

A MESSAGE FROM NICK BRAITHWAITE



Dear Colleagues,

I hope you have been enjoying this summer and finding ways to cope with the recent heat waves, fires, droughts and flooding across Europe and beyond. The increased frequency and severity of such extreme weather events are stark indicators that the climate is changing.



July 28 this year was Earth Overshoot Day, the day our global use of resources exceeds the annual quota available. I learned about this on one of our new sustainability microcredentials and I know colleagues are keen to include impactful data like this in their course resources and assessments. Our suite of climate change microcredentials is intended to expand your knowledge and capacity for action.

We are offering 5 free places on [Climate Change: Transforming your Organisation for Sustainability](#) to anyone who can explain in 200 words why they should receive a free place to do the 10 week, 100 hour course starting 24 October (you would need line manager approval to spend any contracted OU hours on this). Email sustainability@open.ac.uk by 28 September outlining which activity in the OU you aim to address for enhanced sustainability. We will draw 5 from the pool of the best responses we receive and announce the recipients in our next bulletin. Note Northern Ireland and Scotland colleagues can apply for funded places by 8 and 18 September respectively at the links below

Applications for Northern Ireland funded places close on 8 September 2022. More information: <https://www.open.ac.uk/courses/choose/skill-up>

Applications for Scotland funded places close on 18 September 2022. More information: <https://www.open.ac.uk/courses/choose/scotland-micro>

CARBON LITERACY TRAINING

As part of our commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions, we have run a pilot with the OU in Wales to develop a unique free learning opportunity, in a project funded by HEFCW. OU staff have worked in partnership with the [Carbon Literacy Project](#), and [Students Organising for Sustainability UK \(SOS-UK\)](#) to develop **free 8-hour Carbon Literacy Training**.

The online learning starts with four hours of self-study activity followed by four hours of facilitated training, and a final Action Pledge that leads to Carbon Literacy certification. We run the course twice a week and it can be made available for groups of 20 upon request at a time to suit, including Saturday afternoons. It is also available in Welsh. If a personal or group Action Pledge relates to work at the OU, then we'll feed that into the Sustainability Action Tool we are launching in the Autumn (more below). We are now able to offer this more widely - [Please do sign up for the free training](#) and upskill yourself so that you too can make sustainability your job and contribute to decarbonisation.

[Sign up for Carbon Literacy Training in English here](#) or

[Sign up for Carbon Literacy Training in Welsh here.](#)

So far, 300 students and staff have expressed an interest in the course and 100 have completed their Carbon Literacy Training, 60 are now certified as Carbon Literate.

SUSTAINABILITY ACTION TOOL

We are engaging with teams across the university to develop a Sustainability Action Tool, in partnership with [NETpositive Futures](#). Not only does the Tool enable sub-units to select from a list of relevant sustainability actions which contribute to institutional sustainability, but sub-units can also be creative and add actions relevant to their own activities and impacts. This creates a tailored sustainability action plan and action tracker. This will helpfully collate the evidence of our continual improvement ready for inclusion in external reporting on sustainability.

With those key benefits in mind – action, and evidence - we invite you to help us select a name for the tool. [Please click on this link and vote for the name you would like us to use](#), or if you are feeling inspired, please input your own suggestions. We'll keep you updated as the Tool is developed.

WARP-IT

We are working closely with the Ways of Working team to pilot a new reuse system called Warp-It. Warp-It makes it easy for us to get, give or loan surplus office equipment or furniture items to other staff, or onto our partner charities. More details will follow on this soon.

CURRICULUM SURVEY AND RESPONSIBLE FUTURES

The Open University in Wales in partnership with SOS-UK (Students Organising for Sustainability UK) seeks to better understand how sustainability is embedded in students' learning. SOS-UK are listening to staff across the OU with responsibility for curriculum design and delivery, as well as those with links to professional accreditation bodies, to understand how sustainability is embedded within the curriculum currently and to identify opportunities to enhance this. Your views will inform future curriculum

development initiatives to improve the student experience and upskill and reskill our students for a net zero and regenerative future.

If your work relates to the curriculum or qualifications, please let us know your thoughts and pass this request on to other appropriate members of faculty before it closes on 19 September:

https://online1.snapsurveys.com/OUWales_Curriculum

The findings of this work will feed into [Responsible Futures](#) launching this Autumn. Responsible Futures is a whole institution change programme in partnership with OUSA, and an accreditation mark to embed sustainability across all aspects of student learning. So, if you are a member of staff working in the design or delivery of the curriculum, in validation or in assessment, please register your interest to become part of the interdisciplinary steering and delivery group who will collaborate on ensuring sustainability is embedded in our curriculum.

LINKEDIN GROUP

It is always encouraging to hear of sustainability-related work and projects going on around the University. To respond to your requests for more opportunities to discuss sustainability, we have set up [The Open University Sustainability Network LinkedIn Group](#). This network is for the whole OU family - our students, staff, alumni, and wider audiences of The Open University with an interest in sustainability. We would love for you to join the conversation.

With continued optimism,

Nick

Prof. Nick Braithwaite

VCE Sponsor for Sustainability and Executive Dean, STEM Faculty

DISCLAIMER: Internal Communications are aware of a known issue with Mailerlite where links are sometimes corrupting after we have sent the message out. Please be assured that if this does occur, we will work with MailerLite to rectify the issue as soon as possible.

The Open University is incorporated by Royal Charter (RC 000391), an exempt charity in England and Wales and a charity registered in Scotland (SC 038302). The Open University needs to collect and process personal data in order to carry out our duties as an employer. This document sets out how we use your personal data. [Colleague Privacy Notice](#).

The Open University

Walton Hall, Milton Keynes
MK7 6AA, UK

01908 274066
www.open.ac.uk

You received this email because you are a member of staff of The Open University.

Unsubscribe