

KAPLAN OPEN LEARNING INTRODUCES CRIMINAL JUSTICE DEGREE

Classes – entirely online – will run year-round

7 July 2008, London – Kaplan Open Learning, the online higher education college, has announced it will begin offering a wholly online foundation degree in Criminal Justice this summer. Kaplan Open Learning was launched last year by global education and training company Kaplan and the University of Essex.

The course is aimed at the more than half a million people currently working in the criminal justice sector, either as employees or volunteers, many of whom do not have higher education degrees. Topics covered include crime and its impact, criminal investigation, skills for the criminal justice sector, terrorism and anti-social behaviour.

The online format offers far greater flexibility than traditional full-time and part-time degrees which require attendance on a campus, so students can pursue a degree without disrupting their work or family life. This creates an excellent opportunity for many of these working adults to gain higher education qualifications who otherwise would not be able to do so. The course is also expected to be of interest to a wider public who follow criminal justice and civil liberty issues.

The course will offer multiple start dates throughout the year with a continuous 52-week academic calendar, and will allow students to study wherever they have access to the internet. Scheduled online classes connect staff and students through both live audio and chat rooms to encourage active discussion and interactive learning in real time. Students can contact their own dedicated academic adviser and tutors outside regular class hours.

The Foundation degree will be awarded by the University of Essex. A third year 'top up' course is under development that, if successfully validated, would lead to the award of a BA (Hons) in Criminal Justice by the University.

The course has been developed by course leader Professor Cedric Bell and Senior Lecturer David Young, a former senior police officer in the West Yorkshire Police who also has considerable experience of the criminal justice sector.

Alan Jenkins, Managing Director of Kaplan Open Learning, said: "This Foundation Degree course has been designed to be relevant, stimulating, current and sufficiently flexible to anticipate future trends. Students will gain an understanding of the relationships and interdependence of the various criminal justice agencies as well as develop specific skills including intelligence gathering, analysis, problem solving, decision making, leadership, and communication."

The introduction of Kaplan Open Learning's Criminal Justice programme follows the successful launch of its Business Studies programme, also entirely online and running all year long. The course has attracted primarily, but not exclusively, working adults without degrees between the ages of 25 - 45.

Online degree courses are becoming increasingly popular throughout the world. In the US alone, nearly 20 percent of all higher education students were taking at least one online course in the fall of 2006. That represents a nearly 10 percent increase from the year earlier and accounts for 3.5 million students, according to the Sloan Consortium and the Babson Survey Research Group.

The partnership between Kaplan and Essex combines Kaplan's global reputation as a provider of education and training for the past 70 years with the University of Essex's excellent academic standing and reputation for high-quality research and teaching excellence. Kaplan Open Learning benefits from the expertise Kaplan has gained in running US-based online Kaplan University, which currently has an enrolment of 37,000 students.

About Kaplan, Inc.

Kaplan, Inc. is a leading international provider of educational and career services for individuals, schools and businesses. Kaplan, which had 2007 revenue of \$2 billion, is a subsidiary of The Washington Post Company (NYSE: WPO). For more information, please visit www.kaplan.com.

About the University of Essex

The University of Essex is one of the UK's leading academic institutions, consistently ranking among the top 12 universities in the country for the quality of its research and teaching. Founded in 1964, it has more than 8,000 students drawn from around 120 countries. For more information, please visit www.essex.ac.uk.

About Foundation Degrees

Introduced in 2001, Foundation degrees are a distinctive higher education qualification combining academic study with work-based learning. Typically taking two to three years to complete, they are equivalent to the first two years of an Honours degree programme and can lead to entry into a Bachelor's degree programme. In 2006, more than 60,000 students were registered for Foundation degrees in the UK.

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