

# The Open University

Your questions  
answered



Union members looking to improve their qualifications and/or enhance their job prospects may want to think about using the Open University – and it may not be as expensive as you think!

Improving workers' lives – Winning for members

Usdaw education – training for action



**Usdaw**  
Union of Shop, Distributive  
and Allied Workers

**Sata**  
Supervisory, Administrative  
and Technical Association

[www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)

The Open University (OU) offers all adults, and particularly those who have very few previous academic qualifications, a unique opportunity to study without leaving home or employment.

Modern OU programmes are often linked to BBC programmes, such as 'The Nature of Britain', 'James May's 20th Century', 'History Detectives', 'Blue Planet' and 'Coast'.

The courses are written in a way that is easy to understand and build on your learning as you progress, allowing anybody the chance to gain a qualification.

## What is study with the Open University like?

Using innovative teaching methods and study materials that bring learning to life, you will learn at a time and place that suits you through course books, online resources, DVDs, face-to-face and online tutorials.

Your tutor will help you with the module material and will provide advice and guidance. Your tutor will also mark and comment on your assignments.

Progress in your study will be measured by assessed assignments that you submit throughout the module and by written exams or project work. Your tutor will give feedback on your work and guide you through anything you find difficult.

Visit [www.open.ac.uk/study](http://www.open.ac.uk/study) to see the wide variety of degrees and qualifications available.

Courses start in October, February and April.

## What is the time commitment?

A 30 credit module will require eight hours of study per week for the duration of the module. Students usually study 60 credits per year which requires 15 hours of study per week.

## Credit Transfer

If you have previously studied at a higher education level you may be able to count your study towards an Open University qualification.

[www.open.ac.uk/study/credit-transfer/](http://www.open.ac.uk/study/credit-transfer/)

## Is financial help available?

In recent years the Open University has had to adapt to the changes in higher education funding which has led to different funding models in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. To find out what Open University funding scheme or student loan applies to you please look at the Open University website [www.open.ac.uk/courses/fees-and-funding](http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/fees-and-funding) or contact your Divisional Project Worker.



## Can Usdaw help?

Urdaw operates an OU Grant Scheme – a scheme of assistance to fully paid-up Urdaw members, who have been in the Union for 12 months and are registered on the OU degree programme. Urdaw can assist members by making payments to them upon completion of degree-related modules. The current rate is £150 for each 60-point course and £75 for each 30-point course. The current maximum total payment to any member is £900. Claims must be submitted within 12 months of the date on the module results letter in order to be eligible for payment.

The grant only applies to 30 point or 60 point OU modules that form part of a degree programme (so does not apply for example, to 'Access' modules).



## Access Modules

As well as courses that count towards a degree, the Open University has three Access modules which are a good place for Urdaw members to start. The modules help to build your confidence and develop your study skills and let you try out the OU's style of learning before starting a qualification.

**[www.open.ac.uk/courses/do-it/access](http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/do-it/access)**

Modules available are:

- Arts and languages.
- People, work and society.
- Science, technology and maths.

Each module lasts 30 weeks and upon completion you receive an OU Access Module Certificate. People on low incomes or who receive certain benefits may be able to study these modules for free.

You could also access 'FutureLearn'. FutureLearn is a private company wholly owned by the Open University, offering a diverse selection of FREE, high quality online courses from some of the world's leading universities and other outstanding cultural institutions, as well as institutions with a huge archive of cultural and educational material, including the British Council, the British Library, and the British Museum. These are delivered one step at a time, and are accessible on mobile, tablet and desktop, so you can fit learning around your life. For more information, visit **[www.futurelearn.com](http://www.futurelearn.com)**

# For more information

Further details are available direct from the Open University at [www.open.ac.uk/union/](http://www.open.ac.uk/union/) alternatively you could contact your Union Learning Rep or Lifelong Learning Project Worker via your Divisional Office or Usdaw's Education and Training Department.

## South Wales and Western

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## Scottish

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## Southern

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## North West

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**email: [warrington@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:warrington@usdaw.org.uk)**

Further details are also available from:

## Education Department

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**Tel: 0161 224 2804 or visit our**

**website: [www.usdaw.org.uk/training](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/training)**

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