



**Alumnus  
Subject  
Graduated  
Place of Work  
Position**

Rob Coveney  
BA French and German  
2006  
GL Noble Denton  
Communications Manager



Rob Coveney joined GL Noble Denton as Communications Manager in 2010, and is involved in a wide variety of marketing and public relations projects across the company. GL Noble Denton is an independent technical advisor to the oil and gas industry. With a presence in over 80 countries, the business applies global best practice in safety, integrity and performance across the lifecycle of its clients' assets and operations.

# Great minds *go on to* great places

### How did you decide you wanted to come to Royal Holloway?

I think it's important to look at various options when choosing where to study. By doing this, I came to realise that I wanted to go to a campus-based university rather than an institution that was sprawled out over a city. I can remember driving away from my first visit to the College knowing that it was the place for me – it had a great community feeling and I felt very safe and comfortable walking around.

### What is your fondest memory of your time at the College?

I really enjoyed getting involved in a number of aspects of College life; which have provided some great memories in return. One of them would definitely be being elected President of the Students' Union by a population of more than 7,000 students. I also met my future wife at Royal Holloway. She studied English and we were both involved in various Students' Union activities. We're getting married next month, and had our engagement party at the Crosslands Suite last year.

### What did you think of the social scene on campus?

The College has a great social life, thanks to its campus environment. The Students' Union is one of the most lively that I have come across, and

provides for a great variety of activities. There are a huge number of sports and societies to take part in, and events on several times a week.

### Why did you become involved with the Students' Union?

In my first year at the College, I joined the German Society at Royal Holloway, and became its President during my second year. I had great fun working with the committee arranging trips to Germany and beer tasting evenings, and thought that it would be good to get more involved. I ended up joining a Students' Union committee that looked after all societies on campus.

Volunteering as an SU Officer allowed me to take a part in a wide range of aspects of campus life. I got a real buzz from that, so decided to run for election as SU President. I will never forget the night that the election results were announced – and how I felt just beforehand!

### What did you most enjoy about being the SU President?

I really enjoyed getting to meet a wide range of students from across the campus and helping to make improvements where they felt improvements could be made. Our contributions to College life during my sabbatical year were definitely a result of a team effort, and the Executive Committee of the Students' Union did some great things. We

helped develop what are now the Tuke, Williamson and Butler halls. We also worked to ensure that anonymous marking practices were undertaken across all departments.

### What did you enjoy most about studying in the School of Modern Languages?

The department has both a great sense of community and an excellent quality of teaching. The members of staff always made me feel that they were there for me, and that they would do their utmost to ensure that we were making the best of our studies. Not only did I learn how to speak French and German well, I also had the opportunity to study areas of linguistics, literature, modern and medieval history, film, philosophy and cultural identity that apply to the countries that French and German are spoken in.

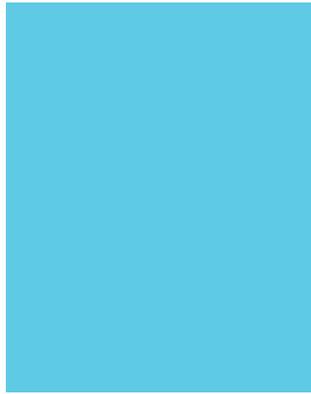
### How did you find studying a joint degree?

Joint languages degrees take a modular approach at Royal Holloway, which allows you to split your studies equally between the two subjects while still studying the core units that deliver the essential language tuition. I spent no less time learning the German or French language than any student who studied those languages as single degrees. The only difficulty for me came in deciding whether to spend my year abroad in a French speaking country, a German speaking country, or both!



# people with passion

“Volunteering as a Students' Union officer allowed me to take a part in a wide range of aspects of campus life. I got a real buzz from that, so decided to run for election as SU President. I will never forget the night that the election results were announced - and how I felt just beforehand!”



### What has been your career path since graduation?

After my sabbatical year I joined a PR agency in London. I was a member of the Corporate Travel Team so I had number of airline and travel company clients. The agency was a great place to start my career in public relations, but I was keen to go in house. After spending two years helping to set up the Communications Department of a legal outsourcing company I moved to GL Noble Denton.

### What inspired you to become involved in the communications industry?

During my time as a Students' Union sabbatical officer at Royal Holloway, I was called by the Sunday Times for an interview. That was my first experience of talking directly to the media so I contacted the College Press Office to get some advice. They were really helpful and I thought that I could make an exciting career in helping companies manage their reputations within the media.

### Why did you choose to work at GL Noble Denton?

Before I joined I didn't know the energy industry very well or how much it impacts on all our lives. This company focuses on advising oil and gas operators on safety and how to make the industry

more efficient. I was particularly drawn to the international character of the industry and I feel my studies have really helped me. To start with we are a German company and having studied German is a real asset. GL Noble Denton is a rapidly growing company and I've had a great opportunity to develop my career quickly here.

### What do you enjoy most about being a Communications Manager?

No single day is ever the same. I'm trying to develop a company's reputation within the media and broaden the industry's awareness of its brand. Internally, I help give a voice to the company strategy and then convey it to more than 3,500 employees. We want our people to have a solid understanding of where the company is going and, in order to do that, we use a number of different vehicles from internal email to global webinars. GL Noble Denton is extremely international in its outlook and I communicate with people from 80 different countries around the world, which means I have to be very aware of the various cultures that I'm working with.

As we are a highly technical company, my job also involves taking the successes of the business, turning them into layman's terms and then working those successes into the media. I develop positive media coverage and help manage the media

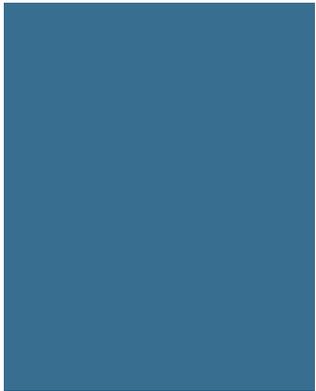
relations around any sort of crisis (which thankfully hasn't happened yet!).

### What exciting projects are you working on at the moment?

I'm working on a campaign called 'you are who we are', which helps to promote the technical expertise of GL Noble Denton's people across the oil and gas industry. We wanted to develop an internal campaign that fed an external campaign, as we were aware that we could be better to profile some of the amazing stuff our employees too. The campaign has gone down a storm and it's really got the industry talking about the work that we do. It was a great feeling last week landing at Houston airport and seeing a huge billboard in the arrivals hall, profiling one of the adverts that I had worked on as part of the campaign.

### What advice would you give to students interested in a career in communications?

Not to take it lightly. PR looks like a fairly glamorous career choice (it certainly did to me), but it is very hard work. During the year or two that I entered in to my first PR role, I had to do a lot of grunt work which I hated at the time! Now I recognise that it needs to be done and if you are serious about doing it then you have to stick those couple of years out. I found the Careers Service at Royal Holloway really helpful - I got great help and access to graduates who had developed a career in PR and who could offer some good advice.



For more Alumni Profiles visit: [www.rhul.ac.uk/alumni/profiles/](http://www.rhul.ac.uk/alumni/profiles/)