The master logo is the most important visual representation of the brand. Universally recognised, it quickly and easily conveys all of our key brand values. Wherever practical, this primary version of the logo must be used.
Securing the Mission

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The Open University is unique and makes a real difference to people's lives. We lead the way in using innovation to create high quality flexible learning, underpinned and informed by excellence in research. We take pride in our Mission of being ‘open to people, places, methods and ideas’. The Open University is the UK's largest university with more than 260,000 students. OU students are more satisfied than any other university students in the UK, with an overall satisfaction rate of 93% in the National Student Survey 2012.

The Strategic Plan 2012-15 is the means by which we secure The Open University’s Mission and thrive as a University within the new Higher Education environment across the four nations of the UK and internationally. It enables us to build on the success we have already achieved by being clear where we will focus our efforts over the coming years. Seven Strategic Priorities have been identified as the key areas that will make a critical difference to the University's ability to achieve this goal.

This document provides a summary of the University's Strategic Plan. Responsibilities for the delivery of the Plan have been clearly defined and mechanisms have been put in place to enable the University to track progress and be able to identify when the objectives have been achieved.

We are committed to building upon the fantastic work that the University does in helping students achieve their study goals and in contributing to the enrichment of society as a whole. Everyone in the University has an important role to play in the achievement of the Strategy so that we can continue transforming lives through education.
Our Mission

The Open University is open to people, places, methods and ideas
Our Values

**Inclusive**

- We play a unique role in society, making Higher Education open to all
- We promote social justice through the development of knowledge and skills

**Innovative**

- We lead the learning revolution, placing innovation at the heart of our teaching and research
- We continuously seek new and better ways to inspire and enable learning
- We create world class research and teaching

**Responsive**

- We respond to the needs of individuals and employers and the communities in which they live and work
- We are dedicated to supporting our students’ learning success
The changing environment

The funding and student finance regimes in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will become even more divergent from 2012-13.

In England, where the majority of our students live, the Government is:

- **Significantly reducing funding** – by 80% in the case of teaching funding for the sector.
- Enabling Higher Education Institutions to **increase fees** up to £9,000 pa.
- Introducing **loans for part-time students** – but only if they are studying for a qualification and at an intensity of at least 25% of full-time study.
- Actively stimulating **competition in the sector**, for example, by making it easier for commercial providers to obtain degree-awarding powers and encouraging the delivery of more higher education provision through further education colleges.
- Increasing the competition for **research funding** and concentrating it on centres of excellence.

The exact arrangements in Wales are yet to be decided although there is a commitment to introduce loans for part-time students. There are no major changes planned yet to the prevailing system of funding or financial support in Scotland. The future plans in Northern Ireland are not yet clear.
The Open University is impacted by this changing UK environment to a greater extent than most universities:

- We are the only institution which operates in each of the four nations within the UK.
- We are predominantly a part-time provider and the greatest competition for new entrants in England is expected in that market.
- We will lose at least £90 million of government funding overall, possibly considerably more.
- We have historically had a module-based rather than qualification-based offer.

Disruption and uncertainty in the sector is likely to continue for some time. Our Mission and on-going viability as an institution are at risk if we do not manage our response to these changes in our core UK market effectively.
The Open University today

The Open University approaches these changes from a position of strength.

This includes record student numbers, a diverse student base, high levels of student satisfaction and strong differentiation from other providers. We have reach outside of the UK, with a number of established international partnerships and thousands of international students studying directly with us each year.

We have a strong reputation for research which enhances our academic standing and are proud of the contribution we make to wider society.
The University has unique capabilities and distinctive ways of working which enable us to compete effectively and which we will retain:

- We are focused on providing high-quality, part-time Higher Education to adults.
- We have an open access policy.
- We have a unique model of supported open learning.
- We are committed to extending opportunities for educational success to those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- We are a trusted, well-known brand with unique reach, for example, through our partnership with the BBC and our strong presence on Apple iTunesU.
- We are a pan-UK University, operating at scale and delivering across each of the four UK nations.
The Open University going forward

The University will continue to welcome all types of student and we will maintain the diversity of our student base.

We will focus on those students that our capabilities make us uniquely well placed to serve, and where we can make the biggest difference:

• Employed adults without a degree who are looking for a higher education qualification to improve their careers.

• Adults without a degree who are not employed and are looking for a higher education qualification to help them get into gainful employment.

• Adults looking to enhance their knowledge or skills by studying one, two or more modules. This group is more likely to study for personal enrichment or for a mixture of leisure and career-related reasons.

• Employed graduates who are looking to increase their career prospects by studying for a postgraduate qualification.
Our primary effort through to 2015 will be aimed at helping students achieve their study goals. In particular, we will focus on offering coherent and supported routes to qualifications – including certificates, diplomas and degrees – alongside a modules-based offer.

This is critical because:

- The majority of our current and potential future students are studying in order to obtain valued qualifications.

- Research indicates that the availability of a government loan makes a big difference to students’ willingness to study at higher prices and only those studying for a qualification will be able to access government loans in England and probably in Wales. So our future financial sustainability is tied to our ability to support effectively those who are seeking qualifications.

- Governments’ long-term support to institutions is likely to be dependent on the perceived return on public investment, reflected in particular in student qualification completion rates and improved employment prospects.

We will do this whilst maintaining the quality and academic standing of our qualifications and modules. We recognise that the balance of demand for qualifications and modules from students and government will vary across the nations.

We will also ensure that we convey the distinctive value of Open University study through our marketing activities.

This sharpening of our focus on the needs of students whilst continuing to make a broader contribution as a University is reflected in our Strategic Plan.
Our Strategy is underpinned by a commitment to our distinctive Mission.

Our Strategic Intent for the period 2012-15 is to secure the Mission and to thrive as a University by delivering a step-change in how effectively we help students achieve their study goals.
We will focus on seven Priorities across two different areas.

Seven Strategic Priorities have been identified as the key areas that will make a critical difference to the successful achievement of the Strategic Intent. These are grouped under two objectives: ensuring that we deliver an outstanding student experience, and enhancing the capabilities of the University. The way in which the Priorities support the achievement of the Strategic Intent is encapsulated in our Strategic Plan diagram.
Delivering the Strategy

The seven Priorities represent seven areas of particular focus, effort and change for the University in the coming years.

Each Priority has a clear objective, a statement setting out how things will be different once the objective is achieved and a clear plan for how it will deliver. Responsibility for the achievement of each Priority lies with a senior executive. The University is tracking key performance measures for the successful achievement of the Priorities, as well as for the Strategic Plan as a whole.

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed and refreshed each year in the light of progress that has been made and changes that we anticipate or experience in the external environment.

Through the execution of the Strategy we will ensure that the University builds on its success in transforming lives through education and continues to thrive and deliver its mission in a changing world.
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Need help with something? Contact: brand-enquiries@open.ac.uk

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- Minimum size

Illegal use of the logo

Related assets available to download:
- Introduction
- Brand Principles
- Print Guidelines
- Sitemap
- Online Guidelines

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