



UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
External System

150 YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

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London CONNECTION

student newsletter

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Reinvention key to success

'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.

Speaking at the London launch of the University of London External System's 150th Anniversary, Mr Rammell said: 'With over 40,000 students across the world, the University of London External System is a pioneer in the field of flexible and distance education. Its immense success can be attributed to its ability to look forward continuously and reinvent itself.'

He added: 'As the 150th Anniversary book – *The People's University* – illustrates, 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 agenda. Through its study programmes, it supports the Government's international development agenda relating to global issues of health, education and sustainable development, amongst others' the Minister added.

Looking to the future, Professor Jonathan Kydd, Dean of the University of London External System, commented: 'We are growing fast, particularly in what in the business world would be called the frontier segment of emerging markets – Nigeria, Ghana, Bangladesh, Pakistan – so we have to think about access and quality in often quite challenging situations. High quality, accessible, internationally recognized higher education can make a great contribution to countries' successful and peaceful integration into the global economy.'

Sir Graeme Davies, Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, said: 'The External System's unique business model allows it to deliver high quality programmes at an affordable cost to students worldwide. The result is that we have graduates from all walks of life and from all parts of the globe, many of whom have made their mark on the world stage. These include five Nobel Prize winners, academics, lawyers, business leaders, engineers and politicians.'

Sir Graeme added: 'We're immensely proud of our 150-year track record, which has opened up the possibility of gaining a world-class University of London award to people studying in their home countries. The commitment of our students is enormously impressive, as many juggle busy lives, fitting their study around work and family commitments. This has been made possible by the University of London External System, which anticipated 20th Century developments in open, flexible and distance learning by more than 100 years.'



Pictured at the London launch (left to right): Professor Jonathan Kydd, Dean of the External System; Gordon Taylor, Chief Executive of the Professional Footballers' Association and former student; Gisela Stuart MP and former student; Bill Rammell MP (Minister of State, Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills) and Sir Graeme Davies, Vice-Chancellor, University of London.

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Undergraduate Student Experience Survey 2007



in making you feel part of a community. This is a significant challenge, given that most of you are geographically many miles from the University and its Lead Colleges. Nonetheless, we are exploring innovative ways of reducing the distance between you and the University, and also bridging the gap between you and other External students registered on your programme. We hope that *London Connection* goes some way to helping us keep in touch with you and keeping you informed about developments in the External System and the University.

We have a valuable set of data as a result of the Survey and are in the process of considering the data at a number of levels, both within Stewart House, the Lead Colleges across London and formally through our committees. This will take some time but will enable us to identify where and how we are able to act. A fuller response and actions arising from the Survey will be published in 2008.

A big thank you to all of you who took the time to complete the Survey. Your views are greatly valued. We plan to run an Undergraduate Survey of this type every two years, so be sure to look out for the next one! We also plan to launch our first full-scale survey of Postgraduate External students in 2008.

As many of you will be aware, we launched an online Undergraduate Student Experience Survey across July and August 2007. The Survey reached over 28,000 of you in more than 100 countries worldwide. We received a total of 7,283 responses across the full range of undergraduate programmes. The Survey invited you to assess satisfaction with, and the importance attached to, a number of services and resources. These included the work of our London-based offices, learning resources and documents (e.g. Subject Guides and Regulations) and your overall experiences of being an External student.

The use of importance ratings alongside satisfaction scales enabled us to gain a fuller picture of the types of services and resources that are most important to you. Respondents to the survey indicated overall high satisfaction with the following:

- the efficiency of a number of services provided from our London headquarters, such as the Admissions, Registry and Despatch Office responsible for sending you your study materials
- Subject Guides as the key learning resource provided to External students to help support you through each module/unit/subject studied
- Examiner's Reports and Past Examination papers provided to support you for preparation in future examinations.

The University is also pleased that 89% of respondents said that they would recommend the External System to a family member or friend.

However, there is still a lot to do. Work is underway to enhance your study and learning experience. Your feedback highlighted a number of areas for improvement, in particular the role played by the University

First global recipient of the 150th Anniversary book

Au-Yeung Wai Man is the 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 the University of London, was the first of 262 graduates who received a copy of the illustrated book in addition to their degree certificates at a special ceremony. This was held on Sunday 13 January at HKU SPACE (Hong Kong University School of Professional and Continuing Education), which over the past 50 years has provided teaching support for students on study programmes offered by the University of London External System.

Speaking after the graduation ceremony, Mr Au-Yeung, a Sales Manager employed by a large American company based in Hong Kong, said he worked hard for his degree whilst going out to work, and was delighted to play a small part in making history for the 150th

Anniversary celebrations by becoming the first recipient of the anniversary book.

He added: 'It's clear by just looking at the cover of this book, which features people like Nelson Mandela, that I have joined a group of special people by graduating with a University of London degree through the External System.'

Sir Graeme Davies, Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, who presided over the ceremony, said a great deal had been achieved over the past 50 years through the University of London External System's close relationship with HKU SPACE. This close relationship had allowed the two organisations to work together for the benefit of students and the wider communities.

Sir Graeme explained that while many people see distance and flexible learning as a new



From left to right: Sir Graeme Davies, Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, Au-Yeung Wai Man and Professor Jonathan Kydd, Dean of the External System.

concept that has emerged as a result of electronic communication, the University of London had been delivering it for 150 years worldwide.

Professor Enoch Young, Director of HKU SPACE, which has a total of 7,000 students studying through the External System, congratulated the University of London on its success and said he was delighted to have participated in the first celebratory event for the 150th Anniversary.

Legal eagle takes flight

Born and raised in the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur, Christina Chelliah wanted to be a lawyer ever since primary school. Seeking advice on her possible study options, one name continued to crop up – the University of London.

One of the defining characteristics of Christina Chelliah's generation in Malaysia is that everyone studies beyond their high school certificate or diploma. Getting a degree, it seems, has almost become a prerequisite. 'We're basically becoming like India – everyone's a graduate', as she puts it.

Educational opportunities

Acknowledging that her own generation has a wealth of educational opportunities compared to her parents' generation, Christina notes that in addition to public institutions of higher learning, there are many private universities and colleges. Usually linked to overseas universities, they offer students a chance to study from a distance in their own country.

Harbouring a desire to pursue a career in law ever since she can remember, it was the University of London's name that she kept hearing whenever she dropped her interest in law into conversation. Even though there are now many LLB degrees to choose from in Malaysia, the University of London LLB is still highly regarded. 'It's a prestigious thing – it says a lot about your academic merit, as opposed to some other law degrees which are assessed not just by exams but also by assignments, attendance and other criteria'.

Studying at ATC

Christina chose to study as a full-time student at Kemayan ATC, probably the biggest independent law school in Malaysia. A law school that specialises in teaching the University of London LLB, Christina describes her three years at ATC as 'one of the best periods of my life. I met so many different types of people, and made many significant friendships. The lecturers and tutors were all very dedicated and always willing to lend a helping hand'.

Juggling a busy lifestyle

As she was assessed by final exam only, Christina needed to be versed in all current developments in law. A daunting prospect, surely? 'In terms of time management it wasn't much of an issue for me. I guess being a full-time student I didn't have any work commitments, except for some extracurricular activities I was involved in'. Named Miss Malaysia Universe First Runner Up in 2002, Christina secured the lucrative Miss Malaysia Tourism World Title the same year. Her credits as a part-time model include work for international brands such as Levi's Jeans and Wella.

'Work hard, be disciplined, and be challenged. Studying the LLB has probably been the most liberating experience of my life, and one that has opened – and is continuing to open – many doors for me.'

'A lawyer on paper'

Completing her LLB in 2005, and not knowing exactly what she wanted to do next, Christina decided to take the year off. Resting on her laurels, however, was clearly never an option. 'I did my ICSA (Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators), a chartered professional qualification. If you have a degree in law or accounting you get exempted from nine out of thirteen subjects. So I only had to do six papers. I've completed five in a year and have got one more to go. Once I've passed that last paper – a finance paper which I'm dreading – then I have the ICSA qualification'.

To add to her burgeoning haul of qualifications, she's also

recently passed her Certificate in Legal Practice (CLP). 'Technically, I'm now a lawyer on paper. What I've got to do is nine months of chambering, or pupillage, where I shadow a lawyer and basically learn the ins and outs of legal practice. All aspects of litigation, corporate, a bit of legal aid – you do everything in that nine months and get a taste of what practicing is all about. If you fulfil that nine months you get called to the Malaysian Bar as an advocate and solicitor.'

Words of encouragement

Now a student ambassador for the External System, Christina can offer her experience and encouragement to those just about to embark on their studies. For her, being successful on the programme depends on a willingness to 'work hard, be disciplined, and be challenged. Studying the LLB has probably been the most liberating experience of my life, and one that has opened – and is continuing to open – many doors for me.'

Erudite, charming, and with a smile that positively lights up the room – there may be 12,000 lawyers in Kuala Lumpur, but Christina Chelliah, you feel, will surely stand out.



150th Anniversary book

As part of our 150th Anniversary celebrations, we have published a limited edition, illustrated book entitled *The People's University: 150 years of the University of London and its External students*. The book illustrates the huge influence the External System has had on higher education, both in the UK and internationally. Many thanks once again to all those graduates who supplied invaluable memories of their student days for inclusion in the publication. For further details about the book please see www.londonexternal.ac.uk/150/book

Success for External students

The High Commissioner for Pakistan, Her Excellency Dr Maleeha Lodhi was the guest of honour at a reception held for students and Scholars who had previously studied through the University of London External System. This was held at The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) on Wednesday 7 November. Dr Lodhi was a student at LSE and taught there for five years after obtaining her PhD. She was made an Honorary Fellow in 2004.

Scholarships were presented to LSE postgraduates:

- Mukul Bhola who studied independently for the BSc Economics, in India and Switzerland. He's now studying MSc Economics
- Kaneez Fatima Saeed studied at both Alta Vista College and University College of Islamabad, Pakistan, for the BSc Economics and Management. She's now studying MSc Local Economic Development
- Tan Meah Yang, Charles, studied at both Stansfield College, Singapore and at the Singapore Institute of Management for the BSc Banking and Finance. He is now at LSE studying MSc Finance and Economics.

The 2007 undergraduate scholarship was awarded to Shahryar Ahmed Khan who began his BSc Economics studying with Roots College International in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Shahryar transferred to the second year at

LSE. Syed Fahad Jilaneer is commencing his final year at LSE as an External Study Scholar, having studied the first year at L'ecole for Advanced Studies in Karachi, Pakistan.

'Congratulations to all of this year's graduates. We are extremely proud of you and wish you every success!'

Joining the event was Tim Butchard of the **Charles Wallace Pakistan, Bangladesh and Burma Trust**. The Trust has been awarding scholarships to graduate students from Pakistan for 10 years and many exceptional students benefit from this support. The recipient this year is Ali Sohail, who studied at Jinnah University College in Karachi, and is now studying for the MSc in Local Economic Development.

The other five students from Pakistan, recipients of the **PJD Wiles Scholarship** and the **Ithmaar Scholarship** are Ayesha Bano, Amna Khalid, Hina Imran, Maria Niazi and Shafiq Zeb.

Dr Lodhi was proud to note the success of the students who obtained scholarships and places at the LSE having studied through the External System; Dr Lodhi also said how



Top: Director of LSE External Study, Rosie Gosling with External student graduates in Pakistan

Above: The High Commissioner for Pakistan, Her Excellency Dr Maleeha Lodhi presenting an award
Photos: Waqar Zaidi

important the External System is to the development of Pakistan.

A further notable success is that of Anne Aponso from Sri Lanka who was awarded a one-third share in the **Sir Edward Stern prize** (together with a candidate from LSE and one from Queen Mary). This prize is awarded to the students with the highest marks in their degrees in the field of Economics among all graduating students in the University of London.

Congratulations to all of this year's graduates. We are extremely proud of you and wish you every success!

Profile: A day in the life of an Online Librarian

My job as Assistant Librarian at Senate House Library has two main roles. The majority of my time is spent working within the Online Library team providing library services to students studying via the External System. The rest of my time is spent working as part of the Senate House Library reference and information services team, providing a professional enquiry desk service for Senate House members.

My typical day starts at 9am by checking emails and responding to urgent requests from colleagues. I check the duty rota and find that this morning it's my responsibility to answer email enquiries from External students. Today, there are 50 enquiries, many requesting Athens account passwords which enable students to access databases via their course subject gateways on the Online Library website: www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk

Enquiries also include requests for help in searching databases and tracking down specific journal articles. A complex law enquiry requires specialist knowledge, so I forward this to the law librarian for her expert attention. Email enquiries are answered Monday to Friday, first thing in the morning, and again in the afternoon. This frequency of service delivery is essential to enable us to deal with the high volume of enquiries we receive, and ensure we respond within our 48-hour target.

I'm busy answering enquiries for most of the morning. I just have enough time before lunch to contact some journal suppliers to request quotes for new journal titles we wish to subscribe to.

When I return from lunch I assess my priorities. At present, the Online Library team are working on two main projects: updating

the database guides on the website, and developing the course gateways by updating the free resources links. I have an hour to spare, so I log in and add some links to free quality information resources.

The rest of the day I'm working on the Senate House reference desk, answering readers' enquiries in person. I intend to continue updating the website, but I'm only able to grab a few moments between enquiries to turn my attention to this. The afternoon flies by and before I know it my colleagues arrive at 5pm to take over for the evening shift. I go home with a sense of satisfaction and the knowledge that I helped many students find the information they needed.

Angela Boots, Assistant Librarian, Reference and Information Services.

Institution snapshot



HKU School of Professional and Continuing Education (HKU SPACE) is the Extension Arm of The University of Hong Kong. It has been providing excellent lifelong learning opportunities for the community since 1956. Its vision is to become a world-class centre of excellence for the provision of professional and continuing education serving Hong Kong, China and the region. With some 900 full time staff and over 2,000 part time teachers, HKU SPACE is the leading local provider of continuing education in Hong Kong. Enrolments since 1956 have exceeded 1.8 million and annual enrolment exceeds 100,000. In 2006/07 this was equivalent to about 21,062 full-time students. The School collaborates closely with the University of London to offer quality programmes and services that meet society's needs to update education and skills for the knowledge economy. The linkage with the University of London covers studies in Business; Computing and Information Systems; Economics; Finance; Law; and Management – from diploma to postgraduate level.

Programmes are fully supported by both academic and administrative staff. Student counselling services and seminars are frequently conducted. There is also easy access to the libraries at The University of

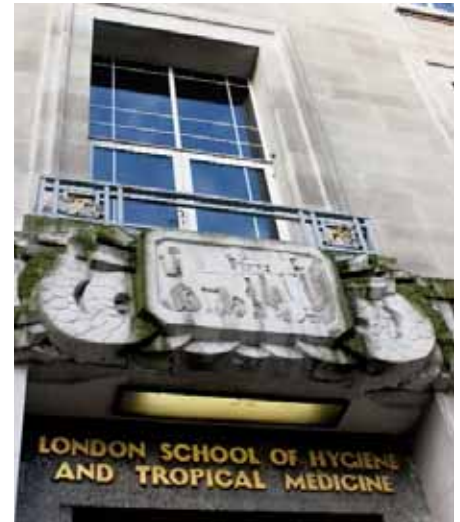
Hong Kong. In addition to offering tuition courses, HKU SPACE has also provided an application and registration service for all applicants to the University of London External System since 1989. This service is offered for the convenience of applicants in Hong Kong, whether or not they enroll on HKU SPACE tuition courses.

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Programmes available through this institution:

BSc Accounting and Finance
BSc Banking and Finance
BSc Economics and Management
BSc Information Systems and Management
BSc Management
Diploma in Economics
Diploma in Law
LLB
LLM
MBA International Management

Focus on: LSHTM



The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) is the oldest school of public health in the world. As the premier institution worldwide in the fields of tropical medicine and public health, its mission is to contribute to the improvement of health globally through the pursuit of excellence in research, postgraduate teaching, advanced training and consultancy in international public health and tropical medicine.

The School trains future academics, researchers, policymakers and practitioners in the international medical and public health community worldwide. Researchers from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine are conducting pioneering research into global public health problems, leading to improved prevention and treatment for a range of diseases such as malaria, TB, HIV/AIDS and pneumonia.

LSHTM launched its first distance learning courses in 1998, and the programme has gone from strength to strength. Providing the academic direction for four postgraduate study programmes offered through the External System – Clinical Trials, Epidemiology, Infectious Diseases and Public Health – there are currently more than 1,900 students on these programmes, based in over 120 countries. In 2006-07, the School's first distance learning course delivered entirely online was launched – the MSc and Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Trials – and had a very successful first year. The web-based presentation of the course materials has received extremely positive feedback from students.

For further information on all health-related programmes please visit:

www.londonexternal.ac.uk/health

Come and meet us

Below is a list of forthcoming exhibitions we'll be attending:

Postgraduate Ireland Fair 2008	20 February 2008
EDUKEX, Colombo, Sri Lanka	23-24 February 2008
University of London seminar, Kandy, Sri Lanka	25 February 2008
EDUKEX, Kandy, Sri Lanka	26 February 2008
Career 2008, Singapore	28 February-2 March 2008
University of London seminar, Mauritius	5 March 2008

For full details please visit our website:
www.londonexternal.ac.uk/news_events/exhibitions.shtml



Senate House Library

Senate House Library is the central library of the University of London and as such, one of the largest libraries in London, with outstanding collections in the arts, humanities and social sciences. We have over 2 million books, more than 20,000 journal titles, rare books, archives and manuscripts, and expert help.

Students studying with the University of London External System are eligible to join Senate House Library at the following rates: annual borrowing (8 books) for £100, annual reference for £85, six month reference for

£64. Short-term membership options are also available.

To join the Library, please bring photographic identification (such as a passport) and proof of address (such as a bank statement). In addition, we require evidence of current enrolment with the University of London External System.

For further details please visit our website: www.shl.lon.ac.uk

Coral Black – coral.black@london.ac.uk
Head of Public Services



Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum

Since the 1970s, and with increasing speed in the internet age, new ideas in education have highlighted ways of placing education at the service of development. Examples include the creation of open schools, open colleges and open universities, and the innovative use of new media to broaden access to learning opportunities. The fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF5), an international five-day conference in July 2008, will explore the interaction of 'access to learning' and 'learning for development', enabled by these new technologies and new approaches to education.

Organised jointly by the Commonwealth of Learning and the University of London, PCF5 – the leading international conference on learning and development – will bring researchers, planners, practitioners and policymakers together in London.

An international call for proposals has been issued, and over 500 proposals for contributions for the conference have been received. Contributions will address the Forum's key themes of Governance, conflict and social justice; Health; Livelihoods; and Provision for children and young people. www.pcf5.london.ac.uk

New partnerships

The University of London, in association with UNESCO, is planning a pre-conference meeting of Vice-Chancellors, Rectors and Principals immediately before the Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (see left). The gathering will bring together the leaders of some of the oldest and largest universities in the Commonwealth to discuss *Development in Higher Education: new partnerships and new approaches*. The agenda will focus on the role of Universities and the tertiary sector in helping to achieve sustainable national and regional development

through research and teaching, as well as the need for universities themselves to transform in order to make quality higher education available on a much larger scale through distance education and other means.

Participants will include a range of institutions with a historical association with the University of London. These include some of the longest-established universities in the Commonwealth, and the newer open and 'mega' universities which use new approaches to reach very large student populations in both developed and developing economies.

150th microsite

In celebration of the External System's 150th Anniversary we've launched a 150th microsite. This provides a flavour of our history and an insight into the experiences of students both past and present. The site gives an overview of the External System's global community of former students and alumni, including some of the exceptional people who have made their mark on the world. As part of the celebrations we're also collecting memories and quotes from students, alumni and staff. We've already added some of these to the site and hope to add many more over the course of the year. Consequently, we'd like to invite you to share your own memories with us. If you have photos we can add them to the 150th



photo gallery. A specially commissioned anniversary book has been produced to commemorate the University of London External System's 150th Anniversary, details of which can be found on the microsite. www.londonexternal.ac.uk/150

Feedback

We would welcome your feedback on this issue and letters/comments for future publication. Please email us at: 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