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Summer 2009

Roehampton number one in the UK for Dance and Biological Anthropology research

The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), the national system for evaluating the quality of higher education research, has rated Roehampton University number one in the UK for its research in Dance and Biological Anthropology.

According to the exercise, Dance at Roehampton has the fifth highest concentration of world-class activity of any department in the country in any subject, while its Biological Anthropology department beat Cambridge University. Overall, 80 per cent of the research submitted from anthropologists at Roehampton was deemed internationally excellent or world class. Drama also scored well, achieving top-20 status.

The RAE found that over a third of research at Roehampton was classed as internationally excellent or world class (3* or 4*) – the highest classifications available. When the 2* ranking is included, 78 per cent of research submitted was regarded as being of an internationally recognised standard.

Compared with London's other new universities, Roehampton University also performed strongly, achieving top position in Drama, History, Theology, Spanish and Anthropology; second in Education, English, Sociology, Psychology and Sport; and fifth in Communication, Culture and Media Studies.

Other key results include strong performances at a national level in Education; Communication, Culture and Media Studies; Theology; and Sociology.

As the Vice-Chancellor of Roehampton University, Paul O'Prey, explains: "The results from this year's RAE are very good news indeed. They confirm Roehampton's growing and sustained reputation for excellent quality research, especially when compared with larger and more established institutions.

"Our academics are to be congratulated for their outstanding efforts and high achieving results that will provide an excellent platform on which to build for the future."

As a result of the excellent performance in the RAE, Roehampton's funding for research has increased by 143 per cent. The research grant rises from £1.1m last year to £2.8m this year – one of the best performances of any university in the country.



Photo by Carol Brown



The University has the best student environment in London



Roehampton is number one in London for its environment on and around campus, according to the results of the Times Higher Education's 2009 Student Experience Survey.

The annual survey, carried out for the Times newspaper's educational magazine, asked undergraduate students from around the UK to identify the key factors that contribute to their overall university experience and then rate how positive or negative these experiences were.

The findings revealed that Roehampton University is second in London for its student support and welfare services, accommodation, and good personal relationships between students and staff.

Additionally, the University was rated joint third in London for its Students' Union and small-sized tutorials, and ranked fifth overall in London for delivering a positive university experience.

Marilyn Monroe director teaching at Roehampton

Roy Ward Baker has been inaugurated as Honorary Visiting Professor of Film at Roehampton University, at a public screening of his 1952 film *Don't Bother to Knock*, which stars Marilyn Monroe, Richard Widmark and Ann Bancroft.

At the event Professor Baker shared his memories of over 60 years spent working with many of cinema's most famous actors, actresses, producers and directors, with staff and students.

Born in Hornsey in 1916, Mr Baker began his career in 1934 making tea for crew members at a London film studio. Between 1943 and 1946 he worked in the Army Kinematograph Service directing documentary and training films, before going on to direct 32 movies including *The October Man* (1946), *Inferno* (1953), *A Night to Remember* (1958), *Flame In the Streets* (1961), and *Dr Jekyll and Sister Hyde* (1971).

He has also directed over 100 one-hour television dramas for seminal series such as *The Saint*, *The Avengers*, and *Minder*.

As Dr Paul Sutton, Principal Lecturer in Film and Television Studies at Roehampton University, explains, Mr Baker will hold regular lectures on film for students in the University's Centre for Research in Film and Audiovisual Cultures:



"Roehampton University is honoured to be able to appoint Mr Roy Ward Baker, one of the UK and Hollywood's greatest film directors, as its Honorary Visiting Professor.

"Roehampton students will now have the rare and exclusive opportunity to study with Mr Baker, who offers a wealth of motion picture knowledge from both in front of and behind the camera and a fascinating historical insight into the film industry over the past 50 years."

Professor receives a Guggenheim Fellowship

Zachary Leader, Professor of English Literature at Roehampton, has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. He is one of two biographers to receive this prestigious award.

Since 1925 the Guggenheim Fellows have been awarded by the Foundation in recognition of the outstanding achievement and exceptional promise they have shown as artists, scholars, and scientists.

This year 180 fellowships were awarded from a field of 3,000 applicants. Professor Leader will use funding from this award to work on his biography of Saul Bellow, the Canadian-born American writer who was awarded the Pulitzer and Nobel prizes in the 1970s, and was himself a recipient of two Guggenheim Fellowships.

In receiving this award, Professor Leader joins scores of distinguished predecessors, including WH Auden, Robert Lowell, Czeslaw Milosz and Vladimir Nabokov.

Nutrition students serve up distinctions inside and outside the laboratory

Two Nutrition students have received prizes at the British Dietetic Association Research Symposium for their outstanding research.

Jane Wylie, BSc Nutrition and Health student, was awarded for her submission, “Eating frequency and snacking habits in women with polycystic ovary syndrome”, and Elizabeth Cillie, MSc Clinical Nutrition student, was awarded for her research in “Protein intake, growth and lung function of infants with chronic lung disease”.

Meanwhile outside the laboratory, Nutrition staff and students put their specialist dietary packages and scientific knowledge to the test as part of a collaboration with a restaurant in Chelsea, London. Led by Andrea Zick, BSc Nutrition and Health student, the group added nutritional information to meal descriptions on the restaurant’s new healthy eating menu. While this type of food labelling is common in supermarkets in the UK, Roehampton staff and students are helping lead the way in labelling meals in restaurants.



Bahrain’s Education Minister visits the campus

HE Dr Majid Bin Ali Al Nuaimi, Education Minister for the Kingdom of Bahrain, visited the School of Education to explore future links with the University.

The visit was part of a Bahrainian government initiative to boost teacher training programmes and create partnerships between its educational institutions, including the University of Bahrain, and universities in the UK.

With a range of internationally recognised education programmes, Roehampton University was the only university on the Minister’s schedule during his visit to the capital.



Deputy Vice-Chancellor advises Victoria State Government



Professor Jane Broadbent, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, has presented a process for evaluating the value for money achieved in the mature operational phase of projects concerned with the private provision of public services (PPPS) to the Victorian Auditor General, in Australia.

The work was part of a three-year Australian Research Council Linkage project, which supports collaborative research and development work between higher education institutions and public and private organisations.

Professor Broadbent and her colleague Professor Richard Laughlin were the two UK experts involved in the international research team, which recognised the importance of the 3Es model in assessing PPPS schemes – Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness.

They also found that two audit roles are needed: that of “watchdog”, to ensure information is provided to parliament and the public to establish accountability; and that of “sheepdog”, to make certain private projects are shepherded towards improved performance.

As governments around the world increasingly use the private sector to deliver public services, this framework may help meet the growing need for a method to evaluate this work.

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International recruitment update

Roehampton signs agreement with Bilgi University Istanbul



Roehampton and Bilgi Universities in Turkey have signed an articulation agreement that will allow Bilgi students to progress into the second year of Roehampton's International Business undergraduate degree.

Commenting on the new relationship, Daljit Kang, Assistant Dean of Business and Social Sciences at Roehampton, said: "Bilgi is a tremendously exciting and vibrant institution. The agreement is the start of forging greater links – building upon curriculum and research synergies that the two universities share."

The alliance was identified in partnership with the International Centre's in-country representative, Edcon. Martin Hookham, International Development Manager at Roehampton University, added: "Turkey is a fantastically dynamic country and it is through links with institutions such as Bilgi that Roehampton will further its international reputation."

Study Abroad students explore the UK

Study Abroad students at Roehampton enjoy a number of visits off campus and this term they explored Leeds Castle in Kent, Warwick Castle and Stratford-upon-Avon (the birthplace of William Shakespeare). Students from the University of Hawaii at Manoa enjoyed a bespoke London orientation that included taking afternoon tea at Harrods, spotting celebrities such as Jessica Simpson and then going to a West End show.

Many of the trips are accompanied by a member of staff from Roehampton's International Centre. In most cases Study Abroad students attend Roehampton for one term only and are actively encouraged to experience as many of the sights of London and the UK as possible during their time at the University.

International exchange programmes

In December 2008 the promotion of Roehampton University's exchange programmes culminated in an Interactive Information Session attended by Roehampton first-year students interested in studying abroad during 2009/10. A panel of students who went on exchanges in the previous year shared their experiences and a range of information on partner universities was available for students to browse. Roehampton has partnerships with 10 universities in Australia, Latin America and the US and 50 universities in Europe, giving undergraduate students the opportunity to spend a term of their degree abroad.



Roehampton's China Representative Office



The University's recently appointed China Representative Office in Beijing has successfully developed a Chinese language website for the University and is currently producing a suite of Chinese language recruitment materials to support the customer relationship management of student enquiries within China.

The new office aims to improve engagement with Chinese universities at both undergraduate and postgraduate level and establish progression relationships with an increasing number of foundation and pre-masters programmes delivered by feeder institutions within China.

Roehampton attends first Cambodian UK Education Fair

Colin Glass, Roehampton University's Industry Fellow, organised the very first UK Education Fair in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in February through his organisation, Springboard4Asia.

The fair was launched by Andrew Mace, Her Majesty's Ambassador and Im Sethy, Cambodian Minister of Education and Youth. At the event there was a great interest in postgraduate programmes. Discussions focused on the possibility of creating Cambodian government sponsorships to provide research students the opportunity to study at Roehampton University.

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University gets Fairtrade status

Roehampton is the latest university in the UK to receive Fairtrade status from the Fairtrade Foundation in recognition of its commitment to social justice and Fairtrade.

Fairtrade is a strategy for poverty alleviation and sustainable development. It works to create opportunities for economically disadvantaged producers, support transparency and accountability in trade, promote Fairtrade products and fair prices, guarantee gender equity, ensure fair working conditions, end child labour and protect the environment.

Fairtrade products with the internationally recognised Fairtrade symbol can now be purchased in all catering outlets across the University and the Roehampton Students' Union.

First animated Money Doctors in the UK

The University's Money Doctors service will be the first of its type in the UK to offer financial and practical advice and support to students through animated webcasts.

Funded by the WestFocus consortium, the project is a fresh new approach to the issues of student engagement and innovative learning outside of the classroom.

Featuring animated webcasts, the new project will focus on the everyday lives and experiences of students and weave in information and advice on money management. Animating a yearly calendar of events and student experiences has never been attempted before in the UK. In developing the programme the Money Doctors and TV Roehampton will be holding student focus groups and drawing on the skills of students, such as scriptwriting and acting. It is expected that the new webcasts will be completed in October 2009.

The world's first academic expert in video game translation and localisation



Miguel Á Bernal-Merino, Lecturer in Media Translation at Roehampton University, recently attended the international Game Developers Conference (GDC) in San Francisco, where he consolidated his position as the world's first academic expert in the field of video game translation and localisation.

In order to successfully localise games, Miguel, who won the 2006 Localisation Research Centre's Best Scholar Award, argues that in addition to

language, culture, stylistics, graphics, and music, even technical and legal factors must be considered.

One example of a successful localisation project discussed at the Conference was the FIFA game in Poland, which saw sales increase by 500 per cent.

Miguel explains that game localisation is a complex process that requires careful planning and adequate expertise: "Localisation can preserve or strip the soul of a game. It is easy to mistake similar words, objects, and habits with direct equivalents in other cultures. Think, for example, of coffee: if you order 'a cup of coffee' in the US it is different from what you get in Italy, Spain, or Japan – not only the beverage itself, but the rituals around it, and its impact on language and culture."

"In order to truly appeal to and capture a particular audience, you cannot simply code a few translated phrases from a glossary. A more robust approach is needed to enthuse players from other cultures with the same energy the game delivers to the original culture, and give them the right information, in the right style so that they can beat the game feeling like the hero the game advertises."

With today's gaming industry generating higher revenues than the film or the TV industry, and the growing demand from both new and maturing markets, there is a need for a variety of localisation professionals in order to guarantee players' satisfaction in every territory. The roles include translators, managers, engineers, coordinators, and testers – Roehampton University is leading in the formation of these professionals.

Spanish graduates arrive at Roehampton

Nine Spanish university graduates have arrived at Roehampton as part of the Leonardo da Vinci European Programme of Mobility, funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation.

All high-achieving winners of grants awarded through the Argo and Faro Global programmes, the nine graduates will study, teach and live at Roehampton University, and explore the local community.

Their fields of study and qualifications are multidisciplinary and reflect some of Roehampton's internationally recognised areas of strength, including modern languages, audiovisual communication, anthropology, film studies, education and translation.

Roehampton is one of the key universities involved in this Spanish-European initiative, which is designed to enable practical professional activities abroad and encourage cross-cultural information exchanges, with many of the graduates set to work closely with Roehampton staff and students.

Despite the changes in language, culture and weather they encountered, the graduates were full of praise when talking about their initial experience at Roehampton University. As Yolanda Macías, one of the first Spanish academics to arrive says:

"This is a superb opportunity for contributing to research and teaching activities, and for learning from first-class lecturers. Everyone is so nice and so well prepared; the campus is beautiful and very lively."

Isabel Santaolalla, Professor of Spanish and Film Studies at Roehampton, explains that the programme is mutually beneficial: "The arrival of the group has been fantastic. It's lovely working with them and feeling the incredible amount of energy and enthusiasm they transmit."

"They can offer so much from their different work and personal backgrounds that I am convinced this will be an extremely rewarding experience for all concerned."

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