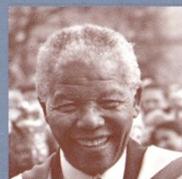
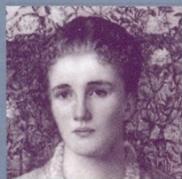
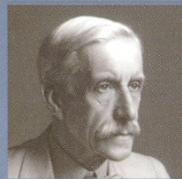
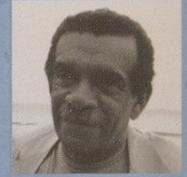
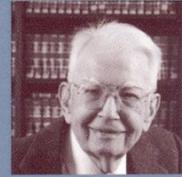




UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
External System

150 YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION



THE PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITY 1858-2008

although it is highly desirable that one should concentrate on the study of one's environment and orientate knowledge towards the needs of the environment, it may take decades for research to produce a body of knowledge suitable to be designed as a University course based on that environment. The orientation of our curriculum to the needs of Nigeria can only be a matter of gradual achievement since we cannot study at the University level knowledge that does not exist. Research must marshal the way for teaching to follow.⁸

The research institutes established by these universities which studied the social and economic problems and cultures of their communities were undoubtedly of benefit to the countries concerned and the establishment of, for example, agriculture as an academic discipline assisted the basic industry of these countries. 'A supply of fresh milk at Ibadan, where cattle had previously been unable to survive, was a typical and vivid demonstration of what could be achieved by scientific research and experiment', Bruce Pattison commented in his 1984 study of the special relations.⁹ On the other hand, in Ghana and Nigeria, where excellent schools of aerial surveying were eventually developed, 'it took some time to convince people in London that British methods of surveying using theodolites and chains were useless in the bush, and that drastic changes of syllabus were necessary'.¹⁰

A meeting in 1955 of some of the principals of the 'special relations' colleges queried whether the university colleges were providing too specialised a form of tertiary education for the communities they served, and whether the more broadly-based system of American 'land grant' universities might be more suited to developing countries.¹¹

In 1964, Professor Eric Ashby (Lord Ashby, Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University) asserted that those carrying out the Asquith Committee's policy had assumed that

a university system appropriate for Europeans brought up in London and Manchester and Hull was also appropriate for Africans brought up in Lagos and Kumasi and Kampala. There is no sign that the Commission considered whether the system to be found in Minneapolis or Manila or Tokyo might be more appropriate.¹²

Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders remarked in reply that a Japanese university would have been a curious model to choose when Britain was at war with Japan, and pointed out that the new universities were planned and built up when the territories to which they belonged were British colonies and seemed likely to remain so for a long time. Independence came to them much

sooner than had been anticipated.¹³ Ashby did acknowledge that 'clearly the pioneers had no choice but to adopt the pattern of an English university. Equally clearly this was the pattern Africans themselves wanted'.

The achievements of the students in the 'special relations' colleges themselves should also not be forgotten. The pass rates in their examinations were similar to those of Internal London students: a remarkable achievement for people who were studying and passing examinations in a foreign language.¹⁴ When independence came, the knowledge and expertise of these 7,000 London graduates certainly helped their countries to maintain services during and after the transfer period and to develop their infrastructures. London degrees provided a passport for postgraduate studies, and students returning with higher degrees could replace expatriates in higher education and help to expand it. There was also, as Sir Terence Ingold of Birkbeck College remarked, an advantage for the London teachers who worked in or visited the 'special relations' universities. 'It has', he said, 'been by no means a one-sided affair. Senior University teachers in London have gained knowledge and experience by the association which have helped them in their own professional work'.¹⁵

New forms of 'special relation'

Ever since the Governor of Mauritius wrote to the University of London in 1864, governments around the world have been asking the University for help in establishing or developing their higher education. Although the officially nominated forms of 'special relations' between London and universities overseas ended with the independence of the nations concerned, the University is still forming other kinds of special relationships with developing institutions of higher education outside the UK.

Double degree in Russia

Since 1997 a unique bachelor's programme in Moscow has combined Russian and British standards of higher economic education and offered students the chance to gain two degrees: a Russian BSc in Economics from the State University, Higher School of Economics (SU-HSE), Moscow, and a UK BSc from the University of London.

The students of the International College of Economics and Finance (ICEF) follow the University of London External programmes in Economics, Banking and Finance, Economics and Finance or Economics and Management, for which the lead College is the London School of Economics', explains the LSE Project Director, Professor Richard Jackman. The ICEF project team at LSE and ICEF share responsibility for course syllabuses, teaching methods and academic appointments, and LSE academics visit ICEF to give lectures and seminars, advise students and give guidance on the delivery of particular courses, as well as to participate in ICEF's

research activities. Teachers from ICEF visit LSE to take LSE Summer School courses, to develop course materials and to conduct research. This continuing LSE input and University of London external assessment of students ensures that the standards of the teaching programme and examinations are comparable to those at the LSE and other top universities in the world.'

ICEF was created in 1997 with financial support from several major Russian commercial banks and financial institutions which has enabled the College to maintain relatively low tuition fees and help gifted students from low-income families. There are currently some 420 ICEF students following a four-year degree programme taught in English and Russian, which includes courses from the University of London curriculum as well as courses which are compulsory to obtain a Russian state degree. At the end of the first year students take SU-HSE exams as well as international tests in economics, calculus and statistics set by the University of Princeton, and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test in English language organised by the British Council. If successful, they are admitted to the three-year University of London programme and officially registered as External London students. So far 82 per cent of ICEF graduates have achieved first or second class London degrees. Most graduates go on to take master's degrees, either in Moscow or abroad, with a significant proportion being admitted to universities in the US and Europe, including several at LSE. Many progress to careers in banking or the financial sector.

Ever since the Governor of Mauritius wrote to the University of London in 1864, governments around the world have been asking the University for help in establishing or developing their higher education and the University is still forming other kinds of special relationships with developing institutions of higher education overseas.



Twins Elena Stoliarova and Andrei Stoliarov celebrate achieving four degrees between them. A unique programme enables students of the International College of Economics and Finance (ICEF) in Moscow to follow University of London External programmes in Economics and related subjects and to gain two degrees: a Russian BSc in Economics from the State University, Higher School of Economics (SU-HSE), Moscow, and a UK BSc from the University of London.



The 2006 ICEF graduates celebrate at the British Embassy in Moscow with the **British Ambassador, Tony Brenton** (third left in front row), **Professor Richard Jackman** (third row from front, second from left), **Dr Oleg Zamkov** (second row, left), and (left to right in foreground) **Simeon Underwood**, Academic Registrar, LSE; **Amos Witztum**, Senior Academic Advisor to the ICEF project; **Professor Yevgeny Yasin**, former Russian Economics Minister and now Research Director, Higher School of Economics; **Sergei Yakovlev**, Director, ICEF, and **Rosie Gosling**, Director of External Studies, LSE.

St Martins, Malta

In November 2006 the University's Vice-Chancellor, Sir Graeme Davies, visited Malta in response to a request by the Prime Minister, the Hon. Dr. Laurence Gonzi, for the University to support St Martins Institute for Information Technology in its aim to become Malta's first private university. Malta is less well-provided with higher education places than other EU countries, and the Maltese Government has ambitious plans to increase the number of higher education places by 10,000 by 2010. It has established a commission to see how higher education can be developed on the island with the help of private education initiatives while maintaining high standards.

St Martins has been teaching London External students in several different subject areas since 2000, and the Institute has been granted 'Permission to Teach' status by London for the Diploma in Computing and Information Systems and the Diploma in Economics, and 'Advanced Specified' status for the BSc in Computing and Information Systems. Its students have achieved very high pass rates and won several prizes, and the Institute is poised to expand its campus and its numbers rapidly in the next few years under the direction of its Principal Charles Theuma. In these circumstances, the Maltese Government is supportive of St Martins' proposal that it should measure its performance against University of London awards, with the view to moving towards offering dual awards, and then, on maturity, for the Institute to offer awards in its own right. A closer association between London and St Martins, which may also include developing the academic standing of St Martins staff, access to London library materials, joint research projects between London and St Martins and sabbaticals in Malta for London staff, is seen as a model for providing the input to enable an institution to grow from a teaching institution to a first class private university. Tertiary education in Malta dates back some four centuries, and the medical school in Malta was authorised as early as 1858 to provide certificates of attendance for London medical degrees. Maltese students have been taking London degrees as External students since at least 1905, when the University of London overseas examinations centre on the Island was one of eight worldwide that was sanctioned to offer exams in subjects requiring practical work.



The University of London delegation to Malta, November 2006, with the Prime Minister of Malta, the Hon Dr Laurence Gonzi (centre), and the Minister of Education, Dr Louis Galea (on his left).



Rosie Gosling (fourth from left, with Russian graduates) is Director of External Study at LSE, and became involved in the External System in the 1980s after returning to education as a mature learner. She sees the revival of the External System in that period as being galvanised by the engagement of the London colleges and by student demand, especially from South-East Asia.

The Diploma in Economics, which arose from these forces, was one of the University's first qualifications to be specifically designed for External students to encourage access on an international scale. 'The Diploma was originally developed by Tom Nossiter, Professor of Government and Dean of Graduate Studies at LSE, and colleagues including Dr Celia Phillips, then Dean of Undergraduates, to fulfil the needs of Irish students who needed a qualification to bridge the gap between the Irish school-leaving certificate and the second year of undergraduate study', she explains. 'News of the Diploma quickly reached higher education leaders in South-East Asia, such as Dr Paul and Mrs Chan of Higher Education Learning Program (HELP) University College in Malaysia, Professor Lee Ngok of Hong Kong University School of Professional and Continuing Education (HKU SPACE) and Professor You Poh Seng, the then Director of the Singapore Institute of Management (SIM), who was an LSE alumnus.

They eagerly sought the opportunity to offer this Diploma, alongside the degrees for London External students that were already being offered at HELP and HKU SPACE. The relationships formed at this stage between LSE academics and these institutions, and the evidence of the level of demand for higher education in these new "tiger economies", provided an impetus for the development of the important suite of LSE-led External courses in Economics, Management, Finance and the Social Sciences (EMFSS), on which some 16,000 students are now registered.'

All these institutions have since developed enormously. Dr Celia Phillips recalls that when she first visited SIM in 1988 it had about 100 London External students, whereas on a recent visit to guide local teachers providing a revision course there she found some 6,000 students pursuing 16 degree and diploma programmes as External London students. 'As long as there are places where people find access to higher education difficult and have a knowledge of English, then there's an important role for the External System', she says. 'In the 1970s when the External System was nearly closed down we couldn't have imagined what would happen in South-East Asia. We always need to be open to new ideas and receptive to new opportunities.