



The Robert Gordon University

Nomination Category: Education / Training Provider of the Year

Nomination Statement:

Concerns are being raised about current skills shortages within the oil and gas industry. Increasing activities and opening up of oil and gas exploration and production to national and international companies is now placing significant pressure on the desired growth of the industry and its ability to deliver projects. The Robert Gordon University (RGU) plays a key role in delivering high quality courses (industry leading programmes) that encourage students both to enter into and remain in the industry. RGU has used a unique multi-strategy approach to ensure the new generation has a stable career path and a bright future. Development of Industry Leading Programmes - RGU, based in Europe's offshore energy capital Aberdeen, delivers a wide portfolio of innovative degrees, professional training, research and distinct programmes to: UK, Shell, PDVSA, Sonatrach, PetroChina, Lukoil and BP/NOC Libya. The RGU course leaders have both field and academic experience and with strong industry interaction, practicing engineers are involved in the development and delivery of our courses. Moreover the courses are fully accredited. This ensures the courses have a unique balance of theory and practice. Key Features - The programmes mode of delivery is full-time (FT) and distance learning for engineers working within industry. This maximises flexibility of entry level, duration and subject matter. Six FT courses are delivered in Aberdeen and three FT specialised courses are delivered in countries (Algeria and Libya). Two new MSc courses (Subsea Engineering and Reservoir Engineering) have been developed by mid of 2008. Most of the courses are specialised to produce highly qualified graduates and attract students towards the oil and gas industry. Courses include field trips, case studies and in-depth projects linked with the industry. The courses are provided in direct response to industry demand. Online Delivery - To meet the increasing demand for Online learning, RGU has developed a number of engaging and innovative courses delivered entirely online via Moodle, a virtual learning environment. These online modules contain interactive lectures that synchronise audio with PowerPoint slides and embedded evaluation questions. Student feedback has been extremely positive, clearly indicated by our student pass rates and increasing numbers. Management of the programmes - The programmes team monitors, technology development and the progress through regular meetings and address challenges as they arise, such as the need for ongoing cooperation between the university and the industrial partners. Benefits - There is a unique interaction between the students, the industry and the university in providing continuing education. In conjunction with the industry, the University participates in a number of career events in addition to holding independent open days, thus consistently attracting high standard students. There are wider benefits (a win-win) for everyone concerned. Company benefits - Sustainability- attracting and retaining staff in order to redress the loss of experience. Accelerate development of professional technical competency allowing for growth and projects development. Employee career development will clearly improve productivity and allow staff to progress further within the company – locally and internationally. Achievement - By working closely with businesses in the energy sector, RGU has established a consistently excellent reputation for producing "industry-ready" graduates worldwide. In 2008 more than 750 students were enrolled on these programmes. The employment rate for RGU graduates was number one in Scotland in 2008. This extraordinary success in recruitment reflects the long term strategy. Conclusion - The programmes contribute locally and globally to the industry. RGU continues to pursue learning opportunities in those areas (industry leading programmes) where there is a real need for skills in the industry while maintaining excellent standards of delivery.