

OLC Newsletter

April 2023



Welcome

A warm hello to all of our champions whether you have been part of our network for a while or recently started your Open Learning Champion journey. As we move to (slightly) better weather we hope that you are all well, and that you are enjoying the activities you are undertaking with your learners. In this newsletter you will find

- Details of an upcoming CPD opportunity
- Information about funded microcredential courses
- Sign up for our next coffee morning
- Update on new resources
- An overview of accessible formats on OpenLearn

Thank you for all that you do for your learners!

Champions Coffee Morning



Our next champions coffee morning will be on **Wednesday 24 May, 11:00 - 12:00**. If you are able to come along we plan to:

- Give you time to discuss recent activity with peers and share with us
- Assuming far enough along, showcase the new Open Learning Champions hub
- Building on the information in this newsletter about accessible formats on OpenLearn with information on how we can support accessibility for learners who move on to Open University courses

[To register for the coffee morning click here](#)

CPD Event

We are delighted to invite you to a free online Coaching and Mentoring workshop on **Friday 12 May, 10:00 - 12:00.**



The workshop will aim to develop your coaching and mentoring skills, with a focus on how these skills can be used as an Open Learning Champion. We will cover the differences and similarities between coaching and mentoring and how these approaches can help the individuals you support overcome their barriers in accessing free informal learning opportunities.

This workshop is open to all Open Learning Champions in Scotland and Wales. During the session, you will have the opportunity to network with other champions.

If you are interested, please register by **Thursday 11 May, 16:00** via the link below. We will contact you with the MS Teams link to join the meeting.

[To register for the event click here](#)

Free Places on Microcredential Courses

The OU in Scotland is currently offering some fully-funded places on our accredited Microcredential courses. These courses run from 10 - 12 weeks and are designed for people looking to gain new skills to help advance their careers. They are suitable for people in employment looking to move ahead in their careers as well those who may be unemployed and looking to gain new skills to help them find employment. The courses on offer include subject areas such as:



- Project Management
- Coding
- People Management
- Leadership
- Computer networking
- Marketing
- Sustainability

More information about the courses and the application form can be found at <https://www.open.ac.uk/courses/choose/scotland-micro>. The deadline for applications is **14 May 2023**. These courses could be valuable CPD for champions or any learners/ others in your network, so please feel free to share.

Resource Updates

Online Module

We wanted to highlight that following some amazing feedback from Gemma, one of our newest champions, we have updated the recently created '[Become an Open Learning Champion](#)' module. Key updates are:

- More information about the benefits of OpenLearn for learners
- More details about how accessibility works
- The exploration activity has been broken up into smaller chunks for ease
- Links to the course content have been added to the quiz questions
- Follow up after completion of the module has been made clearer

If you have anyone in your network keen to become an Open Learning Champion then feel free to share the module and encourage them to contact scotland-engagement@open.ac.uk if they have any questions. We would also encourage existing champions to sign up to access the forum to create a new community space for this network.

New Hub and Interactive

We are working with our colleagues in OpenLearn to develop a new hub for Scotland champions and learners. This hub will contain information and key resources to enhance the learning journey and support you in your roles. We hope to have a version we can showcase at the next coffee morning.

We are also collaborating with a colleague to develop a new interactive that will support learners to understand more about their goals, learning styles and help develop a bespoke initial learning plan for OpenLearn. This is in the early stages at the moment but we will be seeking support for testing at an appropriate stage - watch this space!

In the meantime, a reminder that new content on OpenLearn is continually updated and can be found on the [latest from OpenLearn page](#).

Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD) 18 May 2023

With [GAAD](#) coming up, we thought it would be good to highlight the accessible formats that are available on the majority of OpenLearn courses. As well as increased accessibility, for example word documents for use with screen readers, once downloaded these can be used offline for learners with limited access to IT, broadband or who prefer learning offline. (It is worth noting that there may be some interactive elements on some courses that will not be included in a printed version of an online course and for completion certificates and/or digital badges there is normally a minimum number of activities that need to be completed online.)



Examples of Alternative Formats

- **Word** - You can download and use the Word version of course materials with most Windows Office software and on many mobile applications. The Word format is particularly useful if you want to annotate your materials or if you

use the JAWS screen reader. Word documents also provide flexibility for changing font size, colour and spacing and can be used offline and printed.

- **PDF** - PDF downloads can be used offline across a range of devices. You will need an up-to-date version of Adobe Acrobat Reader in order to view them. PDF downloads might be useful if you want to print out some of your course materials to make notes on directly, you can also make notes on them electronically.
- **Epub2** - Electronic publications (EPUBs) are the most common form of ebook and will be usable with most e-readers. Downloading course materials in EPUB format to your e-reader may be helpful if you are looking for a portable way to study your materials offline or if you require your e-reader to help support your study due to a disability. In most cases you can adjust EPUB files to change the setting for font size and colour to suit your needs Kindle version is an ebook format that works on Amazon Kindle.
- **Transcripts** - Videos within courses will usually also have captions and transcripts that can be downloaded for offline use.

Share your thoughts

We are keen to find out what you thought of this newsletter. Did you find it informative, interesting and useful? Please click on the thumbs up or thumbs down below.



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.

If you have any questions about Open Learning Champions, please do not hesitate to get in contact with us at scotland-engagement@open.ac.uk.

Keep well,

David, Ewe and Kat



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Scotland@open.ac.uk

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