

Focus on: department

Focus on... Showing Seeing Centre



Seeing is believing, as they say, and nowhere is this more true than in the Departments of Classics and Archaeology. Visualising the past is an essential aspect of both disciplines, and thanks to a state of the art set-up students are able to get closer to the ancient world than ever before.

The Showing Seeing Centre uses equipment supplied by the Visual Learning Lab to reconstruct the past in vivid detail. Whether it's capturing — and printing — in poster format, high resolution images for lectures, or making 3-D reconstructions of ancient Roman towns and buildings, the centre has a hands-on approach. Students even have access to a Playstation2 to play games based on the ancient world. "It may seem strange," says the centre's co-director Katharina Lorenz. "But our students can opt to study the representation of Classics in modern media, such as games like *Civilization* and *God of War*. The reception of the ancient world is a key area and this kind of visual aid can really help students get to grips with difficult concepts."

Classics and Archaeology may not be the first departments you'd perhaps think of when it comes to state-of-the-art technology, but Dr Lorenz says this couldn't be further from the truth. "In Classics and Archaeology, producing presentations is a very important part of the work. In order to enable people to see elements of ancient Greece for example, we need the very best images we can create and reproduce. The centre provides this."

3D reconstructions

The centre is housed in three rooms across the Archaeology and Classics building on University Park. Room B12 is situated in the Archaeology Department Drawing Office and houses a large format printer and scanner. These are linked to high-end software programmes for making high quality posters for portfolios and posters for presentations. C22 is a favourite with students. It houses a wall mounted plasma screen and the Playstation2 which gives students unique access to 3D constructions. These facilities are used for teaching and to prepare and trial presentations.

In C23, students can borrow laptops and games and access a vast library of colour slides. There are also bioarchaeology laboratories, equipped with microscopes and archaeobotanical and zooarchaeological reference collections.

Dust may well be an occupational hazard in Classics and Archaeology, but the Showing Seeing Centre proves that you can not only bring the past to life, but you can bring it to vivid, ultra-modern life.

The Showing Seeing Centre at a glance

- The department has two new bioarchaeology laboratories; one for teaching, the other for research
- The Microanalysis Research Facility is home to a JEOL JXA-8200 electron microprobe
- The centre allows students to get to grips with difficult concepts using visual means