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Leader column

Research Excellence Framework results provide firm foundation for the future

With the immediate excitement surrounding the results of the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) now over, I have taken time to talk to University and sector colleagues and reflect on the outcome and what it means for Leeds. The overall feeling is that it confirms the University as a force to be reckoned with, placing us as one of the UK's top 10 universities for research power and well above our peer group average for the impact of our research.

I'd like to thank our academic and professional services staff for all their hard work over many years that has contributed to the results. A huge amount of effort went into the assessment – both within the University and, as several of our academics sat on REF panels, externally – and colleagues should be congratulated and thanked for their commitment and energy.

During my time at the Higher Education Funding Council for England I lived through the controversy of whether or not an impact element should be included in the 2014 submissions. In the event, this accounted for 20% of the overall score, together with outputs (65%) and environment (15%). This new requirement caused a lot of extra work for many institutions, but our own determination and commitment to show the tangible effects of Leeds research has been rewarded by a particularly strong performance in research impact. Our Impact Grade Point Average (GPA) score of 3.47 puts us above the Russell Group average of 3.44 – unequivocal proof that research carried out at Leeds has real benefits outside academia, in areas such as the economy, healthcare, public policy, civil society or culture.

Two very different examples – one local and one international – spring to mind to illustrate the breadth of our research impact. In the first, researchers from our Faculty of Performance, Visual Arts and Communications traced the artist JMW Turner's many visits to Yorkshire, the first of which took place in 1797. Using Google Earth's GPS technology they accurately identified the viewing points and locations depicted by Turner. This research led the official tourist agency, Welcome to Yorkshire, to launch a 'Discover Turner's Yorkshire' initiative featuring the Turner



Trail, an interactive map, and website. In just one year an estimated 1.25 million visitors saw the Trail's interpretation boards and visitors to Trail locations spent an average £119 per head. A survey of tourism businesses revealed that over half believe that the project had a positive impact on their business.

The example of our international impact took place far from Yorkshire, and saw our academics working to protect priceless biodiversity in the Galapagos Islands. Their research into how new diseases are potentially introduced to the islands led to changes in legislation and new biosecurity measures to protect the unique biodiversity of the archipelago. One area of the research showed that mosquitoes hitching a ride on airliners were the biggest risk for introducing viruses. A suite of measures was recommended to reduce this risk, including the use of insecticide treatments on all aircraft flying to Galapagos, bans on direct international flights to Galapagos and restrictions on the point of origin for all flights. These measures led to Galapagos being removed from UNESCO's List of World Heritage in Danger.

Of course, these are just two examples of a wide spectrum of research that has had far-reaching impact* and the REF results confirmed the University's excellence in several key areas.** What I also found particularly striking and pleasing about the results was that they highlighted the overall strength of the institution, and the impressive breadth and depth of our research. We did well in every assessment area to which we submitted; our institutional GPA increased to 3.13 (it was 2.72 in RAE2008), and 82.76% of our research is now rated 4 star or 3 star (60.8% in 2008) – meaning it is world-leading or internationally excellent.

Nationally, the results were characterised by a general improvement across the sector: the average proportion of the outputs judged to be 4 star rose from 14% in 2008 to 22%, and the average proportion judged to be 3

star from 37% to 50%. According to HEFCE, these changes are consistent with independent evidence about the improved performance of UK research in international comparative terms.

Another related feature is the extremely small margins between the rankings; just 0.27 separates us from the highest institution in the overall GPA ranking. This highlights the extremely competitive nature of the current HE environment, and emphasises the hard work that must continue if we are to build on our 2014 REF results.

Initiatives such as the recruitment of 250 University Academic Fellows and 220 new PhD studentships are now in place, and the Strategic Plan is firmly aligned to increasing our research funding and power. Through the plan we are identifying and addressing how we can further improve our future research performance and consistency, and we have clear plans and targets to increase the range and volume of world-leading research. Our substantial investment in three key areas – people, infrastructure, and the means to tackle global challenges – will help us build on our existing success. The aim is to ensure that REF2020 will produce a much stronger result for Leeds and we will use the forthcoming integrated planning exercise (IPE) meetings to agree any further actions needed to achieve progress over the next five years.

Alan Langlands

* Read more case studies at goo.gl/vwOXFq

**The following areas are all ranked in the top 10 in the UK by overall Grade Point Average: Business and Management Studies, Environmental Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, Theology and Religious Studies, Sports and Exercise Sciences, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Civil Engineering, Law, and Communication and Media Studies.

News

Leeds at the heart of new Clinical Research Network

The University will be at the heart of a new consortium to help improve the Clinical Research Network, the Department of Health has announced.

The Clinical Research Network is part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), providing researchers with access to the NHS services and the additional support they need to make clinical studies happen in the NHS. Its aim is to support more research across England and enable more patients to participate in well-designed research.

The consortium also involves Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, and will provide a single Clinical Research Network Coordinating Centre (CRNCC), responsible for delivering the NIHR Clinical Research Network and its extensive portfolio of clinical trials.

Running for the next five years from April 2015, this consortium streamlines the previous arrangement based on nine separate centres, creating a simpler, more effective and wholly integrated research delivery model.

Professor Paul Stewart, Dean of Medicine, says: "This is a unique CRNCC Alliance, which will take the already outstanding performance of the NIHR Clinical Research Network to the next level of efficiency and impact by creating a much more integrated and effective model.

"Most importantly, it will further engage patients and NHS trusts in clinical trials that we know deliver improved patient care quality and outcomes, contribute to evidence-based clinical practice and also generate economic



Professor Paul Stewart

growth. This new Centre will help make the NHS in England the 'go-to' place to conduct clinical research, with a research infrastructure that will be a benchmark of excellence for the international life sciences research community.

"Being appointed to provide the NIHR CRNCC is affirmation of the excellent work the existing team has delivered so far. It's also confirmation of the Department of Health's confidence that the University, in collaboration with Guy's and St Thomas' and PA Consulting, will continue to improve the service we offer to the life sciences industry, the charitable sector, patients and the public.

"Alongside our partners, and with the strategic insight of our Vice-Chancellor Sir Alan Langlands, who was previously Chief Executive of the NHS, we are exceptionally well placed to provide an even better CRNCC."

The consortium will work with a broader 'CRNCC Alliance' of partner organisations that bring together the consolidated experience of four additional research-led universities (University of Liverpool, Imperial College London, King's College London and Newcastle University) that will provide national academic and clinical leadership.

Completing the CRNCC Alliance is PA Consulting, a commercial organisation with an international reputation and footprint that delivers excellence in innovation for health and life sciences.

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About the Reporter

The *Reporter* is the University of Leeds' staff magazine, produced eight times a year. More than 7,600 copies are distributed to our staff and stakeholders. The *Reporter* is produced by the Communications team.

If you have an idea for a story, want to write a letter, comment on this edition or would like to voice your opinion about University matters, please get in touch:

Email: the.reporter@leeds.ac.uk

Tel: (0113) 343 6699

Web: www.leeds.ac.uk/forstaff/reporter

If you would prefer to receive an electronic copy of the magazine, please email internalcomms@leeds.ac.uk quoting your staff number or, if you are external to the University, your name, postcode and preferred email address.

The front cover shows fifth-year medical student Amy McCulloch with fellow students.

News



IntoUniversity's Rosie Kenwood working with pupils at the new centre. Photo ©Johnston Press plc

New partnership inspires pupils to aim for university

A new centre aiming to help young people from disadvantaged backgrounds aspire to and achieve a place at university has been launched with the support of funding from the University's alumni.

The IntoUniversity Leeds East Centre is now open in the Harehills area of Leeds. Located in the hall of St Aiden's Church on Roundhay Road, it is already working with six local primary and secondary schools in the city and has seen dozens of families sign up their children to receive extra support. In its first year, the Centre aims to work with over 450 school pupils from the age of seven to 18. Sessions run after the school day help raise attainment and aspirations and are supported by student and business volunteers. The Centre also sends staff into schools.

Donations from University alumni helped raise the £500,000 needed to get the project off the ground. "We backed this programme because it complements and adds to our existing programme of outreach," says Head of Educational Engagement Louise Banahene. "The Centre will work intensively with learners from primary through to sixth form in one of the most deprived areas of the city. It aims to increase attainment and to raise aspirations and awareness of higher education."

The Centre's team leader Rosie Kenwood says: "We know that university is not for everyone

but we also know that, by the time they get to the end of their time at school, some pupils have already written themselves off and decided it's not for them. We want to start at a young age and ensure that children believe in themselves, so they're in the best position to be able to make a decision."

She says the Centre will help normalise the university environment so pupils get used to the idea of student life. Pupils attend weekly homework clubs and also go to sessions during the school holidays. They are given advice about managing their finances, living away from home and the 'soft skills' they might need to help them adjust to university life.

The IntoUniversity charity has been established for more than a decade, supporting young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to attain a university place or another chosen aspiration. It runs similar centres elsewhere in the country; however, this is the first of its kind in northern England. A second centre is planned to open in South Leeds later this year.

Nominations needed for student Executive

The Leadership Race returns to Leeds University Union (LUU) in March, when six students are elected by their peers in a campus-wide vote to become directors of a £10 million organisation, trustees of a medium-sized charity, and representatives of 30,000 students – but before that can happen, candidates need to be nominated.

All staff can anonymously nominate students for the Education, Union Affairs, Equality and Diversity, Welfare, Community and Activities Officer roles. The nominated students will then be invited to join the Leadership Race and run campaigns to become part of the LUU Executive team for the academic year 2015/16.

Current Union Affairs Officer Bradley Escorsio says: "Last year we received over 170 recommendations encouraging students to run and now we need the help of University staff to inspire our next generation of student leaders."

Any colleague who knows of a student who would be perfect for one of the six Executive positions can nominate them. It only takes a few minutes, recommendations are anonymous, and your nomination could give a great candidate the confidence to go for a role.

Nominations close on Friday 13 February. Nominees who accept their recommendation begin campaigning with a Candidate Question Time on Wednesday 4 March, before voting begins on Monday 9 March. Nominate students at www.luu.org.uk/leadluu

Opportunities for students

Understanding the ‘distinctive journey’

‘Who is the Leeds graduate and what makes their journey distinctive?’ was the question under discussion at this year’s Student Education Conference (SEC), which was attended by more than 400 of the University’s academic, professional and support staff.

For the first time, the conference took place over two days, giving delegates more time to visit the exhibition area and network with exhibitors and each other in a more relaxed and informal setting. With 15 workshops and 30 parallel sessions on offer, delegates had a great opportunity to further their knowledge about the journey that students make as they transition to, through and from university, and explore the ways the University engages with and supports these crucial phases of the student experience.

Opening the second day of the conference, Vice-Chancellor Sir Alan Langlands said: “There are very few universities that could hold a conference of this scale; not another university in the UK could provide as rich and diverse a programme as our own Student Education Conference.”

The conference’s opening panel discussion focused on the journey from school to university, with senior representatives from schools and academies discussing how best to prepare pupils for higher education, what students should look for in a university, and how universities can improve their offering. Panel members encouraged the University to engage more with teachers, parents and pupils at all levels, including primary school, to raise awareness of the benefits of a university education. Completing the examination of the student journey, the conference closed with a discussion

of the move from university to employment. The panel of employers and alumni talked personally about how Leeds helped make them distinctive and influenced their careers, where Leeds excels and how we – and the higher education sector in general – can improve. They highlighted the importance of graduates being able to demonstrate good communication skills, digital literacy, resilience and a positive attitude alongside the assumed academic excellence. This was followed by a general discussion with contributions and questions from delegates.

In the keynote speech, Leeds alumnus and visiting professor Dr Dan Crow reflected on how his experience at Leeds helped shape a career that has included roles at Apple and Google. He also outlined what he now looks for in graduate employees at startup enterprise Songkick, an online music database where fans can track their favourite artists, find out when they are performing, and share their experiences of the event through an online community. He commented on the value of graduates (and employees) having a ‘growth mindset’ – actively looking for and exploiting opportunities for personal, professional and commercial growth.

Dr Crow praised the efforts of Leeds University Business School with its Leeds Enterprise Centre, but said the institution should do more to broaden student engagement with enterprise and with startup schemes: “It’s great to see

that Leeds offers courses ‘with enterprise’ but there are only three in existence at the moment. Students should be encouraged to think about growing their own enterprises through student-faculty joint initiatives.”

He also shared his ideas from his successful career in technology about how education might change: “The future of education exists primarily in the virtual world. The rise of online education is a huge opportunity that should not be dismissed. Universities should blend their own teaching with online, but not forgetting the physicality of a campus atmosphere where you can get involved and talk to like-minded people. We are becoming a global online society – education should too.”

The conference also saw the formal launch of the new Leeds Curriculum at a celebratory reception hosted by Pro-Vice Chancellor for Student Education Vivien Jones. The event included speeches from the PVC and Chairs of the Leeds Curriculum Working Groups. Two undergraduates described their positive learning experiences since the Curriculum’s inception in September 2014: a first-year student studying an inspiring discovery module in the Ethics, Religion and Law Discovery Theme, and a third-year student working on a research-based final-year project. A new A5 brochure summarising the curriculum for external audiences was also introduced at the event: goo.gl/kaNlgR



First-year social policy student Jo Llewellyn



Discussing the journey from student to employee. Keynote speaker and alumnus Dan Crow is on the left

Opportunities for students

Leeds University Union launches new strategy

Leeds University Union (LUU) has launched its new strategic plan for 2014-18, aiming to continue delivering its vision for students: 'Together, we'll make sure you love your time at Leeds'.

Following on from the successful 2010-14 strategy, where it achieved 91% satisfaction rating in the National Student Survey and secured a major investment by the University, LUU created the 'Express Yourself' survey to reflect the latest news in education and the demands of current students (See Reporter 578). Over 4,000 students completed the 40-minute survey online.

"We wanted this research to tell us something new," says Bradley Escorcio, Union Affairs Officer (2013-present). "We wanted to understand more about the attitudes and behaviours of students in order to cater for as

many as possible. We now know what makes our members happy, how career-ready they are, where they shop and what motivates them, giving us more ideas about how to diversify both our offer and our communications."

The new strategy has four programmes, each with a series of 'missions' to ensure LUU delivers its targets. The programmes are:

- Inspire students to succeed
- Enrich students' experiences and activities
- Empower students to make change
- Drive our students' union into the future.

"We're really proud of the new strategic plan: it

combines innovative developments with work we have already begun," says Aidan Grills, Chief Executive of LUU. "But our aims will only be successful if we continue to work in partnership with University staff. I urge them to read about what we want to do and let us know how they can work with us to achieve it."

More information about the programme is at luu.org.uk/plan and printed versions can be obtained from Rosie Perry r.perry@leeds.ac.uk

LUU's impact over the past four years is summarised at impact.luu.org.uk



The LUU executive (l-r): Freya Govus (Welfare), Tom Dixon (Education), George Bradley (Community), Gemma Turner (Equality and Diversity), Bradley Escorcio (Union Affairs) and Fiona Metcalfe (Activities)

Martinique, c'est fantastique!

Who wouldn't jump at the opportunity to travel to a Caribbean island to do some outreach work? Students Jennifer Norris and Katrina Adam from the Low Carbon Doctoral Training Centre were given the opportunity to do just that through the British Council's Science in Schools programme, in which researchers and scientists deliver workshops in English to French schoolchildren.

"Anticipating a journey across the English Channel, we were rather startled – but delighted! – by the invitation to hop over the Atlantic to Martinique," says Katrina. "Once there, we developed a workshop to teach students about some global challenges associated with climate change. Students worked in groups, first ranking countries according to their carbon dioxide emissions. The use of total and per capita data prompted discussions on how each country fared under each ranking method, and led to a second exercise in which students represented selected countries to negotiate their emissions reduction contributions in a 'trade game' exercise."

Jennifer continues: "We also designed an energy efficiency 'top trumps' game that encouraged discussion about how individuals can address the problem of climate change.

It created an accessible way for students to understand how their own choices can reduce carbon dioxide emissions. A final quiz showed that students had enjoyed and understood our workshop, answering questions on climate change and carbon dioxide in English with a high level of success.

"Throughout the week, we received a warm welcome and fantastic hospitality. We were really impressed with many students' ability to understand, discuss and argue complex ideas in a foreign language and, whatever the level of English comprehension, the session gave them an enjoyable introduction to the issue of climate change. The schools gave us glowing feedback, and we hope that this experience will yield a longer relationship between the University and schools 'across the water' in Martinique."



Jennifer and Katrina working with students at a school in Martinique



Research and innovation

Chinese academy builds on partnership in the UK

The UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) extends its research placement scheme to China

The AHRC has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with one of the most renowned higher education arts institutions in China.

Shanghai Theatre Academy (STA) is a research and Study Abroad partner with the University. It has expertise in contemporary and traditional performance and has made a significant contribution to the development of research on the cultural and creative industries in China.

The agreement means that STA will join the AHRC's International Placement Scheme, which provides funded fellowships at some of the world's leading research institutions for early career researchers, doctoral-level research assistants and AHRC-funded doctoral students. This is the first provision on the scheme for performance and digital research.

The Academy is an active member of the Staging China research network – an international research network led by Professor Ruru Li (School of Languages, Cultures and Societies and a STA BA and MA graduate) and Arts and Cultural Education Fellow Susan Daniels (School of Performance and Cultural Industries) – and was a co-lead in the 2008-10 DARE initiative, European Cultural Co-operation Project OPENCOV.

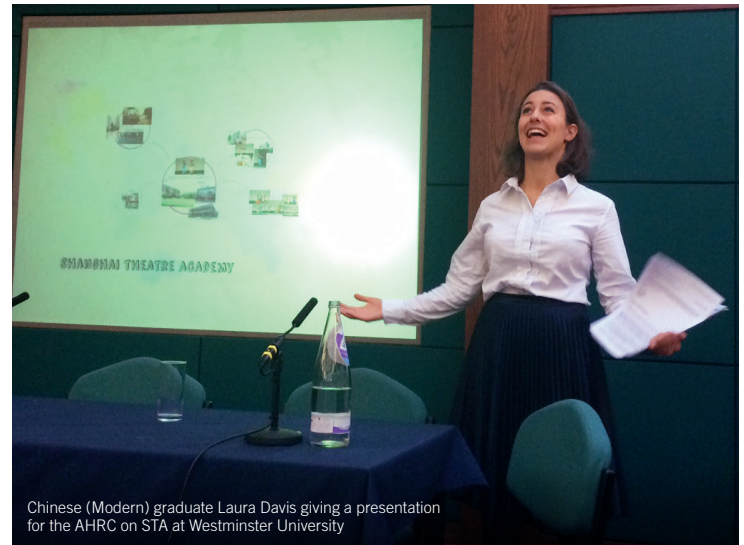
Susan says: "The University has well-established engagement of senior researchers and undergraduates with Shanghai Theatre Academy, and this exciting extension of the

AHRC scheme provides a unique opportunity for early career researchers to be included.

"We hope that there will be both applications from, and awards to, Leeds scholars across the performance and cultural disciplines."

President of STA, Professor Han Sheng, says: "I was extremely pleased that we have signed the Memorandum of Understanding with AHRC. China and the UK both hold a significant place in world culture. The signing of this MoU is a big step forward for our future collaboration in theatre studies and the creative economy."

Up to four fellowships will be available in 2015.



Chinese (Modern) graduate Laura Davis giving a presentation for the AHRC on STA at Westminster University



A Shanghai Theatre Academy performance

Infrastructure and Sustainability

Go for a spin – Try Cycling

Borrow a bike for free for five weeks – with helmet, lights and lock provided, along with free cycle training, route advice and general assistance – as part of this year's Try Cycling scheme.

All colleagues can apply for the first stage of the scheme, which begins on 23 February. Bikes are available in sizes small to large, and there's also a choice of normal, electric and folding bikes. As there are a limited number of bikes to borrow, once the scheme is fully booked, colleagues whose application was unsuccessful will be automatically registered for the next stage of the scheme which starts on 13 April.

The scheme is being run by *UTravelActive* and is designed to give staff at the University, Leeds Beckett and Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust an opportunity to have a go at riding a bike with all the support they may need.

Further information, dates and sign-up page can be found on www.utravelactive.org.uk/try-cycling/



Colleagues can hire a bike, helmet, lights and lock for free

University launches Climate Hubs

Sustainability is developing a new initiative across the University called Climate Hubs, which will respond to frustration at slow international progress against climate change by encouraging positive local action in the run-up to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21).

Staff and students will be able to work together online to create their own Climate Hubs and take action to reduce the energy and water consumption of their workplace.

The overarching Climate Hub is there to share information, offer support for actions that people might be taking, and suggest and develop ideas to reduce carbon emissions. Localised Hubs will also be available, focusing on reducing work-related carbon emissions. Examples of actions could include changing working practices, reducing business travel, saving water, reducing the climate impact of purchases, or replacing old, inefficient equipment. When a Hub completes an action, it will be scored on the associated carbon savings. Scores will be totalled at the end of the year and the Hub with the highest score will be recognised at

the annual Sustainability Awards.

The Hubs will be supported by Sustainability, who can help identify opportunities and implement solutions. There are no compulsory actions, so you can commit as much or as little time as you choose.

A key aspect of the scheme is the creation of an online community. Each Hub will have an online profile on Yammer (a business social network), where members can share and develop ideas, offer advice and support, and start taking action.

For more information, please email sustainability@leeds.ac.uk

Mobile phone amnesty 2015

Use the University's new secure collection service to recycle old mobile phones, chargers and batteries, from work or home, free of charge.

From Monday 12 January, there will be a mobile phone amnesty where Sustainability will be collecting unwanted phones and donating them to a company called 'Second-hand Phones'. The company will reuse or recycle phones that otherwise would be collecting dust in the depths of our cupboards. This initiative is open to all staff and students.

Simply drop your phone and any accessories in one of the five secure collection bins at the following locations:

- Sustainability Offices – 31 Cromer Terrace
- Cleaning Services – Hillary Place
- Security Office – 175 Woodhouse Lane
- Student Union Offices
- Worsley Building – level 3

If you have any questions, please email Michael Howroyd at sustainability@leeds.ac.uk



International/Community engagement

Artworks build community links

Artworks created by young people with learning disabilities, asylum seekers, homeless people, and people with mental health problems are being given pride of place in the Worsley Building thanks to a new initiative funded by the Leeds Institute of Medical Education (LIME).

“The project is a chance for community groups to get involved with the School of Medicine and meet and influence the doctors of the future,” says LIME’s Professor Dr Trudie Roberts.

“Creating art – whether it’s painting, poetry, videos or collages – has enabled people to express some of their experiences of receiving medical care: for example, the difficulties of being treated when English is not a first language or how it feels to be a patient when a doctor talks to your carer rather than to you. The project has given really valuable feedback that will help us improve doctor–patient relationships in future.”

Current medical students taking part in the initiative have met regularly with the community groups involved. They have found that

participating in the project has broadened their experience and given them insight into a range of issues, such as access to medical treatment, discrimination and holistic care, and increased their awareness of other forms of support available in the city.

Dean of Medicine Professor Paul Stewart is keen to see the project continue: “We’re determined to bring more art into the Faculty. It can help forge better links with the community, provide our students with a better understanding of the nuances of the doctor–patient relationship, give disadvantaged groups a voice, and ensure our corridors are populated with fantastic artwork.”

Community groups taking part in the project

were Leeds MIND/Inkwell, People in Action, The Big Issue in the North, Leeds Asylum Seekers Support Network in collaboration with the Women’s Health Befriending Project, and the Access Committee Leeds. The project was coordinated by Barry Ewart, LIME’s Community Education Development Co-ordinator; for more information, contact Barry at b.r.ewart@leeds.ac.uk

“The project created a great and rare opportunity for our vendors to have their voices heard.”

Patricia Fas, Regional Manager, The Big Issue in the North



Members of the Leeds Asylum Seekers Support Network, Aster Yehayes, Bolanle Oresanya and Fatoma Esmail with a collage they helped produce

2020 project works with community’s older people

A University collaboration with a local older persons neighbourhood scheme is giving the over 60s a chance to try out something new.

The 2020 Project, coordinated by the Volunteering Hub in Student Opportunity and Enhancement, is part of Moor Allerton Elderly Care’s (MAECare) 20th anniversary celebrations. Over the next 20 months the project will give older people the opportunity to try 20 new activities or ‘experiences’ run and delivered by students both on and off campus.

The most recent event was hosted by Food

Science students who gave 10 MAECare members a tour of the School and its labs.

The visitors were then invited into the sampling booths where they were asked if they could detect differences in a variety of food and drink. The tests included tasting and rating three types of chocolate and drinking standard orange juice and orange juice mixed with food colouring to see whether they could taste a difference.

For the next event, a group of Intercultural Ambassadors plan to create an International Pancake Day in this year’s World Unite Festival, when a typical ‘flour, eggs and milk’ recipe will be mixed with different cultural flavours and

traditions for the MAECare members to create and taste.

Get involved!

Do you have an idea for an activity that older people would find engaging? The Volunteering Hub is looking for staff to lead one-off sessions that could be delivered in conjunction with students either on or off campus. For more information email Laura Bielby at volunteer@leeds.ac.uk or call 0113 343 7445.

Alumni global get-together

Alumni groups from Leeds University Business School (LUBS) held get-togethers on the same day in Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, Bangkok, Taipei, Kenya and Athens as a celebration of their global success.

Some groups met in cafés, bars or restaurants, while others booked venues and had entertainment with music, singing, and quizzes. Altogether, more than 150 alumni met to share their memories and photos of Leeds. LUBS alumni groups in Japan and Nigeria are also organising similar events.

The event was a great opportunity for alumni to connect with local LUBS groups and meet up with fellow alumni in their region. Many groups

are lively hubs for networking, business, professional development and continued learning, providing a great way to reconnect with old friends, share experiences, do business and learn together, either face to face or online. LUBS has supported the creation of many of these groups and now has 30 groups in 25 countries.

More information can be found on the alumni groups website goo.gl/p0f9sO

Valuing our people

Team talk – Purchasing Tender Group

Who's in the team?

The central team is made up of Richard Clarke, Colin Challinor and Darren Wood. Mark Agar and Richard Trimble look after purchasing for the Facilities Directorate. Ellie Cope, Heather Clarke and Fiona Alcock take care of Medicine and Health and Biological Sciences. Maggie Whitworth is the contact for Engineering, Earth and Environment, and Mathematics and Physical Sciences.

Most of the team started their careers outside higher education. They mainly have public sector backgrounds such as health, local government and nationalised industry, which has helped us to bring fresh ideas and approaches to the University.

What are the team's responsibilities?

To tender formally all goods or services with a value in excess of £25,000, which includes our buildings, the equipment and services within them, utilities, IT, lab supplies, consumables, temporary staff, and a host of external services ranging from banking and audit to pest control.

What are your strengths?

Our ability to be flexible and reactive to support all projects at any time of year, regardless of the impact on resources. Most industries or public bodies have a cycle of workload but ours is less predictable due to the HE funding model, which often means taking swift action to meet deadlines imposed by grant-awarding bodies or face losing the funding. We often say that to be effective at procurement you have to operate like a plate spinner in a circus.

What does the team get the most satisfaction from?

The diversity of products and services required by a large research-intensive university is fascinating and opens up opportunities for procurement staff they wouldn't have exposure to in industry or other areas of the public sector.

What are your main objectives in 2015?

Each year we conduct 150-200 tenders to a value of £50m-£65m, which typically result in savings of £5m-£6.5m. This year we have £4m of capital equipment funding that requires 53 tenders to be conducted so that all goods are fully commissioned by 31 July 2015. Ten long-term agreements will require renewal



Tender team (l-r): Richard Trimble, Maggie Whitworth, Fiona Coleman, Colin Challinor, Ellie Cope, Richard Clarke, Mark Agar and Heather Clarke

this year. The Facilities Directorate has a major capital programme underway which will see us spend £120m and includes six major building projects.

Many of these tenders for goods and services will exceed the EU threshold of £172,514. In most instances, these will require an advertisement to all EU member states and each tender will take a minimum of three months to complete.

Each year we will receive unplanned requests, although it's pleasing that these are becoming less frequent as we develop relationships with departments to become involved in their plans at an earlier stage. There is still scope for better forward planning through early engagement with purchasing so we can advise on appropriate routes to market and guard against pitfalls.

What are the most unusual things you have procured for the University?

A 'shaker table' to simulate earthquakes, a mathematical model of a gas explosion,

various hip, spine and knee simulators, a climbing wall, phantom heads for dentistry, and actors dripping in blood for medical exams!

What message would you like to convey to readers?

We often get asked "Do I have to accept the cheapest offer?" – to which the answer is certainly not! We always award to the offer that represents best value for money, which we justify through award criteria. We are open and transparent about our tender processes so that bidders understand how they'll be judged and know that they can seek feedback to improve future tenders. If we can't justify the winning bid – and be happy to offer feedback to unsuccessful bidders – then the award decision is probably incorrect.

Competition – whether it's genuine or perceived by a supplier – will drive out their best deal. The most successful procurements occur where all our team fully embrace the process and use it as a lever.

In the news



Stephen Hawking told the BBC that full **artificial intelligence (AI)** could “spell the end of the human race”. His comments sparked a wider debate about artificial intelligence and, in an online feature for the international news agency AFP, Professor Tony Cohn (School of Computing) contributed to the debate, saying that full AI was still a long way off.

At the beginning of December, Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne released his **Autumn Statement**. Dr Andrew Crines (School of Politics and International Studies) was quoted in *Bloomberg Businessweek*, saying the Statement “was very driven to position the Conservative Party for the election by heading off Labour attacks”.

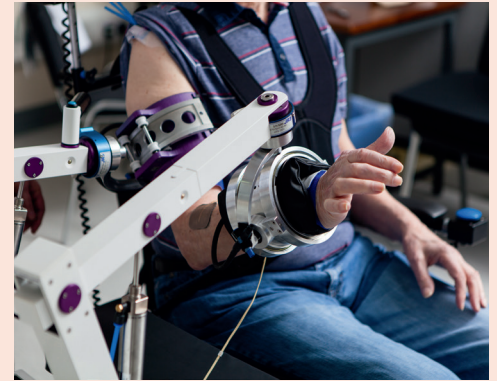
Dr Clifford Stott (School of Law) was interviewed on *Scotland 2014* on BBC Two (Scotland), as well as by BBC Radio Scotland’s *Newsdrive*, ahead of the England–Scotland **football** match. Speaking to *Newsdrive*, Dr Stott said that the police should not have revealed their strategy for dealing with hooliganism.

Research led by Professor Mark Wilcox (School of Medicine) found that the concentration of bacteria in the air around ‘jet-powered’ **hand dryers** was 27 times higher than the air that surrounds paper towel dispensers. The study showed that hand dryers, both jet-air and warm air dryers, spread germs across the user and people nearby. The story was covered by *The Times of India*, *Mail Online*, *The Telegraph*, *The Yorkshire Post*, *The Scotsman* and *i*. Professor Wilcox was also interviewed about the study on BBC Breakfast.

Professor Derek Scott (School of Music) spoke to presenter Lucy Worsley on BBC Four’s *Dancing Cheek to Cheek – An Intimate History of Dance* about the invention of the upright piano in the 1820s. Filmed from the Brontë Parsonage at the sisters’ **piano**, Professor Scott talked through the influence the new invention had on dance.

A study by Dr Steven Clapcote (School of Biomedical Sciences) and Dr James Dachtler (School of Biomedical Sciences) examined a gene mutation linked to autistic traits. The researchers knew that some people who had **autism** did not have the gene neurexin-II and wanted to know whether the missing gene was linked to the condition. To discover whether there was a link, the researchers studied mice with the same gene defect and found that they displayed behaviour that was similar to autistic symptoms. The story was featured in *The Yorkshire Post* and *Mail Online*.

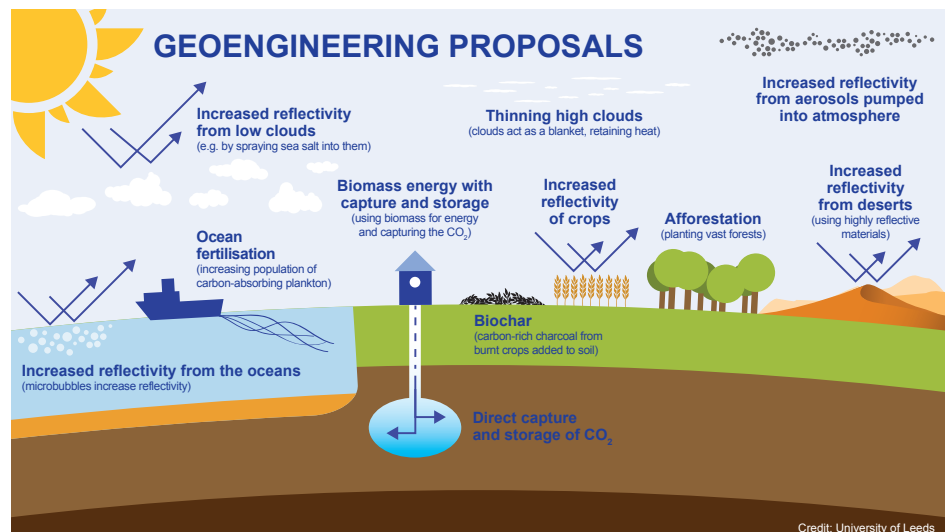
The University backed a new centre based in the Harehills area of the city which is run by the charity IntoUniversity. The centre will work with **young children** from disadvantaged backgrounds to raise their aspirations for further education. The story was featured by *The Yorkshire Post* and *Yorkshire Evening Post*. (See article on page 4.)



The Sun profiled several robots which have been developed to aid healthcare. The University’s iPAM, a **robot** which can help patients with rehabilitation therapy, was included in the feature. Professor Martin Levesley (School of Mechanical Engineering) spoke to *The Sun* about how robots can deliver physiotherapy, regularly providing faster and more consistent progress for patients.

Dr Kevin Macnish (Inter-Disciplinary Ethics Applied Centre) was interviewed live on the BBC *Breakfast* sofa in November. In response to a report by the Commons Science and Technology Committee, to which he gave evidence, Dr Macnish discussed **social media** companies’ terms and conditions.

Towards the end of last year, three studies on **geoengineering** were published – the first ever publicly funded studies in this area. They argued that large-scale intervention in the Earth’s climate system was not a ‘quick fix’ for global warming. The results of the three projects – one led by the University of Leeds, the others by the Universities of Bristol and Oxford – were announced at an event held at The Royal Society in London. The research received wide coverage including BBC News online, *The Telegraph* and *Mail Online*. Following the launch, Dr Lawrence Jackson (School of Earth and Environment) was interviewed by BBC World News in the London studio.



Our people/honours

Emeritus Professor Peter Holman has been awarded an MBE for services to early music in the New Year's honours list.

Professor Holman was formerly Professor of Historical Musicology at the University. Director of the early music group Parley of Instruments, the choir Psalmody, the vocal ensemble Seicento, and Opera Restor'd, he is also the founder and director of the acclaimed English Orpheus series on Hyperion Records.

His special interests are the early history of the violin family, instrumental ensemble music of the Renaissance and Baroque, and English music, from the 16th to early 19th century. He is the author of a prize-winning book on the violin at the English court, and a much-praised study of Purcell's music.

The European Geosciences Union has awarded **Professor Greg Houseman** (Earth and Environment) the Augustus Love Medal. This medal is given to a distinguished scientist in the field of geodynamics, comprising mantle and core convection, tectonophysics, post-glacial rebound and Earth rotation. Professor Houseman is supported through Natural Environment Research Council grants, and his research focuses on understanding the earthquake cycle on large fault systems.

Dr Luke Burns (School of Geography) won the Association for Geographic Information (AGI) Excellence in Education Award for his module on geographic information systems (GIS) and spatial analysis.

Dr Richard Walters (Earth and Environment) has been awarded the Royal Astronomical Society's Keith Runcorn Thesis Prize for the best doctoral thesis in geophysics in 2013 for 'Geodetic observation and modelling of continental deformation in Iran and Turkey'. Dr Walters completed his DPhil in January 2013 at the University of Oxford, under joint supervision of Professors Barry Parsons, Philip England and Tim Wright (Leeds).

Dr Manuel Barcia Paz (School of Languages, Cultures and Societies) has been awarded a Philip Leverhulme Trust Prize. The prize recognises early career researchers whose work has attracted significant international recognition and whose research career is exceptionally promising. Dr Barcia Paz's research focuses on slavery and the slave trade in the 19th Atlantic world.

Professor Martin Iddon from the School of Music has won a British Composer Award for his composition *Danaë*.

The awards, given by the British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors, seek to promote the art of composition, recognise the creative talent of composers and sound artists, and bring their music to a wider audience.

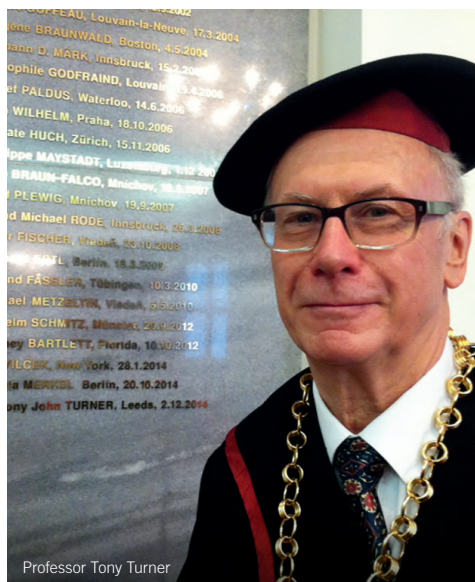
Before joining the University, Professor Iddon ran music projects for schoolchildren with no experience in music making. He wondered how someone would play an instrument if they had never seen it before. This inspired *Danaë*, where a violin, viola, and cello use two bows, one in each hand, and play with no hands touching the actual instrument.



Professor Martin Iddon

The University has received a prestigious **Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents Gold Award** for Occupational Health and Safety for the third year running.

Professor Tony Turner (Molecular and Cellular Biology) received an Honorary Doctorate from Comenius university in Bratislava (the oldest, largest University in Slovakia). The University has awarded only 117 of these special doctorates in the past 95 years. The award recognises his distinction in biochemistry and neuroscience and in international cooperation and communication in science.



Professor Tony Turner

Storm Jameson Court has been awarded a Goldstar by the national Green Tourism Scheme. The award highlighted areas such as high-energy efficiency in design, fabric, and services installed, levels of recycling and volunteer activities. The auditors also acknowledged the commitment, knowledge, and drive shown by University colleagues.

The **2014 MEDEA Awards**, which encourage innovation and good practice in the use of media in education, recognised initiatives by Plant Sciences (Faculty of Biological Sciences) and Leeds University Business School (LUBS).

The Plant Science TREE project addresses the decline in student numbers in plant science. Led by members of the Centre for Plant Sciences, with engagement from the UK plant science community, the TREE is a digital repository giving free access to inspirational teaching resources.

Also highly commended was LUBS's online course *Innovation: The Key to Business Success*. The three-week course uses Marks and Spencer plc as a case study to demonstrate the importance of innovation in a growing and sustainable business.

Anatomy lecturer **Dr James Pickering** (School of Medicine) has been named Most Innovative Teacher of the Year at the Times Higher Education Awards.

The awards celebrate pioneering research and high-quality teaching, and this award recognised how Dr Pickering's imagination and passion could transform a course and inspire his students. His use of technology to support his teaching was a major factor in his success.

Dr Pickering is lead educator on one of the University's free online courses *Exploring Anatomy – The Human Abdomen*, which integrates anatomy theory with practical research and clinical scenarios. More than 8,000 people signed up for it, and 99% of participants reported that Dr Pickering was an engaging educator. The three-week course runs again from 6 April.

At the same awards, the Recognising and Responding to Acute Patient Illness and Deterioration (RRAPID) programme, developed at the University's Institute of Medical Education, was shortlisted for the Outstanding ICT Initiative of the Year award.

News

Ambassadors aim to build stronger communities

Forty-five students from around the UK and across the world have come together to work on 10 new projects as part of the University's Intercultural Ambassadors Programme.

"These Ambassadors are on a mission to help build a stronger community inside and outside campus, while developing their cultural insight and employability skills," says the International Student Office's Katy Manns. "The programme's diversity is a major factor in its overall success; 24 nationalities are represented, with students from every study level and eight faculties, making it one of the most diverse groups with which many participants will have been involved."

As well as campus-based projects, the Ambassadors are running community-based projects with hopes of having an impact on the wider Leeds community and beyond. Two Ambassador teams are working on a primary school project called 'Around the World in 80 Minutes'. One team will bring children to explore the campus and different cultures, demonstrating the educational opportunities available to pupils, and organising a matinée featuring some of the University's best international performers. The second team is going into local schools with three student societies and the Confucius Institute, to give pupils a taste of different cultures. Other Ambassadors will work with Moor Allerton Elderly Care (MAECare) to create an international Pancake Day (see page 10 for more details).



The University's 2014-15 Intercultural Ambassadors

In a virtual volunteering project in collaboration with the M&S Archive, Ambassadors plan to use Skype to deliver a lesson to schoolchildren in Mumbai on sustainability and marketing based on items from the Archive.

Other projects aim to bring the campus community together during LUU's World Unite Festival (6–15 February). As well as creating the festival buzz, teams are running: an interactive exhibition 'Beyond stereotypes' at the Global Café; the Global Amazing Race, challenging teams to discover the world in one day; a Feast of Nations food extravaganza; an international crafts drop-in Life Journey Creative; and Blood Markets, a series of talks on human trafficking.

Alongside working on their programme projects, Ambassadors have undertaken nine training sessions. A session on culture included a

simulation game demonstrating how lack of cultural understanding can impact on people's contribution and comfort. Other sessions cover project development and how Ambassadors can use their experiences when applying for jobs.

World Unite – get involved

All staff can take part in this year's World Unite Festival and, looking further ahead, they could also become a mentor to one of the 2015-16 Ambassador teams, suggest a project idea an Ambassador team could work on, or facilitate part of a training session. To find out more about Ambassadors or to get involved, contact Jackson Kihiko at globalcommunity@leeds.ac.uk

Small ads

Professional services

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Practical and emotional support and companionship before, during and after fertility treatment from an experienced infertility sherpa.

Natasha 0797 676 6417, natasha@irisfertility.co.uk
www.irisfertility.co.uk

IMMIGRATION ADVICE: INTERNATIONAL STAFF

All immigration matters: Tier 1, 2 and 4, entrepreneurs, family members, EEA, long residency, entry clearance, in-country extensions, appeals.

Emma Brooksbank 0113 243 2288
immigration@henryhyams.com

INDEPENDENT MIDWIFERY CARE in your home or workplace. Personalised holistic care and information for pregnancy, birth and parenting. Your insurance may cover partly or fully. Home birth supported.

0782 735 8865, www.yorkshiresorkstorks.co.uk

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Checking grammar, spelling, punctuation, and editing of dissertations. Flexible rates depending on the level of work required. Hard copy work or online service provided.

Zarina 0771 188 1153, zarinayousuf@hotmail.com

Other

SUBLET/HOUSESIT WANTED

Newly retired active American (MSc Leeds), looking for 3-6 month furnished rental, May-October, flexible. Quiet, neat, responsible. Leeds area base for walks, rambles in country. Flexible, willing to do basic gardening, lawn care. You: sabbatical, lengthy holiday.

cegperson_49@yahoo.com

SCIENCES TUTOR WANTED GCSE

1:1 coaching. School will supply past papers, curriculum. Teaching experience optional: enthusiasm essential! LS7.

Claire 0776 191 0900

House for sale

DELIGHTFUL TWO-BEDROOM

Semi-detached 1938 house with south facing garden on the Headingley/Kirkstall border. c £138,000. Easy access to the University

Jill Woodman (0113) 275 4276.

Small ads can be submitted online at <http://smallads.leeds.ac.uk> The charge is £7 for 10 words or part thereof (University members) or £10 (general public). The deadline for the next issue is 18 February 2015 at 12 noon. Advertisers are independent of the University. The University makes no warranty or representation as to (a) the accuracy of ads or (b) the quality of goods or services advertised. To the full extent allowed by the law the University excludes all liability. Contact the Reporter on 0113 343 6699 or the.reporter@leeds.ac.uk

Events

UTravelActive Inspiration cycling talks

Thursday 5 February, 18.30 start, Business School Western Campus LT G.01

'Outdoor philosopher' Kate Rawles talks about her 4,553 mile cycle ride from Texas to Alaska, during which she talked to Americans about climate change – from truck drivers to the Mayor of Albuquerque. Her adventure became the basis of her book *The Carbon Cycle*. She now lectures and campaigns on environmental issues.

Thursday 12 February, 18.30 start, Rose Bowl, Level 2 lecture theatre, Leeds Beckett University

Cycling-mad Imran Mughal spent 15 months pedalling 25,000 miles around the world after he was made redundant. The former NHS worker will talk about his journey, which took him to 33 countries in four continents in just over a year.



Imran on the road

He experienced a terrifying ordeal at gunpoint in Bosnia, deadly spiders in the Australian outback, 53 degree heat in the Oman desert, and cycling through monsoons in Indonesia.

Wednesday 18 February, 18.30 start, Michael Sadler LG.X04

Ben Irvine is the author of *Einstein and the Art of Mindful Cycling* and founder of *Cycle Lifestyle*, a free magazine which promotes the benefits of cycling. Ben also runs the London Cycle Map Campaign, which lobbys for a Tube-style map and network of cycle routes in London.

For more information on the speakers and to book tickets, visit www.utravelactive.org.uk/inspiration-talks-2015



Kate Rawles

Drawing items from the First World War with artist Juliet MacDonald

Saturday 31 January 2-4pm

A rare opportunity to draw directly from museum objects. Taking items from the University's World War One Liddle Collection, artist-in-residence Juliet MacDonald will provide guidance on techniques and approaches to drawing that enable us to encounter historical objects and explore their meanings in the present day.

The free workshop is open to ages 14+ and suitable for anyone who has drawn before, even if only a little.

Places are limited, so book in advance at WW1-drawing-workshop.eventbrite.co.uk A £5 refundable deposit will be requested on booking.

Planned University Technical College (UTC) – public consultation

Thursday 5 February, 2-8pm, School of Mechanical Engineering

The University, with local industry partners, has been successful in its bid to open a University Technical College (UTC) with a specialism in Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering. As part of the process, a consultation period is running until Friday 20 February. This is aimed at parents, carers, local community groups and stakeholders, and provides an opportunity for us to outline our plans for the proposed UTC, provide information for prospective students, and explain what the UTC could mean for the local community. This open drop-in event is a chance to meet the team involved, ask any questions and get more information.

The UTC website – utcleeds.com – also provides further information and links to a brochure, FAQs and consultation survey.



Online webinar – Managing Work–Life Balance – 29 January 2-3pm

Top-performing people are usually those who have found a way to manage both their work and home lives effectively. Finding work–life balance in a sometimes hectic world can be a challenge, which is why this webinar session focuses on areas such identifying pressure points, understanding personal behaviours, knowing what you want from your career and life, separating the components of 'home' vs 'work', prioritising and negotiating your priorities with others, and practical techniques for improving work–life balance

This interactive session will be led by career development experts Position Ignition. For details and to register visit Leeds University Business School website at goo.gl/wrszYb

World Unite Festival 2015

Friday 6 – Sunday 15 February

World Unite Festival 2015 is back for the seventh year running. The Festival celebrates the University's rich and diverse global community with cultural events and experiences from around the world. Staff can take part in the action-packed programme which ranges from guest speakers, an International Film Festival, a World Food Kitchen to art exhibitions, stand-up comedy, music and much more.

You can also get involved with the Festival by tweeting about activities [@UniLeedsStaff](https://twitter.com/UniLeedsStaff) with the hashtag [#WUFest](https://twitter.com/WUFest) to share your experiences.

More information and a full brochure will be available closer to the time at goo.gl/X5vuEp

FAQs

Jackson Kihiko, Global Community Project, International Student Office

Tell us about your role.

My role involves providing assistance to my line manager in running the Intercultural Ambassadors Programme through training sessions and project delivery, as well as running the Ellerslie Global Residence events programme. I also work on the management and development of the Global Community website as part of my internship.

What are you currently working on?

Currently I am working on what sort of events Ellerslie students would like to engage in at the start of the academic year. I'm also reviewing the project plans submitted for the Intercultural Ambassadors Programme, assessing budgets and making note of any changes that need to be done. I have just completed a feature article for the *Reporter* on the Intercultural Ambassadors Programme on progress so far, so look out for that! (See page 14.)

The World Unite Festival is the biggest of its kind in the UK – why do you think it's so successful?

For me, the biggest reason why the Festival has grown to the massive scale it has is because our students have such a great desire to participate in extra-curricular activities. The Global Community department, alongside Leeds University Union, runs various activities, projects and events to make the intercultural experience on campus as engaging as possible to students, and gives them that sense of being part of a global community through the World Unite Festival.

Which of the activities in this year's Festival would you recommend to staff?

I would definitely recommend the activities run by our own Intercultural Ambassadors during the week. These are the food-based event, the creative arts and crafts events, talks



on global issues, and the photography/media exhibition (further information on the projects will be released closer to the time). The amount of time and effort that has gone into the development of these projects makes them more than worthwhile to check out. Expect the Festival to be even bigger and better than last year!

Which country have you always wanted to visit and why?

Ever since I was young, I always wanted to travel to the United States – more specifically, New York. I consider myself to be a city person as I get a thrill from the hum of busy streets, commuters rushing about in their constant pursuit, the sights and smells... I could go on but I don't want to overstretch my desire to travel there! My ideal visit to the States would entail taking a road trip with a group of friends through the whole country and finishing in New York.

How do you unwind in your spare time?

I like to take a walk into town during the weekends to take my mind off the daily pressures of work and go into some new shop that I have never been in before. Apart from this, I can be found at one of the local bars with

a few friends on Friday evenings at the end of a busy working week.

I also enjoy cooking. Some of my friends have given me the nickname 'the Gordon Ramsay of Hyde Park', due to my ability to make some splendid meals! I try to improve my culinary skills during those weekends when I am at home.

What are your dreams and ambitions for the future?

It has always been a dream of mine to start my own business after I have graduated, as my own father undertook the same challenge after his studies and started his own company in property management. At the moment, exactly what sort of business I want to go into is still unclear, but I think it would be along the lines of helping those around me using the advanced technology of today.

If you could pick any super power, what would it be and why?

Mind reading of course! If I were able to read people's minds, I would be able to do whatever I want and get whatever I want. Look at all the Marvel comic books (X-Men in particular): mind readers tend to be the most powerful of the group!