

External Studies

Professional Development

The Open University's professional development unit spearheads educational and technological innovation. During the past year, several new educational programs were introduced.

Nationwide teacher-training in computer science: Since the study of computers is now part of the 4th-6th-grade curriculum, appropriate teacher training has also been introduced. A team of tutors, including some from the mathematics and computer science department, conducted teacher training in the basics of computer science, using Scratch software. Nationwide instruction was undertaken for all population sectors (Jewish, Arab, Druze and Bedouin).

Academia in the classroom and specialization in teaching: Over the past year this program, which is designed for education students who have reached the practicum stage of their studies, has been expanded to include implementation in four schools around the country. With a view to providing a broader, enhanced experience in practical teaching processes, pedagogical advisors from the professional development unit work with both students and educators. Students participating in the twice-weekly program receive an annual scholarship. The program for specialization in teaching continued to hold internship workshops for teaching certificate graduates, while integrating them into the teaching profession in schools. Courses for support of new teachers also took place, as well as nationwide training programs for new-teacher coaches.

Training program for school principals: During the past year, another cycle of training programs for school principals, held in conjunction with the Avney Rosh Institute, was successfully completed. A summer seminar for graduates of the seven cycles of the program was attended by sixty graduates, most of who already fill roles as school principals.

Training programs and certificate studies: Two groups took part in a two-year training program for the teaching of gifted students, comprising a total of 240 hours. The focus was on the special characteristics of gifted students, and participants studied relevant theories, and practical strategies. The Matal program (for specialists in the assessment of learning disabilities) in the Jewish and

Arab sectors also offered certificate studies in a range of subjects, such as remedial teaching, counseling of parents of children with learning disabilities, and pedagogical coordination.

Etgarim : During the year, the Etgarim program was implemented in twenty Arab-sector schools. The program aims to promote and develop strong school leadership. In some cases, this was the program's second year and participants were able to apply the acquired principles and skills to spearhead pedagogical and organizational change among their staff and in the school.

Additional programs

- A two-year program for the professional development of senior educators in a range of subjects (part of the New Horizons reform program).
- Training of teacher-educators in combination with "assessment alternatives" in a technological environment.
- Courses and seminars for teachers of science and technology, social science, Russian, Jewish Law, computer science, and more. Each course is backed by the relevant academic department.

External Studies Center (Ma'aleh)

Ascolot – School of Interdisciplinary Studies

Enrollment numbers for Ascolot rose this year to exceed 26,250 students. The Government and Strategy: Intelligence and National Security forum, taught in Tel Aviv by Maj. Gen. (Res.) Eitan Ben-Eliahu, completed its eighth successful year. Other continuing courses included the Economic Forum, taught in Haifa by economic analyst Sever Plotzker; and the Legal Forum, taught by legal analyst and correspondent Yuval Yoaz. Adv. Art courses were held at Ascolot's Beit Ayala branch, and morning studies were expanded. A new course in film was added for the 5,000 film students around the country currently studying through Ascolot. A new literature course is being taught by Jerusalem novelist Haim Be'er, while journalist and broadcaster Kobi Meidan has opened reading clubs in Jerusalem, Haifa and Ra'anana. Courses in music continued with composer-conductor Gil Shohat, who hosted prominent performers in three separate courses. The Pre-concert

course has continued its twenty-year collaboration with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. More courses in a variety of musical genres were offered by Ronen Borshevsky, conductor and deputy to maestro Zubin Mehta, together with pianist-composer Dr. Orit Wolf, and prominent lecturer and music critic Dr. Omer Shomrony.

Hasifa - School of Communication, Television, and Multimedia

Hasifa offers a range of study tracks, some of which are recognized as credits towards a BA degree. The school is a partner of the Open University's Center for Media Studies. In the past year, the school organized a series of conferences in collaboration with the Center for Media Studies, as well as two end-of-year exhibitions of work by Hasifa alumni, covering the development of computer games, design, and post-production processes, with the cooperation of the Center for Film Studies. Two graduate films were selected for screening at the Cannes Film Festival's Short Film Corner. This year, Hasifa offered a course specifically designed for the security sector, creating a new collaboration with Wix.com, a Cloud-based web development company.

Tafnit – Continuing Education for Managers

This year, Tafnit continued to expand its programs. In the areas of business consultation, human resources management, group instruction, and information management there was improved enrollment, and volume of programs. These fields were positioned as core subjects. In addition to programs in the private sector, Tafnit was also involved in projects with leading organizations in industry and the economy. Management workshops were held around the country in joint programs for the training of business owners, Ministry of Justice personnel, and managers. Tafnit hosts the Open University's Enterprise Forum, which introduces business people and managers around the country to the school's programs.

Diploma – Certificate Studies

Diploma offers professional training tracks in a range of fields, including tourism, finance, and design. In some programs, students are prepared for licensing exams. The Center for Interior Design Studies is now Diploma's largest program and enables students to include short modules from outside the main track in their studies. Topics included in the program are design and interior design, furniture and lighting design, SketchUp, and home styling.

DiAlog – School of Languages

DiAlog offers many courses in different sectors and business organizations around the country. During the past year, the school introduced changes and improvements to its syllabi, study methods, and content. Several companies in the commercial sector trained their senior personnel, with a view to helping Israeli representatives improve communication in English with overseas contacts and the media. Private lessons were offered to senior businessmen and police officers, and courses and workshops were held for senior managerial personnel at the ministries of Health, Finance, and others. There are also training courses in Arabic for senior police officers and Tax Authority personnel. Courses in other languages, such as Italian and French, were successfully presented at large corporations.

Meirav – School of Complementary Medicine

Meirav offers professional training in complementary medicine, as well as courses for personal enrichment and empowerment. Meirav courses for the private sector are available in Kfar Hayarok, Jerusalem, Modiin, and Beersheba. The school adapts itself to developing trends and is planning new courses in the healthcare field. In addition to the private sector, Meirav is aiming its marketing towards the individual needs of organizations involved in complementary medicine.

Beit Daniel

Beit Daniel hosted a wide variety of one-day and multiple-day programs during the year. These included professional training and workshops for the advancement of managers and employees of Israeli organizations and companies; training for government organizations; meetings with artists, poets, and more.

Beit Daniel also hosted many academic and educational seminars, conferences, and meetings of lecturers and students from Israel and other countries and hosted activities for Open University academic and administrative departments.

Other Beit Daniel offerings were musical in nature and included courses for musicians of all ages. As in previous years, the general public was invited to enjoy three music-themed weekends under the direction of Smadar Carmi Giberman. This year's focus was on Schubert, Haydn and Mahler.