



Your
2026/2027

Access Modules Prospectus

Welcome to the home of online learning

**Have it all with The Open University
and discover a more flexible way
to achieve a career-boosting
qualification.**

Our globally recognised courses are designed to fit around you – your job, family and social life. Study flexibly online when and where you like, all with the support of dedicated tutors and the UK's biggest student community.

There's no limit to what you can achieve.
Ready to unlock a world of possibilities?

The future is open

Rated gold

in the Teaching
Excellence
Framework



**Top 3 in
the UK**
for employability



**Top 6 in
the UK**
for course quality



Ranked in the
top third of UK
universities for
**research
excellence**

**REF
2021**



The experts in online learning

Study at a world-leading university known for teaching excellence.

Trusted

Join the largest UK university for undergraduate education.

Unrivalled flexibility

Learn online when and where suits you.

Choose your pace

Achieve a degree in three years or take things slower – you decide.

Earn while you learn

Many students balance studies with their careers.

87% of alumni

Say the OU helped them achieve their career goals.

Tailored career support

To help you navigate your future.

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Why Access?

Prepare for success with an Access module

If you're looking to prepare for an OU qualification, or you haven't studied for a while, an Access module is the ideal place to start. You'll build the academic skills, understanding and confidence you need to succeed. They also provide a solid foundation for future academic study, whether you're exploring a new subject, returning after a break, or discovering where your learning journey might take you.



Students who start with an Access module are more likely to be successful when they advance to their next course.

There are four broad subject areas you can choose from. Each is perfect preparation for an Open University qualification:

- *Arts and languages Access module* (Y031), also available as a fast-track module (YXFT031)
- *Business and law Access module* (Y035), also available as a fast-track module (YXFT035)
- *Psychology, social science and wellbeing Access module* (Y034), also available as a fast-track module (YXFT034)
- *Science, technology and maths Access module* (Y033), also available as a fast-track module (YXFT033).

For more details about what you'll study in these modules, see pages 6–13.

Study that fits into your life

Our flexible style of learning means you can study whenever and wherever suits you, fitting study around your work, family and other commitments.

Two ways to study Access

Our standard Access modules start in February and October. In May and August we also offer a fast-track version, giving you the choice of how long it takes to complete them.

For the standard Access module, you'll need:

- **8–10 hours study a week, over 30 weeks.**

For the fast-track module you'll need:

- **16–20 hours study a week, over 16 weeks.**

Whichever option you choose, you'll explore the same subjects and benefit from the same tutor support.

If you have more time to dedicate to study each week, the fast-track option could help you finish the Access module in time to move straight onto the first stage of your qualification.



Taking an OU Access module was the first step – having been out of education for a long time, it gave me the confidence to carry on and study at a higher level.



Ayesha Zeeshan
OU student

Bringing university to you, wherever you are

You won't be alone. When you study an Access module you'll have:

- one-to-one tutorials with a dedicated tutor who can tailor their approach to your individual needs. Your personal phone tutorials take place at a time that suits you, and you'll get written feedback on your work
- a Student Support Team staffed by specialist advisers, able to help with any issues you might experience while studying with us
- the opportunity to share ideas with other students through our online forums.

Designed to inspire you

You'll explore a range of broadly related subjects within one module. That means you'll have the time and space to discover what subjects you are interested in before settling on your ultimate qualification goal. It gives you a solid foundation to build on – it may even spark your interest in something completely new.

Skills development built-in

Our study materials will develop not only your knowledge but your skills and confidence too. They're designed specially to help with things like:

- refreshing your study techniques – it might have been a while since you last studied, or you might prefer getting to grips with online learning before committing to a qualification. Whatever your circumstances, an Access module is excellent preparation for the next step of your student journey
- using computers – if you're not confident with computers, an Access module gives you lots of help and advice as it guides you through tasks such as internet searches, online quizzes and talking to fellow students through our online forums.

No exam

Your work on the Access module will be assessed through four short written assignments and some activities online.

All study materials included

We'll send you all your study materials, including books and other printed materials, plus a link to your module website.

You'll start studying with the printed resources provided before moving to online study, so you'll need access to a computer with a good internet connection. You'll also need to be able to communicate with your tutor either by phone, email or online.

For more information on what you'll need for your chosen course, visit our website.

Expert support

Careers and study advice

If you're studying to open up your job prospects, or looking to change career, our Careers and Employability Service can make sure you're on the right track.

Find out more at openuniversity.co.uk/careers.

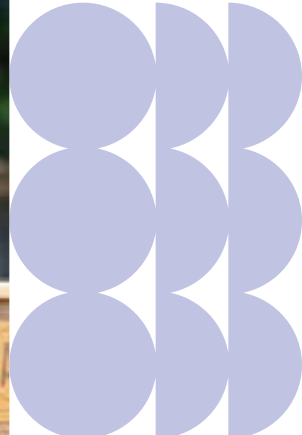
Accessibility all the way

Last year, we supported over 36,000 students with disabilities or additional needs. We'll do our best to make your studies accessible, with help by phone, web or email.

See if you qualify for extra financial help towards study costs, visit openuniversity.co.uk/disability or call **0300 303 5303**.

Affordable payment options

We try to make OU study as affordable as possible, and you could study an Access module for **free**. Find out more about fees and funding on pages 4-5.



Fees and funding

Our fees cover everything. There's nothing else to pay. And your studies might even be free.

Study for free

Depending on eligibility and availability of places, you could study your Access module for free.

To qualify, you must:

- be resident in the UK (excluding the Channel Islands and Isle of Man) or have a British Forces Post Office address
- be eligible to pay a UK fee
- meet the income threshold criteria, for more information visit openuniversity.co.uk/ug-access, and
- have **not** completed one year or more of any full-time undergraduate programme at FHEQ or CQFW level 4/ SCQF level 7 or above, and **not** successfully completed 30 credits or more of OU study within the last 10 years.

Once you've started the registration process, either online or over the phone, we'll contact you about your payment options. This will include instructions on applying to study for free if you are eligible and funded places are still available.

For further information, visit openuniversity.co.uk/ug-access.

Do you live in England?

An Access module costs £1,022.

Get a student loan

If you can't study for free and are planning to start your studies in October 2026, you might qualify for a student loan.

To get a loan, you need to be studying your Access module as part of an OU qualification. There's nothing to repay for up to four years. And after that, only once you're earning more than the annual income threshold of £25,000.

For courses starting from January 2027, student finance is changing. For more information visit openuniversity.co.uk/ug-fees.

Pay your own way

If you don't qualify for free study or a loan, you can pay your own way instead.

An Open University Student Budget Account (OUSBA) will let you pay by instalments, see opposite.

Or you can pay in full by debit card, credit card or by bank transfer.

Do you live in Wales?

An Access module costs £359.

Get a student loan

If you can't study for free, you might qualify for a student loan.

To get a loan you need to be studying your Access module as part of an OU qualification.

It comes from the government. There's nothing to repay for up to four years. And after that, only once you're earning more than the annual income threshold of £29,385.

Pay your own way

If you don't qualify for free study or a loan, you can pay your own way instead.

An Open University Student Budget Account (OUSBA) will let you pay by instalments, see right.

Or you can pay in full by debit card, credit card or by bank transfer.

Do you live in Scotland?

An Access module costs £334.

Pay your own way

If you don't qualify for free study, you can pay your own way instead.

An Open University Student Budget Account (OUSBA) will let you pay by instalments, see right.

Or you can pay in full by debit card, credit card or by bank transfer.

Do you live in Northern Ireland?

An Access module costs £325.

Pay your own way

If you don't qualify for free study, a fee grant or a loan, you can pay your own way instead.

An Open University Student Budget Account (OUSBA) will let you pay by instalments, see right.

Or you can pay in full by debit card, credit card or by bank transfer.

Do you live in the Channel Islands or Isle of Man?

An Access module costs £1,105.

You won't be able to get a free place or a student loan. But you can pay by instalments with an Open University Student Budget Account (OUSBA), see right.

Or you can pay up front by debit card, credit card or by bank transfer.

Do you live in Ireland?

An Access module costs £962.

You won't be able to get a free place or a student loan. But you can pay by instalments with an Open University Student Budget Account (OUSBA), see right.

Or you can pay up front by debit card, credit card or by bank transfer.

Are you at a British Forces Post Office (BFPO) address?

If you're based at a BFPO address, the cost of your Access module and your payment options will be the same as they are for the country you'd otherwise be living in.

Other support

Study-related costs

If you're resident in the UK and on a low household income or receive certain benefits, you might be eligible for additional funding for study-related costs, such as travel, internet access and stationery.

Open University Student Budget Accounts Ltd (OUSBA)

When you enrol with us, you'll be offered the opportunity to pay your fees through a loan from OUSBA.

OUSBA will pay your fees to The Open University, and you repay OUSBA either in a single sum before your course starts – in this case there's no interest – or in monthly instalments of up to a year – in this case, interest does apply.

The interest rate is fixed for the duration of the course (representative APR 5.1%).

If you're worried about affordability or a poor credit history, you can apply for a joint loan application with a third party e.g. partner, sibling, friend, etc.

As a responsible lender, OUSBA carries out affordability checks as part of the application process.

Find out more about OUSBA at openuniversity.co.uk/ousba.

Open University Student Budget Accounts Limited is a subsidiary firm of The Open University.

Next steps

Find out more about your funding options or start your registration.



Visit
openuniversity.co.uk/access-modules
Call
0300 303 0069



Arts and languages

Access module (Y031)

Kick-start your learning with this broad introduction to arts, humanities and language and culture.

Through the central theme of 'protest' you'll explore the fascinating and interrelated areas of arts, humanities and language. You'll develop knowledge of topics including:

- history
- art history
- English literature
- English language studies.

You'll also touch on areas of popular music, classical studies, and religious studies.

Each subject will be introduced and explained at a comfortable pace, ideal if you have little or no prior knowledge.

The module is divided into three blocks:

Block 1: Finding your voice

Focusing on English literature and English language, block 1 develops your understanding of both your own and other people's voices.

The block explores how language is:

- used to communicate
- adapted for different purposes
- used to persuade and engage
- employed as a means of cultural expression.

Building on the exploration of protest themes, you'll be introduced to language in its various spoken and written forms, including protest poetry.

You'll also study different examples of poetry to develop an understanding of how poems create meaning, including pieces by Wilfred Owen and Benjamin Zephaniah.

Block 2: Speaking out

Block 2 widens your study of language to consider popular culture and the wider language of protest evident within:

- music
- media
- politics
- sport.

You'll consider what impact dialect and pronunciation have on how meaning is produced by looking at contemporary contexts, drawing particularly on examples from hip-hop and song.

Your focus will then move to history and the struggle for the vote in Britain, and the protest movement that surrounded it. This includes investigating the role of protest in politics and the media.

You'll develop new skills for approaching historical sources which will expand on the literary analysis you applied in block 1.

Block 3: Visions of protest

Block 3 moves on to consider the relationship between art and protest.

You'll be introduced to the study of visual arts by looking at a selection of works that have been nominated for the Turner Prize. By uncovering the techniques used by art critics, you'll learn how to interpret the message, identity, and voice of the artist.

You'll then explore some diverse case studies, including:

- A painting by Picasso.
- A display at St. Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art.
- Graffiti as street art.
- Symbolism and language used in football banners.

These case studies will give you the opportunity to build on what you have learnt so far and incorporate a wider range of academic disciplines such as history, art history, religious studies and linguistics.

You'll also be able to participate in activities that will help you make decisions about your future study plans.

Arts and languages Access module: fast-track (YXFT031)

Our standard Access modules last 30 weeks, but you can **complete this module more quickly** with the fast-track option. This is ideal if you want to complete an Access module before starting the first stage of your qualification or moving on to the next step in your studies.

You'll explore the same fascinating subjects and benefit from the same tutor support, but you'll complete the module in less time by studying **16–20 hours a week, over 16 weeks**.

Not sure which option is right for you? Chat with one of our friendly advisers, call **0300 303 0069**.

Choosing a qualification

Our *Arts and languages Access module* is ideal preparation for studying towards a wide range of qualifications. A small selection is shown here, but for more information about all the qualifications we offer, visit **openuniversity.co.uk/ug**.

Arts and Humanities

- BA (Hons) Arts and Humanities (R14)
- BA (Hons) English Language and Literature (Q39)
- BA (Hons) History (Q01)
- Diploma of Higher Education in Arts and Humanities (W59)
- Certificate of Higher Education in Arts and Humanities (T32)

Languages

- BA (Hons) Language Studies (Q30)
- Diploma of Higher Education in Language Studies (W41)
- Certificate of Higher Education in Language Studies (T21)

Open qualifications

In addition to our named qualifications, we also offer three Open qualifications, including a degree.

As our most popular programme, the Open Degree, Diploma and Certificate of Higher Education offer you the flexibility to build a qualification that suits your ambitions, so if you're unsure which path to choose right now, an Open qualification may be the choice for you.

For more information, visit **openuniversity.co.uk/ug-open**.

You could study for free

Depending on eligibility and availability, you could study this module for **free**. For more information, see page 4.

Even if your end goal isn't a qualification, you can continue your studies with one of our standalone modules. For more information, visit **openuniversity.co.uk/modules**.



If you haven't studied before, do an Access module. It gives you a chance to get a view of the subjects, and it will certainly help going forward.



Steven Sutherland
OU student

Next steps

To register or discuss your options



Visit
openuniversity.co.uk/y031
Call
0300 303 0069



Business and law

Access module (Y035)

Explore what makes a business successful, and how laws affect our everyday lives. Learn how businesses are started, how disputes are resolved and why ethics matter.

Each subject will be introduced and explained at a comfortable pace over 30 weeks, ideal if you have little or no prior knowledge. For anything you're unsure of, you'll have the specialist and dedicated support you'd expect from The Open University.

The module is divided into three blocks:

Block 1: Business, law and everyday life

You'll start the module by meeting your case study characters. By following them through their first steps of setting up a business and learning about the legal system, you'll develop exciting insights into how business affects them, and what roles business and law play in our everyday lives.

You'll consider who counts as a 'legal person' and what that means for businesses, plus the differences between criminal and civil law. You'll delve into what makes something a crime, learn to work with real legal materials and explore how to start a new business.

In this block, there's also an emphasis on developing your study habits. Skills such as using a computer, researching, and academic writing will lay the foundation for your future studies.

Block 2: Resolving differences and working together

Block 2 has a wider theme of addressing ways of resolving differences and working together; it builds on your study from block 1. The block explores parts of the UK legal system by considering when an individual might find themselves in court, why a business might choose to avoid court, and where they turn for legal advice. You'll also learn the significance of age in both law and business, as well as the purposes of punishment when someone is in trouble with the law.

Through the business focus of block 2, you'll explore the practical and ethical issues small businesses face in sourcing and marketing their products, and key considerations, such as:

- how might a small business raise money?
- does it matter where a business is located?
- how do people in large organisations work together?

While exploring these concepts, your online learning skills are developed, including reading and note-taking, and there's a focus on constructing an essay.

Block 3: Business and law case studies

Finally, you'll explore some in-depth case studies to develop the topics you studied in blocks 1 and 2. You'll focus on key questions surrounding business and law such as:

- what is the importance of the age of criminal responsibility? How do we decide what it is and why does it differ across the UK?
- how do we protect consumers – and businesses – from fake online reviews?
- what happens when a business causes harm?

By looking at these issues and building on what you've studied over 30 weeks, you'll develop key academic skills in critical evaluation and comparison. You'll also have the opportunity to plan and write an essay to consolidate these essential skills, preparing you for further study.

Business and law Access module: fast-track (YXFT035)

Our standard Access modules last 30 weeks, but you can **complete this module** more quickly with the fast-track option. This is ideal if you want to complete an Access module before starting the first stage of your qualification or moving on to the next step in your studies.

You'll explore the same fascinating subjects and benefit from the same tutor support, but you'll complete the module in less time by studying **16–20 hours a week, over 16 weeks**.

Not sure which option is right for you? Chat with one of our friendly advisers, call **0300 303 0069**.

Choosing a qualification

Our *Business and law Access module* would be ideal preparation for studying towards a wide range of qualifications. A small selection is shown here, but for more information about all the qualifications we offer, visit openuniversity.co.uk/ug.

Business and Management

- BA (Hons) Business Management (Q91)
- BA (Hons) Business and Law (R76)
- Certificate of Higher Education in Business Management (T27)

Law

- Bachelor of Laws (Hons) (LLB) (R81)
- BA (Hons) Criminology and Law (Q92)

Open qualifications

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For more information, visit openuniversity.co.uk/ug-open.

Study for free

Depending on eligibility and availability, you could study this module for **free**. For more information, see page 4.

Even if your end goal isn't a qualification, you can continue your studies with one of our standalone modules. For more information, visit openuniversity.co.uk/modules.

I don't think I'd have done my degree without having studied the Access module first. It was such a good transition back into learning, and played a huge part in building my confidence.

Jacob Mackenzie
OU student

Next steps

To register or discuss your options



Visit
openuniversity.co.uk/y035
Call
0300 303 0069



Psychology, social science and wellbeing Access module (Y034)

Get an introduction to the wide-ranging topics that make up the social sciences.

You'll develop a solid foundation for future study in areas such as:

- psychology
- childhood and youth studies
- health and social wellbeing
- sport
- education
- social sciences.

Each subject will be introduced and explained at a comfortable pace, ideal if you have little or no prior knowledge.

The module is divided into three blocks:

Block 1: Who am I?

You'll consider the overarching question of '*Who am I?*', including an introduction to genetics and demographics. You'll explore how these assigned or biological factors combine with social elements such as gender, class and our psychological outlook on life to form the concept of identity.

Block 2: Is it fair?

In this block, you'll address the topic of fairness in several different ways and investigate how these differences affect our life chances: from the places we are born and the environment in which we are raised, to the physical, practical and psychological differences of our bodies and minds. All these differences mean that our 'playing field' may not always be equal.

Block 3: What can be done?

The tensions between nature and nurture, and the dynamic society in which we live, mean that there are choices we can all make in our homes, neighbourhoods, countries, and the planet as a whole to effect change. However, some of these changes may not be as simple as they appear. In block 3 you'll examine how the key issues you've studied in blocks 1 and 2 can be put into practice, developing the skills needed to succeed in future academic study.

You'll also be able to participate in activities that will help you make decisions about your future study plans.

Psychology, social science and wellbeing Access module: fast-track (YXFT034)

Our standard Access modules last 30 weeks, but you can **complete this module more quickly** with the fast-track option. This is ideal if you want to complete an Access module before starting the first stage of your qualification or moving on to the next step in your studies.

You'll explore the same fascinating subjects and benefit from the same tutor support, but you'll complete the module in less time by studying **16–20 hours a week, over 16 weeks**.

Not sure which option is right for you? Chat with one of our friendly advisers, call **0300 303 0069**.

Choosing a qualification

Our *Psychology, social science and wellbeing Access module* is ideal preparation for studying towards a wide range of qualifications. A small selection is shown here, but for more information about all the qualifications we offer, visit **openuniversity.co.uk/ug**.

Education, Childhood, Youth and Sport

- BA (Hons) Childhood and Youth Studies (Q23)
- Diploma of Higher Education in Education Studies (Primary) (W54)
- Diploma of Higher Education in Sport and Fitness (W07)
- Certificate of Higher Education in Early Childhood (T26)

Health and Social Care

- BA (Hons) Health and Social Care (R26)
- Certificate of Higher Education in Health, Wellbeing and Social Care (T52)

Psychology and Counselling

- BSc (Hons) Psychology (Q07)
- Certificate of Higher Education in Psychology (T22)

Social Sciences

- BA (Hons) Social Science (R23)
- BA (Hons) Politics, Philosophy and Economics (Q45)
- Certificate of Higher Education in Social Sciences (T06)

Open qualifications

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For more information, visit **openuniversity.co.uk/ug-open**.

You could study for free

Depending on eligibility and availability, you could study this module for **free**. For more information, see page 4.

Even if your end goal isn't a qualification, you can continue your studies with one of our standalone modules. For more information, visit **openuniversity.co.uk/modules**.



Next steps

To register or discuss your options



Visit
openuniversity.co.uk/y034
Call
0300 303 0069



Science, technology and maths

Access module (Y033)

Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) are broad and fascinating subjects that challenge and excite.

With a mix of theoretical study and some practical experiments, this Access module will help you prepare for further OU study in STEM subjects, no matter where you're starting from.

You'll gain a base knowledge in subjects such as:

- science
- engineering and design
- environment
- mathematics
- computing and IT.

Each subject will be introduced and explained at a comfortable pace, ideal if you have little or no prior knowledge.

The module is divided into three blocks:

Block 1: Life

Block 1 starts with biological and ecological ideas and uses varied examples to describe relationships between plants, animals and the wider environment. You'll learn about the unique role of humans, exploring how farming and conservation have changed the environment to suit our needs. You'll consider how we can tell what effect current lifestyles have on the environment through the introduction of the ecological footprint model, sustainable living and species conservation.

This block also introduces key mathematical ideas and techniques to help you tackle everyday mathematical problems and build the problem-solving skills needed for further study.

Block 2: Water

Water is essential for life and key to how we live. Block 2 investigates how water has shaped our planet and our lives. Through this focus on water, you'll learn and develop skills that will aid your practical understanding of a variety of tools used in science.

Using home experiments, you'll develop key skills to enable you to carry out practical science enquiries. For example, you'll investigate the presence of water in potatoes and how water is required for yeast to respire. From this practical work, you'll learn about using experimental data to develop and refine hypotheses. Underpinning this are some essential mathematics and further computing skills.

Block 3: Home

Block 3 will give you the chance to explore subjects of design, engineering and computing around the central concept of home. You'll find out how homes are designed and how they can be improved using engineering and computing. In this practical block, you'll have the opportunity to complete several design, engineering, and computing activities and experiments.

You'll record a portfolio of your work in an online design studio while continuing to learn mathematics and IT skills to support your study of computing and engineering concepts.

Towards the end of the module, activities will become available to help you make decisions about your future study plans.

Science, technology and maths Access module: fast-track (YXFT033)

Our standard Access modules last 30 weeks, but you can **complete this module more quickly** with the fast-track option. This is ideal if you want to complete an Access module before starting the first stage of your qualification or moving on to the next step in your studies.

You'll explore the same fascinating subjects and benefit from the same tutor support, but you'll complete the module in less time by studying **16–20 hours a week, over 16 weeks**.

Not sure which option is right for you? Chat with one of our friendly advisers, call **0300 303 0069**.

Choosing a qualification

Our *Science, technology and maths Access module* would be ideal preparation for studying towards a wide range of qualifications. A small selection is shown here, but for more information about all the qualifications we offer, go to **openuniversity.co.uk/ug**.

Computing and IT

- BSc (Hons) Computing and IT (Q62)
- Diploma of Higher Education in Computing and IT (W36)
- Certificate of Higher Education in Computing and IT (T12)

Design, Engineering and Technology

- Bachelor of Design (Hons) (R63)
- Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) (Q65)

Environment

- BSc (Hons) Environmental Science (Q52)

Mathematics and Statistics

- BSc (Hons) Mathematics (Q31)
- BSc (Hons) Mathematics and Statistics (Q36)
- Diploma of Higher Education in Mathematical Sciences (W43)

Science

- BSc (Hons) Natural Sciences (Q64)
- BSc (Hons) Biology (R58)
- BSc (Hons) Physics (R51)

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For more information, visit **openuniversity.co.uk/ug-open**.

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Even if your end goal isn't a qualification, you can continue your studies with one of our standalone modules. For more information, visit **openuniversity.co.uk/modules**.

Next steps

To register or discuss your options



Visit
openuniversity.co.uk/y033
Call
0300 303 0069



The OU not only boosted my career prospects, it made me more confident. I owe everything I've achieved in my career to the OU.



Gary Steel
OU graduate

openuniversity.co.uk

Get in touch

If you're in England, Scotland, Wales, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or have a British Forces Post Office address

- Email us from our website **openuniversity.co.uk/contact**
- Call our Student Recruitment team on **0300 303 5303**

Lines are open (UK time) Monday to Friday: 08:00–17:30.

Calls are charged at the local rate when calling from a UK mobile phone or landline.

In Northern Ireland

- Email **northern-ireland@open.ac.uk**
- Call our Student Recruitment team on **028 9032 3722**

In Ireland

- Email **ireland@open.ac.uk**
- Call our Student Recruitment team on **(01) 6785399**

All other countries

- Go to **openuniversity.co.uk/contact**
- Call **+44 (0)300 303 0266**

I siaradwyr Cymraeg

Os ydych yn siarad Cymraeg a byddai'n well gennych drafod eich anghenion astudio drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg, cysylltwch â:

Y Brifysgol Agored yng Nghymru
18 Heol y Tollty
Caerdydd
CF10 1AP

- Ffoniwch **029 2047 1170**
- E-bost **cymorth-cymru@open.ac.uk**

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