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Double success for Loughborough in national education awards

Loughborough University has won two prestigious 2007 Times Higher Awards – for the Best Student Experience, and Outstanding Support for Overseas Students.

It is the second successive year that the University has picked up the hotly contested Best Student Experience title. The awards presented to Loughborough were the only two to be voted for by students.

Announced in November at a ceremony held at the Grosvenor House Hotel in London, the awards, organised by The Times Higher Education Supplement newspaper, aim to raise awareness of and reward the huge contribution British universities make to the economic and cultural health of the country.

Commenting on Loughborough's success, Vice Chancellor Professor Shirley Pearce said: "These awards are testimony to the hard work and enthusiasm of all our staff at Loughborough and the excellent working relationship we enjoy with the Students' Union."

The Best Student Experience award recognises universities' outstanding contributions to the learning experience. Loughborough was rated highly by its students for the community atmosphere, extracurricular activities and societies, and the good environment on campus and around the University.

Loughborough Students' Union President David Gerty said: "It is an honour and privilege to have received such prestigious awards. They are particularly special because they were voted for by students, and it is a reflection of the well-rounded academic and social experience enjoyed by all of us at Loughborough."

The Outstanding Support for Overseas Students award is presented to the university that helps international students to gain the maximum benefit from their study. International students were asked, via an independent survey, to rate various aspects of their university experience. The careers service, students' union and visa advice were among the services that international students rated highly at Loughborough.

Tony Westaway, Director of the University's International Office, commented: "It is really fantastic that Loughborough's international students clearly believe that the support offered by staff and the Union is the best in the UK. This will continue to enhance Loughborough University's growing worldwide reputation."

The awards come just a couple of months after the results of the 2007 National Student Survey, in which Loughborough was ranked fourth in the UK for student satisfaction, providing further confirmation of the high quality learning experience the University provides for its students.

Pictured at the awards ceremony are (from the left) Loughborough Students' Union President Dave Gerty, Vice Chancellor Professor Shirley Pearce and Paul Ramsden from the Higher Education Academy.



Take Over Day

Loughborough's students should recycle more, and on-campus transport needs to be improved, according to local school pupils who visited the University as part of the national 11 Million Take Over Day initiative.

Held in November, 11 Million Take Over Day was an opportunity for England's children and young people to take over the running of some of the country's key organisations and services. It was also a chance for the country to demonstrate its commitment to listening to and recognising the contributions of children and young people.

Having spent the morning assessing various aspects of the University, the students met up with the Vice Chancellor to feedback their conclusions. One group, from Burleigh Community College, had looked around three halls of residence. They considered two to be energy inefficient, and suggested a recycling rota or inter-hall competition could help provide the incentive for the students to recycle more.

A group of sixth formers from Harry Carlton School, East Leake, spent the morning in the University's Library. They found the study areas to be well-used spaces, with lots of information provided and user-friendly opening hours. However they thought the library itself was in need of a make-over, with better lightning and more attractive decoration on their list of suggested improvements.

A second group of Burleigh Community College students assessed the campus environment. They were impressed by the two buildings they visited – the Centre for Collaborative Construction Research and the ECB National Cricket Centre – and felt the University campus was generally good, although it should have more green space. They also recognised that on-campus transport was an issue, with too many cars around, and suggested that a better bus service could help to address the problem.

Having heard the students' comments, the Vice Chancellor, Professor Shirley Pearce, said: "The students were able to very quickly home in on the challenges facing the University and came up with some incredibly helpful and interesting suggestions."

Celebrations continue at imago

Celebrations at imago are continuing after the venue brand was awarded top place in the 2007 Venuemasters Mystery Buyer survey.

imago beat off stiff competition from 85 other venues in the UK to secure the position, and then was awarded a Venuemasters award for Best Website.

The news comes just weeks after imago received two bronze awards at the MIMA (Meeting Industry Marketing Awards).

Emma Boynton, head of sales for imago, said: "We are delighted at this news. For the last two years we have been awarded third place in the survey ratings, so we are thrilled to have finally reached the number one spot."

The Venuemasters Mystery Buyer Survey is now in its third year and aims to provide a benchmark of service and response levels for members to measure their performance against others.

Researchers from an appointed agency telephoned 85 venues in the UK, with details of 'an event' their company was planning to hold later in the year. The researcher then recorded the venue's response to the enquiry against a checklist of actions a buyer would expect to encounter. The categories were split into four sections: initial response; how much information is gathered from the potential buyers; how staff provided information and quotes to the potential buyer; and the follow up.

imago scored a total of 833 out of a total 1000 points, to put it in the top position. The average overall score was just 40%. imago scored particularly well in the initial response section, where venues were judged on how quickly the call was answered and how the phone was answered, scoring 91%. The average score for other venues was 70%.

imago also scored exceptionally well in the follow up section, scoring a maximum 100%. The average in this section was just 40%. This section was judged on how quickly the enquiry was followed up after the initial response.

To top this news off imago was awarded a Venuemasters award for Best Website. "This is a fantastic achievement," Emma said. "The team at imago have worked hard with Mooloop, a Leicester based web design agency, to develop the website so it is clear and easy to navigate."

For more information about imago please telephone the sales team on 0845 036 4624 or access www.welcometoimago.com

Employer Mentoring

The University's Careers Centre has just launched its first full Employer Mentoring programme, building on a pilot study undertaken in 2007.

The scheme offers Black and Minority Ethnic students the opportunity to be mentored by a professional working in a supervisory or managerial role. Employers are drawn from a variety of backgrounds including banking and finance, marketing, engineering and local government and are generally identified through their close links with the University, either as a recruiter or as a graduate.

Under the scheme 30 students have been provided with mentors from 22 employers. The mentor/student pairings were revealed at a special 'meet and greet' event held in November, when Careers Advisor Susan Reed presented the students with an envelope containing the name of their mentor.

The mentoring experience offers students a unique opportunity to engage with employers and gain an insight into the workplace and the employability skills they need to impress recruiters. Their self-esteem and confidence is often increased through the one-to-one guidance and advice given by their mentor.

The funding for this three-year project has been provided by the Higher Education Funding Council for England and it is hoped the scheme, which can equally contribute to the mentor's self-development, can be extended to benefit more students.

For further information about the Employer Mentoring Scheme please contact Susan Reed by emailing s.j.reed@lboro.ac.uk

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans History Month

A series of events are being held at the campus throughout February to mark Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans History Month 2008.

The first is taking place on Wednesday 6 February when Leicestershire Constabulary will be giving two seminars on homophobic/transphobic hate crimes at 1pm and 6pm.

Other events include the screening of a documentary entitled 'Property of the State: Gay Men in the Apartheid Military', and an evening of eye opening poetry by the gay Socialist transvestite poet Chloe Poems.

Details of all the events taking place can be obtained from Sheralyn Bland, Personnel and Equality Assistant, by emailing S.Bland@lboro.ac.uk or calling 01509 222177. Staff, students and members of the public are welcome to attend.

National recognition for WebPA

The Engineering Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (engCETL) has been awarded £200,000 to carry out pedagogic research and make continued enhancements to WebPA, the online peer moderated marking system.

The project is being funded by the JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) and builds on existing academic and technical expertise in peer moderated marking and learning technology development at the University.

WebPA was first created in 1998 and facilitates self and peer assessment of group work. It has undergone significant development based on collaborative efforts of academics and software developers at Loughborough and is now used in 15 departments.

WebPA is unique in that it is specifically for the assessment of contribution of effort within group work, making it highly sought after by other institutions. The software is currently being piloted and evaluated at a number of universities.

Staff expertise and experience in peer moderated marking was recognised internally recently when an academic practise award was given to Dr Peter Wilmot from the Wolfson School and Dr Keith Pond from the Business School for their joint work in this area. They have contributed significantly to WebPA in collaboration with the developer, Paul Newman, and have given it pedagogic credibility within the academic community.

The software is continuing to embed at Loughborough and with the help of the project funding, two new posts of research associate and e-learning systems developer have been created to assist the research, development and use of WebPA in the curriculum. This continued financial support has also enabled enhancements to be made to the system, including textual feedback from students, peer only assessment and a demonstrator system.

Information about the WebPA system can be found at <http://webpa.lboro.ac.uk> or by emailing s.p.loddington@lboro.ac.uk

Event celebrates five years of successful partnership

Representatives from Loughborough University, BAE Systems and the East Midlands Development Agency (emda) recently gathered at the campus to celebrate five years of successful partnership.

The organisations joined forces in 2002 to establish the Systems Engineering Innovation Centre (SEIC) at the University's Holywell Park. The SEIC was created to develop jointly systems engineering, which can add enormous value to complex organisations and in doing so lift the performance of East Midlands businesses and help them to become more competitive.

Peter Winter, the University's Pro Vice Chancellor for Enterprise said: "The collaboration between BAE Systems, emda and Loughborough University is an outstanding example of what can be achieved by working closely in partnership. The SEIC confirms Loughborough University's position as the world leader for research and teaching of Systems Engineering. The last five years have seen our prowess in this area go from strength to strength, building even more international collaborations to further increase the prestige of the University and the East Midlands."

Mark Reason, Commercial Director Shared Services of BAE Systems, added: "The need to work in a collaborative environment that fosters knowledge sharing and transfer is a critical element for BAE Systems in developing new technologies and capabilities. The SEIC is a prime example of such an environment."

Mike Carr, Executive Director of Business Services at emda said: "emda is delighted to continue to work alongside BAE Systems and Loughborough University to support the SEIC. It is a nationally renowned centre of excellence for Systems Engineering, which provides businesses with a focal point from which they can access information, training, research funding and a range of other valuable services.

"emda is committed to encouraging and supporting innovation in the region and the SEIC is a tremendous resource that companies in the East Midlands can utilise in order to generate new ideas and products that will provide them with a competitive advantage."

Pictured from the left is Deputy Vice Chancellor, Professor Neil Halliwell, and Vice Chancellor, Professor Shirley Pearce, Group HR Director for BAE systems, Alastair Imrie and Executive Director of Business Services at emda, Michael Carr.



National teaching award

A Loughborough academic has won a prestigious national teaching award.

Dr Zoltan Nagy from the University's Department of Chemical Engineering has been presented with an ExxonMobil Excellence in Teaching Award. The awards have been established in association with the Royal Academy of Engineering to identify and reward centres of Excellence in Engineering Teaching in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

To apply for an award candidates need to have shown a commitment to teaching, professional activities, establishing industrial-academic links and promoting engineering as a rewarding and creative career. Each award winner's university department receives £10,000.

Speaking about the award, Dr Nagy said: "The award motivates me even further to combine high quality research with devoted education. I strongly believe that in our role as lecturers we all possess a real power, which can allow us to have a significant positive impact on our society."

Dr Keith Guy FGCI FREng added: "The ExxonMobil Excellence in Teaching Awards highlight the importance that must be placed on developing the engineering education curriculum to meet the needs of industry in the 21st century and to create the enabling pedagogy."

Professor Richard Wakeman, Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering, said: "We are incredibly proud of Dr Nagy's achievement – his award will benefit many students in the Department."

Loughborough University Development Trust Prizes

In 2007 funding by the Loughborough University Development Trust made it possible for the University to award 25 undergraduate prizes and two postgraduate prizes in recognition of exceptional achievements and efforts.

The Trust now funds over 30 undergraduate prizes within departments ranging in value from £50 to £100 and two postgraduate prizes, each

The Vice Chancellor (left) presents Bee Shee Lim with her prize.



of £400. In December, Bee Shee Lim from IPTME was one of two postgraduate students to receive a Loughborough University Graduate School Prize funded by the Trust. The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Shirley Pearce, presented the student with a cheque for £400 and a prize certificate.

Speaking on behalf of the Prize's Committee, its Chair, Dr Keith Gregory, said: "The Trust's funding of prizes for both undergraduate and postgraduate prizes is greatly appreciated. It allows the University to recognise the efforts of undergraduate students in all three faculties who had achieved significant successes or made outstanding contributions despite personal difficulties. The Trust's contribution also allows the Graduate School to recognise the outstanding all-round achievements of exceptional taught postgraduate students."

The Loughborough University Development Trust exists to support the University in giving students an outstanding quality of educational experience. It raises funds from former students and other friends of the University.

imago Services wins Food for the Brain accreditation

Loughborough has become the first university in England to achieve Food for the Brain accreditation in recognition of the healthy food it offers students and staff.

The scheme is ran by the Food for the Brain Foundation, a non-profit educational charity created by a group of nutritionists, doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, teachers and scientists to promote the link between nutrition and mental health. It seeks to reward catering that optimises people's mental performance and wellbeing.

To achieve accreditation imago Services updated its menu to include more 'brain' foods, such as seeds, oily fish and green vegetables, and also embarked on a campaign to raise awareness of healthy eating among its students.

imago's Executive Chef, Mark Price said: "The key element of planning a balanced menu is not just using healthy ingredients, but also thinking how they are incorporated. So for example with wholemeal pasta, there's a strong possibility if it was offered alongside white no one would choose wholemeal. But you can combine it to offer 50/50. Same with brown rice, so instead of just offering brown rice it's 50/50, resulting in increasing people's fibre intake."

imago worked with the Russell Partnership to update its menu. Fiona McDonald-Joyce of the Russell Partnership said: "It was an absolute pleasure to return to the University and see first hand the improvements that Mark Price and Halls Food Service Manager Mark Gane have made to the standard of catering.

"Their enthusiasm for the Food for the Brain initiative is self evident and they have made considerable improvements to the nutritional quality of the food, chiefly by emphasising fresh cooking using whole, unrefined foods, improving the overall menu balance and taking impressive steps to ensure both staff and students are aware of healthy choices and the value of nutrition."

Visit www.foodforthebrain.org for more information.

Honorary degrees 2007

At the Loughborough winter graduation ceremonies in December honorary degrees were conferred upon three distinguished people in recognition of the outstanding contributions they have made to industry, education, sport and society.

Great Britain Paralympic wheelchair tennis player Jayant Mistry was presented with the award of Honorary Doctor of the University (Hon DUniv), in recognition of his outstanding contribution to wheelchair tennis, Paralympic sport and as an inspiration to the local Loughborough community.

Master Craftsman Rob Armstrong received the award of Honorary Doctor of Technology (Hon DTech), for his outstanding contribution to guitar design and craftsmanship.

Professor Doug Taylor - Visiting Professor in



Great Britain Paralympic wheelchair tennis player Jayant Mistry.

Thermofluids - received the award of Honorary Doctor of Technology (Hon DTech), in recognition of his outstanding achievements as an engineer and as a leader of industry.

At the congregations two members of the University were also awarded the Loughborough University Medal. Dr Roy Frost,

Professor Doug Taylor - Visiting Professor in Thermofluids



Master Craftsman Rob Armstrong

Senior Planning Officer, and Cllr Peter Lewis, former lecturer in the Department of English and Drama, were both presented with their medals. The Loughborough University Medal was developed to mark service for and on behalf of the University, and allows the unrecognised contributions made to University life to be acknowledged.

Combating corruption in the Commonwealth

Representatives from 11 Commonwealth countries recently attended a training course at the University on combating corruption in infrastructure delivery.

The five-day intensive course was organised by the Water, Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC), in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat.

It covered topics relating to government work with the private sector, public integrity reform, whistleblowing, and anti-corruption programme design. The participants were drawn from business, government, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Commonwealth countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. They agreed to work together to share information and identify tools that would help end the misuse of power for private gain - the very definition of corruption.

"This first step represents an enormous change in the way that projects in the infrastructure sector will be handled," said Professor Sohail Khan, the chief organiser of the event and a Research Director at WEDC.

Helping households reduce energy use

The University is playing a key role in a new £0.57 million project aimed at significantly reducing the amount of energy consumed by UK households.

The indeedNET (Integration and Demonstration of Energy Efficient Dwelling Networks) project will focus on the development of a high tech wireless home energy management system. This will enable households to monitor and control their energy use when they are at the property and when they are away from home.

The system will take into account weather conditions, such as temperature, rain and light levels outside, to provide the optimum home environment using the least amount of energy. This will include reducing or switching off the central heating system, opening or closing windows and controlling lighting.

As well as being able to manage their home environment from within the property, the system will also allow users to securely and safely control their home remotely from anywhere in the world using a mobile device such as a mobile phone or laptop. Shuang-Hua Yang, Professor of Networks and Control in the Department of Computer Science, said: "This project will aim to reduce domestic energy use for every family home in the UK by 40%. Not only will this be better for the environment, it will also help homeowners to significantly reduce their energy bills."

The system will be demonstrated at a purpose-built test house based at the University campus.

IndeedNET is being funded by the Department for Trade and Industry. The project leader is Advantica Limited and other project partners include East Midlands Housing Association and SURE Technology. For further information please visit the indeedNET website at <http://www.indeednet.org>

What happened in 2007...

As 2008 gets underway news@lboro takes a look back at the University highlights for 2007:

March

- The University announces that, in partnership with the East Midlands Development Agency (emda), it is to create a £15 million state-of-the-art Sports Technology Institute on campus. The Institute will develop cutting-edge technology to assist the country's elite athletes in their preparation for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and enhance research, innovation and enterprise in the sport and leisure sector.

May

- In the Guardian University Guide, Loughborough rises to its highest ever rating of 9th. Eight subject areas are ranked in the top ten.

June

- Loughborough Students again claim the British Universities Sports Association (BUSA) championship, taking the men's title for the 27th consecutive year and the women's for the 29th.
- Official statistics from UCAS show that applications to study full-time undergraduate courses at Loughborough in 2007-08 have risen by 11.2%, more than double the national average.

July

- In The Good University Guide, the UK's newest league table, Loughborough is ranked 11th, placing it firmly among the UK's academic elite. Eleven subject areas are rated in the top ten.
- Loughborough Rag breaks the national student fundraising record by raising £693,397 net profit in 2006-07 for local and national charities.
- At the summer graduation ceremonies, honorary degrees are awarded to:
 - The Right Honourable Mr Anthony Benn, Socialist MP 1950-2001
 - Quentin Blake, Artist and illustrator
 - Professor Paul Ching-Wu Chu, President of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
 - Peter Davenport, Former President of the Alumni Association
 - Professor Ken Friedman, Professor of Leadership and Strategic Design, Norwegian School of Management; and Associate Professor, Denmark's Design School
 - Dame Kelly Holmes, School Sports Champion and Olympic Gold Medal Winning Athlete
 - Digby, Lord Jones of Birmingham, Former Director-General, Confederation of British Industries and now UK Skills Envoy
 - Sir Keith Mills, Chairman of Loyalty Management Group Ltd; Deputy Chairman of The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Limited; Team Principal of the Origin America's Cup Team and Director of Tottenham Hotspur Plc; Former International President and CEO of the London 2012 Olympic Games bid
 - Trevor Phillips, Chair of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights
 - Professor Surendra Prasad, Director of the Indian Institute of Technology
 - Chris Rawlinson, Loughborough graduate and international sports person
 - Sue Townsend, Author
 - Mike Turner, Chief Executive, BAE Systems
 - Professor Dr Zhan Tao, President of Shandong University

August

- The Times Good University Guide places Loughborough 12th – the sixth consecutive year it has appeared in the top fifteen.

September

- Students rate Loughborough fourth in the National Student Survey, providing a ringing endorsement of the high quality learning experience the University provides for its students. Five subjects were ranked top in the UK, with 23 out of 29 – almost 80% – rating in the top ten for overall satisfaction.
- Loughborough secures 13th position in the Sunday Times University Guide, cementing its status as one of the country's pre-eminent universities. It is ranked second for teaching quality and first for sport.
- Loughborough signs a formal agreement to validate existing undergraduate degrees at the British University of Egypt (BUE) – a ground-breaking initiative which provides a British style education and will produce graduates who are attractive to major Egyptian, UK and international employers.
- The Government announces that the Midlands Consortium, comprising the universities of Loughborough, Birmingham and Nottingham, has been selected to host the new £1 billion Energy Technologies Institute, which is being developed to help the UK reduce its carbon footprint. The headquarters will be based at Loughborough University.

October

- The British Olympic Association (BOA) announces that Loughborough's Vice Chancellor, Professor Shirley Pearce, is to sit on its Advisory Board. Drawn from leading British business expertise and opinion formers, Board members will offer their advice and experience to the BOA, particularly as it pursues its objective to select, lead and manage Britain's Olympic team to 4th place in the London 2012 Olympic Games.

November

- Loughborough is awarded its sixth Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education – an achievement equalled only by the University of Oxford. The prestigious prizes are awarded biennially in recognition of outstanding educational achievement in areas of service and benefit to the nation. The 2007 Prize was awarded to Loughborough in recognition of its vehicle, road and driver safety research.
- Loughborough wins two Times Higher Awards 2007 – for the Best Student Experience, and Outstanding Support for Overseas Students. It is the second successive year that the University has picked up the hotly contested Best Student Experience title. The awards presented to Loughborough are the only two to be voted for by students.

December

- At the winter graduation ceremonies, honorary degrees are awarded to:
 - Rob Armstrong, Master craftsman
 - Jayant Mistry, Great Britain Paralympic wheelchair tennis player
 - Professor Doug Taylor, Loughborough Visiting Professor in Thermofluids

Research grants and contracts awarded in November and December 2007

Aeronautical and Automotive Engineering

Handling Bleed Valve Research Project
Prof J J McGuirk, Dr A Spencer and Dr J F Carrotte
£253,000 Rolls-Royce plc

Transient tyre modelling for the simulation of drive-train dynamic response under low-to-zero speed traction manoeuvres - CASE Studentship for New Academics with Jaguar Land Rover
Dr G Mavros
£85,896 Jaguar Land Rover/EPSC

Senior Research Fellowship – Extension
Dr G Wigley
£75,000 Lotus Engineering

Interaction between the Acoustic Energy and Velocity Fields Associated with Circular Holes
Dr J F Carrotte and Dr A Spencer
£46,700 Rolls-Royce plc

HYSTOR – Controlling a High Density Energy Storage System for Hybrid Vehicles
Prof R Stobart
£21,457 EPSRC via Sussex University

LCDF Injector Investigation
Dr J Carrotte
£81,700 Rolls-Royce, Canada

Support Services Solutions: Strategy and Transition
Prof M Henshaw
£113,524 EPSRC via The University of Cambridge

Rectangular Jet Plume and Coanda Effect Studies – Phase 1
Prof J J McGuirk
£96,500 Rolls-Royce plc

Business School

The Role of Venture Capital in the Growth of Chinese High-Tech New Ventures
Dr H Zou
£7,100 The British Academy

Exploring Organisational Innovation and Practices of Agile Software Development
Dr A Elbanna
£7,156 The British Academy

Chemical Engineering

Investigation of kinetics of spreading over powders
Prof V Starov
£14,000 GlaxoSmithKline

4th International Conference in Ion Exchange, Japan (Travel Grant)
Dr B Saha
£2,150 The Royal Society

Chemistry

A short and flexible total synthesis of Lactacystin and derivatives
Prof P Warwick
£20,766 Charnwood Molecular Ltd and EPSRC through CASE Studentship

Creating a Colourful Life – Award increase
Dr S Dann
£21,340 EPSRC via University of Southampton

A short and flexible total synthesis of Lactacystin and derivatives
Prof P Warwick
£62,298 Charnwood Molecular Ltd and EPSRC through CASE Studentship

Solubility of Thorium in the presence of Cellulose degradation products
Prof P Warwick
£29,780 Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

The use of upland drinking water sludge in permeable reactive barriers
Prof P Warwick
£30,000 Severn Trent Water Ltd

Civil and Building Engineering

Personal Carbon Trading: Using Stated Preference to Explore Behavioural Response
Prof A Bristow
£25,326 RSA Carbon Ltd

Electronic and Electrical Engineering

Understanding the model of action of cold plasma sterilisation on foodborne pathogens (Industrial Case Studentship)
Prof M Kong and Dr G Shama
£84,020 BBSRC and Campden & Chorleywood Food Research Association

Multi-Modal Blind Source Separation Algorithms
Prof J Chambers
£115,623 EPSRC

Large scale industrial photovoltaic system monitoring, evaluation and optimisation
Dr R Gottschalg
£381,204 Perpetual Energy Ltd

ESRI

Field Operational Tests Support Action (FESTA)
Prof P D Thomas
£53,672 European Commission

Geography

Cities and Regions in Focus: Exploring the Role of City Development Companies in English Regions
Dr J Harrison
£6,563 The British Academy

Human Sciences

Emotion and Crime: a mixed methods study
Dr J Cromby
£74,646 ESRC

The Physiological Basis of Clothing Comfort and Performance – 3 Research Scholarships
Prof G Havenith
£45,000 Decathlon

Information Science

Economic Implications of Alternative Publishing Models
Prof C Oppenheim, Prof A Morris, Dr A Gourlay and Prof J Poyago-Theotoky
£25,000 Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC)

IPTE

Processing Optimisation of Oxide Dispersion Strengthened Steels for Fusion Applications
Prof R Faulkner
£10,768 UKAEA

Min Nah Tong CASE Studentship
Prof J Binner
£62,298 CTA

Min Nah Tong CASE Studentship
Prof J Binner
£30,000 Rolls-Royce Fuel Cell Systems Ltd

Mathematical Sciences

Leverhulme Visiting Professorship
Prof R Grimshaw
£67,500 The Leverhulme Trust

Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering

Supporting Highly Adaptive Network Enterprise Collaboration through Semantically Enabled Knowledge Services (Synergy)
Dr J A Harding and Dr R I M Young
£453,573 European Commission

Researcher Exchange Programme
Dr A Mitrofanov
£4,017 British Council

School of Sport and Exercise Sciences

Physiological Support for Wheelchair Tennis
Dr V L Tolfrey
£41,878 The British Tennis Foundation

Physical Activity in Pre-School Children
Dr M E Nevill
£6,150 Youth Sport Trust

Ergonomics of Wheelchair Configuration for Optimum Sports Performance
Dr V L Tolfrey
£89,217 UK Sports Council and British Paralympic Performance Services Ltd

Evaluation of the Physical Activity Care Pathway London Feasibility Pilot
Dr F C L Bull, Dr K Buxton and Dr K Milton
£93,636 Department of Health

Social Sciences

Development of definitions of LA services and guidance for their new Children in Need Census
Prof H Ward
£69,990 DfES

WEDC

Pre-African Water Information Service
Dr F O Odhiambo
£115,692 The Senegal River Development Organisation



Pic caption: The Secret Valentine project team (left to right) Eddie Norman, Rob Armstrong, Owain Pedgley and Gordon Giltrap.

Cool Acoustics unveils Secret Valentine polymer guitar collaboration

Cool Acoustics, the Loughborough University venture developing foamed polymer technology for acoustic guitars, recently unveiled its Secret Valentine project.

This yearlong collaboration with renowned UK guitarist Gordon Giltrap and master guitar-maker Rob Armstrong has resulted in a specially commissioned studio album recorded on a stunning new polymer acoustic guitar.

The new Rob Armstrong Secret Valentine guitar is a handmade hybrid acoustic guitar, featuring a wooden body and neck but with a Cool Acoustics soundboard. The soundboard is the flat front panel that shapes the majority of a guitar's sound and is traditionally made of spruce or cedar. But these materials have two major quality concerns – they are vulnerable to tonal and structural changes caused by fluctuations in temperature and humidity, and as no two pieces of wood are the same there can be a variation in the tonal quality of guitars that are mass-produced to a standard construction.

Cool Acoustics soundboards are manufactured from foamed polycarbonate, a manmade material that avoids the shortcomings of softwood and provides outstanding tonal quality.

Professional guitarist Gordon Giltrap jumped at the chance to be involved in the new project, having been won over from his first audition of Cool Acoustics instruments in 1999. The Secret Valentine guitar has been designed and developed to Gordon's exacting specifications, and takes its name from one of his favourite personal compositions. Gordon was so impressed by the guitar that he has used only this instrument to record his first solo studio album for 16 years. The resulting album, also entitled Secret Valentine, is a captivating new recording of Gordon's most romantic and melodic pieces. The album also includes a video interview with Gordon and the creators of the guitar. Copies can be ordered through Voiceprint at <http://www.voiceprint.co.uk>

To further celebrate the unveiling of this project, Cool Acoustics plans to manufacture an exclusive limited edition batch of Secret Valentine guitars that will appeal especially to guitar enthusiasts. The negotiations for the manufacture are now underway and the resulting instruments will be made to the exemplary standards of the handcrafted guitar used by Gordon.

Tony the Tiger says swimming is "Grrreat!"

Tony the Tiger, from Kellogg's Frosties, joined around 200 children at the University pool in December to launch a revised national programme to help children learn to swim.

The National Plan for Teaching Swimming has been developed by the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) to provide a template for 'Learn to swim' schemes around the country. The Plan takes non-swimmers through a ten stage learning process to achieve competence and confidence in the water. Loughborough University's 'Learn to Swim' scheme now follows this Plan.

All children who attended the launch received a goody bag and had their photo taken with Tony the Tiger. There was also a fun 'Floats and Inflatables' session and a chance to try new activities including mini waterpolo and synchronised swimming.

Staff from the ASA and the University's pool were on hand to answer questions about the programme. Loughborough graduates Ros Brett, European Gold medallist, and Sarah Price, former Commonwealth champion and world record holder, were also at the event to inspire Britain's next generation of swimming talent.

Sam Pittham, manager of the University's pool said: "Swimming is a great, fun way of getting exercise and who knows, we may even start a future Olympic swimming champion on the path to success!"



LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY

POSTGRADUATE OPEN DAY

Wednesday 20th February 2008, 12-4pm
Stewart Mason Building

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e: graduateschool@lboro.ac.uk

 Loughborough University



Passenger detection technology wins global award for innovation

A new infrared imaging system developed at Loughborough that automatically counts the number of people in moving road vehicles has won a prestigious innovation award from The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), one of the world's leading professional societies for the engineering and technology community.

The vehicle monitoring system, dtect, can be used in all weathers, day or night, to instantly detect human skin behind all types of automotive glass at a range of 10-100 metres. Its inventor Dr John Tyrer, an optical engineer, designed it as a means of enforcing car sharing priority lanes to ease congestion, but the technology is also used in road tolling and to monitor vehicles entering high security areas.

Since its successful trial on some of the UK's major trunk roads and traffic black spots, dtect has received considerable investment by Avingtrans Plc, an AIM listed company specialising in the design and manufacture of critical components and associated services to the medical, aerospace and transport sectors.

dtect is part of a portfolio of innovations in non-contact testing developed by John Tyrer who formed his first spin out company Laser Optical Engineering in 1997. Seven years later, he formed his second, Vehicle Occupancy Ltd, specifically to boost dtect's commercial prospects. The recent alliance with Avingtrans has proved a shrewd move as its subsidiary company Crown UK is the leading UK supplier of roadside camera housings.

John Tyrer was presented with the Transport category award at the IET's annual Innovation in Engineering Awards ceremony at the Marriott Hotel, Grosvenor Square, London, to celebrate excellence in engineering innovation across a range of industry sectors and engineering disciplines. Winners were selected from hundreds of entries from around the world by a distinguished panel of judges.

Student wins national SET award

A Loughborough student has been presented with a prestigious national Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) Award.

Ewan Porteous, who was based in the Department of Aeronautical and Automotive Engineering before graduating in July with first class honours, won the award in the category 'Best Maritime Technology Student', sponsored by The Lloyd's Register Educational Trust. It was in recognition of his final year project developing new ideas in acoustics and vibration that could be applied to maritime technology.

The award is one of 17 Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) Awards presented annually. Organised by the World Leadership Forum, the SET awards are Britain and Ireland's most important awards for science, engineering and technology undergraduates. They provide a showcase for educational excellence by publicly recognising the exceptional achievements of both students and universities. For the 2007 awards record numbers of entries were received from every major university in the UK and Ireland.

Ewan's project, entitled 'Wave-like propulsion of small marine craft', involved the designing and building of an entirely autonomous and robotically controlled model boat with wave-like aquatic propulsion. Provided by localised elastic wave propagation in the boat's keel, this novel type of aquatic propulsion is similar to that used by stingrays and is characterised by very low underwater noise and improved safety for people and marine animals. The boat achieved impressive speeds in open water, demonstrating that this type of propulsion is a viable alternative to a traditional screw propeller.

Professor Victor Krylov, leader of the Department's Acoustics and Vibration Research Group and Ewan's project supervisor, said: "Ewan's work on his final year project was truly outstanding. He worked very enthusiastically, demonstrating remarkable skills and ingenuity. As Ewan's supervisor, I can say that it was a privilege to work with him."

Before coming to Loughborough Ewan attended Cults Academy in Aberdeen. In addition to his academic achievements, he represented Scotland for swimming in 2001/2002 and obtained his Private Pilots Licence in 2002, being an active member of the Loughborough Students Flying Club for five years. After graduating from Loughborough Ewan travelled through Europe for two months, before beginning work with Goodrich Engine Control Systems in Birmingham in September.

The Lloyd's Register Educational Trust SET Award for the Best Maritime Technology Student was judged by the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) and the Royal Institution of Naval Architects (RINA).

IMarEST Chief Executive, Keith Read CBE said: "It is always a delight to host the judging for this important Award. We congratulate Ewan, wish him well for the future and are sure that he will be playing an active role in IMarEST in the future. He typifies the young men and women we are eager to attract to this vitally important global industry."

The award was presented to Ewan at the prestigious SET Awards ceremony in London's Alexandra Palace. The event was attended by hundreds of science and technology students and academics, as well as senior figures from industry, Government, science and the media.



University Choir

Following the huge success of its Christmas Concert in the Cope Auditorium, the University Choir is now starting work on its new programme for the spring, which will include John Rutter's 'Magnificat' and music from Les Miserables.

The Choir is open to all staff and students, plus members of the local community, with the current membership standing at 58 and members ranging in age from 16 to 70 plus. The longest-serving member is Alex Fairly, who has sung with the Choir for more than 30 years.

A high proportion of the students and staff involved are from other countries, and the Choir provides a very successful forum for international students to mix socially with home students. There are also a number of very enthusiastic members from the local community – unlike most choirs it is free to join because of the University's support.

Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings from 7pm to 9pm in the Arts Centre near the Towers, followed by refreshments and an opportunity for socialising. There are no auditions and no expectation that members have prior choral experience or the ability to read music, although, as conductor Charles Slade says, "It helps if you can sing a bit". Practice CDs are available to help singers, particularly beginners, learn their parts, and groups get together informally for extra practice sessions.

For further information about joining the University Choir email Charles Slade at c.w.slade@lboro.ac.uk or just turn up any Monday evening to give it a try.

Solar cell success

Experts from the University's Centre for Renewable Energy Systems Technology (CREST) have been celebrating after creating silicon solar cells with a high efficiency rate.

The work on the cells is part of the 'Photovoltaic Materials for the 21st Century' (PV21) project. Funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), the study is one of a series of advanced energy research projects supported by the EPSRC's Sustainable Power Generation and Supply Initiative (Supergen).

Several British universities and companies are involved in the £4.5 million PV21 project, which started in April 2004 and is due to be completed this year. It is the UK's largest ever single research programme on solar cells and its main aim is to make renewable energy more cost effective.

At CREST a team led by Professor Ayodhya Tiwari have produced silicon solar cells using Laser Grooved Buried Contact (LGBC) technology with an efficiency of 14.7%. This is close to the 18% efficiency achieved by BP Solar, one of the world's largest solar companies.

Dr Gianfranco Claudio, a Research Associate in the University's PV Devices group said: "This is a truly remarkable result given we have had to build our facilities within the laboratories from scratch and the short time that we have been processing cells for.

"This efficiency has been obtained on the very first cells we have produced from start to finish, and I am confident that by the end of the project in March, the silicon solar cells we produce will achieve efficiency comparable to the best laboratory in Europe."

Letter to the Editor

Dear all

I write to thank you for the wine glasses, scanner and National Trust book you presented to me on my retirement. I would also like to thank all those who contributed to the DVD produced by my colleagues.

The University is a dynamic place to work and I have enjoyed my years at Loughborough. I look forward to reading about its continued success.

Yours

Roy Hill

Award for Loughborough technician

Peter Beaman, a Senior Social Psychology Technician in the Department of Social Sciences, has become the first person to be presented with a Higher Education Academy Psychology Network Technician Award.

The award has been set up by the Higher Education Academy Psychology Network, in collaboration with the Association for Technical Staff in Psychology (ATSIP), to recognise the valuable role of technicians and demonstrators in supporting the student learning experience within psychology departments.

Peter was presented with the award in recognition of his work to support psychology learning and teaching, for his 2007 national study of technical staffs in psychology and for his research into the 'Use of resources and courses for students and staff'.

Peter is Treasurer and Members Secretary of ATSIP. He has worked at Loughborough since 1988 after graduating from the University with a BSc degree in Human Psychology.

Swimming coach picks up second honour

Ian Armiger, the University's Director of Swimming, was presented with the Judges Award at the BBC East Midlands Sports Awards 2007.

The award came just days after the announcement that he was also to receive the esteemed Mussabini medal at the Sports Coach UK Coaching Awards in December. The medal is given to individuals that have made a significant contribution to the development and management of coaching and individual coaches in the UK.

The BBC East Midlands Sports Awards, which were hosted by BBC presenter John Inverdale, recognise the best sports stars in the region who have achieved a high standard of performance at local, national or international level.

Ian has been a swimming coach for over 30 years and became Loughborough University's first full-time paid coach 11 years ago. He has worked with many successful swimmers throughout his career and has had swimmers in the last three Olympic squads.

During his time at Loughborough he built the foundations for one of the country's most successful swimming programmes. The University also includes an excellent coach development scheme which has supported the likes of Ben Titley and Steve Bailey.

Aziz Rashid, Head of Local Programming at BBC East Midlands, said: "Congratulations go to all of the winners in what proved to be another memorable awards ceremony for the region. Our sports people have given us another great year to look back on and their efforts and achievements help the BBC East Midlands Sports Awards go from strength to strength."

Graduate Maw gains Welsh Rugby performance job

Former Loughborough student Graeme Maw has been appointed Elite Performance Director as part of a radical restructure by the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU).

The 43-year-old, who graduated from the University before continuing studies in exercise physiology in the USA and Australia, recently returned to the Loughborough campus to work with its rugby teams and their coaches. Maw was responsible for reviewing existing fitness

testing, strength and conditioning and performance analysis procedures and helping the club establish a robust sports science and medicine programme.

His appointment to Wales marks a dynamic new player and coach talent development structure designed by the WRU which they hope will push the nation to the forefront of world rugby.

In this role he will work alongside new Head of Rugby Development Nigel Davies and Head Coach Warren Gatland.

Maw, who most recently held high profile roles with British Triathlon Association (BTA) and British Gymnastics, will develop groundbreaking techniques and systems to ensure players realise their full physical and psychological potential.

During a 15-year career in sport he has taken sportsmen and women to five Olympic and Commonwealth Games and, as Performance Director for the BTA, the performance pathway he saw the sport secure 28 world, European and Commonwealth medals in just six seasons.

Previously Maw was High Performance Manager for the Queensland Academy of Sport in Australia where he helped develop systems and structures that resulted in 13 swimmers from nine coaches being selected to the 2000 Olympic Team where they won 19 medals.

He has also worked in the USA and has built a reputation which has led him to a high profile role delivering strategic coaching development and scientific guidance to governing bodies, sports organisations and industry.

As well as many years closely involved in personal training he has a doctorate in exercise physiology, a masters degree in sports physiology and an honours degree in sports science and recreational management.

"I am delighted to be joining the Welsh Rugby Union because I aim to ensure this proud rugby nation sustains and develops its historic determination to be the best," said Maw.

"Welsh rugby is more than a team and a stadium and I feel privileged to be part of it in a role which can help it aspire to reach great heights in the future.

"In elite sport you have to be at the forefront of all that high performance management can provide to achieve success and I know I can put in place systems and a culture which will improve the performance of our best players.

"I have already started detailed discussions with Nigel and I know we will be able to use our complimentary skills to create positive results. I want to be the best at what I do and becoming the Elite Performance Director for Welsh rugby is a fantastic opportunity for me."

Maw's role as Elite Performance Director will also place him on the executive board of the WRU reporting directly to Group Chief Executive, Roger Lewis.

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Loughborough hockey double celebration

A place in Europe's final 16 and home to the country's first National Performance Centre (NPC) gives Loughborough hockey a double reason to celebrate this year.

In autumn 2007 Loughborough's men became the only university side, and one of just three English clubs, to make it to the final 16 of the Euro Hockey League (EHL). The team now travel to Spain over Easter to face Belgian rivals Royal Antwerp in the knockout stages which begin on 21 March.

And thanks to a history of impressive achievements like this, sport governing body England Hockey has named Loughborough as one of two regional universities to lead the pilot of the East Midlands NPC. Open at the start of the spring term, the centre allows players to access top quality coaching and athlete support whilst continuing their education.

As well as specialist coaching there will be world-class strength and conditioning programmes to give athletes top physiotherapy, lifestyle and medical support. More than 20 players aged 18-23 years are expected to access facilities at Loughborough in the centre's first year.

"I am delighted Loughborough University has been chosen to be part of the first National Performance Centre," said Loughborough University's Head of Performance Sport, Andy Borrie. "The fact we've been selected as the only pilot and are ready to start in January is testament to the quality programme we already have in place."



"This exciting new partnership will enable us to build on our history of expertise in elite hockey and will give the country's best young players the opportunity to continue their studies whilst receiving world class coaching and support."

Canterbury NZ supports international rugby scholarship

Innovative sportswear manufacturer Canterbury NZ has funded an international scholarship to enable South African rugby player Dan Potgieter to study and train at the University for a year.

Potgieter, who already has qualifications in Institutional Finance and Financial Risk Management, is taking a one-year Masters in Banking and Finance and will become an integral part of the Loughborough rugby team who are current Midlands 1 league leaders.

The 24-year-old has access to all high quality training, facilities and support services offered to elite athletes at the University and is expected to represent Loughborough in both University and league fixtures.

As part of the scholarship Potgieter receives a supply of Canterbury NZ kit, including the innovative and intelligent BaseLayer and IonX kit.

The development of these groundbreaking products was supported by crucial research carried out at the University's Sports Technology Institute and was worn by Rugby World Cup winners South Africa during their recent successful campaign.

Potgieter joins Loughborough from his home town Stellenbosch where he studied and played rugby at the local university. Until his recent move the second row player was also a regular with Western Province rugby team.

Since arriving in Loughborough this autumn, Potgieter has settled in well and is enjoying increased access to training.

"Rugby provides me with a really positive outlet for my energy and the sense of shared joy that I get when we win a match is a real buzz," he said. "I am having a brilliant time here. The rugby is really professional and everyone has been very welcoming. I am really grateful to Canterbury for making my time here possible."