



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SINCE 1858

Contacts:

Binda Rai +44 (0)20 7862 8545
Peter Quinn +44 (0)20 7664 5584

Background Information 01

Introduction

The University of London External System is now more than 150 years old. It is also the longest standing and foremost supplier of transnational education in the world.

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

Not only did the University break new ground by admitting any male student who was able to take a degree, but in 1878 it became the first UK university to open its doors to women. Amidst these radical reforms in education access, further new ground was broken in 1858 with the establishment of the External System. This opened up degrees to those who could not come to London to study. The granting of the fourth charter, signed by Queen Victoria, established the University of London as the first to offer degrees to students worldwide, with Mauritius as the first overseas country to host its examinations in 1865.

The University of London External System:

- has 45,000 students worldwide
- offers more than 100 study programmes
- has students in more than 180 countries across the globe
- enables students to continue to earn a living whilst studying. Students are able to study at a flexible pace and take their examinations in their home country, without having to come to London.

- More follows -

Background Information 02

Famous former students and alumni

Our global community of former students and alumni include many exceptional people who have made their mark on the world. They include six Nobel Prize winners:

- **Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins** – Winner of the Nobel Prize in 1929 for the discovery of what are now known as vitamins.
- **Wole Soyinka** – Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986.
- **Professor Ronald Coase** – Winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1991.
- **Derek Walcott** – Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1992, and the foremost West Indian poet and dramatist writing today.
- **Nelson Mandela** – Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.
- **Rolph Payet** – Shared the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) Nobel Peace Prize as an IPCC Lead Author.

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

- **Academics** – Asa Briggs, Kwasi Wiredu, Sir Geoffrey Elton.
- **Engineers** – Sir Barnes Wallis.
- **Politicians** – Dr Luisa Diogo, Gisela Stuart MP.
- **Writers** – H.G. Wells, Chinua Achebe, Malcolm Bradbury.

Many more may be cited in each of these categories. Today, the University of London External System's reputation continues to ensure our graduates are to be found in leading positions across the globe.

- More follows -

Background Information 03

Quality

In 2006, the University of London External System was given a judgement of 'broad confidence' by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education – an independent body responsible for safeguarding the quality and standards of higher education in all UK universities and colleges.

External study programmes, which continue to evolve and change to meet new demand, are led by Programme Directors, all of whom are academics from one of the University of London's constituent Colleges.

All graduates, whether they study on campus or through the External System, are awarded a University of London degree. Equal standards are maintained because academics who teach and assess campus-based students within the University of London's Colleges are responsible for developing and writing the study materials for all its programmes. They also set the exam papers and mark the scripts. Examinations are held in approved centres in over 180 countries worldwide. All participating centres, many run by the British Council, take responsibility for the safe return of papers to London for marking.

- More follows -

Background Information 04

Frequently Asked Questions

How many students study through the University of London External System?

There are 45,000 students in 180 countries across the globe on more than 100 study programmes.

How do students study with the University of London External System if students don't come to London?

Students can choose to study independently, taking full and active responsibility for organising their programme of study at a pace which works for them. Alternatively, many students choose to pay for additional educational support at a local teaching institution where one is available, and benefit from face-to-face academic support and interaction with fellow students.

Who is responsible for creating the study materials and are they as good as those received by students in London?

The study materials are written by the same academics as those who teach at the University of London's constituent Colleges. Study materials are therefore of the same high standards as those received by College-based students studying in London.

How do students sit their examinations and are they carried out in a secure examination environment?

Examination papers are delivered to approved examination centres in over 180 countries worldwide. Once students have completed their examination papers they are immediately returned to London for marking. Assessment is the responsibility of academics at the constituent Colleges of the University.

How long do students have to complete a study programme?

We offer a flexible study period. Generally, for undergraduate programmes students have three to eight years to complete a degree, and one to five years to complete a diploma. For postgraduate programmes, students generally have two to five years to complete an MSc, and one to five years for postgraduate diplomas and certificates.

- More follows -

Background Information 05

Our study programmes

Undergraduate

Accounting
Accounting and Finance
Accounting with Law
Banking
Banking and Finance
Business
Business Administration
Classical Studies
Computing and Information Systems
Creative Computing
Development
Development and Economics
Diploma in the Common Law
Divinity
Economics
Economics and Finance
Economics and Management
English
Finance
French
French and German
Geography and Environment

German
German and Italian
History
Information Systems
Information Systems and
Management
International Relations
Italian
Italian and French
Law
Management
Management with Law
Mathematics and Economics
Philosophy
Politics
Politics and International Relations
Social Sciences
Sociology
Sociology with Law
Spanish and Latin American Studies
Theology

Postgraduate

Agribusiness for Development
Agricultural Economics
Applied Educational Leadership
and Management
Applied Environmental Economics
Banking
Biodiversity Conservation and Management
Citizenship and History Education
Clinical Trials
Economic Principles
Educational and Social Research
Environmental Management
Epidemiology
Finance and Financial Law
Financial Economics
Financial Management
Human Resource Management

Infectious Diseases
Information Security
International Business
International Management
International Management (China)
International Primary Health Care
Law
Livestock Health and Production
Managing Rural Development
Organizational Psychology
Petroleum Geoscience
Policy Studies
Public Financial Management
Public Health
Public Management
Public Policy and Management
Sustainable Development
Veterinary Epidemiology and Public Health

- More follows -

Background Information 06

Facts at a glance

- The University of London was established in 1836 and is one of the oldest, largest and most diverse universities in the United Kingdom.
- The University's founding principle is to provide education for all, irrespective of race, creed or political belief.
- In 1858, the University of London was granted its fourth Charter, which paved the way for the establishment of the University of London External System.
- The University of London External System is a unique global network of 45,000 students in 180 countries, on more than 100 study programmes.
- The External System has been instrumental in the formation of British higher education – all English and Welsh universities founded between 1849 and 1949 offered University of London degrees before obtaining Royal Charters to award their own degrees.
- Between 1946-1970, the External System played a significant role in establishing many Commonwealth universities under a unique scheme of 'special relations'.
- Through the External System higher education was made available to a much wider range of social classes; it pre-empted 20th Century developments in open, flexible and distance learning by more than 100 years.
- Famous former students and alumni of the External System include six Nobel Prize Winners: Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins, Professor Ronald Coase, Wole Soyinka, Derek Walcott, ex-President Nelson Mandela and joint winner Dr Rolph Payet.

For further information contact:

Binda Rai
Head of Global Media and Public Relations
University of London External System
Email: binda.rai@london.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7862 8545 (office)
07920 476483 (mobile)

Peter Quinn
Senior Communications Manager
University of London External System
Email: peter.quinn@london.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)20 7664 5584 (office)