

Hello.

I'm Professor Dave Phoenix,
and I'm really proud to be the new Vice-Chancellor
at The Open University.

First, I want to thank you
for choosing to study with us, and I hope your studies are going well.

Every one of you will have your own story
and your own reasons for learning, and it's a privilege
to share your journey with you.

It's your stories of determination,
discovery, and change that remind us
why The Open University was created to make learning possible
for anyone, anywhere.

That belief has guided us
from the very beginning.

Since 1969, we've held true to our values of opportunity, equity and
quality.

And these same values
still define us today in the way they did 50 years ago.

The world has changed
dramatically since then, though, but the need for
the OU has never been greater.

Rising costs, inequality and rapid technological change
all shape how people live and learn.

That's why we're developing
a new University strategy called Opening Up.

It builds on our proud heritage, but it looks firmly to the future.

We're asking ourselves
how we can continue to open up learning, opportunity and connection
for even more people in the decades ahead.

People who are going to follow
in your footsteps.

To do that, we're starting a conversation
across our student and staff communities by sharing our early thinking
about
in a changing world.

Our emerging ideas are built around
three key priorities, and they reflect who we are
and what we stand for.

The first is creating societal impact, reaching more people who face
barriers
real difference

The second, advancing social mobility,
supporting every one of our students to achieve their ambitions and
succeed whatever their background or goals.

And finally, empowering communities
through partnership.

Working with employers, educators
and local organisations to ensure that alongside our global reach, we are
having local impact.

At the heart of each of these
priorities lies the combined power of teaching
and research, working together.

Our teaching opens up
learning that changes lives.

Your lives.

Helping you gain knowledge, skills and confidence to reach your goals.

Our research expands
what's possible, addressing big questions and creating solutions
that make a difference to society.

Together,
they bring our mission to life and ensure that our impact is both personal
and far reaching.

And that's where you come in.

The way we teach, the questions we explore and the impacts
we create all begin with you.

Our students.

Your experiences and ideas help us understand
what matters most and how we can keep improving what we do.

That's why as part of Student Voice Week,
we want to hear from you.

We want you to tell us what you think
about the emerging strategy.

Does it reflect your experience
and ambition?

Does it capture what the OU should
stand for in the future?

Your feedback will help us shape
our thinking and ensure we continue
to advance our mission, so that more people and communities can benefit
from the transformative power of learning.

Your voice can help shape
the next chapter of our story, and as we look to the future
with confidence and purpose, together we can continue to open up
learning for everyone, everywhere.

Thank you for listening.