



London Connection

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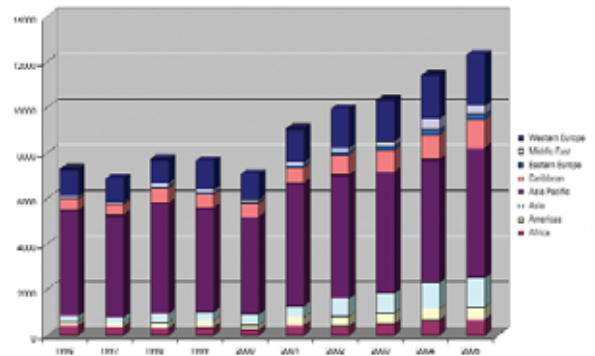
Record year for recruitment to the External Programme

The External Programme learning community is growing. Recently released figures show that annual new student recruitment numbers topped 12,000 for the first time last year. This represents a growth of 75% since the year 2000.

While the majority of new students continue to be from Singapore, Hong Kong, the UK, Trinidad and Malaysia, student numbers are growing worldwide. This year there were new students in countries as far afield as Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Reunion Island and the Dutch Antilles – places where there is little other way of achieving a world-class degree,

especially in some of the more specialist postgraduate areas.

Two of the most popular new programmes are the LLM and the Masters in Public Health. The Diploma for Graduates (from the LSE) also continues to grow. The Director of External Study at LSE, Rosie Gosling, commented that the Diploma for Graduates is "ideal for those who wish to acquire and demonstrate knowledge in a particular field or who wish to undertake postgraduate work and whose first degree is in an unrelated field."



The above graph shows the continuing growth of new student registrations between 1996-2005.

Improving support for the LLB



Photo: Getty Images

With more than 12,000 of you studying for the LLB in over 125 countries worldwide, we're pleased to announce a whole raft of new study support initiatives. We hope that this improved support will make your path through the degree that little bit easier. This includes:

- Online 'fun' exercises that introduce you to the study of rules and encourage you to consider the type of skills you will need to develop as you study on the External Laws programme.
- A new 'kit guide' to help you familiarise yourself with your box of study materials.
- A new study guide, *Studying English Law with the University of London*, which provides a general introduction to the common law system, the language of law and researching and studying legal rules.

- Online legal research exercises to help you make use of the extensive legal resources available online, especially the legal databases in the University's Online Library: Westlaw, LexisNexis, Justis and JSTOR. First set available online from Spring 2006. (For students registering in or after September 2007, these will be compulsory.)

- Computer-marked assessments to test your knowledge and understanding through multiple choice questions – with feedback when you have finished. Pilot series in the four Intermediate/Diploma subjects available from January 2006.

- A dedicated Online Laws librarian who can offer you expert guidance.
Email: onlinelibrary@shl.london.ac.uk

- Redesign of the Online Laws Library website. Do use it and ask us for help to make the most of it.
www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk

- Course readers (sets of extended readings for Intermediate and Diploma subjects), available from September 2006 in both online and print versions.

- An online learning environment (OLE) for the Laws programme, introduced incrementally over the next four years beginning Summer 2006.

🔗 www.londonexternal.ac.uk/current_students/programme_resources/laws/

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Your feedback...

We've had an extremely positive response to the Student newsletter. Many thanks to all those who have emailed comments – we've included some examples below:

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have just completed reading the 1st edition and I must congratulate all involved for doing a fine job. I was impressed with the quality and contents of the newsletter. It was very informative and it gave me a sense of belonging even though I am thousands of miles away. For the first time I feel I am part of the University.

Keep up the good work.

Cheers,

Tan Pik Lan

LLB, Malaysia

I work full time as a freelance translator and am a happy wife and proud mother of three boys. For these past seven years most of my weekends between the months of September and April are devoted to studying, and so are my summer holidays. But I've enjoyed it all, and wish to thank you for this opportunity.

The newsletter was very welcome because being the only student in my country and region, I feel rather isolated and at a loss when it comes to having nobody with whom to share experiences and/or material.

Good idea!

The External Programme has sent me back to college, broadening my mind and giving me useful tools in a number of fields. Thank you for making this accessible and available to all, even to those in remote locations.

Warm regards,

Karin Handley

BA English, Argentina

I was very pleasantly surprised to receive the London Connection newsletter in my mailbox. I registered earlier this year and chose to study independently as I expect to be living in different continents as well as go through major changes in life (career change, marriage and having children) during the time it will take to complete my degree. Not attending classes and having tutors or fellow students for support makes for a very isolating experience indeed. The newsletter made me feel more like a part of a wider student body and a part of the University itself, rather than someone strictly 'external' to it. I thank you for this new addition to UoL's external package and look forward to future issues.

Sincerely,

Suraiya Neshah Ismail

BSc Accounting and Finance, Singapore

We would welcome your letters/comments for future publication. Please email us at: newsletter@lon.ac.uk

You've spoken...we've listened

Our first Undergraduate Student Experience Survey was launched in April 2005. We appreciate the high level of responses received and hope the survey has given a large number of you an opportunity to provide your feedback.

The findings of the survey: a snapshot

The majority of respondents found the subject guides useful. Programme Teams commission experts to write and review the guides; all new guides now benefit from specialist editing and design to help meet your learning needs.

The findings show that many of you had positive views on exams-related services, e.g. over 80% felt that exam questions reflected the syllabus. Our examiners ensure that the questions set not only reflect the syllabus for each unit/module, but are also varied and precise. Exam papers are evaluated by independent External Examiners, so you can be sure that detailed consideration has gone into their production.

More than three-quarters of you considered exam entry arrangements to be clear. Our Student Assessment team aims to provide an efficient and helpful service and this has been confirmed by your feedback.

The majority of respondents felt that they receive an efficient and high standard of service regarding the information available both before enrolling and after registering for their programme.

A snapshot of survey response rates:

- 7,500 undergraduate External students invited to complete the survey online
- 2,054 responses
- 27.5% response rate
- 61 undergraduate awards represented in survey sample.

Once published, you will be able to access a detailed response to the findings from the homepage of our website.

Actions taken in relation to the findings of the survey

Respondents highlighted a number of areas where they felt there was room for improvement. We've listed a few below, along with an indication of our action points:

Award schemes/criteria

Some of you felt that you would benefit from more detailed information on how your programme is assessed. As a result, award schemes/assessment criteria will now be introduced into all Programme Regulations. This will include a range of information that we hope will help your understanding of the requirements that are expected of you to succeed as an External student.

Guidance on exam results

Many students would like to receive more guidance on exam results. We've explained the reasons why it's not possible to give you individual feedback in our detailed survey response. You've commented on the value



of some of the general resources we offer, such as Examiners' reports. In 2005, our Academic Board agreed that these reports should be written for all modules/units for undergraduate programmes.

Navigation of the External Programme website

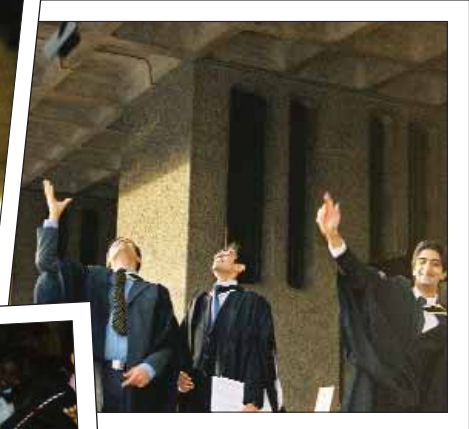
A large number of you felt that the website wasn't as easy to navigate as you would have liked. We recognise the importance of the website as a way of communicating with you, and as a means through which you're able to access a range of resources. After an extensive evaluation and redesign exercise, the External Programme website was relaunched in June 2005. ☛

Adam Dawkins, Quality Manager

The 2006 Graduation Ceremony



The 2006 Graduation Ceremony took place on 13 March at the Barbican Centre in the heart of London. 521 graduates from every corner of the globe attended the event – along with over 800 guests – in what was the largest External Programme Graduation Ceremony on record. HRH The Princess Royal, Chancellor of the University, presided over the occasion. We were also delighted to welcome representatives of institutions from Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Iraq, Ireland, Malta, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia and Turkey.



Photos: Antonia Steadman



To purchase a DVD of the 2006 Ceremony, please visit:
www.londonexternal.ac.uk/alumni

Focus on: Royal Holloway, University of London



Photo: Courtesy of Royal Holloway, University of London

Celebrating its 120th anniversary this year, Royal Holloway, University of London, enjoys an international reputation for the highest quality teaching and research across the sciences, arts and humanities. Since Queen Victoria presided over the grand opening ceremony in 1886, the College has continued to grow in size and status, building on the excellence of its scholarship.

Ranked in the top 10 research-led universities in the UK, Royal Holloway provides the academic direction for two postgraduate programmes offered through the External Programme, an MBA in International Management and an MSc in Information Security.

The MBA is developed by the renowned School of Management, recently accredited by AMBA (The Association of MBAs) and now one of the elite Schools delivering management programmes in the UK. Designed to equip students with the ability and skills to think globally and to meet the needs of modern business, the programme offers the opportunity to specialize in subjects of both international and professional relevance.

The MSc in Information Security is developed by academics within the Information Security Group (ISG), now immortalized in Dan Brown's bestselling novel *The Da Vinci Code*. One of the foremost academic security groups in the world, the ISG is at the cutting edge of research into the design and evaluation of smart cards, electronic commerce, security management, mobile telecommunications security, and the integration of security techniques into specific applications. ☛

Further information:
 ☎ www.londonexternal.ac.uk/mba
 ☎ www.londonexternal.ac.uk/infosec

QAA success

We're delighted to announce that, following a recent audit from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education – the independent body responsible for reviewing the quality and standards of higher education in all UK universities and colleges – the QAA has placed broad confidence in the quality of our programmes and the standards of awards we offer*.

The audit was the External Programme's first engagement with the QAA, and we're pleased to see that their report acknowledges the significant amount of development and enhancement that we have undertaken in recent years. The audit report will be helpful to our plans for further improving the student experience.

*There are three possible judgements: broad confidence; limited confidence; no confidence. ☛



Photo: Stockbyte



Q & A with:

Dr Hugh Starkey, Programme Director, MA Citizenship and History Education

A Senior Lecturer at the University of London's Institute of Education and co-author of the recently published *Changing Citizenship: Democracy and Inclusion in Education* (Open University Press), Dr Hugh Starkey continues to blaze a trail in the burgeoning field of Citizenship and History Education.

Q1. How has the field of Citizenship and History Education developed over the last few years?

Citizenship education is being introduced across the world as part of a generalised movement of democratisation. In older established democracies there is a realisation that democracy is a potentially fragile system that cannot be taken for granted. Citizenship education has often been associated with instilling patriotism and assimilating minorities. Governments expect history education to support this. Our courses examine both these tendencies critically.

Q2. Could you summarise the key features of the new programmes?

We start from the premise that there are universal approaches to citizenship and history. Citizenship is based on human rights, for example and these provide universal principles. We can therefore offer our course

worldwide. In technical terms we provide a programme that provides study material in printed form and is tutored via the web. We are able to offer a huge range of resources including the latest research and materials.

Q3. Who are they aimed at and what are the study objectives?

Our courses are aimed at teachers, educators, NGO workers and all those interested in citizenship, civic education, social studies or political education. It aims to help them think critically about fundamental principles and teaching approaches and to apply their insights to their professional context whatever and wherever that is.

Q4. In developing the programmes, how did you ensure that they would be relevant internationally?

We piloted one module in 2005 and we included students from five continents. They were enthusiastic about what the course

provided. Our latest course materials are currently being read by colleagues from China and Mexico as well as the UK. We adapt the materials in the light of their comments.

Q5. What is your own area of expertise, and has your research area impacted on the development of the programmes?

I have a background as a teacher of languages and intercultural education. I have developed a theory and practice of human rights education. I trained some of the first teachers of citizenship in England, when the subject was introduced in 2002. I have written many books, articles and chapters on citizenship and human rights in education. ✉

For further information please visit:

🌐 www.londonexternal.ac.uk/education

Profile on: Student Assessment



Responsible for arranging exams and overseeing the administration of students through the various stages of their study programme, right up to the point of graduation, the 26-strong Student Assessment department is organised into five discrete sections. With each section responsible for its own specific degree areas – the LSE suite of programmes, Law, CIS and so on – the timing of exams throughout the year means that there are two main cycles of activity. The first wave takes place in May/June (for which over 20,000 exam entries have been received this year), the second from August right through to mid-November.

The cycle includes collating results coming back from examiners, inputting results and producing mark sheets, taking mark sheets to final Board of examiners' meetings, acting as Secretary to the Boards, advising on regulatory matters and associated issues, and once results have been confirmed, producing notifications (or pass lists in the case of graduates). In addition staff answer queries from students, examiners and colleagues from other institutions.

One of the Student Assessment team who fulfills a vital dual function is Angie Rowland. On the one hand, she administers exams for postgraduate programmes led by the Institute of Education and CeFIMS (SOAS); on the

other, she is also responsible for managing all of the UK and overseas exam centres, ranging from the British Council offices in Austria to the Examinations Council of Zambia.

This secondary aspect of her role can entail any number of things, including "establishing new centres, producing guidelines, answering any queries they might have, keeping them going really". With her problem-solving hat on, Angie is currently looking for an alternative venue to the British Embassy in Rwanda which, due to the small but growing number of students, can no longer comfortably host exams for External students. Looking to the future, Angie is hopeful that the new Atlas database, currently in development, "will help us to produce better information to send out both to students and exam centres".

Having visited all of the major exam centres in the Far East – Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong – Angie will shortly be visiting the Ministry of Education in Trinidad, to offer additional support to one of the External Programme's major growth areas. ✉

Studying as an External student

We've put together a few guidelines on how to revise for examinations, which we hope will be especially useful for those with exams coming up.

Revision tips

■ Set aside the time

You should block out enough time for revision after working through the study topics of a course. Try to make very few appointments and postpone any big parties in the weeks before the examination period! Concentrate first and foremost on revision. Make yourself a revision timetable. Set yourself time to do the same amount of revision for each of the main subjects on which you will be examined. Try to stick to this schedule.

Do not spend lots more time revising the subjects you like best or find easiest. Likewise, do not spend all your time on the subjects you find most difficult. Finally, do make sure that you don't spend every minute on revision – this way you'll go mad. Short breaks will refresh you and prevent you getting completely obsessed.

■ Be aware of the styles of examination question

You should prepare yourself for the styles of question that are likely to be asked in the examinations. This can be done by looking at previous examination papers and reading any advice provided by course tutors very carefully (especially in cases where there

may be a change in the style of questions asked compared to previous years). Note that question style is likely to vary from course to course.

Where possible examples of exam questions and past papers are provided with the study materials. You should not rely on trying to guess exactly what questions are likely to be asked in a future examination. Although some of the questions in previous examination papers appear to cover similar topics, future questions may vary in the way that they are phrased and this variation can change an easy question into a very difficult one.

■ Practise writing examination answers

If you are not familiar with the British system of taking written examinations it is particularly important that you practise writing examination answers under time constraints. Where possible we have provided examples of previous examination papers for this purpose.

Good luck! 🍀



Photo: Photodisc

Institution snapshot:

HELP University College, Malaysia



Since opening its doors in 1986 to provide affordable educational opportunities for Malaysians, HELP University College has developed into the leading institution of higher learning in Malaysia with a firmly established international reputation among universities, business and governments in Asia Pacific, Europe and North America.

The basis of all HELP's achievements is an educational philosophy that emphasises sound classroom management, with all programmes delivered by a faculty that matches the best in the world. As an international university, HELP has achieved breakthrough results, set new benchmarks of academic standards and established a great tradition of excellence and achievement.

HELP graduates are highly prized individuals who are warmly welcomed for postgraduate studies at top universities around the world including LSE and Oxbridge, and keenly sought after by top companies like Motorola, Ernst & Young, Shell, Ericsson, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, and Goldman Sachs for their versatility and leadership abilities.

In 1988, HELP pioneered the introduction of the Diploma in Economics from the University of London, having taught LSE-led BSc programmes since 1986. This has subsequently evolved into a highly successful programme which has produced outstanding scholars. HELP students studying University of London programmes consistently score excellent results, topped in 2001 with 11 BSc First Class Honours and 16 Diploma in Economics distinctions. In 2002, for the ninth consecutive year, HELP students again won all three scholarships awarded by the Standard Chartered Bank, Malaysia, for completion of their studies at LSE.

HELP introduced a Foundation Programme in 2004 which has been accepted as satisfying the entry requirements for the LSE-led BSc degrees. This qualification will enable the programme to grow in Asia, and HELP University looks forward to working with the University of London as the External Programme moves into new areas in Asia. 🌐: www.help.edu.my

Photo: Courtesy of HELP University College

Come and meet us

Below is a list of forthcoming exhibitions we will be attending:

Gulf Education & Training Exhibition, Dubai	12-14 April 2006
SPACE (HKU) Open Day, Hong Kong	22 April 2006
Association of MBAs Fair, UK	15 May 2006
E-Learning Africa, Ethiopia	24-26 May 2006
University of London Open Days, Trinidad	23-24 June 2006
SPACE (HKU) Open Day, Hong Kong	15 July 2006

For full details please visit our website:

www.londonexternal.ac.uk/news_events/exhibitions.shtml

We've received several emails requesting information about purchasing **University of London merchandise**. To view what's on offer, please visit:

🌐: www.londonexternal.ac.uk/current_students/general_resources/merchandise

Around the London Colleges

Major scientific discoveries and investigations into social, political and economic issues ensure that academics at the University of London are widely regarded as world-leaders in research.

UCL's revolutionary brain scanner



UCL scientists have developed a revolutionary portable brain scanner that could aid the treatment – and potentially help save the lives – of premature and newborn babies in intensive care.

By providing vital information about brain function at the cot side, the scanner avoids the need to move critically ill babies to conventional scanning facilities, which may involve sedating them and has a degree of risk. The data produced by the new scanner can be used to diagnose and assess conditions such as brain haemorrhages and brain damage, and to inform decisions on effective treatment.


Researcher Dr Adam Gibson said: "The technology we're developing has the potential to produce high quality images at the cot side...It could make an important contribution to the care and treatment of critically ill babies. Scanners could be available commercially within a few years."

www.ucl.ac.uk

New 240-hour short course from the RVC

The Royal Veterinary College, recently featured on BBC One's *Super Vets*, is offering a new short course in Animal Welfare. International in its scope, the course considers current practices and viewpoints on animal welfare, and will challenge your analytical thinking and judgment within today's social and agricultural context. The materials for this course have been authored by a team of international experts, led by Professor Neville Gregory from the RVC.

As the course is offered by distance learning you can fit your study around family and professional commitments. You may decide to do this course on it's own for personal

interest or professional development. Or, as it is a module within our distance learning MSc/Postgraduate Diploma programme in Livestock Health and Production, you may wish to study further. 

www.londonexternal.ac.uk/rvc




Photo: Getty Images

University of London scoops two *Times Higher* awards

The University of London has won two categories in the inaugural *Times Higher Awards 2005*. Professor Lewis Elton, Honorary Professor of Higher Education at UCL's Centre for the Advancement of Teaching & Learning, picked up a Lifetime Achievement Award for what the judges referred to as his "trailblazing work on pedagogy" and for having inspired a generation of academics over a 60-year period.

King's College London won the 'Business Initiative Of The Year' category for its drug discovery and development spin-out company, Proximagen Neuroscience. Proximagen was established in 2003 by Peter Jenner, Professor of Pharmacology at King's, to seek new treatments for neurodegenerative conditions such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

The awards received widespread support including Prime Minister Tony Blair recording a special video message for the ceremony in which he hailed the achievements of the UK's world-beating higher education institutions. 

www.thes.co.uk/Awards/2005

Country's oldest student is University of London graduate

Following a major nationwide search by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, Bernard Herzberg has officially been recognised as the UK's oldest student at the age of 96.

Born in 1909 in Hanover, Germany, Bernard fled Germany shortly after the Nazis seized power, eventually settling in South Africa. In 1985, aged 75, Bernard was transferred to London to establish a firm procuring industrial chemicals and pharmaceuticals. He finally retired at the age of 81, but far from reaching for the pipe and slippers he decided it was time to brush up on his mother tongue, German.

Bernard duly registered for a BA German with the University of London External Programme, successfully graduating in 2000 at the age of 91. An outstanding achievement in its own right, this merely whetted his appetite for further study.


The nonagenarian is now studying for an MA in African Economics and Literature at SOAS. 

Photo: Courtesy of UCL

SOAS wins joint bid

A consortium of universities that includes SOAS has recently been awarded a coveted new contract for running the EU-funded Executive Training Programmes for Japan and Korea. These one-year programmes have a high profile internationally and are targeted at talented young executives across Europe who will go on to develop the language, cultural and management skills necessary to work successfully in the Japanese or Korean markets.

Along with SOAS, the successful consortium includes Sciences Po in Paris, the Bocconi School of Management in Milan, Yonsei University in Korea and Waseda University in Japan. This group brings together universities with leading expertise in the areas of management, and the teaching of Asian languages and cultures. 

www.soas.ac.uk

Feedback

We would welcome your feedback on this issue and your 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