Teaching OU courses in-house

An alternative scheme to deliver education and training in workplace and community settings

2009/2010
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Introducing the in-house teaching scheme

The in-house teaching scheme is an innovative initiative developed by The Open University (OU) Faculty of Health & Social Care. Through partnership, organisations and groups are able to deliver high quality learning opportunities in their own setting. Teaching and learning can take place in workplaces and community settings in exciting and effective ways to meet the needs of individuals, employers, organisations and communities. Running since 1997, the in-house teaching scheme has a track record of developing people and helping management to meet strategic aims in a range of contexts across a range of sectors and settings.

The partnership between the OU and employers or community organisations is key to its success. The OU brings unique expertise and resources, most notably our supported open learning model in which students are members of a tutorial group and study alongside other students with the support of a personal tutor. This is underpinned by high quality learning materials, quality assurance and assessment along with specific training for tutors.

As a partner we will help you to identify which OU courses might meet your local needs and select students for a learning group. We will also help you explore possible tuition arrangements, which include nominating a tutor from your own organisation (who will be approved and supported by us), or the appointment of established OU tutors from our teaching teams.
What people say:

**K260 Death and dying: Developing skills in the North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust**

As the lead for palliative care within our busy NHS Trust, I was concerned about the lack of fundamental skills that some nurses demonstrated when they were looking after patients who were dying and their families. Unfortunately, the constraints on the training budget of the Trust suggested that only very limited numbers of nurses could access courses that would give them a greater understanding of the intricacies of the care required by this special client group. I studied the course Death and dying (K260) when I was an OU student myself. I persuaded the Trust that we would run it as a pilot venture in collaboration with the OU.

This collaboration means that we are more flexible in how we run the course and we can tailor its application according to student needs. We decide when the tutorials will be held and as I, the approved course tutor, work on site, students can access me on a daily basis if they so wish. Financially, the burden on the Trust is reduced – I teach the course as part of my ongoing workload and the cost per student is less. So for this year at least, we can have ten nurses who should all achieve a recognised outcome, whereas if we had accessed an outside course, we may well have only been able to offer it to one or two. The OU scheme can only lead to an enhancement in nursing skills and thus facilitate enhanced patient care. We already have names of people who wish to sign up next year!

Margaret Kendall, Macmillan Consultant Nurse in Palliative Care

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**K311 Promoting public health: The Open University in the East Midlands works with Derbyshire County PCT**

This programme is now in its eighth year and delivers K311 to frontline practitioners in Derbyshire County Primary Care Trust.

133 frontline staff have so far taken and passed this course from a range of sectors and professions, including health visitors, community midwives, district nurses, environmental health officers, health promotion staff, community development workers, physiotherapists, community mental health workers and health-related voluntary sector staff.

Retention rates and results are much better in this group than the national average for the course, demonstrating the additional benefits of being part of a collaborative, employer supported group. Students also complete an evaluation of their learning experience which is always highly positive.

A number of students have moved into health promotion as a career as a result of taking the course and approximately ten have gone on to take a masters degree in public health or health promotion.

Additional benefit is gained if a member of PCT staff can teach the course, as is the case in Derbyshire, as this increases organisational support and provides an accessible tutor for students.

Julie Hirst, Health Improvement Specialist – public health specialist, Derbyshire County PCT
K303 Managing care: The Open University in Scotland, in partnership with Orkney Islands Council and Orkney College

In 2004 Orkney Islands Council sponsored eight students onto The Open University course Managing care. This course is particularly attractive in Scotland because it meets the Scottish Social Services Council's registration requirements for managers in a range of social services settings. The students were all drawn from the Council’s Department of Community Social Services.

The in-house tutor nominated by the Council, a lecturer in social care at Orkney College, has worked closely, for some years, with the Training Section of the Council’s Department of Community Social Services and has long experience of running courses in social care for the Council and other social care agencies in Orkney.

The partnership was a great success. Tutorials were held at the college, where Open University students had access to the same support available to people registered on Orkney College courses. Some K303 students, for example, took advantage of the College’s learning support services. All the students passed the course and said that the presence of a locally-based tutor and the support of the wider College services were important factors in both their success and enjoyment of the course.

After the K303 cohort had completed their studies a further year long partnership with Orkney College was established. Funding from the OU allowed any Open University student on a Level 1/SCQF Level 7 course to access learning support from the College either face to face or by video-conferencing. This example demonstrates the importance of the college sector as a partner in the success of OU provision.
Benefits of the in-house teaching scheme

For employers, workplaces and organisations

1. Relevant courses
We have a strong national track record in designing up-to-date practice related courses in the health and social care field. All courses are vocationally relevant and contribute to recognised pathways leading to accredited awards. Many can also be studied singly for continuing professional development (CPD) purposes. Provision includes courses that:

- provide an integrated vocational route *(An introduction to health and social care (K101))*
- offer underpinning knowledge for National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications (particularly the National Occupational Standards in Health and Social Care)
- have commissions by the Department of Health and other national agencies on issues such as mental health and palliative care
- are part of the Faculty’s social work programme, with awards approved by the General Social Care Council in England, the Scottish Social Services Council and the Care Council for Wales
- form a work-based pre-registration nursing programme, validated by the Nursing and Midwifery Council
- are part of a Diploma of Higher Education in Health and Social Care that is aimed at supporting workers in various healthcare settings
- are part of the Faculty’s Foundation Degree in Youth Justice (England and Wales), developed in collaboration with the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales.

2. High quality and educationally sound provision
We produce some of the UK’s finest teaching resources. Our course materials are rigorously tested and academically sound. We will also approve the course tutor you might select to ensure they meet our quality assurance standards and the specific requirements to teach particular courses.

3. Convenient and cost effective
With The Open University you can offer in-house education and training programmes without having to develop and produce the teaching resources yourself. Staff education and training can be tailored to meet local priorities and training needs. You decide what the composition of the tutorial group will be because you select the students. Distance learning is inherently cost effective as students can carry on working as they study. There are additional savings if you nominate your own staff to tutor as part of their work – fees are reduced by a third.

4. Innovative, value added and capacity building
Our courses add value through ensuring ‘fit’ by choosing your own tutor and venue, or linking into other in-house training provision. In this way learning can be embedded in the organisation whilst making best use of The Open University’s quality assurance and outcomes. Any staff member who is appointed as a tutor will be able to take advantage of the personal and professional development opportunities offered by the OU, thus enhancing their skills and performance.

www.open.ac.uk/study
and for Higher and Further Education establishments

**Increased range and flexibility of provision**

Education providers can teach OU courses in-house, developing their own programmes by offering a wider, more flexible range of courses to their students – without the cost of developing resources.

Further Education colleges and sixth forms can offer progression from vocational or pre-university level course by running top-quality undergraduate courses in house, for example The Open University’s Young Applicants in Schools and Colleges Scheme (YASS) which enables academically gifted students in Years 12 and 13 to study a wide range of undergraduate modules at first-year level alongside their AS and A levels.

For The Open University such collaborations with Higher Education and Further Education providers offer real opportunities to innovate in the curriculum and meet diverse needs.
How it works

Setting up your in-house teaching scheme will involve several steps

**Step 1**

**Identifying a course that meets your needs and setting up the partnership**

Our course levels equate to the three years of a full-time degree course, with Level 1 corresponding to the first year of study and Level 3 to the third year. Credit points identify the amount of study undertaken. An honours degree in England and Wales normally comprises of 360 credit points, so a 60-point course equates to 1/6 of a degree or half of one year of full-time study.

Some courses which work well when taught in-house:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>An introduction to health and social care (K101)</th>
<th>60 points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offers a thorough grounding in health and social care issues and is an ideal starting point for students wishing to work towards a diploma or degree. Students who pass the course are entitled to a Certificate in Health and Social Care. There is an optional integrated vocational route (IVR) offering a Level 3 vocational award.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Challenging ideas in mental health (K272)</th>
<th>30 points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Examines emerging and contemporary debates about mental health from a holistic perspective and will appeal to workers in health and social care as well as service users/survivors and others with an interest in the subject.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Death and dying (K260)</th>
<th>30 points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taking a wide-ranging approach to the subject of death, this course is suitable for carers, people with an interest in the subject and will be of particular interest to those working with dying or bereaved people.</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Working with children and families (K204)</th>
<th>60 points</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spanning the range of health, education, childcare and social care settings, this course enables students to develop the knowledge and skills to work effectively with children and families.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Managing care (K303)</th>
<th>60 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Takes a practice-led and service user based approach to managing care. Relates to N/SVQ Level 4 in Management. Students who pass the course are entitled to a Certificate in Managing Care.</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Promoting public health: skills, perspectives and practice (K311)</th>
<th>60 Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promoting public health is everyone's business, you'll be encouraged to challenge your existing assumptions around current policies and interventions. A Certificate in Promoting Public Health is awarded for successful completion of the course.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Mentorship and assessment in health and social care settings (K320)</th>
<th>30 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This interprofessional course is for practitioners who support and assess learners in practice in health and/or social care settings. Focussing on mentorship in the practice setting, it will enable you to become a credible, effective, valued supporter of learning and assessment in practice.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Youth: perspectives and practice (KE308)</th>
<th>60 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students undertake an in-depth examination of young people’s lives, exploring change and diversity in identities, relationships and everyday practices. Students who pass the course are entitled to a Certificate in Youth: Perspectives and Practice.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please make contact with a member of the Health and Social Care team in your region (see back page).

For details of these and other courses from the Faculty of Health & Social Care go to www.open.ac.uk/study
Help with discussing the options

The Open University is organised into 13 local centres based in regions and nations (see page 16). Local staff for the Faculty of Health & Social Care can advise you on how to use the in-house scheme to meet your needs and make best use of your capabilities.

There is a range of issues you will need to consider:

- what you want to achieve and how OU courses will support this
- how students will be funded
- practicalities of teaching and learning
- issues such as evaluation and progression

You will be able to tap into our experience of working with other partners. We can discuss what tuition package would best suit your needs.

One of the most exciting opportunities our scheme offers is your greater ownership of the delivery of OU courses through the nomination of a tutor from your organisation, and a ‘Collaborative Teaching Agreement’ set up between us to deliver a course jointly. Under a collaborative agreement the roles and responsibilities are divided as follows.
Roles and responsibilities

You (the ‘partner organisation’)

- recruit students for the group
- nominate a suitably qualified and experienced course tutor (see page 13), who provides individual support to students, group tutorials and marks and comments on students’ work. Many tutors in collaborative partnerships incorporate this into their daily work. Any additional remuneration is up to you
- provide suitable teaching premises.

We (The Open University):

- register the students
- interview and approve the course tutor you have selected, through our normal recruitment procedures
- provide the tutor with resources and guidelines to deliver the course
- provide students with open learning materials needed to study the course
- provide induction, support, training and continuing professional development to tutors in collaboration with you
- take responsibility for quality assurance and quality control, including feedback to tutors
- undertake the administrative processes around course assessments and examinations
- give appropriate awards and credit points to successful students.
How much will it cost and how will I fund it?

Our course fees usually include tuition costs. However, when the tutor is provided by the partner organisation a reduced rate is charged for this option, normally saving you around a third of the standard fee.

For current standard fees please see our website at www.open.ac.uk/study

Timing

An example of a timetable of activity for a course starting in February is shown below.

Ideally, the paperwork (see right) associated with running an in-house group should be completed at least two months before the course begins. Late student registrations (during the month before the course begins) are acceptable as long as we have already been notified of the total number of places booked. However, late registration means students could receive their learning materials late and miss out on local induction or other events.

Sample schedule for the in-house teaching scheme for a course starting in February

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Who</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negotiate scheme that meets needs with local Health and Social Care team</td>
<td>Anytime</td>
<td>Partner with Health and Social Care regional staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make group booking for anticipated number of places required</td>
<td>August/September</td>
<td>Partner or contact at OU regional centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit students</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutor nomination</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutor approval and appointment</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>OU regional centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student registrations</td>
<td>November – December</td>
<td>Partner arranges with OU regional centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student induction</td>
<td>December – January</td>
<td>OU regional staff or Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutor induction</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>OU regional staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course starts</td>
<td>February</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutorials</td>
<td>February – October</td>
<td>Partner or OU to arrange tutorial venues. Tutor manages students' learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment marking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence tuition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam (if applicable)</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>OU arrange venue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 2

Setting up your student group

Recruiting the students for a group is one of the partner organisation’s key responsibilities. We can provide information, advice and support to help you identify and recruit appropriately including detailed information about the course and other aspects of study. Partners often put on information events for prospective applicants to clarify opportunities and expectations.

Partner organisations need to ensure that students are appropriately matched with courses. Students need to be aware of issues such as: what supported open learning involves; the time commitments for the course; the level and range of content. For example, a Level 3/SCQF Level 10 course such as Promoting public health: skills, perspectives and practice (K311) makes intellectual demands appropriate to the final year of an honours degree. Students would be expected to be familiar with relevant concepts, and the course assumes some practical experience. The course is worth 60 points which requires an average of 16 hours a week to study.

Although generally we do not have formal entry requirements, we do offer advice to students to help them decide whether the course and level of study is appropriate. Advice is available from your local Open University centre (see page 16). You should also note that for some courses access is limited by the requirements of professional bodies.

How many students would form a viable group?

There is no minimum number of students for a collaborative teaching agreement where you provide the tutor.

If – after deciding to set up the arrangement – you can’t form a viable group after all, it might be an option for students to register individually with the OU and join an open OU group to study in the normal way. Alternatively, our local staff may be able to offer flexible tutorial arrangements within the normal OU programme (for example, holding tutorials at a particular workplace, if it suits the rest of the tutorial group).

Students with disabilities

We have a range of special teaching and support services designed to enable people with disabilities and additional requirements to participate in OU courses. These may include audio recordings of course materials, transcripts of audio material, personal induction loops, interpreters and special exam arrangements. A booklet entitled ‘Meeting Your Needs’ gives details and is available from OU local centres (see page 16).
Step 3

Arranging tuition for your students

As a partner we will discuss tuition arrangements with you. If you are nominating your own tutor, we will help you to do this as we need to follow our own quality assurance procedures. After we have formally interviewed and approved them, we will supervise and support them in the same way as other OU tutors, as part of their ongoing staff development.

Some partners choose to enhance student support by providing additional preparation and induction – our experience is that this early support improves retention and success.

There are specific requirements to teach particular courses. Information about this is available on the OU website, see: www.open.ac.uk/employment/associate-lecturers

We have also developed a generic person specification for course tutors, who should have:

- a degree or equivalent, or a professional or vocational qualification in the subject area they wish to teach
- an appreciation of how adults learn and an appreciation of study skills
- the ability and willingness to promote the learning of adults through correspondence, telephone, face-to-face and, where appropriate online tuition
- the ability to use information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching and supporting students and communicating with other areas of the OU
- the ability to work with students from diverse educational, cultural and work backgrounds
- the ability to work with students with disabilities
- a commitment to student-centred learning
- an understanding of and commitment to equal opportunities and diversity policies and practices
- an organised and systematic approach to work
- the potential to work successfully in a team and the potential to work independently
- good written and oral communication skills
- a commitment to personal staff development
- availability and accessibility to students
- ability to travel to designated tutorial centres.

It is a requirement of the role that all tutors have access to a computer, as all courses contain an ICT element.
The course tutor role

The work of OU tutors includes:

- providing correspondence tuition, assessing students’ work according to given marking schemes, and giving feedback to students to help them in their learning
- providing academic support through face-to-face, telephone or electronic teaching methods
- monitoring the progress of students on their course, including making contact with students who do not submit assignments and authorising the late submission of assignments where appropriate
- being a first point of contact for students for course-related and study-related advice and support, facilitating study groups where appropriate, and referring other matters or enquiries to Student Services and regionally based faculty staff
- making contact with all students to welcome them to the course and, for students new to the OU, providing an introduction to the OU’s method of supported open learning
- helping with the development of study skills in connection with the course
- making proactive contact with students at a number of defined points in the course (e.g. first assignment, examination support)
- identifying individual student needs for additional support, and either referring students directly to Student Services for information and advice or contacting Student Services or regionally based faculty staff to initiate follow-up action
- providing feedback, through a variety of mechanisms (e.g. survey response, attendance at debriefings), on the student learning experience
- taking part in staff development activities to maintain and enhance professional experience and commitment to personal development
- using ICT, when appropriate, for teaching and supporting students, accessing information to undertake duties in relation to students, facilitating contact with academic units, and dealing with administrative contact and communications with the OU.

Under a Collaborative Teaching Agreement you, as the partner organisation, are responsible for ensuring that tutors are allocated time to carry out their duties. Any remuneration for these tutors is the responsibility of the partner organisation. Quality assurance of their tutoring is the responsibility of the OU.

Benefits for tutors

If you opt for a full collaborative teaching arrangement we will offer your appointed tutor appropriate staff development and support, which will include:

- role briefing, which usually takes the form of a face-to-face briefing covering the role of the OU tutor. This includes correspondence tuition, OU assessment and other procedures, student support, monitoring, mentoring, support materials for tutors and an introduction to the local Open University centre. This will be given as part of the local induction programme for all new tutors
- continuing professional development – a programme of face-to-face meetings open to all Faculty of Health & Social Care tutors in the local centre or some other convenient venue covering issues of interest and concern
- monitoring of teaching and assessment
- mentoring – new tutors will be given a mentor, who will normally be experienced in tutoring their course
- support materials. Tutors will be provided with course materials.

Also available are ‘Open Teaching Toolkits’, and online information about how to support open learners, stationery and administrative mailings.
How much tuition is involved?

You will need to think about the workload if you nominate your own tutor. Average weekly workloads for tutors vary according to many factors, including the size of the student group. We estimate that the average weekly workload during the course (for example, from February to October) is 6-7 hours a week for a 60-point course. This estimate is based on a group of 20 students. However, the workload is not usually evenly distributed. For example, the work associated with correspondence teaching is concentrated around scheduled submission dates for assignments. This will vary depending on the course. The tutor may also have additional commitments such as:

- getting to know the course materials
- familiarising him/herself with our systems
- attending staff development.
Locally based expertise and support

The OU in London
*Area covered:* Greater London
Tel: 020 7485 6597

The OU in the South East
*Area covered:* Kent, Surrey, East Sussex, West Sussex
Tel: 01342 327821

The OU in the South
*Area covered:* Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Channel Islands, Dorset, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Oxfordshire, part of Wiltshire
Tel: 01865 327000

The OU in the South West
*Area covered:* Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Isles of Scilly, most of Wiltshire (excluding Salisbury)
Tel: 0117 929 9641

The OU in the West Midlands
*Area covered:* Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire, most of Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands, Worcestershire
Tel: 0121 426 1661

The OU in the East Midlands
*Area covered:* Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, most of Derbyshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, part of Staffordshire (Burton-on-Trent area)
Tel: 0115 962 5451

The OU in the East of England
*Area covered:* Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Suffolk
Tel: 01223 364721

The OU in Yorkshire
*Area covered:* North, South and West Yorkshire, East Riding of Yorkshire
Tel: 0113 244 4431

The OU in the North West
*Area covered:* Cheshire, part of Derbyshire, Isle of Man, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside
Tel: 0161 998 7272

The OU in the North
*Area covered:* Cumbria, Durham, Northumberland, Teeside, Tyne and Wear
Tel: 0191 477 6100

The OU in Wales
Tel: 029 2047 1019

The OU in Scotland
Tel: 0131 226 3851

The OU in Ireland
Tel: 028 9024 5025

What to do next

To find out more contact your local region or:

External Engagement Team
Faculty of Health & Social Care
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
MK7 6AA
Tel: 01908 654976
hsc-partnerships@open.ac.uk
www.open.ac.uk/hsc

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