

The Queen's Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education

Fifteenth Round Report | 2022–2024







The Royal Anniversary Trust

Charity number 1,000,000

The Royal Anniversary Trust promotes and champions the outstanding work of universities and colleges across the four nations of the United Kingdom. Through programmes including the prestigious Queen's Anniversary Prizes, part of the national Honours system, and the Royal Challenges which convene the brightest academic minds to work on research projects addressing current critical issues, the Trust recognises and celebrates excellence, innovation and the positive social impact of tertiary education in the UK and around the world.

The Trust was established to mark the 40th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's accession. Her late Majesty was a passionate believer in the power of education to help realise human potential and solve the world's many problems and did all she could to promote, support and protect it. The Trust is proud to honour her lifelong commitment to education through its ongoing work to build on the already formidable reputation of UK universities and colleges at home and abroad.

A Message from the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak



10 DOWNING STREET LONDON SW1A 2AA



THE PRIME MINISTER

I want to say a huge congratulations to the winners of the 2022-2024 Queen's Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education. I know this year's honours will be particularly special as we remember the late Queen Elizabeth II and her long-standing support for these awards, and for the tremendous good that education can bring.

The UK has a long and proud history of research, discovery and excellence in education and training. I am delighted that the 2022-2024 winners are continuing that tradition. The sheer breadth and variety of the work is impressive. In health, robotics, space, engineering, sustainability, animal welfare, photonics, skills and training, the English wine industry and more, you are pushing the boundaries of what we can achieve. Thanks to your ingenuity, your dedication, and your hard work we are making real progress in science, transforming public health, growing the economy, and improving and enriching people's lives.

I am immensely proud of Britain's higher and further education sector. In the UK, we have some of the best universities anywhere in the world. We have first rate further education colleges. And we are home to some amazing innovations, incredible inventions and ground-breaking research.

As your work shows, there is some extraordinary work taking place in British colleges and universities today – and it is being conducted in a spirit of inquiry, public good and a quest for knowledge.

So let me thank all the Queen's Anniversary Prize winners for everything you are doing.

And let me also thank The Royal Anniversary Trust for your commitment to bringing us the very best in Britain's higher and further education sector.

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The Trustees and Executive



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The Awards Council

The Awards Council is made up of Trustees of The Royal Anniversary Trust and nominated representatives from UK government.

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The Royal Anniversary Trust is grateful for the support of Amazon Web Services (AWS).



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The Queen's Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education

The Queen's Anniversary Prizes are an integral part of the national Honours system, recognising at the highest level of the state, outstanding creative and inspirational work in a wide variety of fields. Open to eligible universities and colleges of Higher and Further Education in the United Kingdom, the Prizes may be awarded for any topic or subject area which fulfils the criteria for the award: excellence, innovation and well-evidenced benefit for education, the economy and the wider world.

The creation of the Prizes was announced in Parliament in 1993 by then Prime Minister, Sir John Major, with Queen Elizabeth II's consent and with all-party support. First awarded in 1994 and now in the fifteenth round, the Prizes are granted every two years by the Sovereign on the advice of the Prime Minister following a rigorous and independent process of review carried out by The Royal Anniversary Trust, an independent charity.

Each Prize-winning entry is reviewed by a minimum of twelve readers, including specialists and members of the Trust's expert Higher and Further Education Panels, before the Trust's Awards Council arrives at its final recommendations.

All reviewers provide their services confidentially, anonymously and pro bono. The Trust is enormously grateful for their support and for the collective experience, wisdom and time they devote to the assessment process and to the integrity of the Prizes scheme.

Over the past 30 years, Prizes have been awarded across a wide range of disciplines – science, engineering, arts and the creative industries, education, the humanities, the environment and medicine. Uniquely, the Prizes recognise not only the team behind the award-winning work, but the institution as a whole.

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Twenty-two universities and colleges have been awarded Prizes in the fifteenth round, 2022–24; a summary of their work follows in this report. The winners' list has the largest number of Further Education colleges in the history of the scheme and reflects world-leading work by both universities and colleges. The winners this year are as inspirational as ever and collectively show the breadth and extraordinary high calibre of the work taking place in the UK's tertiary education sector.

The Prizes will be presented by Their Majesties The King and Queen at a formal investiture ceremony at Buckingham Palace on Thursday 22nd February 2024. The Trust remembers with gratitude the guiding hand of Queen Elizabeth II in creating and supporting these unique awards and is grateful to The King and Queen for their continued patronage.

Queen Elizabeth II Royal Collection Trust © His Majesty King Charles III 2024





Recipients of The Queen's Anniversary Prizes

Fifteenth Round 2022–2024

"The Queen's Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education are an integral part of our national Honours system, shining a light on the groundbreaking work taking place in universities and colleges across the UK. All 22 Prize-winners demonstrate excellence, innovation and impact, with many tackling some of the toughest problems we as a society face today. They are to be commended for reaching this pinnacle of achievement in the tertiary education sector. Congratulations."

Sir Damon Buffini, Chair of The Royal Anniversary Trust

Prifysgol Aberystwyth University

Protecting people, animals and economies from harmful parasitic worms



Parasitology research at Aberystwyth University

Pioneering research into diseases caused by parasitic flatworms that is leading to the identification of new drugs, innovative detection methodologies and sustainable health practices, improving the quality of human and animal health, and safeguarding the global food supply.

Parasitic worms cause some of the most disfiguring, debilitating and chronic infectious diseases of human and animal populations across the globe.

They kill thousands of people and animals annually as well as lead to the suffering of millions more and contribute to the development of chronic disorders such as cancer. In terms of food and crop security, parasitic worms also threaten our ability to feed the planet's ever-growing population, creating substantial economic losses in every food-producing nation on the planet.

In a neglected field of research, scientists at Aberystwyth University have devoted themselves to the study of a particular group of parasitic worms – the flatworm species responsible for causing diseases such as Schistosomiasis in people and Fasciolosis in livestock. By merging the expertise of both agricultural and biological parasitologists, Aberystwyth University has built an international reputation for its work combatting the devastating impact of parasitic flatworms on people, animals and economies.

Shaped by a century of underpinning research, innovation and development, Aberystwyth scientists have advanced global understandings of fundamental flatworm biology. They have analysed the complex lifecycles and host interactions of these parasites to an unprecedented level of detail so that vulnerabilities can be identified and targeted by new vaccines or drugs. They have also pioneered



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Schistosomiasis affects more than 200 million people globally and is transmitted by freshwater snails in tropical areas of Africa, Asia and South America. It is one of many diseases of humans, livestock and wildlife caused by parasitic flatworms, which are the focus of research undertaken by parasitologists at Aberystwyth University. Credit: Dr lain Chalmers, Aberystwyth University the development of innovative methodologies to influence and advance new vaccine, diagnostic and drug discovery pipelines as well as created screening, detection and medical treatment processes to save lives and safeguard food production. Crucially, Aberystwyth scientists widely share the findings of their transformational work with academic and industry partners for the improvement of global health and the benefit of society. Their unique expertise plays a pivotal role in ongoing international efforts to control parasitic flatworm diseases and mitigate their devastating consequences on human and animal health as well as food production globally.

University of the Arts London

Shaping the fashion industry of the future

Global leadership and pioneering work in environmental and social sustainability, shaping the future of the fashion industry through teaching, research, industry and community-based practices.

University of the Arts London (UAL) has played an outstanding role in influencing perceptions of and actions towards environmental and social sustainability across the global fashion system to deliver real world benefits.

UAL has become a world leader in shaping the fashion industry of the future, by enabling everyone from designers to manufacturers and suppliers to thrive amidst the challenges of the twenty-first century through new thinking and transformation. UAL's dynamic partnerships across the fashion industry are at the forefront of sustainable fashion innovation. The Sustainable Fashion Glossary, created in partnership with Condé Nast in 2020, is the first global resource of its kind for media professionals, fashion sector players, educators, learners, and citizens alike. UAL's long-standing partnership with international luxury brand Kering has enabled its students and researchers to work with worldleading design houses, from Gucci to Alexander McQueen, on innovations that deliver direct benefits to people and the planet from early-stage work in mushroom leather, to the development of rental platforms



for men, in collaboration with Roots Barbershop, Sirlute and London College of Fashion, UAL. Photo credit: Sirlute



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UAL's Poplar Works site sew fabric masks for front-line workers during the Coronavirus pandemic and post-carbon wardrobes. Its research-led teaching also extends to learners in over 190 countries thanks to its pioneering open-source education developed in partnership with NGOs, industry and media organisations. UAL believes that the world needs creativity and delivers transformative social sustainability projects. Making for Change is a ground-breaking example of this work.

Launched in 2014, the programme started as an in-prison training and fashion manufacturing workshop and commercial production facility, providing a safe space for female offenders to gain high quality, industry-recognised qualifications. This has developed into a social enterprise with its own independent manufacturing unit situated within Poplar, an area of London with particularly high levels of female unemployment. As a testbed for change within the fashion industry, the programme connects this community-based unit and the prison unit with emerging and established designers within the UK.

Prifysgol Bangor University

Wastewater-based monitoring: a holistic approach

A novel system for public health surveillance through the analysis of harmful pathogens in wastewater, deployed nationally during the pandemic and now adapted to measure a wide range of public health indicators.



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Bangor University's wastewater monitoring project

The COVID-19 pandemic taught us the power of viruses and the harm that they can do to society in terms of lives lost, economic tolls, and social bonds severed.

Bangor University broke new ground in developing tools to quantify the levels of respiratory and enteric viruses in wastewater. When COVID-19 emerged, they used these tools to track SARS-CoV-2, delivering critical national surveillance on infection rates and the emergence and spread of new variants. They showed that wastewater-based epidemiology can provide invaluable, unbiased insights into community health. Their research was used to directly inform government policy (e.g. decisions on imposing lockdowns) during the pandemic. The research was also used to measure the incidence of COVID-19 in core national infrastructure (e.g. prisons, hospitals) and to assess the import rate of COVID-19 into the UK at national borders such as airports and mass quarantining facilities. Since then, and on behalf of Welsh Government, the Food Standards Agency and European Union, the technology has been expanded to monitor a wide range of public health indicators including enterovirus, norovirus, influenza, RSV, polio and antimicrobial resistant organisms. This is now being built into a real-time alerting system for healthcare facilities and public health agencies. The technology is also being used to predict the potential for individuals to become infected from coming into contact with sewage contaminated water (e.g. open water swimming), helping to sever the disease reinfection cycle.

This research exemplifies how fundamental science and applied innovation can profoundly enhance society. It has established the university as a world leader for wastewater epidemiology with global reach. The award recognises the team's trailblazing spirit, scientific rigour and commitment to progress through partnership. Their work has set new standards in responsible research for the public good.





University of Birmingham

Supporting sustainable UK manufacturing of aero-engines

Worldwide leadership in aero-engineering research, in long-term partnership with Rolls-Royce, leading to the development of ever safer, more reliable, and more efficient aero-engines.



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International Women's Day at the High Temperature Research Centre

Over two generations, this partnership has played a pivotal role in the transformation of the UK aerospace industry, enhancing advanced manufacturing research capability through the development of world-class infrastructure, providing global competitive advantage and creating highly skilled jobs in the UK.

The University and Rolls-Royce together have secured multiple high-value research awards over 34 years, establishing a world-leading University Technology Centre (1992), Manufacturing Technology Centre (2010) and High Temperature Research Centre (2015). Today, 70 academic staff, 30 postgraduate students, and 120 Rolls-Royce employees are working together to enhance the scientific understanding of the metallic alloys used for safety-critical components in aero-engines. Such discs and blades have been at the heart of the partnership to date. This collaborative work is crucial in developing future generations of efficient engines that are essential in meeting 2050 net-zero emissions targets. Over the past 20 years the partnership has provided the very best type of "technology transfer" with over 100 of the University's PhD students joining Rolls-Royce on graduation. Together with the invention of well over 100 patents, this has delivered significant competitive advantage to Rolls-Royce. As well as its major scientific advances and its training of this next generation of metallurgy experts across both academia and industry, the partnership is working to address gender imbalance in a traditionally male-dominated area. It is attracting more females than ever to study engineering and is supporting them into the workforce. The partnership has played a pre-eminent role in retaining Rolls-Royce research and technology in materials within the UK despite fierce global competition.





Alloy discs and blades are at the heart of the partnership



Bridgwater & Taunton College

Nursing home-grown talent

The first Further Education college to gain consent from The Nursing & Midwifery Council and a university partner to deliver nursing degrees locally, opening up new career routes for all ages and responding to workforce challenges within the local NHS.

The nationwide shortage of qualified nurses is well documented, but the problem is particularly acute in Somerset, a county with no major cities or traditional university campuses. Bridgwater & Taunton College has spent a decade negotiating, collaborating and innovating to overcome this challenge, becoming the first FE college to gain the consent of both the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) and its university partner (University of the West of England) to deliver nursing degrees locally and in its own right. The College was also the first FE College to be invited and accepted into the Council of Deans of Health as an Associate Member, and now sits alongside university healthcare faculties at the heart of policy and political debate. In addition, the College has become the Further Education representative on NHS



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Trainee Nursing Associate at Bridgewater & Taunton

England's South West Region Nursing and Midwifery Supply Board, actively contributing to removing barriers to health careers.

In partnership with the College, Somerset NHS Foundation Trust is strategically addressing some of the biggest workforce challenges and threats to the delivery of high quality, sustainable health care across the South West region. This provision is a superb example of a college responding to local workforce demand. Not only has it opened up exciting new career and progression routes for individuals of all ages in Somerset, but in doing so has made a hugely positive contribution to



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Student nurses at Bridgwater & Taunton

the health and wellbeing of the entire community, whilst also ensuring that local talent is retained in-county, where it is desperately needed to help resolve a critical workforce crisis. By becoming the first FE establishment to secure NMC approval through to degree level in both adult and mental health nursing, the College has brought nurse education directly to the Somerset community, offering those who may not have previously had the opportunity to become fully qualified nurses. For example, 83% of students are coming from TUNDRA Quintiles 1–3 and over 22% of apprentices on the programme are over 40 years of age. Since approval from the Nursing & Midwifery Council in 2021, the College has exponentially grown to 300 students on the programme, with an attrition rate of less than 5%. Of those successfully completing the programme to date, 89% (205 graduates) have been directly employed into the NHS across the South West region.

City College Plymouth

Leading the way for the UK on marine and maritime skills



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City College Plymouth

student testing equipment in the College's Materials Testing Laboratory A leading provider of maritime skills, the College collaborates with a wide range of employers, offering world-class facilities, an innovative industry-led skills provision and an international reputation for excellence in a sector accounting for more than 10,000 jobs locally.

City College Plymouth is located in a city where maritime skills play a significant role, contributing to 10,564 jobs in the area. Over the past three years, there has been a 4.1% increase in the number of people employed in the sector, compared to the national average of 1.9%. The College has established itself as a leading provider of maritime skills through world-class facilities, industry-led skills provision, innovative partnerships, and a reputation for excellence and innovation. In November 2021, the College opened the Centre of Higher Technical Innovation and Maritime Skills. This state-of-the-art facility, located in Plymouth's marine enterprise zone, offers cutting-edge machinery. This machinery includes a unique 5-axis CNC router designed for various large metalloid moulds making, 3D surface carving, and shape cutting. It also features a high-spec CNC milling machine, resin-based 3D printers, and an innovative wave flume, facilitating education in autonomous vehicles and marine technology. The College has collaborated closely with large employers and SMEs to develop programmes in marine autonomous vehicles. Students are equipped with a wide range of skills, from design to prototyping, meeting the demands of this rapidly evolving field. This approach has led to strong partnerships with local companies like Plymouth Marine Laboratories, Babcock International, and MSubs.



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City College Plymouth student operating a lathe to make a component for a nuclear submarine The College restructured its delivery for Babcock International, resulting in increased apprenticeship numbers of over 32% since 2019. The College offers tailored learning around maritime defence vessels, aligning with workplace shift patterns and providing onsite support.

To address the skills shortage for skilled carpenters in the luxury yacht industry, the College developed tailored training programs that match the shift patterns of Princess Yachts' employees. An impressive 86% of participants from the programme are now working for Princess Yachts. The College's commitment to developing skills for the industry earned them the Maritime UK Future Skills award.

City of Glasgow College

Saving seafarers' lives by tackling oxygen depletion in enclosed spaces

Life-saving research into oxygen depletion in enclosed spaces on-board ships, with the findings being shared through the development of accredited materials available to students globally in partnership with the Merchant Navy Training Board and the Maritime Education Foundation.



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Life-saving research into oxygen depletion in enclosed spaces

Almost 22,000 UK seafarers work for UK and international organisations, shipping companies and cruise liners. And every day they face an invisible danger – oxygen depletion in enclosed spaces on-board ships. It is a problem the industry had considered to be addressed. And yet, some sixty years after the first guidance was written by the International Maritime Organisation it continues to claim the lives of unwary seafarers. Building on its extensive maritime history, City of Glasgow College set out to understand why lives were still being lost. They discovered there was an absence of empirical research and that the position remained extant despite the potential for a profound impact on global maritime safety. Working with industry and a research team, the College proved that oxygen depletion takes place at a far faster rate than previously thought. Moreover, even minor changes in temperature, pressure, and the condition of the cargo could have dangerous impact on the speed at which oxygen depleted.

Together with the Maritime Education Foundation (MEF) and Merchant Navy Training Board (MNTB) the College made its findings freely available on Udemy, and each year shares its research findings with the UK's largest cohort of maritime cadets, ensuring that future seafarers are more aware and better prepared than ever to tackle this hidden and deadly danger.



University of Glasgow

Editing and curating Robert Burns for the 21st century

World-leading interdisciplinary research into the life and work of poet Robert Burns providing fresh insight and informing decisions on authenticity, provenance, acquisitions and exhibitions, and offering a template for studies on the impact of cultural figures in the wider economy.

The Centre for Robert Burns Studies (CRBS) is the world's leading centre for the study of Scotland's national poet Robert Burns (1759–96), his contexts and associated literatures. Establishing itself as a crossdisciplinary area of research excellence which has attracted major financial and intellectual investment, CRBS has brought together the largest concentration of Burns experts in the world and their work has impact on a global scale.

CRBS's textual scholarship has revolutionised understanding of Burns's creative processes by examining for the first time all surviving manuscript and early-print witnesses across the entire canon of his prose, song, correspondence and poetry, illuminating this research for a worldwide audience via a suite of specially commissioned performances and digital resources. Innovative approaches to the relationship between literature and material culture have led to a new model for the creation of cultural



Artist David Mach with his work The Flying Haggis with Dr Paul Malgrati, Research Assistant on The Burns Supper in History and Today project at the University of Glasgow. Credit: Martin Shields memory, recently furthered using Virtual Reality (VR) technology. Interdisciplinary research drawing on new technical methodologies for the authentication of historical manuscripts has underpinned expert advice to organisations with Burns holdings, informing decisions on authenticity, provenance, acquisitions and exhibitions. Furthermore, CRBS's work to establish and increase the cultural and economic value of Burns – through research and promotion of Burns Night and via the 'Robert Burns in the Scottish Economy' report – has illuminated Burns's under- exploited economic potential, provided a template for future studies of the impact of cultural figures in the wider economy, and advocated recommendations which have begun to be implemented on an international scale.

CRBS's excellent research, innovative approaches to learning and teaching, extensive and diverse knowledge exchange activities and partnerships with Culture and Heritage institutions have revolutionised scholarly and popular understanding of Burns's life and works, increasing the cultural and economic value of Burns not only in Scotland but internationally.



Robert Burns window in the Bute Hall at the University of Glasgow. Credit: Darren Jewell-Irons

Burns Beyond Reality. Credit: Edify



Hopwood Hall College & University Centre

Widening participation of 16–18 year olds in education



Hopwood's nurturing approach

A trauma-informed approach to learning, designed to support marginalised and disengaged young people aged 16–18, by responding to a range of social and mental health issues affecting life chances in one of the most deprived areas nationally.

Hopwood Hall College and University Centre is a Further Education college with campuses in Rochdale and Middleton, Greater Manchester. It serves a community that has historically had barriers to entering, staying in and succeeding in education – with 69% of students being from an economically disadvantaged postcode. In response to the complex issues arising from the local demographics, the college introduced a pioneering trauma-informed approach in order to widen participation of 16–18 year olds from marginalised communities in education.

This strengths-based framework is grounded in a greater understanding of the impact of trauma through Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), with an emphasis on physical, psychological and emotional safety for young people. It includes projects targeted at groups such as the Care Experienced, SEND, LGBTQ+, ethnically diverse learners, those at risk of forced marriage, those in alternative provision, school refusers and

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young people with mental health issues such as anxiety. One example of this is the college's innovative annual transition projects, which have had resounding impact, enabling even the most anxious students to succeed. This strategy encompassed whole staff training in trauma and attachment. In addition, new roles were introduced such as Mental Health First Aiders, an Achievement Improvement Officer for Looked After Children, Behaviour Support Officers and Health & Wellbeing Champions. Hopwood also became the first college to have a full-time social prescribing link worker.

This trauma-informed approach has had an extremely positive impact, particularly with marginalised young people. This is evident in destination figures, which show 57.2% of young people in the borough now going to a Further Education College in 2022, up from 47.9% in 2020. In addition, Looked After Children – a group that traditionally underperforms in education – achieved 2% above the general college cohort in 2021/22.



Students meet the college wildlife as part of the transition programme

Students make clay models as part of the transition programme



The Institute of Cancer Research, London

Transforming lives through world-leading breast cancer research

Transformational research programme significantly improving health outcomes of people with breast cancer globally, including new drug treatments for people with inherited genetic mutations, improved approaches for selecting those who can avoid chemotherapy and reducing the number of radiotherapy treatments.

Over the last 25 years, the Institute of Cancer Research, London, has advanced the understanding of breast cancer, pioneered new treatments and genetic tests, and led practice-changing clinical trials that have ultimately helped people with breast cancer around the world to live longer, healthier lives – especially those whose disease is driven by faults in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 breast cancer genes.

Discoveries at The Institute of Cancer Research (ICR) have improved the lives of people with breast cancer in the following ways:

 By transforming the way that patients with inherited mutations in the BRCA genes are treated – beginning with ICR's discovery of the BRCA2 gene all the way through to the creation of new ways of treating BRCA gene mutated cancers.



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Rebecca Orha, Higher Scientific Officer at The Institute of Cancer Research, London By leading the development of tests that enabled individuals with oestrogen receptor positive (ER+) breast cancer to avoid unnecessary chemotherapy and by showing that there are ways of improving the effectiveness of hormonal treatment.

These advances are benefiting patients in the UK and worldwide as well as global healthcare systems and economies.

The ICR takes a collaborative, team science approach to meeting the challenge of breast cancer by working across the spectrum of breast cancer research – from fundamental laboratory science, genetics and epidemiology to translational research, drug discovery and clinical trials. They are supported in this programme by strong relationships with hospital partners in the UK and internationally, and by sustained funding from Breast Cancer Now, Cancer Research UK and others.

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Intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT) for targeting radiation doses precisely to the shape of tumours

Lakes College West Cumbria

Developing highly skilled technicians for nuclear and low carbon energy

A ground-breaking, transferrable model of training for higher technicians in the UK's nuclear and low carbon sector within the framework of a curriculum developed with industry and accredited by the National College for Nuclear.



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National College for Nuclear at Lakes College

From a superbly equipped base in West Cumbria, Lakes College specialises in providing high-quality technical and vocational programmes within Further and Higher Education, serving the needs of employers across Cumbria and the North West. As a founder member and skills provider within the National College for Nuclear, Lakes has developed an innovative, transferrable model supporting the development of highly-skilled technicians for roles across the nuclear and low carbon energy sectors.

Focusing on the Higher Technician Class, the model integrates project-based and experiential learning methodologies within an employer-led curriculum, combined to develop highly-skilled site and role ready employees who attain excellent academic knowledge and skills development. The transferrable model enables the development of appropriate sector behaviours from the outset and throughout learning. The model continues to be deployed within the growing network of National College for Nuclear accredited providers, enabling access throughout the UK. Lakes College is home to the National College for Nuclear Northern Hub, providing employers, learners, apprentices and staff with access to first- class, industry-standard resources to develop the skills and behaviours demanded by industry. This includes: virtual and augmented reality suites, a Digital Accelerator Hub, radiological protection and science labs, low carbon energy training equipment including solar power, wind technology, hydrogen cells and heat pump systems, a new digital manufacturing suite including computer integrated manufacturing systems and fast prototyping, and an array of sophisticated training and simulation equipment directly mirroring industry practice.



Lakes College students



University of Lincoln

Innovation in agri-food technology

Innovations in agri-food technology including the development of robotic systems in harvesting crops, use of AI to support farming businesses in accessing global markets, and education programmes supporting labour supply, leading to improved productivity, efficiency and sustainability in rural economies.



University of Lincoln soil scientist Dr Iain Gould The University of Lincoln is supporting the success and sustainability of the UK's food and farming industries through innovations in research, education and technology.

The University's Lincoln Institute for Agri-food Technology (LIAT) is a specialist research centre focussed on improving productivity, efficiency, and sustainability across the food chain "from farm to fork". Its multi-disciplinary team of researchers brings together sector-leading expertise in a diverse array of disciplines including agriculture, artificial intelligence, machine learning, robotics, engineering, crop science, environmental sustainability, food manufacturing, and supply chain management, among many others. They are engaged in internationally significant research in collaboration with a range of academic and industry partners, from family-run businesses to multi-national corporations. LIAT is based at the University of Lincoln's 220-hectare Riseholme Park Campus just north of Lincoln, which includes a working farm. It serves one of the largest concentrations of agri-food production, research and distribution businesses in Europe. LIAT develops technology to help underpin food security, recognising that the provision of good quality, affordable food is essential to the health and prosperity of people across the UK and in nations all over the world. In addition, it seeks to reduce the environmental impacts of food and farming with the global food system thought to be responsible for up to 37% of all greenhouse gas emissions. Lincoln's soil scientists are championing sustainable approaches to soil and water management, while robotics and artificial intelligence specialists are helping industry reduce waste through innovative technological solutions. This includes the development and deployment of world-first automation, machine learning and robotics systems.

The University of Lincoln hosts the UK's first global centre of excellence in agri-robotics research, Lincoln Agri-Robotics. It is also a partner in the EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training for Agri-food Robotics – a firstof-its-kind advanced training centre.



Agri-tech researchers from University of Lincoln

University of Liverpool

Pioneering chemistry research for the benefit of society

Innovative chemistry research that harnesses strategic collaborations with global partners to revolutionise materials discovery and design, decarbonise industrial processes, develop more sustainable fast-moving consumer products, and drive forward advances in drugs for combatting HIV and neglected diseases.



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Researchers in the Stephenson Institute For Renewable Energy at the University of Liverpool are discovering and testing new catalysts and electrode formulations to improve the efficiency of green hydrogen production The University of Liverpool's pioneering Department of Chemistry continually pushes forward the frontiers of chemical sciences to address current and future global challenges. The University harnesses strategic partnerships to develop new solutions that drive economic growth, co- develop new fast-moving consumer goods, accelerate the development of pharmaceuticals, create new processes and technologies to tackle antimicrobial resistance, and decarbonise industrial processes, thereby improving lives regionally, nationally and internationally.

The benefits of chemistry research and innovation at the University of Liverpool are felt on a global scale – from pioneering antimalarial drug discovery and materials automation, to developing one of the bestknown methods for making nanoparticles. Their chemistry research has underpinned a new commercial manufacturing process for the sustainable production of methyl methacrylate and the development of nanomedicine for HIV and other diseases. Through the Centre for Materials Discovery and the Materials Innovation Factory, the University's chemistry research has revolutionised the design-based discovery of a range of functional materials, changing how industrial and academic R&D teams around the world discover new materials for a variety of energy and related applications. Their knowledge leadership in chemistry research helps create and sustain an exceptionally skilled R&D workforce and world-leading industrial chemicals sector in North West England.

The University's commitment to applying its research to support
global chemistry education is exemplified through the development of
ChemTube3D, an internationally renowned open educational resource
that contains interactive 3D chemistry animations and structures for
students studying advanced chemistry topics in schools and universities
around the world.



Researchers in the Open Innovation Hub for Antimicrobial Surfaces at the University of Liverpool are using advanced X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy techniques to analyse and design next generation antimicrobial surfaces. Credit: McCoy Wynne / University of Liverpool

Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine

Tiny Targets: vector control for the elimination of sleeping sickness

International research leading to the development of a simple and affordable vector control for the elimination of sleeping sickness, protecting over 1.8 million people across five African countries and directly contributing to the WHO confirming the elimination of the disease in Uganda.



Tiny Target assembly

65 million people around the world are at risk from Gambian Human African Trypanosomiasis (g-HAT), more commonly known as Sleeping Sickness, a fatal parasitic disease transmitted by tsetse flies. International research led by Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) has contributed to the elimination of the disease in Uganda, and a reduction in cases in Guinea, the Democratic Republic of The Congo and Chad.

Historically, the control of Sleeping Sickness relied on case detection and treatment, which was both complex and costly. LSTM researchers, working in partnership with institutions across Europe and Africa, have developed Tiny Targets. This innovative device is a highly effective and cost-effective method of controlling the tsetse population which can be easily and quickly adopted, scaled up and deployed where needed. Tiny Targets are insecticide treated squares of blue fabric surrounded by black netting which attract and kill the flies. Placed at intervals along local riverbanks and water sources, the Targets are being used effectively on a large scale across five countries which together account for over 80% of all cases reported, thus protecting lives and livelihoods in the most at risk populations.



Tiny targets used for tsetse control in sleeping sickness areas.



Loughborough College

World-class space engineering programme

A unique and world-class space engineering programme in partnership with the National Space Academy that combines A-Levels and engineering together to be the most academically challenging course for 16–19 year olds in the country.



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Loughborough College Space Engineering students outside the National Space Centre in Leicester In a ground-breaking collaboration since 2012, Loughborough College has partnered with the National Space Centre in Leicester to offer a world-class and innovative Space Engineering programme. The Level 3 programme gives students a distinct advantage in contributing to humanity's exploration of the universe and prepares them for the rigours of working in the thriving aerospace industry.

As the only course of its kind, this academically intensive course blends A-Level Mathematics and A-Level Physics with a BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Engineering, which is equivalent to four A-Levels. Students on this course benefit from masterclasses conducted by space industry experts and gain insights from leading astronauts. Helen Sharman and Tim Peake have both supported learning on the programme. Students enjoy high quality teaching which covers various aspects of engineering co-delivered at the Loughborough College campus and the National Space Centre, giving students access to cutting-edge technology and innovation. Graduates are actively involved in significant global initiatives across elite industries, including aerospace, aeronautics, manufacturing, and environmental sectors. Their contributions are making a profound impact on the world. This includes a recent graduate of the programme, Tom, who is now part of a leading space initiative, working as the Avionics Lead for a team running a project to build a rocket.



Loughborough College Space Engineering students at their end of course awards ceremony

Level 3 Space Engineers at the National Space Centre learning about Bruno the Mars Rover



Newcastle University

Research programme of global excellence in water security

An interdisciplinary research programme of global excellence in water security, working in partnership with communities, industry, governments and NGOs to deliver lasting real-world impact in a field that encompasses floods, droughts, water quality and public health.



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Newcastle University has trained hundreds of researchers and practitioners around the world to use their lab in a suitcase to monitor water quality. Water security is to have a reliable and acceptable quantity and quality of water. Developed over many years, Newcastle University's research takes a holistic, interdisciplinary and solutions-focussed approach to water security that encompasses floods, droughts, water quality and public health.

This integrated understanding of water risks in catchments from clouds and precipitation, through hydrological processes and impacts, right down to the nanograms of micropollutants and genes of the microorganisms in our water, has shaped local and national government policy. Methods to quantify and communicate water risk have been applied at a range of scales; enabling communities, cities, and nations around the world to better understand and manage floods and droughts – including for large transboundary river basins such as the Nile. Newcastle's work has changed how billions of pounds of infrastructure is designed, to ensure it is resilient to current and future water risks. Among the innovative solutions pioneered in Newcastle, the portable 'lab in a suitcase' enables potentially unsafe water to be screened anywhere for pathogens – including antibiotic resistant bacteria – in even the poorest and most remote areas of the world.

Newcastle will continue to play an active national and international role in pursuit of water security for all through its recently established Centre for Water that spans the full intellectual breadth of the entire Institution. The scale and reach of collaborations enables the University to use its breadth of expertise to accelerate change, helping billions of people and environments around the world have access to a clear, safe, sustainable water supply.



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Lab in a suitcase

The Open University

Online distance-learning at scale

Delivering authentic online laboratory experiences at scale to distance learning students in the fields of science, health, computing and engineering; changing the way scientists and engineers of the future are educated via an accessible and inclusive online teaching model.



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Telescope

The OpenSTEM Labs enables students to remotely use research grade telescopes located at the Teide Observatory in Tenerife. The Open University's OpenSTEM Labs are online laboratories that allow students from anywhere in the world to participate in experimental work, virtually, 24/7 and interactively as if they were in the laboratory. Founded in 2013, the world-leading and multi-award-winning labs make practical science experiments accessible changing the way scientists and engineers of the future are educated by making authentic laboratory experiences possible online and at scale. They comprise science, health, computing and engineering laboratories, and observatories, principally for accessible and inclusive online teaching.

Each year the OpenSTEM Labs supports over 100,000 hours of student learning supporting more STEM students via distance-learning than

traditional universities and helping to address the nation's critical shortage in STEM skills. Since its inception, the OpenSTEM Labs have supported over 120,000 users of which several thousand are external free users from school children to PhD researchers. More than 10,000 new users register each year to access 146 different practical activities.

OpenSTEM labs have successfully made practical distance-learning of STEM subjects a reality for many, embodying The Open University's mission to be open to people, places, methods and ideas.



Microscope

The OpenSTEM Labs Virtual Microscope allows students and researchers to examine and explore microscopic views of a wide range of terrestrial rocks, lunar samples, minerals and meteorites as if using a research-grade polarising microscope.

OEL Labs

The OpenSTEM Labs enables students to conduct authentic practical experiments and activities in STEM subjects through online distance learning. The online labs are scalable and can be rolled out to large numbers of students via a Virtual Learning Environment – leading the way in the digital transformation of learning delivery.



University of Oxford

Innovation in autonomous robotics

Extensive and innovative research leading to major advances in autonomous robotic technology with applications across industry, notably transport, agriculture and energy; influencing UK policy for transport and safe nuclear power; and delivering technology for space exploration to ESA and NASA.



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Industrial stakeholders watch as ORI staff demonstrate their research in navigation, control, and localisation for extreme environments on the ANYmal B robot. This was part of the UKRI ORCA Hub field trials at the Fire Service College, Gloucestershire, UK. Credit: Oxford Robotics Institute The Oxford Robotics Institute (ORI) has delivered fundamental advances in autonomous robotics technology, providing new capabilities to industry and society, and supporting future sustainability and growth in sectors such as transport, agriculture, and energy. This has been made possible by the co-location of academics with professional engineers, in a dedicated space with shared hardware and software. Innovation is delivered via a unique systems-focused industrially-engaged virtuous cycle of system creation and real-world field trials, leading to the identification of new challenges for future development.

Research from the ORI has: changed the policy, funding, and commercial landscape for autonomous vehicles; influenced Sellafield and UKAEA's robotics strategies for safer, cleaner nuclear energy; and delivered technology that will fly on ESA's Rosalind Franklin rover. Today ORI academics are working directly with partners in construction, agriculture, care, manufacturing, and energy to demonstrate how robotics can enable new ways of working which generate less impact on the planet, whilst providing safer and more stable industrial environments.

ORI grew from a nucleus of a single research group in 2003, to an independent research institute in 2016. Today it is home to 100 people across seven research groups. Since its founding, ORI researchers have published over 900 papers and raised over £40M of research funding. This work has been validated in over 380 field trials in locations from Icelandic volcanoes to Loch Ness. This in turn has led to at least 22 patents, 70 IP licences granted to the University, and four start-ups. ORI has significantly contributed to the UK's people pipeline in AI and robotics, training over 120 PhDs, 40 postdoctoral researchers, and at least 60 masters students. Its work has also shaped the public's perception of robots through public engagement including online videos (over half a million views) and in-person events (tens of thousands of participants).



Public Engagement at The Royal Society

Plumpton College

Growth and sustainability of skills for the UK wine industry

Innovator and developer of industry-led training and education programmes, supporting growth and sustainability of the English wine sector.



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Wine student in laboratory

Plumpton College has been the sole innovator and developer of industry-led training and education programmes for the English wine industry since 1985. This progressive employer-college partnership has grown from foundation and degree programmes to an offer including a Masters programme, industry CPD and more recently introductory-level wine academies and apprenticeships.

Ground-breaking work in the late 1980's and 1990's helped professionalise the industry when it was fledgling and struggling to produce the quality of vintage that could compete in an international market. In 2006, a period of rapid expansion occurred due to an increasing need for economic diversification on land estates, changing weather patterns favouring grape ripening and an economic push to increase product exports whilst reducing imports. Subsequently, through continual close working with wine employers and employer representative bodies, programmes have been regularly reviewed and updated through the college's Wine Advisory Panels and Industry Liaison Boards to make sure they meet the sectors emerging technical and business needs.

Responding to employer demand for a production process to develop a high-quality English wine, the college's own vineyard and winery has always been at the forefront of producing internationally award-winning sparkling wines. This resultant expertise, developed amongst graduates, has led the way to create a real competitor to champagne and other sparkling wines. Currently, over 95% of wineries and vineyards across the UK employ staff who have been trained and educated at the college.

Innovation continues today with strategic support for wine tourism and the development of tourism implementation plans at regional scale.



Students in vineyard

Plumpton College Wine Centre. Credit: Christopher Lanaway Photography



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Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)

Improving animal health and welfare through excellence in veterinary services

A world-class, fully integrated, Veterinary Services team that has transformed animal health and welfare, delivered education and knowledge exchange and played a leading role in the eradication of Bovine Viral Diarrhoea in the UK and Republic of Ireland.



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Vet Services staff at SRUC

Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) is one of Europe's leading land-based institutions, with a heritage going back over 100 years. SRUC Veterinary Services is the largest provider of livestock health schemes in the UK. With around 7,300 farmers and livestock keeper members, health schemes have transformed animal health and welfare, contributing hundreds of millions of pounds to the economy through improving productivity.

SRUC's flagship initiative is the Premium Cattle Health Scheme that has national and international impact in helping to eradicate Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD), one of the major cattle diseases that causes slower growth rates, increased susceptibility to other diseases and raised mortality rates. The modelling and analytical work carried out by our researchers is regularly cited as an example of best practice in its field. As well as contributing to animal health and welfare and providing vital support to industry, SRUC veterinary services have also had political impact by providing the underpinning technical frameworks for sheep and goat exports to Northern Ireland post-EU exit.

The veterinary services team is supported by a central state-of-the-art laboratory and network of regional facilities which can process up to one million samples per year. These came into their own during the COVID pandemic when the molecular biology facility was re-purposed for testing for human samples of coronavirus.



Tim Geraghty, SRUC vet (below left) discussing health management with practitioners at the British Cattle Veterinary Association Congress (BCVA)



University of Strathclyde

Excellence, innovation and entrepreneurship in photonics

The UK's largest academic centre for translational research and education in photonics, home to an internationally recognised photonics ecosystem which has been developed over more than three decades, including the UK's first and only Fraunhofer Centre.



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Testing a micro LED array

The University of Strathclyde is home to an internationally recognised photonics ecosystem. Developed over more than three decades it has a highly-developed research community which is working at scale on the leading edge of technology, and translation to practical application. Its academics boast a strong track-record of enterprise and commercialisation through institutional support for significant numbers of spin-out companies in the field.

By embedding a close working relationship with industry, a culture where staff are comfortable working across all technology readiness levels has emerged. In this environment, collaboration and innovation have flourished and companies have clustered and thrived in the wider Strathclyde ecosystem.

Through the University's extensive teaching programmes for undergraduate, masters, PhD and early career researchers, a sustainable and high-quality

talent pipeline supplies the sector. This is one of the key elements of a distinctive ability to accelerate the 'pull' for research by industry and the 'push' of new ideas into industry.

The University was an early pioneer of the photonics field, recognising its importance through the creation of an established Chair in Photonics in 1982, which is believed to be the first of its kind in the UK. Since then, the focus has been on distinctive innovation and research that can translate to major societal impact and economic benefit.

The University has worked with local, devolved and national governments, industry and enterprise agencies as partners and enablers to boost economic growth. Through long-term strategic investment and a series of major and foresighted high risk/high return initiatives, including launching the Institute of Photonics in 1995, the Institution has created a cluster of photonics researchers and industry partners that totals in excess of 230 people, making it one of the largest in the UK. It is also home to the UK's first and only Fraunhofer Centre to facilitate translation of the cutting-edge research.



University of Strathclyde's Technology and Innovation Centre

Red semiconductor disk laser with frequency-doubling to the ultraviolet



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Prifysgol Abertawe | Swansea University

Harnessing public data to improve population health and wellbeing

World-leading research that harnesses data to improve public health and wellbeing, providing a secure national data linkage and access system for all public data in Wales, and increasingly other UK nations, delivering population-level insights for governments and policymakers.



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Public data for public good

Swansea University's Secure Anonymised Information Linkage (SAIL) Databank is at the international forefront of Population Data Science, the growing and multidisciplinary field focusing on collections of individuals and the biological, economic, social, and environmental experiences that shape their lives, their health and their wellbeing. SAIL brings together, links and analyses data from multiple sources to deliver population-level insights for governments and policymakers. Simply put, SAIL's mission is to make routinely collected data work hard for the public good.

Building on more than fifteen years of investment and experience, SAIL's 220-member team conducts and supports world-leading research to develop analytical tools and methodologies, enabling researchers across the UK and internationally to use complex and diverse data at unprecedented depth and scale. Their work brings together healthcare professionals and scientists to undertake robust research in a worldrenowned, secure data environment. Recognised as one of the world's broadest and best-characterised population databanks, SAIL hosts comprehensive data about the Welsh population and is increasingly entrusted to manage data representing UK populations.

As a consequence, SAIL's work underpinned wide ranging Covid-19 research and fast-response, data-driven policy intelligence for the Welsh and UK Governments, with SAIL consistently the best performing centre across the four nations in terms of acquiring new data and undertaking projects. SAIL is also the national data linkage and access system for public data in Wales (from every sector and across more than 500 organisations) and provides data linkage and banking services for numerous global initiatives. Crucially, the work of SAIL enriches the evidence base for policymakers, helping them to better understand the relationships between their various service provisions, ultimately improving people's lives.



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Data Science building at Swansea University

The Queen's Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education Winners 1994–2023

The names of the Prize-winners are listed as they were at the time of recognition. Some name changes may have occurred since.

2023

Prifysgol Aberystwyth University University of the Arts London Prifysgol Bangor University University of Birmingham Bridgwater & Taunton College City College Plymouth City of Glasgow College University of Glasgow Hopwood Hall College & University Centre The Institute of Cancer Research, London Lakes College West Cumbria University of Lincoln University of Liverpool Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine Loughborough College Newcastle University The Open University University of Oxford Plumpton College Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) University of Strathclyde Prifysgol Abertawe | Swansea University

2021

University of Aberdeen Anglia Ruskin University University of Bradford Chichester College Group Exeter College University of Glasgow Grimsby Institute (The TEC Partnership) Heriot-Watt University University of Huddersfield Imperial College London University of Leeds London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine The London School of Economics and Political Science

The Manchester College Nottingham Trent University University of Oxford University of Reading South West College University of Strathclyde Swansea University Warwickshire College

2019

Belfast Metropolitan College Birmingham City University Coventry University Cranfield University Dudley College of Technology Heriot-Watt University King's College London London South East Colleges (LSEC) Manchester Metropolitan University Queen's University Belfast The University of Kent The University of Manchester The University of Plymouth The University of Sheffield The University of Strathclyde Tyne Coast College University of Exeter University of Greenwich University of Huddersfield University of Oxford University of Stirling University of York

2017

The Arts University College at Bournemouth Cranfield University Cardiff University Harper Adams University London School of Economics and Political Science London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

National Film and Television School

Newcastle College Scotland's Rural University College The Institute of Cancer Research The University of Edinburgh University of Aberdeen University of Birmingham University of Durham University of East Anglia University of East Anglia University of Glasgow University of Glasgow University of Liverpool University of Southampton University of Surrey Weston College

2015

Abingdon & Witney College Blackpool and The Fylde College Bridgwater College Cardiff Metropolitan University Cardiff University Cranfield University Edinburgh Napier University Heriot-Watt University Lancaster University Nottingham Trent University Queen's University Belfast The University of Edinburgh University of Bradford University of Bristol UCL Institute of Education University of Greenwich University of Huddersfield University of Hull University of Oxford University of Warwick Westminster Kingsway College

2013

Cardiff University Coleg Cambria Cornwall College Loughborough University MidKent College Northumbria University Teesside University The University of Edinburgh The University of Kent The University of Manchester University of the Arts London University of Bedfordshire University of Bristol University College London University of Dundee University of Glasgow University of Leicester University of Oxford Newcastle University University of Stirling

2011

Bournemouth University Brunel University Coleg Llandrillo Cymru Cranfield University Hackney Community College Queen's University Belfast South Nottingham College The University of Manchester The University of Plymouth University of Bath University of Birmingham University College London University of East Anglia University of Leeds University of Nottingham University of Oxford University of Reading University of St Andrews University of Southampton University of Surrey University of York

2009

Aberdeen College Aberystwyth University Cardiff University City College Norwich City of Sunderland College Edinburgh Napier University Keele University King's College London Lancaster University London School of Economics & Political Science Newcastle University School of Oriental and African Studies Thames Valley University The Open University University of East Anglia University of Essex University of Leeds University of Oxford University of Reading University of Warwick University of York

2007

Cardiff University City & Islington College Coventry University Cranfield University Guildhall School of Music & Drama Imperial College London Joseph Chamberlain Sixth Form College John Wheatley College Loughborough University Oxford Brookes University Southern Regional College Telford College of Arts and Technology The City Literary Institute The University of Kent University of the Arts London University of Cambridge University of Greenwich University of Oxford The University of Sheffield University of York

2005

Accrington and Rossendale College Birkbeck, University of London Chichester College Cranfield University Guildhall School of Music & Drama Harper Adams University Lancaster University Liverpool John Moores University London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine Loreto College Loughborough University Newcastle University Queen's University Belfast The University of Edinburgh University of Cambridge University of Dundee University of Exeter University of Oxford University of Reading University of Southampton University of York

2002

Deeside College Hills Road Sixth Form College Imperial College of Science, Technology & Medicine John Leggott College King's College London London School of Economics & Political Science Loughborough University Matthew Boulton College of FE & HE New College Nottingham Queen Margaret University Royal Northern College of Music Sabhal Mor Ostaig University of Cambridge University College London University of Greenwich University of Leicester

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University of Manchester Institute of Science & Technology University of Oxford The University of Sheffield University of Surrey

2000

Banff and Buchan College of Further Education Bridgwater College Cardiff University Greenhead College Hastings College of Arts and Technology Imperial College of Science, Technology & Medicine Lauder College Loughborough University Middlesex University Oxford Brookes University Queen's University Belfast Royal College of Art Royal Northern College of Music The Sixth Form College, Colchester The University of Sheffield University of Aberdeen University of Bath University College London University of Greenwich University of Nottingham University of Oxford University of Salford University of Surrey Roehampton

1998

MidKent College Birmingham College of Food, Tourism & Creative Studies City College Plymouth Godalming College Hills Road Sixth Form College Loughborough University Middlesex University Royal Holloway, University of London

Royal Northern College of Music The Arts University College at Bournemouth The University of Sheffield University of the Arts London University of Cambridge University of Dundee University of Exeter University of Glasgow University of Manchester Institute of Science & Technology University of Reading University of Wales, Lampeter University of Wales College of Medicine University of Wales, Swansea

1996

University of the Arts London University of Birmingham Carlisle College College of North West London University of Edinburgh University of Exeter Greenhead College Hackney Community College University of Hull King's College London Leeds Metropolitan University Liverpool Hope College University of Manchester University of Manchester Institute of Science & Technology Middlesex University The Open University University of Oxford School of Oriental and African Studies Queen's University Belfast The Sheffield College University of Strathclyde University of Surrey University of York

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1994

Aberdeen College Bournemouth University Burton and South Derbyshire College Chippenham College City & Islington College Croydon College University of Durham University of Glasgow Heriot-Watt University Imperial College of Science, Technology & Medicine Lancaster University Loughborough University Luton Sixth Form College University of Leicester University of London, Wye College University of Manchester University of Oxford University of Plymouth Queen's University Belfast Royal College of Art University College London







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