

SUE BLACK: Welcome to Returning to STEM, a free eight week course designed to help you return to work in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The Open University has produced this course, because we know there are many people, women and men, who are already qualified or experienced in STEM, but not working in these sectors. I'm Sue Black. And I'll be taking you through your eight-week journey back into the world of work in STEM.

I came back into STEM as a mature student. I was really petrified to start with, but soon settled in, and I've now had a very successful 20-year career in technology. During the eight-week course, you will have an opportunity to do a range of activities, including tasks such as preparing your CV, learning how to update your knowledge of your employment sector, making links with not only other students, but also colleagues and professional bodies.

If you've had a career break from STEM, you'll need to understand how employment has changed in terms of legal rights and also working practises, such as flexible working and job sharing. Creating a work life balance that suits you will speed your transition to the marketplace. The support and advice that nurtures positive change will be cultivated throughout the weeks by networking, role models, and mentors.

This course will take you on a personal journey that begins with a focus on you, but grows through the eight weeks to an understanding of the person that you'd like to become. That change will be marked along the way with weekly achievements, like constructing a powerful CV. Later, with a growing network of support, insights, and new skills, you'll build your action plan and indeed begin to implement it. I wish you every success with this course, which I hope will take you back into STEM and a very successful career.