OPEN TO PEOPLE, PLACES, METHODS AND IDEAS
The Open University (OU) is a world leader in the design, content and delivery of supported open learning. The OU’s work promotes educational opportunity and social justice through high-quality university education for all who wish to realise their ambitions and fulfil their potential, regardless of where they started life. Since 1969, more than two million people have experienced this life-changing learning through their study with the University.

The OU’s unique social mission, to widen access to higher education with research excellence through pedagogic innovation and collaborative partnership, underpins the teaching we deliver to around 176,000 students annually as the UK’s largest university, and the only one operating in all four nations.

Conducted within a digital environment, the OU’s teaching and research is designed to have impact, influence policy and practice, and change lives for the better, in the UK and across the world.

The OU’s innovative, responsive and inclusive approach to delivering world-class, part-time education to individuals across the four nations of the UK and worldwide, makes a significant contribution to employability, productivity, and to the UK’s economy.
The Faculty of Business and Law (FBL) has a strong reputation as a provider of high-quality management and legal education, bringing together two schools – The Open University Business School and The Open University Law School.

For more than 30 years, The Open University Business School has been a leader in flexible and accessible high-quality business and management education. We are proud to be part of an elite and exclusive group of fewer than 1% of business schools worldwide which hold the coveted triple accreditation.

We have established strong alliances with employers as a result of the flexible way we deliver our qualifications. Our International Advisory Board (IAB) works closely with the Executive Dean and management team, in an advisory role, to provide international business and management expertise to support the delivery of our research and teaching.

The Open University Business School is highly distinctive due to our engagement with large numbers of students at the point of practice, our wide exposure to international perspectives of business and management, and our enduring emphasis on issues of social importance.

The Open University Business School

The Open University Law School

The Faculty of Business and Law

- Academic staff: 186
- Research students: 74
- Research staff: 11
- Visiting academics: 18
- Academic-related staff: 65
- Support staff: 34
- Associate Lecturers (Tutors): 567
- More than 11,300 current students

More than 27,300 MBA alumni around the world

For further information:
- International Advisory Board (IAB)
- The Open University Business School
- The Open University Law School

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More than 11,300 current students
An Active Research Environment

The Open University’s ground-breaking multi-media platforms, open approach to innovative methods and ideas, and commitment to cross-disciplinary research allows the Business School to develop world-leading approaches to designing, executing and disseminating research with national and international reach.

There are many sources of internal and external funding available to researchers and research fellows at the OU. The Business School’s Research and Enterprise Team supports academics to source and apply for funding to aid their research, while seedcorn funding is also available for projects in early development. The Business School has a unique ability, and proven expertise, in establishing new centres of research excellence via philanthropic and corporate funding. Our current academic departments and research areas are:

Department for Public Leadership and Social Enterprise (PULSE)

The Department commits to generating public and social value through the impact of their work on research, policy and practice in the areas of interorganisational collaboration and collaborative governance, public and voluntary sector leadership and management, social enterprise and entrepreneurship, and business ethics, corporate social responsibility and sustainability.

Its research successfully combines a critical understanding of leadership and management with practical relevance by working closely with practitioners. The reputation and success of the Department is manifested in the work of a strategic research area, a research centre of excellence, and two research clusters.

Citizenship and Governance strategic research area

Citizenship and Governance is a strategic research area for The Open University. Working with Social Science academics, this interdisciplinary research cluster is rethinking the changing relationships between states, markets and citizens in the 21st century, and the challenges of governance and leadership on global issues such as migration, climate change and security. The research encompasses global issues like migration to localised spheres – via organisational structures and practices that create public and social value.

The Centre for Voluntary Sector Leadership (CVSL)

Established with a generous philanthropic gift from investor and alumnus Anthony Nutt, the Centre leads on new areas of research where there are significant leadership knowledge and solutions-based gaps. It provides free and flexible leadership development opportunities, and collaborates with organisations in the sector to create leadership development resources including Local Learning Clubs and digital learning modules.

Social and Sustainable Enterprise (SSE) research cluster

This research cluster addresses the connections between entrepreneurial activity, innovation and the transition towards more environmentally and socially sustainable ways of doing business. Current research specialisms include social and environmental practice in SMEs and social enterprises, impact investment in socially and environmentally responsible enterprises, green innovations and start-up ventures, and issues related to enterprise education and pedagogy.

Space Exploration Analysis and Research (SPEAR) research cluster

This is a cross-faculty and cross-disciplinary research collaboration that builds upon the expertise and reputational capital of The Open University in space science and exploration and socioeconomic and business analysis. It draws upon

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Citizenship and Governance
The Centre for Voluntary Sector Leadership (CVSL)
Social and Sustainable Enterprise (SSE)
an international network of academics, policy makers and practitioners engaged directly and indirectly in the space sector. Examples of research projects include evaluating the European Space Agency (ESA) exploration programme and SpacePort Scotland among others.

**POLICING ORGANISATION AND PRACTICE (POP)**

This new department is made up of an interdisciplinary team with diverse expertise in contemporary policing. It seeks to deliver flexible and engaging curriculum that meets the needs of policing practitioners and organisations nationally and internationally. The team are engaged in a wide range of research, scholarship and knowledge exchange activities working collaboratively with our police partners though our faculty Centre for Policing Research and Learning (CPRL).

Areas of expertise within the team include:
- Police diversity and culture;
- Counter-terrorism;
- Evidence-based policing;
- Police ethics and accountability;
- Police education and professionalisation;
- Policing Mental Health.

**The Centre for Policing Research and Learning (CPRL)**

The Centre works with 22 police agencies across the UK, and academics from across the OU to create and use research and education to improve policing. CPRL’s ambitious, innovative and wide-ranging programme of activities involves research, teaching and learning and knowledge exchange with national and international impact.

**DEPARTMENT FOR STRATEGY AND MARKETING (DSM)**

The Department is a vibrant hub for research and teaching in the key business disciplines of marketing and strategic management, with recognised research expertise in international strategy, non-market strategy, consumer behaviour and social marketing.

**Social and Responsible Marketing research cluster**

This focuses on research and research-led pedagogy related to marketing theory and practice aimed at positive societal impact. Key research themes include social marketing, responsible marketing and consumption, as well as strategic marketing for sustainability. Additional areas of interest include marketing-led corporate social responsibility, marketing ethics, arts and cultural marketing and innovation and social enterprise.

**Strategic Management and Leadership research cluster**

In contrast to strategy groups in other business schools, we do not just focus on commercial organisations and the private sector, but also consider strategy in public service organisations – including the public sector and not-for-profit organisations – which better reflects the make-up of our student population and society in general. Being culturally diverse, we have a global perspective on strategy and leadership, and we conduct research in Africa and Asia as well as the UK and Europe.
I find the University provides a supportive environment for research including with external partners, across academic disciplines and internationally, to strive for social justice.

**Professor Jean Hartley**
The Open University Business School

### DEPARTMENT FOR PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS (DPO)

The Department houses a diverse group of academics who research many aspects of work and organisations. These can be broadly understood as centring on organisation studies and organisational psychology; and management and organisational learning, processes, change and innovation. Members of the department also have an interest in academic practices like research ethics and the politics of knowledge production.

**Research into Employment, Empowerment and Futures (REEF)**

We seek to explore and shape the future direction of empowerment, work and society with dedicated research into this area. In partnership with The People Space, this academic centre of excellence draws on the Department for People and Organisations’ scholarly expertise on themes of identity, leadership, gender, bodies, ethics, power and learning to empower policy makers, organisational leaders, social practitioners and people from across contexts to work together to co-create innovative solutions for meeting these coming opportunities and challenges.

**Gendered Organisational Practice (GOP) research cluster**

This research cluster takes feminist solidarity as a starting point to create a space where feminists of any gender can share insights and knowledge from academic study and practice. The cluster fosters continuous collaboration and exchange between practitioners and academics and provides a hub for those interested in developing equality through their research, but also for practitioners wanting to make their organisations more egalitarian and fairer places. Current areas of expertise include gendered working bodies, feminist organising and gender and sexuality.

### DEPARTMENT FOR ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE (DAF)

The Department seeks to deliver rigorous and relevant finance and accounting education that enhances our students’ ability to analyse and explain complex financial decision-making problems that they may face in their personal and professional contexts. It also seeks to deliver nationally or internationally excellent research in accounting and finance that makes meaningful contributions to the academic literature and/or public policy related to accounting, financial markets and institutions, financial management and investments in real and financial assets.

**Centre for Public Understanding of Finance, Institutions and Networks (PUFIN)**

The Centre focuses on research, teaching and public engagement on topics related to savings, debt and spending, and investment decisions. It works to improve public understanding of financial decision-making through its research and the delivery of free Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), providing individuals with the tools to make sound financial decisions. The Centre has reached more than 350,000 people through its accessible free courses.

**History and Political Economy of Business and Finance (HYPE) research cluster**

This research cluster puts forward an interdisciplinary research agenda on finance, using insights from the perspective of political economy (social institutions) and history. The cluster’s research covers a large variety of topics on the history of financial innovation, political economy of finance, the history of monetary and exchange rate policy, as well as post-colonial approaches to the history of accounting.

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**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

- **Research into Employment, Empowerment and Futures (REEF)**
- **Gendered Organisational Practice (GOP)**
- **Centre for Public Understanding of Finance, Institutions and Networks (PUFIN)**
- **History and Political Economy of Business and Finance (HYPE)**
The Open University Business School is committed to providing excellent training and development opportunities for academics at all stages of their career. We invest in the best possible environment to ensure academics succeed in both teaching and research.

With a pioneering research reputation, an enthusiastic approach to collaborative research and teaching, and with flexible study and research leave, the School attracts leading academics from around the world.

The School offers a competitive employment package which includes generous holiday entitlements, pension scheme, training and learning opportunities and other staff benefits. Every member of academic staff also has a generous annual entitlement to research time.

You will join at a time of significant growth and development and will be part of a global education provider delivering workplace-relevant knowledge, skills and tools that benefit individuals, organisations and industry, making a positive impact on a broader societal scale.

Additionally, our balanced excellence in research and teaching provides a unique opportunity to contribute to distance learning and customised programmes for organisations through our Executive Education provision which delivers highly effective blended learning.

You will have access to developing Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and opportunities to work with leading television and radio broadcasters on major innovative series reaching millions of participants; contributing to the OU’s mission to be open to people, places, methods and ideas.
Further Information

EXECUTIVE DEAN
Professor Devendra Kodwani took over as Executive Dean for the Faculty of Business and Law (FBL) in 2018. He is a Professor of Financial Management and Corporate Governance and joined the OU in 2004 having worked at three higher education institutions in his native India.

His teaching portfolio includes undergraduate and postgraduate accounting and finance courses. He led the redevelopment of the OU’s MBA programme, and the development of two specialist masters (MSC in Finance, and MSc in Human Resource Management) as Masters Programme Director from 2010-13. Then as Associate Dean for Curriculum, Learning and Teaching, he shaped learning design and learning teaching strategy for all qualifications offered by the Faculty. He has supervised several PhD students and has published widely. He was also Head of the Business School from 2018 until early 2021.

Devendra is a member of the OU’s Vice-Chancellor’s Executive (VCE) and academic boards, and is involved in strategy formulation and implementation for the University. He has served on the Board of Directors of FutureLearn, which is leading a revolution in innovating online learning. Recently, he has been a member of the task force on Digitalisation and Management Education of the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) which has been considering what digitalisation means for the future of management education and quality standards. He is the VCE sponsor for the University’s Apprenticeship programme.

CHANCELLOR
Baroness Lane-Fox of Soho became the sixth Chancellor of the OU in 2014. The businesswoman, philanthropist and public servant built her career around the digital world, notably as one of the founders of lastminute.com, the internationally recognised leisure and travel website. Her contribution to charity and furthering technology saw her awarded a CBE in 2013, also becoming a life peer as a crossbencher in the House of Lords that same year.

PRO-CHANCELLOR
Malcolm Sweeting took up the role in January 2019. His entire career has been at Clifford Chance LLP, one of the largest elite global law firms, having been the youngest member of the firm’s council and then becoming a Senior Partner in 2010.

VICE-CHANCELLOR
Professor Tim Blackman became the OU’s Vice-Chancellor in October 2019, having previously been Vice-Chancellor of Middlesex University for four years. Before that, he was the OU’s Acting Vice-Chancellor and also its Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Quality. Professor Josie Fraser is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, providing significant support in developing and delivering the OU’s academic strategy and providing visible corporate leadership on issues assigned and agreed by the Vice-Chancellor.

GOVERNANCE
The Council is the University’s main governing body, supported by a number of sub-committees.

The Senate is the academic authority of the OU, responsible for promoting the academic work of the University, both in teaching and research. It oversees academic management, including curriculum and all aspects of quality and standards associated with the University as a degree-awarding body.

Teaching at The Open University is an exciting and intellectually satisfying experience which offers an opportunity for pedagogic innovation and designing stimulating and effective bespoke distance learning.

The University remains at the forefront of providing learning in the 21st century and in a post-pandemic world. It’s the preferred institution for higher education and lifelong learning for an increasing number of people around the world.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
EXECUTIVE DEAN
VICE-CHANCELLOR
CHANCELLOR
PRO-CHANCELLOR
GOVERNANCE
ANNUAL REPORT