

Student Engagement in a Non-Campus Context

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The Open University in Scotland
Open University Students Association

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Student demographic data and student profiles

Stuart



A New Year's Resolution to challenge himself more led to Stuart Borland deciding to study for a degree with the OU and has helped him develop a new career. He explains: "I was a single father and had been working long-term in a small hotel in a rural village with little opportunity for change.

- Having taken a long break from education after leaving school, he was not confident in returning to study.
- Initially took access modules to help him decide what subjects he enjoyed
- Worked full time and looked after his children, he needed scope to fit study hours around a very unpredictable and ever-changing schedule.
- He says that studying wouldn't have been possible without having access to the Part-Time Fee Grant to pay for his studies.
- Studied across a number of years while balancing new changes in his family and work life.

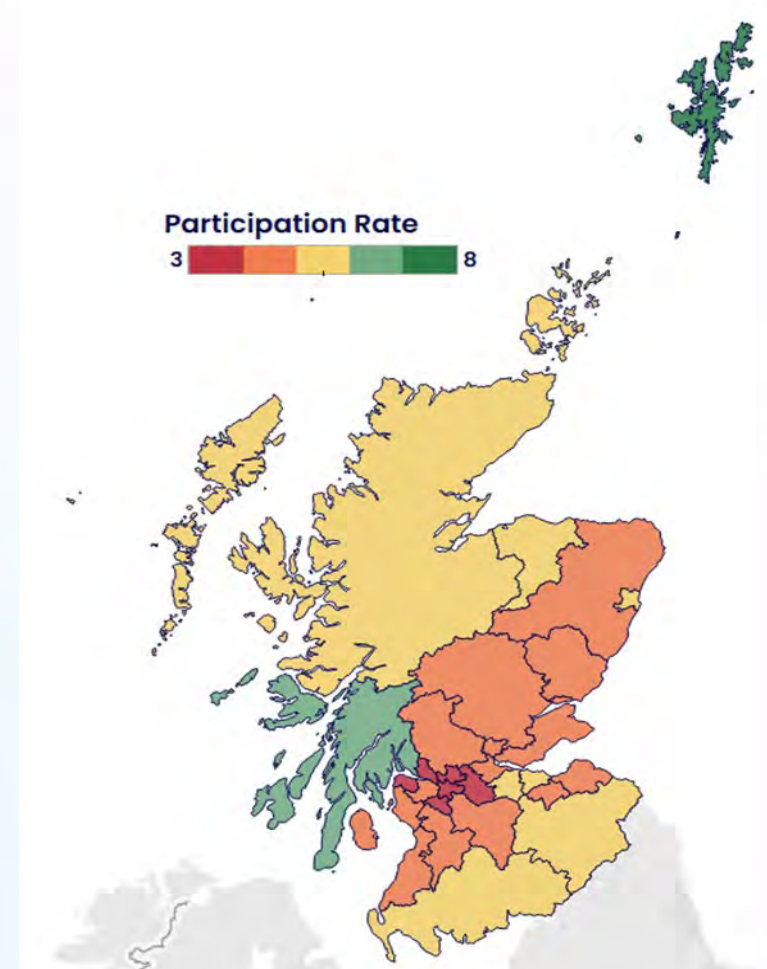
Reflecting on his time with the OU, he says: "My studies helped me to change career and move into a job that I love.

Where our students live

A key feature of the OUIS is that it provides part-time, flexible opportunities irrespective of where students live. This slide looks at the 2021/22 local authority participation rate: the student headcount per 1000 of the general population aged 16 and over.

- ▶ Shetland had the highest participation rate (7.4) followed by Argyll & Bute (6.3), Scottish Borders (5.8) and Dumfries & Galloway (5.7).
- ▶ Lowest participation was seen in West Dunbartonshire (3.5), Glasgow City and North Lanarkshire (both 3.7).
- ▶ Local authority with a high proportion of island or remote mainland communities tend to have a higher rate of student participation.
- ▶ Local authority areas with a dense urban geography and high levels of deprivation often have lower rates of student participation.
- ▶ These trends have been consistent over the past 20 years.

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Student demographic data and student profiles

Elyse



Despite facing several challenges over her lifetime, Elyse Hocking's "go watch me" approach to life has led to her successfully entering the third year of a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Business Management with The Open University (OU).

- Like many others who are care experienced, she left school without the qualifications she would need to attend university. However, she says the OU "welcomed me with open arms".
- She is also grateful to Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) for a Part-Time Fee Grant "because without it, the OU may not have been a feasible option".
- Manages multiple health conditions
- Works full-time and is a mum to three teenage boys.
- First in family to attend university, "No one in my family has attended or completed any university courses, and I want to show my sons that even when things get tough trying is better than not doing.

"I want to improve my prospects in employment to also secure their future. This is what drives me."

Student demographic data and student profiles

Abdullah



The Open University (OU) has made it possible for Abdullah Jamil to balance work and family while working towards his dream of following his father into the healthcare sector.

- Working as a clinical support worker since 2016, Abdullah was encouraged by one of his managers to apply for the Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Adult Nursing degree.
- Works full-time to support his young family during his studies. He welcomes that studying with the OU means “being able to study and earn an income at the same time, in a job role that has a future”.
- Found that placements have been the “best part of studying. I am learning so much from being in the healthcare setting, having a team and managers that coach and inspire me.”

He hopes that his journey to becoming a nurse will encourage more males to enter nursing, as it's been his experience that it is still often viewed as mainly a “female job”, and inspire more males and females of Muslim faith to enter the profession.

Engaging Distance Learners

How do we extend our reach to engage learners at all levels across Scotland?

- ▶ **Open Learn:** Over 1000 free educational resources
- ▶ **Open Learn Champions:** Network of over 400 members to take learning to communities
- ▶ **Short Courses:** 85 short courses offered taking between 25-100 hours to complete
- ▶ **Microcredentials:** 26 micros in the market with 11,000 learners registered
- ▶ **Access modules:** 530 Access modules studied in 2021-22
- ▶ **Core UG/PG provision:** 21,300 OU students across Scotland in 2021-22



Student Voice

4-nations approach and initiatives unique to Scotland

- **Partnership working** (Scholarship, Relationship Agreement, Student Consultation, Faculty/nation based initiatives)
- **Representation** (Governance committees, other steering groups, project teams and Task and Finish Groups, catch-ups between staff and Student Association representatives)
- **Panels** (Curriculum design, Library, Careers and Employability)
- **Surveys** (National Student Survey, Student Experience on the module, brand trackers, real time student feedback)
- **Scotland** (Big Blether series, Student Voice Week, Student Consultations, Freshers events, Student & Staff Engagement Group Scotland, OU in Scotland student groups, Student Voice Steering Group membership, Care-experienced Student Reference Group)

OU Students Association & Working in Partnership

How do we work in partnership with our student reps in Scotland to engage our students?

- › **Mission:** To make a positive difference for all OU students.
- › **Vision:** To support, encourage and empower OU students by:
 - Offering students the support services that they need
 - Creating opportunities for students to engage in a vibrant and inclusive student community
 - Being a strong, effective and accountable representative body
 - Working in partnership with the OU to enhance all aspects of the student experience
- › **Values:** Integrity, Equality and Inclusivity, Openness, Collaboration, Kindness and compassion





**The Open
University**

Scotland