

Facts and Figures 2019/20



Headlines

About the OU: Operating at scale

Total number of students taught since 1969	2.2 million
Total number of students in 2019/20	175,718
Percentage of part-time UK undergraduates taught by the OU in 2018/19	44%
Students on validated programmes	39,078
FTSE 100 companies that have sponsored staff on OU modules	75

About the OU: We are global

International students directly studying with the OU	7,750
Teachers who have benefitted from OU's TESSA project	Over 1.2 million

About the OU: Our students

Percentage of 126k directly-registered OU students already in work	72%
OU undergraduates who had no previous HE qualifications on entry	78%
OU UK undergraduates who live in the 25% most deprived areas	26%
New OU undergraduates aged under 25	34%

About the OU: Research and Enterprise

UK research position (based on REF 2014 Power rankings)	41st/128
Research deemed world-leading or internationally excellent (REF 2014)	72%
Number of doctoral degrees awarded in 2019/20	155

About the OU: Innovation in learning

Visits to OpenLearn website since launch in 2006	80.8 million
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Facts and Figures 2019/20

Student and customer statistics*	2018/19	2019/20
Undergraduate-level students	118,027	125,741
Postgraduate-level students		
Taught	9,565	9,008
Research part-time	344	393
Research full-time	566	551
Collaborative	49	58
Students on non-credit-bearing courses	843	889
International special scheme students	218	0
Students on validated programmes	38,504	39,078
Total Students	168,116	175,718

* All student statistics are student headcount unless stated otherwise.

Student distribution	2018/19	2019/20
UK students		
England	92,345	95,681
Scotland	17,134	18,280
Wales	8,640	10,717
Northern Ireland	3,944	4,212
Total UK students	122,063	128,890
Republic of Ireland	1,003	933
Other EU	4,567	4,638
Non-EU	2,030	2,179
Students on validated programmes	38,504	39,078
Total	168,167	175,718

International Students	2018/19	2019/20
Global Direct students in Europe	5,537	5,519
Global Direct students outside Europe	1,790	2,168
Total Global Direct students	7,327	7,687

Students by subject area (FTEs)*	2018/19	2019/20
Subjects allied to medicine	1,813	2,089
Biological and physical sciences	15,123	15,853
Mathematical sciences, computer sciences and engineering & technology	11,854	12,658
Social studies	11,153	12,998
Law	3,959	4,170
Business and administrative studies	6,718	7,093
Languages	4,095	4,213
Historical and philosophical studies	5,456	5,344
Creative arts and design	1,151	1,069
Education	6,852	7,557
Other	32	31
Total	68,204	73,074

* Excludes non-credit-bearing modules, study materials, packs and validated programmes.

Features of Open University students	2019/20	
	UG level	PG level
Male:female ratio	38:62	46:54
Age profile		
17 and under	1%	0%
18-21	9%	1%
22-24	12%	4%
25-34	36%	27%
35-44	23%	31%
45-54	12%	23%
55-64	5%	10%
65 and over	2%	3%
Median age of new undergraduate-level students	28	

Ethnic origin of new undergraduate students*	2018/19	2019/20
White	89%	88%
Asian	4%	4%
Black	3%	3%
Mixed and Other	4%	4%

* where ethnicity was disclosed.

Facts and Figures 2019/20

Qualifications on entry of undergraduate level students	2018/19	2019/20
No formal qualifications	2%	3%
A Levels - amount not specified	18%	18%
1 A Level or lower	33%	33%
2 A Levels or equivalent	24%	24%
HE qualification	20%	20%
Postgraduate qualification	3%	3%

* where qualifications were known.

Other student information	2018/19	2019/20
Number of students receiving help with fees	11,724	12,305
Number of students with disabilities	27,237	30,791
Number of students receiving credit transfer awards for prior study	5,870	4,980
Number of students working full/part time	92,078	96,724

Qualifications awarded	2019/20	1971 to 2019/20
Foundation degrees	44	7,287
First degrees	2,350	431,471
Higher degrees	1,901	73,350
Undergraduate certificates and diplomas	1,206	371,304
Postgraduate certificates and diplomas	783	80,392
Validated qualifications (under/post-graduate)	6,892	177,394

* The number of qualifications awarded reported is lower in 19/20 than in 18/19. Timetabling of June conflation activity resulted in a significant number of qualifications being awarded later than in previous years and will be reported in 20/21.

Student Assessment	2018/19	2019/20
TMA and CMA assignments submitted	548,556	724,651
Examinations taken	25,390	9,112
End-of-module assignments submitted	70,533	9,564

Student Contact	2018/19	2019/20
Number of telephone calls from students	434,126	322,566
Number of Emails received from students	194,008	290,534

Modules information	2018/19	2019/20
Number of standard modules offered		
Undergraduate level	351	346
Postgraduate level	132	138
Overseas versions	1	0
Curriculum partnerships	24	24

Most popular undergraduate modules*	2019/20
DE100 - Investigating psychology 1	6,784
DD102 - Introducing the social sciences	5,908
B100 - An introduction to business and management	4,699
E102 - Introduction to childhood studies and child psychology	4,462
TM111 - Introduction to computing and information technology 1	4,394

* Based on number of students.

Validated Programmes	2018/19	2019/20
Number of validated programmes	390	360
Number of approved validated institutions worldwide	41	44
Total students to have achieved validated awards	6,095	6,892

Research and Enterprise	2018/19	2019/20
Value of research grants and contracts awarded in year	£23.8m	£17.2m
Number of running research grant and contract awards	402	390
Number of postgraduate research students registered for study	742	824
Research quality Grade Point Average (GPA) score	N/A	N/A
Number of research outputs downloaded from Open Research Online (ORO)	1,530,701	1,842,048

Facts and Figures 2019/20

Media	2018/19	2019/20
Average daily usage of Moodle	29,691	30,974
Views/listens of OU programmes via BBC	320 million	pending*
Accumulative years of OU/BBC partnership	48	pending*
Peak-time TV and radio co-produced programmes	31 series	pending*
Amazon Kindle - downloads	0.4 million	0.6 million
Amazon Kindle - total downloads (since 2016)	1.2 million	1.7 million
YouTube - total visitors (since 2008)	23.7 million	53.4 million
YouTube - video views	5.3 million	6.3 million
Location of visitors to OpenLearn:		
UK		51%
USA		12%
India		7%
OpenLearn visitors	8.9 million	13.6 million
OpenLearn free courses	953	1,011

* Broadcast figures are delayed until February 2021.

Notes on fees and funding

The way higher education is funded is determined by each of the national governments of the UK, so the cost to students in each country reflects the amount of teaching grant the OU receives directly from each of these administrations and the support that is available to students to pay their fees.

A small number of modules exceed the £3,012 fees typical in England and Northern Ireland for 60 credit undergraduate modules.

Fees		2019/20
Undergraduate module (60 credit points)		
England and non-UK		£3,012
Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales	£1008 to	£2,625
Undergraduate residential school		
England and non-UK		£385
Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales		£385
Postgraduate taught module (60 credit points)	£1,700 to	£5,800
Research degree		
Full-time		£4,327
Part-time		£2,163

Cost of study	2019/20
Typical total fees for BA/BSc (Hons) degree	
England and non-UK	£18,072
Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales	£6,048

Finance	2018/19	2019/20
Income		
	(£ millions)	(£ millions)
Tuition fees and education contracts	301.2	330.8
Funding body grants	95.0	95.3
Research grants and contracts	13.6	13.6
Other income	29.0	18.0
Investment income	7.1	13.7
Donations and endowments	3.3	3.2
Total income	449.2	474.6
Expenditure		
Staff costs	416.1	272.4
Other operating expenses	135.6	138.7
Depreciation	6.7	6.5
Interest payable	1.8	3.0
Total expenditure	560.2	420.6

Staff statistics	2018/19	2019/20
Salaried academic staff	1,096	1,210
Academic-related staff	1,953	2,061
Support staff (secretaries, clerks, technicians etc)	1,575	1,629
Associate lecturers	3,992	3,923

Notes on 2019/20 statistics

Please be aware that some of the 2019/20 statistics may be impacted due to the COVID pandemic.