

# TEACHING AND LEARNING

Innovative teaching and learning sit alongside first-rate research, scholarship and enterprise at the heart of the University's mission.

Right: Lord Puttnam with Professor Rosamund Sutherland on the roof terrace at the Graduate School of Education in Berkeley Square



## New teaching and conference facility opens in Berkeley Square

Lord Puttnam of Queensgate visited the Graduate School of Education in December to open a state-of-the-art teaching and conference facility on the fourth floor of the School's main building in Berkeley Square.

The new accommodation, funded by HEFCE from its Teaching Initiative Fund, includes a large teaching space and a conference area, as well as a science laboratory for training teachers, created in conjunction with the Science Learning Centre South-West. Audiovisual and IT facilities include the Access Grid Node, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. This is a multi-screen video conferencing facility which enables the School to collaborate with colleagues across the world, particularly in cutting-edge analysis of video data. Links have already been made with Australia, Norway and the USA.

## Online help for students

A new student help website ([www.bristol.ac.uk/studenthelp](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/studenthelp)) provides links and answers to frequently asked questions about many aspects of student life. A second site, devoted to student skills ([www.bristol.ac.uk/studentskills](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/studentskills)), offers a searchable directory of skills-based courses and resources available to students across the University. Students can book places on many courses directly from the site.

## Feline better: new Training Scholarship

The School of Veterinary Science is the base for a new training scholarship established by the UK charity Cats Protection. Its first Clinical Training Scholarship in Feline Behaviour and Welfare has been awarded to Jenna Kiddie, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh.

Cats Protection finds homes for 60,000 cats each year, and around ten per cent of these have behavioural problems. The Scholarship aims to further understanding of feline welfare, especially within a rescue environment. Jenna will help to develop research projects, the findings from which will inform further training for staff and volunteers in feline behaviour and welfare. Her findings will also promote behavioural therapies for cats, rather than pharmaceutical treatment.



## Festival of Language Learning

Over 100 sixth-form students from local secondary schools joined academics at the School of Modern Languages for the third Festival of Language Learning in September. This annual event aims to promote the diverse employment, social and cultural opportunities that continued language learning has to offer. Students had the chance to try out less commonly taught languages, such as Russian, Czech, Italian and Portuguese. They also took part in cultural seminars, on topics such as Paris in French cinema and the protest songs of the Chilean songwriter, Victor Jara. The event included advice on careers and how to apply to university, and a workshop for teachers.



## Dental developments

The Bristol Dental School is to help address the shortage of dentists in the UK, thanks to a grant of £16.1 million from the Department of Health and HEFCE. The new funding, following a successful joint bid by the University, United Bristol Healthcare Trust and Bristol South Primary Care Trust, allows the Dental School to increase its annual intake from 55 to 75.

An ambitious rebuild programme includes the refurbishment of existing space, with a more wheelchair-accessible main entrance to the Dental Hospital. A new infrastructure, both clinical and non-clinical, will also pave the way for future expansion, including a teaching and clinical centre at the South Bristol Community Hospital, due to open in 2008/9. Experienced students based there and at the Dental Hospital will provide supervised dental treatment sessions for local people.

Additional benefits at the Dental Hospital include enlargement and upgrading of the Clinical Skills Laboratory; a new prosthetics teaching laboratory; new library and IT facilities; and an expanded student common room furnished to allow for private study throughout the day. There will also be new training and clinical centres in Swindon and Marlborough Hospitals from 2007.

## Training boost for Systems Engineering

The Universities of Bristol and Bath collaborated to win a £3.4 million EPSRC Collaborative Training award to establish an Engineering Doctorate (EngD) Centre for The Management of Systems for Enhanced Performance. The industry-driven Centre, based at Bristol and supported by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, will create enormous opportunities for innovation and industrial growth in the UK.

The EngD programme will recruit research engineers already working as experts in their field to work on projects of concern to industry. The Centre will begin operating from the start of the 2006 academic year.

## Signs of change

The Centre for Deaf Studies has been closely involved in a project to remedy the shortage of certified sign language teachers in Europe. The work is organised by SLATE, a project funded by the European Union.

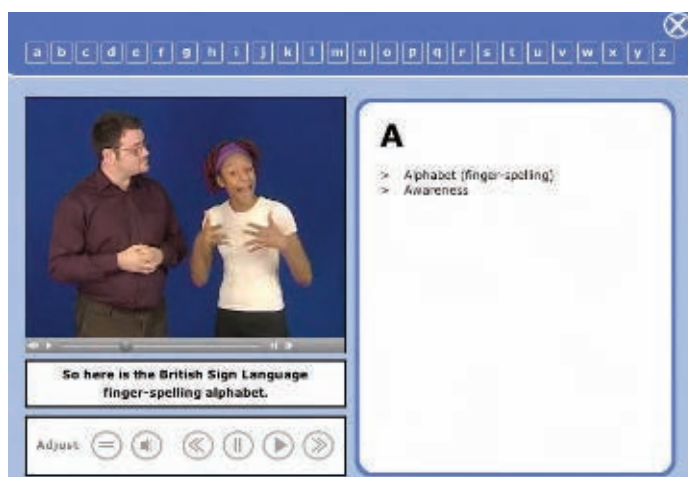
Sign languages are only officially recognised in a few countries, such as Finland, Sweden, Germany and Greece, but they have gained great popularity in high schools and colleges, and demand for sign language classes often outstrips supply.

'Many Deaf sign language teachers have difficulties in understanding written or spoken language,' explains Dr Linda Day from the Centre for Deaf Studies, 'and therefore find it hard to acquire a substantial knowledge of the field, especially in sign language linguistics.'

The new project will supply sign language teachers with a bilingual web-based teaching management system, pooling knowledge and experience of sign language teaching from different European countries to create high-level teaching materials and learning tools.

A pilot course for teachers took place at the Diaconia Polytechnic in Turku, Finland, in October; a more advanced course was held at Burwalls, the University's residential study centre, in February.

Below: Signstation ([www.signstation.org](http://www.signstation.org)) is a new website run by the Centre for Deaf Studies, with video, interactive exercises and explanations of British Sign Language and Deaf people at work.



## Support for teaching bioethics

The Graduate School of Education has launched a new website, [www.bEEP.ac.uk](http://www.bEEP.ac.uk), to help teachers cover topics in biology where science and ethics overlap. The resources include information for pupils on a range of bioethical issues as well as activities and discussion areas. There are also teacher resources and online discussion forums.

Its development was funded by a Wellcome Trust Society Award from its 'Engaging Science' programme. Feedback included praise for the 'amount of detail it gets into about topics' and its visual appearance. The team has been asked by the Institute of Physics to develop a similar site, focusing on ethical questions in Physics.

## Academy on track for 2008

The Society of Merchant Venturers is sponsoring the development of an Academy in South Bristol on the site of Withywood Community School. The University is a co-sponsor and worked during 2005/06 with the Merchant Venturers, Bristol City Council, teachers and members of the local community to advance the project.

The Merchants' Academy Withywood will be a state school for 11- to 19-year-olds. It will operate independently of the Local Education Authority and will have a focus on enterprise and skills. Due to open in September 2008, the Academy will aim to raise the quality of secondary education in Withywood and to support the economic regeneration of the area it serves.

The Graduate School of Education is helping to devise the Academy's curriculum and the methods of delivering it, as well as the staff training and development programme. The University's Support Services are also involved in the partnership to ensure that the Academy succeeds.

Below: An artist's impression of the new Merchants' Academy



## Teaching prizes

Rogelio Vallejo (right), Senior Language Tutor and Languages Teaching Co-ordinator in the Department of Hispanic, Portuguese and Latin American Studies, has won a prestigious Fellowship from the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme. The Scheme recognises and rewards teachers and learning support staff in higher education in England and Northern Ireland for their excellence in teaching.

Dr Dudley Shallcross (right) in the School of Chemistry is the first-ever recipient of the Society of Chemical Industry's Science Education Award. The award recognises 'outstanding contribution to the science educational field so as to bring science alive and encourage young people to continue to study science'.

The University awards its own Teaching Prizes to members of academic staff. In 2005 these were awarded to:

**Rogelio Vallejo**, Department of Hispanic and Latin American Studies

**Dr Ian Holyer (1)**, Department of Computer Science

**Dr Judy Harris (2)**, Department of Physiology

**Professor Jonathan Sandy**, Department of Oral and Dental Science

**Dr Dudley Shallcross**, School of Chemistry

**Dr Sally Barnes (3)**, Graduate School of Education

The University's 2005 Rising Star Awards, for staff who have been teaching in Higher Education for less than five years and who show excellent potential, were given to:

**Dr Ellen McCarthy**, Department of English

**Dr Mohammad Wanous (4)**, Engineering Management Group

**Liz Incles (5)**, Department of Anatomy

**Stephen Greenwood**, Medical Education

**Dr Duncan Wass (6)**, School of Chemistry

**Dr Tom Slater**, School for Policy Studies

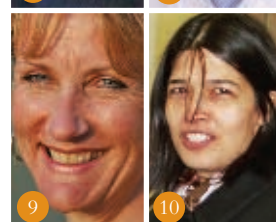
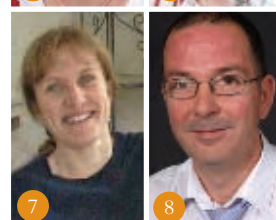
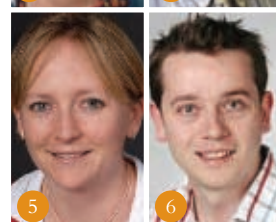
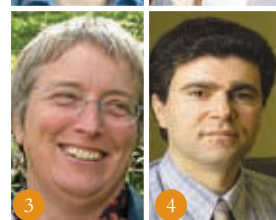
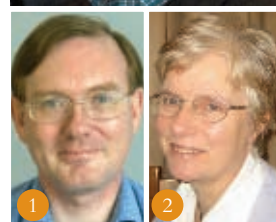
New awards recognising support for teaching were awarded to:

**Evi Gossner (7)**, Department of German

**Steven Gaze (8)**, Department of Anatomy

**Pauline Hambling (9)**, School of Biological Sciences

**Melissa Bevan (10)**, Faculty of Engineering

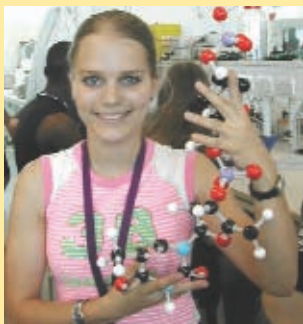




# OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

The University is closely involved in the life of the city and local communities. There are examples in the chapters on teaching and learning and on students. Two more examples are highlighted here, and numerous others could be cited in areas as diverse as lifelong learning, staff volunteering, community dialogues, public lectures and partnerships with local cultural enterprises.

Young visitors during 2005/06 (clockwise from top left): Building molecules at a NAGTY Science Summer School; graduation practice for children from Fair Furlong School; and a local primary pupil consults a teacher's textbook in the Senate Room, at a Primary Aimhigher Day



## Catching them young: Widening Participation activities 2005/06

The Widening Participation Office continues to make concerted efforts to encourage applications from students with backgrounds that are under-represented at Bristol.

The office is involved in a range of initiatives, often in partnership with other organisations, to raise awareness of opportunities in higher education. These include a number of successful summer schools, including the Higher Education Summer School, The National Academy for Gifted and Talented Students (NAGTY) and the Sutton Trust Summer School.

Over 350 undergraduates have been trained to act as ambassadors and role models, on projects such as e-mentoring for pupils interested in medicine and tutoring in collaboration with teachers on attainment-raising activities.

The University hosts many other events, including visit days, subject enrichment events, master classes and information

sessions. A law enrichment event was recently highlighted as a model of good practice in the Universities UK/Standing Conference of Principals-sponsored research on widening participation.

For those about to begin their undergraduate careers, a growing range of support is available. A recent example currently being piloted is the Student Navigation Network, in which current students welcome and advise new arrivals in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Another pilot scheme, 'Access to Bristol', aimed at year 12 students from local state schools, was launched in November 2005. The departments of Mathematics, English and Policy Studies are involved in the scheme, in which students visit the University over six months and take part in a progressive academic programme, with support from student mentors. This year the scheme has been expanded to include Theology, Biomedical Sciences and Engineering.



## Science: It's alive!

Everyone can enjoy learning about science – that was the message resounding inside the Mall Galleries in Bristol's Broadmead during a packed weekend in March.

Science Alive! 2006 was the University's contribution to National Science Week, an annual event arranged by the British Association for the Advancement of Science to increase public engagement with science. Members of the public got to grips with interactive displays on topics including glass blowing, how dinosaurs walked, how insulin is made and what would happen if Bristol were to flood as a result of climate change.

The University subsidised transport to Broadmead for pupils from 14 local schools, who were able to chat with scientists about their work. Also featured were works in progress by award-winning artist Richard Box, some popular exhibits from Explore@Bristol, and a display from United Bristol Healthcare Trust.



Staff and members of the public meet and talk about science at the March 2006 event in the Mall Galleries, Broadmead.

