

Graduates



In 2008-2009, 2,386 students obtained Bachelor's Degrees and 333 students obtained Master's Degrees. In addition, various diplomas, including 56 teaching certificates, were awarded to students completing a variety of study programs. Of those receiving a degree or diploma, 12% had no matriculation certificate.

Survey of All OUI Graduates

The Open University attaches great importance to feedback from graduates. Such feedback enables the OUI to learn from graduates' experience about the contribution of the academic degree to their personal, educational and professional lives. In the spring semester, questionnaires were sent to all OUI graduates (a total of 25,000 graduates). A response was received from about 25% of them

Main Findings

Career-related improvements: Of the respondents, 45% reported that they had received an increase in salary, 35% had advanced in rank, 33% had been promoted to a more senior position, 27% had benefited from an improvement in their terms of employment, 52% experienced an improvement in their social status and 82% reported improvement in their personal status.

Postgraduate studies: About 40% of the respondents reported that they had registered for graduate studies, most of them at universities in Israel. Of those continuing their studies, 41% were or had been at the OUI, 40% at other universities, 7% at universities abroad and 12% at Israeli colleges. The findings also show that 34% were studying for an MBA. In addition, 3.7% of the respondents were registered for doctorate programs and 71 of them had received their doctorates.

Russian Program Graduates

This year, the OUI awarded degrees (in Humanities and Social Sciences) to four students whose academic program had been held in Russian, one of them *summa cum laude*.

Graduates Who Started Studies as High School Pupils

This year, 68 students who had begun their studies while still in high school received a degree. Of these, 50 received Bachelor's degrees, and six received Master's degrees. 38 of these students completed their studies *cum laude* and seven *summa cum laude*.

For data on graduates, see Appendix C, p .62

From a Speech of an OUI Graduate



Leor Ben-Ezer, speaker at the graduation ceremony

I would like to express deep gratitude to the graduates' families. The backing and encouragement of a supportive family is a central element all through the studies at the Open University, and there is no doubt in my mind that the continuous support you, as family members, gave the graduates during their challenging journey to obtaining their degrees, was crucially important to all of them. Therefore, on behalf of all graduates, I would like to open this speech with a warm thank you to the families who were with us and supported us throughout this long journey.

For me, the OUI is part of the family and the family is part of the OUI. I am one of four siblings, all of them present or past students at the OUI. My eldest sister has a Bachelor's degree in Management and Communication and a Master's degree in Business Administration, both *cum laude*. My brother met his wife during his studies and both obtained their Bachelor's degrees in Economics and Management, *cum laude*. Today I too obtained my Bachelor's degree in Accounting and Economics, *cum laude*. My younger sister is in her second year of the Economics and Management program. The family is so deeply involved in this educational and culture enterprise, that it is hard to imagine how it would go on without them.

I began my studies during my military service. Actually, the OUI is the only institute which allows you to combine

full military service with studies. Thus I was able to utilize my time in the army efficiently. And the army supported my studies, and because of my excellent performance, even financed them.

Thanks to the Open University I was able to continue my studies after my discharge from the army, working to gain experience and to finance my further studies. After my military service, I worked at Bank Mizrahi during my first two years at the OUI, and had acquired experience in economics. I got a very good and professional job upon my release from the army because I was able to complete my studies at the OUI during my military service.

Towards the end of my degree studies in accounting I began my pre-internship at the accounting office of "Ernst & Young, Kost Forer Gabbay & Kasierer", one of the leading accounting firms in Israel. The fact that I was a student at the OUI gave me an edge over many students from other colleges and universities who competed for the job. I was recruited for a professional position in the office, a job which required self-study, motivation and self-discipline, all of them skills acquired during my studies at the OUI.

I cannot emphasize enough the fact that not only is the level of studies at the OUI very high, but that during their studies, all graduates of the OUI acquire new skills and develop the ones they have. This is a result of the study method, i.e., high ability to cope with independent study, to manage time, and have motivation, self-control and perseverance. The OUI gives us the tools to cope with all types of challenges at work and in our daily life. The material we studied and the skills we developed will prove an invaluable asset for us all in our future endeavors throughout life.

As graduates, we all went through "basic training", learning how to cope with the tasks and tests set for us. We may all feel justly proud of what we have achieved. Everywhere I turn, people are impressed by the fact that I studied at the OUI, and that the OUI opened doors for me.

So, raise a toast, celebrate and enjoy your achievements. We are a unique species, and we've made it!

On this festive occasion, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all OUI teams, on behalf of all graduates who have today reached a significant goal in their lives, and who will be moving on as empowered graduates, well equipped for their future.

Thanks!!!