

# NEWSLETTER

## August 2021



## Welcome

Welcome to the new look Open Learning Champions newsletter. It's a new academic year for us at the OU in Scotland and we're starting with a new look – which we think you'll agree is an improvement on our lockdown look but with the same great content!

If you have trouble opening it, please contact Ewe [ewelina.grzanka@open.ac.uk](mailto:ewelina.grzanka@open.ac.uk) and she'll send you a link to the online version.

## Champions coffee morning

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You asked and we listened. In our annual survey, you told us you would like online opportunities to meet and chat with other champions.

On **30 September** (at 11) we are having our first of what we hope will be a monthly series of meet-ups for peer support and coffee. The first session will give you a chance to talk with other champions

about the challenges of the past year or so as everything moved online, and to share resources and tools that helped you and your learners get through. You can also tell us what you would like to see for future sessions. Bring your own coffee for this informal get together.

[You can register for Champions coffee morning event here](#)

## Making online safety accessible

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Last year, we partnered with Lead Scotland to create [Everyday Computer Skills](#) – a digital skills course for absolute beginners with a focus on accessibility. This year, Lead have produced some key online safety messages in a huge range of formats and languages, including braille, large print, audio, Polish, Urdu, Chinese (with more to come). We have now incorporated these into the course. You can also access them on [Lead Scotland's website](#).

Lead Scotland are offering free 30-minute webinars on zoom this September for people wanting to get to grips with online safety and security. They are also offering 1 hour 'Training for Trainers' lunchtime sessions for practitioners, volunteers or others who support people with low digital confidence.

[You can sign up for Lead Scotland sessions here](#)

## Funded places and workforce learning funds

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The Open University in Scotland is currently offering a limited number of fully- funded places on a selection of accredited Microcredentials. We have 14 courses on offer covering subjects in business and management, computing and technology, and climate change.

The deadline for applications is **12 September**. For more information and to apply, please visit the website [Free places on microcredential courses](#).

We also have funded health and social care courses through the National Transition Training Fund. The deadline for these is **1 September so** hurry!

For more information and how to apply, please visit the website [Funded health and social care modules through the National Transition Training Fund](#).

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across Scotland can access funded workforce learning up to the value of £5,000 delivered online by The Open University, to upskill and reskill their workforce through a Scottish Government fund.

Find out more at the website [Flexible Workforce Development Fund | Business at The Open University](#).

## New OpenLearn resources

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[60 second adventures in Artificial Intelligence](#) Short animations narrated by comedian David Mitchell.

[Open Centre for Languages and Cultures](#) is a learning hub for communication in an interconnected world. Resources in Spanish, French, Chinese, German, Italian, Scots, Welsh languages as well as culture and business communication.

[Olympisize Me](#) as the Olympics come to end and the Paralympic games get started, this interactive quiz will help you figure out which sport you're most suited to.

[Can you be the curator?](#) If you've been watching Secrets of the Museum on BBC2, this is your chance to test your skills as a curator of items from the V&A's collection.

[iSpot: Your place to share nature](#) Citizen science - what you can do to help sustain nature and biodiversity using the iSpot platform.

[Can you spot the digital lies?](#) Six minute video about misinformation by BBC Ideas.

## Where to take your learning next

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If your learners (or you) have been doing OpenLearn courses during lockdown and are now thinking about their next steps these new [animations about our Access modules and Making Your Learning Count](#) might help.

[An Access module is a great place to start](#) if you want a gentle introduction to OUstudy. It can also help you to find out more about your interests and where you want your learning to take you. There are three Access modules to choose from (at SCQF level 6), and they start each February, May, and October.

[Making Your Learning Count](#) is an OU Level 1 (SCQF Level 7) module that allows you to count study from OpenLearn, or other types of previous learning, towards an OU qualification. You will reflect on what you have learned already while developing the skills you need to be a successful student.

The deadline to enroll on this module is **9 September**. Students resident in Scotland with a personal income of up to £25k may be able to study for free.

## Involving and supporting volunteers

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Centre for Voluntary  
Sector Leadership 

Volunteer  
Scotland 

Our friends at Volunteer Scotland have been busy creating [free online learning courses](#) for people with a role in involving, supporting and leading volunteers, including:

- [Learning Bite - A Volunteer Charter](#)
- [Keeping Volunteers Safe: Restarting your Volunteer](#)
- [Programme Involving Volunteers](#)

They are also running [interactive learning bites](#) for member organisations.

## Community Council Hub

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The OU in Scotland has partnered with the Improvement Service to create a new [hub for community councils on OpenLearn](#). This will give community council volunteers the opportunity to learn access courses in digital skills, business skills, finance and fundraising, community and society.

## Free Duolingo English language tests for refugees and asylum seekers

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Duolingo are offering free English language tests for students to schools, college, universities and community organisations. Duolingo provides coupon codes to organisations to give to students who need help accessing an English test in order to progress to higher education or further studies. Students can take the test online for free. Duolingo is expanding access to this initiative for organisations working to support asylum and refugee applicants. Universities, schools and community organisations supporting students seeking sanctuary can apply for the test fee waiver.

[Apply for the test fee waiver here](#)



## Open Learning Champions workshops

It may be a while before we can meet face to face but we are able to offer online Open Learning Champions sessions (1.5 hours). [If your organisation would like to host an online workshop, please get in touch.](#)

**More information on Open Learning Champions workshops here**



## Reminder

Remember to follow [@OUScotland](#) and [@OUfreelearning](#) on Twitter for updates and tweet us using **#OLchamps** if you have anything to share.

You're welcome to share this with your colleagues, learners and networks. [If you no longer wish to receive these mailings, you can unsubscribe here](#) and we'll take you off the mailing list.

**Keep well,**

**Ewe and Gill**

To find out more visit our [OU in Scotland website](#), and follow us on social media: [OU in Scotland on Twitter](#); [OU in Scotland on Facebook](#); [OU in Scotland on LinkedIn](#).

You can [contact us by email at Scotland-engagement@open.ac.uk](mailto:Scotland-engagement@open.ac.uk).

**The Open University in Scotland**

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