Open learning champions
network event

Wolfson Centre, Glasgow

30 April 2019

Gill Ryan
The Open University in Scotland

Happy birthday to OU

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=TrKIImWQejI

OPENLEARN: the home of free learning

256 Open Learning Champions
104 community / voluntary organisations

OPEN LEARNING CHAMPIONS

Open learning champions enable access to open learning within existing relationships with potential learners in the community.

- Support learners to access open learning
- Help to navigate OpenLearn and other platforms
- Facilitate groups of learners to undertake an open course (blended learning)
- Support to plan journeys from informal to formal learning
- Staff and volunteer development
- Signpost, share on social media
- Create and adapt open resources using OpenLearn Create

“On a 1-1 basis with young adult carers as an alternative to further education or as a stepping stone back into learning which is flexible and can fit around the demands and responsibilities of caring”

“We have plans to use OpenLearn Create to expand training opportunities for volunteers”

“The flexibility of open learning makes it adaptable for staff and young people.”

“Recommending courses to colleagues and training participants that might be of interest to their volunteers or clients”

“Patients study the subjects of their choice, including Open University. They study alongside a volunteer who can provide technical support and a discussion partner.”

“We ran the Caring Counts course offline and worked through the activities as a group”

“We are using Open Learning as a place to progress people on to as part of a suite of learning opportunities”

Case study: adapting open course for carers in a blended setting

Ann is team coordinator of a project that supports carers of people with mental health issues and provides training for carers from across Glasgow. A number of their staff have done the champions workshop. They use the *Caring Counts* reflection course on OpenLearn Create with people who have been caring for a long time.

The course is never the same twice, as we adapt it to each group to make sure everyone can access it. We use the activities, videos and reflection log, and create timelines for reflection. We run it with groups of 4-6 people over three sessions, one week apart. Between sessions, people reflect on what we've covered. We also show them how to access OpenLearn. As we go through the course, we identify what people are interested in, and signpost to resources on OpenLearn, such as *Understanding depression and anxiety*. We make sure it's at the right level and length for the learner and provide a description.

Mental health carers can experience social isolation due to stigma and because the person you care for takes up all your time, energy and head space. Delivering the course this way encourages peer support and fosters relationships. The group gives them confidence, builds resilience and provides a supportive environment where they can be honest about the good and bad times without judgement.

“We’ve seen transformations in people, and in a very short time.”

Case study: empowering citizen involvement using open learning

Erin is the volunteers manager at a small social enterprise that gets people involved in town planning, providing guidance and training for communities. They also offer ongoing training to their 300 volunteers across Scotland. They are currently moving some learning opportunities online.

Our volunteers are all over Scotland and it can be difficult to get them to get attend workshops in Edinburgh or Glasgow but the numbers don't always justify other locations. So we want to develop more online and digital learning, which would be much more flexible for our volunteers. There's so much on OpenLearn that I can signpost to volunteers as part of our training mix. We are looking at a model of pre-learning online in the volunteer's own time before they come to the face to face session. Our volunteers usually have digital skills but they may not all be confident about learning online. We would offer support to access the online courses if they needed it.

We use a tool in our workshops called the Place Standard to facilitate a group discussion on town planning. We're creating an online course on how to use the Place Standard, using the OpenLearn Create platform. Although it would be targeted towards our volunteers, if anyone else wanted to do the course they would be welcome. Every citizen should know the basics of town planning and to be empowered to have their say.

“The Place Standard is a public tool, so OpenLearn Create is an appropriate place for it.”

Case study: building digital skills with community learners

Lydia is Community Engagement Officer with a community learning project in Midlothian. The project works with adult learners of all ages, particularly with those with lower levels of educational attainment, living in SIMD postcodes, and other indicators.

Open Learning Champions for me is about reaching out into the community. I work with community learning groups and we talk about OpenLearn as a next step. Supporting them to get online and use the materials is what makes the difference – I could bore people forever about how wonderful Open Learn is, but until you actually sit them down and get them going on it, it doesn't really make sense. You can have an incredibly mixed group but OpenLearn has something for everybody. Searching with learners for subjects they are interested in can show them how to explore the platform. It can be a bit overwhelming for learners so I like to jump straight to a starting point at the right level.

Most of my learners don't have a computer or a laptop at home, so they use a tablet or a public library. That digital divide means they need support to get started, but once they get to a certain level OpenLearn is something fun and engaging that helps increase their digital skills but not in a boring IT class. Doing a wee thing in a subject that interests you makes you more comfortable in the digital space.

“OpenLearn is something fun and engaging that helps increase their digital skills but not in a boring IT class.”

Pathways from informal to formal learning

OPEN PATHWAYS

Guide for learners

User testers wanted!

- **Your feedback on layout and content**
- **Feedback from learners**

https://www.open.edu/openlearn/education/open-pathways-higher-education-0

Pathways from informal to formal learning

Making your learning count

This innovative and flexible OU level 1 module is a fantastic way for you to count previous or current study from the OU's free learning website, OpenLearn, or specified other open educational resources (OER) towards our BA/BSc (Honours) Open (QD) degree, Diploma of Higher Education Open (W34) and our Certificate of Higher Education Open (T09). Through a series of topics and assessment tasks, you will explore what you have learned on these OER whilst developing the skills you need to be a successful student. The blend of subjects that you choose to cover is up to you, making this learning experience an entirely personal one. Your tutor will help you plan your study and identify what you are hoping to achieve through this module and your future study plans.

Module

Module code
YXM130

Credits
30

Study level

OU	SCQF	FHEQ
1	7	4

Study method
Distance Learning

Module details | Entry requirements | Module registration | Study materials

Register

Start	End	Scotland fee	Register
05 Oct 2019	Jun 2020	£247.00	Registration closes 12/09/19 (places subject to availability) Register

Final date for part-time fee grant application endorsement 05/09/19.

www.open.ac.uk/courses/modules/yxm130#registration

The Open University SCOTLAND 50 YEARS

If you earn under £25k you could study for free

OU in Scotland: The Widening Access university

The Open University SCOTLAND 50 YEARS

Based on 2017-18 FTE figures

17% of new undergraduates live in Scotland's 20% most disadvantaged areas

64 students in 14 secure facilities across Scotland

38% of new undergraduates live in Scotland's 40% most disadvantaged areas

22% of OU in Scotland students declare a disability

16,465 OU students in Scotland

18% of new undergraduates have a college HNC/D

74% of our students are in full or part time work

70% of new undergraduates earn less than £25,000

27 years old median age of new undergraduates

18% of new undergraduates join without standard university entrance qualifications

Gill Ryan
Gill.ryan@open.ac.uk
@gill_ie

Open Learning Champions:
http://www.open.ac.uk/scotland/our-work/open-learning-champions

SCOTLAND

The Open University

50 YEARS