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UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Enhancing
Equality

Registrar's view



Lee Sanders, Registrar

YOUR BUZZ

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Front cover image: Una Martin, Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Equalities.

'I cook with wine. Sometimes I even add it to the food.' – W.C. Fields

I thought that line might get your attention! I enjoy cooking. Having the time to research a recipe, buy good ingredients and cook a meal to share with family and friends is one of life's great pleasures. I have spent a lot of time practising it, but wouldn't say I am a natural talent as a cook. My son often reminds me of the time I burnt the BBQ sausages.

So what makes a talented University Administrator? Let's be honest, there probably aren't many people for whom HE management was their only desire since the age of eight, but it seems to me that there are certain qualities that mark out someone who is likely to excel. I use a shorthand for these qualities: 'snap'. Professor Tim Softley, our PVC (Research), sometimes refers to academic 'fizz' as a defining characteristic of the very best schools. Whatever your choice of imagery, the question of what makes a talented member of Professional Services (one with more natural talent than my cooking skills, at least) is interesting in the context of our Birmingham Professional programme.

Four years ago, I launched the Birmingham Professional as a way to strengthen the identity of our Professional Services and to develop talented people. Universities, after all, are about people and relationships. When academic colleagues and students tell me positive stories about the support they have had from Professional Services, it is rarely because they are impressed by our wonderful systems and policies. Rather, it is because they are impressed by the people with whom they have worked – both individually and as a team.

The Birmingham Professional helps people to build on their talent to become exceptional leaders, managers and administrators for the University. It provides a framework of training, networking and opportunities for colleagues to take responsibility for their own development, whatever role they are undertaking in the University. We encourage the qualities of initiative, flexibility and lateral thinking which are necessary for senior management positions. Intellectual confidence, blended with empathy for academic life and organisational savvy, are other key ingredients in the recipe for success.

Good Professional Services are not in themselves the reason that a university succeeds, but they can make a big difference in delivering exceptional teaching and an excellent student experience, and in supporting world-class research. They help the University to recruit the best staff

and students. They promote the University, helping it grow its influence regionally, nationally, and globally. They ensure the University's resources are well stewarded to enable us to invest; they manage and improve the estate and infrastructure; they develop and implement policy and link this to service; they are well-networked and influential externally; and they use all this know-how to support effective and rapid decision making, based on sound evidence.

One of the highlights of the Birmingham Professional year is the Birmingham University Awards for Tremendous Achievement, known across the institution as the BUAFTAs. The awards have become a big event in the University calendar and are an important way to recognise the contribution made by individuals and teams in Colleges and central departments within Professional Services to the University's success.

Elsewhere in this issue you can read about this year's BUAFTA winners. Reading through this list reveals the many University achievements, big and small, in which Professional Services have played an important role – everything from supporting major research initiatives to the opening of the first secondary university training school in the country.

The Birmingham Professional and the BUAFTAs are now being copied by other universities and I have lost count of the number of requests, including from overseas, we have had to visit and find out how we do it. The Vice-Chancellor and I are thinking of setting up a consultancy on running universities. I hope we'd make a better fist of it than a cookery school!

I have already mentioned the importance of building strong relationships, and this is perhaps one of the most important qualities that the Birmingham Professional seeks to develop. We want to work well with academic colleagues and external partners, to learn from others, and to use that knowledge to help the University to succeed.

And that allows me to leave the last word to the American author, Laurie Colwin:

'No one who cooks, cooks alone. Even at her most solitary, a cook in the kitchen is surrounded by generations of cooks past, the advice and menus of cooks present, the wisdom of cookbook writers.'

Find out more about the Birmingham Professional on the staff intranet: www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/strategic-framework/professional-services/birmingham-professional

BIRMINGHAM GLOBAL

MELBOURNE



PROFESSOR SIR DAVID EASTWOOD VISITS THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

The University of Birmingham and the University of Melbourne have signed an expansive new agreement to formally collaborate on research, education, and cultural engagement.

The partnership will strengthen the existing collaboration between the universities, with the centrepiece being a joint PhD programme co-funded by both institutions giving up to 20 'Priestley Scholars' in engineering the opportunity to study alongside world-leading academics in Birmingham and Melbourne. The £2 million (\$4 million AUD) 'Priestley PhD Fellowships' programme reflects the unique, 20-year relationship between the universities, which have a shared history in Sir Raymond Priestley, the British geologist and Antarctic explorer who was Vice-Chancellor of both institutions.

Working together across shared areas of priority research will lead to high-quality research with global impact, and provide exciting research opportunities for PhD students. Beyond the Fellowships, the agreement also provides for a £100,000 (A\$200,000) collaborative fund to encourage close working between academics in each university and increase exchanges between the UK and Australia.

Over the next two years, the proposed staff mobility fund will allow academic staff from both institutions to visit counterparts and collaborators at the other, and both universities remain committed to exploring enhanced mobility and study programmes for students.



University of Birmingham Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir David Eastwood and University of Melbourne Vice-Chancellor Professor Glyn Davis (pictured above) signed the partnership agreement at a special ceremony held at Melbourne's Parkville campus.

Sir David said: '*Signing our strategic partnership heralds an exciting new era of close collaboration that will lead to high-quality research with global impact as well as exciting education initiatives for students. We are natural partners with a shared history through Sir Raymond Priestley, who was Vice-Chancellor of both institutions, and I am delighted that we have taken this significant step towards further strengthening our successful relationship.*'

Professor Davis said: '*This is a significant change in our relationship with Birmingham, and an extremely positive one at that. At Melbourne we have made it a priority to establish deep partnerships with leading universities around the world that would provide for excellent research collaboration and student mobility opportunities, and that is why today's announcement is a welcome one.*'

BIRMINGHAM AND JAPAN

A high-level delegation from Waseda University, one of Japan's most prestigious universities, visited Birmingham in early March, and both sides signed a new agreement to collaborate on research into the works of William Shakespeare, and other areas of mutual interest.

As the world marks the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 2016, the agreement will unite the University's world-renowned Shakespeare Institute with Waseda's Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, which is named after Professor Tsubouchi Shoyo, a pioneer in modern Japanese literature and theatre, also well known for translating Shakespeare's complete works into Japanese.

Beyond Shakespeare, the collaboration between the two universities will expand across a wide range of other research areas, especially in robotics, linguistics, drama, and sport and exercise science.

University of Birmingham Provost Professor Adam Tickell said: '*The UK is one of Japan's top research partners. It is important for both the University of Birmingham and our country to develop closer engagement with our counterparts in Japan, especially in areas of shared research strength.*'

'*I'm delighted that we have secured this collaboration with Waseda University. There is much common ground between us, particularly as the world's attention focuses on our region and Shakespeare in 2016, and I look forward to other areas of joint research being developed.*'



Ex-CIA director visits campus

Last month General David Petraeus, Former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) visited campus for a Defence Studies Dining Club event.

Image (l to r): Chairman of the Defence Studies Dining Club, Dr John Craggs DL, General David Petraeus, and Professor David Dunn, Head of the Department of Political Science and International Studies

STAFF OPINION SURVEY
HAVE YOUR SAY
UPDATE

Have Your Say is changing: Running 18 April–6 May, it will return in a new slimmed-down, annual format, providing you with an important opportunity to shape the University's future. Have Your Say is a vital and effective way to gather the views of colleagues across the University. Results of the survey will help colleges and professional services devise action plans to improve your experience of working here at the University, and in turn will enable us to continue making important things happen.

Look out for more information on the staff intranet

Staff Fundraising Week 2016: You did it!

Staff have raised more than £2,600 to fund children's cancer research at the University. Across campus colleagues took part in a variety of activities from bake sales to quizzes to comedy nights and even dressing as a crocodile for the day! The money raised will go a long way to advance Dr Frank Mussai's research to develop revolutionary new treatments for children with cancer.

'My team and I are very grateful to all of the staff that donated their time and money to support our research. The funds will be used to start clinical trials and begin to transform the lives of children fighting cancer.'
 Dr Frank Mussai



You can find out more about community fundraising for the University's pioneering research projects, including Dr Mussai's work to fight children's cancer, at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/staffundraising.

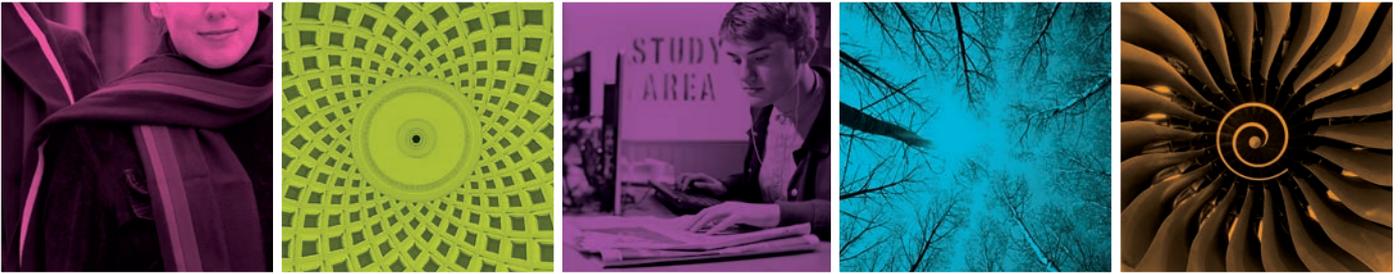
Procurement Performance improved by 19% on national criteria

In December 2015, the Procurement function was re-assessed under the national Procurement Maturity Assessment criteria and has improved its performance by 19%; average improvements for large scale universities are generally around 10 to 12%, and our score came in at 62% (previous score 43%). This now means

that the University's procurement operation has now moved to 4th place nationally in its group category for procurement excellence. Of the 55 assessed procurement criteria for the University, 13 areas are now classified as 'Superior' (which is the highest category).

There is still a great deal of work to be

done to get to the 'Superior' performing category, such as improving our collaboration, doing more on ethical procurement and enhancing savings in some areas, but good progress is being made. Congratulation goes to all of the procurement staff for their work on making improvements.



MAKING IMPORTANT THINGS HAPPEN

Six months on from the launch of Making Important Things Happen – our strategy to 2020 – Buzz magazine has been looking online at some of the stories that highlight the ways in which staff across the University are already contributing to its delivery.

The new website and intranet site provide easy access to information about the many ways in which staff are making important things happen across the four pillars of the strategic framework; Research, Education, Influence, and Resources. As well as providing an interesting summary or update on work and achievements, many of the examples also have the potential to be repeated or replicated in other areas.

www.birmingham.ac.uk/strategy2020

EDUCATION: EPS – HIGH SPEED RAIL COLLEGE

The Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education (BCRRE) is to play a key role in the training of engineers working on the HS2 rail link following the announcement that the National College for High Speed Rail will have its headquarters in the city. BCRRE will advise the College on best practice from similar overseas projects and offer access to a wide range of high-quality facilities. The Centre will also contribute to the governance of the College and provide its students with pathways into higher education at both undergraduate and postgraduate level.

INFLUENCE: CAL – BOOK TO THE FUTURE

Book to the Future is the College of Arts and Law's festival of the written and spoken word. Each year it delivers a packed programme of workshops, lectures, readings and question and answer sessions featuring our own academic, student and alumni talent as well as well-known authors,

poets, playwrights and storytellers. In October 2015 the event, which is open to staff, students and the wider community, featured SJ Watson, a special Noel Coward exhibition, Phenomenal Poetry, writing workshops and many other activities.

RESEARCH: PROFESSIONAL SERVICES – LEGAL SERVICES AND HTRC

The £60 million project, to build a state-of-the-art innovative research facility at Ansty, was jointly financed by HEFCE and Rolls-Royce Plc, and Legal Services has been involved every step of the way.

From working closely with Research and Innovation Services (RIS) and our academic colleagues in relation to the structuring and submission of the original HEFCE bid through to the acquisition of the actual site and advising on employment procedures for both Rolls-Royce Plc and the University, Legal Services will continue to support the HTRC as it develops.

RESOURCES: LES – PERCAT

The University recognises that the early-career researcher is vital to our activity and the PERCAT programme aims to provide information and training to staff during their post-doctoral research here at Birmingham, and to help develop their career and make successful choices about what comes next. The PERCAT website provides a gateway to resources and support available here and the programme is jointly funded by the Wellcome Trust, the College of Life and Environmental Sciences and the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences.

EDUCATION: MDS – BASIC LIFE SUPPORT COURSE

The Basic Life Support course is a prime example of programme innovation. Unique to the University of Birmingham, the programme is taken by all first-year undergraduate and graduate medicine, dentistry, physiotherapy and pharmacy students. It is accredited by the European Resuscitation Council (ERC), as well as being endorsed by the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine. Events have also taken place in the community, including an AED awareness event at Birmingham New Street railway station and a programme aimed at students aged 11–18 at schools across the West Midlands. This initiative has taught over 6,000 school students in over 100 schools, colleges and community groups.

INFLUENCE: PROFESSIONAL SERVICES – GLOBAL COMMUNITY

September 2015 saw the launch of the Global Community at Pritchatts Park Village. This distinctive accommodation option gives residents the opportunity to live among a multicultural mix of home and international students, enhancing their cross cultural skills and introducing them to world cultures right at home. Interest in the Global Community was strong among both UK and international students; with students from more than 40 different nationalities filling the 163-bed Pritchatts House residence. Related events and activities are coordinated by Accommodation Services in conjunction with other departments across campus and the Guild of Students.

transforming OUR campus

'First-class
treatment'

New Birmingham Dental Hospital and School of Dentistry set to open doors to public

The new home of the University's School of Dentistry is due to open its doors to students, staff and patients this month, just over a mile away from main campus. The first new dental hospital and school of dentistry to be built in the UK in 40 years will open at the old Pebble Mill site on Thursday 31 March.

The Birmingham Dental Hospital and School of Dentistry was officially opened by the Queen late last year, ahead of the operational opening. The four-storey development is the first integrated, stand-alone dental hospital and dental school to be built in the UK for almost 40 years. It expects to treat more than 100,000 patients each year.

It houses a range of services for the public including walk-in emergency

dental care, restorative dentistry, oral surgery, oral medicine, orthodontics and paediatric dentistry.

The public will access all dental services from Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Trust in one wing of the building while a second wing provides the University's School of Dentistry with world-class research facilities and a modern learning environment for more than 600 undergraduate and postgraduate students and trainees.

Professor Phil Lumley, Head of the School of Dentistry at the University of Birmingham said: '*The facilities within the new building will be a state-of-the-art*



Her Majesty The Queen officially opens the new building

new home for our world-class teaching and research, as the next generation of dentists and dental specialists are trained here.

'As well as the first-class treatment carried out here for people from the city region and beyond, we will continue with our groundbreaking research to better understand oral and dental health and improve the lives of patients as a result.'

Route to the Vale set to begin

Work on the new route to the Vale, to make walking into campus quicker and easier for first year students, has begun. The new path will open for the start of the 2016/17 academic year.

The new path will take pedestrian traffic off the congested footpaths of Edgbaston Park Road, before emerging near the

Metallurgy and Materials building. It will provide the first, dedicated pedestrian route between main campus and the Vale. When the Green Heart is completed, the route will make up part of a seamless route into campus for all pedestrians.

There will be some work taking place in the car park at the Elms day nursery on

Edgbaston Park Road, but our contractors aim to have completed the bulk of this work during the Easter break to minimise the disruption to parents and staff.

Lapworth Museum roars back into life

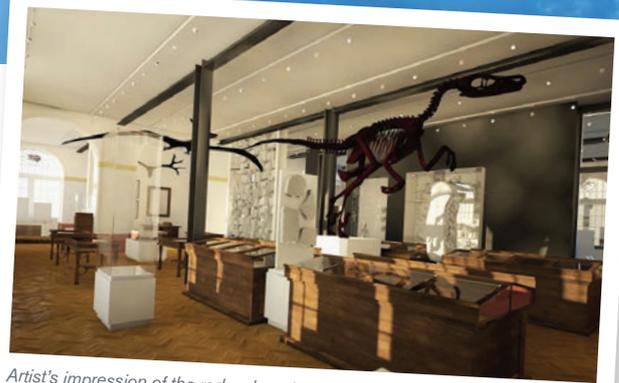
The reopening of the Lapworth Museum of Geology grows ever closer – with refurbishment of the building and installation of the new exhibits progressing swiftly and staff preparing to welcome visitors back into the Museum from 10 June.

More than 3 billion years of history will be brought to life as the University's very own geological museum reopens its doors following a £2.5 million refurbishment. The new museum experience will allow visitors to benefit from light and airy spaces enhancing the setting of the displays, and a new range of innovative interactive and tactile experiences.

Centred around four themes, the museum will explore life over the past 3.5 billion years, covering mass extinctions and evolutionary changes.

A host of fossils from around the West Midlands will show how the area changed from a tropical sea to desert to ice sheets over a 450 million-year period.

The redevelopment has been made possible thanks to a major Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant of 1.5 million and the generous support of University of Birmingham alumni, and a number of



Artist's impression of the redeveloped Lapworth

grant awarding bodies, trusts and foundations. The museum has been closed since autumn 2014 while the redevelopment has taken place, and staff are eagerly awaiting the chance to welcome people back into the space.

New student spaces are revealed

Two new student spaces in some of the University's most beautiful buildings have been officially opened by the Vice-Chancellor.

The new Aston Webb Student Hub was opened in early February with the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir David Eastwood, being joined by Shenaid Tapper, the 300,000th University of Birmingham graduate, and Guild of Students President Jack Mably, to welcome invited guests to the space. Guests were taken on tours of the Hub, which is housed in a completely remodelled wing of the Aston Webb Building, to view for themselves the new study spaces, lecture theatre and Student Hub itself. The guests were also treated to music from student group Uptone Girls, and had the chance to view the finalists in a campus photography competition run to mark the Hub opening.

The Hub brings together a range of the services students need to access together in one area at the very centre of campus. The Hub is a place for students to visit from registration, throughout their studies here, to graduation. The Careers Network is also now housed in the Hub,

and it is hoped that by co-locating this service with many others, increasing numbers of students will access our guidance service, skills training and access to mentoring.

The Hub also makes it easier for staff from different areas to collaborate, resulting in a more effective and seamless service for students.

Just a week after the Hub opening, the new Westmere Building for postgraduate researchers was opened by the Vice-Chancellor. Westmere House on Edgbaston Park Road has been redeveloped into a training and social space for all postgraduate researchers. It will become the centre for postgraduate researcher workshops, conferences, training, social events and networking.

There are also five Westmere Scholars (one from each college), who will lead the way in bringing the physical

space and our postgraduate research community together.

The Westmere launch included speeches by the Vice-Chancellor, Director of Postgraduate Studies, Westmere Scholars and Wellbeing Officer, and PGRs from the College of Arts and Law provided tours.



The Vice-Chancellor and Guild President Jack Mably unveil a plaque in Aston Webb Student Hub



The Vice-Chancellor with Westmere Scholars and Wellbeing Officer Martine Van Driel

Congratulations to the 2016 BUAFTA Winners!



The ninth annual Birmingham University Awards for Tremendous Achievement (BUAFTA) event was held on Friday 19 February 2016.

The evening celebrated Professional Services staff and served as an excellent reminder of the hard work undertaken to support the University's wide breadth of activities, allowing the University to continue to thrive and be successful. This year more than 750 BUAFTA nominations were submitted across all areas of the University, and the quality of those nominations was better than ever.

The host for the evening was Rachel New, co-host of the *Breakfast Show* on

Heart FM, and an emerging writer. In 2014 Rachel graduated from University of Birmingham with a distinction in her Creative Writing MA and she is currently studying for a PhD in Creative Writing.

Entertainment was provided by the 'Funky Feathers', a troupe of Bollywood dancers, and Illusionist INFINTI; praised by the Vice-Chancellor for his mind-bending tricks. Guests celebrated the University's place in Birmingham by creating their own cityscape out of craft

materials, with each table building a landmark building from either the University campus or the city.

This year's nominated charity was Childhood Cancer Research at the University of Birmingham. Supported by the BUAFTA raffle and Staff Fundraising Week, a record £8,135.37 was raised. 100% of proceeds will go to the work of Dr Frank Mussai, UoB academic and clinician at the Birmingham Children's Hospital, who is testing a new drug that could save lives.



TEAM OF THE YEAR

The Birmingham Qur'an Project team – This project drew in expertise from departments across the University to deliver a hugely successful range of events, talks and materials. More than 8,000 guests visited the exhibition from all over the world.



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

Anne Simper, Business Engagement Partner, MDS – Anne brings not only a wealth of experience but, crucially, an optimistic attitude to her role. Her colleagues say she brings an energy and a dynamism that is infectious.



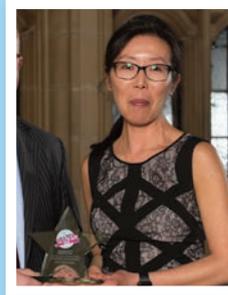
EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

Samuel Ingram, Academic Services Project Officer and ITSMP Project – Sam played an integral role in the move to the new Aston Webb Student Hub, a complex project involving multiple teams moving from different locations across the University.



EXCEPTIONAL CHANGE LEADERSHIP

James Kelly, Educational Technology Team, MDS – James has been instrumental in effecting great change among more than 80 academics, promoting the use of new technology for live assessment of clinical dental students working at the Dental Hospital.



EXCELLENT SUPPORT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Kelly Chilton-Davies, Senior Taught Administrator, EPS – Kelly held together the teaching support provided to the School of Physics and Astronomy during the National Student Survey. Her endless positivity and resilience helped contribute to the School's unblemished NSS record. Colleague Mary Li collected the award in Kelly's absence.



THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE AWARD

Adrian Powney, Welfare Tutor, CAL – Adrian works tirelessly to promote the importance of diversity throughout the College. His work was highlighted by the panel of *The Times* Leadership and Management Awards as one of the reasons as to why the team won the Outstanding Departmental Administration Team award in 2015.



EXCELLENT SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH

Sally Wiley, Research Development Officer, Research and Commercial Services – Sally was instrumental in establishing a formal collaboration with the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC). Thanks to her, it grew within a short time from a roundtable to a legally binding three-year collaboration agreement.



'UNsung HERO' OF THE YEAR

Gemma Davies, UoB Sport Coach – Gemma has worked to support and nurture the growth of over 60 students in the women's football club, instigating a huge number of projects to provide community links and opportunities for real-life work experience.



BIRMINGHAM PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

Alexandra Parish, Interim Director of Operations, University of Birmingham School – Alexandra has been responsible for overseeing all operational aspects of the development of the new University of Birmingham School. Involving collaboration from almost every department, with Alexandra's leadership, the School has already gained an outstanding reputation.



THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD

The Circles of Influence Team – The University's Circles of Influence campaign raised in excess of £190 million, smashing the original target of £60 million. This success makes the Circles of Influence the most successful campaign of any UK university outside the golden triangle of Oxbridge and London.



THE PRINCIPAL'S AWARD

University of Birmingham School – Creating the first University secondary school in the country has positively demonstrated the University's commitment to the city and has shown true innovation in education. 'Heroic' efforts by this team ensured the successful opening of the school to pupils last year.

BRINGING A TASTE OF HOME TO OUR CHINESE STUDENTS



The University's catering operations manager, Louise Sherratt, travelled to China to find out about the nation's culinary tastes. Richard McComb reports for *Buzz*.

It is the calm before the culinary storm at Nong Yuan canteen at Peking University.

Groups of students are making a beeline for their favourite food outlet inside the four-storey block. It is 10.30am but it is not a late breakfast or a mid-morning coffee that are being sought at China's top-ranking higher education institution. This is the start of lunch service and over the next two-and-a-half hours up to 10,000 customers will enjoy broths, noodles, roasts, stir fries and... well, the menu just goes on and on and on.

Nong Yuan (which literally means 'agricultural garden') is just one of the campus's food outlets. Taken together, Peking University's canteens serve up to 47,000 lunches each day. It's no wonder Louise Sherratt is lost for words.

Louise is the catering operations manager for the University of Birmingham, which on a busy day might serve 14,000 customers at lunchtime. It is no mean feat to keep all these students, staff and visitors fed, watered and happy at the University's 28 food outlets. But how about satisfying the hunger pangs of 47,000 customers? That's like serving the entire population of Edgbaston and Selly Oak in one sitting.

Louise has joined a group of UK university catering and hospitality managers on a study tour of China. Organised by The University Caterers Organisation (TUCO), the trip includes visits to five diverse universities to examine their food

offering to students. The 11-day tour takes in Beijing and the southern cities of Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Hong Kong.

Due to its historic Western influences, the latter is the only university on the tour where sandwiches are sold in outlets. Despite being a default meal for UK students, and a food staple given to international students when they arrive here, Louise and her fellow TUCO delegates learn that many Chinese will never have eaten a sandwich in their lives. It's no wonder they are baffled when they are handed a BLT.

China represents the biggest international recruitment territory for UK higher education and catering bosses, who are keen to learn more about the world's most populous nation's favourite flavours and tastes. By gaining a better understanding of China's hugely diverse cooking styles, of which there are eight main regional cuisines, campus kitchen brigades hope to better cater for students from the East when they touch down in the West.

'The style of service at universities in China is very different,' explains Louise. 'They are intent on giving students three hot meals a day. There are vast choices. Some of the universities are serving 350 different dishes.'

In the majority of the universities visited by TUCO, the meals are served in traditional dining halls, often built over several floors. Louise says: 'In England, we have different styles of services.

Students can have a hot meal, a take-away meal, a coffee and a cake, whereas in China there is a lot more choice of dishes but the service is more rigid.'

She is surprised, as all the delegates are, by the low cost of the meals, which are heavily subsidised by the state. Unlike in the UK, there is no imperative for university food and beverage operations to generate profits.

'Some of the meals are as low as 30 pence,' says Louise. 'The most expensive meal I have seen at a Chinese university is £1.20. The average spend in a UK university is probably around the £5-£6 mark with a drink.'

'The quality of the food is superb. It looks really fresh and wholesome. Some of the counters in some of the older universities were quite dated and perhaps reflected the old refectory-style that British universities used to have 30 or 40 years ago. But they are there for a purpose and the hot food looks really nice.'

The second institution on the visit to the capital is Beijing Normal University, a teacher training institution founded in 1902. Its growth reflects the scale of economic expansion in China, mushrooming from 10,000 to 25,000 students in a decade. There are also 5,000 academic staff and support workers.

There are no tuition fees and each undergraduate receives a £15 monthly allowance from the state. Beijing



Images © Richard McComb

Normal has seven canteens and a large number of students eat all their meals on campus, selecting from 100 dishes on a four-week menu cycle.

Yunhai Xu, general manager for catering, encourages his chefs to take pride in their work and there is stiff competition between the seven canteens to see how many students and staff they can serve. As well as all the Chinese regional cooking styles, the University has launched a global canteen serving Japanese, Korean and Western dishes.

The university tours are complemented with cultural visits including the Great Wall of China and Tiananmen Square and a host of different food and restaurant experiences. Delegates try everything, from freshly cooked sashimi-style yellow trout and braised sturgeon to congee (rice porridge), dim sum, ducks' tongues, fiery Sichuan food, aromatic Hunan, yak and, naturally, Peking duck.

Louise says the study tour confounds her expectations, not least the variety of different styles of cooking. The insights will prove invaluable as the University looks at the way it caters for Chinese students and attempts to give them an authentic taste of home.

'The key thing is to take a dish and cook it spot on, make it exactly the way the Chinese like it. We have got to consider what ingredients we are using,' Authenticity, says Louise, is everything.



'In addition to all the university visits, we had great food experiences, which has helped me understand the Chinese culture more and helped me understand what Chinese students want to eat. The challenge now is how we replicate that.'

Small things can make a big difference in making overseas students feel at home in Birmingham. Louise says she had never appreciated that Chinese people like drinking warm or tepid water rather than

cold water from a refrigerator. *'The personal benefit for me is that I can take this cultural experience back to Birmingham and share it with staff,'* she adds.

Following the study trip, Louise has helped to push forward a Chinese broth concept at one of the University's food sites, and all menus, where appropriate, are written in Chinese. There are plans to organise a Chinese focus group to explore catering possibilities.

A New Look in MDS

Last autumn there was an update in *BUZZ* on the Life Sciences review which highlighted excellence in research and teaching and established the institutional Life Sciences Strategy (LSS). The LSS is integral to delivering the region's vision of Birmingham as a powerhouse for the Life Sciences sector. It will also make Birmingham one of the leading national contributors to the successful delivery of the Government's vision for UK Life Sciences.

In order to fully deliver this strategy the College of Medical and Dental Sciences has undergone some structural changes to reflect these strengths, supported by significant investment. In October 2015 the College was realigned into eight Institutes, which, in addition to being central to the College structure, are interdisciplinary in nature encompassing and encouraging collaborative activity across campus.

College Executive



Professor David Adams
Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of College
Dean of Medicine
Birmingham Health Partners Director



Professor Philip Lumley
Deputy Head of College
Dean of Dentistry
Head of School of Dentistry



Professor Paul Moss
Director of Research and
Knowledge Transfer



Dr Emma Robinson
Director of Operations



Professor Prem Kumar
Director of Education
Director of the Institute
of Clinical Sciences

Six months on since the realignment, the new structure is becoming established and is driving the College forward. There have been recent new appointments into senior academic and administrative positions, in addition to new thematic leads in each Institute, all of whom bring fresh ideas, impetus and energy into the College leadership. Change is never easy. The academic

and professional services staff within the College have embraced the change with great levels of optimism, professionalism and pragmatism ably supported by a BUAFTA-shortlisted Change Management team that has helped navigate the College through the change process. It is now set-up to deliver against exciting plans outlined in the University and College Strategic Framework and will

work towards realising the ambition of delivering the full circle of translational medicine and being recognised globally as a leading UK institution for Life Sciences research and education.

Find out more at www.birmingham.ac.uk/mds or visit the College's Strategic Framework intranet site.

The New Institutes



Professor Prem Kumar

Director of Education
Director of the Institute
of Clinical Sciences

Institute of Clinical Sciences:

coordinating all undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and student engagement activity in MDS and leading on the College's Allied Health research, the Institute equips students with the skills to deliver outstanding health care and to carry out life-changing medical and clinical research. The Schools of Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy are contained within the Institute of Clinical Sciences and retain their status as distinct, professionally-oriented academic units sitting alongside the School of Biomedical Science.



Professor KK Cheng

Director of the Institute of
Applied Health Research

Institute of Applied Health Research:

tackling global societal challenges, from occupational health risks in the UK and Europe to childhood obesity in China.



Professor Malcolm Taylor

Director of the Institute of
Cancer and Genomic Sciences

Institute of Cancer and Genomic Sciences:

making a unique and powerful contribution to understanding how genetic abnormalities within cancer cells lead to disease, and using this to rigorously assess new and proven cancer treatments.



Professor Gerard Nash

Director of the Institute of
Cardiovascular Sciences

Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences:

world leaders in several areas of cardiovascular work, including research into the behaviour of platelets, white blood cells, atrial fibrillation and angiogenesis.



Professor David Wraith

Director of the Institute
of Immunology and
Immunotherapy
(from summer 2016)

Institute of Immunology and Immunotherapy:

making a world-leading contribution to understanding and treating immune-mediated disease.



Professor Janet Lord

Director of the Institute of
Inflammation and Ageing

Institute of Inflammation and Ageing:

from basic science to community exercise classes, covering every aspect of research into, and treatment of, inflammation-driven illnesses and the role of inflammation in ageing.



Professor Wiebke Artl

Director of the Institute of
Metabolism and Systems
Research

Institute of Metabolism and Systems Research:

leading the global field in metabolism research, particularly in endocrinology, and at the forefront of systems-level studies of the human metabolome.



Professor Ian Henderson

Director of the Institute of
Microbiology and Infection

Institute of Microbiology and Infection:

a joint initiative with the College of Life and Environmental Sciences – one of the largest groupings of microbiologists in the world at the vanguard of innovative research into combating antimicrobial and antibiotic resistance.

CAMPUS CURIOSITIES



Chancellor's column

Our interfaith community has ancient precedents

In February I was privileged to deliver the annual Chaplaincy lecture at our Multi-Faith Chaplaincy, a pillar of the diverse and international community within the University of Birmingham.

The title of the lecture was '*The Everlasting Flame of Zoroastrian Identity: An unbroken thread of achievement from Cyrus the Great to today*'.

I am a Zoroastrian Parsi, from one of the smallest and oldest religious communities in the world, numbering under a hundred thousand, and yet it is in terms of per capita achievement probably the most successful in the world.

That has only been possible due to the secular and pluralist environment both in the UK and in India, allowing a small and ancient religion and community to flourish, excel and contribute. It was so relevant to our own University of Birmingham community, where we are one of the most international universities in Britain.

Our success has only been made possible through the partnership we have with our community. This was so amply demonstrated by the variety of people who attended the chaplaincy lecture, including, priests, clergy from many different faiths, Theology students, members of the Birmingham and West Midlands community and finally the excellent vote of thanks was delivered by the Bishop of Birmingham, David Urquhart. All of the successes of the University are built on our wonderful diversity and the partnership with our community.



What is it?

Cathode Ray Oscilloscope by Telequipment Ltd, c. 1976. Collection of Historic Physics Instruments, Research and Cultural Collections

Where is it?

Poynting Physics Building (viewable by appointment, please email rcc@contacts.bham.ac.uk).

Oscilloscopes are a type of electronic test instrument which allow for the observation of varying signal voltages. These instruments can convert other signals, such as sound or vibration, to voltages and display this reading. The voltages are displayed as a two-dimensional line, plotted against a scale which allows the viewer to analyse changes in the electrical signal over time.

Cathode-ray oscilloscopes are an early version of this type of instrument. They consist of a cathode ray tube, amplifiers, a timebase and power supply. They are now called 'analogue' scopes to distinguish them from digital

versions that became more common in the 1990s. This particular model was a popular British-made dual-trace oscilloscope which allowed two signals to be displayed simultaneously.

Learn more

This object, along with many others from Research and Cultural Collections, has been used by Artist in Residence (2014–15) Antonio Roberts to create his latest exhibition. Permission Taken is in the Bramall Music Building, 2 March–30 May, Mon-Fri, 9.00am–5.00pm. Admission is free.

Please see <http://rcc-redmarley.tumblr.com> for a blog post about the exhibition. You can visit <http://archiveremix.com/> to find out more about Roberts' work.



news+views

Our regular feature gives *Buzz* readers a quick tour of the latest University news hitting the headlines and activity among our online community.

If you would like to work with the press office, or find out more about how they can help you promote your research, email pressoffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk or call 0121 414 6029

in the news...

Many articles about Birmingham research and expertise appear in local, national and international press every day. Here are just a few examples of our recent highlights.

The groundbreaking news that LIGO detectors had observed evidence of gravitational waves was making front pages across the world. Professors Andreas Freise and Alberto Vecchio, who developed the techniques for detection, were interviewed by a number of media including Channel 4, BBC, BBC Radio 5, *The Independent*, *the Guardian*, *Nature* and *The Times of India*.

Professor Bob Stone was the focus of an article in *New Scientist* that explored how virtual environments could be used to combat stress in isolated populations, and Professor David Dunn spoke to the BBC on the risk of drone technology being used by terrorists.

Professor Julian Bion was among those interviewed for BBC Radio 4's *The Report* to discuss the reality of a seven-day NHS, Professor Peymane Adab was quoted in *The Daily Telegraph* on effective methods for weight management, and Dr Hannah Batchelor was featured on *BBC Midlands Today*, in *The Sunday Mirror* and on regional radio stations, talking about the ACCEPT trial for developing child-friendly medicines.

Professor Paul Moss spoke to *The Sunday Times* on the latest developments in cancer immunotherapy and Dr François-Xavier Li spoke to BBC, on Eddie Izzard's marathon efforts for Sport Relief and the associated health risks.

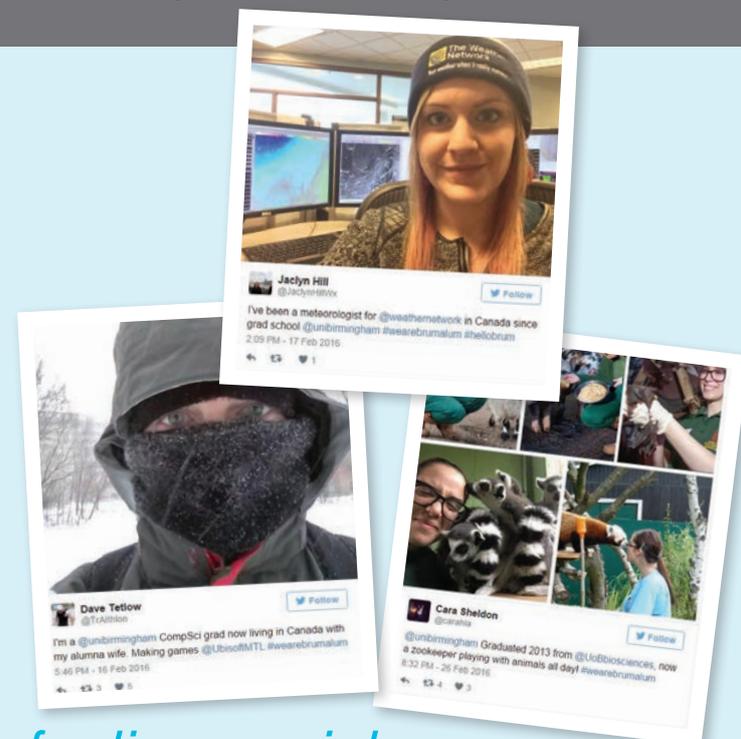
Eva Reindl and Dr Claudio Tennie's work, showing spontaneous learning in human toddlers, similar to wild great apes, was covered globally including pieces in *the Guardian*, *Daily Mail* and a feature on *BBC Earth*. Meanwhile, Dr Zanna Clay saw her research on the social interactions of bonobos featured in *New Scientist* and *Metro*, among others.

Professor Roy Harrison was interviewed on Sky News about how air quality has changed since the 1970s, Dr Gregor Leckebusch commented for the BBC on how climate change could lead to longer-lasting flights, Dr Francis Pope's pioneering trials into monitoring car emissions was featured in *The Sunday Times* and on LBC radio.

The University's contribution to the EU referendum debate has been gathering pace with Dr Tim Haughton on the sofa for *BBC Breakfast* discussing why referendums are held.

Join the UoB online community

Follow us on Twitter at [@unibirmingham](https://twitter.com/unibirmingham). If you use social media at work and would like to increase your visibility, find out more at: intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/socialmediaguidelines



feeling social...

During our key conversion time in February, we asked our alumni community to share 'selfies' of themselves in their current roles.

In a joint campaign between the DARO and Central Marketing teams, Birmingham graduates were asked to share their successes to help show prospective students the breadth of opportunities open to them with a University of Birmingham degree.

The #wearebrumalum hashtag was launched on Twitter and alumni were asked to share their name, current job, and what they've been up to since graduating.

Albums of the selfies were then shared on the University Facebook channel as well as through a Storify link featuring all the inspiring messages.

During the campaign, current students were also taking to Twitter saying how inspired they were by the hashtag, and that they couldn't wait to post their own achievements after graduating.

Una Martin... in my own words



Professor Una Martin is the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Equalities.

I was brought up in Dublin where I went to Medical School and later trained to Registrar level. From there I went to Edinburgh to do a PhD in Clinical Pharmacology, and subsequently to Southampton to take up a Senior Registrar Post in Clinical Pharmacology. I joined the University of Birmingham as a part-time Senior Lecturer shortly after the birth of my first child 20 years ago. I was promoted to Professor of Clinical Pharmacology in 2015. My clinical and research interests are in high blood pressure and I run the Hypertension Service in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

In September I was appointed Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Equalities, a newly created post, which emphasises the commitment and determination of the University to address all aspects of equalities. My own interest dates back to 2007 when I first started chairing the Women in Academic Medicine and Science group in the Medical School, and where I led the application for Athena Swan status, achieving a Silver award in 2014. I've worked part-time until recently and combined my academic work with a clinical career. I've been on maternity leave twice, so I have hands-on experience of some of the issues that many of our staff face.

Of course, the equalities agenda encompasses more than gender equality. Given the diversity of the city and our international recruitment, it's not surprising that we already exceed the UK Government's targets for BME student representation. What I'm more interested in is how well these students do when they arrive, and how we ensure there are no barriers to attainment. There are many ongoing initiatives – mentoring schemes, the BME ambassador scheme, and the inclusive curriculum – to ensure there are no impediments to success. We're pushing ourselves to do even better and preparations for application for the Race Equality Mark are underway.

Climbing to 50th in Stonewall's LGBT-friendly employers list is a terrific achievement and one I'm very proud of. Success was in part due to our willingness to engage, our staff and student networks and the inclusive curriculum for LGBT students. We run a vibrant 'LGBT History Month', which sends out a very strong message about our inclusiveness. This is paying dividends and we're starting to work quite closely with Stonewall, for whom we'll be holding an 'allies' conference in May.

Our new *Equalities Scheme 2016–2020* supports the Strategic Framework, and goes beyond a tick-box exercise for protected characteristics – I am really excited about it, I think it will make important things

happen by acknowledging that people are our greatest resource. It approaches equalities in a more novel way around four interrelated themes: inclusiveness; attainment; flexibility; and embedding – these aren't mutually exclusive. As part of this we'll be enhancing the 'Not On' campaign to make sure that we tackle sexual harassment on campus in a co-ordinated and assertive way. We aim to tackle head-on any barriers to staff attainment by embedding flexibility. In practice this would mean being able to pick up a child from school, or attend to a sick relative. Our immediate target for Athena Swan at University-level is achievement of a Silver award. We recognise that representation of women and BME staff in professorial posts and senior-management positions is a challenge we need to address.

Our University is a very exciting place, packed with vibrant, interesting people and we've got a terrific team leading us forward. However, it's important that all these practical measures are reflected in everyday conversations. I want people to be comfortable here whoever they are and to feel relaxed about admitting to mental health issues or hidden disability. I'd like to achieve a greater cohesiveness between what's happening at the top and on campus, so that we all feel we're working toward a common goal.

Universities should be places where people can speak freely to a diverse community, and where minds are opened to new ways of thinking. In recent times, universities have been castigated in some corners of the media as places where hate-speech is perceived to have a platform as an extension of free-speech. In our openness we always have to be mindful of challenging opinions that seek to divide everything that we wish to unite and make equal – we have a duty to protect our students while encouraging open discussion.

Like many working women I've tried to keep my head above water at home and at work. Most of my free time has been spent bringing up my children and with family and friends, though I do make time for swimming, playing tennis and I'm an avid reader. I have not lost my links with Ireland and as a family we have recently acquired a flat on the coast in Northern Ireland, so I'm looking forward to spending lots of time by the sea! But I must say that I feel very settled in Birmingham. I like that it's a big, diverse city in the middle of England; one in which we as a university are striving to create so many opportunities, no matter who you are or where you've come from. ”