Reaching out to Adult Learners: What we do and why

Dr Liz Marr: Director of Teaching
The first, and most urgent task before us is to cater for the many thousands of people, fully capable of a higher education, who, for one reason or another, do not get it, or do not get as much of it as they can turn to advantage, or as they discover, sometimes too late, that they need. Only in recent years have we come to realise how many such people there are, and how large are the gaps in educational provision through which they can fall. The existing system, for all its expansion, misses and leaves aside a great unused reservoir of human talent and potential.”
Our mission: open to…
Facts and figures

- Since 1969 over 2 million people have studied with the OU
- Approximately 180,000 people (over 10,000 from overseas) now study either on qualifications or individual modules.
- 73% are working full or part time
- 10%+ declare a disability (around 20,000)
- 1,800 students on more than 200 courses in 150 prisons or secure environments.
- Average age of new undergraduate OU students is 29
- Only 9% of our new students are over 50
- 30% of new OU undergraduates are under 25
- 49% with low or no PEQs
Widening Access and Success at the OU

- The Access Observatory

Research and Scholarship

Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning

Seminar series and biennial conference

Engagement with national bodies: FACE, UALL, Action on Access, SEEC
Opening up higher education
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