

THE AWARDS 2021

University of the Year

Institution name	The Open University
Submission title or project name	Supporting more learners through the pandemic and recovery
Nominee/key personnel	
URL	www.open.ac.uk
Submission	<p>2019/20 was a landmark year for The Open University (OU) in which we utilised our pioneering distance learning expertise to support our vast student community through the COVID-19 pandemic and provided essential resources for millions of learners, families, teachers and other academic institutions.</p> <p>The OU continues to play a key part in the national pandemic response, offering free training through the Department of Education's Skills Toolkit for furloughed and unemployed workers. We remained 'open' to our students throughout a turbulent year and saw student numbers grow to 175,758, whilst welcoming an additional 18 million learners through our free OpenLearn platform. During the first lockdown, we quickly adapted to provide free resources for learners and teachers to pivot to online learning, and healthcare workers return to the frontline.</p> <p>In a year like no other, the OU demonstrated why we are not just an institution for our times, but for the future.</p>