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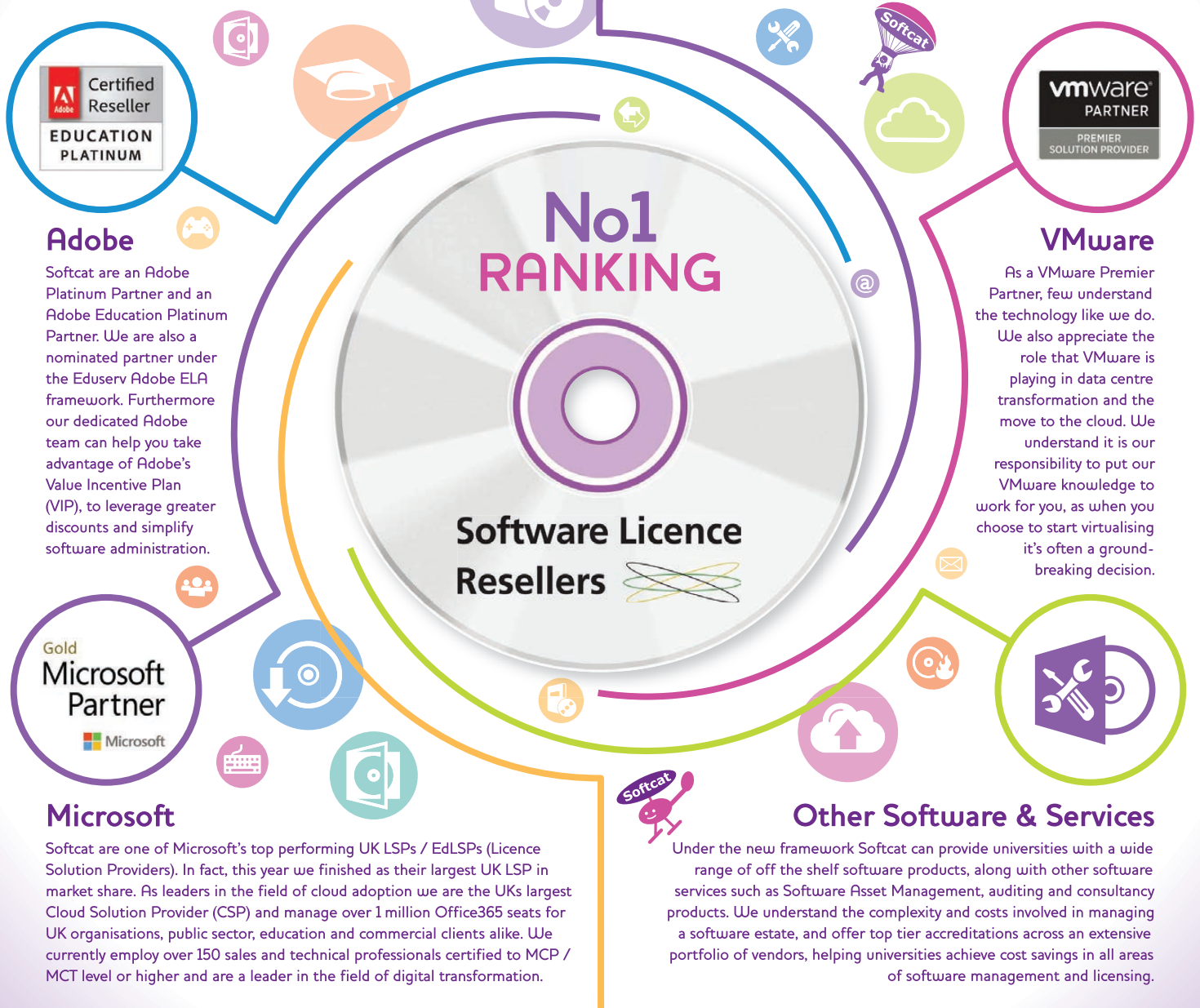
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And we're back

As quick as that the summer is behind us and we begin a new academic year. I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you a warm welcome back.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *UB*, it is one of my favourites, because we look ahead at what the next 12 months in HE could bring. In this issue's roundtable, four HE leaders discuss and debate the future challenges across our sector. Take a look on page 13.

We also preview some key upcoming sector events – find out more about The HE Conference on page 28 and the Student Accommodation Conference and Awards on page 30.

This issue also features my review of the annual TUCO (The University Caterers Organisation) conference, this year held at Nottingham University (page 55).

I had high expectations of the event, and the team certainly didn't disappoint.

Our Last Word feature (page 78) discusses the very topical and highly debatable issue of Vice-Chancellors' pay. Running a major university today is a hugely demanding job that requires a rare skill set, that is a fact. But, with teaching quality and student services constantly under scrutiny, are some of these top salaries justified? I would love to hear your thoughts on this. Please get in touch.

Until next time,

Would you like to be featured in *UB*? Got a project you'd like to shout about, or keen to share your views on a topical HE subject? Email me rebecca.paddick@wildfirecomms.co.uk



Rebecca Paddick
Editor

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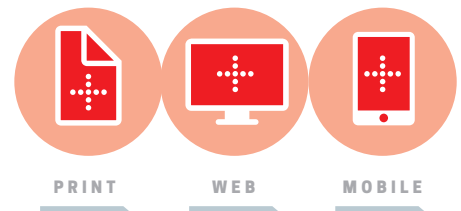
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Dealing with drop-outs

University drop-out rates are rising, but what can universities do to spot any struggling students before they decide to stop studying? Phil Richards, chief innovation officer of education technology solutions not-for-profit, Jisc, explains all

A new report, this time from the Social Market Foundation (SMF), confirms that university drop-out rates in England are rising. Taken in context with a raft of other student data released this year a picture emerges of increasing difficulties for disadvantaged students and those with mental health issues.

THE STATS

- A report from the Social Market Foundation (SMF) says that the national non-continuation rate for students at English universities rose from 6.6% in 2011–12 to 7.4% in 2014–15. The report goes on to point out that many of the disadvantaged groups targeted through widening access programmes are also the groups most likely to drop out.
- 2017 data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) shows that a record number of 1,180 students left courses early in the 2014–15 academic year due to poor mental health – a 210% increase on 380 students in 2009–10.
- Statistics released by the Office for Fair Access in June 2017 showed that, in 2014–15, 8.8% of young, full-time, disadvantaged undergraduates did not continue their studies beyond the first year – up from 8.2% the year before.

WHAT CAN UNIVERSITIES DO TO REVERSE THESE TRENDS?

For some struggling students, the university wellbeing department, with trained counsellors and GP services, can be a lifeline, but while some services are receiving greater investment, others are not so well funded. A report in the *Guardian* (May 2017) says demand for these services is out-stripping supply at some universities, and the waiting time to see counsellors is therefore increasing.

But what about those students who don't choose to seek help? In order to prevent them slipping into disaster, it is vital they can be identified, carefully approached and given the right support to enable them to stay well and continue on their course.

IDENTIFYING AT-RISK STUDENTS

With thousands of learners on the roll, it's not easy to keep personal tabs on everyone. Peer and tutor support has an important role to play, but technology can also spot signs that an individual student may be in trouble.

Using learning analytics will allow institutions to personalise interventions and uncover hidden patterns in their student data, reflect on how students are interacting, and make evidence-informed decisions about how best to support, or challenge, their students.

Imagine a student has not accessed the virtual learning environment, been to the library or engaged in the college community for a number of weeks and has missed their last couple of deadlines. Data about all this is already being collected (although it's often geared toward internal admin needs) and can be used to ring an alarm bell.

BOOSTING RETENTION RATES

The Office for Fair Access (OFFA) – which regulates fair access to higher education in England – encourages



effective learning analytics tools to enable both students and tutors to monitor performance more effectively and identify strategies to improve'.


Analytics data can also be rolled into a predictive model of student success or failure. For example, a model at the New York Institute of

“What about those students who don't choose to seek help? In order to prevent them slipping into disaster, it is vital they can be identified, carefully approached and given the right support to enable them to stay well and continue on their course”

institutions to ensure that students from non-traditional backgrounds are successful following enrolment.

Analysis by Jisc of 2017/18 fair access agreements found that 14 institutions explicitly mentioned learning analytics. Buckinghamshire New University, for example, highlights that it 'intends to introduce learning analytics to inform the support, learning, engagement, retention and success of its students' as part of its efforts to establish a stronger culture and practice of data usage across the institution. Exeter University's access agreement states that it is 'developing

Technology successfully identified 74% of students who subsequently dropped out as having been 'at risk'. And, when learning analytics were applied at Columbus State University College in the US, retention rose by 4.2% overall, but 5.7% for low-income students. In Australia, a three-phase scheme at the University of New England saw drop-out rates fall from 18 to 12%.

The use of learning analytics is growing in the UK and Jisc has conducted considerable research and development in this field, culminating in the launch of an app for students in September. 

Sir Lenny Henry launches BCU in London

A new networking group for Birmingham City University has been launched by Chancellor Sir Lenny Henry, in London. 'BCU in London' is now open to graduates of the University – from senior leaders to up-and-coming professionals – who are based or have business interests in the capital.

Addressing some 100 distinguished guests and alumni gathered at the launch, Sir Lenny Henry said: "We want this launch to form the basis of a strong and enduring network – BCU in London – where graduates and friends of the University here can come together to forge professional links that recognise what you have in common and the expertise you have in your various disciplines."

"Both online and in person, the aim of BCU in London is to bring our alumni together in a formidable network of professionals whose careers have been impacted by our University."

Joining the Dudley-born actor, writer, comedian and charitable campaigner at the Institute of Directors in Pall Mall were notable figures including the Rt Hon Baroness Elizabeth Butler-Sloss, Lord Bruce Grocott, MP for Ladywood Shabana Mahmood and former MP for Edgbaston, Gisela Stuart.

Senior alumni representatives from organisations such as the BBC, EY, IBM, Sport England and Universal Music Group were also present.



First-class degrees on the rise

The proportion of top degree grades being awarded by UK universities has soared – with some universities giving first-class degrees to more than a third of their students.

The University of Surrey awarded a first-class degree to 41% of students last year, and firsts awarded at the University of East Anglia have almost trebled to 37%.

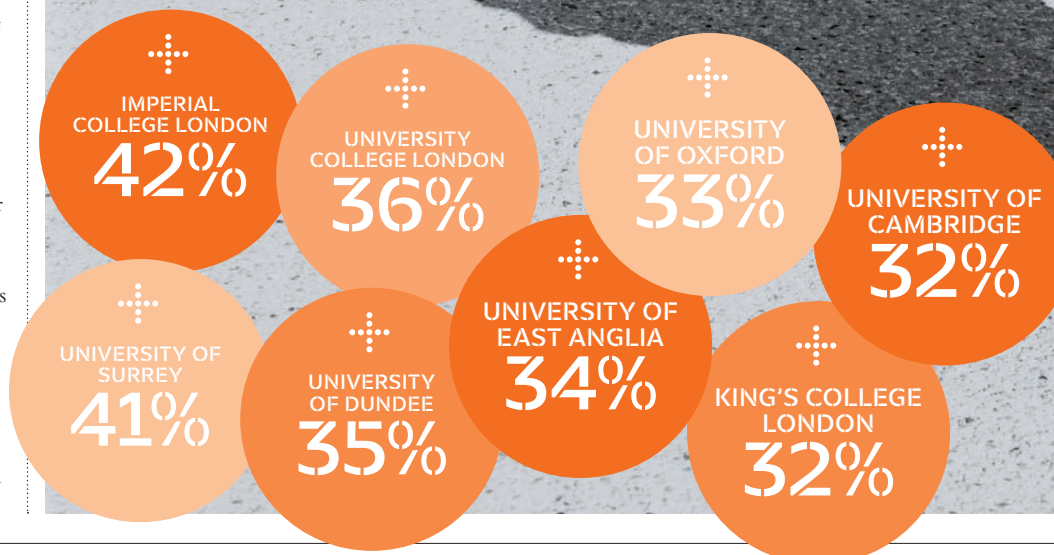
Among the Russell Group of universities more than a quarter of students received a first-class degree. The Press Association survey, analysing figures for 2015–16 from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), indicates it is now more common to graduate with a first-class degree than a lower second (2:2) grade – with 24% getting a first last year, compared with 21% getting a lower second. The most widely awarded degree was an upper second (2:1), received by about 51%.

The figures from HESA go back only as far as 1994 – but they show the proportion of firsts has more than trebled in the past two decades.

Among the 148 universities with comparable data, only a handful saw fewer first-class degrees last year than five years previously.

Imperial College has the highest proportion of firsts among mainstream universities.

HIGHEST PROPORTION OF FIRST-CLASS DEGREES IN MAINSTREAM UNIVERSITIES





Jo Johnson plans university contracts

Students will have formal contracts with universities, so they can challenge them over too few teaching hours or if facilities are inadequate, the Universities Minister Jo Johnson, has said.

This means that universities could face the prospect of being sued if they fail to make the grade and renege on contracts they offer to their students, under government plans to reform the higher education sector.

Johnson said the newly established Office for Students would consider how to introduce contracts for all students. "Although contracts do exist in various forms in some institutions, most of them do not provide enough detail to be useful," said Johnson.

Providing students with greater contractual certainty would "help to address much of the dissatisfaction over seeming poor value-for-money of undergraduate education."

Johnson said such contracts would tackle problems of "non-delivery" for students and would give them "some form of redress", which could include "legal remedies".

Speaking at the Reform think-tank in London, yesterday, Johnson also warned universities to stop "excessive" pay for vice-chancellors.

Johnson has made no secret of his concern about inflated vice-chancellor pay in the past. Now, in cases of exceptionally high pay, he wants the Office for Students, the higher education regulatory body that comes into force next year, to demand evidence that demonstrates a vice-chancellor merits the reward.

"When students and taxpayers invest so heavily in our higher education system, value for money should be guaranteed. Yet, I am still hearing students say that their course is poor quality. This is not good enough, especially when some vice-chancellors take home a wage that in some cases exceeds that of the prime minister."

In his speech, Johnson fought back against calls to stop the rise in tuition fees and interest rates on loans.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies has warned that higher fees of £9,250 and interest rates rising to 6.1% will mean graduates leaving university with debts of more than £50,000 on average. While saying such charges would be kept "under review", he defended the principles underlying the current system as progressive and providing the funding for extra university places.

"Although contracts do exist in various forms in some institutions, most of them do not provide enough detail to be useful"



Appointments, Awards and Acknowledgements



TEENTECH CEO AWARDED HONORARY DEGREE

Broadcaster and CEO of TeenTech Maggie Philbin has been awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Technology by Southampton Solent University. Maggie has worked in radio and television for over 30 years on a wide range of science, medical and technology programmes – from *Tomorrow's World* to *Bang Goes The Theory*.

Maggie has consistently worked to improve the visibility of successful scientists and engineers, to encourage both young people and women to pursue careers and reach top positions in these areas. In November 2008, she pioneered TeenTech, a dynamic initiative which brings together teenagers, scientists and technology companies. This initiative now runs in 12 locations across the UK and

Ireland, with a year-round supporting awards scheme. HRH the Duke of York KG is now patron of TeenTech, and the winners of the annual Awards are invited to Buckingham Palace to celebrate their success.

Maggie works tirelessly to increase diversity in STEM companies, helping organisations understand that social and ethnic diversity are as important as gender. In June 2016 she was voted most influential woman in UK IT by *Computer Weekly* and was also named 2016 Digital Leader of the Year.

In January 2017, she was awarded an OBE in the New Year's Honours List for her work to promote careers in STEM and the creative industries.

BAKE-OFF JUDGE BECOMES QMU CHANCELLOR



TV presenter and food entrepreneur, Prue Leith CBE, has been officially installed as the Chancellor of Queen Margaret University (QMU), Edinburgh.

Prue, who was recently announced as the new judge on *The Great British Bake-Off*, was joined by internationally renowned film producer Iain Smith OBE, who was awarded an honorary degree for services to the film industry. Both attended an impressive ceremony in Edinburgh's Usher Hall with 800 students and their families.

Prue Leith, novelist, businesswoman, food writer, restaurateur, campaigner and TV presenter, takes over the role of Chancellor of the University from entrepreneur Sir Tom Farmer, who served as Founding Chancellor of QMU from 2007 to 2016.

Professor Petra Wend, Principal of Queen Margaret University, said: "Prue Leith is a highly respected public figure who has strong beliefs about the importance of education and in its transformational impact on society. She has contributed significantly to the food and hospitality landscape of the UK, having worked successfully as a food entrepreneur, as well as highlighting the UK's culinary talent and promoting good food health for all."

NICOLA DANDRIDGE TO BECOME CHIEF EXEC OF OFFICE FOR STUDENTS



The Office for Students, the new regulatory body from HEFCE, has appointed Nicola

Dandridge as Chief Executive Designate.

From her current role as Chief Executive of Universities UK, Nicola will bring to the Office for Students (OfS) extensive experience and expertise across the higher education sector, together with a strong legal background, experience of working with government, and a track record on equality and diversity issues.

Madeleine Atkins, Chief Executive of HEFCE, said: "I am delighted with the

appointment of Nicola to this vital role. With her deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities right across the sector, I have every confidence that she will make the Office for Students a highly effective organisation and one which will work in the interests of students. I look forward to working with her, and with colleagues in the Office for Fair Access, as we prepare for the transition to the OfS in the spring of 2018."

PELICAN PROCUREMENT AWARDED TWO-YEAR CONTRACT WITH LEEDS BECKETT

Pelican Procurement Services has been awarded by Leeds Beckett University the contract to purchase food, beverages and associated consumables as well as taking responsibility for the management of their supply chain.

Leeds Beckett has 26,000 students at their Leeds campuses and just over 2,400 staff. Their facilities include two food courts across two sites providing a full range of consumer offers throughout the day. In addition to the food courts, the University manages and operates four retail outlets, three coffee shops, a new conference centre and provides internal and external hospitality food services for staff and visitors to the University. The University's current spend is over £1.8m.

Lesley Carden, Procurement Manager at Leeds Beckett University said: "We were looking for an external provider to source, tender and contract manage our food services. We awarded the contract to Pelican as they demonstrated their expertise and depth of knowledge of the

food industry, and EU procurement and supply chain management. We felt that they would be the best partner to help us improve our operation and support us in



expanding and improving our offering."

Pelican will be supporting the University's procurement and catering teams in achieving their goals by delivering better prices and quality, developing supplier and customer relationships, ensuring compliance and delivering process efficiencies through the provision of bespoke procurement together with supply chain management and cloud-based back office systems.

Shabaz Mohammed, Managing Director at Pelican Procurement Services, said: "We are delighted to partner with Leeds Beckett University. Our team are very excited to be part of the University's ambition to improve profitability and provide innovative solutions to cater for the student market.

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Education blooms at Regent's

Idyllic, independent and international – Regent's University London is an educational rose blossoming in the heart of London

Location, location, location, or is it education, education, education? Both beauty and brains combine at Regent's University London, the capital's only independent university. Based in the heart of the beautiful Regent's Park, the University offers world-class degree programmes to students from more than 140 countries worldwide.

IDYLIC LOCATION

You would be unlikely to find another campus in London, if not in the UK, that is as central, self-contained and as beautiful as Regent's University London. Some may argue it is one of the UK's best-kept higher education secrets.

Sitting alongside the 30,000 blooms in Queen Mary's Rose Garden with the swans that swim serenely in the lake, Regent's is an oasis of beauty in the middle of one of the busiest and most vibrant cities in the world. It is located on the Inner Circle of the royal Regent's Park.

The campus has a long and rich history, and was in fact opened by the rose garden's namesake, HRH Queen Mary, in its former guise as a campus for Bedford College in 1849. Regent's itself has been delivering international higher

education on this site for more than 30 years, formerly as a college prior to being awarded university status in 2012.

The four main buildings of the Regent's campus exemplify traditional British architecture of the 20th century. The original buildings, designed in Queen Anne style by architect Basil Champneys, have been modified over the years, particularly after suffering bomb damage in World War II.

Some interesting relics on campus include the ornate Tate Library, donated by Lady Amy Tate in memory of her husband Henry, founder of London's Tate Gallery. There is also the dome of an Astronomical Observatory, opened by the Astronomer Royal, an unusual sight for a university.

As well as being in a park, the campus itself also boasts 11 acres of its own beautiful private gardens, featuring impressive biodiversity, bee-friendly plants and a 'secret garden,' tucked away behind high hedges.

A private gate at the bottom of the gardens leads to the banks of the Regent's Park lake, where you can cross the bridge and within a few minutes' walk be at the door of 221b Baker Street, home of fictional detective Sherlock Holmes, and

Madame Tussauds. A short distance south of the main campus is the University's specialist fashion design and theatre facilities on Marylebone High Street, a vibrant and adaptable studio space in a magnificent renovated chapel.

It is as part of this elegant neighbourhood that Regent's University London revels in its position as the capital's only independent, not-for-profit higher education institution.

INTERNATIONAL FOCUS

It's not just about the beautiful surroundings at Regent's. The University offers world-class degree programmes to students from more than 140 countries, limiting student numbers to under 5,000 to create a close-knit community and keep class sizes small to provide a tailored education experience.

Regent's Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive, Professor Aldwyn Cooper, explains: "Regent's is small and intimate enough to feel like a home away from home. With just over 4,800 students on campus over the course of a year, staff and students get to know each other by name, and students benefit from plenty of one-to-one contact with their tutors.

"We are committed to developing



tomorrow's global leaders. Our students come from a vast range of backgrounds, providing a cultural richness and unique opportunity to exchange perspectives and share experiences, enabling them to perform confidently anywhere in the world."

Indeed, Regent's is a microcosm of the world its student and staff body represents, and acts as a meeting place for people from across the globe, with internationalism represented in the student body as well as the educational style. Additionally, the University's alumni network currently lists over 16,700 members, living and working in 160 countries.

"Regent's is a hive for innovative thinkers – students who want to learn in a supportive, personal environment, and who go on to enter the world of work as entrepreneurs and leaders who think and operate globally," Professor Cooper said.

"Intercultural exchange and international languages are also a crucial part of education at Regent's. We enjoy close links with more than 180 partner institutions across the globe, and many students spend a portion of their studies abroad, gaining experience of other cultures, languages and work practices."

INNOVATIVE AND INDEPENDENT

Regent's offers both UK and American-style degree programmes in a wide range of subject areas, including business and management; fashion and design; film, media and performance; liberal arts and humanities; politics and international relations, and psychotherapy and psychology.

Being independent and not-for-profit means that as a charity, the University's surplus income is re-invested in the student experience to support their educational experience, rather than paid as dividends to shareholders.

Regent's Faculty of Business & Management prides itself on industry-relevant degrees that blend formal academic training with direct learning experience of the international workplace. Students benefit from a strong global focus to their studies, exploring the many influences affecting the changing business environment worldwide.

Film, Media & Performance programmes at Regent's offer a challenging and highly creative curriculum that synthesise academic learning with practical, hands-on experience. Students gain an international perspective through study abroad

“A key challenge for the University's estates and facilities team today is managing the site within the limits imposed by the historical environment, while adapting buildings to meet modern standards and student expectations”

and complete a work placement to develop the practical expertise and contacts needed for the future.

Students studying fashion and design have access to well-equipped design studios and lecture rooms so they can apply their learning to real-world design challenges. Live projects, work experience and sponsorship by London fashion and design companies give them a head-start in developing real working skills.

Regent's is also one of the UK's leading training institutions for psychology, psychotherapy, counselling psychology and mediation. With options at both

undergraduate and postgraduate level, students are provided with a wealth of insight into how human beings function, and the application of psychology to key social issues in fields including sport, health, education and the justice system.

Students are actively encouraged to undertake internships and work experience, and many graduates go on to build successful international careers in a range of industries, as well as becoming entrepreneurs, start-up founders, or returning to ensure the continuing success of family businesses.

It would be hard to move on from this idyllic location and transformative educational experience, but the institution is proud to see a higher than average number of its graduates move into graduate-level jobs, with starting salaries also considerably higher than other UK universities.

DID YOU KNOW?

Regent's Park was designed in 1811 by John Nash, the favoured architect of the Prince Regent, later George IV


The University campus was originally built for Bedford College, which moved to the park from nearby Bedford Square. Founded in 1849 by Elizabeth Jesser Reid, the college was the first higher education institution for women in the UK

In 2012 Regent's College gained its own taught-degree awarding powers and the following year the institution was awarded university status, becoming Regent's University London in 2012

A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

A key challenge for the University's estates and facilities team today is managing the site within the limits imposed by the historical environment, while adapting buildings to meet modern standards and student expectations.

The University is investing in a major carbon data project to track and improve energy use in the campus buildings over the next several years. The outlay is expected to be repaid seven-fold as better understanding and smarter systems help to reduce costs and capital spend. The more consistent approach to energy management will help to save 1.9 million kWhs and 3092 tonnes of carbon – the equivalent of planting 3,000 trees.

Regent's policy of sustainable investment, which both respects the historic environment and reduces energy use while improving the student experience, led to the achievement of ISO standard 14001 in 2012, and ISO 50001 in 2015. The latter award was particularly welcome, recognising the work put in by the Estates & Facilities team to attain the standard and our commitment to environmental performance in delivering Regent's services. 

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The road ahead — expect the unexpected

From Brexit to UKRI, OfS to TEF, **Steve Wright** asks four sector leaders for their take on the coming year's key landmarks and challenges



Maddalaine Ansell
Chief Executive,
University Alliance



Professor Chris Day
Vice-Chancellor and President,
Newcastle University



Professor Adam Tickell
Vice-Chancellor,
University of Sussex



Professor David Phoenix
Vice-Chancellor,
London South Bank University

What lessons from the past academic year will help us prepare for 2017–18?

MA: This year has been about getting the right overall structures in place for the new regulatory framework. Next year will be about the detail. We are expecting to work closely with officials and ministers to make sure we get this right.

CD: The clear lesson from the past academic year would be: expect the unexpected. The last general election clearly indicated that higher education remains high on the political agenda for all parties, with Labour's pledge to abolish student fees the plainest example of this. Universities need some thorough planning for a potential change in the fees regime in the near future. The passing of the Higher Education and Research Act has clearly changed the higher education landscape significantly, with April ➡

2018 seeing the launch of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the Office for Students (OfS). How these two new bodies develop their policies, with respect to research and teaching respectively, will be a key feature of the next academic year.

Finally, the past academic year has demonstrated that Brexit's effect on HE will be far from clear for the foreseeable future, with no signs of clarity likely to emerge even during 2017–18.

AT: The political turmoil in the UK over the last year, and the new regime for higher education, has increased the degree of uncertainty. Much of what we expected looks less likely: but universities must continue to prove to our students that the investment in their future is one worth making. The evidence is that graduates continue to get better, and better-paid, jobs than non-graduates. The biggest lesson, though, is surely that uncertainty doesn't help planning!

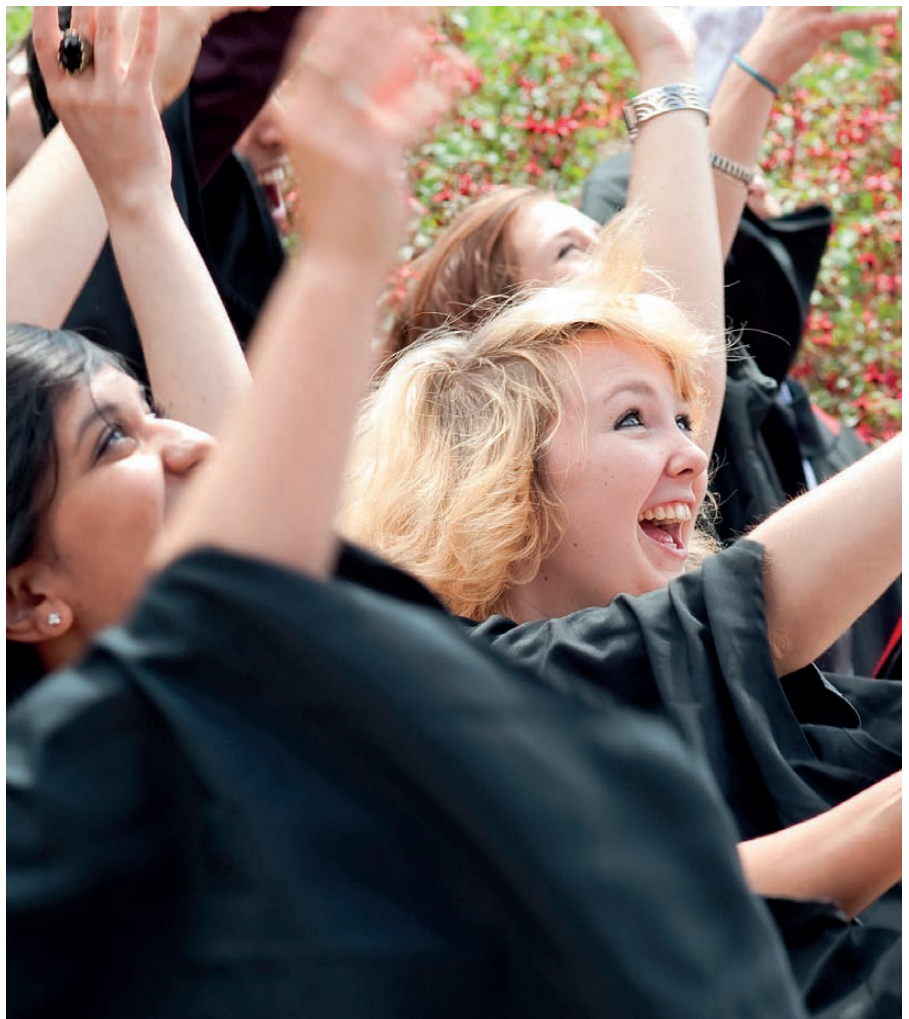
DP: A lot of lessons can be learned, both from the passage of the Higher Education and Research Bill and the aftermath of the Brexit vote. Lobbying for the Bill largely took place behind closed doors, rather than eliciting any form of public support – or it played out in the House of Lords with former Vice-Chancellors and Chancellors speaking out against various aspects. To an extent, this has reinforced HE's elitist reputation.

This also came up in the aftermath to the Brexit vote. Universities rightly pride themselves on their international outlook, but this can sometimes make them seem remote from their surrounding population. Our response to the resurgence of the fees questions posed during the election also has the potential to make universities seem out of touch with the public. After the Brexit vote, the sector rightly let out a collective wail of dismay – but I think that there is a feeling from policy-makers that we have had enough time to complain now, and should be looking at how to make a success of Brexit. As part of this, many universities will want to put a new emphasis on place, and reengage with their local areas.

Brexit also highlighted stark divisions across the country in terms of salaries and social mobility.



ABOVE: Students celebrate Holi Festival



ABOVE: Sussex graduates originate from more than 100 countries

I think universities will be expected to engage more with their local communities and businesses to help address these skills and social mobility problems.

A year on from the Brexit vote, are we any clearer on its implications for HE?

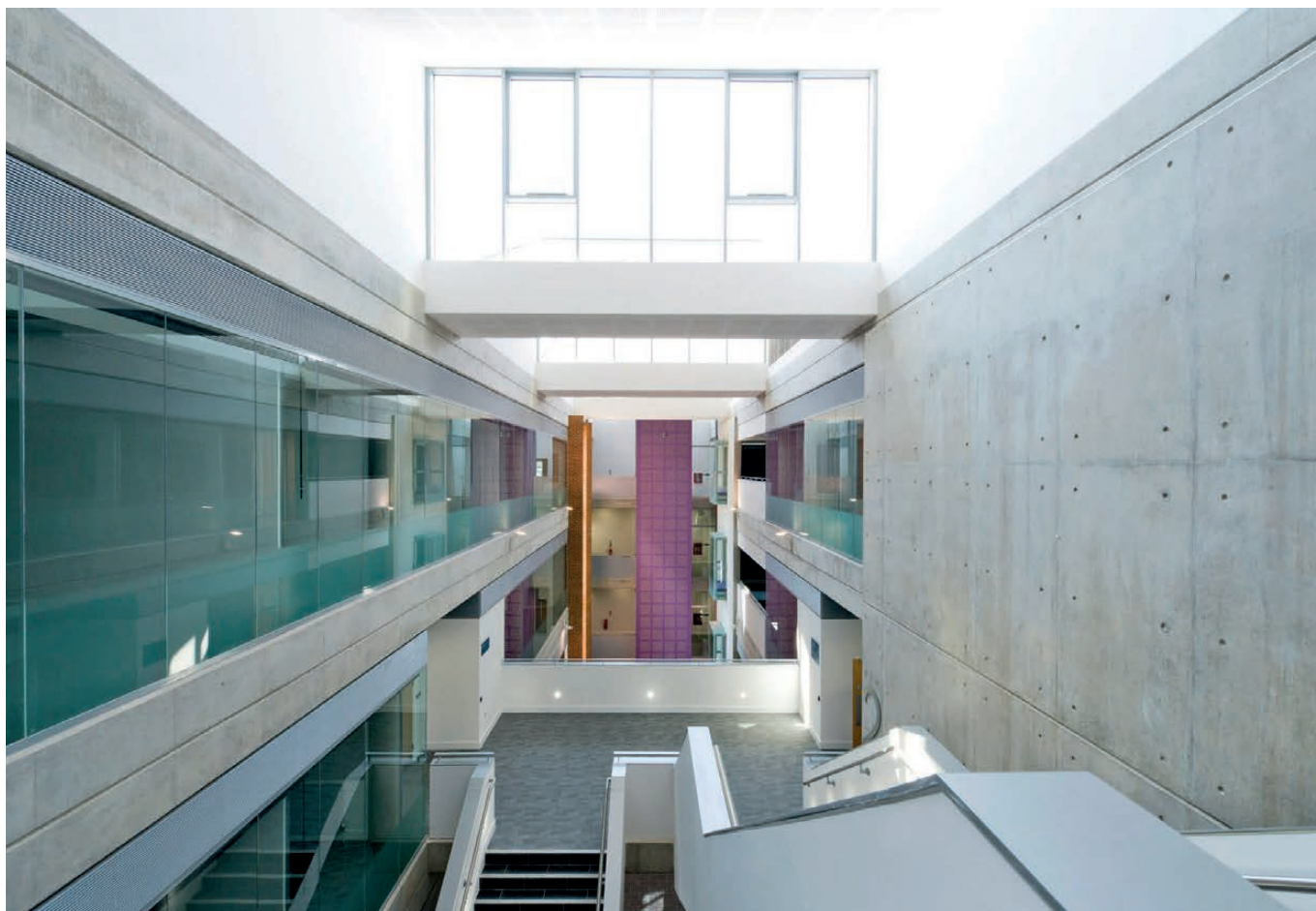
CD: I don't think we are, particularly given the results of the last election and the narrow majority achieved by the current government. It remains unclear whether we will be able to remain part of the research funding system, or what effect any new immigration arrangements might have on the movement of both European students and staff members.

AT: Not in the medium term. The government has stabilised the short-run situation with timely announcements on access to

financial support and the extension of research grants. My own view is that fears over visas for academic staff are misplaced: if staff from China can get visas to work, it seems unlikely that those from France won't be able to. However, the longer-term position is much more concerning: our EU staff come to work here because we have both meritocratic and exciting institutions, and because they see the borders as relatively frictionless.

Perceptions matter: the withdrawal from Euratom is seen as indicative of a retreat from multilateral scientific cooperation.

DP: In a word: no, although that is true for basically every UK sector. We have had some reassurances about the short term – the government has helpfully agreed to underwrite any approved Horizon 2020 projects that extend past our leaving date, plus students who matriculate in the 2018–19 academic year will remain eligible for financial support. As time progresses, however, these commitments will need renewing. Students will be considering 2019 entry very shortly, and bids are being written for funding that would fall outside current commitments.



ABOVE: The £29m Jubilee Building at Sussex has been granted a BREEAM 'excellent' rating

“We need a finance system that is sustainable, supports a diverse system and doesn't limit social mobility”

I think it unrealistic to assume that a new deal will have been negotiated by 2019, and we will therefore not be in a position to fully replace European structures and frameworks. We need greater clarity on the overarching ambition – but we also need to be identifying what a transitional agreement might look like. As Michel Barnier pointed out the clock is ticking down to March 2019 – and we still have very little clarity on what the government wants.

MA: We are already seeing a fall in applications from EU students, suggesting that the Brexit vote and continuing uncertainty on the status of EU nationals is having an impact on those considering study and work in our universities.

What's your assessment of the current student finance situation?

MA: During this year's election campaign it was clear that, for many, the current

system of student fees has become totemic of wider issues of intergenerational inequality. However, two important points are often missed in the public debate on fees. Firstly, the rise in the fee cap in 2012 directly compensated for a corresponding cut in funding for universities from the public purse; secondly, it allowed the removal of the student number cap, which is important for increasing opportunities for widening participation students.

We need a student finance system that is sustainable, supports a strong and diverse system of higher education – and doesn't limit social mobility. Any system which limits the number of people going to university will hold back the opportunities available to disadvantaged applicants and potential applicants.

CD: Student finance has become a hot topic in HE once again, and there seems little doubt that the debate around the balance between public and individual 'good', and how this plays out in the

funding of a university education, will be back on the table. My own view is that there is likely to be a continued contribution from students, as well as the State, towards university education – but the precise balance of these contributions will clearly need to be discussed.

AT: The current policy in England is intra-generationally progressive, though it doesn't feel like it to most students. The facts, though, are: disadvantaged students in England are twice as likely to go to university as their counterparts in Scotland; those who repay the most will be those who earn the most; there is no evidence that poorer students have been put off going to university; and so on.

However, young people feel very strongly that it is not inter-generationally just. Whilst pensioners have, on average, higher incomes than working families, young people are frozen out of housing markets, see work as less secure and are told that not only do they have to pay for the triple lock on pensions – they also need to save for their own because there will be nothing for them in future.

All of this leads to a toxic politics, where very few people are prepared to offer realistic financial suggestions for continuing to provide an excellent, globally desirable education. ➡



ABOVE, FAR RIGHT AND BELOW:
Newcastle University campus,
main building and graduates



“Abolishing tuition fees is not very progressive in socioeconomic terms as it would be of greatest benefit to the highest-paid graduates”

DP: The problem with the current conversations around student finance, since Corbyn's election surge, is the simplistic binary nature of the debate: fees versus no fees. Yes, abolishing tuition fees is not very progressive in socioeconomic terms as it would be of greatest benefit to the highest-paid graduates: but the current system is unsustainable and could be seen to have been roundly rejected by the young people it serves.

Policy-makers should be exploring a more balanced HE system: but this needs to look at the totality of fees and maintenance support. I believe we should reintroduce maintenance grants for all students, with additional means-tested support for those in most need. Making the poorest students take out the biggest loans, as we do in the current system, will only hamper widening participation efforts. The importance of

grants shouldn't be underestimated – the cost of living is one of the biggest barriers for entering HE. For London institutions like mine, living costs can easily outstrip fees.

In terms of fees, I agree that students should pay something towards the benefit they receive – but there needs to be a balance between what students and the state contribute. A university education is not a wholly private good: it has a wider public benefit – social mobility, civic engagement, and addressing the skills crisis that is dragging down national productivity.

Finally, that skills crisis is most acute in certain public-sector professions, where there is an argument for fee forgiveness and the reintroduction of bursaries for some key workers. UCAS figures have shown a 19% fall in nursing applications, for example, since the abolition of bursaries. Any review should support part-time study – and

engage those mature learners who have walked away since fees were introduced.

We've just received the first round of Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) results. What do you make of the framework, and how will it shape our sector during the months ahead?

MA: Alliance universities have always championed teaching excellence, and we've played an active role in helping shape the TEF. The publication of the awards has prompted a welcome discussion of the different models of teaching excellence. Where other ranking systems tend to simply reflect entry requirements, prestige or research, the TEF seeks to recognise the context in which teaching is delivered. With an informal 'lessons learned' exercise currently underway, followed by a more comprehensive review next year, we expect the system to evolve – and, in particular, better metrics to be developed.

AT: The aims of the TEF are entirely laudable: it isn't unreasonable for us to be asked to prove that we are providing excellence in education. As the TEF



LEFT: Newcastle Students in the Biomedical and Biomolecular Sciences



evolves, it will become better able to provide a granularity that will better measure this excellence. The first Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) has evolved markedly into the current Research Excellence Framework (REF), and few would now deny that the RAE/REF has helped to transform the quality of research in UK universities.

CD: There are a number of positive features of the framework – most significantly, raising the profile of teaching in a previously research-dominated HE landscape. However, there is clearly much work to do on the methodology of the TEF before it achieves the credibility of the REF. That said, any measure that encompasses student satisfaction, retention rates and graduate employment rates cannot be all bad. The situation with the subject-level TEF pilot is more difficult, with various universities stating that they do not intend to take part in the pilot. In the meantime, there seems little doubt that universities with a good TEF rating will exploit this for marketing purposes, particularly with respect to international markets and, to a lesser extent, home students, while those with Bronze awards could encounter difficulties with student recruitment.

DP: I am pleased that South Bank received a Silver award in recognition of our graduate outcomes and personalised learning. However, I still have some serious reservations about the process and I am pleased to see that an independent review is going to be conducted. I am opposed to the linking of TEF to fees, and I remain concerned that this could generate a significant bureaucratic burden.

That said, the idea of a teaching framework is, in principle, a good one. It has the potential to give greater focus on teaching, and to give students a clear idea about what academic experience they can expect from an institution. Of significant importance is its inclusion



of outcomes for different demographic groups. At South Bank, this has allowed us to redouble our efforts to support students from less advantaged backgrounds, and has been timely in terms of our commitment to the Race Equality Chartermark. The TEF does have great potential to highlight, and help address, different outcomes obtained by students.

How will the post-election HE landscape continue to evolve?

AT: It's difficult to know. If the Conservatives remain in power, OfS and UKRI will bed down – and there should be some predictability. However, whilst a lot is expected of universities (drivers of economic growth; agents of social mobility; producers of excellence in fundamental science; excellence in educational outcomes for all; agents of UK soft power; contributors to the balance of payments; trainers of the future workforce; sponsors of schools; and so on), political support for us is very soft and prone to demagogic attack.

DP: I don't think the student finance issue will go away anytime soon, although it seems unlikely that there will be any ➡



ABOVE: Newcastle's main teaching and research activities take place in the heart of the city

political will to implement a fundamental reform of the system in the immediate future. Any further changes to the HE landscape are likely to be less dramatic than if the Conservative party had won a large majority – plans for a review of tertiary funding, and for universities to sponsor schools, seem to have been put on hold indefinitely. Elsewhere, alongside universities' greater engagement with their communities, I can foresee the government attempting to rebalance research funding away from the London/

“Any further changes to the HE landscape are likely to be less dramatic than if the Conservative party had won a large majority”

Oxford/Cambridge 'golden triangle', while post-Brexit consideration of how innovation is supported nationally will become increasingly important.

MA: Both the main political parties agree on the need for a modern industrial strategy, and universities have a big role in this agenda. This includes providing lifelong learning in technical and professional education, so that the existing workforce can reskill and upskill; supporting innovative firms to grow and create jobs; and nurturing emerging sectors with world-class R&D.

Most importantly, though, debates about industrial strategy have increasingly emphasised the importance of 'place' and this is where universities, as anchor institutions, can provide the vital linkages between people, businesses, talent and research to underpin sustainable growth across our cities and regions.

CD: UKRI and the OfS will start to implement changes outlined in the Higher Education and Research Act, and these changes will have an effect. There seems little doubt that the recent focus on graduate employability will continue, with universities increasingly expected to play a role in the skills agenda through such schemes as degree-level apprenticeships. The role of HE in implementing the government's new industrial strategy remains unclear – but it seems likely that they will play at least some role in the place-based clusters.

Consideration of implications for higher education in Brexit will hopefully be at least part of the negotiating agenda, however, I don't imagine that these considerations will be at the front of the queue. What the last election demonstrated is that higher education remains a political hot topic, with student fees perhaps the most likely target for future debate and potential reform. **UB**



ABOVE: LSBU is celebrating its 125th anniversary this year

TIME TO CELEBRATE EDUCATION SUSTAINABILITY LEADERS

Steve Hamilton, Vice President and General Manager, UK, Ireland and the Middle East at Interface, explains why universities and colleges need to take the lead in creating a more sustainable education sector

Sustainable practice is fast moving up the agenda, especially in the built environment. With this in mind, it's vital that all organisations – including those in the education sector – take the lead in rethinking the way they operate. This includes minimising any negative impact of existing processes on their supply chain, their operations and, ultimately, our planet.

To be true leaders in this area, it's crucial to champion more sustainable ways of working. This means not only changing the way organisations operate, but considering new ways of evolving their working practices to exceed expectations. It entails challenging perceptions that are considered the norm. When it comes to sustainability, by looking at completely new ways of working with a restorative vision in mind, it is possible to achieve significant breakthroughs. This is a goal to which a growing number of companies are committing, across a variety of sectors. Interface, for example, has been working for 23 years to achieve its Mission Zero target to become wholly sustainable by 2020. Since committing to this, the company has gone beyond



the realms of what was thought possible, making significant progress towards its goal. With the Mission Zero goal in sight, Interface is now looking beyond 2020 and has recently announced a replacement commitment to build on its achievements, called Climate Take Back. As a new mission to run the business in a way that creates a climate fit for life, as well as encouraging the wider industry to do so, Climate Take Back involves working towards four key objectives. These include: having zero environmental impact; championing technologies to sequester carbon positively; supporting the biosphere in regulating the climate; and leading industry re-revolution through cross-sector collaboration. Such commitments are sparking transformations across a range of areas, from the way raw materials for manufacturing are sourced, to how organisations carry out their day-to-day operations, to the procedures around waste.

However, organisations – including universities and colleges – cannot make such a transformation without support. They need to collaborate with like-minded partners to take positive steps towards a more sustainable future, as Interface did when establishing NetWorks™. The company collaborated with the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) to launch the initiative, which helps tackle the environmental problem of discarded nylon fishing nets in some of the world's poorest coastal areas. These nets are collected by local communities and sold back into the global supply chain, providing the carpet industry with recycled

nylon, while cleaning up endangered ecosystems and providing locals with new income streams. Since its launch in 2012, NetWorks™ has collected over 142 tonnes of waste nets to be recycled for use in Interface carpet tiles.

Universities and colleges can meet similarly bold targets by working together with each other and supply chain partners, pooling resources, sharing knowledge and skills to address a wide range of supply chain and operational challenges, all while minimising individual risk.

By co-operating in this way, education institutions can develop a more comprehensive understanding of the wider impact of their sector and beyond, and use their expertise to take the lead in laying the groundwork for radical, positive change.

That's why Interface is proud to be sponsoring the Leadership award category at this year's Green Gown Awards – which recognises sustainability best practice in the education sector. The Leadership award in particular celebrates outstanding individuals working at a senior level at education institutions across the country, who are taking ambitious steps to transform the sustainability of the sector.

With the leadership of these individuals, all organisations in the education sector can work together and play their role in transforming and revolutionising the existing built environment, doing their bit to build a more sustainable future for the rest of society. [UB](#)

www.interface.com
www.net-works.com



HE in numbers



MORE THAN
11 NEW
GRADUATE START-UPS
ARE LAUNCHED EVERY DAY,
CREATING AROUND
21,000 JOBS

22% OF 18-YEAR-OLDS
FROM THE AREAS OF LOWEST HIGHER EDUCATION
PARTICIPATION IN ENGLAND HAVE APPLIED
TO UNIVERSITY IN 2016 COMPARED TO
12% 10 YEARS AGO

THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
FOR GRADUATES (3.1)
IS LESS THAN HALF THAT OF
NON-GRADUATES (6.4%)

THERE ARE
201,380

ACADEMIC STAFF
EMPLOYED AT UK
UNIVERSITIES

THERE ARE
208,750

NON-ACADEMIC STAFF
EMPLOYED AT UK
UNIVERSITIES

BY
2022
THERE WILL BE
2 MILLION
ADDITIONAL JOBS IN
OCCUPATIONS REQUIRING
HIGHER LEVEL SKILLS

IN **2014/15** UNIVERSITIES IN ENGLAND SPENT **£26BN**
ON DAY-TO-DAY RUNNING COSTS OF, **TEACHING**
AND **SERVICES FOR STUDENTS**, CONDUCTING
RESEARCH AND TRANSLATING RESEARCH INTO
INNOVATIONS THAT **BENEFIT SOCIETY**

THE PERCENTAGE OF
LEAVERS

IN UNEMPLOYMENT
HAS BEEN GRADUALLY
DECREASING SINCE

2011/12,

WHEN IT SAT AT **7%**,
IN **2015/16** IT FELL TO **5%**

IN 2015/16 THERE WERE
2.28 MILLION

STUDENTS STUDYING
AT UK HE INSTITUTIONS
UNDERGRADUATE: **1.75M**

POSTGRADUATE: **532,970**

FULL TIME: **1.7M**

PART TIME: **540,285**

STUDENTS FROM THE UK: **1.84M**

STUDENTS FROM THE EU: **127,440**

STUDENTS FROM
NON-EU COUNTRIES: **310,575**



IF ALL **UK UNIVERSITIES** WERE BASED IN THE SAME CITY,
IT WOULD BE THE **FIFTH LARGEST CITY ECONOMY**
IN THE COUNTRY, BASED ON CONTRIBUTION TO GDP. OVERALL UK
UNIVERSITIES GENERATE A **YEARLY OUTPUT OF £73BN**



TEACHING AND INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

Teaching and learning within higher education has arguably never had a profile as high as it does right now. It is not difficult to see why.

The combination of Brexit and concerns about international competitiveness, the pressure on institutions to widen access and deliver ever better and more valuable user experiences to justify increasing fees and the implementation of the Teaching Excellence Framework, have all intensified focus on the quality of teaching and the learning experience.

Simultaneously, changes to the Disabled Students' Allowances regime have fuelled interest in inclusive teaching practices devised to meet statutory equality obligations through a more strategic approach to

reasonable adjustments. That such practices carry a wider range of benefits than merely assisting with baseline legal compliance makes the case for inclusivity compelling.

HEFCE data show that around 10% of all students in the UK have disclosed a disability. The proportion of disabled students varies between institutions, but some report disclosure rates at or above 20%. Most agree that the true figure is even higher than this – particularly as there is no general legal duty on students to disclose that they have a disability – meaning that in many providers, disabled students constitute a significant proportion of the community.

Disabilities come in many forms, physical and mental, with students recognised as being vulnerable to a range of them. Making the transition from home to university can be challenging, requiring adaptation to a new place and more independent ways of working. The pressure on students to do well is considerable. Mental health issues, which tend to be underreported, are now recognised as a core driver of drop-out rates.

The argument for inclusivity is simple – if an institution invests in inclusive practice for the benefit of all students, it is likely to significantly reduce the cost and time needed to make individual adjustments the law requires

for disabled students. There should also be a decrease in complaints, a rise in student satisfaction, more successful learning outcomes and significant reputational enhancement that may also be reflected in TEF results.

The decrease in funding of Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) is one of the most significant financial developments to hit the HE sector in recent years. The logic of the cuts was presented as incontrovertible: levels of public funding had become unsustainable and institutions should bear more responsibility not only for ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) and public sector equality duty (which they should be doing anyway) but also for creating more inclusive teaching and learning environments for the benefit of all students. Whilst DSA funding has not ceased altogether, it is now considered by Student Finance England to be only the *"top of an apex of support, underpinned by an inclusive environment, and individual reasonable adjustments where required"*.

The extent of the reasonable adjustments duty is still often misunderstood. Although the obligations imposed are wide, extending to individual students and being anticipatory in nature, it is not the case that the law requires providers to make adjustments for all students, who previously benefited from DSA support (though many may choose to do so). To be protected by the Act and therefore be eligible for adjustments, a student must meet the technical definition of 'disability'. This goes beyond having a recognised condition or diagnosis to there being a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the individual's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities that has or is likely to persist for more than 12 months.

Another misconception is that the Act requires adjustments to be made to genuine competence standards. Schedule 13 of the Act defines a competence standard as an *"academic, medical or other standard applied for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability"*. As the application of a competence standard does not come under the Act's definition of a *"provision, criterion or practice"* there is no requirement for providers to make reasonable adjustments to the standards themselves. What providers should do is take all reasonable steps to ensure that disabled students are not disadvantaged in demonstrating their competence whilst protecting the integrity of academic standards and learning outcomes. This position is

reinforced by both the Equality Act Technical Guidance for Higher and Further Education and the quality assurance regime overseen by the QAA. Under the latter: *"academic assessment practices must ensure that disabled students are given the opportunity to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes and competence standards."* [Precept 12] and *"whilst there is no duty to make any adjustment to a competence standard itself, the duty does apply to the assessment of that standard, that is, to the process of enabling a student to demonstrate that they meet the standard"*. This may include alternative assessment tasks and, if necessary, consideration of transfer to another suitable

"The provision of targeted reasonable adjustments often identify students to their peers as disabled and thus, whilst fulfilling legal obligations, often themselves act as a barrier for many disabled students and can locate them as 'a problem'. For this and many other reasons, the National Association of Disability Practitioners (NADP) have actively promoted inclusive teaching practices for many years. These practices require student-centred approaches to teaching which, when properly applied, make the learning environment relevant, accessible and engaging for all students and, as this excellent article makes abundantly clear, help to resolve so many of the current strategic preoccupations of HE providers, such as closing the differential outcomes gaps, improving retention and increasing student attendance and engagement."

PADDY TURNER, NADP

course. True inclusive practice is of course far more than 'lecture capture', important though that is. It means developing programmes where competence standards are considered carefully and taking anticipatory action is a matter of routine. Inclusive practice chimes with the social model of disability, which recognises that inequality is the product not of individual limitations but of a failure to remove the obstacles that prevent disabled people from participating equally. This is a key message of the best practice guidance on the subject produced by the Disabled Student Sector Leadership Group (DSSLG) for HE providers (including colleges) published in January 2017 and will inform HEFCE's latest sector

review. Historically, disabled students have been significantly more likely to make complaints about their course, both to their provider and to the OIA, than their non-disabled peers. This is reflected in the OIA's new draft 'Good Practice Framework' – supporting disabled students' guidance. Whilst emphasising that the general principles of the Good Practice Framework apply to all students, disabled or not, the guidance also makes inclusivity recommendations with disabled students in mind. These include the improvement of procedural accessibility and clarity, through considerate language use and formatting as well as the adjustment of normal process where it would be reasonable to do so to remove disadvantage. The consumerisation of higher education under the watch of the Competition and Markets Authority and implementation of the Teaching Excellence Framework, with its focus on student opportunities and outcomes irrespective of background, and the growing importance of student surveys, means there are further benefits for institutions moving towards greater inclusivity. It is increasingly apparent that students investing more in their higher education experience expect institutions to provide a more widely accessible learning environment whether or not those students happen to be disabled.

The case for inclusive teaching and learning is now well-established and being embraced by an increasing number of institutions. Indeed, it has already resulted in a clear move away from the focus on individual needs that was fostered by the old DSAs system. This does not mean there is no longer a role for DSA-funded individual support, only that it should be joined by a pervasive move towards inclusivity for all. HEFCE's decision to double the funding available to disabled students to £40m and to publish a sector review, confirms there is top-level interest and support. But it remains the responsibility of individual institutions to make inclusive practice an integral part of their culture. Legal compliance is important but the benefits of inclusivity offer so much more. **UB**



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leaving the technical side to us!



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- Implementation tailored to your business processes and unique needs.
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- Delivered integration to your student information and finance systems
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- Automatic communication options using Email and/or SMS
- Unlimited user license
- Staff tools to effectively manage your Residence Life and Housing organization such as auto allocation, drag and drop reporting, room changes, program and incident management, contracting, profile management, damage billing and so much more.



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Plans revealed for Leeds science building

Planning application submitted for a new £96m science building on behalf of the University of Leeds

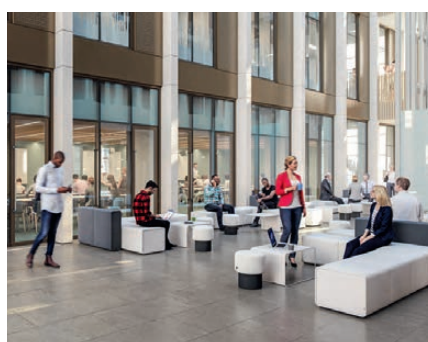
Architects ADP has revealed the plans for a new Integrated Centre for Engineering and Physical Sciences at the University of Leeds.

The project is the largest single investment that the University has made in recent history.

The development, which brings together the schools of engineering and physical sciences, forms an instrumental part of the University's £520m masterplan.

Located between the Grade-II listed Old Mining building and St George's Field, the new six-storey development replaces the now demolished Estates Offices and Boiler house.

The project provides 16,000sqm of laboratories and



specialist teaching spaces for the schools of engineering and physical sciences.

Laboratory spaces have been designed to encourage a culture of inter-disciplinary working in the research and development of new materials in areas including computing, telecommunications, sustainability, biology, pharmaceuticals and medicine.

The development



incorporates a striking five-storey atrium that accommodates the vertical circulation and break-out spaces to provide a vibrant core throughout the building.

Materials including Portland Stone and bronze-coloured aluminium have been chosen to complement the existing building and historic character of the surrounding conservation area.

Proposals also include improving connectivity and links with the rest of the University campus. The building is due for completion in spring 2020.

DID YOU KNOW?

LEEDS' MASTERPLAN HAS OUTLINED A TOTAL OF 19 DEVELOPMENT SITES WITHIN THE CAMPUS, WITH THE POTENTIAL OF PROVIDING APPROXIMATELY 80,000 SQUARE METRES OF ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATION

NEW £60M AUTOMOTIVE FACILITY TO PROPEL UK JOBS AND INVESTMENT



The University of Bath has received significant new government investment to develop the Institute for Advanced Automotive Propulsion Systems

The Institute for Advanced Automotive Propulsion Systems (IAAPS) will be a global centre of excellence, delivering transformational research and innovation into advanced propulsion systems. Located at the Bristol and Bath Science Park, it will lead the development of future generations of ultra-low emission vehicles and attract sector-related businesses to the region, generating economic growth. IAAPS is scheduled to open in early 2020.

The Institute will exploit the engineering expertise of the University of Bath for the benefit of the UK's automotive industry. IAAPS will stimulate over £67m in additional automotive research investment by 2025, creating an additional turnover of £800m for the UK automotive sector and supporting nearly 1,900 new, highly productive jobs.

The capital investment of £28.9m announced from the Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE) UK Research Partnership Investment Fund (UKRPIF), will

enable construction of the £60m IAAPS facility to start in the summer of 2018.

The West of England Combined Authority and Local Enterprise Partnership has also committed support for the project with the allocation of £10m through the Local Growth Fund*.

Global companies, including McLaren, Ford, Jaguar Land Rover, Hofer Powertrain and HORIBA Group, as well as more local businesses such as HiETA

Technologies, have been key to the success of the IAAPS concept. The support and advocacy of the Automotive Council and the Advanced Propulsion Centre, alongside the support of the University's Industrial Partners will continue to play a key role as the vision becomes reality.

Specialist facilities will make IAAPS a centre of excellence for training and skills development in automotive engineering, supporting new apprenticeships, honours degrees, masters' and doctoral courses, helping to address the engineering skills shortage facing the UK automotive sector.

IAAPS will also support the development of a much larger and more competitive automotive business cluster in the South West by providing access to its state-of-the-art facilities to regional start-ups and small- to medium-sized companies.

President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bath, Professor Dame





“THROUGH OUR INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY AND £4.7BN INVESTMENT FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, WE’RE ENSURING WE CAPITALISE ON THE GREAT WORK TAKING PLACE IN UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THE UK AND REMAIN AT THE FOREFRONT OF INNOVATION.”

Universities and Science Minister Jo Johnson



Glynis Breakwell said: “I am delighted that IAAPS has received the support and backing of the government. The University of Bath has over 40 years of automotive research excellence in collaboration with some of the world’s leading companies and is ideally placed to turn this opportunity into a reality.

“I look forward to this fantastic facility opening its doors in 2020, helping to ensure the UK maintains and expands its global position within the automotive sector.”

Universities and Science Minister Jo Johnson said: “The UK’s world-renowned leadership in science, research and innovation is helping to solve a range of national and global challenges, and the breadth of the projects funded today means this will continue.

“Through our Industrial Strategy



ABOVE: The new Institute aims to attract sector-related businesses to the region, generating economic growth

and £4.7bn investment for research and development, we’re ensuring we capitalise on the great work taking place in universities across the UK and remain at the forefront of innovation.” **UB**

* Subject to approval of the Full Business Case by the West of England Joint Committee. The committee comprises the constituent councils of the West of England Combined Authority (Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council) and North Somerset Council.

TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK – A SILVER RATING SO FAR

This year's Higher Education Conference returns to London to tackle the challenges and opportunities that come with increased competition and choice in the sector off the back of momentous HE reforms

The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) has been introduced by the government to assess the quality of higher education providers in England. It is designed to recognise excellent teaching and is used in addition to existing national requirements for universities. TEF's first results, which were released in June 2017, caused mixed opinions amongst professionals as universities were benchmarked on a whole new criteria, including students' entry qualifications, background and age.

Despite this, universities have the option to appeal their award and any changes will be published in July 2017. The scheme awards either a gold, silver or bronze rating to a higher education institution and may also be used from 2020 to decide on the allocation of state funding. The framework was created to assist students in choosing where to continue their education. It simplifies the decision-making process as the assessment accounts for a wider variety of criteria.

Following the publication of the TEF framework, many of the UK's top higher education institutions were left disappointed over the new grading system. Several of the Russell Group universities who had previously been rated highly by the Quality Assurance Agency, were rated 'bronze' under the TEF. Despite this, many have been pleased with the changes made by the government. Steve Smith, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Exeter, part of the Russell Group, said: "I think the TEF is an attempt by the government to say that teaching matters." Smith added that the government is "trying to rebalance the focus of institutions towards teaching."

Others feel that first generation university students will benefit from this assessment system due to metrics being benchmarked

and reflecting the selectivity of the higher education institutions. Tim Blackman, Vice-Chancellor of Middlesex University, welcomes the change as he believes that absolute scores are not the answer, citing that Russell Group universities start with a large advantage as a result of selecting their students from top schools.

The government's plan is to use scores from the TEF as a tool to appropriately allocate funding. The sector faces a large financial problem that needs to be addressed, although Blackman has branded linking TEF successes with the right to raise fees as a "mistake".

The framework has caused a stir amongst students and education professionals keen to voice their opinion, with critics claiming the benchmark system is unclear and unfair. Sir Christopher Snowden, President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Southampton, voiced his concerns regarding the new TEF especially the benchmark system in light of being awarded bronze.

"There is no logic in our result at all," Sir Christopher said. "How can you have so many positive comments and exceed many of your benchmarks by a colossal margin and still get a bronze?"

"I know we have done significantly better [on metric scores] than many gold-rated institutions with a similar student profile – I can show you the evidence."

Sir Keith Burnett, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield, believes that the marketisation will break down a university's capacity for learning. The TEF provides an incentive for learning through competition



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rather than a desire for learning through a strong relationship between student and teacher. He said: "The relationships that bind students

and teachers inevitably exceed those of the market." He added that the government's proposals for HE in the Green Paper included "driving value for money both for students investing in their education, and taxpayers underwriting the system". The standard of teaching, however, is measured by the pay its students receive upon leaving university. The TEF uses a relatively simplistic measure of success that ignores large amounts of research showing that students with higher household incomes will go into higher paying graduate jobs. Again, however, there are those who feel that this drastic change is much needed. Nick Hillman, Director of the Higher Education Policy Institute, said: "The teaching excellence framework would have comprehensively failed if it had simply replicated existing hierarchies."

He claims that the TEF was designed to be completely different to previous forms of rankings, arguing that previous rankings ignore areas that need improvement and do not show areas of excellence.

Professor Madeleine Atkins, Chief Executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, who plays a vital role in the framework, stated: "The TEF measures excellence [and] we are very pleased to be working to develop and refine the TEF so that it can be as useful as possible in helping prospective students choose where to study."

Professor Madeleine Atkins is a keynote speaker at the Higher Education Conference 2017, register your place today to hear her discuss the long term visions for the TEF. **UB**





Happy on the inside, happy on the outside

Why a comfortable living environment gives students their best chance of success

Tanya Rogers, Sales Director at Crystal Facilities Management, talks about the importance of making student accommodation feel like a home from home to help ease the transition into university life

The new academic year comes complete with many different emotions, everything from excitement to trepidation to even downright dread! It's not surprising really, considering how entering into university life inevitably means students are being forced to step out of their comfort zones. Whether it's through starting a challenging new course, having to forge brand-new friendships, moving out of home or in the case of many students, moving to a completely new city, saying goodbye to the good old comfort zone is undoubtedly pretty daunting.

For a lot of students, accommodation plays a huge part in how quickly and easily they settle into university life. Having a safe, homely living space, where they feel able to chill out, relax and comfortably continue with their studies can prove to be a complete godsend, especially for those in their first year who are still acclimatising to the hustle and bustle of campus life.

If a student is unhappy with their living conditions it is not rocket science to see how this will have a knock-on effect on

the rest of their university experience. The saying 'home is where the heart is' certainly rings true in this situation – if their new 'home' is miserable and unwelcoming it will only heighten feelings of homesickness and possibly even prevent them from throwing themselves fully into student life.

Equally, if a student is happy and content in their accommodation there is an increased likelihood of them having a more confident and positive approach to student life, and ultimately their studies. So how do you ensure that students are falling into the latter category?

This is where Crystal Facilities Management can help. With over 10 years' experience providing specialist cleaning services to universities, our team are used to dealing with the challenges that come hand-in-hand with student accommodation.

As can be imagined, student accommodation has to withstand a fair amount of wear and tear, especially as it is often the first time that many of the students have lived away from home and been responsible for their own cleaning. With this in mind, ensuring that the accommodation meets the highest standards of cleanliness prior to the new academic year is paramount.

In the weeks leading up to the arrival of the new intakes, our team perform a thorough, deep clean across all areas of



the student accommodation, including carrying out any repairs and addressing any areas that may need specialist cleaning, such as upholstery or carpets. Not only does this provide the perfect welcome to the new students, it also ensures that all traces of any previous occupants are erased!

Due to the extremely positive response that we have received as a result of our seasonal deep-clean services, CFM now provide year-round services for several of our customers, including The University of Sheffield and Falmouth University. In addition, we also provide a security service to ensure the safety of students and their belongings within their accommodation.

In a nutshell, having a safe, clean 'home from home' on campus is one less thing for students to worry about. Which, for once, is a worry that is no doubt shared with their parents! **UB**

www.crystalservices.uk.com



Student Accommodation Awards return this December

Get the recognition you deserve on 7 December by entering your company, halls or teams into the Student Accommodation Awards

The dazzling evening ceremony will celebrate excellence across student housing, and will reward innovation, talent and dedication that makes for the best home-away-from-home experience.

The awards ceremony is part of the wider Student Accommodation Conference & Awards event, taking place on 7 December in Birmingham, designed to bring all stakeholders together to discuss, debate and celebrate the sector as a whole.

The awards will follow up in the evening after the main conference on the same day. Both events represent an unmissable opportunity for the very best in student housing to come together for a night of celebration.

There are 12 awards up for grabs, and to be in with a chance of winning, enter your nomination by Friday

15 September. Whether you've just completed a brilliant development, want to recognise your unsung hero, or work for a super student accommodation team, we want to hear from you!

After the huge success of the separate conference and awards ceremony in 2016, Property Week has joined the two events together to create one all-encompassing event for everyone involved within the student accommodation sector including universities, developers, operators, investors, agents and service providers. You will also get the opportunity to hear from students on what makes or breaks their student experience while studying.

The conference will discuss the most pressing issues from university campuses, PBSA companies, and investors as they navigate an array of issues – from political landscape and demographic changes, affordability and student



experience, to what the next generation of student housing may look like.

Meet and network with over 800 of the biggest names in the sector through the day – the revamped programme, which will delve right into the heart of student and university needs, as well as future gazing into how the sector will grow and all of the business opportunities that this will present.

What's more, for the first time the conference will include three



Awards categories are as follows:

- Personality of the Year – to be decided by the judging panel
- Hall of Residence (Overall) of the Year – to be decided by the judging panel
- University Halls of Residence of the Year
- Private Halls of Residence (London) of the Year
- Private Halls of Residence (Rest of UK) of the Year
- Unsung Hero of the Year
- Innovation of the Year
- Developer of the Year
- Professional Team of the Year
- Student Accommodation Team of the Year (Universities)
- Operator of the Year
- Investor of the Year

simultaneous Innovation Zones – Student Experience Zone, University Zone and the International Zone. These three content clusters will zoom in on the specific issues within each segment. You will be able to attend sessions of each zone and create your own itinerary of content.

The main agenda content will be focusing on the current major aspects within student housing, including the view from UK universities, current investment and developments, and affordability. Conveying information through thought-provoking presentations and innovative panels, the conference will be bringing you answers to your most burning questions on the sector this December.

With the Student Accommodation

Awards a completely sold-out event in 2016, we've grown capacity for 2017 and added in some new categories to ensure that every aspect of the sector is celebrated, including splitting our schemes regionally.

Registration and awards entries are currently open with the deadline for all entries Friday 15 September 2017.

Anybody can submit an entry as long as they or the company/individual they are entering meet the criteria for the relevant category. The period covered by Student Accommodation Awards is from 1 September 2016. While initiatives, deals or projects may have commenced before that time, the focus of the entry must be within the stated period. All categories are completely free to enter.

To submit your entry, simply visit student.propertyweek.com and follow the online entry process. ^{UB}

The deadline for all entries is Friday 15 September 2017. Property Week's Student Accommodation Conference & Awards event will take place on 7 December 2017 at the NCC in Birmingham.

You can secure your place online at student.propertyweek.com



Sitting pretty

Rather than impose a new seating solution, the University of Southampton let its students decide...

As part of a long-term refurbishment programme of its shared learning spaces, the University of Southampton wanted to replace the accumulated mismatching seating with a single style of chair. The University enlisted the help of national seating specialists Posturite, with the eventual decision handed over to the students themselves.

Several meetings were held with the client to listen to their requirements to provide a chair that would suit the environment of the Common Learning Space areas. They wanted something with longevity and a lengthy warranty to ensure they didn't have to replace them or have to deal with broken parts. The various types and colours currently available were discussed, and the black chair with black back and seat pads and silver legs was chosen to fit in with the environment visually as well as ergonomically. It was taken in to the Project Team to evaluate first and then put out to the students, alongside a selection of other products that similarly fit the bill.

At the end of the trial, the participants overwhelmingly voted for the HÅG Conventio Wing. Once the chairs were supplied, the client stated that we had provided a first-class service to support the quality product.

A dynamic chair specially designed for meetings and conferences, the HÅG Conventio Wing has a variety of features which make it perfect for learning environments. The chair's built-in rocking

mechanism inspires and encourages variation and movement, enhancing blood circulation, mental focus and performance. The freedom to move also removes any feelings of constriction, which become more acute when concentrating. The Wing also features self-stabilising legs, so no matter how uneven the floor surface, all four legs always remain rooted.

“The environmental credentials were seen as admirable by students”

The aesthetic appeal was a big winner for the students. Its wing-shaped back with a slight curve is not only ergonomic, but attractive too. Its light but tough build makes it easily movable, and it can cope with rough treatment, coming with a 10-year warranty. It can be stacked up to 15 high and can easily clip together with a simple linking mechanism, great for when use in conference settings.

Finally, the environmental credentials were seen as admirable by students. The Conventio Wing follows HÅG's ongoing commitment to sustainable production, with recycled car bumpers and plastic bottles a significant proportion of the plastic used, as well as recycled aluminium and steel. The product is EPD, Greenguard and Mobelfakta certified.

Southampton University was impressed

with the credentials and backed the students' choice, and to date over 2,500 chairs have been ordered, in two different configurations; five-star bases for computer focused areas, and the four-legged variety everywhere else. They also took advantage of the customised upholstery options, with each chair carrying a stitched 'Common Learning Space' motif to identify them.

Speaking a few months later, a representative from Southampton University said, “Since the first batch of chairs went in, they have been subjected to the usual day-to-day use by students but they are still looking as smart and stylish as the day they were delivered.”

The University has received positive feedback from students, with students regularly spotted dragging their chairs from one room to another, in order to avoid using a different chair. After the initial installation, office and educational furniture specialists BOF took over the tender, and have supplied the University with additional pieces ever since the installation. ^{UB}

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Transforming workspaces

Keri Beckingham looks at the ways in which universities are using spatial design to boost staff wellbeing →



Did you know that in today's workplaces, on average only 44% of desk space is occupied, or that at any one time only 67% of staff are observed on site? These statistics from Spacelab, a leading architecture and design firm, suggest that office and administrative spaces are not being used effectively, an area where universities are also falling short. Here, we explore whether spatial design can develop an institution's office and administrative space, and therefore improve the motivation and productivity of staff as a result.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SPATIAL DESIGN IN NON-TEACHING SPACES

Nathan Lonsdale is a Partner at Spacelab and has worked with several UK universities to reconfigure their office spaces. He believes spatial design can help universities to operate more effectively, and says: "First and foremost, in our experience universities like to be called organisations, however, they are definitely more like businesses because they need to make money, function and collaborate – a mindset change needs to take place, and interior architecture can help to start break down those barriers.

"We are great believers that if you get the heart of the business right, it will naturally start to spread through the workplace into the product. The design is the feeling, the emotion on top of this – it's important for universities to know what they want to create."

Graeme Scott is Managing Director of Constellations, a company that designs and installs workspaces for clients in the education sector. He believes spatial design is important for allowing staff to work more flexibly, and says: "Designing work environments with people in mind is fundamental. As non-teaching employees may spend the majority of their working day in their office, it is essential that new spaces are considered beyond the parameters of simple space planning.

"This has seen the introduction of new products tailored to the individual preferences of organisations and their employees. For example, our height-adjustable desks, which allow employees to move from a sit to stand working position, have seen a jump in orders over the past 12 months as university procurement teams see the benefit of creating flexible environments and as 'hot-desking' and the use of laptops and tablets become more popular too."

Another key reason for a university to review the spatial design of their non-teaching spaces is to improve the motivation of their staff. Nick Conway is Director at ITC Concepts, a construction company who recently worked with UCL to refurbish their SU and create office space for their support services. He says: "Any space, whether for teaching, socialising or administration, can impact on the creativity and the frame of mind of those who use it. As universities want their staff to be working to the best of their abilities, it is always worth investing in non-teaching spaces so

ABOVE:
Constellations' adjustable desks, which allow employees to move from a sit to stand working position, have seen a jump in orders over the past 12 months

“Traditionally universities have non-teaching spaces set up in separate silos or offices for different departments. The downside is that here, staff are not working together, whereas they should be helping the university to function better”



that they feel motivated, relaxed and ready to achieve.

“As a construction company, this is something we bear in mind, whether it’s developing new social and leisure facilities or refurbishing a whole faculty’s administrative and teaching spaces.”

IMPROVING WELLBEING, PERFORMANCE AND WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

When working with universities, Spacelab aim to provide lots of different types of spaces which are tailored to the different moods of staff. As Nathan Lonsdale says: “We create several options depending on whether someone wants to get their head down and focus in a quiet space, or work collaboratively with others – we help to build a community.

“We think it’s really important to provide

ABOVE:
University procurement teams see the benefit of creating flexible environments, breakout areas and ‘hot desks’

space that allows everyone to tailor their activity. Rather than us dictate how someone works, there is flexibility which allows them to tailor their workspace themselves which is really empowering.”

Graeme Scott agrees that it’s important for universities to offer their staff a range of working space options, based on the specific needs of different individuals and teams. He adds: “Spatial design can help to ensure that working environments are able to accommodate the different working styles and functions of a team effectively. We work with clients to understand the tasks their teams will perform and look to design flexible spaces that facilitate those.

“Introducing areas for collaborative working such as staff break-out spaces, as well as areas for individual working and on-to-one meeting spaces helps to ensure that employees are able to work effectively and keep disruption for others in the environment to a minimum, aiding productivity.”

Nick Conway also believes that spaces should reflect those who work in them, and comments: “Fit out and refurbishment projects are central to the creation of positive and productive environments for staff. Being in a space which is inspiring, comfortable and creatively designed is conducive to feeling inspired, relaxed and happy. We can see universities recognising this through greater investment in spaces for staff.”

DEVELOPMENTS OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

What changes in spatial design have our experts seen in universities over the last year? Graeme Scott says he has seen a focus on effectively utilising existing spaces through the use of furniture, and comments: “We have seen a rise in demand for quality furniture that is durable ➡

DID YOU KNOW?

- 🕒 In today’s workplace, only 44% of desk space is occupied
- 🕒 For most businesses, people rarely spend more than 50% of their working week at their desks
- 🕒 In several cases, staff can be at their desks for less than a third of the week

SOURCE: www.spacelab.co.uk/blog/known_your_office



“Designing work environments with people in mind is fundamental. As non-teaching employees may spend the majority of their working day in their office, it is essential that new spaces are considered beyond the parameters of simple space planning”



LEFT: The nearly-refurbished UCL SU and office space for support services

ABOVE: Office space designed by Spacelab

BELOW: Constellations' Locker Unit



but also very flexible in its use. For example, there has been more demand for our leg-extension packs that allow our office desk layouts to be re-configured – enabling the arrangement to adapt as working environments and working teams develop and change.

“We have also seen a rise in demand for individual private storage space in office environments. This led to the development, in conjunction with Nottingham Trent University, of our new locker units that provide secure storage for staff. These lockers are designed to work with our modular storage systems enabling the lockers to be part of the interior design.”

Adding to this, Nathan Lonsdale says that he has seen an increase in the creation of agile workspaces, where not every member of non-teaching staff will have an allocated desk. He adds: “Traditionally universities have non-teaching spaces set up in separate silos or offices for different departments. The downside is that here, staff are not working together, whereas they should be helping the university to function better.

“By getting staff out of their offices, bringing them together and allowing them to move more freely within the workspace, it will encourage a change in staff behaviour which will result in a more effective working environment.” **UB**



PROMOTION

Furniture for active learning spaces

The maker movement is drastically altering the environment and culture of our classrooms. By understanding this evolution, we can ensure learning spaces are best prepared to embrace this new active way of learning, ensuring teachers and students can make the most of their time together. *By Alison Mallett, National Sales Manager for Education, KI Europe*

The maker culture features a connected and personal focus on active learning and doing. It comes as no surprise that maker culture is supported widely by top entrepreneurs and innovators. Where experiential and creative confidence lives, so too do the tech founders, the application and industrial engineers, the authors, scientists, artists, and the next generation of teachers and education professionals. Each will be well equipped to bring about the next cycle of disruptive innovations and technology in decades to come.

More and more educational institutions are embracing this pedagogical evolution in order to nurture the skills required in the workforce of the future. This new active, human-centred approach to learning develops agency, meaning students become independently capable of expressing creative confidence and curiosity within their environment. No longer do we find educators at the front of a room, lecturing. Instead, we see an inspired shift, from teacher to mentor, whereby distributed teaching and learning is occurring throughout a fluid, interdisciplinary process. STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and now the expanded STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) live here. Students use technical tools such as 3D printers that proclaim that a 'different' kind of learning is happening within this space.

A makerspace is by nature one that facilitates and encourages this dynamic learning method. So firstly, the conventional idea of a classroom, linear and constrained, must be erased. Technology now means that everywhere is a place to work, learn and

interact. By thinking outside the traditional four walls of the classroom, we can promote uninhibited exploration, support movement, interaction and collaboration – not just between teachers and students, but between the students themselves.

Here are a few idea starters showcasing common themes observed across the maker movement, that may serve as a conversation starter for what would best work for your unique requirements and culture.

FLEXIBLE STORAGE:

Maker-centred learning involves prototyping, crafting and many iterative processes. Design-based approaches to problem-solving will often require access to supplies, and a safe place to store a work-in-progress. So, storage within the space should be mobile, vary in size, and user-friendly for easy on-demand access.

WORK SURFACES:

Students need a place to create – whether this is a large work surface for individual or group work. In this new learning environment, the work surface isn't just for a notebook or laptop. It now could quickly

transform to become a place to set up a 3D printer or robotics, or other learning tools that will enhance and reinforce agency (the capacity to make choices and decisions).

SEATING:

Adaptive seating solutions easily allow students and teachers to move throughout a space, giving them the freedom to select different styles of seating based on their needs. The importance of movement in an active space is vital – not only does it facilitate new ways of learning as already discussed – movement in and of itself is proven to be beneficial to human health. As with agile workspaces that discourage a sedentary working culture, an active learning space can improve concentration, retention, productivity and wellbeing for both students and teachers.

WRITABLE WORK SURFACES:

Surfaces for expressing and sharing ideas – markerboards, magnetic or tackable/stickable walls) allow students and teachers to generate and easily synthesise ideas as they work through the creative design-thinking process. **UB**

ABOUT KI EUROPE

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International, Inc.), has grown to become one of the world's largest and most respected independent furniture manufacturing groups. KI's EMEA headquarters and showroom in Central London is supported by an established network of manufacturing facilities and distribution partners across the UK, Europe and the Middle East.



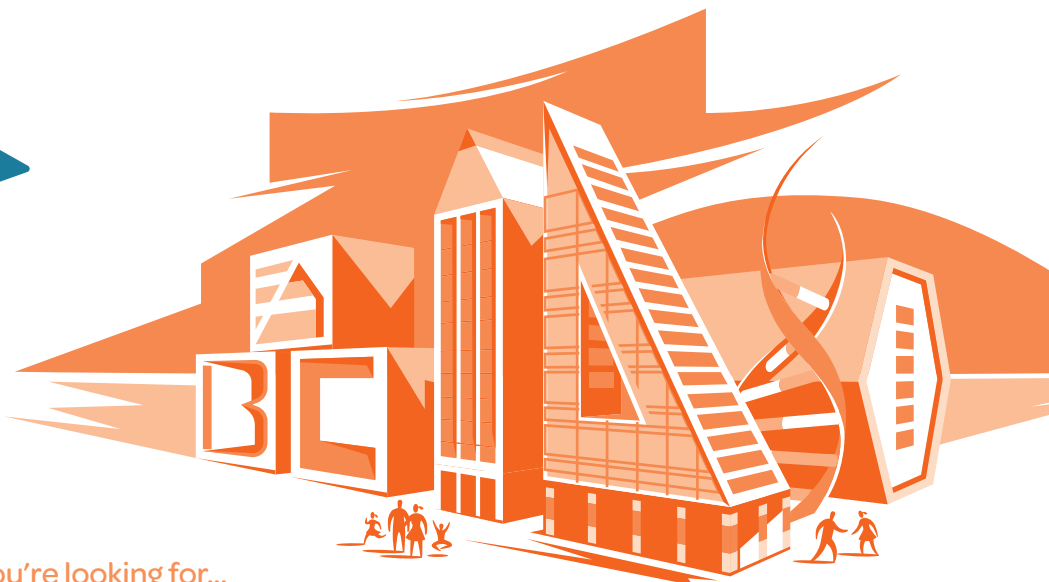
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A NEW YEAR ON CAMPUS

As a new academic year approaches, it seems that accommodation providers are on an annual hamster wheel as our campuses come to life once again, says Noreen O'Shea, Assistant Manager Student Residences, Campus Life Services, University of Limerick and ASRA Ireland representative



We have seen it all before, a new cohort of befuddled freshers looking for directions to their lectures, grappling with their timetables, figuring out what contact hours are or where they can get a decent cup of tea.

From the outside, it may well seem that we just provide the bricks and mortar of student accommodation, however, in reality, our services and supports go way beyond that. The accommodation a student chooses to live in for their time on campus moulds their student experience.

For the first-year student, checking in to their new digs is often an undergrad's very first experience of the campus and its culture, and the experience they have with us will stay with them. Students are catapulted out of the comfort and security of home and we provide them with their home away from home. The strangers that they meet in their halls on that very first day can often become their friends for life. Their new bedroom becomes their retreat, where, by hanging some posters, they begin to express their individuality while the common areas of the new home become a social outlet.

For senior students who, as freshers successfully navigated through the challenges that just 12 months ago seemed seismic to them, return to our campuses confidently knowing the shortest route to

the centre of campus, understand the campus colloquialisms that baffle visitors "I'll meet you in the Fish Tank", and appear to their younger peers to be university boffins.

Their return to campus is at first a significantly social celebration, celebrations that often take place in the common rooms of their accommodation. They will catch up with friends with whom they have not met in person in months but have followed every experience of their summer break on a variety of social media channels.

They return to our accommodation as more experienced residents, having the skills to deal with the minor housemate squabbles that come with sharing a kitchen with five others. Often our residents will return to us year on year and our accommodation offers a comfortable sense of security that supports not only their social get-togethers but also provides a sanctuary allowing them to study individually or as groups of residents.

They have passed their exams and progressed. They now face into a new year understanding which subjects they flourished in and which they might need to focus on more this year. The proximity of our residences to the

academic buildings is a priority for many residents, especially those whose course work require them to spend long hours based in laboratories, theatres, studios or group study spaces across the campus.

Another significant support we offer our residents are our Resident Assistants. RAs are also students and whilst they encourage residents to integrate into our residences and meet new people through our events programmes, they act as a helpful resource to their resident peers. The RAs share their experience of student life and provide advice to the students on how to get the most out of living on campus and their time at University. As they build relationships with our residents, they are often the first to notice students who might be struggling and can act as a signpost to welfare or academic support services offered on campus.

Each new academic year brings with it a flurry of excitement, anticipation and anxiousness for all of our residents whether they are an unknowing undergrad or a self-assured senior. We as accommodation providers play a key role in that experience and we are delighted to be part of it. Roll on AY17/18! **UB**

"EACH NEW ACADEMIC YEAR BRINGS WITH IT A FLURRY OF EXCITEMENT, ANTICIPATION AND ANXIOUSNESS FOR ALL OF OUR RESIDENTS"

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 **MADE IN BRITAIN**



Industrial design scheme at De Montfort University's Campus Centre

Mark Richards, Head of Design at Godfrey Syrett, discusses the recently completed installation at De Montfort

Campus Centre at De Montfort University has recently undergone a £3m refurbishment as part of a wider campus transformation. The space has been refreshed to make it more welcoming for students and visitors alike.

The Campus Centre houses the Student Union HQ, as well as the DSU Officer Team. The refurbishment has opened up the building, creating a light, bright and airy space which allows for a better flow of communication between the Officer Team and the students. This all serves to make the DSU team more visible and easy to contact by the student body and other staff.

Godfrey Syrett worked with the team at De Montfort to design the space; helping to guide their furniture choices to make the most of the space while also meeting their specifications.

De Montfort University envisaged a bright and contemporary aesthetic for the Campus Centre; and the furniture choices had to enhance this. Godfrey Syrett installed desks, task chairs and visitor seating throughout the DSU offices.

The use of clear-lacquered exposed



metalwork on furniture items throughout gives the building a raw and edgy feel; embracing the current design trend for a more natural and unfinished style. This adds to the industrial feel of the whole building, complementing exposed steel beams in the ceilings and the elements of raw brickwork.

Within the student zones, a number of Spark-Hi booths were installed; creating semi-private areas which are ideal for students to relax or collaborate on projects. The combination of grey and yellow fabric in contrasting textures enhances the tactility of the booths, encouraging their use.



The dining space at Campus Centre houses a combination of traditional dining furniture at varying heights, and soft seating with low tables where students and staff can relax and catch up with a coffee; or equally use for group work.

The Campus Centre at De Montfort University is an excellent example of how the design and function of higher education spaces is changing; incorporating adaptable social spaces and breakout areas for collaborative use. **UB**



SHEFFIELD'S SOCIAL SCIENCE FACILITY GETS GO-AHEAD

The University of Sheffield's plans for a new, world-class Social Sciences facility have been approved

Designed by award-winning Sheffield-based architects HLM, the proposed state-of-the-art home for the University's Faculty of Social Sciences aims to improve learning for students through its new collaborative teaching and social spaces and offer a wide range of disciplines under the same roof for the first time.

It will also include a research hub, bringing

together cross-cutting research centres in an innovative working environment to encourage truly interdisciplinary research that will lead the way in addressing key societal and global challenges.

The building has been designed with sustainability at its core and it is expected that it will be the University's first building to achieve a BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) 'Outstanding' rating. Ground source heat pumps will be installed to maximise the opportunity created by thermal warmth, and provide cooling in the summer.

The Faculty of Social Sciences is the University's largest faculty, with more than 9,000 students – making up 34% of the University's total student population.

The Faculty comprises 13 departments, several cross-cutting research institutes, and the White Rose Doctoral Training Partnership. The Faculty is unique among its peers in the Russell Group in having both classical social sciences disciplines such as Politics and Economics, but also practitioner-based disciplines such as

Architecture and the Information School.

Professor Gill Valentine, Vice-President and Head of Faculty for Social Sciences, said: "Our Faculty is leading the way in impactful learning, teaching and research. The new facility has the potential to secure future development in these areas by bringing our students and academics together in an innovative, interdisciplinary environment."

The proposed new facility will also provide departmental bases for the Departments of Economics, Politics, Sociological Studies, the Sheffield Methods Institute and the Faculty of Social Sciences office.

The adjacent Elmfield Building, which currently houses the Department of Politics, will provide the departmental homes for the Information School, Journalism Studies and the School of Education. This will bring departments in closer proximity to the Sheffield University Management School on Conduit Road.

Construction work on the Social Sciences building will start on site in early 2018, with an expected completion date of spring 2020. **UB**



ABOVE: The Faculty comprises 13 departments and several cross-cutting research institutes

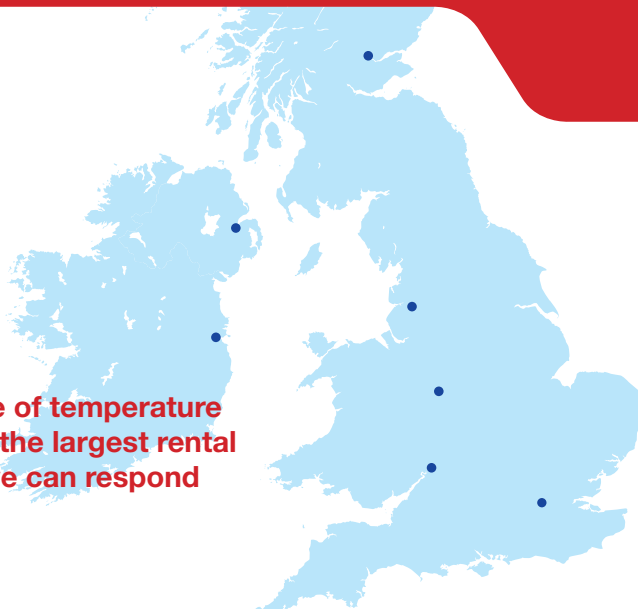
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HOW UNIVERSITIES CAN PROTECT THEMSELVES AGAINST CRITICAL PLANT FAILURE AND REMAIN FULLY OPERATIONAL



TCEPS should be part of every university's emergency contingency plan. Terry Stevens-Smith of Watkins Hire explains how it works and the benefits

WHAT IS TCEPS, AND WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FOR UNIVERSITIES?

Failure of critical plant, such as heating, air conditioning or refrigeration systems, can have serious consequences for organisations such as universities, which rely on continuity of vital technical support services.

The comfort of staff and students depends on continued operation of HVAC plant, while research facilities may rely on specialist cooling and heating systems. IT facilities may depend on continuity of cooling to remain operational and keep data safe. In the event of unforeseen equipment breakdown, the costs in terms of building closures, lost IT capability and disrupted research can be incalculable.

TCEPS – standing for Temperature Control Emergency Planning Services – was developed by Watkins Hire to provide a vital safety net, to protect organisations such as universities from critical plant failure. It forms a central part of an organisation's contingency planning strategy, to ensure universities can continue to operate as normal even if vital support plant breaks down.

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produce a detailed report on critical plant, and its role in maintaining the operation of your organisation. We then design a TCEPS contingency plan to safeguard your institution and ensure it can continue to operate as normal in the event of a breakdown or other service interruption.

WHAT DOES THIS INVOLVE, AND WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO THE UNIVERSITY?

It covers the provision of high-performance, high-efficiency standby hire plant that comes on-stream almost instantly in the event of service interruption to produce hot water, heating, cooling or dehumidification – whatever back-up technical services are required to maintain the operation of buildings, IT infrastructure and research facilities.

The service includes installation, commissioning, transport planning and fuel management for the duration of the contract using Watkins unique GSM telemetry service and 24/7, 365-day cover.

The benefit of TCEPS is that it provides total assurance that the university can continue to operate as normal until plant can be repaired and a long-term solution found.

WHO USES TCEPS?

It is used by organisations whose operations depend on the continuity of service of critical plant. As well as universities, users include hospitals and care homes, manufacturers with vital processes that are temperature dependent, hotels and leisure companies, and the IT and telecoms industry.

IS IT A ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL SCHEME, OR ARE THERE VARYING LEVELS OF COVER?

There are three levels of cover: Gold, Silver and Bronze, enabling organisations to match the level of support they need with the criticality of the application and their budget. Each TCEPS plan has a unique reference number, which the university or responsible FM company quotes at the time of any emergency call, ensuring a timely response and minimising downtime.

HOW CAN I ASSESS WHETHER TCEPS WOULD BE BENEFIT MY UNIVERSITY?

Simply get in touch, and we will arrange for our specialists to visit and make an assessment of your requirements. We will explain how the service helps protect you, the levels of cover available, and how it can dovetail with your own contingency planning for your organisation. **UB**

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SAILING TO THE TOP WITH HENLEY

Charley Rogers reports on Henley Business School's annual Regatta Day, and the school's continuing research and training projects

Henley-on-Thames is famed for its annual Royal Regatta, which showcases not only the top in rowing talent, but attracts some of the world's most prominent figures and celebrities. However, the banks of the River Thames are also home to the UK's first established business school, and the *Economist*'s number one-rated business school for networking opportunities.

Set within very impressive grounds, Henley Business School (HBS) affords not only stunning views of the river and surrounding countryside, but also offers a world-leading business education. The school celebrated its 70th anniversary in 2016, and Dean John Board recently confirmed the institution's focus on the importance of the juxtaposition between business and life as a part of its continuing ethos and strategy. Commenting on the development of the school and its priorities during this year's Henley Business School Regatta Day, Dean Board said, "Every business starts with a bit of entrepreneurial activity," thereby solidifying the encouragement of innovation and invention at Henley.

This appreciation for established methods combined with emerging modern theories is very clear through the research that is happening at Henley. The Regatta Day allowed an insight into some of the academics' current projects, which include research into the taboo of stress in executive positions from Dr. Caroline Rook, the issue of diversity and board effectiveness from Rita Goyal, and the psychology of leadership and the effect of personal narratives in the workplace from Dr. Penny Moore. The team at HBS are very aware of the need to tailor both learning and business strategies to the current changing global landscape, whether that means finding new ways to teach diversity and cultural understanding, or how to future-proof businesses in the face of recession and uncertain political climates.

This viewpoint was certainly communicated through Professor Ginny Gibson's discussion of 'Leadership in Times of Change', and the introduction to, and panel discussion of, the new Apprenticeship Levy.

The Levy, introduced earlier this year, is a government scheme to encourage businesses to invest in the development of their workforce. Henley Business School is one of the first higher education institutions in the

FOUNDED IN 1945,
HENLEY WAS THE
FIRST BUSINESS
SCHOOL TO BE
ESTABLISHED
IN THE UK

UK to partner with businesses in order to offer degree apprenticeships in a variety of business subjects, and to help guide businesses in the use of their Levy contributions.

As well as an introduction to the school's academic projects, the HBS Regatta Day afforded an opportunity to experience the welcoming and dynamic atmosphere on campus. The day was thoroughly organised, with scheduled addresses from academics and a specialist panel, as well as a scenic boat ride along the Thames to witness the delights of the Royal Regatta, and to allow a chance for one-to-one discussion with members of the business school. HBS is proud of its ethos of inclusivity and individualism, stating that 'Each and every one of us has our different motivations and a unique set of abilities. At Henley we make it our business to help you fulfil your potential by unlocking the real and even more capable person within.'

The UK is undeniably operating under an economy of change at present, and this does not exclude the HE sector. With so many uncertainties, and a job market that is transforming to include brand-new sectors and careers, now is the time for transferable skills and leadership abilities to be brought to the fore. And with its mix of stellar academics and expansive real-world business connections, Henley Business School is the place for it. **UB**



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Lot 20 is EU Ecodesign legislation for electric heating. Effective from January 2018, all installations must comply with this minimum efficiency standard. The focus is on removing poorly controlled heaters from the market and replacing them with controls for temperature, timer, presence and open window detection amongst others.

The important part of this legislation to understand, is that heaters fitted with basic controls will no longer be permissible, but that doesn't mean the control unit has to be integrated.

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impressive range of features. The specifications required under EU law are far exceeded and this master control, fitted separately from the panel, also makes sense from a future-proofing perspective, enabling upgrades and new innovations to be taken advantage of more affordably, by simply replacing the control unit.

The new Lot 20 compliant packages from Prefect, that include the slave heater along with Ecostat 2, will be available from November 2017.

To view videos that demonstrate Ecostat, visit www.prefectcontrols.com/product-info/

DELIVERING A NEW FUTURE FOR CUBO



It's been a busy 12 months for CUBO, implementing the result of a strategic review to become a limited company and recruiting a new Chief Executive. CUBO reflects on an unprecedented year of change and the key people making these developments happen



"Taking our strategic themes of Deliver, Lead, Connect and, Develop, I look forward to creating more value for members and partners and growing CUBO over the coming years"

Emma Furnival took over responsibility for the CUBO Chair two years ago. During this time, with the support and help of the Executive team, she instigated a strategic review, which has led to the membership association being transformed into a limited company.

CUBO now has a board of directors and has recruited a Chief Executive. In the last year it has also formalised a partnership with University Hospitality Seminars, taken a major step forward in developing partnerships with suppliers and increased income and profitability.

In her day job, Emma is Assistant Director of Estates & Facilities, Hospitality & Accommodation Services at the University of Wolverhampton. A portfolio which has given her in-depth experience in the core areas of CUBO business and the needs of members. Emma was quick to recognise that the changing nature of CUBO members roles meant that CUBO needed to develop as an organisation to best serve the membership.

Emma has certainly not worked alone. Members of the Executive Board: Gillian Almond, Liam Cairns, Bryan Carroll, Jon Greenwood, Richard Kington, Richard McGloin, David McKown and Stewart Ross

were expressly thanked by Emma at the CUBO Awards ceremony in Kent for their tireless work in implementing changes from the strategic review. With a new succession plan in place, Stewart Ross has become Chair elect. This provides long-term stability for the Executive team going forward.

Looking ahead to the next academic year, Emma and the team look forward to seeing many of their ideas being developed and implemented with the help of new Chief Executive, Jan Capper (pictured). Jan took up post as CUBO Chief Executive in June and comes with a wealth of experience of growing an association. She was previously Executive Director of the International Association of Language Centres (IALC), an association of independent language schools in over 20 countries. Over two decades, Jan worked with successive boards to develop IALC into an award-winning association and quality brand in study travel.

After the intense activity of the last year, don't think that CUBO will now rest on its laurels. CUBO has a number of exciting projects on the go to continue its progression.

In a quest to communicate its aims more clearly, CUBO has identified four strategic themes at the heart of its business:

DELIVER

- Supporting members to deliver excellence.
- Rewarding innovation and championing best practice.

LEAD

- Influencing policy and decision-making.
- Leading the way on new initiatives.

CONNECT

- Connecting members to resources and partners.
- Creating an effective network across the sector.

DEVELOP

- Personal development and knowledge sharing.
- Professional skills training.

These themes provide a clear statement of CUBO's objectives for members and stakeholders. Members can expect to see a number of initiatives at work in these areas over the coming year. As a taster this will include the launch of a new CUBO website and social media platforms, an enhanced corporate partners scheme, and, of course, two more exciting conferences in Wolverhampton and Manchester. With a new leadership team and commitment to deliver core strategic themes, CUBO are set to lead us into the future. **UB**

www.cubo.org.uk

**ABOVE: Jan Capper, CUBO CEO.
Emma Furnival, CUBO Chair**



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Brexit: An opportunity for university conference departments?

Despite the uncertainty surrounding Brexit, the UK events industry is showing positive signs of growth with delegate numbers increasing

Most, if not all, universities in the UK provide conference and events facilities. Marketed externally, these are an essential revenue stream. Eventbrite, a platform that allows organisers to plan and promote their events, calculates the industry's value at £42.3bn and says over 1.3 million business events are held annually. It conducted a survey of 800 event professionals this year and published some encouraging statistics:

- The average spend for medium to large businesses per event is £119,655, a huge increase on last year (£67,379)
- 65% of organisers expect their events to grow in 2017 and 56% plan on launching new events
- 22% of all organisers expect their budgets to increase this year.

Following the referendum and subsequent vote to leave, Brexit has lowered the value of sterling. This makes the UK attractive for hosting international events and conferences as it becomes more cost effective.

In fact, many in the conference industry believe that 2017 is a year of opportunity, so universities might be well-advised to brace themselves for an influx of enquiries from overseas event organisers.

However, the conference industry is changing as well as growing, attendees



are more demanding, increasingly looking for premium facilities delivered sustainably. Universities need to embrace this. According to Eventbrite there are over 10,000 venues in this country, so competition is rife. One way universities can deliver premium facilities, while simultaneously improving their environmental credentials, is by investing in a mains-fed drinking water dispenser system such as BRITA Vivreau's Table Water Bottling System, as opposed to bringing in and stocking pre-bottled water.

By purifying water in-house, the university can eliminate the need to purchase plastic or glass bottles meaning no more emissions from delivery and disposal, no more packaging waste and substantial cost reductions.

The Table Water Bottling System provides unlimited quantities of high-quality chilled still and sparkling drinking water on tap. BRITA Vivreau also supplies attractive reusable designer glass bottles which can be branded with the university logo to make a strong impression on event attendees. The bottles can also feature an environmental message on the back, driving home the university's commitment to sustainability.

The University of Strathclyde is taking advantage of the Table Water Bottling System. "It considerably reduces packaging waste and the costs of removing that waste," said Catering Manager June Hayes. "We no longer need to order plastic

bottles, process their delivery or find space to store them. Instead we can quickly offer chilled still or sparkling water in professional-looking, reusable, branded glass bottles thanks to BRITA Vivreau."

BRITA Vivreau also offers a mains-fed water dispenser called the ViTap, which is ideal for self-service points throughout the campus for students, visitors and staff. Sleek and stylish, it provides instant chilled still or sparkling water and even boiling hot water. Touch sensor controls facilitate easy self-service operation, and it can also come with the Equality Access Pad to allow access for wheelchair users.

The University of Manchester opted to install the Table Water Bottling System and ViTap. Jonathan Minshull, Head of Catering Operations, said: "Conference delegates now expect filtered water. Being able to offer the Table Water Bottling System as part of our conference package is a big plus for us. It also looks more professional than the plastic bottles previously offered. ViTap is in an open area with a daily footfall of around 3,000. It is always working and accessible."

The expected increase in enquiries from overseas event planners is great news for UK universities. By promoting their commitment to the environment and offering a premium service, they will be able to compete effectively against the thousands of other venues on offer. **UB**

W: www.vivreau.co.uk



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MAKING A STRONG FIRST IMPRESSION

By Matt White, Chair of The University Caterers Organisation (TUCO) and Director of Catering, Hotel and Conference Services at The University of Reading.



September is possibly the most important month in a university's calendar, as it marks the start of a new academic year and a fresh intake of students. For university caterers, it's their chance to create a strong first impression and become the number one choice for students.

To stand out from the get-go, it's imperative that the food and drink on campus matches – and in many cases, goes beyond – what's happening on the high street. This essentially boils down to bringing a taste of global food trends to universities and incorporating options which reflect consumer demands and eating habits. At TUCO, we recently conducted our annual research into global food and drink trends and discovered 78 specific trends. Keeping on top of a handful of trends is a challenge in itself, let alone trying to consider 78! To help with this, we have identified key overriding themes for university caterers to consider when planning their offer for the new academic year.

These include:

1. Health for All – There is now a greater understanding of the link between the food we eat and our wellbeing, which is driving demand for free-from and low-in-sugar options. To tap into this, university caterers are developing large vegan ranges and creating vegan versions of popular dishes.

2. Conscientious Consuming

– Conscientious eating is a big focus for students and as a result, they're opting for local and seasonal foods. This provides FE caterers with the opportunity to celebrate the provenance of the food and drink on menus and seek more localised, artisan suppliers.

3. Crafted and Curated

– Consumers are more interested than ever before in the creation of their food and drink. Building on this, companies are offering bigger back stories and detail around their processes – a notion which is being embraced across campuses.

4. Plant Perfection – In a technology-saturated world, there is a counter trend emerging that places the focus back on the natural world. For this trend, caterers are turning more to plants, botanicals, florals and plant-based foods and including these within student menus. There are many food and drink trends out there and it's, of course, impossible to include all of them on menus. The challenge is to interpret, evaluate and prioritise to find which ones work best for your university and your students' tastes. ^{UB}

To download TUCO's global food and drink trends research, please visit: www.tuco.ac.uk



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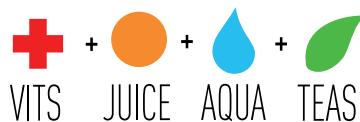
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lunch! goes ExCeL for 2017

Thanks to a 23% increase in stand space, the 10th anniversary edition of the UK's favourite food-to-go show will also be its biggest yet

Frequently cited as a 'must-attend' for discovering innovative new ideas and concepts, lunch! may need little introduction to the sector it serves (over 6,200 buyers attended in 2016).

The show's pivotal focus on promoting new innovations is key to its continuing success. Everything that food-to-go caterers need to run their businesses successfully is here – from their kitchen equipment to counter displays, from the food and drink they serve to how it's packaged and paid for. Since its launch in 2008, lunch! and its eclectic mix of exhibitors have been influencing 'on-the-go' menus across the UK (and beyond).

Now, for 2017, lunch! has already confirmed a record 335 exhibiting companies (it sold out over two months in advance) and exclusive keynote interviews with Roger Whiteside, CEO of bakery and food-to-go giant Greggs, Andrew Walker, chief executive of EAT, celebrity chef Theo Randall (hosted by The British Sandwich Association), and Paul Ettinger, business development director at Caffé Nero.

The line-up will also include senior representatives from Tesco Hospitality, Starbucks, Pret A Manger, Tim Hortons, and Harris & Hoole giving insights into their operational strategies. Plus, as in previous years, there will be essential food-to-go market updates from MCA, The NPD Group, CGA Peach and IGD.

10TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

2017 is not just a milestone year for lunch! but also the industry it serves. Food-to-go has never been more popular – and its market never bigger. It was recently valued (by MCA) at a hugely competitive £20.2bn (across all day parts). To put that in some context, in 2009 (just after the launch of lunch!) it was worth £14.9bn.



lunch! has certainly reflected that growth, while remaining faithful to its boutique marketplace beginnings. Its eclectic exhibitor list (and 2017 is no exception) is renowned for its inspiring balance of promoting emerging start-ups and niche, speciality producers alongside some of the industry's best-known suppliers.

lunch!'s new venue will accommodate more innovative exhibitors than ever, an extended Start-up Zone featuring some of the industry's newest suppliers, two Keynote theatres, and boast wider aisles to enable easier navigation around the busy show floor. Sandy Anderson, senior buyer – food at Elior, has attended the show since its launch at Old Billingsgate and is a big fan of its diverse range of cutting-edge exhibitors: "lunch! goes from strength to strength, with more and more innovative start-up and established companies displaying their fantastic products. It's the ideal exhibition for buyers and developers to find new and exciting products to enhance their offers. I wouldn't miss it!"

"lunch! brings together key contacts in the industry, provides a springboard for innovation, and shares learnings from inspirational speakers. It is a must-attend event in our calendar year," agrees Jennie Brownlow, product & brand manager at Durham University Catering.

Catering and procurement managers from the universities of Birmingham, Essex, Cambridge, Nottingham, Portsmouth, Winchester, Hertfordshire,

and Surrey, Oxford Brookes (Compass Group), Heriot-Watt University, University for the Creative Arts, Royal Holloway University of London, Imperial College London, and Goodenough College, among others, are just some of the names already pre-registered to visit.

A TASTE OF WHAT'S TO COME

"Food-to-go is a critical driver of growth in the total Eating Out of Home market, as the UK demands more convenient food solutions. However, consumers are increasingly demanding better quality, more interesting and wider choices, and will not accept cheap and boring," says regular lunch speaker Simon Stenning, executive director at MCA.

lunch!'s Innovation Challenge Gallery is always a good starting point to see a raft of new, "interesting and wider choices". Designed to promote the best food-to-go innovations over the last 12 months – it will showcase a record 70 entries for 2017. [UB](#)

To register for a free ticket to lunch! 2017, please visit www.lunchshow.co.uk and quote priority code LUN49.

lunch! 2017
10am to 5pm
(last entry 4pm)
21–22 September
ExCeL London
www.lunchshow.co.uk



SKILLS FOR CHEFS CELEBRATE 20TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

More than 200 chefs have made the annual pilgrimage to Sheffield for the 20th Anniversary of the Skills for Chefs Conference.

This year, the show launched new format. David McKown, Director of the Skills for Chefs at The University of Sheffield, said: "It was about time we made some changes and the opening event with Tom Kerridge and Cyrus Todiwala OBE, was very well received."

Fresh from his success in winning the Chef Catey, sponsored by the Craft Guild of Chefs, Tom Kerridge took to the stage to participate in an interview hosted by chef and presenter Joe Hurd. The delegates gained a valuable insight into Tom's culinary and business philosophy, the session was inspiring and highly motivational.

Following this session, delegates were treated to a Parsi feast created by Cyrus Todiwala OBE, in conjunction with the chefs at Inox, the flagship restaurant and events venue at The University of Sheffield.

The food was exciting and full of flavour and the banter between Tom, Cyrus and all the delegates was a delight to witness.

The following morning the chefs then descended on The Sheffield College for a global breakfast, and the opportunity to network with exhibitors and sponsors. Following a short briefing, the chefs then attended a series of masterclasses and larger plenary sessions in four different kitchens,



Cyrus Todiwala, Tom Kerridge, Paul Cunningham and David McKown



including sessions from; two Michelin-starred chef Paul Cunningham; celebrated pastry chef Claire Clark

MBE; and Francesco Mazzei from Satoria & Radicci Restaurants, to name a few.

The 20th Anniversary of Skills for Chefs concluded with a spectacular Gala Dinner held at Firth Hall at the University of Sheffield, and a team of Master Chefs of Great Britain chefs from the Sheffield College and the University worked in collaboration to present an Italian-themed menu. [UB](http://www.skillsforchefs.org.uk)

Further details on the conference can be found at www.skillsforchefs.org.uk



Steve Jackson, Commercial Director, DJM Food Solutions explains why Manoucher Artisan Breads are perfect for TUCO and increasing student demands for healthy, great tasting natural food.

Since 1983, artist Manoucher Etminan the founder of Manoucher Bread Fine Foods has committed himself to abide by the same principles in art as he would in the bakery, and today this philosophy still rings true. Each and every loaf that comes out of the oven is born from a recipe perfected by its creator, then carefully made and dressed by hand using only the best in all-natural ingredients.

Manoucher's unique patented in-house flash freezing process ensures 100% Freshness of these "Fully Baked" breads. Once defrosted a little warming in an oven or Panini Grill for perfect sandwiches every time.

Very versatile breads
Fully baked, just de-frost and warm through
Preservative and chemical free
No waste v fresh
Low in fat
Handcrafted from a BRC approved factory
Lasts 4 days once de-frosted

All Manoucher Breads can be ordered direct from Bidfood, using the following codes:

Bidfood Code	Product Description	Case Size & Product Weight
80491	Manoucher Unsliced Barbaree Bread	18 x 530g
28873	Manoucher Sliced Barbaree Bread	24 x 576g
80394	Manoucher Fokachio Bread	27 x 360g
80409	Manoucher Garlic Bread	30 x 260g
80419	Manoucher Basil Bread	30 x 290g
28186	Manoucher Flatcrust cheesy garlic	126 x 123g

For more information please email info@djmfoddsolutions.co.uk



TUCO 2017 – health, wealth and wellbeing

Hundreds of caterers from the FE and HE sectors gather at the University of Nottingham for the TUCO Annual Conference. *UB* Editor (and part-time vegan) **Rebecca Paddick** discovers the latest catering trends ➡



Sporting legend Sir Steve Redgrave gave an inspirational speech on overcoming adversity



Deliciously Ella founder, Ella Mills



Members of The University Caterers Organisation (TUCO) travelled from across the UK in July for the association's annual conference, exhibition and dinner.

The three-day event, designed to drive learning, development and product innovation, is TUCO's largest annual gathering, and was this year held at the University of Nottingham, and focused on the theme of 'Health, Wealth and Wellbeing.'

I kicked off my conference experience with a tour of Nottingham's key catering and bar outlets, and both front and back of house. As we visited the various outlets, dining halls and restaurants across the vast campus, trends such as international cuisine and special diets were clearly apparent... topics which would reappear throughout the conference.

The panel of high-profile speakers included award-winning food blogger, Deliciously Ella; five-time Olympic Champion, Sir Steve Redgrave; and Thomasina Miers, Co-Founder of Wahaca, it was diverse and exciting programme.

SPECIAL DIETS

Having decided to go vegan for July (I clearly missed the boat for Veganuary!) I was interested to hear the talk from keynote speaker Ella Mills, founder of 'clean eating' brand Deliciously Ella. The young

entrepreneur gave a very personal account of her health struggles and how educating herself about natural foods was instrumental in regaining full health. Interestingly, despite all of the Deliciously Ella products being vegan, none of them are labelled so. "This is to create that normal and accessible feeling," she explained. This was something I could relate to and appreciate during my short time experimenting with the animal-free diet, and IT made me think of the barriers students may face when it comes to catering to their own special dietary requirements.

I thoroughly enjoyed this year's conference. I thought the venue was excellent and the social programme, as always, was a big hit. The Goose Fair kept it very 'Nottingham' and the gala dinner was a triumph in quality and service. It was lovely to meet some new people, and as always this is a fantastic networking and learning opportunity for all in attendance. The speakers were very interesting, and I particularly enjoyed the keynote speakers, as well as the talk on Brexit from Prof Casson and the session on customer service from Linda Moir. As always, it was sad to leave and already I am looking forward to the TUCO conference in 2018!

**ALAN RIDDELL, DEPUTY DIRECTOR,
RESIDENTIAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES,
UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS**

Ella's talk highlighted the need for universities, and in particularly university caterers, to support students on their quest to become healthier. "Students are definitely a big part of our market, which is very exciting and encouraging," she added. "So one of our focus areas is to continue to produce, quick, easy, practical, yet exciting, interesting and delicious recipes for young people with busy lives."

After Ella's keynote I headed to the exhibition hall where more than 80 suppliers displayed their product ranges for us delegates to sample. I was of course very limited on what I could try this year, but the likes of Brakes Linda McCartney, and Tiffin Sandwiches kept me fuelled with their meat- and dairy-free snacks. Well-known brands such as Bidfood, Café Direct and Love Joes, among many others, had lots to offer.

PERCEPTION OF FLAVOUR

A personal highlight was a breakout session on day two from Jozef Youssef, founder of Kitchen Theory – an experimental gastronomy design studio.

Chef Jozef's talk explained the fascinating



field of gastrophysics; the emerging science of understanding how our senses can alter our perception of flavour.

Another interesting talk came from Mark Casson, economics professor from the University of Reading. Mark spoke on the very latest facts about Brexit, and how this could affect the UK food service industry and UK universities.

Speaking at the conference, Mike Haslin, TUCO CEO, said: "We had more than 200 delegates at our 2017 event in Exeter, which was our biggest ever conference, but this year in Nottingham we've beaten that record with 227 delegates, more than 80 exhibitors and the strongest speaker programme that we've ever put together."

"We are continuing to grow our members, to develop our academy, and to expand our competitions. Our vision is to become the first-choice training providers for our members, and we are well on track to accomplishing that. In 2016/17 we delivered over 30 courses to more than 300 people, and we are constantly looking to develop and improve on these."

The TUCO team always put a great deal of effort and creativity into its evening social programme, and this year they certainly didn't disappoint. Monday evening saw the recreation of Nottingham's

TUCO IS THE LEADING MEMBERSHIP ORGANISATION FOR IN-HOUSE CATERERS OPERATING IN THE HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION SECTORS

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT TUCO GO TO WWW.TUCO.AC.UK OR FOLLOW ON TWITTER @TUCOLTD

famous Goose Fair, complete with barbeques, fairground rides, and, of course, the geese! On Tuesday, guests were treated to the Nottingham City Experience Dinner – where the evening was spent enjoying great food, drink and company in a beautiful church converted into one of the city's most popular pubs, Pitcher and Piano. By the time the final night came, guests were ready for the Masquerade ball and gala dinner, this year modelled on the *Phantom of the Opera*. The carefully conceived four-course menu catered to all tastes (yes, even mine) and was followed by the very first TUCO Awards.

CYCLING FOR CHARITY

This year's conference also saw 16 TUCO members arrive by bike, after completing a 100-mile Cycle Challenge for the Chair's charity, Mary's Meals. The ride started in Manchester at TUCO's HQ and finished 12 hours later at the University of Nottingham, raising a total of £12,500 for the charity which aims to provide a meal every day for the world's poorest children.

The *Phantom of the Opera* cast entertained guests at the gala dinner



Each year the TUCO conference gets bigger and better. This year's line-up of speakers and workshops delivered refreshing, inspirational knowledge and development you would expect as a delegate at a quality conference. Additionally, this year the large exhibition provided the opportunity to discuss and explore the latest technological advances with exhibitors and taste the latest on-trend and emerging foods and drink from all over the world. The conference was excellent, a credit to the TUCO team.

PHILIP REES-JONES, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, COMMERCIAL, ESTATES AND CAMPUS FACILITIES, CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

"Each year, at the annual conference, our ambition is to not only inspire members but also share first-class knowledge so that they can incorporate new, up-to-date ideas into their own catering methods," said Matt White, Chair of TUCO.

He added: "I am delighted to say that this year's packed events schedule didn't fail to impress, with guests treated to a line-up of outstanding speakers providing an array of inspirational, thought-provoking, and fun sessions. Attendees had the chance to learn about everything from gastrophysics and multi-sensory dining to how to unleash potential through laughter and the key principles of brain food."

INAUGURAL AWARDS

Ending on a high, attendees gathered for a glittering awards ceremony to celebrate the outstanding achievements of staff at all levels within TUCO's member institutions. The winners of the first TUCO Awards were:

- **Rising Star:** Terri Sadler, Royal Holloway, University of London. This award recognises an individual catering or bar professional who is seen as an emerging talent with future potential within the industry.
- **Innovation:** The University of Leeds. This award recognises a university or college that has successfully launched a new development or refurbishment in the past 12 months.
- **Sustainability:** The University of Manchester. The Sustainability Award recognises the university or college catering team that has taken the most innovative steps to neutralise its impact on the environment in the past 12 months.

● TUCO Team of the Year:

The University of Huddersfield. Team of the Year rewards the procurement or catering team that best demonstrates collaborative working to deliver significant service improvement to its customers.

● TUCO Member of the Year:

The University of South Wales. This award recognises the member institution that has made a significant contribution to the work of TUCO.

TUCO Chair Matt White added: "This year, we also introduced our first-ever TUCO Awards, to recognise, and, more importantly, celebrate the fantastic achievements and contributions of our member institutions. The quality of the award entries was extremely high and a real testament to all the hard work put in by FE and HE catering teams up and down the country. I would like to offer a massive congratulations to all the winners, as well as those who were shortlisted – they've really set the bar high for next year!" **UB**



PROMOTION

RIDICULOUSLY GOOD COFFEE. RIDICULOUSLY GOOD BUSINESS

Cafédirect has been a well-known Fairtrade hot drinks business for many years now. Born out of the coffee crisis in 1989, it was the first UK business to carry the Fairtrade logo in store and the company has only grown since. But what does the future hold for Cafédirect? First off, earlier this year Cafédirect has introduced its specialty range of Cafédirect Handpicked premium coffee into foodservice. All reports by Allegra have, in recent years, indicated coffee trends of a more sophisticated palate in the average coffee drinker. Consumers enjoy a diverse offering and the Cafédirect Handpicked range is specifically tailored to meet this market need.

Cafédirect Handpicked coffee is roasted in small batches in Cafédirect's own roastery in London Fields with an average SCA score of 85. The foodservice range boasts

a signature Handpicked Espresso blend, as well as bi-monthly rotating coffees to promote discovery of flavours.

A second exciting move for Cafédirect is the addition of the London Tea Company into the business in May '17 as part of a wider business strategy. With tea enjoying a similar trend as coffee, more premium options are needed for a continually more demanding consumer. The London Tea Company offers a fully Fairtrade specialty tea range with amazing flavours and blends in the portfolio.

And last, but certainly not least, as part of the changing business proposition, Cafédirect will undergo a total re-brand later this



year. This re-brand will reflect the values of Cafédirect, which has a bold business plan to be a force for good. With investments of over 50% of profits to date back into the farmer communities Cafédirect works with, the company has raised over £6m – and that is on top of their Fairtrade commitments. The proceeds go into the Cafédirect Producers' Foundation, a farmer-led charity, to ensure farmers' livelihoods are always improving and no resource is wasted. This has led to a stunning rise in coffee quality, creating a taste experience that is second to none. **UB**

The food environment



The importance of the environment in which our students dine is often underrated in regard to the psychological influence it can have on food choice, average spend and dwell patterns, says Professor David Russell

Research from Cornell University has shown that the immediate environment, paired with food presentation (the food environment) “plays a major role in determining consumption volume because it affects the accuracy of consumption monitoring and alters consumption norms.” This happens for four reasons: eating atmospherics, eating effort, eating with others, and eating distractions.

“Atmospherics influence eating duration. Increased effort decreases consumption. Socialising influences meal duration and consumption norms. Distractions (such as watching TV or reading while eating) can

Professor David Russell is the founder and chairman of the Russell Partnership



“Let’s stop distractions getting in the way of healthy intentions – and deliver clarity, simplicity and ease to our students through their campus environment”

initiate, obscure, and extend consumption.”

Further research conducted in the Netherlands takes into consideration how the internal cognitive factors influencing food choice can be altered in any given environment. Internal schemas such as societal norms, self-control and biological cues are often influenced by our external environment, potentially leading consumers towards unhealthy food and beverage decisions in the pursuit of instant gratification, low expenditure or social conformity.

What we may already know – that the external environmental has the ability to influence internal thoughts, behaviours and schemes relating to food and beverage choice – is backed by years of research and academic findings. It’s how we utilise this research that is fundamental in ensuring our students have ample opportunity to make conscious, healthy and intentional decisions regarding their health outcomes. So, how do we do this?

Firstly, we can implement change on a campus level – ensuring that healthy messages are the norm and there is a consistent opportunity for students to nourish their

bodies with wholesome produce. Efforts must be made by multiple functional areas to ensure communications are streamlined, and that there is opportunity for students to actively engage with educational programmes supporting healthy eating.

Secondly, environments can be set up to minimise impulse-buying of nutrient-devoid products and optimised to fuel the mindful purchase of nutritious foods; this can be achieved through strategic produce placement, fair price points and diversity of choice. Abundant fresh produce must be the feature, with high sugar and processed foods being substantially reduced.

Lastly, we must ensure food and beverage environments are aesthetically optimised to encourage healthy habits – this includes relevant décor, optimised seating layouts and appropriate socialisation opportunities.

Let’s stop distractions getting in the way of healthy intentions – and deliver clarity, simplicity and ease to our students through their campus environment.

www.russellpartnership.com

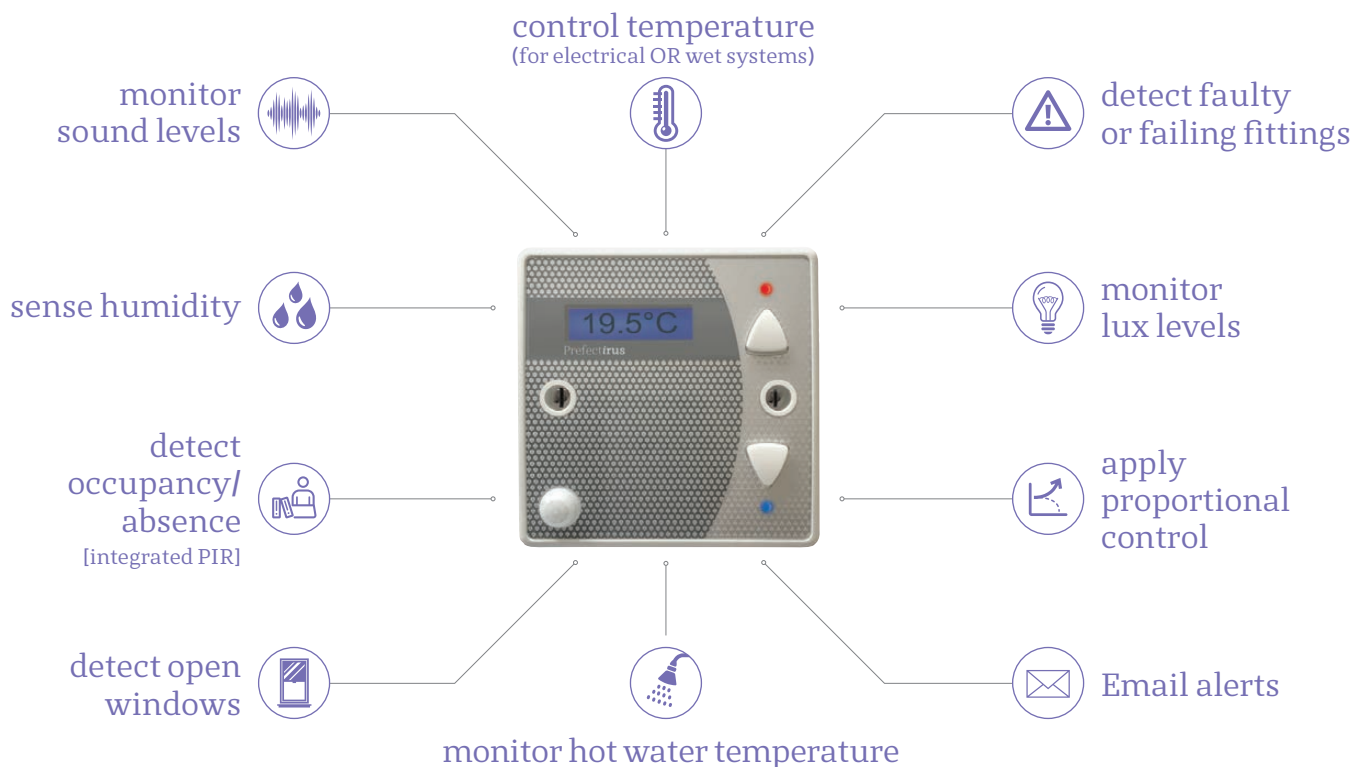
TRADITIONAL ROOM CONTROL:



adjust temperature

Monitor heating, lighting, water and wellbeing

Central management - with local control



Prefectirus

The new **Prefectirus CU3** is packed with features that distinguish it from a simple thermostat *AND* a complex building energy management system (BEMS).

Its algorithms cleverly learn the environmental conditions for individual rooms; how much heat is required; the time it takes to reach temperature; dissipation rates; and, lighting, sound and humidity levels – the software then balances comfort and energy use for the benefit of both students and energy managers.

Accommodation managers can be alerted to issues that require maintenance, provide compliance with regulations to support the wellbeing of students and be confident of optimum energy efficiency as heat is only used when needed - without ever setting foot in a room.

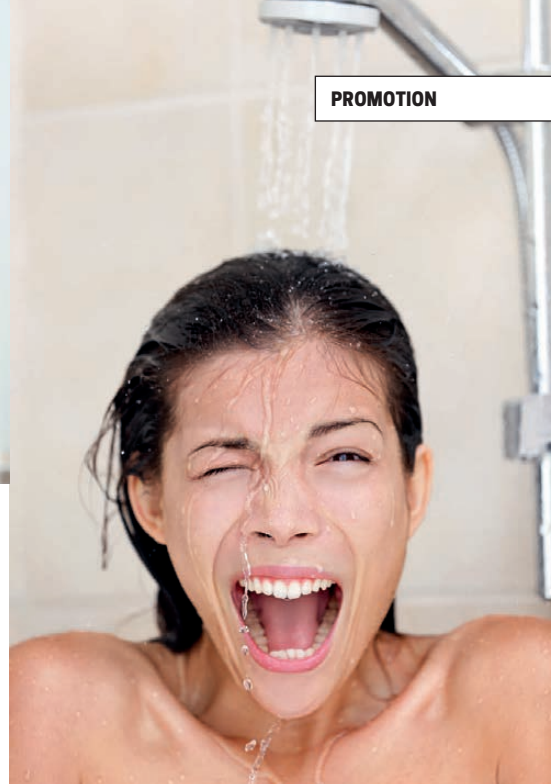
Students are able to control the comfort of their environment, safe in the knowledge that they cannot waste energy by leaving the heat on high when they go out or if windows are opened.

Prefectirus – just what student accommodation needs from a BEMS.

To find out more about Prefectirus visit
www.Prefectirus.com or call **01787 320 604**



Cleverly simple control of energy



PREFECTIRUS - ALERTS YOU TO MAINTENANCE ISSUES VIA EMAIL

As well as its energy efficiency benefits, the all-new Prefectirus CU3 features maintenance sensors that warn of malfunction and faults via email alerts

The all-new Prefectirus CU3 unit has obvious benefits relating to energy efficiency. By using only the energy needed to keep student rooms at comfortable temperatures, energy is saved through a number of features including programmable on/off times, maximum temperature settings, absence and presence detectors and open window monitoring, all managed from the central controller linked to each room node via the existing electrical wiring within the building.

But the new Prefectirus CU3 also features maintenance sensors that warn of malfunction and faults via email alerts. Blown light bulbs, defective fans or broken thermostats are now detected without ever setting foot in a room, allowing appropriate remedial action to be taken.

Algorithms cleverly learn the environmental conditions for individual rooms – how much heat is required, the time it takes to reach temperature, dissipation rates, along with sensors for lighting, sound and humidity levels.

LIGHT LEVELS

Low light levels in study bedrooms can have a detrimental effect on students' performance, alertness and wellbeing. Failed light bulbs or fittings are often not reported as the lighting in the room still works but may not be sufficient.

The new CU3 is equipped with a lux sensor that constantly monitors light levels in the room and the system can alert managers to constant low light levels in individual rooms so that action can be taken and fittings replaced.

HUMIDITY LEVELS

The sophisticated in-built electronic

hygrometer measures temperature and relative humidity (RH). The ideal relative humidity for health and comfort is around 40%–50%, in the winter months. By constantly monitoring the RH level in the room the CU3 can highlight potential problems like faulty ventilation, or illicit cooking, by alerting managers when pre-set RH level is breached. By keeping humidity levels within safe limits, mould growth and damp conditions can be avoided.

HOT WATER LEVELS

While monitoring the temperature of hot water, a feature designed to comply with regulations to safeguard against the likes of legionella, Prefectirus will alert managers should the temperature rise above set parameters due to failure of third-party thermostats on the hot water heating system. This safety feature will guard against water being delivered to showers, for example, that is too hot – avoiding potential scalding incidents.

INTEGRATED PIR

These maintenance features are complemented by the inclusion of the



integrated PIR that removes the need for additional remote PIRs and associated wiring thus reducing capital cost. Settable for 'detection' or 'absence detection' the new passive infrared sensor can be set to trigger the heating ON only when the occupant is asking the thermostat for heat, switching off quickly if no movement is detected or it can simply set to activate the heating when first entering the room.

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

The IRUS system constantly monitors all of the new CU3's integrated sensors: temperature, movement, humidity, sound and lux. The information is then displayed allowing management to view individual rooms in real time and, because the portal is web based, it can be viewed on any device from anywhere with internet connectivity.

Passive monitoring and control of accommodation is now enhanced with alerts sent via email to maintenance, accommodation or energy managers should any one of maximum parameters be breached.

These new features are available so that well-maintained, safe, comfortable rooms can be provided for students by universities and colleges.

Managers can rely on Prefectirus to keep them informed of maintenance issues and ensure energy efficiency and compliance of regulations for student safety and wellbeing, while students are able to control the comfort of their room to their personal preferences, safe in the knowledge that their environment is monitored to ensure it is safe, efficient and conducive to effective study. **UB**

www.prefectcontrols.com

Work begins on Aston campus revamp

Work starts on a major redevelopment and refurbishment at Aston University

Nottingham-based Clegg Construction was awarded the £4.5m contract to overhaul part of the main building at the University's campus, which is close to Birmingham city centre.

It will involve remodelling existing under-utilised space in the building and transforming it into new labs for the University's School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, which will utilise the space for research into fibre-optic communication.

Clegg Construction will carry out a range of works including internal demolition, stripping out of existing services and the creation of new rooms and lab spaces, including a clean room. Work is due to be completed by the end of October 2017.

The work is part of a wider multi-million pound redevelopment of the entire estate at Aston University.

Aston University's Director of Estates, Ian Oldacre, commented: "Clegg Construction has shown a flexible approach that enables success in delivering schemes in sensitive and live buildings. This is a factor why Aston University has enjoyed successful projects with them." **UB**



DID YOU KNOW?

- Founded in 1895 and a university since 1966, Aston has strong links to industry, government and commerce
- Aston's goal is to have 100% of its students on placement by 2020
- Aston has been ranked as a top university for graduate employability – 80 in the world and 12th in the UK, according to QS Graduate Employability Rankings

PREFECT COOK-UP A WINNER



Hobsafe keeps shared kitchens safe by ensuring hobs cannot be left on inadvertently.

The Hobsafe timer from Prefect Controls has been redesigned to 21st-century safety standards and is one of the only units available for this purpose and is certainly the most cost effective.

Perfectly suited to student accommodation, the robust

design and large switching capacity makes it the only choice for safety conscious landlords and accommodation managers and a favourite with electricians because of the ease of installation. Hobsafe can be installed in less than 30 minutes and controls most electric hobs.

This tamper-proof model includes factory set 15-, 20-, 30- or 45-minute run-times, LED operation light and a re-set button for extended use.

Hobsafe also saves money – in terms of energy waste when hobs are left on and emergency services call-out charges if fire crews attend a fire alarm. **UB**



Hobsafe

making **communal & studio kitchens** safer by switching hobs off after a preset time.



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EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Covering all the topics in the technology sector this month

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Sunderland invests £1m in engineering

The University of Sunderland plans to increase capacity and improve its offering to the next generation of engineers, with latest investments

More than £1million is being invested into the School of Engineering at the University of Sunderland, with the investment expected to deliver more graduates with the high-level skills employers in the manufacturing and engineering sector need.

Sunderland's Engineering department is to benefit from additional capacity and improved teaching spaces at its site in the David Goldman building at its Sir Tom Cowie Campus at St Peter's.

New features will include a dedicated mechanical lab, a fluid lab, demonstration space for hands-on teaching and a new manufacturing lab – each bringing students closer to the real-world environment they will be employed in once they graduate.

Modern industry-standard digital equipment is being installed including laser cutters and 3D printers to complement traditional engineering tools, ensuring students are taught engineering through problem-based learning methods using the latest techniques.

Dr Rebecca Chandy, Academic Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing commented: "We want to be a stepping stone for students pursuing a career in engineering, giving them a great experience



on campus, raising their aspirations and helping them move forward to the next stage, whether that is through placement opportunities or supporting businesses to solve real-world problems.

"We have a strong foundation on which to grow the Faculty and make us the leading University in the North East for Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering. From our links with the North

LEP to Nissan, our low carbon agenda through AMAP and the major opportunities we'll be tapping into, in particular our partnership with the International Advanced

Manufacturing Park (IAMP), we want to increase our regional opportunities; this investment will mean employers can walk through our doors and see that our students are ready to move straight into their workforce."

It's estimated that in the UK there's a shortfall of 20,000 graduate-level engineers per year, meaning highly qualified engineers are in great demand and therefore able to command competitive salaries.

The number of students joining Sunderland's School of Engineering has already increased five-fold, from an intake of 30 growing to 140 students in four years – with students attracted to the University's teaching, links with industry and the varied and lucrative career opportunities that this sector offers to graduates.

IT'S ESTIMATED THAT
IN THE UK THERE'S A
SHORTFALL OF 20,000
GRADUATE-LEVEL
ENGINEERS PER YEAR

100k students using online courses

MORE than 100,000 students from 124 developing nations have signed up to earn one of 15,000 free certificates from a British university as part of a partnership between the British Council and the GREAT Britain campaign, using the online learning portal FutureLearn



In order to qualify for one of the free certificates, students had to be resident in a country that is eligible for Official Development Assistance from the UK, have completed at least 90% of the steps on the course and achieved an overall score of at least 70%.

The 13-week Study UK initiative targeted students in developing nations, encouraging them to enrol and forms part of the GREAT Britain campaign.

Students enrolled in 131 online courses in total, from 29 UK universities and received their certificates on a first-come, first-served basis.

The majority of those who took part, 72%, were aged 18 to 25 years old with a roughly even gender balance of 48% female and 51% male.

Leading the list of nationalities was India, home to 16% of applicants; 12% were from Egypt, 8% from Nigeria, 6% from Pakistan and 6% from Brazil.

The most popular types of courses were in the categories of business and management or health and psychology, with over 4,000 certificates awarded in each category.

The three most popular courses in terms of the number of certificates claimed were:

1. 'Management and Leadership: Growing as a Manager' by the Open University;

“The sheer volume of enrolments from so many countries illustrates the truly global scale of online education and its ability to reach and help people anywhere to get a little closer to achieving their ambitions”

2. 'Health in Humanitarian Crises' from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine;

3. 'The Internet of Things' by King's College London

Rob Lynes, British Council Director UK said: “The Study UK initiative has been a great success both in raising the profile of UK higher education overseas, and demonstrating new aspects of international development.

“Education is a vital resource in a developing economy, and the British Council’s reach, combined with the quality of the UK’s higher education institutions can lead the world in this field.

“These certificates can make a real difference to the lives, the employment prospects, and the future of the eager students who are taking part.”

Simon Nelson, FutureLearn CEO,

added: “Britain has always been a leader in global education and we’re proud to have been part of the Study UK campaign which saw courses from our UK university partners promoted all across the globe.

“The sheer volume of enrolments from so many countries illustrates the truly global scale of online education and its ability to reach and help people anywhere to get a little closer to achieving their ambitions.

Most importantly, we’re delighted that so many learners from those 114 countries were able to benefit from the campaign and receive a tangible reward for their efforts. We hope it’s just the start of their journeys.”

72%
OF LEARNERS
WERE 18 TO 25
YEARS OLD

INDIA IS HOME TO 16%
OF APPLICANTS, 12%
WERE FROM EGYPT,
8% FROM NIGERIA, 6%
FROM PAKISTAN AND
6% FROM BRAZIL

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Making BYOD safe for universities

Matt Green, Client Director for Education, Insight UK, discusses the BYOD initiative, and explains how we can ensure university-wide security

With a recent survey finding that almost two thirds (62%) of the global working population are taking advantage of flexible working practices, initiatives such as bring your own device (BYOD) are helping to encourage and foster this preferred way of working. As this trend continues to see a monumental growth, it's not just businesses that are taking note.

Over the past few years, we've seen an increasing number of universities take to refurbishing their networks in a bid to offer staff and students more network flexibility and capabilities.

However, allowing our own smartphones, tablets and laptops to be our faithful companions, we open up gateways to sensitive personal and confidential information. From email accounts to banking profiles – when it comes to our personal devices, we're quick to use them to sign in to everything leaving us exposed if the devices aren't secured.

More often than not, these devices have limited – if any – protection. With a university hosting, on average, between 15–18,000 students on a network, the risk of connecting an infected device is greatly heightened. As BYOD at work or university increasingly becomes the norm, here are three tips universities should be thinking about when implementing BYOD initiatives.

1. Making protection consistent

With so many people bringing new devices onto the network, ensuring everyone has the same level of protection is crucial. So how can university administrations do this? Well for one they must proactively ensure all members of the network are using up-to-date apps and platforms, and if possible, provide appropriate software.

Already a number of universities are providing advice and guidelines on what specifications devices should follow before granting access to the network. As new patches are released, universities should continue to follow up to ensure all users periodically update the

systems, even when already using the correct software.

2. Educating students and teachers on the impact of their actions online

It was earlier in the year that it was announced school children in England will be offered lessons in cyber-security, with an aim of finding the experts of the future to defend the UK against attacks. Whilst it's crucial that we train the future generation in cutting-edge cyber-security skills – especially in light of a looming skills gap – cyber-attacks have the potential to impact every single person.

That's why there should be training on the impact our actions have online. As the next generation of business owners take shape, it's never been more important for universities to invest time into ensuring students are taking the right precautions when using their own devices. With viruses and malware just a click away, this couldn't be more vital.

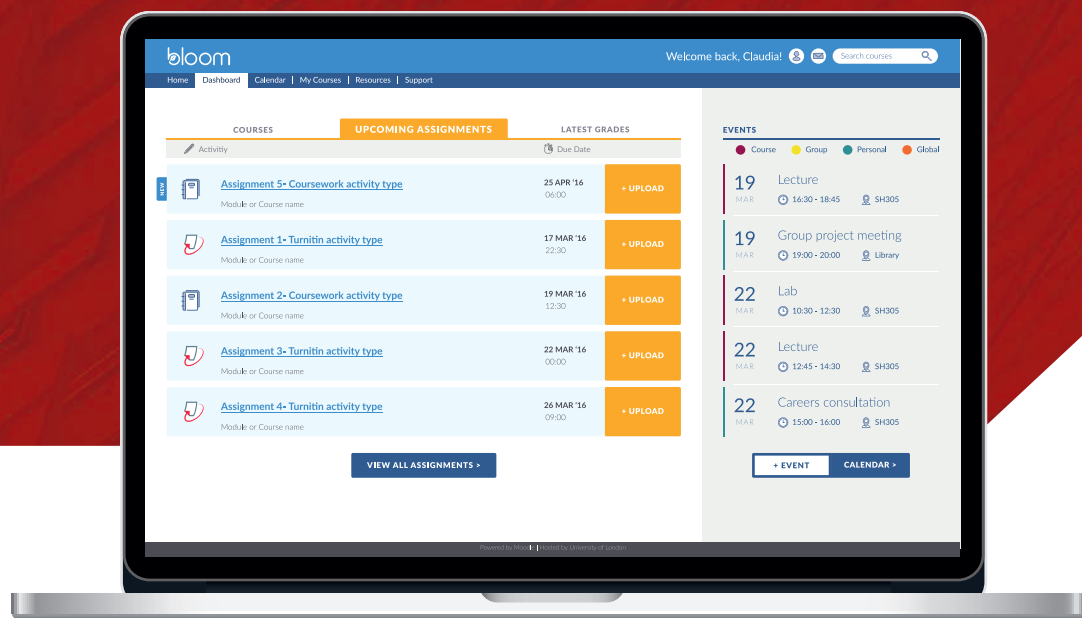
3. Data spring cleaning

In any organisation, people move on and leave. As such, it's vital that HR personnel take it on as their responsibility to monitor and manage the user database to ensure old data is properly stripped from devices of anyone that has left the university.

With the number of organisations affected set to grow, it's no secret that the next major security breach is just around the corner. As such there have been many conversations around the necessity for UK organisations – both private and public – to keep up with the pace at which technology is moving, and to invest in safeguarding the wealth of data in their possession. With the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) coming into full effect next year, allowing employees to use their own devices to access company data raises data protection issues that businesses must address. Because education institutions like universities are equally at risk, it's vital that they take the same steps to foster a safe and secure BYOD environment. **UB**

“As the next generation of business owners take shape, it's never been more important for universities to invest time into ensuring students are taking the right precautions when using their own devices”

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Can online platforms solve inequality in education?

The online approach has significantly contributed to breaking down barriers to education; addressing inequalities and increasing the opportunity of open access for all, says FutureLearn CEO, Simon Nelson

Education was once associated with those that could afford the opportunity, now we're seeing global cohorts of students learning together, whether it's a short course, an introduction to a subject area or a taster course leading to a full online degree.

At FutureLearn, transforming access to education is a topic close to our hearts. A study by Harvard and the Asian development bank tells us that only 6.7% of the world's population has a degree, showing a lot of work is still to be done to ensure everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. But inequality doesn't only refer to populations in less-developed countries, this also encompasses those in the developed world.

Due to the constant flux within the education sphere, opportunities have been narrowed for many people: the cost of education is rising around the world, institutions have had to address the fact that borders may be closing, and new demands in the workplace have prompted a re-examination of the learner profile to address the fact that education needs to cater for more than just those in undergraduate study.

The online approach has significantly contributed to breaking down barriers to education to address these inequalities and increase the opportunity of open access for all.

CONNECTING GLOBAL COHORTS ONLINE

With a very small minority of the population holding a degree qualification, this raises the question: do enough people have access to this level of education? As borders are closing, institutions are faced with the challenge of reaching learners on a global scale. With wider internet access today, learners have the opportunity to access content from world-class universities, regardless of their location. By connecting online, learners are able to access content from universities on the other side of the globe, and interact with learners from completely different backgrounds.

The social learning element of the FutureLearn platform not only enables learners to study alongside one another, but also allows them to discuss and exchange ideas, delving into the educational



**“WE MOST RECENTLY
ANNOUNCED THE
LAUNCH OF 50 ONLINE
DEGREES WITH COVENTRY
UNIVERSITY OVER THE
NEXT FIVE YEARS”**

content at a much deeper level to increase their understanding of a topic. This pedagogical approach benefits those who might not normally benefit from access to education or indeed different viewpoints, which we hope enhances their learning and their wider understanding of people in different environments.

TRANSPARENT ACCESS TO COURSE MATERIAL

When we talk about inequality, we not only refer to reaching people in remote areas; for students worldwide, paying for an undergraduate degree is a huge undertaking, so they should be given every opportunity to ensure they're making the right decision. It's important for students to know exactly what they're paying for so that they're

confident with the financial commitment they're making.

We most recently announced the launch of 50 online degrees with Coventry University over the next five years. This followed the addition of Deakin University to our partner portfolio – the first partner to launch several fully online degrees on a MOOC platform. With both partners, we wanted to ensure this idea of greater transparency, so every Program and degree offers a free 'taster' element where learners can sample the content covered and decide if they're comfortable with the qualification they're pursuing before committing financially. Ultimately, it allows them to try before they buy. Almost 16,000 people have enrolled in the free taster session: 'Cyber Security for Small and Medium Enterprises' from Deakin University, showing a real demand for visibility of course material.

RE-THINKING THE LEARNER PROFILE

Whilst a three- or four-year undergraduate degree fits the

bill for some, and there will always be a place for campus-based learning, this form of study doesn't address the needs of everyone. As the job market transforms and employees embark upon multiple careers in their lifetime, universities need to rethink their role in society to accommodate more than just the 18–25-year-old student.

Online platforms are paving the way to enabling greater access to education. By providing an international learning experience, empowering students with greater visibility of course content, and reaching a greater pool of learners, people all over the world are being given the opportunity to realise their full potential, regardless of economic challenges and boundaries imposed by the current political climate. **UB**



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5 TOP TIPS FOR PLANNING PRESERVATION OF RESEARCH DATA

CoSECTOR | UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Ensuring the preservation of data is essential for any HE institution. Here, CoSector share their top tips on how best to plan for it

Increasingly, stakeholders such as funders and institutions are asking for a preservation plan for research data at the bidding stage as part of the submission process. This blog aims to help you plan the best you can for the preservation of research data.

GET INVOLVED AS EARLY AS YOU CAN IN A PROJECT

Offering help with a preservation plan can open doors, and the earlier you are involved, the more effective you can be in planning and preparing for the research data that will eventually come your way.

DRAW UP A LIST OF ACCEPTED AND SUPPORTED FILE FORMATS

File formats are important in digital preservation. It's true that some are better than others, but you also don't want to be supporting vast numbers of different formats, as this can cause a lot of extra work.

Researchers may choose a particular file format for many reasons, and don't always consider the implications for long-term preservation. An approved list helps to

focus project requirements, stops random choices, and alerts you to any genuine need to use an 'off list' file format.

DECIDE ON WHEN AND HOW PRESERVATION ACTIONS SHOULD BE TRIGGERED

Once you're involved in a project, start to discuss with the PI what the workflow and lifecycle of the research process will be, and begin to work out at what point(s) preservation will be required. This is a very difficult decision for research data, as data can be 'live' for a period beyond the immediate life of the project. Consider 'snapshots' at certain points, and how and when live data held in short- to medium-term storage can be passed on for long-term preservation.

PEOPLE LEAVE - MAKE SURE VALUABLE DATA DOESN'T GO WITH THEM

When projects end, researchers move on. Make sure that valuable information about the research data doesn't vanish when they do. Consider having a checklist, handover process, and sign-off procedure so that you have all the metadata and other relevant information you need to manage and preserve the data in a meaningful way for

the long term. Agreeing specific triggers and dates for this can save a lot of problems later on. Without a good description and good contextual information, data can become meaningless over time.

BE AWARE OF DIFFERENT MOTIVATIONS FOR PRESERVATIONS

Research data is created in the environment of a specific research project. This means that it is often a fairly bespoke output. The original requirement for data creation comes from a combination of research not only in a particular discipline, but also within the specific definition of a project. Finding out how a project will work, what will be delivered, how data will be created, used and managed for a project can be great building blocks for creating a workable preservation solution.

WHAT IS RIGHT FOR A DIGITAL HISTORY PROJECT WILL NOT NECESSARILY WORK FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH.

A bespoke approach helps to ensure that preservation is seen as a useful element in managing the outputs of a project for the long term rather than just another admin overhead. ^{UB}



One step ahead

Online security is an ongoing consideration for universities. **Simon Fry** rounds-up the latest advice on how to stay safe

With the NHS and UCL coming under cyber attacks in recent months, the threat of similar security compromise is a constant concern for universities. As when avoiding disease, prevention is better than cure, and being a step ahead of any potential incident is vital. It is important to inform, but not alarm, staff and students, and gaining preparedness can even be enjoyable.

“Cyber attacks are a significant risk for our university and we know the risk doesn’t stop when we step off campus into our everyday lives,” said Tracy Willis, CIO and Director of Information Technology Services at the University of the West of England (UWE Bristol).

Technologies like social media and online shopping mean security threats are far more pervasive, so today security really is an issue for all of us, not just the IT team. UWE Bristol’s Cyber Security Week offers a fresh take on security awareness. It draws on the

ingenuity of our students, academic experts and technologists, who devise security-themed events everyone can take part in. Tracy added: “We show films, run online games for students and staff to compete in and host real-world activities. For example, last year we ran a security escape room. There are also surveys and drop-in advice sessions. We know security training can be dry and a little daunting so we’re trying to make it fun without diminishing the message it’s a serious topic affecting us all.”

The University is also always on guard. ➡



To help everyone stay security conscious throughout the year UWE offer continuous online courses illustrating some of the devious tactics, like phishing emails and fake online profiles, criminals use to access confidential information. “You need to almost think like a criminal – it takes a thief to catch a thief and lots of security breaches involve social engineering so you have to focus on the psychology as well as the technology,” added Tracy.

According to Henry Seddon, Duo Security Vice President of EMEA, based in London, “Universities have a large and diverse group of IT users, including faculty, students and employees, making them a prime target for hackers as it is easier for them to pick and choose who they target. These institutions also hold a great deal of publicly identifiable and sensitive information about faculty and students, as well as valuable grant-funded research that can be sold. This issue has affected a number of educational institutions. According to a Freedom of Information (FoI) request submitted to UK universities by Duo Security in November 2016, 70% of 51 respondents confirmed they have fallen victim to a phishing attack in which an individual had been tricked into disclosing

“You need to almost think like a criminal – it takes a thief to catch a thief”

personal details via an email purporting to be from a trusted source. To protect their users and data, universities must ensure they practice basic security fundamentals before they spend a pound on other security products. This includes data encryption and back-up, timely patching of software, utilising password managers, multi-factor authentication and overall device hygiene such as ensuring browsers and operating systems are up-to-date. Think of it like washing your hands to prevent the spread of disease rather than needing a hazmat suit.”

Potential threats

The advice from 2CQR Library self-service, stock management and security is any software applications or indeed any devices connected to the internet should be treated as potential attack vectors and secured appropriately, preferably also completely isolated from the internal

networks when possible. Even on devices specifically intended for browsing, browser add-ons such as Flash should be strictly controlled; these are among the favourite tools for attackers to abuse, as they contain numerous problems and are very powerful tools when they are compromised. 2CQR software solutions on self-service units and sorters do not require browser access or any sort of connection to the internet, specifically for this reason, making them easy to secure from the outside world.

Data back-ups need to be taken further than just making back-ups: proper recovery plans should be in place and actively rehearsed. Universities should also know where their data is; which systems contain data needing to be controlled more strictly, and which systems can be ‘zeroed’, or started over, if disaster strikes.

“As a specialist online institution, we place a much greater emphasis on

“Follow the 3-2-1 strategy for back-up; maintain three copies – one of your copies should be offline and at least one of the copies should be offsite”

protecting our online presence,” says Dr Ben Silverstone, course leader for computing and quantitative business at Arden University. “With courses delivered using a virtual learning environment (VLE) it is essential this is accessible – and protected – at all times as an integral part of the business. An external provider is used to achieve this, which enables the IT function to maintain a much more strategic view of the threat situation, looking to respond as appropriate. There is still some concern over the integrity of the internal systems underpinning the work the University does; measures are in place to limit the potential damage users within the organisation could cause, as well as looking to respond to any external incursions. In addition, robust user policies are in place to help ensure the staff align to the University’s security agenda.”

Steve Robinson, Arcserve Territory Director – UKI South & Netherlands

has the following advice for universities looking to safeguard against future cyber attacks. “There are some simple steps you can take to mitigate the risk of an attack in the first place, and ensuring your critical data is protected and recoverable if the worst should happen. Protect the source machine by taking precautions to prevent ransomware infection in the first instance by training users to not click on links within emails or download attachments from unknown sources. Use a mainstream antivirus and security package and update virus definitions and patch software on a timely basis.”

It could pay to be flexible. “Perform regular back-ups, which may include rethinking your service level agreements to ensure critical business data is backed up more frequently. Follow the 3-2-1 strategy for back-up; maintain three copies – one of your copies should be offline and at least

one of the copies should be offsite. Ensure your chosen back-up solution includes virtual standby for critical systems so you can get back on your feet very quickly.”

Unique challenges

Lastline’s Senior Security Researcher, Marco Cova, believes universities face some unique challenges when it comes to computer and network security. “They must protect a wide range of data with different levels of desirability from an attacker’s perspective, ranging from basic contact information for visitors to students’ financial records to laboratory research findings to patient data for universities running hospitals. They have a varied group of users to protect, including ad-hoc visitors, students who stay a few years and faculty who may stay for decades, each with different technical skills and needs, and therefore different security and privacy requirements. Universities have traditionally favoured an open culture with a high regard for privacy that in some cases clashes with security requirements.

Marco recommends the following measures among others. “Keep all systems up-to-date with the latest software patches. As seen with WannaCry and Petya, even a few outdated systems can function as entry points for attackers. Compartmentalise networks and use different security levels for each. For example, use higher security with more restrictive access for sensitive labs as compared with visitor networks where ease of access is important.”

“Recent attacks have proven the classic ‘protect the perimeter’ and ‘hardening’ security strategies ineffective and insufficient against breaches,” says Dr Mohammad Hammoudeh, head of Manchester Metropolitan University IoT Lab.

“One myth is universities can manage ➔



UWE Bristol's Cyber Security Week offers a fresh take on security awareness



2CQR Self service kiosks at the University of Exeter

“Universities need to balance preventing, detecting and responding to a security incident. Many struggle to measure the impact of risks and design adequate mitigation plans”



only with defence mechanisms; however, proactive mechanisms such as monitoring are increasingly essential. Another myth is the increasingly rising security threats require complicated defence; however, most recent major security incidents have exploited well-known vulnerabilities in dated or unpatched systems. These could have been avoided by remaining vigilant, through security

awareness training, replacing old systems or patching up-to-date ones.

“Universities need to balance preventing, detecting and responding to a security incident. Many struggle to measure the impact of risks and design adequate mitigation plans; most of the damage results from poor responses to security breaches rather than the breaches themselves. Looking forward, universities should invest more in advanced threat protection solutions rather than introducing more cybersecurity controls limiting the ability of employees to collaborate and work painlessly.”

Unfortunately, threats to universities’ computer systems from cyber criminals will never go away, but robust defences and eternal preparedness equips universities to best fend off attacks. Vigilance must be constant, and complacency must be avoided at all costs. **UB**

CAN ‘GOING DIGITAL’ HELP TACKLE THE APPLICATION DECLINE?

By Gavin Newman, Director of Ivent

So the big news over the summer was that, according to the latest UCAS data, there are 25,000 fewer people applying for university this year, a 4% drop on last year’s figures.

Notable amongst the facts and stats was that the number of EU students planning to study in the UK has fallen by 5% – though I guess we can all be buoyed by the fact that international (outside the EU) students applying to study in the UK are increasing.

Perhaps it’s not too surprising when you consider Brexit, increased fees and those changes to funding for certain courses. The challenge universities now face is how to attract applicants and as always, I believe digital communications will play a significant role. Universities are competing now more than ever for both homegrown and lucrative overseas applicants. A marketing strategy that doesn’t heavily feature digital comms, from interactive social media to whetting their appetite, with lecture examples and live Q&A with students for example, will surely miss the mark.

Since cost is a factor in the decline, students want to be more assured they are making the right choices. However, since they do not necessarily have the time and money to attend open days at multiple universities, virtual open days are an obvious solution.

We already know there is increasing demand for distance learning from international students, particularly in emerging markets. But even UK-based students may look for an alternative way to access their course. Be it mature students, professionals in work who want to up-skill, and those younger students who cannot undertake the financial cost of living away from home to get their degree.

Universities needn’t panic; going digital doesn’t mean an end to lectures and group tutorials. The right digital platform allows live streaming, video chat for both one-to-one and groups, and unlimited downloadable resources.

Let’s hope this applicant drop is a short-lived trend, but one thing is for sure, whether immediately or further down the line, universities need to buckle up for a ride on the digital highway and embrace a new approach, both for attracting students and to disseminate their academic programme. **www.ivent-uk.com**



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VC pay – what’s the story?

Senior executive pay continues to be heavily scrutinised by the media, regulators and government. Recently, the higher education sector has been the focus of particular attention. Jenny Brown, chief not-for-profit operating officer at Grant Thornton UK LLP, examines the figures

Grant Thornton’s survey of 156 HE institutions found that the average vice-chancellor salary for FY 2015/16 was £246,000. When you combine this with pension contributions, benefits in kind and bonuses, total average remuneration for a VC is brought to £281,000.

From the start of our research in 2009/10, average VC remuneration has increased by 13%. During this period sector income has also increased by 29%, expenditure by 25% and the number of staff for which VCs are responsible has increased by 12%. Interestingly, before inflation, the average UK weekly wage also increased by 13% during this period.

With most employees having to settle for low digit wage increases, the HE sector is not alone in finding itself under increased scrutiny regarding senior executive pay.

There is a continued focus on FTSE 350 companies to connect remuneration with strategy and results and an increasing responsibility for remuneration committees to be more transparent and accountable.

However, remuneration committees in the higher education sector are independent and report only to their university’s governing body. Whilst VCs regularly have to deal with complex issues similar to those of a large corporate CEO, our research found that few university VCs are on the same salary scale as their UK corporate counterparts.

The CEO of a FTSE 350 company, with total income on par with a large Russell Group institution, would expect to receive a salary in excess of £500,000. Whilst there is considerable variation at institutional levels across all sectors we have found that, on average, VCs in

the HE sector receive 50% less salary than their FTSE 350 counterparts.

An average FTSE 350 CEO received a salary of £478,000 in 2015/16, a 3% increase on the prior year (2014/15: £466,000) and not dissimilar to the increase seen in VCs’ salaries over the same period (2.2%).

However, when comparing to the FTSE 350, it is important to highlight that salary accounts for less than a quarter of a CEO’s remuneration package. In the HE sector, even with the introduction of performance-related pay, the average salary for a VC represents 87% of their total remuneration. Therefore in terms of

“One approach increasingly used by large corporates is to benchmark CEO pay against the organisation’s average employee salary”

a total remuneration package, the average FTSE 350 CEO receives approximately eight times more than the average VC.

To effectively start challenging the current level of senior executive pay, a common measure first needs to be established. Whilst not perfect, one approach increasingly used by large corporates is to benchmark CEO pay against the organisation’s average employee salary. This approach has obvious advantages and disadvantages as the resulting figure would vary greatly depending on the size, employee make-up and location of the organisation but it does provide a clear commonality. Currently, there appears to be a relatively strong correlation between the total cost of a VC’s office and an institution’s size in the higher education sector. Those in the Russell Group that generate more than 20% of their income through public

and private sector research are found to remunerate their VC more generously. There are many reasons why this could be – the relative size and complexity of the institution, recognition of the VC’s vision and ambition for the institution or because they believe that a higher salary better reflects the status of the institution and is therefore more likely to attract and retain the most appropriate candidates. Surprisingly the average VC salary in London is only 0.3% higher than the average for the rest of the UK, £247,000 compared to £246,000, and total remuneration for a VC in London is just

4% higher than in the rest of the UK (£284,000 compared to £279,000). There are a relatively large number of small and specialist institutions in the capital which may account for the average pay of London VCs being in line with the sector average.

Of the 156 VCs surveyed, 37 had been in place since 2009 and had seen a remuneration increase of 21% over this period, compared to 14% for the sector in general. Reward for demonstrable achievements in the sector still tends to be in the form of a salary uplift or pensions benefits.

There is also a very strong positive correlation between university league table rankings and VC pay. As the universities towards the top of the league tables tend to be larger institutions, justifying a higher than average salary is likely to be easier when VCs can point to their league table position. **UB**

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