



Student Education Bulletin

Issue 14
June 2015

SEC5 2016

Get involved!

see back page for details

Laidlaw Library opens

The Laidlaw Library opened on 26 May 2015 and was immediately full of students studying for exams. The Laidlaw will support student learning by providing a gateway to information in all formats. It is an inspirational study environment that will be of benefit to the wider Leeds community as well as our students.

The new library complements the three existing campus libraries and brings together the services, books and online resources that students need, all within state-of-the-art facilities. The Library's High Demand Collection, plus undergraduate texts for all disciplines, will be housed here. Medicine and Health will remain in the Health Sciences Library.

The Laidlaw offers students access to a greater variety of improved study spaces, with 935 additional desks and study areas, plus individual and silent-study spaces. Students told us that they are increasingly using portable devices for study, so many of these spaces feature individual power sockets.

With collaborative working a core component of many programme modules, the Laidlaw also features bookable group-study rooms. These contain specialist software that students can use to display and share all the work held on their various devices. Wireless access is also available throughout the building.

Educational Engagement will be reaching out to the wider community by inviting school children and those from non-traditional backgrounds to the Community Classroom, where they will inspire and encourage people to undertake higher education. Including here at Leeds, of course!

The award-winning Skills@Library service will also have a presence at Laidlaw in the Skills Zone. This space will host workshops in teaching rooms, individual consultations in skills pods and drop-in skills sessions in the Footsteps Fund Room. All the other key Skills@Library services will continue to be offered in order to help students develop their academic skills.

Library users will also be able to seek advice and support from the staff at Reception. Plus, as part of the University's sustainability

programme, the building includes a roof garden with bee hives and 225 square metres of solar photovoltaic panels on the roof.

What students say

We have received really positive feedback from students both via Twitter and on the whiteboards by the exit:

"Can't wait to colonise one of those hermetically soundproofed armchairs with a view over Leeds #LaidlawLibrary"

"Wow! The new #LaidlawLibrary @UoLLibrary is amazing! Definitely a #betterUoL"

Take the tour

Guided tours for staff will be taking place on Wednesday 8 July at 2pm, Thursday 16 July at 11am and Friday 24 July at 4pm. To book, email office@library.leeds.ac.uk and put 'Laidlaw staff tours' in the subject and give your preferred date. Staff are of course welcome to have a look around at any time – just remember to bring your staff card to get through the gates!

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Student perspectives

Tom Dixon, LUU Education Officer

Freya Govus, LUU Welfare Officer



At the end of an eventful year, it's great to be asked to share some final reflections and to look ahead into the near future of student education. We capped off an amazing year by celebrating members of the University and Union community at our annual Partnership Awards just over a month ago. There were many worthy winners, with new awards focusing on the renewed work of LUU

around engaging postgraduate researchers. Special congratulations to Helena Coleman and Professor Martin Levesley, joint winners of this year's Partnership Award for outstanding contribution to the University and Union community.

Looking ahead, we know that the landscape of student education is due to change in the coming years. It's been a great privilege to assist in making the University more technologically literate, and my hope is that we can continue to accelerate that progress. I'm quick to remind other members at LUU that by the end of our next strategic plan (2018), we'll be welcoming lots of students to Leeds who have been born in the year 2000. We must ensure that we're ready to meet the challenge of an increasingly tech-literate student body by being open-minded in our approach to e-submission, e-marking and the full capacity of the lecture-capture system amongst other things.

Finally from me, I'd like to thank the University for its commitment to Partnership this year. It's been incredible to work alongside people with a strong sense of values and a real urge to make the lives of students at the University better. When goals are shared, we can do great things together and so I owe a lot to those within the University who have helped me and LUU more widely this year. I wish you all the best in the future.



As Tom said, a lot has happened since our update in last issue of the Bulletin. During February and March, we held our Leadership Race where we elect our new Student Exec. Myself and Gemma, the Equality & Diversity Officer, were re-elected. This means we have four new Student Exec members – Melissa Owusu is our new Education Officer, Piers Cottee-Jones is our new Activities

Officer, Jonny Foster is our new Community Officer, and Toke Dahler is our new Union Affairs Officer. It's looking to be a great year and I can't wait to get started with the new team!

Along with the celebrations of the Partnership Awards, I co-hosted the Halls Exec Awards during Celebrate Week. It's great to see new students working in innovative ways to improve the experiences and overall wellbeing of their peers, and I'm looking forward to seeing next year's Hall Execs continue to do great things for their students. There's no doubt that the next academic session will be a great one for LUU and the University. I'm really excited about working in partnership with the University for another year, especially in areas surrounding student support and our mental-health services.

Undergrads in Parliament

Simon Lightfoot (POLIS) and Katie Livesey (Earth & Environment)

Research-based learning (RBL) is at the core of our programmes and our students are capable of producing very high-quality independent research. One challenge for academic staff is how to showcase the excellence of this research to other students and staff, and to people outside the University. This piece highlights two initiatives that the University of Leeds has been involved in now for a few years: the British Conference of Undergraduate Research (BCUR) and its sponsored event, Posters in Parliament.

BCUR was founded in 2010 by a coalition of universities and held its first conference at UCLan in April 2011. The conference meets annually, bringing students from across the UK to present their work. Thanks to the Footsteps Fund Award, the University will be sending more students to this year's conference, with 18 students from different schools attending the University of Winchester next April.

Last year, Politics student Vineeta Sehmbi presented her work:

"I was asked a lot of questions and lots of people came and talked to me about my dissertation. I got to hear a lot of interesting presentations and meet politics students from other universities. I'm really glad I did it!"

Posters in Parliament is sponsored by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the Higher Education Academy, BCUR and the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan). Lucinda McGregor (Meteorology & Climate Science) and Emma Simpson (International Relations) presented their research posters in the Houses of Parliament alongside 44 other undergraduate submissions. This vibrant event showcases some of the best undergraduate research from selected universities across the



Leeds North West MP Greg Mulholland visited the exhibition

country, with students presenting research posters to invited guests, including many MPs. Each year the event awards prizes to the two best posters. This year, however, the judges awarded a third prize to Lucinda. Our students were also able to spend a lot of time talking to Greg Mulholland MP, who visited the exhibition, and the whole event finished with an evening reception at Westminster Central Hall, where Lucinda received her award.

Lucinda said: "It was a very enjoyable day, getting to meet students from universities across the country who are all passionate about what they

study and have an active interest in research. The exhibitions were inspirational and getting to watch a bit of debating in the House of Commons was great. But the highlight for me has got to be meeting Sir Anthony Cleaver!"

Emma also enjoyed getting to meet the other students. She said: "The event was an incredible opportunity, not just to talk about and take pride in my own research, but also to see the hard work of undergraduate researchers from all across the UK. I was fortunate enough to meet many other inspiring students, create opportunities for future collaboration and learn about the work going on in other disciplines."

To find out more about Posters in Parliament or BCUR, email Andrea Jackson (member of the BCUR steering group) on a.v.jackson@leeds.ac.uk

The Editorial Board would like to thank Tom and Freya for their engaging and enthusiastic contributions to the Bulletin over the last year – thank you both! We look forward to working with Freya again in the 2015-16 session and to welcoming Melissa to this page.

Leader column

Vivien Jones, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Education)

Investing in excellence and innovation

We reach the end of another academic year with much to celebrate, as major new investments signal our continuing commitment to excellence in student education.

I'm delighted to announce that, at its most recent meeting, the University Executive Group (UEG) enthusiastically endorsed the proposal that we establish a **Leeds Institute for Teaching Excellence and Innovation**. This will be a flagship development, exemplifying the principle clearly articulated in our strategic plan that we reward excellence wherever it is found across the range of our core activities. The Institute will build on our established strength in providing a holistic research-intensive education through the Leeds Curriculum and LeedsforLife. It will provide an aspirational focus for colleagues committed to teaching excellence, innovation, and pedagogic scholarship; and it will signal to external audiences that, in Leeds, our research ambitions are matched by our ambitions in teaching, and that we properly value those colleagues who choose to specialise in education and associated scholarship.

Following UEG's decision, we can move quickly to appoint an academic head of the Institute and a Board to support them. It will then be their job to define the workings of the Institute in detail, in line with the vision announced in the proposal endorsed by UEG:

To establish the University of Leeds as an international leader in the pedagogy and scholarship of research-led education and research-based learning, and a centre for the development and dissemination of exciting and innovative teaching practice.

International excellence is key. Openness, dissemination, and dialogue with colleagues and partners across the sector will be crucial to the Institute's long-term success. With this in mind, there will be external representation on the Board, and the plan is to open at least one of up to six annual Fellowships to external applicants.

We expect the Fellowships to be highly competitive. Successful candidates will be funded and provided with support (the current suggestion is for a year) to work on a project. There is no blueprint for the form such projects should take, but examples might include: the design and development of a piece of pedagogic research likely to result in external funding opportunities; or an innovative teaching project with demonstrable impact on the Leeds student experience – whether, for example, that is interdisciplinary, blended, involving external partners, or promoting widening participation. Importantly, the Fellowships will by their example set the standard of excellence for the Institute as a whole and, at the individual level, the award of a Fellowship will be a significant strength in applications for promotion.

The Institute will run seminar series, workshops, and other events designed to ensure the effective dissemination of pedagogic research activity and good practice in programme design and teaching. It will also, importantly, provide a space where innovators can take risks. And by doing all this, it will provide encouragement and support to colleagues making the transition from 'best practice' to pedagogic research and publication. In this way, it will build on our well-established tradition of teaching excellence as evidenced in, for example, our record of winning National Teaching Fellowships, the work of the Leeds Enhancing Educational Practice (LEEP) Partnership, and the quality standard we have set in digital learning. The Institute is an investment in our staff – though students will of course benefit from its work. It will be complemented by revisions to University promotions criteria, currently under active discussion and due to be implemented next session, the aim of which is to ensure proper reward for achievements in education and related scholarship. The other major example of my theme of investment is of course the Laidlaw Library. Students queued outside to be the first through its doors at eight o'clock on the morning it opened, and it has been packed ever since. Feedback is overwhelmingly positive – see this issue's cover article – about the digital learning 'pods', about the colourful furnishings, and about the great views from the picture windows. The high-spec design, with state-of-the-art technology inside and the Portland stone finish outside echoing the Parkinson Building, makes a clear statement about the importance of student learning. And the whole is excitingly completed by Simon Fujiwara's specially commissioned sculpture, 'A Spire', which – in shape and title – wittily and intriguingly brings together past and future, the University and the City.

But small investments can also have great effects. In the next Bulletin, there will be an article about the LeedsforLife Citizenship Awards and the wonderful things our students do to make a difference to the lives of individuals in less advantaged communities, both locally and internationally. Like everyone who attended, I was moved and humbled by the dedication and creativity with which our students more than repay our modest investment in their projects.

Finally, my congratulations to our two newest National Teaching Fellows, Professor Nigel Lockett from LUBS and the Leeds Enterprise Centre, and Dr David Lewis from FBS.

And I wish everyone a good summer – both productive and relaxing.

The Teaching Enhancement Scheme in practice

Clara Davies, Staff & Departmental Development Unit

The Teaching Enhancement Scheme (TES) is a mechanism for staff who teach at the University of Leeds to engage in teaching development activities. The scheme encompasses all aspects of student education, such as curriculum design, assessment and blended learning, as well as teaching practice, and is a relatively new and novel alternative to peer review of teaching. Following successful pilots in two schools during 2012-13 (previously reported in Student Education Bulletin Issue 10, February 2014), TES was launched in 2013-14 for full implementation across the University.

Monitoring the scheme's implementation is integrated with the University's ongoing quality assurance processes. During 2014-15, Annual School Reviews and Faculty Taught Student Education Committees undertook a review of progress in implementing TES within individual schools. Discussions indicate that schools have engaged positively with TES in some form and that there are a large number and variety of projects being taken forward. A number of schools have selected Blended Learning as their TES theme. Some have a single cross-school approach, whilst others have established a number of themes. Some schools have established – or re-established – peer observation within the scheme.

The following are examples of how the TES has been implemented in four different schools from across the Institution:

School of Physics & Astronomy

Alison Voice

The School of Physics & Astronomy has welcomed TES as a way to involve all staff in student education developments as a mechanism to encourage the focussed discussion and development of particular topics.

We have used the scheme to work on topics that are of current key interest to the School and the University, ie. things we would have worked on anyway, by making TES the vehicle to involve all staff in these key decisions and developments.

Currently this relates strongly to embedding the Leeds Curriculum, and we have groups looking at learning outcomes and assessment, final-year projects and employability. Linked to this we have a group looking at the development and assessment of writing skills throughout our degrees to ensure good progression of professionalism and independence in our students as they move through the levels.

Another group is looking at lecture capture and how students engage with it, so that we can better use it to enhance deep learning. More specific to the discipline, a group is looking at the content of our first year, in particular the maths that supports the physics.

Topics were established through discussion at STSEC and by asking staff for ideas for projects. A short summary of each project was created and all staff were asked to sign up to at least one. From those, the DSE appointed a leader to convene each group, drive the agenda and create regular reports to STSEC and School meetings. In this way all staff have input to and ownership of our student



education and this feeling of inclusivity really works.

So far the scheme has run for two years; some projects have been completed and new ones started, while others have run the two years. At present we have no specific student membership in any group, but all projects are discussed at Student-Staff Forum and in other informal meetings with students, and in this way we keep our students at the very heart of our work.

School of Politics & International Studies

Neil Winn

POLIS has four ongoing TES Enhancement Groups covering key areas of student education activity. This resulted in a Teaching Enhancement Away Day in September 2014 to present best practice to colleagues and to cross-fertilise information and pedagogical expertise.

The groups are:

- assessment / feedback;
- personal development (including LeedsforLife);
- teaching methods; and
- blended learning.

The assessment / feedback group has pioneered the use of a new feedback form with dedicated boxes for 'feedforward' comments on how students can improve their work, along with feedback surgeries. The School has also worked closely with the Student-Staff Forum in the past year to spread out assessment deadlines in order to reduce workload for students at key pinch points. The School is also piloting the use of Grademark on a considerable number of UG and PGT modules to look into the utility and quality of online comments on students' work.

Via the personal development TES group, the School has encouraged all personal tutors to make full use of the functionality in LeedsforLife to help students in their wider experience, eg. compiling CVs, employability, recording of extracurricular activities. The School has also prioritised employability and the TES group made suggestions regarding student placements, the industrial year abroad that we are taking forward through the School's dedicated SES Employability post.

The teaching methods group has made recommendations around the management of modules, mentoring of Teaching Assistants (TAs), delivery of modules and teaching pedagogy. For example, in February 2015 we held a TA Away Day inspired by the Teaching Enhancement Away Day in September 2014 that covered similar topics, thus involving PGRs as 'critical' educators, colleagues and students in their different manifestations.

Finally, the blended learning group has made innovations by pioneering the use of social media in teaching, and helping students to become critical users of electronic media as well as how to produce their own media for academic work via the use of blogs or Twitter to enhance their learning.



School of Earth & Environment

Anne Tallontire

The School of Earth & Environment has welcomed the flexible approach of TES and aimed to use it as a framework to recognise the various ways in which colleagues were already engaged in enhancing teaching. For example, over the past four years, the School has funded over 40 projects through our STEF scheme (Student Education Enhancement Fund). STEF projects have covered:

- Software applications and web development (eg. Virtual World for field mapping training; testing apps for field classes);
- Software training materials (eg. adapting Matlab for ecological economics);
- New teaching resources (eg. online database of rock samples – Rockbase); and
- New approaches to delivery and assessment (eg. working with nature reserves managed by Leeds City Council to enable students to produce environmental management plans and present them through a poster exhibition; introducing a level-3 synoptic module on sustainability).

For the academic years 2013-14 and 2014-15, we decided to create a database of ongoing teaching enhancement activities and showcase good practice and ongoing learning with a view to stimulating more teaching enhancement activities.

Our survey in June and July 2014 that formed the basis of our TES database, based on a response from 63 staff, found that 59 were engaged in some kind of activity including: participation in ULTRA/ULTA courses; STEF projects; enhanced use of the VLE; numerous module and programme modifications based on feedback; or had received Teaching Star awards. We were keen to find out how teaching enhancement activities were shared beyond those immediately involved. Over half said they had passed on their learning to others in their programme teams. Many had lots of interesting experience that others could benefit from, but it was clear from patterns of STEF applications that much of the enhancement activities were clustered in particular discipline areas and there was a need to stimulate teaching enhancement activity across our large and diverse school.

In December 2014 we held our second Teaching Away Day, attended by 44 people, with a focus on disseminating the experience of STEF projects and to share expertise in blended learning (eg. flipped classroom and use of the VLE for assessment). The day ended with 'elevator pitches' through which new project ideas were quickly outlined with a view to recruiting people to help develop the idea further. The subsequent call for STEF projects in January 2015 yielded lots of new ideas, including collaboration to extend the Virtual Worlds project from geological mapping to environmental management. We are now planning to organise another away day and build in more dissemination opportunities.

School of Media & Communication

Kate Nash

In the School of Media & Communication, TES is structured around three key ideas drawn from the scholarship of teaching: **Learning about teaching**; **Building a learning community**; and **Recognising engagement**. TES forms the backbone of our professional development as educators with staff at all levels, including postgraduate teaching assistants, being encouraged to participate. We currently have nine groups exploring topics as diverse as interactive lecturing, role play in teaching and employability.

Learning about teaching

TES provides opportunities to learn about teaching and to conduct research projects to inform our teaching. Two staff members are currently leading a group investigating the experience of international postgraduate students. We also have a teaching and learning reading group that is evaluating relevant literature.

This year the School made some funding available to support teaching scholarship. One group was successful in securing funding to research the needs of early-career teachers, particularly those involved in small-group teaching. As TES groups begin to publish their research findings we hope to build our reputation for media education research outside the School.

Building learning communities

TES is an informal, collaborative learning opportunity that gives staff the freedom to set their own priorities and to work together to share experience and develop skills. In addition to building communities within the School, we are conscious of the need to connect to learning communities in the broader University community. Kate Watkins is currently leading a networking project around the School's successful Media Futures programme. This project will bring together staff to develop an employability module.

Beyond Leeds we are working to make connections with leaders in media education through a series of research seminars. Starting in September 2015, these seminars will bring leading media education scholars to Leeds to address key questions in media and communications pedagogy.

Recognising engagement

A key principle is the need to recognise staff engagement in TES as an important form of professional development. This year groups were provided with coffee vouchers to give them an incentive to get together to further their projects over coffee. In this small way we aim to recognise the value of participation.

Our annual TES showcase in December provides an opportunity for groups to share their projects with the School as a whole.



Next steps - further information

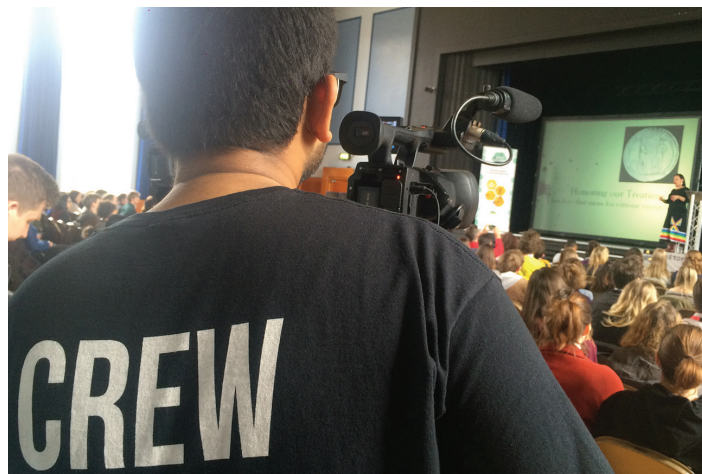
A further round of progress monitoring will help to embed the scheme across the University, and will support staff and help to disseminate good practice. The Teaching Enhancement Scheme Working Group will be convened towards the end of the current session to plan the next phase. Further information about TES and its implementation can be found at http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/21050/teaching_enhancement_scheme/647/teaching_enhancement_scheme_overview

Thanks to Marie Fordham (QAT) for her contribution to this article.

Visualising the Curriculum – a journey of discovery

Kate Cater (Learning Enhancement) and Nick Robinson (**Power and Conflict** Discovery Theme Leader)

We live in an increasingly visual age, so the mantra goes. A desire to help students navigate their module choices within what can seem a bewildering Curriculum was the inspiration for our work with Leeds Student Television (LSTV – a Leeds University Union society). Their brief was to produce a series of short films to introduce the Discovery Themes to students and aid their navigation both to and within them.



The LSTV crew in action

Discovery and the Leeds Curriculum

Most Leeds undergraduate programmes include provision for students to take discovery modules (previously electives) as part of their degree. These modules offer students the opportunity to broaden their learning and pursue their own personal interests while developing skills that will help prepare them for life after university. To help students navigate the extensive choice on offer, we have organised the modules into ten Discovery Themes (see below), which together represent the breadth of the University's teaching from arts to sciences, from theory to practice.

Going visual!

A key challenge for the Discovery part of the project is to connect with students, inform them of their options, and to empower them to broaden their learning beyond their core degree. The decision to work with LSTV on this part of the project was made with ease: who knows better about how to reach and inspire students than other students? Following consultation, two of the LSTV project leads, Samwise Wilson and Jonny McGuigan, soon came up with lots of ideas about how they wanted to capture the different Themes – using student voices as well as input from academic staff and the Discovery Theme Leaders themselves. Each video lasts just a few minutes and, though they differ in style and content, each gives a flavour of the subjects covered in, and the cross-disciplinary approaches of, the individual Discovery Themes.

The filming process was not without challenges – negotiating staff availability to coincide with times LSTV members were free was difficult at times, and finding willing participants to go on camera sometimes proved tricky. The first batch of videos was completed on schedule and to a high standard, however, and the Discovery Themes website launched in August 2014 with a full complement of Discovery Theme videos.

Perhaps the most gratifying thing to come out of this collaboration has been the benefits to students: LSTV tell us that scores of students have been involved in making the films and this will have real real benefits to those students' employability and has also fostered a real sense of the University as a community:

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The whole process has been great fun, really interesting and inspiring to be part of. It's been great to see the University engaging with students like me on a much broader level and it's had a 360-degree benefit: skills and work experience for students, whilst providing the University with high-quality, peer-to-peer designed videos for the Discovery Themes.

Jonny McGuigan, LSTV Head of Technology

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Going forward

In January 2015, we ran a workshop with input from Jonny and Samwise at the Student Education Conference. The workshop provided a space for participants to engage with the curriculum website, offer feedback about the value of the videos and crucially to speak to LSTV about next steps in the visual curriculum. It quickly became obvious that the videos were a really engaging part of the Discovery Themes website and the workshop reinforced our plans to add more videos that offer student perspectives on broadening and that delve deeper into the Themes.

This spring, LSTV began another round of filming and editing is now underway for several more videos, which will be added to the Discovery Themes website over the summer.

Working with LSTV has been a fantastic way to involve a large group of students in developing and communicating the new Leeds Curriculum. Not only have the videos added much to the project, but an additional benefit has also been what the students themselves have got out of their involvement. Given their centrality to the whole process, we leave the final word to them:

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Thanks to all who had the insight, vision and belief (and patience!) to allow us to defy the norm! We hope the results and the continued work after completion of the Discovery Themes speaks for itself.

Jonny McGuigan, LSTV Head of Technology

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Next steps – further information

In the 2015/16 session, the Leeds Curriculum moves from project mode to business as usual, and support for schools will be ongoing where needed. In parallel, an in-depth evaluation will be carried out to measure the success of these enhancement activities and findings disseminated in due course.

View the videos at <http://leedsforlife.leeds.ac.uk/Broadening> and www.facebook.com/BroadeningLeeds?ref=hl

The Discovery Themes are: Creating Sustainable Futures; Enterprise and Innovation; Ethics, Religion and Law; Exploring the Sciences; Languages and Intercultural Understanding; Media, Culture and Creativity; Mind and Body; Personal and Professional Development; Power and Conflict; and Technology and its Impacts.

Engineers get a Headstart

Kerry Jaine Baker and Duncan Borman, Faculty of Engineering



On 29 June 2015 – just as this issue of the Bulletin lands on desks, a group of thirty 16 and 17 year olds will be attending the Headstart Broad Based Engineering Summer School. Together, they will spend four days and three nights on campus, exploring the fascinating world of engineering through a series of hands-on, goal-driven activities. The Headstart programme is designed to introduce participants to a range of engineering and computing skills in order to help them decide what areas of engineering they would be most suited to and most enjoy. This is the third year this residential summer school is taking place, and it will be delivered by academics from across the Faculty of Engineering, organised by the Outreach Officer for the Faculty and overseen by the Engineering Development Trust.

What we deliver?

Participants work on two concurrent group projects: the first incorporates mechanical engineering, chemical engineering, electronic engineering and computing. It requires each group to design and build a three-wheeled motorised buggy will be used to compete in a straight race, a slalom and a bridge challenge. The buggies are controlled using an Xbox Kinect that has been programmed – by the participants – to control the buggy's movements via the movements of the person in front of the Kinect sensor. The process involves learning some basics of design and mechanical engineering, and producing their ideas on design software with the support of postgraduate students. These designs are then cut overnight with the help of support staff and are waiting the next morning for the electronics to be added. The groups learn the fundamentals of electronics and set about producing their own control boards, which are added to the buggy chassis along with the batteries and wheels. Although batteries are used as the power supply, participants spend time in chemical engineering experimenting with alternatives to the standard battery. The final step of the buggy design is to set the interface and instructions to link the movement of the body to the movement of the buggy. Groups decide which body movements will make the buggy move in a particular way and, with the help of staff and students from the School of Computing, write the code required to make the movements sensed by the Kinect control the movements of the buggy using a Bluetooth connection.

At the same time that the groups are working on their buggy and

control designs, they must also design a structure using a specific kit that spans a 30 centimetre-wide gap. This structure is made from miniature replicas of construction materials and must achieve three separate aims:

- it must span the gap and allow the buggy to pass over it without collapsing;
- it must also hold an item one metre from the ground that does not fall off when the buggy passes over the structure; and
- it must all be done with the fewest materials possible.

The groups use both the structures and the buggies to compete against each other in a final showdown on the last day.

Non-academic activities and organisation

The participants also spend three nights on campus, living as students in halls of residence and eating their meals in the Refectory. During the evenings, a range of activities and experiences are provided for the group. These are designed to allow participants to get to know each other, to get to know Leeds as a University and a city, and to discover what both offer in terms of student life.

People they meet

Throughout their time here, participants have the opportunity to meet engineers at all stages of education and work. The groups are supported during the day by four undergraduates from the Faculty that guide them to the various locations and answer questions about university life, studying engineering and what route they took to get here. Participants also interact with postgraduates from the Faculty and staff members. On the first night, ten graduate engineers from a variety of sectors and backgrounds join the group for dinner and network informally with participants.

Benefits

Of course, this time on campus is not just an opportunity to showcase engineering, along with jobs and careers within the industry. It is also a chance to highlight the benefits of studying at the University of Leeds. Comparing data from the two previous Headstart courses to application and enrolments to engineering at the University, the Faculty has received ten applications from both years of Headstart participants, with one confirmed place in the 2014-15 academic year from the first year (second year data not yet available). Headstart participants have fed back that attending the course not only helped them make a decision about what type of engineering

Student Operations update

Catherine Lorigan, Director of Student Operations, Student Education Service

I often think of Student Operations as the engine room of the Student Education Service. We are in the background providing the administration, organisation and quality control that enables our students to progress through their programme of study and graduate. In other words, we provide everything that people take for granted and only notice if it fails to work. As we congratulate ourselves on another successful module enrolment (a great piece of teamwork between Student Operations, IT and the Portal Team), I am reminded how challenging life can be in Student Operations, but also how rewarding it is when we get it right.

As the 2014-15 session draws to a close, colleagues are busy on all fronts. At the time of writing, finals have just finished and we are preparing for graduation, processing PGR scholarship applications, planning the forthcoming registration event, finalising the timetable for the 2015-16 session and anticipating changes in funding for our taught postgraduate students. As we prepare for each key event of the academic year, we look for opportunities to improve the way we work, remove unnecessary complexity from our processes and deliver better outcomes for students.

In order to help with this, QA have submitted proposals to simplify the deliberative structures for taught students. Under these proposals, three new steering groups will be established: Portfolio, Standards, and Education. The aim is to improve institutional oversight of our curriculum development and educational practice as well as to speed up decision making. Instead of a number of standing groups, there will be working groups which deliver specific actions and initiatives. These proposals were endorsed by Senate last month and we now need to define the remit and membership of the new groups and understand how the deliberative structures within schools and faculties and the cross-functional teams in the SES will link in to them.

Those of you who are involved with new programme development will be glad to learn that work has started on the requirements-gathering phase of a project to implement a new Integrated Programme Administration System (IPAS) to replace the current programme and module catalogue. This will provide a single point of truth for all programme and module information and support a workflow and reporting structure for programme administration. We have appointed AKARI, an Irish software company which specialises in curriculum management systems, to help us with this phase of the project. Their consultants will be on site two days a week until the end of June documenting processes and helping us to define a solution that will support the development of innovative programmes.

Looking further ahead, there are a number of other interesting developments on the horizon. The use of different marking scales was discussed in TSEB recently, resulting in an agreement to undertake a review of assessment practice. We now need to determine how best to take that forward, giving consideration to tactical improvements as well as longer term challenges such as e-assessment. We will be looking for insights from other institutions, such as Lancaster, that have already adopted a different approach to classification in anticipation of the introduction of Grade Point Average.

We have also been reviewing our approach to timetabling. With over 4,000 modules to timetable, it is a difficult task each year to provide a timetable that satisfies everyone. We therefore invited

SUMS Consulting, a membership organisation which promotes and supports the development of good practice in Higher Education, to conduct a short review. This focused on obstacles to delivering a clash-free timetable for students and also touched on resource and space constraints. We look forward to seeing the final report and discussing it with colleagues.

We face, as ever, some new challenges from external factors.

The Competition and Markets Authority has issued new guidance to Universities. This recognises the rights of students as consumers and, in particular, their rights to be treated fairly and consistently. Universities UK will be issuing a briefing document to all members in the coming weeks after which we will understand more about the changes we will have to implement for this October. In Student Operations we will need to look at how we can provide every student with a personal copy of the student contract. We will also have to consider how we update students on any proposed changes to their programmes of study and think about how complaints are captured and resolved.

Registration becomes more complex each year with new requirements to incorporate, many related to changes in UK visa and immigration policy. This year our international students will be issued with Biometric IDs. Normally, these would have to be collected from a Post Office on arrival in Leeds, however, as one of the top fifty institutions admitting international students, we have been invited to participate in a pilot scheme that will allow us to issue these ID cards to our students ourselves.

We have also been having discussions with West Yorkshire Police about how we can improve the process of police registration for international students (who currently have to travel to Pudsey by bus to register). For UK students we are trying to incorporate registering to vote as part of the process and colleagues have been working with Leeds City Council to find a simple way to do this.

Through all of this we continue to take significant steps forward in embedding SES values and bringing them to life. Across the University colleagues are building networks, identifying opportunities for smarter ways of working and solving problems together. The vision of One Service is rapidly becoming a reality: not so much through the structures we have put in place, but through the ways in which we are evolving as a team and constantly challenging ourselves to do better.

B



A truly global internship

Jenna Isherwood, International Student Office

Issue 14



Jackson Kihiko, the 2014-15 Global Community Project Assistant, will return to LUBS for his final year having gained some invaluable skills and experience

The aim of the Global Community project is to inspire our students to get the most of studying at a multicultural, international university – and to support them as they take advantage of this opportunity. By working with partners across the University, LUU and beyond, the International Student Office aims to encourage meaningful interactions between students from different backgrounds, helping them to use their global and cultural insight to make a positive impact on others and increase their global employability skills. To support the development and delivery of this exciting work, the International Student Office offers a 12-month internship for a Global Community Project Assistant.

This year's intern is Jackson Kihiko, a third-year BSc Management student at LUBS. Originally from Nairobi in Kenya, Jackson has been at Leeds since his first year and immediately got involved with a wide range of activities on campus. He plays in the lacrosse team and last year he was events manager for Leeds East African Society (LEASoc). Jackson says that his placement year has been busy, challenging and a big change from student life:

“

It is an actual full time job which has thrown me head first into the working world. Many students only experience this after university so it's been really useful to gain full-time workplace experience while I'm still a student. The International Student Office is such a good environment to work in. Everyone here has been really helpful in ensuring I have a successful placement.

Jackson Kihiko, Global Community Project Assistant

”

Jackson has been instrumental in the success of one of the most exciting elements of our Global Community activities: the Intercultural Ambassadors Programme. This year, 45 Intercultural Ambassadors from over 24 different countries were put into ten teams to develop and manage projects to encourage intercultural interaction and raise awareness of global and cultural issues on campus and beyond. While supporting this programme, Jackson gained experience of a wide range of different activities: promoting the opportunity, recruiting and selecting volunteers, setting up training sessions, liaising with mentors and facilitators, managing budgets, and supporting the planning and delivery of some very varied and challenging projects, including working with external community partners for the first time. The programme culminated in the Intercultural Ambassadors Showcase during Celebrate Week:

“

Organising the Showcase was an intense piece of work. There were loads of things to do in a short space of time. We all managed to work together to deliver a successful event that everyone enjoyed.

Jackson Kihiko

”

A key objective for Jackson was to ensure that the Intercultural Ambassadors had a positive experience during the programme. At the Showcase event, it was easy to see the rapport Jackson had built with the Ambassadors. One Ambassador, Phil Vanden (second year Linguistics and Phonetics) recognised the very valuable support Jackson had provided:

“

I spent a lot of time over the course of my project talking with Jackson. He provided me with a lot of help in the area of project management, something I had never done before.

Phil Vanden, Intercultural Ambassador

”

Jackson is now working on the evaluation of the programme and planning for next year to make sure 2015-16 Ambassadors have a fantastic experience.

Alongside this, Jackson has overseen a successful programme of welcome activities at Ellerslie Global Residence and has been providing other general support to the Global Community team for activities like Global Cafe. Somehow, he has also found time to be our Green Impact contact, identifying and implementing sustainability measures in line with NUS criteria. He submitted evidence for a recent auditing visit and is confident that we'll soon be achieving an award.

Jackson plans to start own tech-related business in the future and felt that 'the placement has given me loads of experience with project management and has increased my confidence.'

Jackson has also learned skills that he feels strongly will help him make a success of his final year:

“

I feel that next year I will be more organised with my university work. I'll be up and ready to go by 9:00am, as I have been this year. I have really learned how to work with an action plan to make sure work is done, up to standard, when it's supposed to be. I have also learned that when a deadline is a month away, that is really not a long time!

Jackson Kihiko

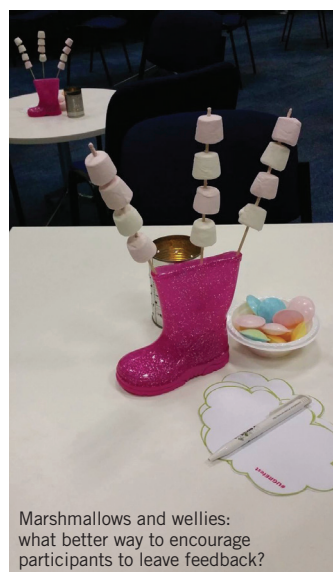
”

All the staff at the International Student Office will be sad to see Jackson go and wish him all the best as he returns for his final year at LUBS. He has recently been involved in recruiting his replacement for next year, gaining experience of shortlisting applications and interviewing. Jackson will be helping to plan the handover and induction for Gruffudd Jones, who will be starting as the 2015-16 Global Community Project Assistant in August. We look forward to welcoming Gruffudd to the International Student Office team so that he can continue Jackson's valuable work, as well as getting started on some exciting new Global Community projects of his own.

B

Innovative research (and cake!) showcased at UGRefest

Beth Calverley, UGRE Intern



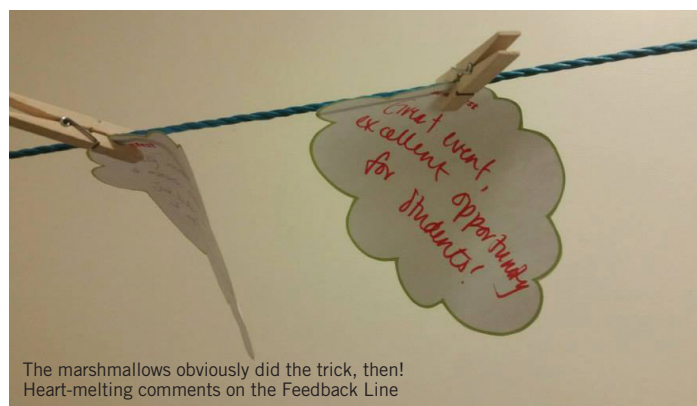
Marshmallows and wellies: what better way to encourage participants to leave feedback?

The Undergraduate Research Experience (UGRE) is an innovative research conference open to all undergraduates in the Faculty of Arts. The event provides a platform for exceptional students to showcase their research discoveries. Our Faculty's student body is renowned for its creative spark and extra-curricular grit, so when someone has channelled additional brainpower and energy into finding out something exciting, whether it's part of their degree or not, we think their research success should be celebrated!

The UGRE values quality, engagement and, most of all, a

genuine passion for research of any kind. No research topic is too diverse: this year's acts ranged from snippets of wisdom learned during one English student's experience of the mental-health system, to the Gryphon music editor's Spoken Word presentation on environmental justice. Training our speakers is about them having fun, meeting like-minded students, and learning how to present ideas in the most engaging way. Speakers get professional training from the presentation company Bettakultcha, which helps headliners to discover newfound confidence and competence on stage. This training helps speakers to maximise their Faculty-wide impact on UGRE Day.

Adding to its reputation of outstanding student engagement, the UGRE is an entirely student-led venture. Like the speakers and research-stall presenters, the UGRE's leading team of paid interns are also Faculty of Arts undergraduates. Interns are selected for their creative vision, their capacity to work together and diversify the UGRE's reach. The interns gain valuable support from the Faculty's Education Enhancement Officer, Tess Hornsby Smith. Alongside their studies, the UGRE team spends four months branding, publicising and managing the conference. They also co-ordinate the speaker-recruitment process. UGRE intern alumni have gone on to apply this sought-after experience of arts management, publicity, teamwork and leadership to their careers beyond their



The marshmallows obviously did the trick, then! Heart-melting comments on the Feedback Line

time with us at Leeds.

This year's interns felt that the UGRE's appeal as a fun and innovative event needed to be communicated far more effectively. In February, **#UGRefest** burst on to campus, unveiling its 'rebrand' as a vibrant festival of discoveries. The unmissable UGRE festival tent, covered in brightly coloured streamers, pitched up in unexpected places around campus. This interactive publicity stunt gave punters the opportunity to find out more about the festival programme and receive friendly, cake-based bribery from the UGRE team. Excitement mounted further as headliners were announced via a popular student spotlight media campaign and on our eye-catching website. Described as TedTalks meets Hay Festival, the UGRE 2015 soon became a must-go event for students and academics alike. Many tutors showed their support by placing UGRE flyers on their doors and blocking off their diaries for the day. Thanks to all this pre-festival excitement, the buzz on UGRE Day was electric.

The event itself was a great success. With a series of fast-paced research talks on a variety of subjects – each lasting no longer than five minutes – the format made it easy for people to pop in and out throughout the day. This meant everyone could support their favourite headliners without fear of missing any meetings or lectures. Brandishing their **#UGRefest** wristbands, lanyards and delicious carnival food, visitors left the event with inspiration in their eyes and bunting on their brains!

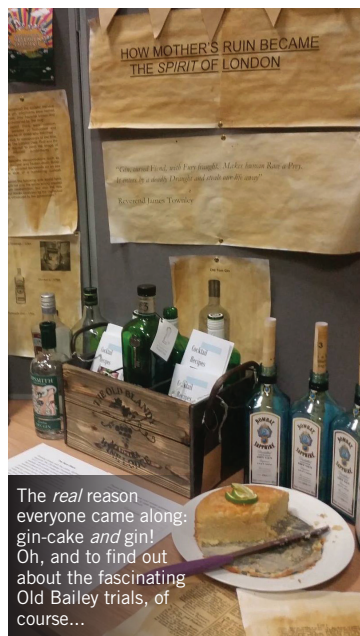
Key acts at this year's UGRE included journalist Evie Robinson's tale of how she got a twitter hashtag trending and helped take a dying man to Anfield. Florence Sutton-Manders also shared her eye-watering slides investigating the politics of Russian performance art. The fascinating Old Bailey Trials stand, complete with free hand-outs of gin-flavoured cake, was by far the most popular research stall. As one of the student interns remarked, people really seemed to 'get' the festival rebrand. What puts UGRE head and shoulders above other faculty-wide student-led ventures is clear: it masters the difficult balance between showcasing high-quality research content, and creating an engaging event that adds real value to students' time here at Leeds.

And, if the main conference was not enough, visitors were also treated to the full festival experience with interactive arts installations and performances scheduled for the 'campfire' after-party. Student-run arts publications Scribe and The Human Rights



Defeat! The English team's reaction in the Battle of the Schools is far from poetic...!

Journal inspired many students to sign up. Acoustic musicians, marshmallows, and poetry from the Spoken Word Society ushered



The *real* reason everyone came along: gin-cake *and* gin! Oh, and to find out about the fascinating Old Bailey trials, of course...

in the UGRE's notorious grand finale: the Battle of the Schools Quiz. Each year this quiz sees students and academics clash in a fierce (but good natured!) head-to-head battle for departmental triumph. The UGRE is all about promoting academic excellence, opening a positive dialogue between staff and students, and inspiring people to look at undergraduate research in a new light.

Feedback for this year was incredibly positive: Alaric Hall made us blush by telling us he loved the 'carnavalesque vibe'; and our very own Vice-Chancellor Sir Alan Langlands gave us our greatest accolade of the day

by commenting on the UGRE's atmosphere of 'joy and satisfaction.' These comments, along with the excitement and inspiration of the day, made all the hard work worthwhile.

We are already looking forward to #UGREfest 2016, so if you know any students who might want to run the festival and develop their presentation skills, please tell them to contact us via the website, Facebook or twitter. And if you have a secret love of bunting (and research, of course), why not come and join us yourself? We can't wait to share more fascinating discoveries with you all again soon!

Find out more and follow us!

Website: www.arts.leeds.ac.uk/ugresearch/ugre/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ArtsUGRE

Twitter: www.twitter.com/ugreleeds

Many thanks also to the other fantastic UGRE interns: Emily Appleton, Laura Sedgwick and Rebekah Chapman.

B

News & updates

Student Opportunity Ambassadors appointed

Bilal Ahmed, Jessica Bassett, Georgiana Epure and Rachel Opadiran have been appointed as the Student Opportunity Ambassadors for the 2015-16 session.

The Ambassadors will be available to support events, induction talks and other activities to promote LeedsforLife along with all other student opportunities available within the Directorate.

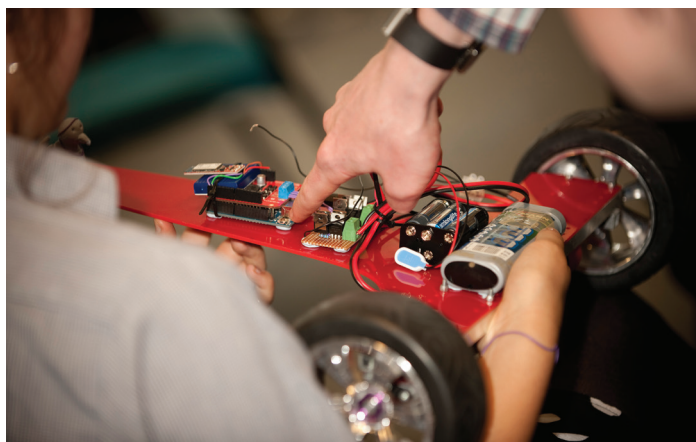
If you would like the Ambassadors to attend an event you are organising, please contact them via lflamb@leeds.ac.uk

B

Engineers get a Headstart

Kerry Jaïne Baker and Duncan Borman, Faculty of Engineering

►p7



Headstart participants design their own a buggy, which has to complete a number of separate challenges whilst competing against other groups

they want to study, but that it had also encouraged them to apply to Leeds. For example, 45% of the students reported it had helped confirm their original subject choice, 41% that it helped make their mind up and, perhaps most interestingly, 7% said that it had changed their minds about the subject they were interested in. We have had to overcome a few hurdles over the last two years, though. This event is one of the few occasions on which members from all five Schools within the Faculty work together, as such it has required a great deal of communication and understanding between staff, so that everyone knows what is expected of them individually and as a group.

Benefits for academics who get involved include:

- All 'non teaching' is organised and co-ordinated by a specialist team (and not by them!);
- It provides an opportunity to showcase interesting teaching ideas;
- It identifies links in teaching/research/courses that can be built on further;
- It provides networking opportunities and a platform to develop other ideas; and
- It's rewarding to be involved in such a successful event.

The benefits for the Faculty and the University include:

- Promotes Leeds as an exciting place to do engineering and computing;
- Informs prospective A-level students what's involved in engineering and computing;
- Gives students a hands-on taster of our courses (as opposed to a superficial look);
- Promotes engineering as a team-based discipline that can be used to solve real-world problems.

The Summer School is organised with a clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities. Marketing and applications is carried out by the Engineering Development Trust as the Summer School is part of their Headstart Programme. This means that the majority of academics' commitment to Headstart can take place during the four days of the School. Faculty Outreach Officers look after all the overall logistics (such as risk assessments) and are on hand to sort out any problems that might occur during the event itself. Which leaves academics free to focus on what they do best: teaching and sharing their passion for engineering.

The key to the success of this event is not only the hands-on activities delivered by the academic staff and the showcasing of what else Leeds has to offer, but also the commitment of all those involved at all points to deliver an engaging, challenging and memorable taster of life as an engineering student here at the University of Leeds.

B

Evidencing excellence

Student Education Conference and Digital Festival call for papers

Thursday 7 and Friday 8 January 2016

The Student Education Conference and the Digital Festival (formerly Hands on the Future) have joined forces. Our theme for next year's event is **Evidencing Excellence**. Over the course of a day and a half, we will examine and share ways in which we can support our claim to offer students excellence in student education *and* give delegates the chance to come face to face with the technology that might enable us to evidence that excellence. SEC5 and the Digital Festival will consider how we evaluate the impact of what we do and how we interpret that impact. Are we measuring the right things and asking the right questions – are the data we get back useful and are we using them properly? Do we talk to the right people? Do module questionnaires, the DLHE, the NSS, etc., answer our questions about quality and impact? Should we participate in deeper dialogue with recruiters and employers, schools and teachers? Are we even the right people to be evaluating the impact of what we do?

We would like to hear your experiences of how you evaluate the impact of what you do and the technology you use to do that.

Further information about this theme and the ways in which you – or the students with whom you work – could contribute to SEC5 and the Digital Festival is available on the Conference website at <http://goo.gl/nKwXCw>

SEC5 and Digital Festival programme

Day one starts in the afternoon with lightning presentations from all exhibitors. The Digital Festival keynote and a panel discussion on using technology to evidence excellence follows, along with Digital Festival workshops. A reception in the Exhibition Area provides an opportunity for networking and closes the day.

Day two comprises a full day starting with an opening keynote address on the theme of *Evidencing Excellence*. Two 30-minute sets of Parallel Sessions, one 60-minute set of Workshops, and access during all programme breaks to the Exhibition Area follow. The day closes with a panel discussion on the *Evidencing Excellence* theme.

Participating in SEC5 and the Digital Festival

We are inviting submissions for the following:

Digital Festival workshops • Two strands (*Online distance learning* and *E-assessment*), each comprising three 15-minute slots that will allow delegates to discuss best practice in evidencing excellence and innovation across each workshop strand.

SEC Parallel Sessions • Lasting 30 minutes, sessions should include some interactivity and time for questions and answers.

SEC Workshops • These 60-minute sessions are highly interactive and

may include group work or role play to enable delegates to engage fully.

SEC and Digital Festival Exhibition Area • Why not let colleagues know about a project in its early stages or showcase new technology? Exhibitor access to delegates includes 60-second lightning presentation and structured programme time on day one, and during all programme breaks and registration on day two. The Exhibition Area is an ideal space in which to network and inform.

Submissions for SEC5 and the Digital Festival can either tie in with the main SEC5 and Digital Festival theme of *Evidencing Excellence* or cover any new good practice within student education that utilises technology and/or showcases innovation.

Submitting your abstract for SEC5 and the Digital Festival

If you would like to take part in SEC5 or the Digital Festival (or both!), please download the abstract pro forma from the Conference website at <http://goo.gl/nKwXCw>

Completed pro formas should be sent to Stephanie Stones on s.e.stones@adm.leeds.ac.uk and must be received no later than **Monday 31 August 2015**.

Submissions are considered by a refereeing panel. Authors may also be invited to publish in the Student Education Bulletin.

Further information

To download the abstract pro forma or for additional information on the *Evidencing excellence* theme, go to the Conference website at <http://goo.gl/nKwXCw>

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