

SHAPING THE FUTURE  
OF PROFESSIONAL LIFE





309 Regent Street in 1909 and now (opposite)





# FOREWORD



The University of Westminster’s 175th anniversary is a significant milestone. The history of the Royal Institute of British Architects – RIBA – spans a very similar timescale; we celebrated our 175th anniversary in 2009, and since the opening of the School of Architecture at the Regent Street Polytechnic in 1891 our two organisations have enjoyed a long and fruitful professional relationship. The need for higher education to have a professional relevance, and for students to be able to engage with industry and professional practice, has never been greater – not just in architecture, but across most disciplines. Whether at undergraduate, postgraduate or professional development level, acquiring the skills and knowledge needed to gain a qualification and build a career now means a significant investment of time and money. The University of Westminster’s heritage, showcased in this brochure, reveals that it has long understood that need, and has worked with professional bodies to meet it.

The University’s central London location has played its part, giving students access to outstanding resources, to powerful professional networks, and fantastic career opportunities upon graduation. But Westminster’s reach goes far beyond the country’s capital. The University’s students are drawn from more than 150 countries as well as those from here in the UK, and they use the learning and knowledge acquired here to build careers and improve lives nationally and internationally. The various case studies in this publication, featuring students from around the world – both in 1949 and today – show that this has long been the case.

More than anything, this book underlines the continuing importance that the University of Westminster places on building strong partnerships with professional practice, to help achieve its mission of ‘building the next generation of highly employable citizens to shape the future’. I look forward to RIBA continuing to work closely with the University of Westminster in the future, and congratulate you on your achievements of the past 175 years.

**Stephen R Hodder MBE**  
President  
RIBA

# INTRODUCTION



This year marks a special milestone in the history of the University of Westminster, as we celebrate the 175th anniversary of the opening of The Polytechnic Institution, the forerunner of our University, at 309 Regent Street. The Institution was launched by the scientist and engineer Sir George Cayley, who is internationally recognised as the founder of the science of aerodynamics. His vision was to create an educational institution that would stimulate innovation among the new generation of ‘professional scientists’ and demonstrate how those innovations could change people’s lives. His institution rapidly gained prowess and became a well-known London landmark; changing its name to the Royal Polytechnic Institution in 1841 when Prince Albert became patron.

In the intervening years our institution has advanced and expanded – significantly under the leadership of Quintin Hogg (1881–1903) as the Regent Street Polytechnic, then as the Polytechnic of Central London (formed in 1970) and, since 1992, as the University of Westminster. Throughout that period of evolution, our commitment to Sir George’s original principles of education and innovation to improve people’s lives has remained strong. Today, 175 years on, the University of Westminster continues to seek to inspire innovation and creative thinking through our close interaction with practice and the professions, our interdisciplinarity, and our international engagement. Our current mission – to shape the future of professional life – reflects our continuing focus on providing an education for our students that is professionally relevant, and pushing professional boundaries through our research and entrepreneurship.

This brochure highlights the strength of the relationships between our institution and the professional bodies in London, across the UK and internationally. Those relationships, born in the eras of Cayley and Hogg, were clearly nurtured throughout the 20th century, as highlighted, for example, by the Central Office of Information’s 1949 exhibition, *Working Man’s University*. Now we are advancing ambitious plans to further develop those relationships as the need for professional relevance in higher education becomes ever greater. I hope you enjoy learning more about the University of Westminster and I hope you will join us in celebrating our 175-year history of educating for professional life.

**Geoffrey Petts**  
Vice Chancellor  
University of Westminster

# WORKING MAN'S UNIVERSITY



## *The First Polytechnic*

Issued by the CENTRAL OFFICE OF INFORMATION, LONDON

## EVOLUTION OF EDUCATING FOR PROFESSIONAL LIFE

This year we celebrate the University of Westminster's 175th anniversary, and our rich heritage and proud tradition of providing academic excellence, cultural engagement and personal enrichment includes many milestones along the way.

The development of the modern University can be traced from the founding of the Polytechnic Institution by Sir George Cayley in 1838, to the opening of Quintin Hogg's Young Men's Christian Institute at 309 Regent Street (soon known as the Regent Street Polytechnic) in 1882, the creation of the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL) in 1970, and the move to university status in 1992.

Alongside the ethos of offering education for all, regardless of background or financial status, a consistent thread running throughout our institution's evolution is the commitment to providing teaching and learning which is professionally relevant, supported by strong ties and

close relationships with industry, the professions and practice.

Sir George Cayley was determined to stimulate innovation among 'professional scientists' and to demonstrate to the public how the advances in science and invention had practical applications which could improve lives.

Quintin Hogg's reputation was that of a philanthropist who focused on providing social, sporting and educational opportunities for young working men; but he was also acutely aware of the importance of professional training to support London's rapidly expanding economy. Day and evening classes which prepared young people to enter a profession, or developed the skills and knowledge of those looking to progress in their chosen career, were a hallmark of the Regent Street Polytechnic from its earliest days.

It was also no surprise that the Regent Street Polytechnic took the lead in retraining large numbers of

disabled soldiers returning from the First World War, or that both Regent Street and its successor, PCL, were at the forefront of developing professionally relevant courses in a range of areas, including business and management, computing and electronics.

The historical timeline charting the University of Westminster's evolution underlines the fact that many of the milestones in our history are linked to education which provides professional progression and development.

One date that does not feature large in the Westminster timeline is 1949; yet it was in this year that the government's Central Office of Information (COI) organised an exhibition to celebrate the success of the Regent Street Polytechnic in delivering "the 'know-how' that modern industry and commerce insists of its workers". Titled *Working Man's University: The First Polytechnic*, the COI's exhibition focused on those studying at Regent Street to further





their careers; from catering classes and tailoring to architecture, engineering, photography and physics, it shows the Regent Street Polytechnic doing what it did best – educating for professional life.

The provision of that education was part of the Polytechnic's daily routine, but the important role the institution was playing in public life should not be underestimated. This was post-war Britain; much of London and other cities around the country had been destroyed by bombing, rationing was still in place, and recovery from the turmoil of the Second World War was a slow process. Yet the Regent Street Polytechnic offered opportunity, education and hope to working men and women from London, across the UK, and around the globe – those featured in the exhibition included students from France, Nigeria, South Africa, Switzerland and Tanzania.

Throughout this 175 anniversary brochure, we have included pictures and profiles from *Working Man's University*, alongside similar profiles from students of today. While the institution may have changed in the intervening years, it's clear that the commitment to professionally relevant education remains.

Today, the relationship between the University of Westminster and our professional partners is as strong as ever. Our undergraduate and postgraduate courses are recognised and accredited by many of the leading professional bodies, from the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants to the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, and our professional development and short courses attract thousands of students to Westminster every year. We work closely with businesses and professional practice to make sure

our courses keep up to date with professional developments, and can offer placements and internships with the leaders in every sector. Our research is helping to push the boundaries of professional development, and our consultancy work and knowledge transfer partnerships are enabling businesses from the UK and around the world to stay ahead of the field.

All of these activities and relationships are part of the University of Westminster's vision to build the next generation of highly employable global citizens who will shape the future. As we celebrate our 175th anniversary, we remain dedicated to educating for professional life, to the original pioneering aims of Sir George Cayley and Quintin Hogg, and look forward to ever stronger relationships with our professional partners.

Current students working in the computer room of our Little Titchfield Street library, in front of an image of the Typewriting class in 1899





## ARCHITECTURE

Of all the disciplines studied at Westminster, architecture has one of the longest and strongest histories within the University, dating back to the South Kensington Science and Art Department classes (taught under the auspices of the Board of Trade) first offered at the Polytechnic in 1882. Classes in land surveying, brickwork, masonry and quantity surveying soon followed, and by 1891 the School of Architecture had been established.

Over the coming years the Polytechnic played a key role in preparing students for professional examinations, including those at the Institution of Surveyors (now the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors), Royal Engineers, RIBA, the Board of Education, City and Guilds and the Schools of the Royal Academy.

After the First World War the School taught an increasing variety of architecture classes, as well as more craft-based subjects such as carpentry, at both evening and daytime classes. The links to professional bodies were strengthened through diploma courses that exempted students from RIBA examination and associateship.

In 1929 the School moved to Little Titchfield Street, and in 1931 the Diploma Final Examination in Architecture was recognised as qualification for registration as an architect. With the creation of PCL in 1970 the College of Architecture and Advanced Building Technologies moved to Marylebone Road, home of today's Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment (FABE). The links with the profession at undergraduate and Master's level are as strong as ever, and in 2009 Westminster was also selected by UN-Habitat as its first partner university in the UK. With more than 2,000 students FABE is one of the largest providers of built environment education in the UK, and was recently ranked second in the country by Architects' Journal.



One of the most important schools at the Polytechnic is for Architecture, Surveying and Building. The Headmaster, John S Walkden (FRIBA, Dist.TP, MTPI, FRIAS) interviews all students before acceptance, and here he is talking to 19-year-old Peter Adams, whose father is President of the Town-Planning Institute in Britain. His uncle holds a corresponding position in the United States of America, and his grandfather was Founder-Member of the Institute. The model in front of the desk is a proposed concert hall for the Regent's Park site, built by Walter Greaves, an ex-student of the school.



Over the last decade the achievements of our architecture and interiors students have been repeatedly recognised by a wide range of external awards, including the prestigious RIBA President's Silver Medal and Dissertation Medal, LIFELINES competition and Archiprix. Simhika Rao is the latest to secure such high-profile success, having been nominated for the RIBA President's Medal Award for Dissertation, which was her dream when she started at Westminster. Simhika completed her Masters in Architecture (MArch) in June 2013, and has already gained work experience at architecture firm Grimshaw, where she was involved in the development of an arts and cultural centre in Bangor and the HS2 rail network. She is discussing her dissertation with her tutor and MArch Course Leader, William Firebrace.





## APPLIED BUSINESS

When Quintin Hogg opened the Polytechnic at 309 Regent Street in 1882, alongside his philanthropic aim of providing social, sporting and educational opportunities for young men in London, he recognised the need for business and professional training to support the city's expanding economy. The School of Commerce taught classes in advertising and statistics, book-keeping, and shorthand, and prepared students for the Civil Service exam. The launch of the Department of Industrial Administration in 1924 saw the introduction of a pioneering course that led to the foundation of a Diploma in Management. After the Second World War a National Diploma in Management Studies was set up and awarded jointly by the Ministry of Education and the British Institute of Management (today the Chartered Management Institute), and from 1959 the School of Commerce was also offering an HND in Business Studies.

After the Polytechnic merged with Holborn College of Law, Languages and Commerce in 1970, the newly created Faculty of Management ran the UK's only MA in Management Studies, and our first MBA course was established in 1983.

A further merger in 1990 with Harrow College created two business schools within the University – one at Harrow, the other at Marylebone – which were combined in 2009 to form the current Westminster Business School, one of the largest in the country. Today our 4,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students are all based at our recently refurbished Marylebone Campus, complete with cutting-edge resources and a high-tech study environment.

Our work in business development, knowledge transfer and consultancy continues to grow, and we are proud to hold a large number of international and professional accreditations from bodies such as the Association of MBAs, Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, ACCA and the Chartered Institute of Marketing.



At the Department of Mathematics and Physics at the Polytechnic, Mr Charles Key is studying to take his BSc General Examination next year. Mr Key is a director of a surgical appliance manufacturer. As a business man he is a firm believer in knowing all about his product before trying to sell it. Now that the firm has decided to manufacture scientific instruments as well as surgical instruments, 42-year-old Charles Key spends his evenings studying Physics.



Howard Collins joined the two-year training scheme at London Underground after leaving school with A Levels at 18. He worked his way through every operational job including station staff, driver and signaller, but found it a challenge to progress to the next level, facing competition from university graduates. Howard wanted to do a practical course where he could put his learning into practice straightaway, so he studied for his MBA at Westminster part-time. He wrote his thesis on the impacts of the closure of the East London Line, a project he was involved in at the time. The MBA certainly helped Howard progress his career – he was Chief Operating Officer at London Underground until 2013, and has now taken over as the new CEO of Sydney Trains in Australia.





## FASHION

Now regularly ranked among the world's top fashion schools, the University of Westminster's fashion teaching has two parallel but distinct histories, originating from both the Polytechnic and Harrow College.

The first cutting (tailors) classes began when the Polytechnic moved to 309 Regent Street in 1882, taught in the evenings by Dr Thomas Darwin Humphreys – a staunch advocate of teaching anatomy to tailoring students. By the time of the First World War the School of Art was running classes in fashion drawing and designing, and there was also a Day School of Tailoring for boys rather than adults, with youngsters from the course later apprenticed to Master Tailors across the city. In 1929 the tailoring classes formed part of the newly created Craft School at Little Titchfield Street.

From 1888 the Polytechnic also offered a series of classes aimed at young women including dressmaking and millinery, which continued to be offered in the School of Domestic Science until 1963.

By contrast, Harrow College of Higher Education provided dressmaking classes (for girls only) from 1889 onwards. Aged 14 to 20, students served an apprenticeship for several years, where they qualified to earn a wage only 'once they had acquired the knowledge of cutting-out'.

While most fashion courses at the Polytechnic were transferred to local colleges during the 1950s and 60s, Harrow College's School of Art continued to expand and thrive. During the 1970s and 80s fashion students were regularly winning international prizes, and David and Elizabeth Emanuel, who designed Princess Diana's wedding dress, both studied fashion at Harrow.

In 1990 Harrow College of Higher Education merged with the Polytechnic. Today, the renowned Department of Fashion at the University's Harrow Campus offers students pioneering courses in design, merchandising, buying and business. It also provides professional development for prominent retailers including Harrods, Tesco and New Look.



At his home in Sidcup, Kent, Peter West spends all his spare time tailoring. Peter, 38, was a big-gun maker for ten years at Woolwich Arsenal. During that time his hobby was making suits both for himself and his wife. Now he has turned to this as a career, and the Polytechnic School of Tailoring will give him the opportunity of qualifying. During the day he works for a tailoring firm, and in the evenings he is studying at the Polytechnic. Now he has orders from outside, a sheaf of which are hanging on the wall on the left.



Lidia Janus lives in London and her style is strongly influenced by the city's cosmopolitan and vibrant environment. She is currently doing her BA Honours in Fashion Design at the University of Westminster and has already worked with some of the biggest names in the industry. She currently has a full-time internship placement with Alexander McQueen, and has previously worked for Claire Barrow, hand painting flowers on leather jackets for her exclusive range that was sold in Joseph, and worn by Rihanna. She has also worked with Ashley Williams on her debut collection which was worn by Rita Ora, Pixie Geldof and Alice Dellal.





## LANGUAGES

Languages have been taught at 309 Regent Street (the University of Westminster's headquarters) since 1861, when the site was used by the City of London College to run classes in French, German, Latin, Italian and Spanish. The Royal Polytechnic Institution started offering language evening classes in 1872, and by the time Quintin Hogg's Polytechnic Institute moved into the Regent Street building it was providing education in those same five languages, as well as Hindustani and Greek.

By 1888, the French course in particular had expanded to include a debating society, study holidays in France and a lecture series. Other language courses also had their own 'literary societies', linking up with Quintin Hogg's holistic vision of education to include more than simply academic learning. Most teachers and lecturers of these classes appear to have been native speakers.

Prior to the First World War the teaching of languages was part of the growing range of commercial subjects at the Polytechnic. Qualifications included the Polytechnic's own diplomas, as well as those examined by the Royal Society of Arts at the London Chamber of Commerce.

The range of language-related courses was strengthened through the merger with Holborn College of Law, Languages and Commerce in 1970 to form the Polytechnic of Central London; Holborn had particular experience in interpreting, and a history of language teaching that also went back to the late 19th century.

Today, the Department of Modern Languages and Cultures provides students with a flexible and exciting range of opportunities to study European and non-European languages, cultures and societies. In addition, the Westminster Professional Language Centre (WPLC) offers professional language training, including examinations of the Ministry of Defence Language Board, a range of teacher development courses and bespoke language units to external clients.



A young French girl, Simone Alexaneryne, tries to make herself understood at the Linguist Club meeting at the Polytechnic. English, French, German, Italian, Swedish, Russian, Polish, Norwegian and Dutch are all taught at the School of Modern Languages for £1 a session (September to May) for each subject. Simone is 20 years old. She came to England to learn the language and teaches French to children at the Notre Dame de France School in Leicester Square.



Julia Buckingham has just completed her MA in Technical and Specialised Translation at the University of Westminster. After finishing her undergraduate degree in French and Spanish at Oxford, Julia found that she needed a Master's degree to be successful as a professional translator. The course at Westminster was recommended to her as one of the best in the country. Julia really enjoyed the practical focus of the MA and the variety of talks and industry links offered during the course. She was selected for a one-month internship with the UN in Vienna earlier this summer and has now been offered a full-time job at APT Transtelex in Putney – one of the leading translation companies in Europe.





## LAW

The origins of the School of Law go back to the Kennington College of Commerce and Law, an evening institute founded before the First World War, specialising in legal studies. Between 1958 and 1970, the College went through several mergers, becoming the Holborn College of Law, Language and Commerce before eventually amalgamating with the Regent Street Polytechnic to form the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL).

From the beginning, the School of Law recognised the important role that part-time studies play in the service to the community, and particularly in offering opportunities for those in employment. The School offered a full-time LLB University of London (external) degree together with a range of part-time day and evening courses for professional law exams including the Bar (Final), the Law Society's Qualifying Examinations for Solicitors and the exams of the Institute of Legal Executives.

The School also devoted resources to other aspects of the part-time study of law, such as the organisation of 'sandwich' courses, short courses and seminars on specific topics. In September 1985 the School introduced a new part-time day CNAALB course – the first in inner London. PCL's law courses continued to be taught at the Holborn College building in Red Lion Square until 1995, when the School of Law moved to its current home in Little Titchfield Street.

Today, Westminster Law School is one of London's leading providers of legal education, and a pioneer of innovative courses; our Solicitor's Exempting degree is the only course of its kind in London and the South East, and one of only four in the country. We have an international reputation for research into the legal profession and legal practice, international law and human rights, and commercial and financial law. Our strong links with the professions directly benefit our students through work placement opportunities at major legal firms and blue chip companies.



Although the School of Law did not exist at the Polytechnic in 1949, disciplines that were part of the traditional legal education were certainly practised. Here is Pirthipal Singh Hunja, an Indian from Tanzania (then Tanganyika), East Africa, studying for his Matriculation Examination. His parents went to Africa from the Punjab during the First World War. The Matriculation Department had its own Debating Society at the time – similar to the negotiating competitions that are now a key extra-curricular component at the School of Law – with a regular attendance of many students and members of the staff of other departments.



Jifree Cader grew up in Streatham, south London and completed his Law LLB at the University of Westminster in 2005. His course included 100 hours of work experience during his second year, which he says gave him a real advantage in the employment market when he applied for vacation schemes and training contracts. During his training contract, Jifree worked through the credit crunch and subsequent recession and, as a result, legal advice for insolvency and restructuring was in high demand. This is now his specialist area as an Associate at Kirkland and Ellis LLP. Jifree took an active part in the extra-curricular activities on offer at the School of Law, including the client interviewing, negotiation and mooting competitions. These proved invaluable talking points at his training contract interviews and were a good introduction to the tough questions he faces as a lawyer now.





## PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography has occupied a unique place in the history of the University from the earliest days of the Polytechnic Institution, and like fashion, the subject has a unique history at both the Polytechnic and Harrow. Louis Daguerre and Henry Fox Talbot both announced separate processes for capturing an image in January 1839, just six months after the opening of the Polytechnic, and by the October of that year lectures were taking place three times a week at the Polytechnic to explain the photographic processes. In 1841 Talbot granted the Polytechnic a licence to demonstrate his new calotype process; the same year the first photographic studio in Europe was opened on the roof of 309 Regent Street by Richard Beard. Classes in photography were taught from 1852, and the School of Photography was established in 1883.

The School expanded quickly, and in the early 1900s it carried out a great deal of research and consultation work. It helped Scotland Yard to establish a photographic department, designed an X-Ray department for Guy's Hospital, and was commissioned to report on the possibilities of forging bank notes.

The School was also at the forefront of developments in colour photography. It was in regular contact with the Lumière brothers, who famously demonstrated cinema at the Polytechnic in 1896. Students of the School held annual exhibitions from 1922 and could become student members of the Professional Photographers Association (now the British Institute of Professional Photography).

Dr Margaret Harker, a former student at the school, was appointed Head of the School of Photography in 1959 (she was also the first female President of the Royal Photographic Society). Dr Harker was instrumental in achieving BSc Honours status for the School's photography course – the first photography degree to be offered in the UK.

Photography classes were also taught at Harrow from the early 1900s, following the opening of the Eastman Photographic Company (Kodak) nearby. Today, the Department of Photography and Film sits within the Faculty of Media, Arts and Design at our Harrow Campus. The Faculty, with around 4,000 students, offers one of the most varied portfolios in Europe and has a strong reputation for professional and practice-based education.

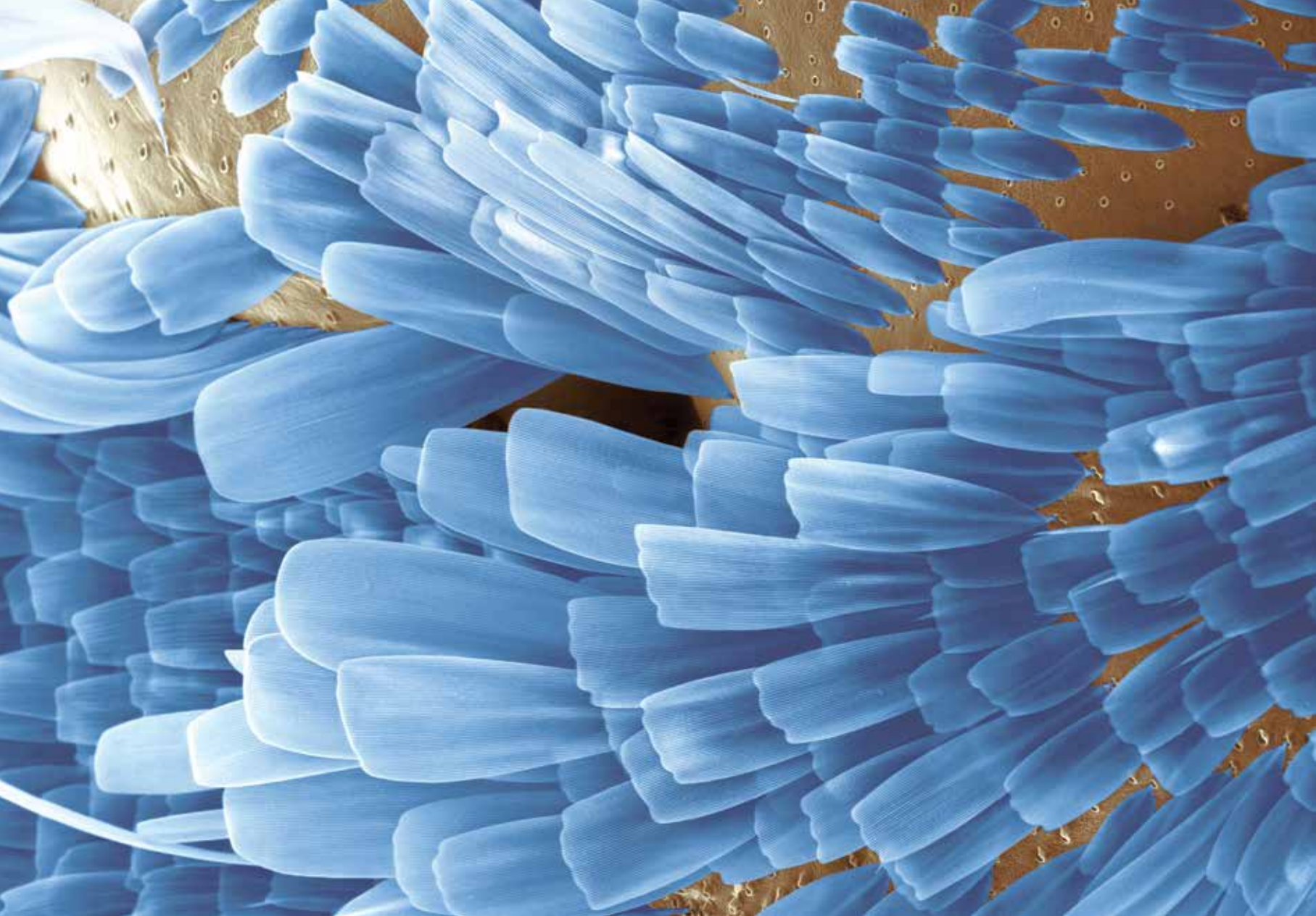


The Polytechnic School of Photography is recognised and approved by the Institute of British Photographers. In the evenings there are courses in General Technique, Commercial Photography, Portraiture and Kinema [cinema] Laboratory Practice. Demonstrating on a model, the instructor is pointing out a lighting technique to George Douglas Elliott, a South African who came to England to take up commercial photography. He married a London girl during the war when he was serving with the Royal Navy.



Aida Silvestri grew up in Eritrea during the cold war, with a wish to document the highs and lows of life during a time of conflict and crisis. Now living in London, Aida decided to fulfil her dream and study for a BA in Photography at the University of Westminster. Aida particularly benefited from the professional features module, which allowed her to get hands-on freelance work as a professional photographer. She has just completed her final year project, documenting the journeys of Eritrean refugees in the UK. Her work has been featured in the British Journal of Photography and exhibited at the Free Range Gallery in Brick Lane. She is now preparing for her first solo exhibition in early 2014.





## LIFE SCIENCES

Courses in human physiology were taught at the Regent Street Polytechnic as early as 1893, and the Department of Chemistry and Biology was created in 1936, offering training to future chemists. The Department had both day and evening classes allowing students to work for the BSc (a University of London external degree), national certificates and pre-medical classes. The Associate of the Institute of Chemistry (AIC) award was also offered, and by 1966 students could obtain graduateship of the Royal Institute of Chemistry (now the Royal Society of Chemistry).

The Department of Life Sciences was established in 1970, enabling students to study for the external Science BSc degree specialising in Life Sciences, with modules in subjects such as biochemistry, botany, chemistry, physiology, psychology and zoology. The Department also offered part-time revision courses in many of these subjects, and a PCL Certificate in Microbiology.

By the mid-1970s short courses for teachers, sixth-form students and research workers were offered, covering a wide range of subjects. The courses included an Introduction to Animal Behaviour; Selected Aspects of Insect Physiology and Ecology II; Soil Biology; Recent Advances in Cell Biology; and Energy in Biological Systems.

Today, the Faculty of Science and Technology offers both mainstream and specialist undergraduate and postgraduate courses in biosciences and biomedical sciences, complementary medicine, nutrition, and psychology at our recently refurbished Cavendish Campus. As well as our thriving research culture we provide professional development courses for biomedical, clinical and research scientists, for clinicians and clinical governance facilitators, and for health and social care professionals. The Polyclinic is our specialist teaching and research clinic and offers its services to students, staff and the general public.



In the Department of Chemistry and Biology at the Polytechnic, Eric Buchwald (facing camera) is in his fifth year. He is a part-time day student who works for Distillers Company who gave him time off to attend courses, pay his fees and his railway fares. He is British of German parents. The School provides students with courses in Chemistry, Botany and Zoology up to BSc Special Degree (External) standard. Evening courses cost three guineas per session for degree courses.



Mary Kennedy, Hannah Bligh and Jonathan Sookunah have all studied at the University of Westminster. They work together in the pathology department at the London Clinic on Harley Street. The Clinic sponsors talented pathology staff for both undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses, and Westminster is their university of choice. Jonathan is half way through his Applied Biomedical Science BSc Honours degree at Westminster. Since starting at the London Clinic, he has progressed from working as a theatre assistant to being a laboratory assistant and now has a supervisory role in the pre-analytical, sample handling area. Jonathan is looking forward to becoming a biomedical scientist specialising in microbiology when he graduates in two years' time.



## TECHNOLOGY

‘Demonstrating the important principles upon which every science is based’ was Sir George Cayley’s founding principle for the Polytechnic Institution when it first opened in 1838. From diving bells and steam-driven machinery to microscope shows and other scientific displays, the Polytechnic soon became the place where the latest technology was showcased to an enthusiastic public. In the 1860s, Dr Pepper demonstrated his giant induction coil to audiences and became famous for his ‘ghost’ illusion. And by attracting paying visitors to learn more about the new world of science, the Polytechnic was also able to underwrite evening classes and lectures to willing students. Our first known graduate, E R Groote, studied Electrical Engineering and completed his course in 1885 with a first prize, silver medal and £3!

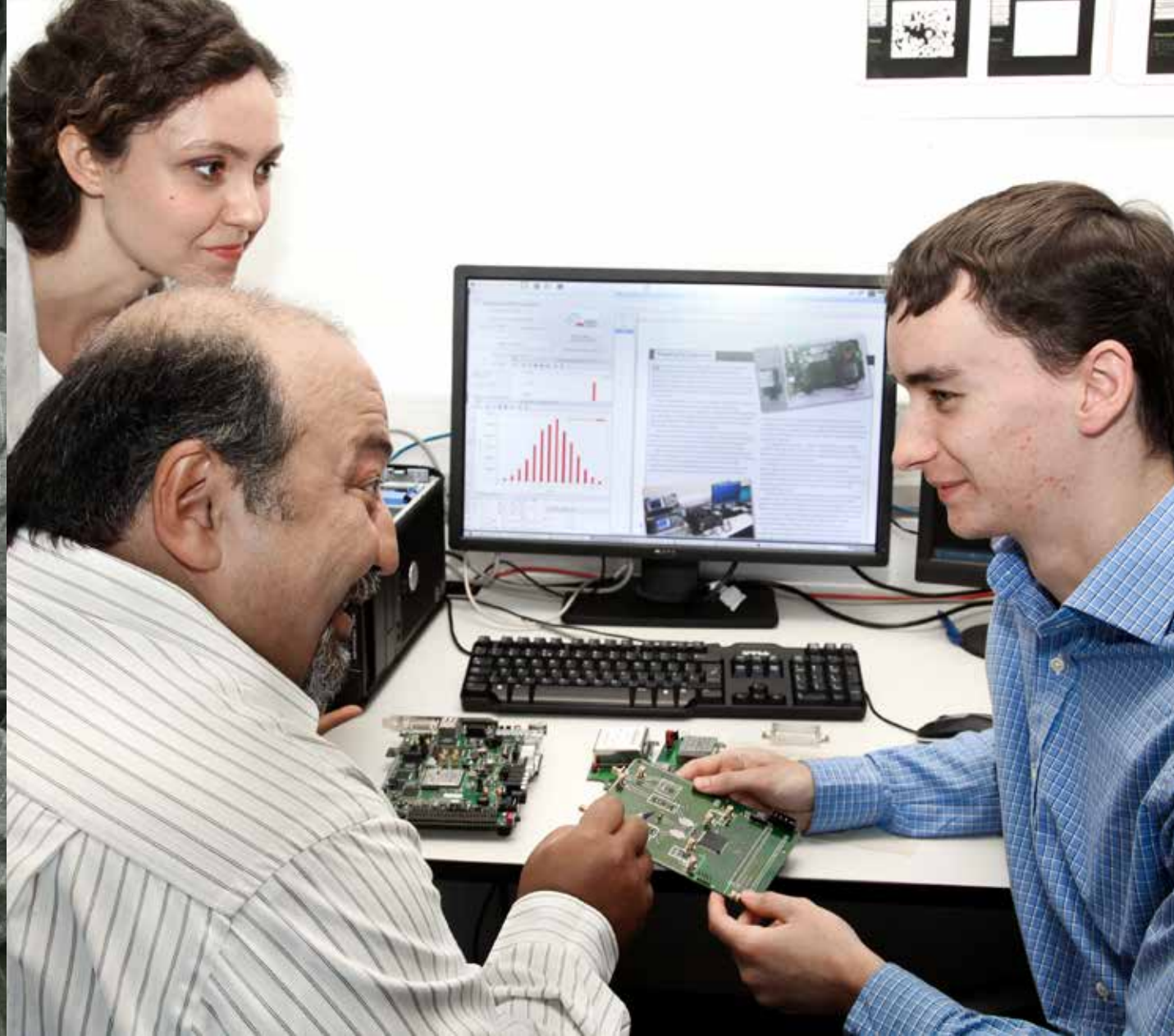
The Polytechnic’s reputation as a scientific pioneer continued into the 20th century, although the focus switched more to education than exhibition. The first computer (an IBM 1620) arrived at the Polytechnic in 1965 and specialist computing staff were employed at the same time. The Polytechnic of Central London was the first of its kind to be granted the right to award professorships, and between 1972 and 1976, the first computing and engineering Professors Gerry Cain, Peter Morse and Yakup Paker taught international short courses on mini- and micro-computers in London and Florence.

The Polytechnic stayed at the forefront of technological innovation throughout the 1990s and beyond, offering the first Master’s degree in Decision Sciences in the UK – the forerunner of the Business Intelligence and Analytics MSc, another first, nearly 20 years later.

Today our electronics and computer science students explore the fundamental principles, technologies and processes, and their application to the solution of practical problems. Our courses provide comprehensive coverage of informatics and its application to engineering, business, and the creative industries. We are evolving continuously with current trends in industry, business and the modern global economy to give our students a head-start in their careers.



Leonard White, Albert Powell and Peter Liepmann are all studying Electrical Engineering at the Polytechnic. They work together as lighting engineers at Elec-Ensign Electric Ltd, where their departmental head is Frank Hulcoop, MBE, who took his diploma at the Polytechnic before the war. All three are working for their Higher National Certificate awarded by the Institute of Electrical Engineers in conjunction with the Ministry of Education. Leonard White, on the right, passed his City and Guilds Illuminating Engineering examination last year.



Reuben Berry completed his Masters in Engineering (MEng) at Westminster with Distinction, and has now been contracted by the University to lead on the completion of the iNsight project. The four-year research project, carried out in partnership with three other universities and nine industry partners, is developing the next generation of positioning receiver systems, bringing together GPS, GLONASS, Galileo and other signals to provide more accurate and reliable data. The technology could eventually be used in mass market devices such as mobile phones and sat navs. Reuben, who has designed some of the key elements of the system, is meeting with his colleagues Professor Izzet Kale and PHD student Isil Kalafat Kizilkaya to explain some changes he has made to a circuit board.



The Regent Street library (which is now The Boardroom) in 1949, and current students enjoying the newly refurbished library at Little Titchfield Street (opposite).



Many thanks to all the alumni, students and staff who helped to produce this brochure.

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