

COU15D008

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Admissions position (Confidentiality status: Open)

As you will have seen from the Student Intake 2015/16 paper, we have had a very successful recruitment year with over 900 more students than last year. We have been able to recruit the shortfall in student numbers in 2014/15 and exceed the growth targets for 2015. All Faculties met, or indeed, exceeded their targets and Clearing activity was minimal. We also maintained quality with a 405 tariff.

Key activity throughout the recruitment timeline helped with this result, for example:

- 32% increase in school and college visits
- 21% increase in international events attended
- 16% increase in Open Day attendance
- Unconditional offer upgrade strategy
- Faster application processing
- 38% increase in Applicant Day attendance

Both the unconditional offer strategy and increase in Applicant Day attendees helped increase our conversion rate to 30% (25% previous year).

Admissions, marketing and recruitment activity has already begun for 2016 recruitment. Key highlights include:

- Launch of new brand, including new prospectus, graphics for fairs and Open Days and website www.uea.ac.uk



- Increase in Open Day attendance up 10% on last year

League Tables (Confidentiality status: Open)

There is a substantive item on domestic league tables at this meeting. There have also been two international league tables published recently. The most recent was publication of the THES World Rankings on 30 September which placed the University 149th (up from 198th). This is a tremendous leap up an important league table and demonstrates our continuing strong performance across all rankings. UEA scored particularly highly on citations (50th for this measure). Full details of this table are available at: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings>

The other publication was the QS World Rankings where UEA was ranked 239th (240th last year). We are aware of some data issues with this table and are seeking to resolve them with QS (notably around Faculty: Student ratio). Our strengths in the QS World Rankings are once again Citations per Faculty (111th) and International Student ratio (118th).

Learning and Teaching (Confidentiality status: Open)

Over the summer, PVC Academic has been working with the Academic Directors Taught Programmes (Adam Longcroft) and Learning & Teaching Enhancement (Helena Gillespie) to assist those Schools that have been most struggling to meet the University's 20-day turnaround commitment for feedback on assessed coursework. Meetings with individual Heads of Schools and teaching Directors have been generally constructive and focussed and a host of straight-forward management actions have been identified to help radically reduce non-compliance for the 2015-15 academic year.

UEA has won two grants for work to further develop excellence in teaching. First, funding from the Higher Education Academy (£25,000) will support a project on developing metrics of teacher excellence to inform career development (one of 25 projects funded from 86 applications). Second, funding from HEFCE (£105,000) will support a project to experiment with different approaches to measuring 'learning gain' – or 'value-added' (one of 12 projects funded from 45 applications).

A Green Paper on the proposed new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is expected later in the autumn. A first phase of TEF needs to be completed by May 2016 in order to permit some institutions to raise their Home/EU undergraduate fees by inflation from 2017/18 onwards, as trailed in the Chancellor's Budget speech. It is as yet unclear how this exercise might be structured, but it is likely that a basket of existing available metrics might be used. The Green Paper will float ideas for the development of a more extensive subsequent TEF, which could be a further two years away.

The Quality Assurance Agency are visiting UEA from 13th to 16th October for our Higher Education Review. This is the first audit of our learning and teaching quality management since 2009.

Research (Confidentiality status: Open)

Following a request from the Minister for Universities and Science HEFCE has agreed to delay publishing a consultation on the next Research Excellence Framework (REF) until the conclusion of the spending review which concludes on 25 November 2015.

The University has 226 new postgraduate research students starting in August to October 2015, of which 46 are international students. A further 31 students including 25 international students started between November 2014 and July 2015. Thus the proportion of research student starters with international fee status over the past 12 months is 28%, an improvement on the proportion of 24% of total research student headcount as of April 2015. Research student FTE in 2013/14 and 2014/15 was

around 15-20% short of targets for students based on the main UEA campus rather than at one of the Norwich Bioscience Institutes. For 2015/16 the FTE target for this group is 276FTE, slightly above the minimum target benchmark of 263FTE calculated by considering the REF performance of competitor institutions, and we need to continue to work hard to hit this during the remainder of the year, given that we only achieved 239FTE in 2013/14 and 230FTE in 2014/15. Approximately 20% of our PGR students are recruited and start their programme during the year, so we are ahead of last year's performance and will come closer to making our target. We are working with Schools to understand their specific needs in terms of shaping funder relationship, marketing and recruitment strategies which support the need to expand international student recruitment, alongside increased work on doctoral training bids for funding from UK Research Councils, the European Union and other funders. UEA has now analysed the 750 responses to the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey which ran earlier in the year, an excellent response rate of 58%. Overall satisfaction has risen to 86% from 82% in 2013, putting UEA in the top quartile in the sector.

The BBSRC have confirmed continued good success rates for both research application numbers (38% based on a total of 29 responsive mode or initiative grant applications) and value (35% based on a total of £11,520K applied for) during 2014/15 in comparison to other institutions (national average of 26% average for both numbers and value). Whilst high, these success rates have fallen in comparison to our performance in 2013/14 (42% based on a total of 36 responsive mode or initiative grant applications and 39% by value based on a total of £12,414K applied for). The overall success rates by number for ESRC are in the region of 10%, but decisions made by ESRC in the period Oct 14 to May 15 on UEA applications have generated in a success rate of 27% (based on 11 decisions, excluding invitations to submit a full application) during the period

Work to increase UEA's share of EU funding to support research activities continues. We are awaiting decisions on submitted ERC Advanced grants and also 2 ERC Starter grants where the applicants were invited to second stage interviews in Brussels. A drinks reception for successful EU fund holders over the last 3 years and recent applicants is being held on 9 November to help share good practice and experiences and also continue to develop the growing network of successful EU applicants throughout UEA. Information and support sessions on targeted EU calls are also scheduled for October and November.

A Project Board has been established by the PVC Research and Enterprise to oversee the development of the UEA research webpages. The focus will be to build UEA's research reputation, attract high quality potential PGR students and emphasise our impact. The project does not have the scope to address individual academics webpages (people pages) or research group pages but will instead focus on higher level content. The main area for development will be the research landing pages and their subpages. Release of the new UEA homepage template in the next few months will also help to raise the general visibility of research on uea.ac.uk

By the end of October 2015, 15 of the 19 School Research Strategy Review Panels will have been held. The purpose of these Panels is to provide guidance on the development and implementation of a strategic plan for research in each School. Each Panel is being chaired by the PVC RE and includes at least one external assessor as well as the ADR and another academic from within the Faculty. The opportunity to reflect on the REF2014 performance and to seek constructive contributions and comment on the ongoing research strategy in each School has been widely welcomed with the involvement of external assessors being instrumental in ensuring that the reviews are both rigorous yet supportive.

Enterprise (Confidentiality status: Open)

UEA has become the only higher education partner of Future50, a business growth programme organised by media specialists Archant and NWes (Norfolk & Waveney Enterprise Services), Barclays, Birketts and Lovewell Blake. Future50 is designed to recognise and reward Norfolk and Suffolk's most innovative companies, by providing quality business advice and mentoring, networking events, and multimedia business support. Successful Future50 companies will be able to apply for funding from the Regional Growth Fund to support the creation of up to 200 jobs across the region in the next two years. See <http://www.future50.org/> . [A number of UEA alumni and spin outs have been part of previous Future50 cohorts.](#)

The Careers Service has developed the UEA Award has been developed following the pilot carried out early in 2015 and the launch is scheduled to coincide with the Recruitment and Opportunities Fair on October 22nd. Up to 1000 students can join the Award in 2015-16.

The University has played a leading role in helping New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership develop its Innovation Strategy. The Vice Chancellor will chair a LEP sub-board to take this forward.

Capital/Estate (Confidentiality status: Open)

The Enterprise Centre will be formally opened on 8 October. Other than that, the current focus is on developing a plan to enable the refurbishment of the Lasdun Wall and there will be a detailed presentation on this at the Council Strategy Conference at the end of November.

Finance (Confidentiality status: Confidential)

REDACTED DUE TO COMMERCIAL SENSITIVITY

Student experience (Confidentiality status: Open)

The National Student Survey results for 2015 were published over the summer. UEA achieved the rank of =2nd among English mainstream universities. Satisfaction with assessment and feedback remains the weakest area among the groups of questions. Although our absolute score increased slightly, our ranked position on this theme slipped, which has heightened the importance and urgency of the work to improve the timeliness of return of assessed work that is underway.

International (Confidentiality status: Open)

PVC Academic visited Ecuador and Peru in September as part of a 15-university delegation led by the UUK International Unit (including Nottingham, Newcastle, Southampton, Reading, Bath and Leicester). There are considerable opportunities for research collaboration, student recruitment and staff and student exchange in both countries and prospective links were established with six universities in each country. The International Office are co-ordinating the follow up, and UEA will be present at a recruitment fair in Peru later in October.

For international recruitment, the focus has been on achieving target and increasing diversity. Specific activities include

- attendance at over 30 events across the globe
- implementation of a central scholarship fund to attract high quality students and raise UEA's profile in key recruitment markets
- enhanced student ambassador programme to aid conversion
- planning for expansion in emerging markets (South America and Africa)

In addition to recruitment, there has been a strong focus on profile raising activity, aided by:

- VCO visits to India, Malaysia, North America, Peru, Ecuador and China, including meetings with University partners, key industry/Government bodies and alumni/donor events.
- 5 pan-University country dialogue groups chaired by academics, providing a dedicated focus on countries identified as strategically important for UEA, particularly for research.
- re-structuring of International office to improve capacity to run short courses/host visits from overseas delegations
- close collaboration with Schools/admin departments to introduce country-specific initiatives e.g. International Development taster courses in Japan

Partnerships (Confidentiality status: Confidential pending a formal announcement)

REDACTED DUE TO COMMERCIAL SENSITIVITY

Higher Education Landscape/the National Picture (Confidentiality status: Open)

The main issue on the horizon is the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review details of which will be made public late autumn. BIS remains an unprotected department and so this is anticipated to impact both teaching and research income but the extent to which this will be the case is currently unknown. However, it is clear that the government are committed to maintaining a highly competitive sector and he has been quite open about the expectation that there will be institutional failures in the future. The Teaching Excellence Framework is being pushed forward and the Green Paper is awaited. Government statements on immigration continue to be unhelpful and there are suggestions that the English language requirements will be further tightened. In addition, the economic situation in China could have a significant impact on UK universities' ability to recruit from this market.

Faculty of Arts and Humanities (Confidentiality status: Open)

The Faculty had an excellent recruitment round and staff are now focused on ensuring a high quality student experience for the larger numbers of undergraduate students with which we are dealing. This includes anticipating likely increased demand for study abroad which may require the identification of new partnership agreements.

A number of new academics joined us in September including Prof Claire Jowitt who has taken up the role of Associate Dean Research and will oversee the Faculty's preparations for REF2020. HUM Schools are now in the process of planning a further round of staff appointments designed to deliver additional research capacity and to contribute to leadership within Schools.

Planned appointments include replacements for two posts originally funded by the Japan Foundation and the Great Britain Sasakawa Trust respectively. We plan to locate the new appointments in the areas of History and Politics enabling us to extend our coverage of Japan-related work; these appointments will consolidate the strong performance of our BA Japanese Studies now in its fourth year.

Work has begun on the Media Suite and Digital Humanities provision located in the Music Building and anticipated to be available for teaching during the autumn semester. These facilities form part of a larger strategy to address league table performance in Media areas and to foster greater collaborative working in Digital Humanities in association with the Eastern ARC initiative.

Faculty of Medicine and Health (Confidentiality status: Open)

There is an expectation of increased targets in the Pre-Registration commissions (predominantly sitting in HSC). Figures of 30%+ have been mentioned for the region which concerns the school in terms of the operational capacity of the programme and space scheduling. However it may be sensible to see this as a short-term opportunity as there is also extensive discussion that funding for the courses will soon be reviewed and may move to a student-fee model. It is unlikely this would be a full switch to the competitive market as Trusts would seek to lock students in to employment so a loan payoff model may be one outcome. UEA would likely still undergo some degree of placement or quality control akin to Medicine.

We note the retirement of Prof Ian Harvey, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. Ian will step down from the Dean's role at the end of January 2016 and retire from UEA at the end of March.

Prof Val Lattimer will also retire from the University in November 2015. Prof Rosalyn Jowett has agreed to act as Interim Head of School until the new Executive Dean is recruited and Head of School recruitment can begin.

Faculty of Science (Confidentiality status: Open)

In August, the contract to host the Pharmacy Education and Developmental Unit (PEDU) out of the School of Pharmacy commenced. Prof David Wright (PHA) led, and was successful, in a tender exercise to host the unit, on behalf of the NHS (HEEoE), valued at £4.8M over three years. The unit will develop, deliver and evaluate high quality training programmes for all levels of pharmacy staff and other healthcare professionals, across the East of England.

Research

The Faculty of Science had a successful few months in relation to being awarded a series of research and other grants, most notably:

- Prof Andrew Lovett (ENV) led a bid titled "ADVENT – Addressing Valuation of Energy and Nature together", and was awarded £513k by NERC.
- Dr J Wright and Dr M Munroz-Herranz (both from CHE) were awarded £162k each by the Leverhulme Trust.
- Dr Jonathan Todd (BIO) was awarded £362k by NERC for a project titled "Bacteria make DMSP - how significant is this process?"
- Dr Robert Whittaker (MTH) was awarded £99k by the EPSRC for a project titled "Exploring the Mechanisms behind High-Frequency Self-Excited Oscillations in Buckled Elastic-Walled Tubes"
- Prof A Ganesan (PHA) was awarded £107k by the EU cost office for a project titled "Epigenetic Chemical Biology (EPICHEM)"
- Prof A Munsterberg (BIO) was awarded £104k by the BHF for a PhD studentship, and a further £392k by the BBSRC for a project titled "Investigating cellular plasticity in the avian primitive streak"
- Prof T Mock (ENV) was awarded a US grant £186k by the GMBF for a project titled "Increasing Potential of Marine Microeukaryotes"
- Dr J Balk (BIO) was awarded £449k by the BBSRC for a project titled "Functional characterization of Iron Regulator Sensor (IRS) proteins in plants"

For this forthcoming academic year, the Faculty was successful in obtaining 12 PhD BBSRC DTP studentships, based out of Schools across Science. Run through the Norwich Biosciences, the DTP involves five world class centres: the UEA, the John Innes, the Institute of Food Research, the Sainsbury Laboratory and The Genome Analysis Centre.

Impact and Publications

In September, Dr Dorothee Bakker (ENV) and co-workers had a paper publicised in **Science**, on the reinvigoration of the Southern Ocean carbon sink demonstrating that carbon uptake by the Southern ocean has increased again after its slowdown in the 1990s. See:

<https://www.uea.ac.uk/about/-/uea-research-shows-revived-oceanic-co2-uptake>

In the same month, Dr Andrew Crombie (ENV), Prof Colin Murrell (ELSA) and co-workers paper in Nature on the role of copper in methane oxidation was published. See:

<https://www.uea.ac.uk/about/-/uea-research-shows-how-bacteria-could-combat-greenhouse-gas>

Other news

It is with great sadness that this month we heard of the death of Prof Roland Von Glasow (ENV). Roland joined the University in 2007 and he will be sadly missed by both friends and colleagues alike.

Faculty of Social Sciences (Confidentiality status: Open)

Professor Kenny Coventry, Head of School in the School of Psychology, has been awarded research grant of €3.5m (euros) by Marie Skłodowska Curie European Training Network.

Prof. Kenny Coventry and Dr Debra Griffiths have won the 2015 British Psychological Society Cognitive Award. This is an award for the most important publication in the field in the last 2 years.

Professor Catherine Waddams in the Centre for Competition Policy has been awarded a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) with Cornwall Energy, a Norwich based energy intelligence and advice consultancy. We will be helping to develop their modelling of wholesale and retail energy markets. They have excellent data sets about the energy markets, and we are looking forward to deepening our working relationship with them through the KTP.

The new MSc Enterprise & Business Creation in Norwich Business School has recruited well in its first year, with 14 students registered (as at 1 October). A course unique to UEA, it offers students the opportunity to develop initial business ideas and plan a real commercial venture before starting the business once they graduate. A distinctive feature of the course enables a small number of exceptional participants to remain in the Enterprise Centre (rent-free) for a further six months with supported incubation to get their business running.

The Faculty has appointed Professor Andy Wood, Chief Executive of Adnams plc and NBS Professor of Corporate Leadership, and Dr Kevan Williams as joint Associate Deans for Enterprise. Dr Alfonso Avila-Merino has been appointed the Faculty's new role of Associate Dean for Internationalisation.

Of the 46 students on the International Business Management course who transferred from UEA London to Norwich to complete studies: 43 graduated in 2014; 1 student withdrew for health reasons; 2 intercalated in 2014-15 and have returned September 2015.

The Faculty is currently recruiting a new Head of School for the School of Education & Lifelong Learning. Interviews will be held in November with the successful candidate taking up their post in 2016.