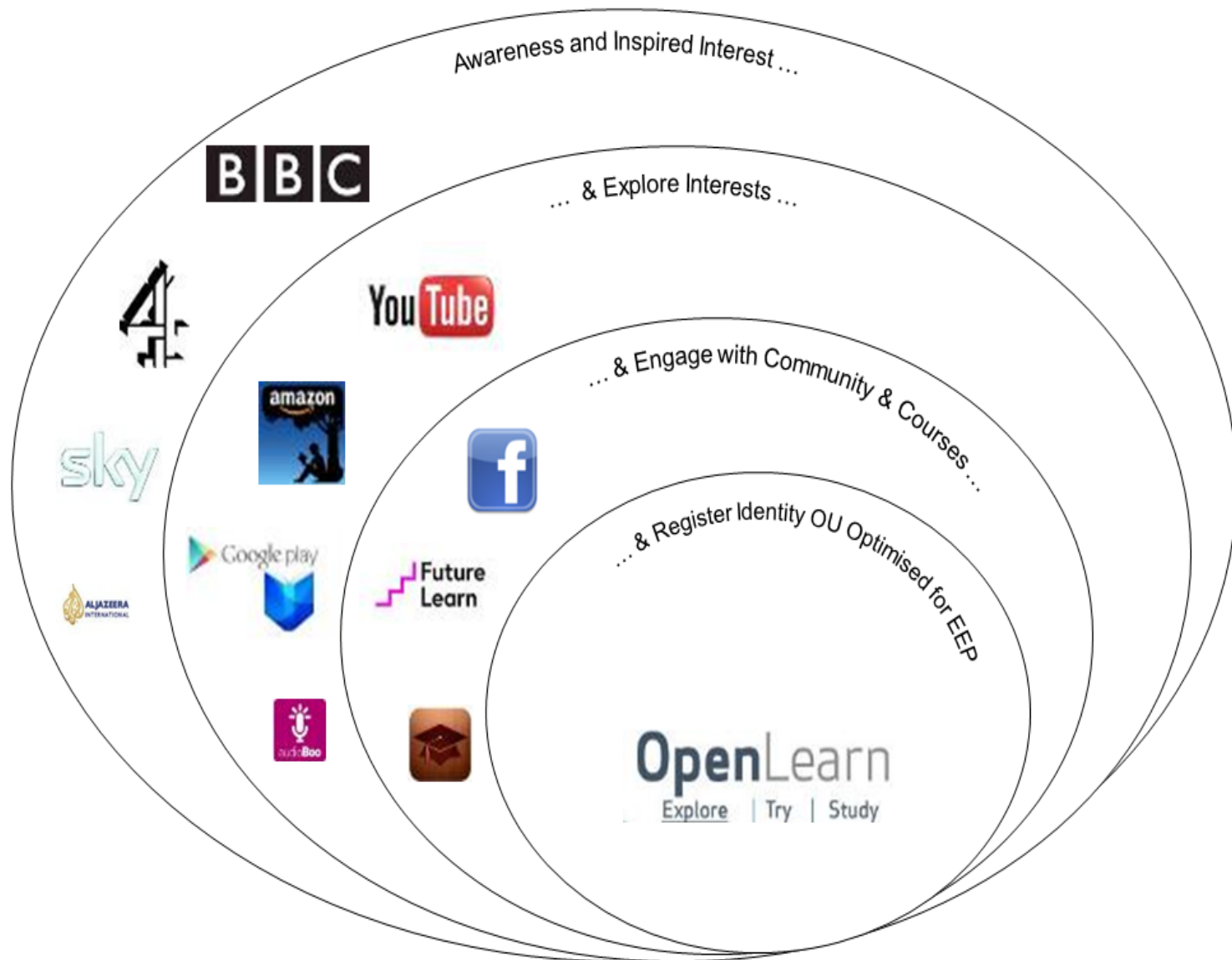
**[www.open.ac.uk/courses/choose/count](http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/choose/count)**

# Progression

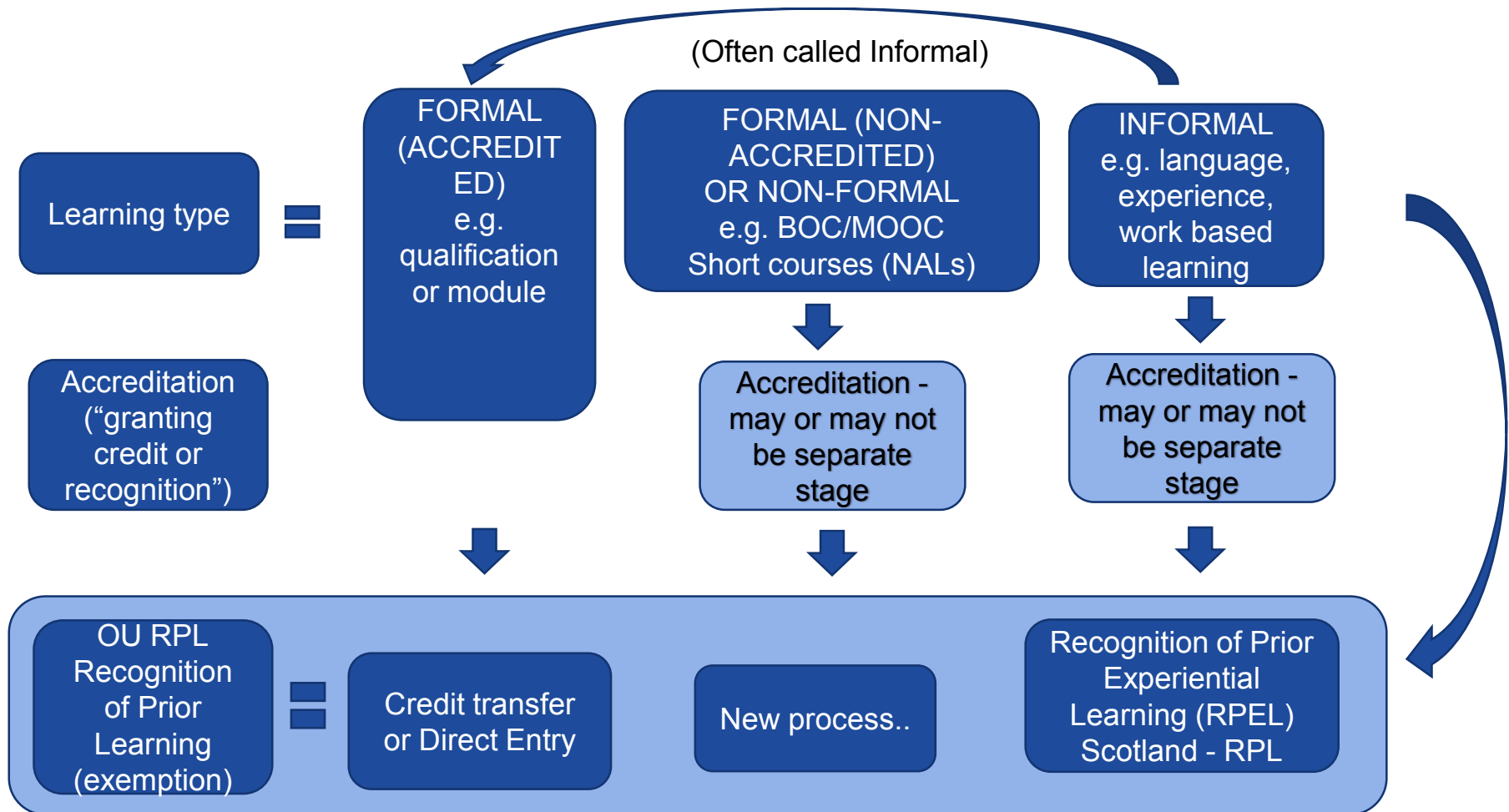
## Articulation routes

Karina studied for an HNC in Social Care part-time at Carnegie College whilst working in community based rehabilitation. Inspired to take her learning further, she explored doing an HND in Social Care, but it wasn't available in her area. Instead she looked into her options with the Open University. Having completed two modules, she decided to work towards a BA/ BSC (Hons) in Health and Social Care. She said, "The modules I've chosen to study are really relevant to my work. They allow almost immediate implementation from theory into practice. My employer (NHS Lothian) values the qualifications I've achieved and my level of responsibility at work is increasing – partly down to my Open University qualifications."

Sarah Cowan went straight from school to work in an administrative post at her local hospital. After taking NVQs part-time, she went on to study for an HNC Business Administration through evening classes at Dumfries and Galloway college. Sarah really wanted to move into the healthcare sector to work with children, so five years after college she looked into courses in childcare at The Open University. She has since completed two level one modules and is currently working towards a BA/BSc (Hons) in Childhood and Youth Studies. Sarah said, "The thing I enjoy about The Open University most is the flexibility of study and that I can fit it in around everything else. There's a lot of support besides the online forums so you never feel you're on your own."



# Journey from Informal to Formal Learning (JIFL)



Formal = with structure and learning outcomes  
NAL = non-accredited learning



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