



## Minister for Universities and Science visits Southampton Solent University

The Minister of State for Universities and Science, Jo Johnson, visited Southampton Solent University and the University of Southampton on Monday 23 November to look at examples of teaching and the student experience.

Solent University's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Graham Baldwin, showed the Minister some of the University's cutting-edge facilities, including the Towing Tank where he watched students run experiments on model yachts. The Minister also saw a group of yacht and powercraft design students working in the Composites Laboratory and had a go at manufacturing a fibre reinforced panel. He finished the tour with a look at students working in the University's industry-standard sports science labs.

Following the tour, the Minister met with a group of students and Solent University's Students' Union president, Naomi Oiku, for a round table discussion centred around the student experience and teaching.

Universities and Science Minister Jo Johnson said: "It was great to meet students at Southampton Solent and hear first-hand about what makes a valuable university experience. Our HE Green Paper is putting students at the heart of higher education and delivering the excellent standards of teaching to help them achieve great careers."

Naomi said they were grateful that Mr Johnson took time to meet with them and hear first-hand some of the issues faced by students today.

"He listened to our point of view and was particularly interested to hear about the University's support and counselling services," she said. "He recognised higher education can be an anxious time both financially and personally, worrying about money and getting the right grades."

Georgi Ridler, studying BSc Sports Coaching, said: "I really hope the Minister takes away from his visit how good Solent University is at helping us to develop the skills we need for our future careers. It's the reason we came here and lots of universities can learn from Solent."

Akeen Matthews, studying BSc Maritime Business, added: "This experience is fairly new, but I thought it was an excellent opportunity to present ourselves. There was a good rapport between the Minister and us and it was great having the opportunity to have a conversation with him about education and shipping."

Earlier in the day, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Jane Longmore represented Solent at a round table discussion at the University of Southampton.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT THE MEDIA OFFICE ON 023 8201 3079 or [press.office@solent.ac.uk](mailto:press.office@solent.ac.uk)

With a population of around 12,800 staff and students, Southampton Solent University offers over 200 qualifications ranging from HND to PhD, in subjects as diverse as maritime education and training, fashion and design, media and television, music, health, sport and leisure, business, IT and technology. Every year we are joined by around 10,000 additional students on short professional courses.

The University was awarded the 2013 Quality Assurance Agency kitemark for quality and standards of teaching and learning, and voted one of the UK's most creative universities in *Which? University's* 2013 and 2014 student polls. Solent's business school has been awarded 'Gold approval' by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), and also holds the Small Business Charter Award, which is supported by the Association of Business Schools and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.