

NEWSLETTER

October 2021



The Open
University

SCOTLAND

Welcome

Welcome to a new academic year at the OU in Scotland. If you are just starting your first module with us, we hope you're enjoying studying so far. If you're continuing your studies, well done on getting this far. There is lots of support available for care-experienced students at the OU, so make a note of the contacts below for when you might need them. We're here to help you succeed.

Care Experienced Week

This week is Care Experienced Week and we're celebrating our students who have been in care at some point in their lives. Check out @OUScotland on Twitter.

Tell us what matters to you

We have a Student Reference Group that represents the views of our care-experienced students. This is your chance to tell them what matters to you, or even join them if you would like to get more involved. Here's how:

- Fill in this survey – there are less than 15 questions, so it should only take a couple of minutes. Every survey response gets added to a draw for £25 of vouchers (your choice of Amazon, books or the OU Student Association shop). [To fill in the survey, click here.](#)
- Join our forum – just for this week, you can talk to other care-experienced students on a confidential forum about the issues that are important to you. Click on this link to join: [OUSA-STUDENTS: OU Students Association Care Experienced Forum \(open.ac.uk\)](#)
- If you'd like to join the Student Reference Group, you can answer that question in the survey and we'll be in contact.

The Group meets up to 4 times a year and keeps in touch on MS Teams in between meetings to plan and review actions to improve support for care-experienced students. Members also take turns to attend the Corporate Parenting Steering Group twice a year. Sometimes they are invited to attend other events but these are optional. We give members vouchers for attending meetings and events as we value your time and contribution.

Care Experience Bursary

The OU bursary is available again this year. This is a one-time cash payment of £250 paid to eligible students.

[For more information and details on how to apply click here.](#)

OU Student Voice Week and other events



Student Voice Week is a celebration of all the different ways that Open University students can get involved in the university's decision-making.

This year the #OUStudentVoiceWeek will run between 13 to 21 November. There are three online sessions of specific interest to OU students in Scotland:

1) Student Mental Health Agreement event, Monday 15 Nov, 8.15-9.15 pm

This session will provide information on the OU in Scotland's Student Mental Health Agreement, developed in partnership with the OU Students Association. We will seek participants' input on how we can best work together to achieve our objectives.

2) Green Entrepreneur Showcase, Tuesday 16 Nov, 6-7 pm

The session will showcase OU students who have been motivated by their studies to develop green/sustainable initiatives. It will be a chance to hear directly from students about how their OU study has inspired them to drive forward actions that support the goals of the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), which is happening in Glasgow the week before Student Voice Week. This event will be run by the OU in Scotland and open to all OU students.

3) The Big Blether, Thursday 18 Nov, 8-9 pm

At this session, the OU in Scotland and OU Students Association invite OU students to join us for a blether via a video call. You'll have the opportunity to put

your questions to OU in Scotland staff and OU Students Association representatives on a range of topics.

[For more information and to book your place click here.](#)



Helping those with care experience to get in, stay in, and return to education.

4) Welcome Event – Hub for Success, Thursday 7 Dec, 7-8 pm

The Hub for Success provides support and advice to care experienced learners of any age across its partner institutions – and the OU in Scotland is one of the partners.

They have been organising online social events for care experienced students during this term as a way for you to meet other care experienced students, have fun, and have the chance to find out a bit more about the Hub.

Their OUIS event will be an online quiz with Just Eat vouchers as prizes for the winning team! This will take place on Microsoft Teams. Hub staff, OU staff and some student ambassadors will all be there – we'd love you to join us.

If you want to know more about the Hub for Success please visit www.hubforsuccess.org or follow them on Twitter @hubforsuccess.

[Please click here to register for the event.](#)



5) Who Cares? Scotland

Who Cares? Scotland is a national voluntary organisation, working with care experienced people across Scotland. [Find out what they're doing to celebrate Care Experienced Week.](#)

Talk to us

Studying online can be a bit isolating, but you are part of the OU community and there is always someone to talk to. If you find yourself struggling, please get in touch.

Your tutor is the first person to talk to about your studies. They can give you extensions on TMA deadlines, or advice on study skills and time management. They are there to help, so keep their email address handy!

Your Student Support Team can help with enquiries about funding, disability support, deferring your studies or changing your module or qualification. You can find out how to contact your team of advisors on StudentHome.

Viki and Ewe are your named contacts in Scotland. They can help signpost you to support if you're not sure where to find it OUScotland-Cares@open.ac.uk

If you would like to connect with other students, the OU Students Association [has groups and clubs for you to join](#) and a [peer mentoring service](#).

If you're feeling low, we have [24/7 support available via Togetherall](#).

You'll find information on our website's [Care Experience page](#), including how to update your student record to tell us you are care-experienced. If you are receiving this mailing then you've already told us (thank you) but you're welcome to share this with other students who may not have yet.

If you think you have received this in error, it may be because you've ticked the box by accident, so follow the instructions on the webpage to update your student record.

Keep well,

Viki and Ewe

To find out more follow us on social media



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