



## Royal seal of approval

The University of London External System has been at the cutting edge of facilitating debate around global and local issues through relevant study programmes – long before these issues became topical in the media – said HRH The Princess Royal, Chancellor of the University of London.

Speaking at the 150th Anniversary celebrations of the External System, where HRH The Princess Royal unveiled a sundial to mark the occasion, she commented 'I'm delighted that Agricultural Economics is widely studied, with decision-makers debating how best to address the world's food shortage. That's not something that happened last month when it became an issue in the media – this has been going on for some considerable time. That is a real encouragement, that there are people out there who've been having this debate.'

The Princess Royal added: 'Courses in Sustainable Development, developed by the External System, help meet the challenges that have been articulated in the Millennium Development Goals at the Rio Summit on Environment and Development; and the Declaration of the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development. Responding to global interests, but very much based on the local needs and the local inputs of the individuals concerned.'

The Princess Royal also cited the example of International Primary Health Care, which brings together health professionals from all over the world who are able to share their experiences through online interaction. The Princess Royal said it was 'encouraging to know that Primary Health Care has such a



HRH The Princess Royal pictured with Professor Jonathan Kydd, Dean of the External System.

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'The Princess Royal reinforced the point that students of the External System continue to make a real contribution to the world!'

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high profile. Whatever we say about research into medicines and cures, primary and public health care are still the things that are going to make the biggest difference and a world-

wide understanding of how best to apply those standards is perhaps one of the most important areas of debate.'

Study programmes offered through the External System equip the student with much-needed skills. More importantly, graduates of these programmes, who have day-to-day experience of these issues, are able to contribute towards the debate at an appropriate level. 'In this way, you really get the reality of the situation coming through', the Princess Royal added. ►►

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► Noting that the External System could count five Nobel Prize winners amongst its students and alumni, including Nelson Mandela, The Princess Royal described this as 'quite an astonishing success rate'.

The Princess Royal reinforced the point that students of the External System continue to make a real contribution to the world and although the list is 'endless' she cited two examples from amongst the audience at the Sundial event in June 2008 – Judge John Hicks and footballer Gordon Taylor.

Judge John Hicks became the first non-Oxbridge graduate in his Chambers, later becoming Head of Chambers and a High Court Judge. Gordon Taylor, now Chief

Executive of the English Professional Footballers' Association, graduated in Economics whilst playing professional football.

'So I would merely not just add my congratulations, of course, to those who have studied successfully, but to those who have co-ordinated and supported [the External System] here in London, and all the colleges brought in to support students wherever they are, who understand the value of the External System and the scope that it gives them to reach so many students' added The Princess Royal.

## 150th Anniversary celebration highlights

### Hong Kong – 13 January 2008

Au-Yeung Wai Man was first person in the world to be presented with a copy of the 150th Anniversary book entitled *The People's University: 150 Years of the University of London and its External students*.

Mr Au-Yeung, who graduated with an MSc degree in Financial Management from HKU SPACE said: 'Its clear by looking at the cover of this book that I have joined a group of special people...These are all people who have made a difference to their own lives and to the lives of those around them, not just in Hong Kong but all over the world.'

### London – 23 January 2008

'Reinvention lies at the heart of the 150 years' success of the University of London External System,' said Bill Rammell MP, Minister of State, Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills. 'The External System continues to evolve in a way that keeps it relevant to new student needs. Through its activities, the University of London External System supports the Government's access



Bill Rammell MP (left) and Sir Graeme Davies, Vice-Chancellor, University of London

agenda. Through its study programmes, it also supports the Government's international development agenda relating to global issues of health, education and sustainable development, amongst others' the Minister added.

### Delhi – 28 January 2008

Creon Butler, the British Deputy High Commissioner for India said of the External System: 'It has ensured that people in some of the remotest parts of the world have been provided with access to high quality education.'

'Its impact on the lives of people all over the world has been immense and I am sure that it will continue to have an influential role in the future,' added Mr Butler. He was speaking at a celebratory dinner hosted by Rod Pryde, the first Minister for the British Council in India.

### Lagos – 15 February 2008

Richard Powell, the British Deputy High Commissioner to Nigeria said: 'This is an opportunity to celebrate the mutual success that has been achieved by the University of London External System and its many Nigerian students, who have not only benefited personally but have made their mark, nationally and internationally.'

He was, of course, referring to the Nigerian writer Wole Soyinka, who in 1986 became the first person of African descent to win

the Nobel Prize for Literature and Chinua Achebe who went on to publish his most celebrated novel *Things Fall Apart*, which has been translated into 50 languages, making him the most translated African writer of all time. Both authors are alumni of the University of London External System.

### London – 10 March 2008

A special 150th Anniversary graduation ceremony, presided over by HRH The Princess Royal, Chancellor of the University of London, attracted 2,000 guests from across the world.



Dancers at the Lagos anniversary event



## Focus on: RVC

The Royal Veterinary College (RVC) is one of the world's leading specialist veterinary institutions. It is the largest and oldest independent veterinary school in the UK and became a College of the federal University of London in 1949.

Founded as the London Veterinary College in Camden Town in 1791, the first four students were admitted to the College in 1792. Now spread over two campuses – one in Camden, the other in rural Hertfordshire – the College provides support for the veterinary profession through its referral hospitals, diagnostic services and continuing professional development courses.

The College provides the academic direction for two postgraduate programmes offered through the External System: Livestock Health and Production, and Veterinary Epidemiology and Public Health. Students can also take individual modules of both degrees as 240-hour Short courses, or constituent

parts of each module as 35-hour and 50-hour Short courses. Both the 240-hour and 50-hour Short courses allow progression to one of the related degrees.

RVC has established the London BioScience Innovation Centre, London's first centre for early stage life science companies. This puts the College at the heart of biotechnology and other biomedical research in London and opens the door for research collaboration. In 1999, the College became the first UK veterinary school to be accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

For further information on RVC's distance learning programmes please visit: [www.londonexternal.ac.uk/rvc](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/rvc)

### Singapore – 3 April 2008

A special 150th Anniversary Award was presented to Mr Noel Hon (pictured below on the right) at the Singapore Institute of Management by Sir Graeme Davies, Vice-Chancellor of the University of London.

Six institutions have been nominated to receive the 150th Anniversary Institution Award in recognition of their contribution to the success of the University of London External System.

Awards have been presented to:

- HELP University College, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- HKU SPACE, Hong Kong
- Singapore Institute of Management, Singapore
- ATC, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (please see page 5 for their profile).

Bhuiyan Academy of Law, Business Administration and Research, Bangladesh and St Martin's Institute of Information Technology, Malta, are being presented with their awards later in the year.



### Trinidad – 16 June 2008

Guest speaker, Justice Antony Gafoor, an alumnus of the External System, told an influential audience of stakeholders how on his return to Trinidad, he was prompted to continue with his studies following a successful legal career in London. He told an audience of 40 key influencers in Trinidad how graduating with a BA in Philosophy has helped his position as Chairman of the Tax Appeal Court of Trinidad: 'Time and other demands of a domestic and work-based nature are always challenges that any student faces: my experience was no exception...in the end any such challenges paled into insignificance in comparison with the sense of achievement, even triumph, which I experienced upon completing each year of the degree.

He added: 'I have recognised that philosophy now provides a platform and methodology for almost everything I do at work and in life.'

### Hong Kong – 20 July 2008

Fifteen men and women met to make history by sharing their experiences of the University of London External System through a history-gathering technique.

The emerging theme from the Witness Seminar was the valued 'gold' standard of the External System degree among students and employers alike, as well as its immense flexibility and portability that allows students to study when and where they like. This was one of three seminars held during the course of the 150th Anniversary.

### London – 1 August 2008

Over 175 graduates, ranging from the 1940s to 2007, attended a drinks reception at the Brunei Gallery, SOAS. Ian Grainger, Member of the External System Board of Trustees, who graduated from the External System with a first class BA in Italian said: 'I feel extremely privileged to be here as a graduate of the System, along with so many others, and to be able to join with all of you in wishing this amazing academic success story another 150 years. It brings opportunity and enlightenment to all manner of folks all over the world: long may it flourish.'



Guests at the UK Alumni reception in August

#### Useful links:

150th Anniversary microsite: [www.londonexternal.ac.uk/150](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/150)

150th Anniversary book sales: [www.londonexternal.ac.uk/150/book](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/150/book)

# Undergraduate Student Survey

## Key findings and feedback

The University of London External System launched an online Undergraduate Student Experience Survey in July 2007, reaching over 28,000 students in more than 100 countries worldwide. The aim of the Survey was to gather feedback and measure satisfaction with:

- administrative services provided by our London headquarters
- learning resources and guidance, e.g. Subject Guides and Regulations
- assessment and examination matters
- additional study support
- overall experiences of being an External student.

## Responses

7,283 Undergraduate External students completed the Survey, yielding a 31.2% response rate. We are pleased with the high number of students who completed the Survey. The feedback gathered is valuable in helping inform the mission of the External System and improve the services and resources we provide to you.

Survey participants were invited to tell us where they are based in the world. More students were based in Singapore than anywhere else in the world, followed by large numbers of responses from Hong Kong, Trinidad and Malaysia and the UK. Overall, we had respondents from all parts of the globe from Argentina to Zambia, reflecting the truly international community of learners that make up our student body.

Feedback was received from students on over 50 Undergraduate degree and diploma qualifications offered, from Accounting and Finance through to Spanish and Latin American Studies. As an outcome we have captured a wealth of data that has been considered by staff at our London offices as well as teams based in the 'Lead' Colleges.

## Headline findings

The headline findings from the Survey are that:

- many of you choose to study with the University because of its international reputation
- studying your programme represents an important investment for your future
- flexibility of study is an important factor that attracts our students to the External System
- the vast majority of you would recommend the External System to someone else
- many of you feel that the University could do more to make you feel part of a community.

## Key findings

We took the opportunity in the Survey to find out why students choose to study with us. The main reason selected was to gain an internationally-recognised qualification. The overall reputation of the University and a view that your qualification would be valued by employers also featured as important factors influencing choice.

We welcome the positive feedback on participants' reasons for choosing to study

with the University. As the External System celebrates its 150th Anniversary, we are aware that our reputation is not just based on our tradition of excellence and educational heritage but also on offering high quality qualifications relevant to the modern world. This is why, in addition to reviewing all External programmes annually, we schedule in-depth reviews to help ensure that our qualifications are high quality and up-to-date.

Our students are the most convincing advertisement to promote the benefits of studying with the University through its External System. In fact about one-third of Survey respondents told us that they found out about the External System through a family member, friend or former or current student. We also welcome the news that nearly 90% of participants would recommend the External System to family, friends or work colleagues.

## Conclusion

We hope that you find the information contained in the summary helpful. The University is committed to continuing to gather feedback from External students and do hope that you will participate in future Surveys and other feedback undertaken. To view the full results of the survey, please visit:

[http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/news\\_events/current\\_news/student\\_survey\\_08.pdf](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/news_events/current_news/student_survey_08.pdf)



## Profile on: Nisha Mohamed

I wanted to study law from a young age. My father had obtained his law degree from the University of London External System 22 years ago and suggested that I do the same. After completing my Bachelor of Law degree with Honours also with the University of London External System and my Postgraduate Certificate in Laws (PCLL) with the University of Hong Kong, I decided to train as a barrister, following in the

'The course not only helped me to think independently but taught me that with self-discipline, perseverance and determination, anything is possible.'



footsteps of my mother who had practiced as a barrister in India many years ago.

I continued my academic pursuits with the distinguished and reputable institution by

enrolling for my Master of Laws (LLM). My subjects were Insurance Law, Carriage of Goods By Sea, International and Comparative Arbitration and Company Law, which proved to be an immense help in my Law practice.

Naturally it was not a piece of cake and in my case this was doubly so as I had to continue a full time practice at the same time. It was admittedly a tough enterprise both mentally and physically. However, due to the structure and flexibility of the course, I was able to succeed in both areas. The course not only helped me to think independently but taught me that with self-discipline, perseverance and determination, anything is possible.

I am indeed happy to say that I definitely made the right decision to take up Law with the University of London External System and my hard work has paid off as I was recently offered teaching positions at both the School of Professional and Continuing Education at the University of Hong Kong (HKUSPACE) and City University of Hong Kong. In addition to teaching, the Masters has opened other doors of opportunities for me, such as writing legal books for practitioners.



## Student Ambassadors

The Student Ambassador Programme currently has ambassadors in 15 countries worldwide. They can give advice about how they managed their studies successfully and offer tips about balancing study with work and family commitments. Our ambassadors, all of whom studied through the University of London External System, have completed qualifications ranging from an LLB to an MBA. For more information please visit:

[www.londonexternal.ac.uk/alumni/ambassadors/index.shtml](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/alumni/ambassadors/index.shtml)

## Institution snapshot



In the last two decades, ATC has grown from a private higher education institution in Malaysia to establishing itself as a major regional player with partnerships in Singapore as well as in Hong Kong.

ATC has graduated more than 8,000 students to date on the University of London programmes. Our sound approach to nurturing school leavers into qualified legal and business professionals has assured our graduates employment opportunities worldwide.

ATC's academic programmes are approved and licensed by the Ministry of Higher Education of Malaysia.

Management with Laws, Accounting and Finance) programmes.

- Full-time and part-time classes.
- Access to the ATC Library and the Tun Hamid Omar Resource and Research Library.
- A fully qualified, trained and dedicated faculty of full-time lecturers for both the law and business programmes.
- Availability of online learning opportunities for self-study students on University of London programmes.

As part of the University of London's 150th anniversary celebrations, ATC was one of six institutions worldwide to receive special commemorative awards in recognition of their sustained contribution to the success of the External System and its students.

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Advance Tertiary College (ATC) was incorporated in 1987 with the objective of providing a responsible and industry-sensitive platform to develop Law and Business skills and qualifications for school-leavers.

### Primary features

- Conduct of the University of London Bachelor of Laws (LLB) programme.
- Conduct of the University of London Bachelor of Science (Management,

### Understanding online privacy



Researchers from the world-renowned Information Security Group (ISG) at Royal Holloway, University of London, are participating in a collaborative project with consent and privacy specialists at Salford

and Cranfield Universities, Consult Hyperion and Sunderland City Council, to explore how people engage with concepts of information privacy and consent in online interactions.

Many people providing personal information over the internet or telephone do not fully understand the issues of privacy and consent in their interactions with information and communications technology. Consequently they are not able to assess the risks they run and organisations cannot develop services which adequately address users' privacy and consent needs.

'The project aims to develop an interactive mental model that enables people from all walks of life to interact with online privacy and consent issues, in the same way that the concept of carbon footprinting has enabled large parts of society to engage in the subject of the environment', comments Lizzie Coles-Kemp, Project Leader from the ISG.

[www.rhul.ac.uk](http://www.rhul.ac.uk)

### Eating oily fish can protect eyesight in old age

Eating oily fish once a week may reduce age-related macular degeneration (AMD), the major cause of blindness in adults in western countries and the third largest cause of global blindness. There are two types of AMD, wet and dry. Of the two, wet AMD is the main cause of vision loss. Co-ordinated by the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), researchers investigated the association between fish intake and omega 3 fatty acids with wet AMD.

Findings published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition show that people who habitually consume oily fish at least once a week, compared with less than once a week, are 50% less likely to have wet AMD. Astrid Fletcher, Professor of Epidemiology at the LSHTM, who led the study, commented: 'This is the first study in Europeans to show a beneficial association on wet AMD from the consumption of oily fish and is consistent with results from studies in the USA and Australia.'

[www.lshtm.ac.uk](http://www.lshtm.ac.uk)

### TV losing its hold on the young

Young people 'consider their mobile phone to be their best friend' and would chose it over all other forms of electrical entertainment. Advised by LSE academic Dr Carsten Sørensen, *Mobile Life Report 2008: the connected world* looks at whether we are losing the ability to form 'real life' relationships and whether people communicate more or less than they used to. The report is the latest stage of a research project started in 2006, looking at the impact of mobile phones on people's lives. Exploring the relationship adults and youngsters have with mobile and internet technology, it surveyed 6,000 people in the UK and US.

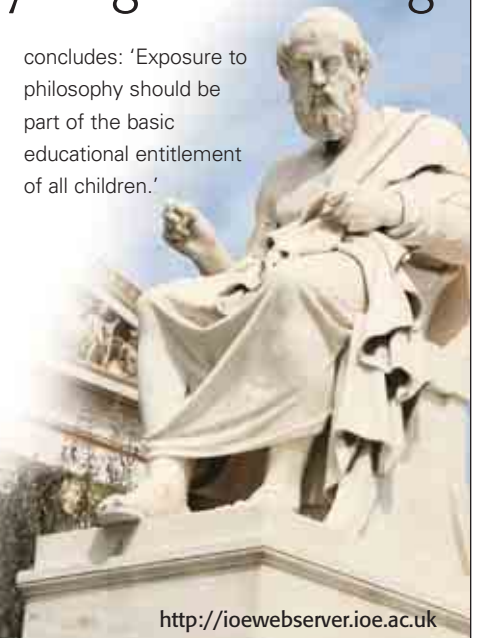
Dr Sørensen, Senior Lecturer in Information Systems at LSE said: 'We found interesting similarities and differences in our study of two countries. Although we found differences in the use of email, SMS, instant messaging, and landline phones for staying in touch with friends and family between the two countries, we found no differences in the level of mobile phone use for these purposes.'

[www.lse.ac.uk](http://www.lse.ac.uk)

### Philosophy: the key to good thinking

Children of all ages should study philosophy in school because it is the basis of critical thinking, say leading philosophers of education. This is one of several arguments for including philosophy on the school curriculum put forward in a new book, *Philosophy in Schools*, edited by Michael Hand of the University of London's Institute of Education and Carrie Winstanley of Roehampton University. 'Critical thinkers are people who reason well, and who judge and act on the basis of their reasoning,' says Dr Hand. 'To become critical thinkers, children must learn what constitutes good reasoning and why it's important – and these are philosophical matters'. In philosophy, the quality of arguments and the meanings of words are constantly under scrutiny. Dr Hand

concludes: 'Exposure to philosophy should be part of the basic educational entitlement of all children.'



<http://ioewebsserver.ioe.ac.uk>

### Contact us

We would welcome your feedback on this issue and letters/comments for future publication. Please email us at: [newsletter@london.ac.uk](mailto:newsletter@london.ac.uk) This issue (and back issues) of the newsletter are available to download in the 'Current Students' area of our website. You can also choose to receive them via email by visiting [www.londonexternal.ac.uk/newsletter](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/newsletter) If you have any general questions about your studies, please contact: [programme.enquiries@london.ac.uk](mailto:programme.enquiries@london.ac.uk)