

Investing in our students

Enhancing the learning experience



Students as creators of knowledge

CETL-AURS: **The Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Applied Undergraduate Research Skills**

Teaching and research are at the core of the University of Reading's ethos. This CETL seeks to ensure that the benefits of being at a research intensive university are felt by our students.

Students are benefiting through:

- investment in dedicated learning spaces around the university;
- opening up to student access many of our rich museums, archives and collections;
- investment in new equipment to enable undergraduates to use the tools and techniques previously only accessible to post-graduate researchers;

- developing vacation opportunities for students to work with academic research teams to engage in genuine cutting-edge research (UROP); and
- our work with departments to enhance course materials to develop students' abilities to recognise and validate problems, think independently and critically, and develop their observation, analytical and communication skills – which all enhance future employability.



Studying at university is not just about learning facts, figures and formulae; it is about critical thinking, making judgements and fine-tuning observational skills, combining disparate information to create knowledge. This is the essence of research, whether in academe or in discovering and dealing with the world at large.

For more information

CETL-AURS
www.reading.ac.uk/cetl-aurs

UROP
www.reading.ac.uk/urop

Students focusing on their future

CCMS: **The Centre for Career Management Skills**

All University of Reading undergraduate degree programmes include sessions on career management skills, encouraging and helping students to prepare for transitions to destinations beyond university. This CETL builds upon this experience, enhancing our links with employers, and placing us at the forefront amongst universities of raising the awareness of employability amongst our students.

How are we benefiting students?

- We have developed a major new online learning and teaching resource – Destinations® – which

supports our students' career management learning. While under continual development here, this website is now being adopted by many other universities.

- New and innovative career and employability-related initiatives are being funded in departments, both within courses and as optional activities.
- We undertake research into effective practice in careers education and into graduate employment, including factors affecting graduate career choices, and the impact of careers education within higher education. This is fed back directly in to Careers Management teaching, ultimately benefiting all of our students.

Employability is a fundamental issue for today's graduates, and developing a sense of ambition and direction is essential from day one at university. These we call 'Career Management Skills'.

For more information

Destinations@preview
www.reading.ac.uk/destinations-demo/

CCMS
www.reading.ac.uk/ccms

Students as experimenters

Experimentation and observation lie at the heart of the Physical Sciences and Astronomy. Problem-based learning, skills-based laboratory teaching and multi-media learning all combine to create rich variety in the learning experience.

piCETL: Physics Innovations Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

This centre is a collaborative venture between the Open University, University of Leicester and University of Reading. All three are working together to offer students new learning experiences in cutting-edge physics and astron-

omy. Students will benefit from the investment in new technology and the sharing of science teaching resources.

For more information

piCETL

www.reading.ac.uk/physics/piCETL
or www.open.ac.uk/picetl

Supporting students' effective study practices

At university students need to become more self-sufficient. Their overall learning is directed, but they have to learn to manage their own time, and develop effective practices for academic study. The University's **Study Advice Team** is here to support them.

For more information

www.reading.ac.uk/studyskills/learnhigher.htm

or

www.learnhigher.ac.uk

LearnHigher

We are working with 15 other universities to research into student practices, creating new materials and resources for our students to support study. Here at Reading we have a new dedicated area with networked PCs, and personal study space for independent study and small group teaching sessions. Our particular task in Reading is to research and develop materials that support students' practices in two specific areas: time management and report writing.

Time management – the move to university brings with it a social world of new distractions, and learning to manage independent study alongside these is a tricky balancing act. We are providing help to students on some specific

issues, including:

- effective strategies to deal with distractions and procrastination;
- managing boundary issues between study and leisure time; and
- targeted advice for particular student groups.

Report writing – writing takes many styles and forms, and learning what is appropriate in different contexts is an important skill. We are developing a series of mini-resources for students, adaptable to different subject areas, which will show students how to:

- write to a specific brief;
- use formal writing styles; and
- understand how to structure and organise information.





Benefiting learning, investing in excellence

Students at Reading are currently benefiting from the largest ever funding initiative by Government, targeting teaching and learning enhancement. £315 million is being invested over a five-year period. This investment rewards excellence and innovation, and enriches student learning across the higher education sector through the recognition and funding of 'Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning' (or CETLs).

Across the country 74 CETLs have been established, some benefiting specific subject areas, others looking at specific educational themes. Each centre was awarded on the basis of institutions' having a proven track record of excellence in their fields.

The University of Reading is one of the United Kingdom's leading research intensive universities, a major contributor to the knowledge economy, and internationally recognised for its excellence in teaching.

The University was one of only two institutions to be awarded four CETLs. Two are wholly based here, and two are collaborative centres with other universities. Students will directly benefit from this extra resource which we are using to enhance the undergraduate experience through improving teaching spaces, student support and developing innovative ways of teaching.

Based wholly at Reading:

CETL in Applied Undergraduate Research Skills	£2.7 million
Centre for Career Management Skills	£3.9 million

Run in partnership with other Universities:

LearnHigher	£4.5 million
Centre for Excellence in Innovative Physics Teaching	£3.9 million

CETL – Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

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