

Shaken or stirred: What do an Open degree and Pina Colada have in common?

video:OPPR003X

Karen Foley:

So, what have we got here? Why did you think this was a good idea then, to demonstrate the Open Programme with this plethora of non-alcoholic drinks?

Peter Taylor:

Well first of all, the Open Programme is for sophisticated students, so we needed a sophisticated environment to talk about the Open Programme. And secondly, the Open Programme's all about mixing, it's about mixing curriculum: at different levels, taking a subject here, a subject there, and putting it together... and that's what cocktails are about. Mixing different drinks and putting it all together, and such that the final product is greater than the individual parts.

Karen Foley:

Okay, well you have sold it to me, even though there is no alcohol involved. Alright, so how does this Open Programme work? I know – Helen, so we have to talk about this before we get Peter on to Chemistry (laughs) – so we need to outline –

Helen Cooke:

(laughing) – Otherwise we won't talk about anything else...

Karen Foley:

We won't! How does the Open Programme work? Because this is basically a way of getting a tailor-made degree that suits you, and one of the things I know that we talked about beforehand is how people will often fit this into their interests, their qualifications and employment, to get something that really really works for them, and throughout this session we'll be talking a little bit about Languages, a bit about Maths, and ways of fitting things in that are really interesting.

Peter Taylor:

So it's all about students choosing the modules that meet their needs. As you said, it might be something that you're interested in, you've always wanted to do – it may be something to do with your work... Lots of reasons why students choose different kind of modules, and it may look a really odd mixture of modules to anybody looking in outside, but if you look at the whole student, their kind of whole life, it actually makes sense to them and the way it all fits together. So the important thing is – and we hold up our...

Helen Cooke:

So there's lots of different ways of building an Open Degree, so of your 360 credits you might choose to do a range of different combinations at each of the three levels, so at Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3. That's one option, you can kind of mix and match as you like. The other way of doing it is perhaps choosing two particular subjects – so you might choose Maths and Music, for example. And you then study 180 credits of Maths and 180 credits of Music, and obviously you can mix and match those subjects as you choose, what might be relevant to your career, your own personal interests, and

providing that you study the right number of credits at each level then you can build a degree that's unique to you.