



London Connection

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Issue 2: Winter 2005



Top photo: The Vice-Chancellor, Sir Graeme Davies, speaking at this year's graduation ceremony at HKU SPACE.

Bottom photo: The Vice-Chancellor with graduate May Ling Wong and Professor Enoch Young, Director of HKU SPACE.

Celebrating half a century of academic excellence

2006 will mark a 50-year milestone in the relationship between HKU SPACE and the University of London. The Vice-Chancellor, Sir Graeme Davies, paid tribute to the special relationship at this year's HKU SPACE graduation ceremony.

The relationship between the Hong Kong University School of Professional and Continuing Education and the University of London is very highly valued by me and my colleagues in the Colleges of the University who have, over the years, worked with their SPACE colleagues to build a suite of academic programmes remarkable in both range and depth.

A great deal has been achieved by the School since the first steps were taken those many years ago in 1956 when it was initially launched as the University's Department of Extramural Studies. The levels of trust, commitment, support and friendship that have been given to the University of London and its Colleges are admirable – this has enabled us to work together very successfully to the real benefit of generations of students.

It is clearly apparent that the contribution that the SPACE has made to educational

development in Hong Kong is of the highest quality – not only because of its range of commitments from conventional diploma and degree programmes through continuing professional development to the provision of services and consultancy to Government, Commerce and Industry - but also because of its flexibility and its support for students at all levels.

Director, Members of the Governing Board, academic and administrative staff of the School – it is my pleasure both personally and on behalf of the University of London to congratulate you on your many years of achievement.

And finally, but not least, our congratulations must also go to today's Graduates – the School was pleased when you chose to study here – I have no doubt that all the staff are equally pleased to see you emerging today as successful graduates.

Photos: Courtesy of Jenny Sin at HKU SPACE

The External Programme has moved



Responding to its ongoing growth, the External Programme has relocated to larger premises. An extensive refurbishment programme has brought together a number of the University's outlying Schools, Institutes and Departments into the newly refurbished Stewart House (which adjoins Senate House at the rear).

It is hoped that through the relocation we will improve communications and offer a better service to our students.

Our new address is:

**The External Programme
University of London
Stewart House
32 Russell Square
London WC1B 5DN
United Kingdom**

Please note that all telephone numbers and email addresses remain unchanged.

This issue

- Graduation ceremony at HKU SPACE
- Move to Stewart House
- Student survey results
- Postgraduate application dates
- Interview with LLB graduate, May Ling Wong
- Special Needs Implementation Panel
- Q&A with Rosie Gosling, Director, LSE External Study
- About LSE
- Exam study tips
- Institution snapshot: School of Business and Computer Science, Trinidad
- Latest news from the Colleges of the University

Improving your experience

Update on 2005 undergraduate student experience survey



Firstly, many thanks to those students who participated in an online student survey in April/May this year.

The aim was to provide a large number of our undergraduate students with an opportunity to give formal feedback to us on their experience of being a student. It's the first time the External Programme has conducted a large-scale survey of this type, and we intend to use your feedback to inform the ongoing enhancement and improvement of your learning experience.

The sample for the survey included External students registered on all 61 undergraduate programmes. Responses were received for 60 of the 61 programmes, providing us with valuable feedback from almost the full range of available undergraduate programmes. We plan to publish the full results of the survey, together with an action plan, by the end of March 2006.

A summary of the survey will be provided in the next issue of this newsletter. ✉

Adam Dawkins, Quality Manager

Illustration: Antonia Steadman

IPHC team win 2005 e-Tutor of the Year Competition

A team of UCL academics from the MSc in International Primary Health Care programme has been judged winners of the 2005 e-Tutor of the Year Competition coordinated by the Higher Education Academy and the UK publication *The Times Higher Education Supplement*. The judging panel praised the submission for its orientation towards the pedagogical process and how the team went about developing the programme online.

With students coming from 11 different countries around the world and from a variety of professions including doctors, nurses and pharmacists, judges were impressed that the technology was almost secondary and very team-focused. In addition, they were pleased to see how the student experience informed the rationale and design of the programme. The judges also noted the way in which developments on the programme were now influencing the work of other programme teams across the University of London, with several adopting the idea of an induction module. ✉

Postgraduate application deadline dates

Applications for postgraduate study are processed throughout the year. In order that we can provide you with the best possible service, you are strongly advised to apply as early as possible. Please note that some programmes have two entry points each year:

31 January	Laws MBA in International Management [please also see 31 July]
1 April	Economic Principles Finance and Financial Law Financial Economics Financial Management Public Policy and Management [please also see 17 November]
31st May	Applied Geographic Information Systems Information Security International Primary Health Care Open, Distance and Flexible Learning

30 June	Applied Educational Leadership and Management MBA in Business Administration Epidemiology Infectious Diseases Public Health
31 July	Laws MBA in International Management [please also see 31 January]
30 September	M.Clin.Dent.(Prosthodontics) Dental and Maxillofacial Radiology Dental Public Health
1 October	Human Resource Management Organizational Psychology
31 October	Agribusiness for Development Agricultural Economics Applied Environmental Economics Biodiversity Conservation and Management Environmental Management Managing Rural Development



Photo: Getty Images

1 November	Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development Sustainable Development
1 November	Livestock Health and Production Veterinary Epidemiology and Public Health
17 November	Economic Principles Finance and Financial Law Financial Economics Financial Management Public Policy and Management [please also see 1 April]

Details and application forms for all our programmes are also on our website:

www.londonexternal.ac.uk ✉

The secret of my success

An interview with LLB graduate, May Ling Wong

Hong Kong student May Ling Wong is a recent addition to the illustrious ranks of University of London LLB graduates. What's more, she is now the proud owner of a First Class degree – a remarkable achievement, particularly given the added pressures of External study. But before we talk about the result, what made her choose the External Programme in the first place?

"I particularly liked the way in which the programme was structured. It gave me the flexibility I wanted. Another influential factor was being able to get a qualification from a prestigious institution like the University of London."

With additional educational support provided by a local institution, HKU SPACE, May Ling managed to complete in the minimum study period of three years. So, after three years of intense hard work, how did it feel to get a First? "To be honest, it still hasn't really sunk in. I remember reading the Student Handbook in my first year, looking at the range of classifications awarded, and thinking to myself 'Well, there's no way

I'll get a First, so I'll just try my best to get a 2:1'. Of course I'm extremely pleased with the result, and the fact it has opened so many doors for me."

As she was working and studying at the

same time, good time management skills proved absolutely essential. What kind of study routine did she have? "In the first year, it didn't quite hit home how much there was to learn until it was close to the exams, so there were days where I literally revised through the night until it was time for work. In the second year, I paced myself a bit better, and began earlier in the year."

It seems that her hard work is already paying off, and that gaining the LLB has resulted in some major, life-changing decisions. "I'm now doing a Postgraduate Certificate in Laws in order to progress onto legal training. I've already decided to change my career completely, from medical research to law, and there's no way I would've been able to do that without the University of London. I've thought about pursuing an LLM, but will leave that until a later stage when I've had time to consider which area I'd like to do that in."

Finally, after such an outstanding result, there's the question that's on the lips of every single External student. Just what was the secret of her success? "One word – discipline. There really is no substitute for discipline when doing a degree by External study. There's no one, apart from yourself, who can make you sit down and open your books every day, every night, while everyone else seems to be out enjoying themselves. Believe me, at the end of the day, it's worth it, and it's a skill that will serve you well in the future too."

Photo: Courtesy of May Ling Wong



Did you know that...

- A total of 57 alumni and staff members of the University of London have been awarded Nobel prizes.
- Scientists from Imperial College London and St George's, University of London are leading the battle against TB, malaria and AIDS in the developing world through their leadership of three major international research projects.
- The Institute of Cancer Research has isolated more cancer genes than any other organization.
- The School of Oriental and African Studies is the world's largest centre for the study of Asia, Africa and the Middle East.
- No fewer than five Goldsmiths Art graduates have gone on to win the prestigious Turner Prize. 📄



Photo: Courtesy of University of London

More help for students with Special Needs



A Special Needs Implementation Panel (SNIP) has been set up to identify issues relating to the provision of services to students and enquirers.

The panel is due to meet at least three times a year. One of its principal aims is to raise awareness of special needs and disability issues and to initiate changes to practice where appropriate, an objective with which Anastasia Ross, the student representative on the panel, wholly concurs. "We need to let students know about the panel and that there's a body that is willing to cater for their special educational needs. A special educational need is one that will aid you in getting your degree. If that means that you need some form of software or written aid, then that's what it is. It's not about your actual disability, it's about how the university can work with you."

Study guides becoming available as PDF electronic files is just one example of the ongoing effort to ensure that learning materials are fully accessible.

For Anastasia, SNIP is all about widening access to educational opportunities "so that whether you're an External student or College-based, you will be able to access higher education. Higher education institutions have managed to overlook special needs for a long time, but now that the law has changed everyone realises that things need to be done. People going into education, their workplace etc – their Special Needs need to be met." 📄

Photo: Stockbyte

Q & A with:

Rosie Gosling, Director, LSE External Study

Surviving a kidnap attempt, circumnavigating the globe several times over and providing a one-stop advice centre for External students – it's all in a day's work for Rosie Gosling.



Photo: Frank Wisselink

Rosie Gosling at an LSE study weekend

Q: You studied as a mature student at LSE. How important was this in shaping your own views on widening access to educational opportunities?

Widening access is the primary reason for my involvement in the programme. I did not have the chance to study when I was younger and after leaving LSE and starting to teach in a Further Education college I realised I had a wonderful opportunity to do something for others. We started the first LSE access programme in West London and when I came back to the College I was asked to develop the Diploma in Economics. There have been some students who started at colleges with 'Permission to teach' the Diploma in Economics who are now extremely successful. The programme still shapes my deep commitment to widening access.

Q: You've been involved with the External Programme for almost 20 years. How has it changed over this period?

It has changed enormously. I was lucky enough to be part of the renaissance of the External Programme. It was thought that it would disappear with all the new university provision in the UK and overseas. In the eighties there were few students on the undergraduate programmes. Until 1992, we worked together with our University of London colleagues to develop syllabuses and work on operational issues. Since then, the academic responsibility has moved to the

Lead Colleges and the operational issues and registration are dealt with by the University. For the programmes in Economics, Management, Finance and the Social Sciences alone we have 13,000 students registered. I used to know nearly every student – unfortunately I do not know every one now, but try to do so!

Q: Having spent many years meeting and advising External students around the world, are there any particular memories or stories that stand out?

The first graduation ceremony of our Diploma in Economics students in Hong Kong. This was a celebration of the hard work and commitment of the lecturers and the students who were all part time. The grand ceremonies in Malaysia, Singapore, Russia and of course London where we see delighted students and their families celebrating success. Working with colleges and their directors who have such faith in the London programme, which were so small and which are now very grand institutions such as the Singapore Institute of Management. Teaching on revision courses in Malaysia with the Law lecturers; working with our colleagues on the Study weekends at LSE; working to ensure the materials get to our lone student in St Helena and finally seeing our students from the External Programme graduating at LSE with their PhDs. There have been some interesting scary stories, for example the time I was

kidnapped and was only freed because I talked so much!

Q: As Programme Director you necessarily have to wear several 'hats' – working closely with LSE academics, extensive foreign travel, advising students. What's the most satisfying aspect of your role?

It is impossible to separate the roles. I love working and encouraging the academics and of course the people in the External Study office, Fay, Nancy, Catherine and Kate. I still get excited every time I start a new journey but I think advising and teaching students must be the most important.

Q: Looking to the future, where do you see the External Programme in 20 years time?

I believe that it will grow and we will have strong relationships with the teaching institutions. There will still be considerable face-to-face teaching but very well supported by electronic means. I believe that the University of London will be seen as a truly international provider of education and our students will be our best ambassadors.

Q: Finally, as a seasoned globetrotter, what are your three top tips for those undertaking international travel?

Enjoy it! Concentrate on the work that you have to do and don't try and be a tourist at the same time. Try and write up your reports straight away. Have plenty of massages, these are essential! ✍️

About the London School of Economics and Political Science

The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) is a world-leading social science institution. Since its foundation in 1895, LSE has been regarded as an international centre of academic excellence and innovation in the social sciences. Its teaching and research is recognised worldwide as a benchmark of quality.

Current areas of research and expertise include globalisation, human rights, risk and business management, new

communications technologies, urban and regional policies, and new forms of governance.

LSE alumni and former staff include 13 Nobel prize winners and 30 past or present heads of state. LSE academics come from all over the world and from many social, educational and ethnic backgrounds. They are in constant demand as commentators and analysts in the media, act as advisors to governments, and are seconded to national and international organisations. ✍️



Photo: Courtesy of LSE

Studying as an External student

We've put together a few guidelines on how to do well in your examinations, which we thought would be especially useful for those who haven't sat an examination recently!

How to do well in your examinations

■ Answer the right number of questions.

The easiest way to fail an examination is not to answer enough questions. Every examination paper will ask you to answer a certain number of questions, and marks will be allocated to each one. Unfortunately, it's all too common for students to answer too few questions. If you are asked to answer four questions, and only answer two, then you'll have to produce perfect answers for the two you did answer just to pass the examination. It's not a good idea to spend a lot of time over one question at the expense of the others. Similarly, you won't gain any extra marks for answering more questions than are required.

■ Answer the question that is asked.

Most marks in examinations are lost through a failure to answer the question properly. Students often see a question on one particular aspect of a subject, and then just write down everything that they know about that subject, rather than the specific aspect that was requested. Read the question carefully and note down what aspects are being asked for. If the question looks similar to one that you have revised, check to see if it is exactly the same, or whether it differs in some important respects. Look for keywords in the question, as these will help you to understand what you are being asked to do.

■ Cite research.

You get marks for citing relevant examples and ideas from books and articles you've read. So always give examples of research to back up your arguments - even when the question does not explicitly ask for them. In answering a question in an examination you are not expected to give full bibliographical references for your sources. You should nevertheless acknowledge the name of any author you cite. It's also a good idea if you can give examples from your own work experience.

■ Multi-part questions.

Some questions contain several parts. Make sure that you answer all the parts that are required: the question may require you to answer two out of three subquestions, or it may be an either/or question. Spend enough time on each of the main parts of the question.

■ If English is not your first language.

Don't worry that you might read and write more slowly than other students. Even if this is the case, remember that you get good marks for writing clear, critical and well-organised answers. Very short answers can still get good marks. ✍



Photo: Photodisc

Institution snapshot:



The School of Business and Computer Science (SBCS), Trinidad

Founded in 1986, SBCS is an independent tertiary education centre based in Trinidad offering degrees and professional programmes to students of the region.

The School's vision is to play a pivotal role in the transformation of the region's human resource into its most valuable natural resource, through education and training. In order to deliver the very best service to students, SBCS has sought to establish links with a select number of UK and US universities including the University of London. The relationship with the University of London External Programme began in 1997 and, since then, has grown from strength to strength. SBCS currently has approximately 1,000 students enrolled on University of London programmes including Banking and Finance; Computing and Information Systems; Information Systems and Management; and Management.

The high level of support received from the Colleges of the University of London (namely LSE and Goldsmiths) is one of the main reasons why SBCS continues to attract more students each year. The programmes are taught and administered by a team of highly qualified, experienced and dedicated professionals, supported by state of the art labs, classrooms and ancillary facilities.

SBCS aims to ensure that students are provided with the very best educational and training experience, such that they are able to consistently deliver excellence, both at exams and in the workplace. SBCS is proud of its association with the University of London and looks forward to working with the University for many years to come. ✍

✉ www.sbcstnt.com



SBCS exhibition stand at the University of London External Programme Open Day in Trinidad, 2005.

Photo: Michael Davis

Come and meet us

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

Star exhibition, Malaysia	7-8 January 2006
Hong Kong Law Fair	18 February 2006
Hong Kong Education and Careers Expo 2006	23-26 February 2006
Edukex Sri Lanka	4, 5 and 7 March 2006
Career 2006, Singapore	2-5 March 2006

For full details please visit our website:


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

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.

Scientists unravel pathway in skin cancer development

Scientists at the Institute of Cancer Research have unravelled the role of a gene important in the development of the deadliest form of skin cancer, malignant melanoma.


A study published in the *Journal of Cell Biology* reveals that a damaged version of a gene known as B-RAF blocks an important pathway involved in preventing the growth of cancer cells. By regulating the relationship between the B-RAF protein and the pathway in human cells and animal models, the researchers were able to slow cell growth significantly. The new research findings, supported by Cancer Research UK, could lead to improved treatments for skin cancer in the future. 

www.icr.ac.uk

Languages of the Wider World



SOAS and UCL have just launched Languages of the Wider World, a 'Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning'. The Centre will promote and support excellence in the teaching and learning of the less commonly taught languages, particularly those of the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the less commonly taught European languages. These languages include many of growing civic and strategic importance.

The Centre marks a significant raising of the national and international profile of these languages and will create a focal point from which teaching innovations and curricular enhancements can be disseminated. The establishment of the Centre underlines the higher education sector's commitment to the teaching and learning of all languages. 

www.soas.ac.uk / www.ucl.ac.uk


New book, new programme



A new book by Professor Audrey Osler and Dr Hugh Starkey, *Changing Citizenship: Democracy and Inclusion in Education*, was unveiled recently at the Institute of Education. Published by Open University Press, the book is a set text on the new Citizenship and History Education

postgraduate programmes offered by distance learning through the University of London External Programme. The book sets out a comprehensive agenda for citizenship education.

The book launch was attended by many key figures in citizenship education.

Commentary on the book was provided by Anne Hudson (Head of Central Foundation Girls School, Bow, East London) and Bruce Gill (Inquiry Secretary to the Zahid Mubarek Inquiry, previously of the Home Office). 

www.ioe.ac.uk

Photo: Hugh Starkey, courtesy of the Institute of Education


Global Public Policy Network (GPPN) launched

A global network for graduate-level public policy education and policy dialogue set up to



Illustration: Antonia Steadman

address the most pressing policy challenges of the 21st century was launched in September at Peking University, Beijing, by three leading international public policy graduate institutions: the London School of Economics and Political Science, Sciences Po (Paris) and Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.

The GPPN will eventually expand to include about ten public policy graduate schools in key global cities worldwide, sponsoring collaborative public policy research and student and faculty exchanges, as well as offering dual degrees in graduate professional programmes. The first Global Forum will take place in Paris at Sciences Po on 6-7 March 2006. 

www.lse.ac.uk

Better health and the Euro economy

Improving the health of the people of Europe could also boost the economy of the region, a new report by researchers from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, the WHO, and the Centre for European Policy Studies has revealed.

Based on a study financed by the European Commission, the report assembles a wealth of evidence to demonstrate how good health promotes earnings and labour supply. Of particular relevance to Europe, with its ageing population, it shows how poor health increases the likelihood of early retirement.

Taken together, this evidence provides a powerful argument for European governments to invest in the health of their populations, not only as a desirable objective in its own right, but also because it is an important determinant of economic growth and competitiveness.

www.lshtm.ac.uk



Photo: Getty Images

Feedback

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

Photo: Corbis