

# In Partnership



The Open  
University

Open University International Partnerships

Open University Worldwide

Newsletter for International Partners

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## The Open University hits ten million downloads on iTunes U

Over ten million Open University tracks have been downloaded from iTunes U, the dedicated learning zone within the iTunes Store (available at [www.itunes.com](http://www.itunes.com)).

The ten millionth track was downloaded in November, making The Open University a top provider of free university content on iTunes U. The Open University launched its first piece of educational content on iTunes U in June 2008 and now has an average of 375,000 downloads a week.

Open University tracks on iTunes U cover a huge range of subjects, including business, computing, technology, healthcare and science. The most popular collections have been in languages and science, with the most downloaded to date being Beginners' French. Short films also look at the student experience, Open University research and teaching methodology.

Anyone can download Open University tracks for free and research shows that 12,000 OU students got their first experience of university through free content on the web before signing up as formal learners. Many of them cite the OU's use of new technologies, which helps them incorporate learning into their lives, as a key attraction.

Martin Bean, Vice-Chancellor of The Open University, said: "Forty years ago The Open University was created to give more people access to higher education and we have always used the latest technology and offered our material in a format that inspires our students. We're still leaders in the field and the popularity of the OU on iTunes U lies in its originality."



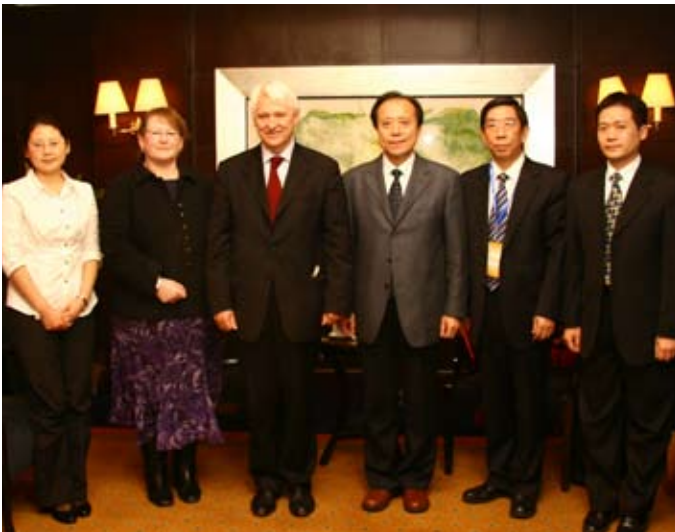
"Tracks from The Open University's 260 collections are consistently in the Top Twenty downloads and this week one in four of the top 100 downloads on iTunes U is from The Open University. We believe this success comes from offering new video and audio tracks from popular, current courses that easily incorporates into students' studies. People want educational materials that work while they are on the move and our vibrant and engaging content makes us enjoyable for both students and informal learners."

With £2.9 million invested in new learning technologies over the last two years, the OU's use of new media keeps pace with the changing world. Clips are also used from television programmes made in partnership with the BBC, adapted specifically for iTunes U so that learners anywhere in the world can download content. This learning flexibility has inspired many to get back into higher education and take a fresh look at formal study: one in ten visitors to The Open University on iTunes U goes on to visit our website.

For more information on working with Open University Worldwide, visit [www.ouwworldwide.com](http://www.ouwworldwide.com)



### UIBE to launch new vocational courses in China



Pictured: Representatives of The Open University and The University of International Business and Economics

The University of International Business and Economics (UIBE), based in Beijing, and the Open University are working together to launch a suite of courses suitable for the Chinese vocational market.

UIBE will use four Open University courses focusing on continuing professional development. The non-credit bearing courses cover leadership, time management for individuals and teams, managing conflict and successful team working. The courses will support a government focus on vocational education at all levels and support people looking for promotions and new opportunities in the economic downturn.

Alan Tait, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Curriculum and Awards, signed the contract for The Open University during UIBE's conference for international leaders in Higher Education. Professor Tait gave a speech on employer engagement at the conference, where The Open University was the sole representative of distance education universities.

### Botho College celebrates two years of partnership

Botho College and The Open University have been working in partnership since February 2008 to deliver the BSc (Hons) Computing and its Practice top up degree. A large tertiary institution spread across three major locations in Botswana, Botho College currently has over 4,000 students, most of whom are registered on to NIIT's DNIIT (Hons) diploma programme and The Open University's top up degree.

Ananth Ram, Director for Education and Quality Assurance at Botho College, believes that partnerships are a vital way for students to receive a high quality education in their own country. "Many students in Botswana are sponsored by the government to study at universities in the UK, Europe, US, Australia, Asia, and South Africa at a very high cost. The country is keen on locally offered degrees such as the OU top-up as a means of investing those funds locally to encourage a vibrant local higher education sector. Open admission policies also provide those students less

likely to be sponsored abroad to receive the same or higher quality education in Botswana."

The skills and qualities needed in Botswana at the moment are changing, and Botho College is ideally placed to equip graduates for the new environment. Ananth continued: "The country is looking to diversify its economy away from diamonds and other minerals to a more knowledge based economy. In line with that the government is encouraging technical education and providing funding for young entrepreneurs in the hope that over the coming decades, new industries can be spawned which create higher level employment."

Botho College has recently expanded its range of business courses, offering The Open University's BA (Hons) Business Studies with South African organisation eDegree. "With the growth in the local higher education sector, and the institution's current Strategic and Long

Term Plan, Botho College is looking to offer students a multidisciplinary experience through more business, communication and study skills content in the IT programme and by diversifying the student body. Furthermore, there is a growing demand for quality graduates in specific disciplines such as Marketing and Accounting."

Ananth argues that a key element of the partnership's success has been the shared values of the two organisations. "Botho College believes that there is potential in every individual no matter what background they come from, a view much in line with The Open University's mission of being open to people, places, methods and ideas. The Open University is a highly demanding partner which believes in challenging their partners to achieve greater heights. The relationship with the OU allows Botho College to offer a high quality qualification in the local market, enabling the institution to compete with other large public institutions."



### Peking University extends license of mental health course



Peking University School of Distance Learning for Medical Education has extended its license of the OU course 'Mental Health and Distress: Perspectives and Practice' (K257) for another three years until 2013. 445 students are currently studying the programme and nearly 3,000 students have completed it since the partnership began in 2005.

Peking University School of Distance Learning for Medical Education was founded in October 2000 and is affiliated to Peking University, commonly known as Beida. The School incorporates over 40 regional learning centres and approximately 15,000 students, offering courses in nursing, applied pharmacy, medical information management and health management at undergraduate level.

Pictured: Denise Kirkpatrick, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Learning, Teaching and Quality, and Madame Gao, Dean of the Peking University School of Distance Learning for Medical Education.

### Business Masters Residential Schools a success in Ethiopia

The Open University Business School held two highly successful residential schools in Ethiopia during February, for students taking the School's triple accredited Masters in Business Administration (MBA) programme. The residential school for "Fundamentals of Senior Management", the first year module in the MBA, took place over five days and consisted of a mixture of workshops on key aspects of management theory and practice including finance, marketing, diagramming, organisational behaviour and using course ideas to investigate students own management issues.

Students also worked on a major case study over several days, analysing the issues and recommending a way forward. Throughout the event students worked in various teams, developing their team working skills, their ability to analyse complex management issues as well as consolidating their understanding of the course material.

Carmel McMahon, Associate Dean, International at the Business School who



Pictured: Students at the workshop on investment appraisal

worked at both residential schools, said, "The tutor team was impressed by the commitment of the first year students to their learning and by the high level of engagement with the process of residential school work. The quality of their work was impressive, including the depth of analysis and reflection."

Ms McMahon continued; "It was also inspiring to see the output of the final year students at the residential school for "Making a Difference", the last module in the MBA Programme. They

had made so much progress since their first year and we were impressed by the quality of the workplace initiatives they are implementing as part of this final module. Participants spoke with enthusiasm about how their MBA studies are helping them in their workplaces and about the confidence they have gained in their managerial and leadership skills. What particularly impressed us was the commitment of the students to making a difference in their organizations and to using their skills and knowledge to contribute to the development of Ethiopia."



### Russian business graduates celebrate their success

Open University Business School MBA students in Russia celebrated their graduation in November as they joined a growing international cohort of more than 20,000 MBA alumni.

34 students were presented with their Master of Business Administration awards at a degree ceremony held at the British Embassy in Moscow. Their graduation brings the number of Open University Business School MBA graduates in Russia to 341.

At the ceremony, the graduates were joined by Professor Denise Kirkpatrick, Pro-Vice Chancellor for Learning, Teaching and Quality at The Open University and Ms Carmel McMahon, Associate Dean, International at The Open University Business School.

Professor Kirkpatrick said: "I am inspired by some of the student stories and remarkable achievements of our graduates. The students graduating



Pictured: MBA Graduates at the degree ceremony at the British Embassy in Moscow in November.

have been studying part-time. The degree ceremony not only marks the end of studying, but also the start of a new career for many."

The internationally recognised Master of Business Administration (MBA), presented in English, provides

opportunities for networking locally at regular seminars and internationally, both at residential schools and online, with managers studying the programme around the world. Seminars are presented by Open University Business School lecturers who have management and business experience.

### Conference for Centres of Excellence looks to the future

The Open University held its fourth and final CETL conference in December, celebrating research into learning and teaching and discussing how to build on this work in the next decade.

A nationwide network of 74 Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) was established in 2005 by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). The largest ever single funding initiative in teaching and learning by HEFCE, the CETLs cover all the main subject areas and address many different aspects of learning. The CETLs initiative has two key aims: to reward excellent teaching practice and to further invest in that practice, resulting in benefits for students, teachers and institutions.

The Open University was one of only two UK universities to be awarded the maximum number of four CETLs. The four CETLs, which come together in the collaborative Open CETL, focus on a range of topics, including personalised integrated learning support, practice-based professional learning, innovations in physics and a centre for mathematics, science, computing and technology.

The Open CETL Conference shared research and learning on a wide range of issues. Conference sessions focused on embedding global teaching technologies, using social networking as part of practice learning, computer supported collaborative learning, online science experiments, healthcare practice and electronic assessment/markings.

Steve Swithenby, Professor of Physics and a CETL Director, said "The CETLs have inspired many of the OU's teachers to look again at their teaching. They have connected with experts worldwide, gathered evidence and have come up with some remarkable new insights, particularly about how distance-taught students can benefit from new technologies."

The OU plans to embed the work of the CETLs in everyday teaching and learning. Professor Swithenby continued: "CETL insights and ways of working are now reflected in the OU's strategy and will continue in the work of the Faculties and the Institute of Educational Technology. Working together we will continue to gather the evidence needed to provide effective learning across the globe."



### Proposals invited for career development fellowships

The Open University is inviting proposals from potential fellows to spend three to six months with The Open University.

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission supports fellowships for mid-career professionals from developing Commonwealth countries to spend time with a UK host organisation in their field for a programme of professional development. OU Worldwide hopes the fellowships will enhance relationships with our partner organisations or build research understanding across faculties.

Several fields have been identified as priority areas for 2010, including Education, Environment, Governance, Public Health and Engineering/Science/Technology. Around 25,000 individuals have benefited from the award of Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowships to pursue educational and training opportunities since 1959. The vast majority of award holders have returned to make a significant contribution to their home countries, in many cases at the highest level.

This scheme invites applications by 30th April 2010. To discuss a proposal contact Dominic Newbould at [d.r.a.newbould@open.ac.uk](mailto:d.r.a.newbould@open.ac.uk) or for more information on the scheme visit [http://www.cscuk.org.uk/apply/professional\\_fellowships.asp](http://www.cscuk.org.uk/apply/professional_fellowships.asp).

### Reflective learning course supports English teaching

The Open University has developed a reflective learning course called Make Your Teaching Experience Count (MYTEC), which will support a substantial teaching project in Bangladesh. The one year teaching pilot will launch in March 2010, with 200 Bangladeshi teachers of English.

English in Action (EIA) is a nine year partner led large-scale English teaching initiative, funded by the Department for International Development (DfID). The project aims to improve the provision of English in order to provide opportunities for greater engagement for Bangladesh on the international scene.

The MYTEC component of EIA will enable participants to reflect on their learning. Participants in the EIA project in Bangladesh will be encouraged to recognise, analyse and reflect on learning and experience gained from EIA, and gain higher education credit for successfully doing so.

MYTEC is adapted from a current Open University self-reflective course, which encourages and supports participants through course materials, activities and assessments to describe and reflect upon their prior learning. The aim is to deepen their understanding of past learning by reflecting on the process and outcomes of selected learning experiences.

## Working in partnership with Open University Worldwide

There are many ways to work in partnership with The Open University, depending on your needs and circumstances.

#### Offer an OU degree

Students are registered with the OU, which provides tutor training, student assessment, examination and awards. Partners manage student communication and guidance and distribute course materials.

#### Offer your own degree

Licence OU course materials for flexible use in your own course. Partners can select the most useful course units, adapt or translate material, and access print, audio-visual and online resources.

#### Consultancy

Expert advice on how to run workshops, write course material and establish distance learning organisations. Areas of guidance include quality assurance, strategy and management, learning support, teacher education and computing.



Pictured: The Stuart Hall Building on The Open University campus, UK, home to the Faculty of Education and Language Studies.

For more information on any aspect of working with The Open University, please contact your partnership representative, visit [www.ouworldwide.com](http://www.ouworldwide.com) or call +44 (0)1908 858785.