

# 'I can't believe my students call me Sir'

A BUSINESS school in Greenwich is offering former students the chance to train as lecturers, writes Zosia Eyles.

GSM London operates an 18-month teaching fellowship scheme for some of their most talented graduates.

The newest of the teaching fellows graduated from her first degree in June.

Mia-Zeba Anwar, 21, said of her move from student to lecturer: "It was a big transition – sitting opposite my ex-supervisor who marked my dissertation and then calling them a colleague was very strange at first."

Omba Ehomba, 27, agreed, "It took me a while to get used to calling other lecturers by their first names instead of Sir and it took even longer to get used to my students calling me Sir."

"This course really is life changing – I used to work in retail and I was so unfulfilled – I just wasn't utilising my full capacity. We all care so much about our students and I can't imagine ever going back."

The teaching fellows come from different backgrounds. For example, Jabir Hassan, 41, came to England from Iraq and used to work as a receptionist and security guard at the BBC.

He said: "I was doing my own learning part-time but three years ago I decided that it was time for me to focus on my education. I gave up my job and started at GSM, creating my own path from undergraduate degree to Masters – I can't believe it, I now want to do a PhD."

Different teaching fellows have found varying aspects of the course challenging.

Fiona Oghorie, 27, said: "For me, it's definitely timekeeping. I can't arrive 20 minutes late to lectures anymore – in fact I have to arrive 20 minutes early."

"It's about adjusting your mindset."

Akim Yillah, 38, worked in a bank before deciding to study with GSM. "The programme is a fantastic opportunity," he said.

"I had to grab it with both hands. It's allowed me to discover my strengths and attributes. I feel so much more confident."

Three teaching fellows have already finished the course – two now have teaching



From left, Tonisha Tagoe, Jabir Hassan, Fiona Oghorie, Mia-Zeba Anwar, Omba Ehomba, Hope Flynn, Neelofar Abrahimi and Akim Yillah

positions within GSM at Meridian House, Royal Hill, Greenwich and one is teaching elsewhere.

## Goldsmiths academics to explore ideas of robot sex

BY TOBY PORTER  
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Have you ever had a problem with self-assembly furniture?

Then Goldsmiths College might have a much harder – but perhaps more entertaining – set of instructions to follow.

Their academics are set to discuss what it might be like having sex with robots.

They have not revealed whether an instruction manual and warranty are included in the discussion, let alone a satisfaction guarantee.

Dr Kate Devlin is organising the second International Congress on Love and Sex with Robots at its New Cross campus – two days of talks and workshops exploring the human relationship with artificial partners.

She is hosting it after it was banned from Malaysia because she is keen for the subject to be taken seriously, which is why she offered to host the conference – and perhaps resisted the temptation to call

it "Congress".

Anyone interested is invited to the event on December 19 and 20.

Dr Devlin's September 2015 article *In Defence of Sex Robots* has been seen by more than half a million readers after being published by *The Conversation* – it is one of the website's all-time most popular essays.

She said: "Our research aims to carve a new narrative, moving away from sex robots purely defined as machines used as sex objects, as substitutes for human partners, made by men, for men."

"A machine is a blank slate – it is what we make of it. Why should a sex robot be binary? What about the potential for therapy?"

"It's time for new approaches to artificial sexuality. Cutting edge research in technology and ethics is vital if we want to reframe ideas about the human-tech relationship."

Sessions are planned on humanoid robots, robot emotions and personalities, teledildonics, intelligent



Dr Kate Devlin electronic sex hardware, entertainment robots and much more.

Presentations will discuss the psychological, sociological and philosophical issues.

It would certainly qualify as safe sex, even if it is debatable whether the earth would move.

But it is not known whether they will discuss the views of Nobel prize-winning physicist Richard Feynman, who said: "Science is like sex: sometimes something useful comes out, but that is not the reason we are doing it."