FRESHERS 2018
GET INVOLVED IN OUR BIGGEST FRESHERS EVENT YET!

ESSAY MILL SERVICE
WHAT IS IT AND HOW CAN YOU PUT A STOP TO IT?

PEER SUPPORT
It's back... find out how our peer supporters can help you during your studies...

BY-ELECTIONS
We have three roles up for election... what are they and why your vote matters.

JOIN THE CLUB
Meet other like minded OU students and find the right club for you.

MEET YOUR NEW STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM
THE NEW PRESIDENT WELCOMES YOU TO THE ASSOCIATION
AUTUMN 2018

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Welcome to this edition of OU Students magazine...

I would like to give you a warm welcome to this edition of the magazine!

I hope you had a pleasant summer break and are excited to return to modules in October. This magazine is a special one because of the upcoming Freshers events, - something I hope everyone returning or #new2OU will participate in.

This is my first magazine as Vice President Media and Campaigns and I hope it will be full of engaging and interesting content for everyone in the next two years!

Fanni Zombor
Vice President Media and Campaigns

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Welcome to Freshers 2018!

Calling all new OU students, continuing OU students and OU students that are coming back to studying after some time away. We hope you’re excited to be part of a community of more than 170,000 students from all over the world.

Did you know that by becoming an OU student, you automatically become a member of the OU Students Association.

What is the OU Students Association?

We’re a team of elected student representatives that influence policy and decisions made at all levels of The Open University, based on your views and feedback. Supported by a small office team located at the OU campus in Milton Keynes, we enable you to have your say on how the OU is run whilst also creating a supportive community of OU students.

What is Freshers?

We realise that starting your studies can be both daunting and exciting at the same time, so we’ve organised a fortnight of fun activities and events for you to get involved in and meet your fellow OU students. From online chats to face-to-face meet-ups, interviews with your elected representatives to how to get involved with societies and clubs, we have a number of opportunities for you to get to grips with this Freshers!
Seven things to do this Freshers...

1. **Clear your diary:** make a note of all the activities going on throughout both weeks.

2. **Let us know you’re coming:** be sure to join Facebook events so you get notified when the event starts.

3. **Be in it to win it:** They’ll be a number of **prize draws** going on throughout Freshers. There’s a chance to win either an Association bundle or a Kindle!

4. **Get involved:** There’s plenty of opportunities to meet other OU students this Freshers, whether it’s through social media, Adobe Connect or even face-to-face. Speaking of which...

5. **Meet-up:** Not interested in just online chat? We have a variety of meet-ups happening all over the country on Saturday, 29 September. Find out if there’s **one near you**.

6. **Tune in:** Our student led radio show, **STUDIO**, will be on Friday, 5 October. Tune in to hear the wrap up of Freshers fortnight, as well as stories from your OU student hosts.

7. **Find out more:** Want to get more involved with the Association? Check out our website for more **opportunities** and projects for you.

**Dates for Freshers 2018:**

**Monday 24 September - Friday 5 October**
Week 1
From chats, support tips and info about groups and clubs, find out how we’re welcoming you in the first week of Freshers 2018!

Monday
24 Sept
Welcome to the Association Facebook Chat
7pm - 8pm
It’s the first event of Freshers 2018! They’ll be opportunities to find out more about the Association, ask questions about your studies and meet other OU students.

Tuesday
25 Sept
It’s Club Day!
Various times
We have over 25 clubs affiliated with the Association, and a number of them are holding events or producing content especially for Freshers, including chats, competitions and blogs. Our Freshers club page will include more details including times and links to

Wednesday
26 Sept
Wellbeing Wednesday
All day
Wellbeing Wednesday is all about looking after yourself and your physical and mental health. There’ll be lots of tips and information shared about the support you can access throughout your studies.

Thursday
27 Sept
Disabled Students Group (DSG) Facebook Open Day
9am - 11pm
The DSG are opening up their Facebook group for the day to allow students with mental or physical disabilities the opportunity to chat and ask questions.

STEM Faculty Chat
7pm - 8pm
Meet other OU students in the faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

Friday
28 Sept
WELS Faculty Chat
7pm - 8pm
Come and chat with other OU students in the faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS).

Meet-ups!
Saturday, 22 Sept - Saturday, 13 Oct
Various times
Meet-ups are casual social gatherings of OU students, hosted by OU students, in public places all over the UK and beyond.

During Freshers we have over 15 meet-ups happening up and down the country. Find the one closest to you at: facebook.com/events/2637585099799941/

Find the links for these events and more on the FRESHERS WEBSITE!
Week 2
The second week of Freshers is all about societies, groups, community, radio and much more! Read below for more information...

Monday
Societies Fair Facebook Chat
7pm - 8pm
One of the best ways to meet other OU students with similar interests is to join a society. Join in the chat and find a society for you!

Tuesday
PLEXUS (LGBT+) Chat
7pm - 8pm
Our LGBT+ group, PLEXUS, are hosting a Facebook live event on their Facebook page for all students to chat, find out more about PLEXUS and their plans for the year ahead.

FBL Faculty Chat
8pm - 9pm
Join in the chat with other OU students in the Faculty of Business and Law (FBL).

Wednesday
Disabled Students Group (DSG) Welcome Chat
7pm - 8pm
Come along to this Adobe Connect session with members of the DSG to chat, talk about starting your studies and finding out more about the DSG.

FASS Faculty Chat
8pm - 9.30pm
Get to know your fellow OU students in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS).

Thursday
Community Drop-In
6pm - 8pm
Community Drop-In is a fortnightly Adobe Connect chat where OU students can talk about a variety of topics from study tips to favourite hobbies. Pop in for as little or as long as you’d like.

Friday
STUDIO
7pm - 8.30pm
Our student led radio show, STUDIO, will be rounding up on the last day of Freshers with a recap of what’s happened, new stories from OU students and announcing the winners of the Freshers prize draws!

No meet-up near you? You can always host one yourself by checking out our website: oustudents.com/about-meet-ups

oustudents.com/freshers
THE NEW TEAM

Student leadership team 2018!
Elected by you and representing OU students for the next two years, meet the new team...

Left to right, top to bottom
President
Cath Brown
Deputy President
Stephanie Stubbins
VP Education
Peter Cowan
VP Equality & Diversity
Cherry Day
VP Student Support
Alison Kingan
VP Media & Campaigns
Fanni Zombor
VP Student Voice
Amelia Gackowska

VP Community
Kat Cramond
VP Administration
Vacant
Student Council Member
Barbara Tarling
Faculty Association Reps:
Business & Law
Bea Fontes
Science, Technology,
Engineering and Mathematics
Claire Davey
Wellbeing, Education &
Language Studies
Sarah P. Jones

Arts & Social Sciences
Billy Docherty
Area Association Reps:
Continental Europe
Michail Kasoutas
England
Danielle Smith
Northern Ireland
Wendy Reid (no image)
Scotland
Mark Cameron
Wales
Lucy Richardson
Republic of Ireland
Vacant

Get to know the team at oustudents.com/central-executive-committee

Best overheard #OUstudent comment: ‘The OU is part of me forever’
Hallo everyone! I wanted to say a particular welcome to those new to the OU this autumn (as well as welcome back to everyone else).

It always feels exciting, starting on a new module – are you counting down to your module website opening, like me?

I’ve got something else to be excited about too – I’ve just started as President of the OU Students Association. I’m fortunate to be working alongside a fantastic team – it’s going to be hard work, but I’m really looking forward to it.

During Freshers, you’ll hear all about everything the Association does and how to get involved. So rather than repeat that, I thought I’d say something about how I got involved myself.

I started my OU journey just wanting to study. I didn’t think I was interested in interacting, and in my first year, going to tutorials was the only time I met other students. So what changed?

Firstly, procrastinating led me to investigate what else was on the OU website. I found a whole lot of interesting forums and got tempted into the discussions going on. Secondly, I got geekily excited about my subject – chemistry – and felt frustrated there wasn’t a society for it. So I started one up. That put me in contact with lots of other students. And – I loved it! It was great fun, it added massively to my life. One thing led to another, and in 2016, I found elected as the Faculty Rep for STEM. The next two years were a whirlwind - I made some amazing friends and loved getting to know more about the OU and Association. Oh, and spent five hours dressed as a duck to raise money for our charity, the Open University Students Educational Trust (OUSET)!

I wonder what the next two years will hold...

The OU has really changed my life, in such unexpected ways. I hope it will change yours too.

Cath Brown
President
As rare as gibbons...

I studied towards a BSc in Life Sciences near the beginning of my primatology career. I took my degree around the world with me to gain simultaneous field experience. I am now undertaking a PhD at University College London and the Institute of Zoology looking at the patterns and drivers of small ape (gibbon) decline across China. There are so many funny similarities between my OU experience and what I do now for a living.

Firstly, gibbons love to sing. They sing every morning to alert their presence to conspecifics, reinforce territorial boundaries, and advertise to potential mates. I have never met an OU student who doesn’t engage in some element of karaoke! During two residential schools (i.e. where OU students go to learn laboratory and field skills) I recall many of my fellow students jumping on tables (could easily have been a tree!), regardless of age, and belting out a tune to impress the crowd.

I once got lost on a university campus. It was day one of the residential school and I could not find my way to the lecture theatre. After wandering aimlessly for 30 minutes, a senior OU academic found me. He thought it was hilarious that I managed to get lost when no one else had. Later that day he interrupted my lesson to give me a huge ball of string which he jokingly said I should tie to my desk and back to my bedroom so I wouldn’t get lost again. Jokes aside, when following wild primates in the forest that is exactly what we do! We follow a wild orangutan to their nest or a gibbon to their sleeping tree, and tie some string around the tree, and then snake it back to the nearest transect. The idea is that come morning, you can find your focal animal very easily in the forest!

One of the best things about studying with the OU is the family element. Everyone is in it together and supports one another with little intra-group competition. This is the same with many gibbon species I have studied. Gibbons live in small, tight-knit family groups comprised of 3-6 individuals. The family will work together, as a team, to find resources and avoid predators. In the 80s, the famous primatologist, Jane Goodall, was the first person to notice tool use in chimpanzees. The world was initially shocked to see that these apes could purposefully break a twig and use it to forage for termites in a rotten log. Older generations pass on their knowledge to ensure their offspring have an adequate skillset for their future survival. When learning with the OU, we are also given a tool kit of skills to help us with our future careers.

I have now studied with four institutions and can safely say that OU students are definitely a unique and rare breed (just like the gibbons). I was always excited to attend my tutorials because everyone had such varied backgrounds and came from all walks of life. I have since made some incredible lifelong friends from the whole experience. Sadly for the gibbons their story is not quite so positive. Of the 20 species, 19 are on the brink of extinction and some species are extremely rare (i.e. only 26 individuals remaining). This highlights the importance of my doctorate research.

If you want to learn more about my research, the gibbons or read more about my OU experience, then please visit my website.

Carolyn Thompson
Rousseau said: “Plants are shaped by cultivation and people are educated... everything we do not have at our birth and which we need when we grow is given to us by education”. For me, Rousseau highlights perhaps the most fundamental ethos of anybody that finds themselves incarcerated. Some would argue that those who end up in prison lack something essential for growth as a human beings. If you prescribe to this notion, then Rousseau provides the solution. To cultivate myself through education became my ethos when it dawned on me that I would be spending a long time in prison. This came from a walk to the prison library. I was not coping very well and the last thing I wanted to do was read. A fellow inmate suggested that the simplest way to cope with depressive thoughts was to distract the brain, and in prison, reading was the most productive distraction.

After going through the motions of pretending to look for a book, Nelson Mandela’s ‘Long Walk to Freedom’ caught my eye. It took me 12 days to complete the book, and I came away from it with an inner strength to not give up on myself. I knew then, that the only way to see my sentence through, was to keep my mind productively occupied. When I arrived at my first proper prison, I enrolled onto an Open University course. I also wrote down my route to obtaining a degree on a piece of paper which I kept for six years. I crossed out completed courses and placed start dates on those pending. The piece of paper eventually turned yellow and I would produce it every time I liaised with distance education professionals.

During my third OU module I realised that education was more than a distraction to my depression. I began to notice that my world view was changing for the better. Education was gradually changing me as a person. It helped me get involved with prison activities such as having a seat on the prison councils. I started helping fellow inmates by becoming a listener and eventually assisting others with understanding their own studies. I found myself again, and I was never letting go. Eventually I got my degree in BA (Hons) Business with Economics. It was not easy, as a long-term prisoner I moved prisons frequently, and not all prisons are progressing in their attitudes to education. I never gave up, at the worst times I would look at my piece of paper to remind myself of the goal I set. When resources were scarce I forced myself to be content with a pass as this would still achieve my goal, reminding myself that it was better than giving up.

I got my degree with six years left of my sentence, little realising that I was not out of the woods yet. After about two years without any rigorous academic challenges I began to feel that my brain was slowly dying. This prompted me to explore future study, and I subsequently enrolled for the MSc in Development Management. This gave me the confidence to know that I can achieve whatever I set my mind to. I no longer fear what the world has in store for me, instead I am confident I will face whatever comes my way.

As I write this I am in open conditions and two days a week I volunteer at the Prisoners Education Trust. I am in my last six months and hope to fully re-join society as a contributing citizen. Education is more than learning, it has substantial rehabilitative qualities far more beneficial than offending behaviour courses. It saved my life, allowed me to see the error of my ways, believe in people again and above all - I am able to grow in the full knowledge that I now possess the correct tools in which to do so.
You may have seen some publicity about the National Student Survey (NSS) recently, when the results came out in late July. So what is it, and why does it matter?

The NSS is a survey for UK university students in their final year (for OU students that usually means that the students doing it are taking a level three module). All universities take part in it. You can find out more details about it [here](#). You will usually see an overall satisfaction score quoted, but in fact, there are a whole range of questions, under various headings. Although most of these are about the university, the Students Association has a question to itself in the NSS, so we are very keen to learn from that how we can do better.

Last year, the Students Association question took a new format to the previous statement about general satisfaction, so in 2017 and 2018, students were asked to say how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statement: ‘The students’ union (association or guild) effectively represents students’ academic interests.’

These are our results:-

- 12,167 students responded to this question, of the 23,300 who were eligible to.
- Of the students who took the survey, 17% said the question was ‘not applicable’. Our NSS scores show the proportion of respondents who expressed a view (so excluding those who said ‘not applicable’) and the ‘not applicable’ responses are therefore not included in this calculation.
- Of those who expressed a view, 46% chose ‘Definitely agree’ or ‘mostly agree’, whilst 5.7% chose ‘mostly disagree’ or ‘definitely disagree’.

**Proportion of respondents who expressed a view on the question:**

‘The students’ union (association or guild) effectively represents students’ academic interests.’

- 49% Neither
- 28% Mostly agree
- 18% Definitely agree
- 4% Mostly disagree
- 2% Definitely disagree

Best overheard #OUsStudent comment: ‘My whole confidence has changed for the better’
There are some positives and some negatives here...

It's good to see that our ‘agree’ score is up by 2% from 2017 (that was the first time the question was asked), and that few students actively disagreed with the statement that the Association effectively represented their academic interests. But obviously we are disappointed that a high proportion of students thought the question was not applicable (17%).

So how do we interpret our results?

Well, the most straightforward way would be that we need to do better on academic representation – and we certainly will be looking carefully at how we do this. We know our team of reps work hard on this, but that doesn’t mean there’s no room for improvement.

It could also mean there’s a lack of awareness of either the Association or the work we do in representing students’ academic interests. Additionally, when the new question was introduced, there was concern that students might be uncertain how to interpret the term ‘academic interests’. This was highlighted in the HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council for England) circular, Annex B.

In 2017-2018, we took the initiative to invite feedback from our student members and asked them what they thought the phrase ‘academic representation’ meant. This took the form of an online consultation, and we produced a detailed ‘you said, we did’ document in response to your feedback. You can read all about it on our website.

It’s also a shame that the response rate was low overall, which also may be to do with lack of awareness.

Whilst we can be pleased to have achieved some improvement since last year, it is clear we still have work to do!

We need to improve how we communicate about our work in academic representation, and look to see how we can make sure far more students are aware of us and can find us when they need us.

Following our consultation activities from 2017/2018, we will continue to work on your suggestions and welcome new ideas that you have to feed into the work of the new Central Executive Committee.

Get in touch...

• Contact your reps here
• Talk to us on the forums

We’re very excited to announce the timetable for our by-election! Missed out on the Elections in April, but interested in joining our fabulous student leadership team?

We have three positions available:

• Vice President Administration
• Area Association Representative, Republic of Ireland
• Student Trustee

14 September – Nominations Open
24 September (Midday) – Nominations Closed
28 September – Profiles and Forums Live
1 October (Midday) – Voting Open
10 October (Midday) – Voting Closed
12 October – Winners Announced
Are you against cheats getting high grades with no effort while you work hard on every TMA submission?

Your Students Association is calling for you to give your views on ‘essay mill’ cheating services!

So what is an essay mill service?
It is an online service providing essays for "referencing purposes". In reality these sites write ready-to-submit essays for students for a fee.

Disagree with these sites being able to advertise openly? - Here is what you can do:
Firstly, sign the petition below! - There have been several different petitions started over the last couple of years, but we have decided to really push this latest one, as the problem is becoming increasingly common in Higher Education. We believe that as the biggest university in the country, our students can really make a difference - we can help to lobby the UK government to have a debate in the House of Commons. After signing, please share this with your friends and anyone you can think of, so together we can gain more support for this cause! We have also asked OU Council member, Mary Curnock Cook about why she thinks we should take a stand on this issue:

"I supported the launch of this petition because it enrages me that these essay mill sharks are undermining the hard work of genuine students and the integrity of higher education as a whole. They prey on vulnerable students and hide behind a thinly-disguised fraud by providing essays to order, complete with the plagiarism checks that make it nearly impossible for universities to detect. Everyone should sign this petition in support of fellow OU students and academics who believe in the value that comes from honest teaching and learning."

Sign the petition here.

Cath Brown (President) and Fanni Zombor (Vice President Media & Campaigns) on behalf of the OU Students Association.

Above: an ‘essay mill’ employee communicates with a student.

While searching for ‘work from home’ jobs in 2015 one of our trustworthy student friends came across one of these sites. She already had a bad opinion of the website involved, but out of curiosity she asked some questions like: Do students get these as read-only documents? How do they ensure students won’t submit this ‘reference’ as their essay? And why can students request a certain grade level? Our enquirer friend was then told that the documents might be withheld if the essay is not written to the requested grade standard. The recruiter finally suggested this might not be the job for our friend if she was so concerned. Needless to say, she could not agree more.
I am currently studying part-time for a Master’s degree in education with The Open University. This is my first experience of studying from home and the first time I have had the courage to apply for an opportunity through the Students Association. I would like to share my experience with you here.

I noticed there were three different shadowing opportunities available at that time; I thought to myself ‘if I want to fully understand how student voice is incorporated then I needed to see it for myself!’ I became very excited by the opportunity to join the scheme and to visit the Learning, Teaching and Innovation (LTI) Academic in Milton Keynes.

I clicked the apply button, took my time to think about it and filled in the application form. Clicked submit.

I was invited to spend the day shadowing the Learning & Development Team on Thursday, 19 July. I arrived from the North East to the breath-taking campus in Milton Keynes and started a journey of what would turn out to be an incredible and invaluable learning experience.

I was invited to be a part of the team for the day to explore how the team works on a day-to-day basis and to gain an insight of how they work within the university. I was invited to take part in a number of different activities - each one offered me something new and rewarding to take back home with me which I could then apply into my studies.

My thirst for knowledge in relation to inclusion and practice was something the team had thought about before I arrived at the campus and they made every effort to include me in activities which gave an insight into how, at different levels, the university was practicing inclusion and student voice, and how the university is supporting students from widening participation backgrounds.

I felt this was a ‘typical day’ and they offered me a flexible programme which included conference calls; the opportunity to discusses technologies with developers; meetings with active lectures and researchers; a tour of research laboratories (and the walled garden upon my request); to explore how the university is active in different communities (across Britain and abroad) and the opportunity to meet ‘real students’ when I attended the Student Association meeting chaired by the infamous Vice President Equality & Diversity Cherry Day.

Before I arrived for my shadowing experience I thought The Open University incorporated student voice and inclusion into practices but now I understand that inclusion and student voice are weaved into the foundations and forms the heart of the university and I am proud to be part of this democratic community. I felt valued, listened to and respected from all involved in the shadowing experience - my voice was certainly heard by the team.

All in all, it was a very informative day filled with precious insights and an incredible once in a lifetime opportunity to explore inclusion and student voice. However, my words do not do the experience justice, I urge my fellow students to have the courage to take part and experience it for yourself. Finally, request to have a guided tour of the campus, you will not be disappointed!

Jodie Schuster
PEER SUPPORT

"I’m not feeling very motivated today"
"That’s ok, we all get days like that sometimes"
"It’s affecting my TMA"
"Let’s talk it through"

Talk to someone who understands.
oustudents.com/peer-support
Better than superheroes!

Our Peer Support service is back...

The Students Association’s Peer Support service has just returned after a rest – with even more Supporters. You can find more details, including how to contact a Supporter, at oustudents.com/peer-support. You might not want to use the service today, but if you save or bookmark the webpage now you can find it if you need a Supporter. You can also find Peer Support on the OU Student Association’s website within the Support section.

Supporters are OU students wanting to help other OU students. They aren’t Superheroes; Superman and Batman were busy. However, our Supporters are better than Superheroes because they understand what it is like to be a student. Our Supporters have juggled a million things at once, finished their TMA after everyone else has gone to bed, and found 20 minutes here and there for revision or reading. They know the anxiety of waiting for module results and have experienced the joys and some of the problems of being an OU student.

If you want to talk to another student privately, please consider our Supporters. They won’t judge or criticise you but nor will they give you your TMA answers. Unfortunately their supply of chocolate cake has run out but they will provide a listening ear, encouragement, and signposting to where information can be found. They will answer queries, including what you might think are daft questions. You can’t ask the most stupid question, I have that award for asking, “If I start reading the module material before the official start date will I be thrown out of the OU?” Supporters aren’t replacements for your tutor or Student Support Team and they will let you know if your query would be better sent to them.

My time with the OU almost finished part way through my first module 17 years ago because I only talked to other students near the end of the module. Chapter five was so difficult that I only managed 17% on that section of the TMA and felt stupid and useless. At the revision tutorial I discovered everyone found Chapter 5 challenging, not as challenging as I had, but my confidence was boosted by knowing I wasn’t alone in struggling. Even a Supporter saying students struggle with parts of modules would have helped but I didn’t know they existed back then. Supporters can’t solve everything but you’ll only know if they can help you by contacting them.

Alison Kingan
Vice President Student Support
Eduroam and Office 365

Eduroam gives OU students access to the internet when we are in other University buildings. There were huge celebrations behind the scenes including party poppers, cheering and talk of a fireworks display when Eduroam finally became available. It wasn’t the last century when Association reps started requesting students had access to Eduroam but sometimes it felt that way. Tactics used to persuade the OU to get Eduroam access included passing on what students were telling us about needing Eduroam, raising it whenever appropriate, and keeping Eduroam on various meeting agendas. There’s more about Eduroam here.

We raised the issue of Eduroam access and badgered the OU over a long period, sometimes locking horns like stags when the OU told us it wasn’t possible. Changes requested by the Association don’t always follow that route, including students having access to a free Office 365 package. I first heard Office 365 mentioned when the OU asked whether we felt students would use it. We didn’t need asking twice and our horns were discarded while we collaborated with OU staff. Discussions focussed on sharing information with students; accessibility; which applications would be available; and whether OU students must use Office 365 to study. The answer to the last question is – NO!

When we asked the OU to share information with students about Office 365 and the new academic email address, they requested questions students might want answers to. Sending these to the OU, some of which had been raised with us by students, resulted in the FAQ section on the Help Centre, and can be found here.

The OU advertised Office 365 via a message on StudentHome. A link on the left of StudentHome called ‘How to sign up to an Office 365 account’ takes you to a range of information about Office 365, it can be found here.

Eduroam and Office 365 became available for students at the same time but the stories of how each happened are very different.

Alison Kingan
Vice President Student Support

In the last few months we’ve produced several new episodes of our podcast. You can find out about some of the latest developments at the Students Association with updates on the Kitemark Project (a project to measure student engagement at the OU) and Student-Led Projects, which helps students get involved in their local communities.

You can hear from some of our fantastic postgraduate students who give a bite-sized update on their research and those who enjoy history and are passionate about the OU will love our audio campus tour which includes some of the leading experts on OU history.

oustudents.com/podcasts
JOIN THE CLUB!

#OUstudents

- Japan Club
- Pagans, Witches and Spirituality Club
- Public Speaking Club
- Carers Club
- Young at Heart Club
- Mind, Body and Spirit Connections Club
- Fit Club
- Dyslexia Club
- Science Fiction and Fantasy Club
- Animal Admirers Club
- Reading Nook
- Neuro-Diversity Club
- Gaming Club
- Christian Union Club
- Make Club
- Language Club
- Disney Dreamers
- Student Forces Community Club
- Biology Club
- Study Addicts
- Baking Club
- Walking Club
- School of Witchcraft and Wizardry
- Engineering Club
- Tattoo Club

oustudents.com/full-list-of-clubs
OU computing students, we want you!

The Dr Turing Society have been working with BCS, who want to share their message with you....

BCS, the Chartered Institute for IT are looking for proactive, enthusiastic and motivated individuals, like you, to get involved with a potential BCS Students Chapter at the OU which would be spread across regional committees.

BCS chapters are usually computing societies, organising socials and extra curricular events for students. BCS provides support in the form of funding and connection students to the BCS and wider network.

There are many reasons why you should get involved:

- 1 year's free BCS Student Membership*.
- Form links with BCS branches and specialist groups.
- Connect with existing chapters at 40 different Universities.
- Collaborate with fantastic companies such as Mendix (mendix.com) and Sparta Global (www.spartaglobal.com).
- Get to know other like-minded students
- Develop your knowledge and skills through discussion and debate.
- Build your confidence and performance.
- Great for your CV!

Please contact Laura Bartle via laura.bartle@bcs.uk to find out more details or to sign up. There is more information about chapters on our website www.bcs.org/studentchapters. We hope to hear from you soon!

*Free membership is just for one year and only for students on a BCS Students Chapter Committee. One year’s BCS Students Membership is worth £37.

Come and try out for the 2019 University Challenge team!

University Challenge is back and we're looking for potential students to represent The Open University! If you fancy appearing on TV and putting your general knowledge to the test then why not register your interest for the prestigious TV knowledge game show!

oustudents.com/join-our-university-challenge-team

Register for interest closes on Friday, 19 October 2018.
The 37th Winter Weekend in January 2018 featured, among many other topics, Professor Clements, our guest speaker, who talked about Graph Theory and set us some easy and knotty problems on the topic for us to tackle.

He also demonstrated his skill with knots and educated us on clever ways to tie shoelaces and the perils of the reef knot.

The 38th M500 Society Winter Weekend will be held at Florence Boot Hall, Nottingham University from Friday 4 to Sunday, 6 January 2019.

This year people attending for the first time can get up to £25 discount by solving a puzzle (to be announced on our Facebook page).

Groups of new people attending for the first time also get a group discount. Two new attendees booking together get a £50 discount (£25 each), a group of three get £100 and a group of four get £200.

This event offers you the opportunity to present a short paper to friendly, like-minded people, or to just come along and enjoy a weekend sharing your views on an aspect of history that you enjoy.

As a member you will also receive copies of our magazine ‘Open History’ which is full of articles written by members as well as current events of interest to historians.

Go to our website for more details, find out how to join and read about our forthcoming events!
Students for Ethical Science Society

Make a difference...

If you are disturbed by the suffering of animals resulting from their harmful use in research and education, Students for Ethical Science shares your concerns. We are a student society affiliated to the Open University Students Association aiming to peacefully persuade the Open University to replace its harmful use of animals with academically equivalent or superior non-harmful alternatives.

If you are interested in studying Life Sciences, but worried about causing harm to animals, please do not be put off. Even though the University still uses many animals in its research projects every year, you can study for Life Sciences qualifications at the OU without causing harm to animals.

A new a generation of biologists, not prepared to harm animals, would contribute to pioneering humane research methods to further scientific knowledge. This can be helped by trained teachers, who are biologists unwilling to harm animals, breaking the cycle of students being told that they must accept the principle of harming sentient beings in the cause of furthering scientific knowledge and understanding.

However, Brexit is introducing an extra level of uncertainty to the future of animal use in research and testing. The current legal requirements for the use of non-human animals for testing treatments, drugs and toxicity are specified by European Union directives as part of the regulations and standards imposed on EU member states to enable them to trade freely with one another.

This will be affected by the UK’s final deal with the EU on leaving and by the nature of the UK’s trade deals with non-EU countries after Brexit. A major part of trade deals is agreement on standards and regulations with implications for animal welfare, the use of animals in research and intellectual property rights, risking greater restrictions on the ability to access and share the content of research papers. This is further complicated by trade negotiations taking place in secret, enabling corporations to have a controlling influence on trade terms away from public scrutiny.

Our forum, OU Students Association Ethical Science, is open to all current OU students for discussing the science and ethics of animal use, animal intelligence and animal welfare or to talk to us and ask questions. You can find us on the student forums.

By joining us, you would: have access to our members' forum on our website; give weight to our voice with the OU in support of animal welfare; learn about the ethics and science of animal use; have the opportunity to gain experience by helping with our work. To find out more and how to join us, please visit our website or email.
The Conference will put research described as ‘paranormal’ under the microscope of critical scrutiny. Phenomena to be discussed include near-death experiences, poltergeists and the veracity of readings by mediums.

We have as speakers some very well-informed believers in the existence of the paranormal, together with some equally sharp sceptics:

**David Luke**
The University of Greenwich (author of Other Worlds: Psychedelics and Exceptional Human Experience)
‘Psychedelics, psi and other exceptional human experiences’

**Peter Naish**
University of Sussex and Open University
‘Things that go bump in the night: Revisiting old haunts’

**Tricia Robertson**
University of Glasgow, (author of Things you can do when you are dead)
‘Physical research... The Cinderella Science’

**Pim van Lommel**
Cardiologist, Arnhem, The Netherlands (author of Consciousness beyond Life)
‘Nonlocal Consciousness: A concept based on scientific studies on the Near-Death Experience’

**Callum Cooper**
University of Northampton, (Author of Telephone Calls from the Dead)
‘Parapsychology from Life to the Lab’

**Chris Roe**
University of Northampton, (Director of the Centre for the Study of Anomalous Processes)
Title tba

**Frederick Toates**
Open University
‘What is ‘para’ about parapsychology? Brains, Minds and Consciousness’

Visit our [website](#).
Do you have an adventure for our OU student to go on? Is there a subject that you’d like to see them tackle? Let us know at oustudents-magazine@open.ac.uk and maybe your idea will be in the next issue of OU Students Magazine!

It’s the beginning of a new term at The Open University…

… so treat yourself to some merch from the OU Students Shop!

www.oustudentsshop.com