

PhDs and Professional Doctorates at The Open University, UK

Contributors in clip: David Pride, Heidi Thiemann, Bukola Oyinloye, Kelleigh Greene, Grainne O'Connor, Peter Macharia, Lucinda Borkett-Jones, Stacy Phillips, Joanne Vincett

Clip transcript:

[music in background throughout]

David Pride:

It's been an absolute rocket ride.

Heidi Thiemann:

It seems like no-one really knows there's PhD students here.

Bukola Oyinloye:

I personally wouldn't want to study anywhere else. It's a combination of environments, the combination of resources that the OU offers.

Heidi Thiemann:

It's a really really lovely research community to be in.

Kelleigh Greene:

Everything is sort of seen as an advantage, you know, life experience rather than something that holds you back.

Bukola Oyinloye:

Students that are coming in, not necessarily from academia but from the professional world.

Grainne O'Connor:

It means that the richness and the diversity of the research that comes out of the OU is much more three-dimensional, is much more authentic.

Peter Macharia:

And also I'm inspired to get to that level where I can be able to give back to society.

Lucinda Borkett-Jones:

It's been really wonderful to work in an environment where inter-disciplinary work is the norm, it's welcomed.

David Pride:

When I first came here, my supervisor said "you will be writing papers, you will be submitting to conferences, you will be travelling the world".

Grainne O'Connor:

I was a little bit worried, because I'm a disabled student. The main thing that struck me at the OU was the attitude, the culture – if you're finding something difficult in terms of a physical barrier or anything else, they go "right, what can we do?"

Stacy Phillips:

One of the amazing opportunities that I've had was to be involved in a BBC/OU co-production. One of my main duties was helping to produce the posters, so at the end of the Earth From Space series when they said "contact the OU to get your free poster", and one of my photos is on there, and that was an amazing experience.

Heidi Thiemann:

It's at the forefront of technology, we have researchers working on science that goes into NASA and European Space Agency missions. And that means that all research here is world-class, and I get to be involved in that.

Joanne Vincett:

I connected with the ethos of the OU. I also have a family as well, so I think just having that flexibility of having taken maternity leave – two times actually – they were very supportive of that.

Stacy Phillips:

So one of the reasons why I decided to come to The Open University was world-class lab facilities that we've got, and the people running those labs are really allowing me to do research that nobody else is doing, and the fact that you've only got graduate students as well as the lecturers and the experts means it feels much more like a research institute.

Grainne O'Connor:

My experience so far has been liberating, intellectually stimulating, just wonderful really. And life-changing. Definitely life-changing.