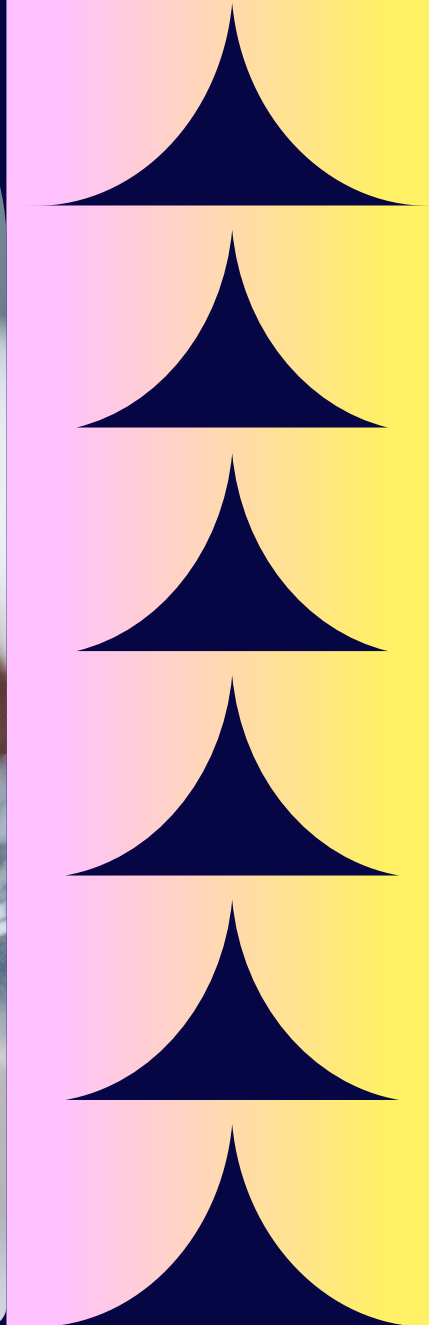




Learning for carers at The Open University

Learning Guide

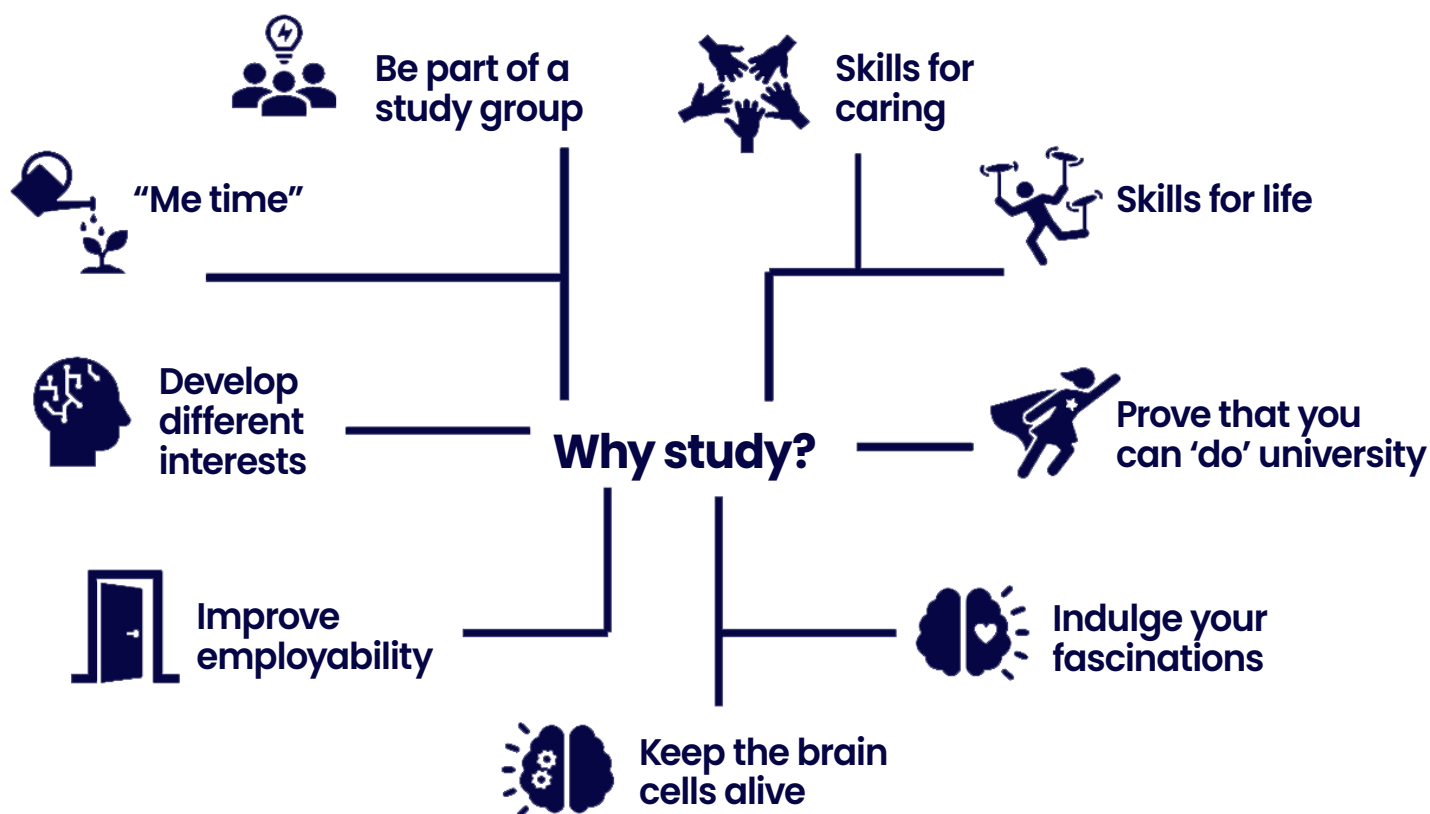


Introduction

Thought you didn't have the time to study, or complete personal/professional development? Well, here's your opportunity - whatever your educational background you can start learning with Open University (OU) OpenLearn courses, working at a pace that will enable you to balance caring and studying and at no cost to yourself.

OpenLearn courses range from 2 hours to 24 hours in length, are pitched at different levels to suit your learning needs, presented in 'bite-size' chunks to help you easily fit studying in short time slots into your daily schedule, have no start or finish date and most of the courses have no formal entry requirement. They are also fully accessible which means that, for example, alternative formats are available if you have any sort of impairment. This guide will take you through the different stages in your learning journey. Enjoy and the very best of luck!

There's a lot to gain from taking up study. Despite the challenges they face, carers have described how studying at the OU improves their wellbeing. Other benefits of OU study are:



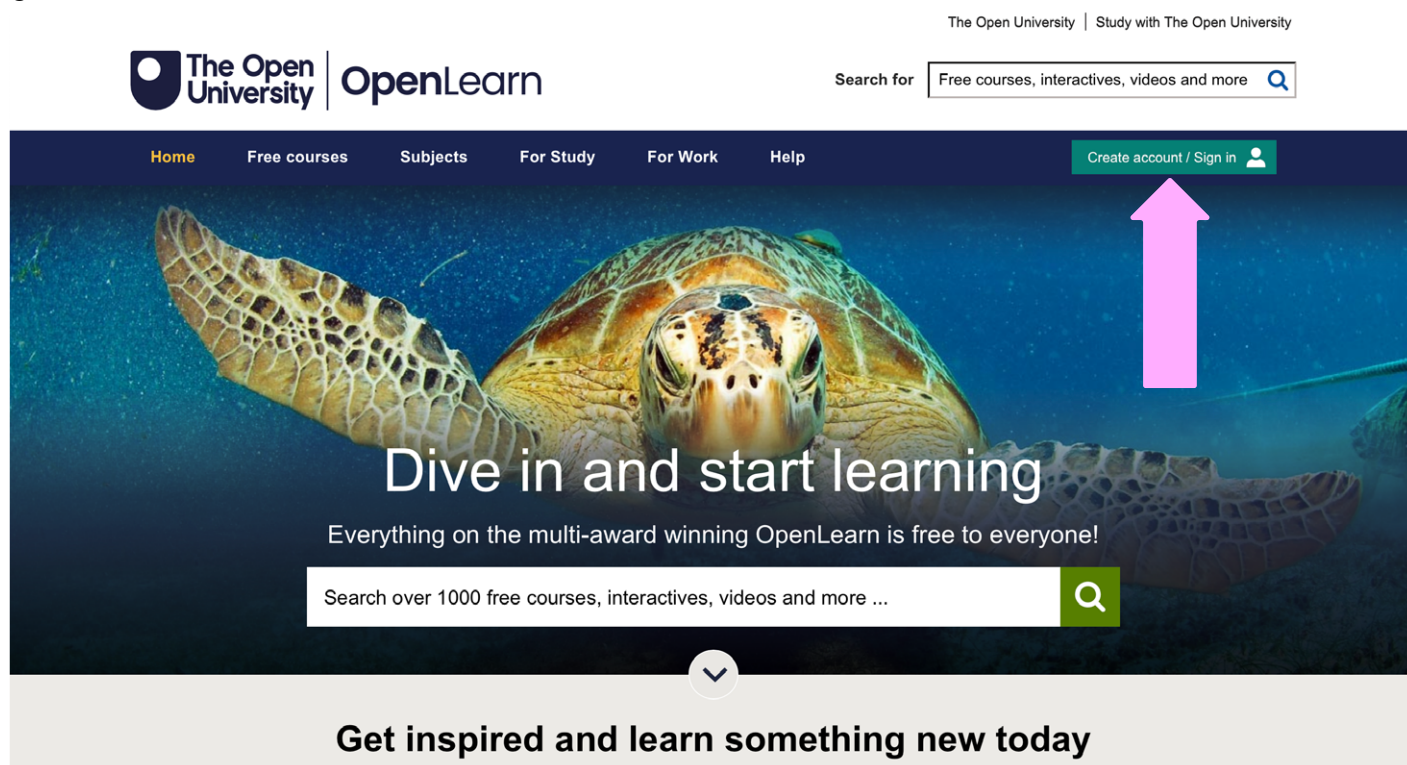
Let's get started!

Start your journey

Create your free OpenLearn account by clicking on the tab at the top right-hand side of the [OpenLearn web page](#).

To create an account, you will need to have an email address. If you don't have one, you can sign up to a free account with Google.

Creating an account will give you full access to a range of features that are unavailable to guests.



From your MyOpenLearn profile, you will be able to track your progress and download an activity record.

- My profile**
- My achievements**
- In progress**
- My badges**
- My OU life**
- My saved items**

OpenLearn in progress

Exploring the psychological aspects of sport injury

Intermediate level Health, Sports & Psychology course

Last accessed: 24 August 2022

0%

My statement of participation (in progress)

Physical activity for health and wellbeing in the caring role

Introductory level Health, Sports & Psychology course

Last accessed: 14 March 2023

67%

[My activity record](#) >

My statement of participation (in progress)

You are now ready to start your learning journey, which is set out on the next page. If you are using a paper version of this guide, please access the online version at <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/health-sports-psychology/learning-carers-the-open-university> now.

Your learning at The Open University

To get started, go to the OpenLearn website and log in to your account

[OpenLearn](#)

Would you like to refresh your study skills before you start an OpenLearn course?

Yes



Check out
'Am I ready to be a distance learner?'

[View course](#)

No



Would you like to start with
a course related to your
caring role?

Yes



There are a number of free
courses focused on the caring
role to investigate including:

**Physical activity for health and
wellbeing in the caring role**

[Caring for adults](#)

No



Do you know what topic
areas you would like to
study?

Yes



No



Go to OpenLearn and use the
search function or head to 'pick
a subject' at the bottom of the
page to explore the eight topic
areas. Don't forget to keep your
certificates and badges to have
your study recognised!

[OpenLearn](#)

Don't worry! Check out some
popular courses to help you get
started. Don't forget to keep your
certificates and Badges to have
your study recognised!

[Browse by topic area](#)

[Popular courses](#)

Need more help?

[Explore the frequently asked questions page](#)

Carer feedback



What was great for me was that if I didn't enjoy it a course, I simply stopped and started another one... super flexibility!



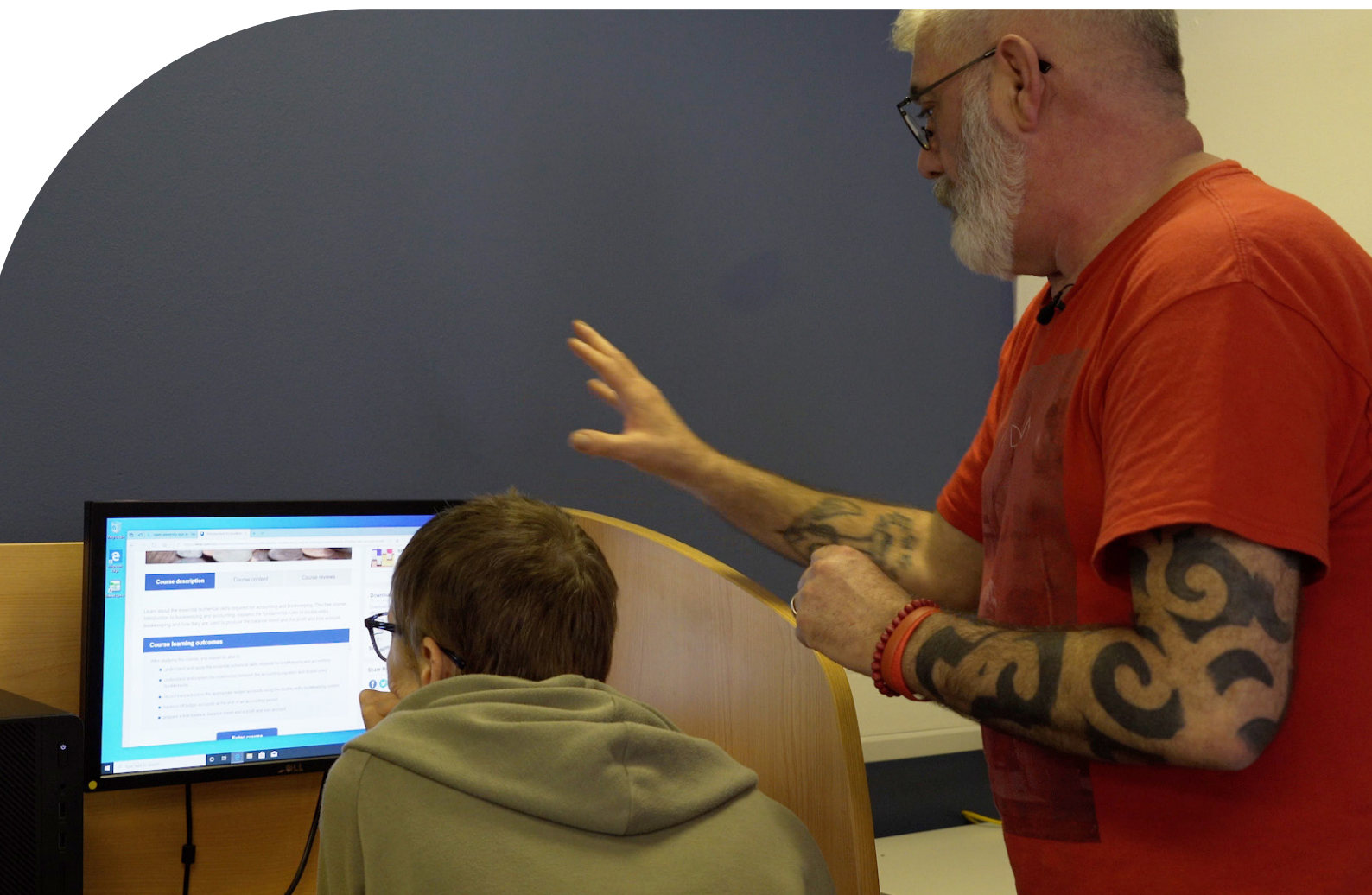
I loved knowing I was learning with fellow carers. Even if we didn't talk about caring, I knew they understood me.



I can't believe how good I felt from completing my first 2-hour course – so much more confident and felt a huge sense of achievement.

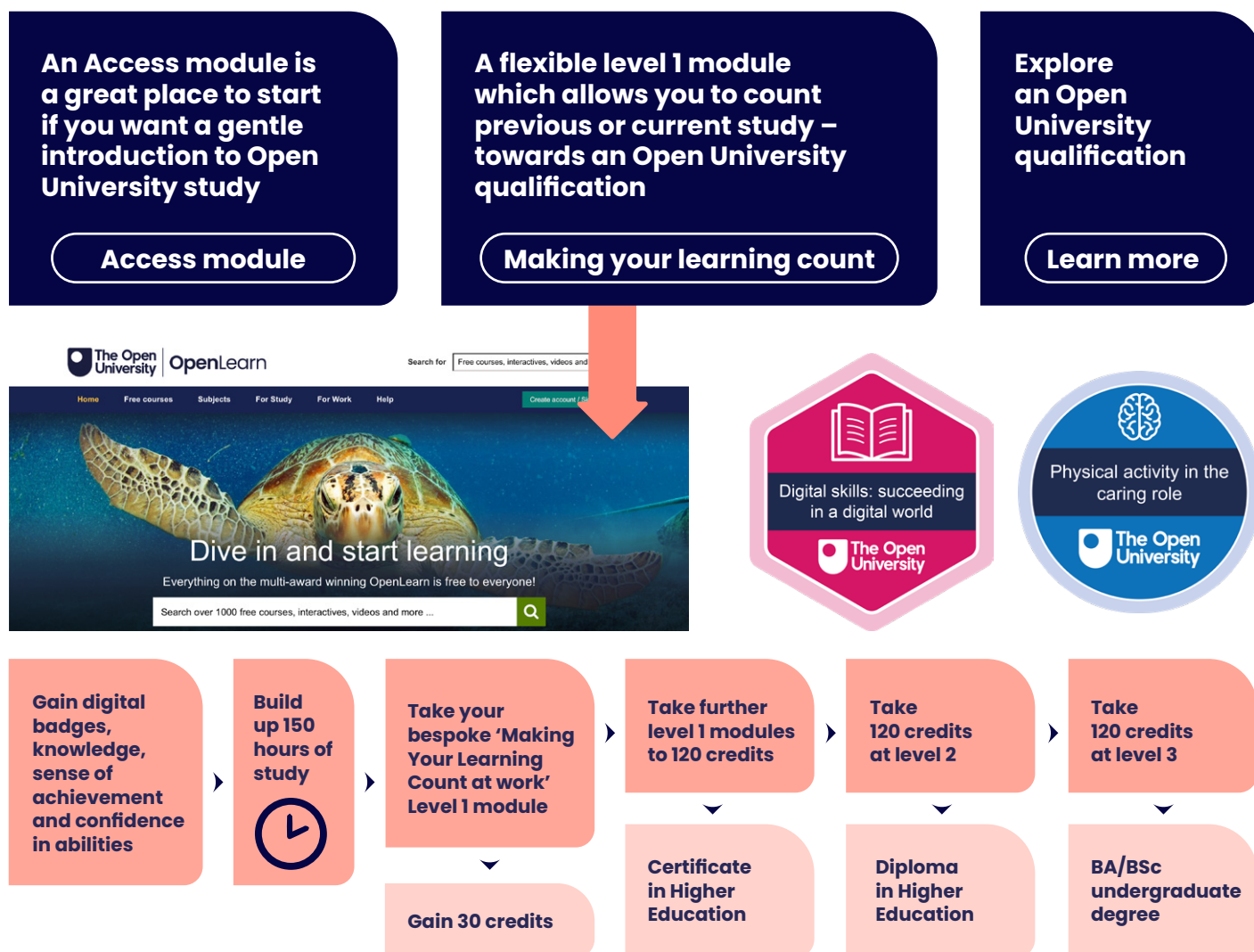


So many free courses and great that they are for all levels and interests. Worked so well alongside my caring role.



What next?

Now you have experienced distance learning and gained some certificates and badges, you might be interested in continuing your study formally. Possible routes to Open University qualifications are outlined below. Talk to your local carer services or employment services if you need further advice and support.



If you are thinking of studying for an Open University qualification, you will find the information below useful:

- The OU's open access entry policy means that your prior educational attainment is not a barrier to study.
- The design of the OU's online learning resources and courses offers the most flexible way for you to study around your caring commitments.
- The OU provides excellent support for carers in accessing and succeeding in education. For example, there is a carer identification system through which carers are routinely offered support by specially trained staff; a regularly updated 'Support for carers' Help Centre page which outlines all the support available to OU students who are carers to help them balance caring and studying; dedicated carers forums; and bespoke carer employability support.
- Financial support is available through the OU's carer bursary scheme (£250 to help with study-related costs); and the pioneering Carers Scholarship Fund which provides up to 50 carers each year with funding for a full OU qualification.

About this guide

This Guide has been jointly produced by The Open University and the Carers Centre Tower Hamlets. We wish to thank those in the Carers Centre Tower Hamlets Carers Wellbeing Academy who contributed to its development and piloting. The Open University is dedicated to open and accessible Education for all. One the main aims of the Carers Wellbeing Academy is to improve the wellbeing of unpaid carers through education.



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open.ac.uk

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