

A TRACER STUDY OF SCIENCE GRADUATES OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

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INTRODUCTION

The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL), established in 1980 as the only Open and Distance Learning National University in Sri Lanka, launched its Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) Degree programme in 1983. The major aim of this programme at that time was to outreach and provide an alternative route for adult learners, who missed learning opportunities at the conventional system in the Science fields. The first group of Science students graduated in 1990.

The OUSL student population is heavily diversified with age, educational qualifications, competency level, etc. Their progress differs considerably and generally takes a longer period to complete their studies than their conventional counterparts. The retention rates of students are also less as most of the students are continuing their studying while working and with other family commitments.

This study was carried out to trace the OUSL Science alumni who graduated from the OUSL and to find out their current status, their perceptions on the B.Sc degree programme and what they have achieved in their career and life in general as a result of studying at the OUSL.

The main objectives of this research study were to find out:

- students perceptions on the B.Sc Degree programme
- the benefits obtained while studying at the OUSL
- the benefits obtained as a result of the OUSL degree