



UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
External System

www.londonexternal.ac.uk/150

**150 YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION**

Two wireframe globes are positioned in the background, one on the left and one on the right, showing the outlines of the continents and latitude/longitude lines.

The People's University:
150 years of the University of London and its External students





The People's University: 150 years of the University of London and its External students
 Based on the commemorative book published by: University of London. Copyright © University of London, January 2008.



Timeline continued on the inside back cover pages

Introduction



Sir Graeme Davies
Vice-Chancellor of the
University of London



Professor Jonathan Kydd
Dean of the University
of London External System

The University of London External System is now the longest standing and foremost supplier of transnational education in the world and 2008 marks its 150th Anniversary.

The University of London celebrates a phenomenal achievement in 2008 – the 150th Anniversary of its External System. The University was the first in the UK to offer its degrees to students irrespective of their religious or political beliefs, or gender. The External System has continued with this tradition of innovation and openness by offering its degrees worldwide, thus anticipating 20th-century developments in flexible and distance learning by more than 100 years.

The University of London External System, which now has 41,000 students worldwide, has played an instrumental role in the formation of British higher education. All English and Welsh universities founded between 1849 and 1949 offered University of London degrees by External study prior to receiving charters to award their own degrees. Similarly, the External System also played a significant role in establishing several Commonwealth universities in the middle decades of the 20th century.

However, little has been known of the key role played by the External System in assisting prisoners of war to take their examinations in the prison camps during both World Wars – a time when demand for education increased rapidly, much to everyone's surprise. Later, Nelson Mandela, who studied with the External System while in captivity on Robben Island, was to become one of its most famous students. To date, the University of London External System is proud to count amongst its students and alumni five Nobel Prize winners, current and former leaders of Commonwealth countries, government ministers and Members of Parliament, renowned authors, academics, judges and senior lawyers, leaders of business and industry worldwide. This makes it a unique global network.

Stories of some of these renowned people are featured in our special anniversary book, entitled *The People's University: 150 years of the University of London and its External students*. Complementing the book, this publication provides a flavour of the University of London External System's remarkable story: a degree system which has always been ahead of its time, and, which we are certain, will continue to grow and develop while maintaining its place as certainly the oldest – and probably the world's most respected – provider of degrees through distance and flexible learning.

We hope that students, teachers and others alike will celebrate this outstanding achievement, which has enabled both individuals and countries to grow. Some of you will be joining the celebrations that have been organised by the University, while others are planning their own. Whatever you do, we would like to take this opportunity of thanking you for your ongoing support, particularly during 2008 – a momentous year for all those who have been involved in the University of London External System as suppliers, recipients and supporters of education.

“To date, the University of London External System is proud to count amongst its students and alumni five Nobel Prize winners, leaders of Commonwealth countries, former MPs, renowned authors and academics, judges and leaders of business and industry worldwide.”

For further information on the book and 150th Anniversary events visit: www.londonexternal.ac.uk/150

First global university



Reproduced by courtesy of the Charles Dickens Museum, London

150 years of international academic excellence and innovation

The University of London, established in 1836, has played an historic and pioneering role in extending university education to all regardless of race, religion, gender or country of residence.

Not only did the University break new ground by admitting any male student who was able to take the degree, but in 1878 it became the first university in the UK to admit women to its degrees. Amidst these radical reforms in education access, further new ground was broken in 1858 with the establishment of the External System, which opened up the degree to those who could not come to London to study. Following the fourth Charter granted and signed by Queen Victoria, this made the University of London the first to offer degrees to students worldwide, with Mauritius becoming the first overseas country to host its examinations in 1865.

Dickens endorses access

At the time an article in the magazine *All the Year Round*, edited by Charles Dickens, described it as the 'People's University' which would 'extend her hand to the young shoemaker who studies in his garret'. The article's endorsement of the University of London degree being extended to all is unequivocal:

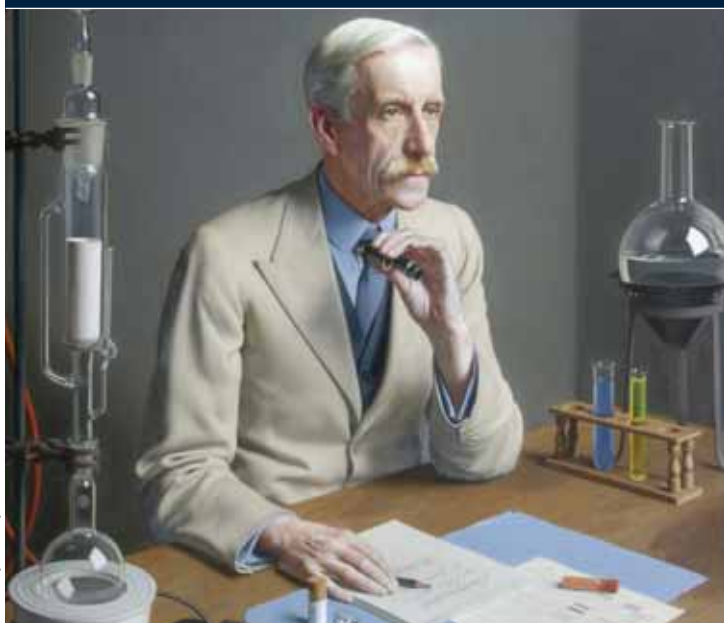
'Nobody ever ridiculed the test of intellectual competence through which only men can arrive at association with the University of London. Having passed by a light examination to the degree of Bachelor of Arts in one of our old universities, the graduate may advance without any examination at all through the series of higher terms of honour. They belong to a question of little more than time and money. In the People's University every degree has to be stoutly fought for'.

The present

Now, 150 years on, the External System continues to innovate and offers more than 100 academic qualifications, many of which are taught using the latest technologies. The global community of External students now numbers 41,000 across 180 countries worldwide, making it a unique network.

Edited by Charles Dickens, the weekly magazine *All the Year Round* described what is now the University of London External System as 'The People's University'

A unique network – former students and alumni



© The Royal Society

Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins

Winner of the Nobel Prize in 1929 for the discovery of what are now known as vitamins, Hopkins graduated in 1890 as a 'non-collegiate' student of the University of London. Hopkins was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1905 and was a member of the first Medical Research Committee.

Nelson Mandela

For many of his 27 years of imprisonment, Nelson Mandela studied Law as a University of London External student. He passed the London Intermediate exams in 1963, but the conditions imposed by the South African authorities prevented him from completing his degree in the later 1960s and 70s. The former President of South Africa and Nobel Peace Prize winner has received more than 100 awards, including many honorary degrees.

Our global community of former students and alumni include many exceptional people who have made their mark on the world. In addition to five Nobel Prize Winners – Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins, Ronald Coase, Wole Soyinka, Derek Walcott and, most famous of all, Nelson Mandela. – they include academics (Asa Briggs, Kwasi Wiredu, Sir Geoffrey Elton); engineers (Sir Barnes Wallis); politicians (Dr Luisa Diogo, Gisela Stuart MP); and writers (H.G. Wells, Chinua Achebe, Malcolm Bradbury). Today, our worldwide reputation continues to ensure our graduates are to be found in leading positions around the world.

Our Nobel laureates

Derek Walcott

Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1992, and the foremost West Indian poet and dramatist writing today, Walcott was born in St Lucia. An extensive bibliography includes the epic-length poem *Omeros* (1990) – a retelling of the Homeric legend in a Caribbean context – and a collection of literary criticism, *What the Twilight Says* (1998). *A Selected Poems* was published in 2007.



© Ferran Paredes/Reuters

Professor Ronald Coase

Ronald Coase took the London Intermediate exam as an External student in 1929, before taking a degree at the London School of Economics and Political Science. A year spent in the USA studying the structure of American industries provided the basis for 'The Nature of the Firm' (1937). Another article, 'The Problem of Social Cost' (1961), continues to be among the most widely cited in economic literature. Both articles were cited by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences as justification for awarding Coase the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1991.

Wole Soyinka

Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986, Wole Soyinka graduated from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, while it was in 'special relation' with the University of London. One of Africa's greatest contemporary writers, his oeuvre includes *Death and the King's Horseman* (1975) – widely considered his finest play – essay collections, novels and memoirs. Covering his life from young manhood to the present, Soyinka's latest volume of autobiography is *You Must Set Forth at Dawn* (2006).

Other exceptional alumni who have made their mark on the world stage include:



H.G. Wells

A BSc Zoology graduate, the British writer H.G. Wells is sometimes referred to as 'The Father of Science Fiction'. His work includes *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896), *The Invisible Man* (1897) and *The War of the Worlds* (1898). A lifelong socialist and a tireless champion of women's rights, in 1936 Wells received an

Honorary Doctorate of Literature from the University, as part of its hundredth anniversary celebrations. Later, in 1943, Wells qualified for a DSc by External study.

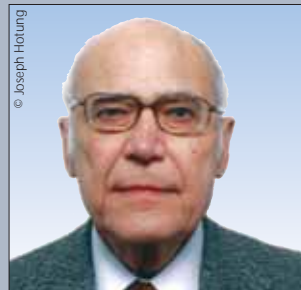


© Gisela Stuart

Gisela Stuart

Born in Velden, Bavaria, Gisela Stuart moved to Britain in 1974. MP for Birmingham Edgbaston since 1997, and a junior health minister until 2001, Gisela sat on the European Convention's 13-strong steering group. She gained her LLB by External study in 1993.

Without it, she claims, she would never have become an MP. She recalls the graduation ceremony at London's Barbican Centre as being 'one of the most moving and magnificent experiences of my life'.



© Joseph Hotung

Sir Joseph Hotung

Philanthropist, art collector and private investor, Sir Joseph Hotung gained his LLB by External study in 1970. Born in Shanghai, Sir Joseph is from the third generation of a Hong Kong family which has generously supported educational causes.

His distinguished career in business includes directorships of HSBC Bank and other international companies. The first Chairman of the Arts Development Council in Hong Kong, he was awarded an honorary DSc (Econ) by the University of London in 2003.

Dr Luisa Diogo

A Financial Economics graduate, Luisa Diogo became the first woman to be appointed Prime Minister of Mozambique. An anti-poverty and health advocate, she has been vocal in taking rich nations to task for not following up on aid, trade and debt relief promises to Africa. "It is no country's destiny to be poor", she has said. In Forbes' 2007 list of '100 Most Powerful Women In The World' she ranks 89th.



© Reuters/Kieran Doherty

Opening the way



The University of London's fourth Charter, signed by Queen Victoria on 9 April 1858, opened the London degree to all those who could fulfil its entry requirements and pay its fees, and so founded what was later known as the External System.

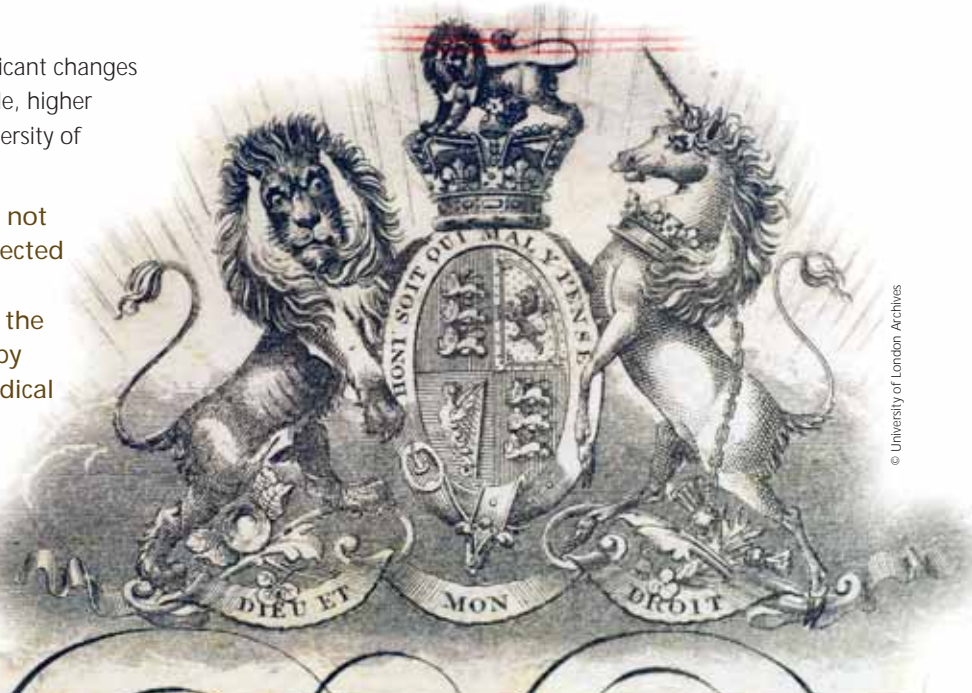
The University of London's 1858 charter opened up the possibility of a university degree to those who had to continue earning a living while they studied. This made higher education available to people from a far wider range of social classes and occupations than previously.

It broke the link between place and study in a way which was startlingly new at the time and laid the ground for developments in university extension, correspondence and distance education throughout the twentieth century. In recent years, this has resulted in the explosive growth in open, flexible and distance and online learning.

For a statement of one of the most enduringly significant changes and developments ever in British, and later worldwide, higher education, clause 36 of the 1858 charter of the University of London does not have a notably impressive ring.

'We do further will and ordain, That persons not educated in any of the said Institutions connected with the said University shall be admitted as Candidates for Matriculation, and for any of the Degrees hereby authorized to be conferred by the said University of London other than Medical Degrees, on such conditions as the said Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and Fellows, by regulations in that behalf shall from time to time determine, such Regulations being subject to the Provisoes and Restrictions herein contained.'

By that single 'not', clause 36 changed higher education significantly and permanently. It opened the London degree to all those who could fulfil its entry requirements and pay its fees, and meant that students no longer had to study in a specified place or institution in order to graduate. Degree exams would from now on be held in an increasing number of places outside London and could be taken after studying however students wished: in their local college or school, or even without going to college at all – through private study, alone or with a tutor.



First graduates

Continuing liberalisation

Following on from the signing of the 1858 Charter, the University of London Senate began to advertise the new arrangements by decreeing that they should be 'extensively circulated among Educational institutions and individuals engaged in Education'

Relating to the professions

Graduates of the University of London not only benefited from the removal of barriers based on class and religion which had prevented them from accessing degrees in the past, but the University also continued to widen and liberalise the content of its degrees. This made the University of London degrees much more relevant to the needs of the professions.

This relevance was none more evident than with the first cohort of graduates produced by the new system in 1860. They included William Lant Carpenter – son of the University's own distinguished Registrar, Dr William Benjamin Carpenter FRS – who made his name as an engineer; Walter Cash Clennell, later to become a solicitor in the City of London; and Alfred Spalding Harvey, who rose to become Chief Accountant to the Treasury.

Embracing heritage



The Reverend Joseph Claudius May (1845-1902) gained a University of London degree in 1868 and went on to become a Methodist minister and the Principal of the Wesleyan High School in Freetown, Sierra Leone. His father had been sold as a child

to Portuguese slavers but was rescued from them at sea by a British cruiser and landed at Sierra Leone. Joseph's brother, Cornelius, later became Mayor of Freetown. Together, they sought to embrace their African heritage by forming the Dress Reform Society. Its aim was to eliminate the use of Western clothes as the first step towards ending the influence of European customs over Sierra Leonean society.

First to empower women

In 1878 the University of London became the first university in the UK to admit women to its degrees (Oxford and Cambridge did not formally award degrees to women until 1920 and 1947 respectively). By 1900, over 30 per cent of the 536 graduating students were women.



Sophia Bryant (1850-1922) was an early candidate for the University of London's Special Examination for Women. A brilliant scholar and teacher, and one of the first two women to graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree, she was the first woman Doctor of Science

and the first woman to be elected to the University of London Senate. After teaching in Highgate, London, she joined the staff of North London Collegiate School, and in 1895 she was appointed its Headmistress, succeeding the School's founder Frances Mary Buss.

Louise Creighton (1850-1936) was one of the first women to enter the University of London's Special Examination for Women, which she passed with honours. She was a social activist, novelist and biographer. She publicly announced her support for votes for women in 1906 and became well-known as a moderate voice in the women's movement. She served on the London University commission, the venereal disease commission and on the governing board of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.



Permission from the Principals and Fellows of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford

Wartime education

The University of London's response to both world wars epitomised the 'wartime spirit' combining co-operation, resourcefulness and adaptability with the maintenance of high standards.

The University made immense contributions to enabling people to continue studying and to pass exams while serving in the Armed Forces, while being uprooted and moved from place to place and – perhaps most exceptionally – while serving as internees and prisoners of war.



© Museum of the Order of St. John

Studying behind the wire

Ruhleben Camp in Germany was a racecourse that had been turned into a prison camp for up to 5,500 male civilian citizens of enemy countries, who were interned while living in or visiting Germany at the outbreak of the First World War. With the aid of American philanthropists such as John D. Rockefeller – the American YMCA funded and built a hall at Ruhleben where religious exercises were held and plays and lectures given. This included a library with several hundred books where internees were able to sit, read and write during the day. University of London Matriculation and degree-level exams were taken in the camp.



Letham Kay White (1897-1950)

was the son of Councillor Matthew White of Edinburgh City Council, and was interned at Ruhleben in 1914 after being arrested when he was on his summer holidays. Letham's son, Kay White, writes: 'My father, having left the Royal High School in Edinburgh aged 17, went to

Germany in order to learn German. At that time there was a compulsory paper in German to get a degree in engineering. He was interned throughout the War in Ruhleben but this did not hinder a good education and career. During that time he did learn the language, and also learnt the art of sketching from fellow prisoners CM Horsfall (who made this sketch of Letham in 1917) and Healey Hislop'.

“The most striking phenomenon in officer prisoners-of-war camps...was the demand for education. It was so widespread as to be almost universal, and it was both tenacious and urgent.”

Second World War

The University of London was able to make use of the experience it had gained during the First World War to bring its operations swiftly onto a war footing in 1939. The University's External System played a key role in acting as the collection, co-ordination and censoring point for all exam papers supplied to prisoner of war camps by UK examining bodies. Nearly 140 bodies were involved, and exam papers were sent out to some 17,600 candidates in 88 camps during the War. In the period from April 1942 to June 1945 10,104 candidates took exams.

A mental escape

The opportunity to study provided a mental escape from the tribulations of prison life. Captain Hamson, imprisoned during the Second World War, recalled: 'The most striking phenomenon in officer prisoners-of-war camps...was the demand for education. It was so widespread as to be almost universal, and it was both tenacious and urgent. Though by profession a University don, I have not in peacetime encountered its equal. However, some part at least of this demand was a psychological reaction against captivity – that is to say, it was a method of escape from the immediate circumstances of prison life'.

In their own words

Students forced to flee their homeland as a result of persecution found that the University of London External System provided a way to fulfil their educational ambitions.



© The University of London

Bernhard Herzberg (1909-2007)

Born in Hanover, Germany, Bernhard Herzberg was the UK's oldest student when he died a month before his 98th birthday while completing his second master's degree (in African Studies) at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies. He achieved his bachelor's degree in German literature at the age of 91 in 2000 as an External student of the University of London.

'Two years after my retirement, during a trip to Germany, I made the acquaintance of a high school teacher who asked me to give a talk to her students about my life and my family's history in Germany. I gave a talk to several German schools and this reawakened my interest in German. The Nazis used to say that when a Jew speaks German he lies, but I wanted to prove that it has nothing to do with descent – it's your mother tongue. My ancestors had been in Hanover for centuries. I wanted to study because I had been in commerce all my life. I paid the London University course fee – £3,600 – with my pension.'

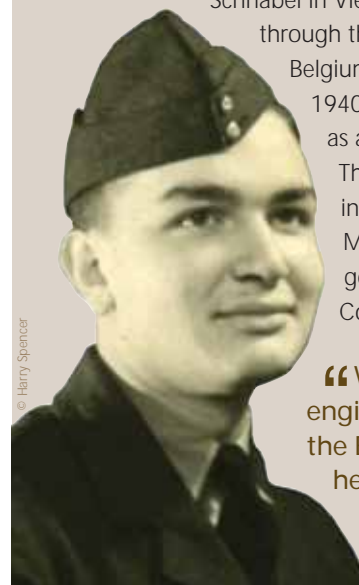
Zvi Hans Schloss

Born in Germany, Zvi Hans Schloss and his family escaped to Palestine in 1936. Having left school aged 12 in order to earn his keep, he was nevertheless keen to study. The University of London External System provided the perfect opportunity.

“After the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 I joined the army but never, even for a moment, gave up my beloved correspondence course! I remember sitting on my rickety camp-bed in a tent somewhere in the desert studying economics, economic history and all the rest of it. The other soldiers were sure that I was utterly mad”

Dr Harry Spencer

Dr Harry Spencer (shown here as a member of the London University Air Squadron in the 1940s) was born Herbert Schnabel in Vienna in 1928, and escaped through the 'Kindertransport' route to Belgium, and from there to the UK in 1940. Harry completed his BSc (Eng) as an External student in 1948. This led to postgraduate study in the US, where he took an MSc in civil engineering before going on to teach at Yale and Columbia universities.



© Harry Spencer

“When I began to teach engineering the example of the External degree system helped me to organise courses of study for working students”

'Special relations'



Students from University College Leicester photographed during the Prince of Wales' visit to the College in 1927.

“ All the English and Welsh universities founded between 1849 and 1949 – and many other colleges that subsequently became universities – initially offered University of London degrees before obtaining charters to award their own ”

Influence at home

The University of London External System played an immensely influential role in the formation of British higher education. All the English and Welsh universities founded between 1849 and 1949 – and many other colleges that subsequently became universities – initially offered University of London degrees before obtaining charters to award their own. Leicester, Hull, Exeter and Southampton had a formal period of 'special relations' with the University of London as they developed from University College to University status. Having first opened its doors in 1921, with a cohort of nine students all of whom were reading for a University of London degree, Leicester was the last of these to gain its own charter, in 1957.

Sharing standards

Between 1946 and 1970, the University of London also played a significant role in the establishment of many Commonwealth universities under a unique scheme of 'special relations'. The most important impetus for this initiative came from the Commission on Higher Education in the Colonies in 1945, which considered higher education in all the areas under British control except India.

Institutions including the University of the West Indies and the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, shared responsibility for academic standards with the University of London until they began to award their own degrees. The scheme not only created 7,000 graduates – by achieving international academic status, the new universities played a key role in nation building following independence from Britain.

The first institution to enter into a 'special relation' with the University of London was Gordon College, Khartoum, Sudan, which became an independent university (University College Khartoum) on 1 July 1956.

Continuing innovation

Since 2000, eLearning has moved from being an experimental innovation to a central – and rapidly evolving – part of the toolset for distance education. The technology is now available to support a genuine interaction between students all over the world and teachers in London. Through its Centre for Distance Education (CDE), the External System has been one of the leaders in this field within the University of London as a whole, identifying ways that new technologies can be exploited for the benefits of students.

Just as the printed study guide and student handbook have become standard components of current programmes – which range from economics to management to information security – eLearning is set to be embedded as a normal component of all newly developed programmes. Projects currently under research and development include the following:

Virtual classrooms and learning environments (VLEs)

Providing practical guidelines and an innovative framework for teaching online.

Mobile Learning (mLearning)

A two-year project in southern Africa to explore how mobile phones and other devices can be used to support degree-level learning. Mobiles are rapidly becoming more widely available in Africa than Internet access. Latest models offer multimedia, photographic and video options. Technological advances offer enormous potential for supporting distance learners in new ways.

Social software

Exploiting new online technologies, such as weblogs and wikis that enable new approaches to interaction and knowledge-sharing, unconstrained by place or time.

Online bibliographic space

Designed for use by the distance learning community to extend the online library services available to students.

3D online environments

The use of live 3D online environments such as those used in 'virtual worlds' like The Sims Online, Active Worlds and Second Life to support teaching and learning.

“The course is non-competitive and supportive. Different professions bring with them different viewpoints, all equally acknowledged”

Making distances disappear

Led by University College London (UCL), the International Primary Health Care programme is the world's first fully online postgraduate degree in primary care. In 2005, the UCL course team won the prestigious e-Tutor of the Year Award, run by the UK Higher Education Funding Council.

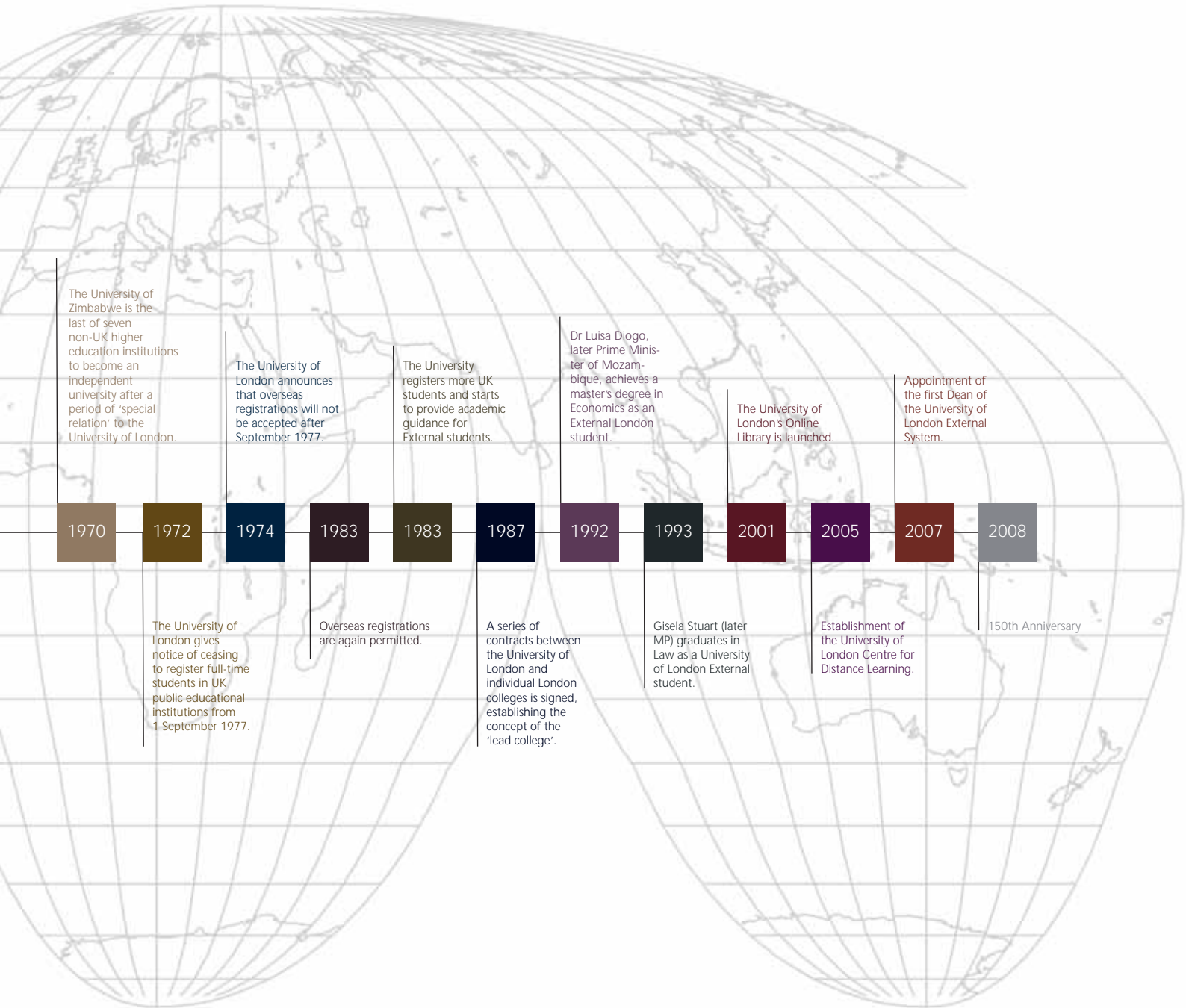
Dr Tina McInnes, a primary care clinical effectiveness facilitator based in Scotland, says the online environment 'makes it possible to fit studying in with running a home, seeing to children's homework, grocery shopping...oh, and work of course. The course is non-competitive and supportive. Different professions bring with them different viewpoints, all equally acknowledged'.

Supported by a flexible Online Learning Environment which includes animations, vibrant graphics and discussion boards, the MSc in Clinical Trials has attracted students from across the world. Inaugurated in 2006, the course is led by the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), the leading postgraduate medical institution in Europe in the subjects of public health and tropical medicine.

Hoping to complete the course in 2008, osteopath Paul Vaucher from Switzerland reflects that 'the major advantage of an online course is about freely scheduling one's working time. The second advantage is about making distances disappear. We are working on courses together in London but sitting in Canada, India, Pakistan, Australia...'







1858
2008

