

**COU14D042**

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Admissions position (Confidentiality status: Open – Paragraph 2 confidential)

The University's Access Agreement was submitted to the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) in April. The Widening Participation Working Group is working on developing an over-arching UEA Strategy for WP to be completed by the end of the calendar year.

#### **REDACTED DUE TO COMMERCIAL SENSITIVITY**

UKVI have drastically reduced the number of Secure English Language Testing centres worldwide (SELTs). This may have an impact on the recruitment opportunities for INTO and the longer term flow through to UEA. Given the General Election result this is unlikely to change but UUK are now able to lobby the new government following the end of election purdah.

League Tables (Confidentiality status: Open)

The Complete Guide published its 2016 University League Table and UEA was ranked 16<sup>th</sup>, down just one place from last year. There has been a good performance in Research following the REF results and an improvement in Good Honours. This year's table reflects the lower institutional tariff position achieved in autumn 2014 – this improves for autumn 2015 which will be submitted with this year's HESA return. The Research score is weighted two-thirds in favour of GPA and one-third research intensity.

The WhatUni awards have also been announced and overall the University is now in the Top 10 for University of the Year (9<sup>th</sup> versus 12<sup>th</sup> last year). Loughborough was number 1 (reference the paper at Item A2). In specific areas the position was:

- Job prospects – 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Courses and lectures – 9<sup>th</sup>
- Student Union – 15<sup>th</sup>
- Accommodation – 8<sup>th</sup>
- University facilities – 13<sup>th</sup>
- City life – 30<sup>th</sup>
- Clubs and societies – 14<sup>th</sup>
- Student support – 20<sup>th</sup>

More information is available at: <http://www.whatuni.com/student-awards-winners/2015.html>

Learning and Teaching (Confidentiality status: Open)

We ran into some problems with the timetabling of examinations this spring as a result of a bug in the computer software we use. The problem affected some other universities too, but at UEA students were issued with exam timetables that did not wholly comply with our own commitments around exam scheduling – such as for example that students will not be required to sit more than one exam on a single day. As a result, we were forced to reissue the exam timetable, which resulted in some students feeling inconvenienced. The Learning and Teaching Service recalled the exam timetable on the Monday, following the Friday release, and issued a corrected timetable five working days

later. Arrangements were made for students who had booked their flights after the publication of the original timetable ensuring that their rescheduled examinations fell prior to the date of their flights. Other circumstances were dealt with on a case by case basis and action was taken to ensure no student was disadvantaged by the timetabling problem though there remained a number of students who expressed their dissatisfaction with their revised examination schedule in comparison to that which had been first released. Some specific lessons have been learned about reducing our vulnerability to this kind of problem in future.

The University's Learning & Teaching Committee (LTC) on 18<sup>th</sup> March signed off its review of the academic advising system which will bring in some improvements to the operation of the system and greater clarity about its purpose. LTC also signed off the introduction of the new "UEA Health Online" programme which is our first wholly online credit-bearing course.

The Students' Union hosted an awards evening for teaching excellence awards on 13<sup>th</sup> April.

#### Research (Confidentiality status: Open)

The funding to UEA from our successful REF2014 outcome was announced in March and secured QR funding to UEA of £15.4M, an improved position on earlier estimates which is built into the University budgets for 2015/16 onwards. Some of the additional funds received will need to be paid over to other NRP institutions reducing the net impact to the University.

A new research collaboration has been founded, extending across eight universities in the South and East of England (University of East Anglia, University of Essex, Goldsmiths University of London, University of Kent, University of Reading, Royal Holloway University of London, University of Surrey and the University of Sussex). The Consortium has confirmed its first commitment which is to bid for an ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership. The first meeting of the Consortium was held in London on 20 March 2015 at which the proposed vision for the collaboration was set out as a strong and collegial partnership at the forefront of disciplinary and interdisciplinary development and recognised internationally for the strength of its social science research and training.

#### Enterprise (Confidentiality status: Open)

In April HEFCE announced HEIF allocations for 2015-16. UEA have been awarded an additional £900k of funding in recognition of the profile of our enterprise activities bringing UEA's total 2015-16 funding to £2.65M. This represents the second largest increase in funding to any institution in this round. We have climbed 7 places in the league table and have not been overtaken in total funding awarded by any other institution. It is still not known whether HEIF funding will exist beyond 2015-16.

Dr Douglas Yu (BIO) has been awarded £250k follow on funding from NERC for the development of NatureMetrics: High-throughput, DNA-based biodiversity assessment and detection for the environmental consultancy market. The timely investment in this project by the University has enabled NatureMetrics to begin trading in time for the seasonal requirement for environmental monitoring.

The university spin out company Syrinix has recently closed a further funding round raising a significant but confidential sum which will support the companies continued expansion into overseas markets including the USA and Canada for its pipeline monitoring equipment. Syrinix Chief Technical Officer, Dr Paul Linford, who has been with the company since its formation and was responsible for much of the underpinning UEA research which led to its establishment, has recently been named 'Engineer of the Year' in the highly coveted Water Industry Achievement Awards.

The UEA Skills Award Pilot is proceeding well, with 211 students from all Schools and year groups taking part. The pilot is due to last until June and allows the skills award system (CareerHub) to be tested and student feedback gained to shape the way the award is administered. More than 250 activities have been submitted so far including work experience, volunteering, academic, Student Union and career management. This is already providing a valuable understanding of student extra-curricular activity at UEA. Following a further period of development in the summer the UEA Award will be launched this October.

#### Norwich Research Park and the LEP (Open)

The new director of the Institute of Food Research, Professor Ian Charles, has now taken up his post. In due course Prof Charles will become the first Director of the Centre for Food and Health. The director of The Genome Analysis Centre, Prof Mario Caccamo, has resigned and a search is now underway for his successor, which UEA will be closely involved in. The LEP has requested UEA support in developing a new Innovation Strategy.

#### Capital/Estate (Confidentiality status: Open)

An Estates-specific ET-R is being held which will discuss all aspects of future Estates strategy and identify investment priorities. The financial planning process is also seeking to develop plans that will release sufficient funds to enable delivery against these priorities. The work on Phase 2 of the Students' Union works have commenced.

#### Finance (Confidentiality status: Open)

This year's financial forecast continues to show an improvement versus the approved plan. Work is also progressing on finalising the budget for 2015/16 and the five year plan both of which are due to be presented to Council at the next meeting.

#### Student experience (Confidentiality status: Open)

The University has responded comprehensively to the recommendations set out in the Students' Union 2014 Student Experience report. At the end of April, we received a further set of recommendations in the Students' Union's Postgraduate Student Experience report and these were discussed at Student Experience Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

#### International (Confidentiality status: Open)

UEA now features amongst the world's elite institutions in 11 of the 25 discipline areas in which are active that featured in this year's QS World University Rankings by Subject. This include 11<sup>th</sup> place for 'International Development' and 28<sup>th</sup> Place for 'Environmental Sciences'. 'English Language and Literature' and 'Communication and Media Studies' ranked in the top 100, whilst 'Education' and 'Medicine' ranked in the Top 200. Analysis of all the subject areas showed our citations to be strong but our reputation once again pulling us down.

#### Partnerships (Confidentiality status: Open)

The run-down of the validated provision of the London Academy of Diplomacy programmes delivered through UEA London continues to be smooth, and we have just a handful of students completing their studies who are expected to complete by January 2016.

Our validated provision partner, Mountview College, which is a drama school based in Haringey, north London held a performance of a play "A Level Playing Field", at UEA on 16<sup>th</sup> April which was a successful event. We will explore making a Mountview production at UEA an annual event to help deepen the relationship with Mountview – our longest standing validated partner.

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

The result of the General Election is now known which should reduce the risk of a cut to the undergraduate tuition fee for Home/EU students and also it is anticipated that the cap will remain removed from student numbers as is the case for 2015/16 recruitment. There are likely to be challenges to overall Higher Education and Science budgets from the Comprehensive Spending Review with the possibility that the funds received from HEFCE to support high cost subjects may be threatened (at least in part).

### Faculty of Arts and Humanities (Confidentiality status: Open)

In April UEA hosted the Art Historical Association Conference, the largest ever held at UEA with over 400 delegates. The UEA library and the Faculty of Arts and Humanities with support from the Foyle Foundation has launched a major new initiative, the British Archive for Contemporary Writing.

### Faculty of Medicine and Health (Confidentiality status: point two below is confidential).

Norwich Medical School has been awarded silver Athena Swan for its progress in the area of equality and diversity.

### **REDACTED DUE TO COMMERCIAL SENSITIVITY**

### Faculty of Science (Confidentiality status: Open)

#### *New Heads of School and Associate Dean appointments*

The Faculty of Science is pleased to announce the appointment of two Heads of School and one Associate Dean. Prof Kevin Hiscock has been appointed as the substantive Head of School for the School of Environmental Sciences. Kevin has been acting in this role since the summer of 2014 following the departure of Prof Tim Jickells. Prof Shaun Stevens has been appointed as Acting Head of School for the School of Mathematics until December 2015, taking over from Prof David Evans whilst a permanent replacement is recruited. Prof David Stevens has been appointed as the Faculty of Sciences new Associate Dean for Learning, Teaching and Quality, taking over from Dr Ben Milner in August 2015 after five years in this role.

#### *A Level Grants Programme to boost Maths/Physics Teacher Recruitment*

In collaboration with the School of Education, the School of Mathematics has lead in the submission of a bid to the National College of Teaching and Leadership to run a national scheme to recruit, educate and train Maths and Physics related graduates to go onto careers as teachers in public education. The bid, if successful, is worth £7.5M over 9 years and would lead to up to 110 new students being recruited into Maths and Physics related subjects each year, for three years starting in 2016.

#### *Admissions*

Science is experiencing a last minute flurry of student applications for 2015 entry, with 450 students still to decide across the Faculty as at the 5<sup>th</sup> May. Whilst new areas such as Geography appear to have strong student application rates, overall the volume of student applications continue to remain a challenge for Science, particularly in Pharmacy.

#### *Research and Enterprise*

Nature Metrics, a company formed out of BIO and co-owned by UEA and Imperial College London, has been launched with £50,000 strategic funding from UEA and £250K follow on funding from NERC. Launched a website at [www.naturemetrics.co.uk](http://www.naturemetrics.co.uk). Their first contract is just in to survey 219 ponds for Great Crested Newts, with a value of ~ £40k. Dr Andrew Hemmings (PI) and Dr Charles Brearley (co-I), both BIO, were awarded a BBSRC Industrial Partner Award for their work on phytases with AB Vista. Phytase enzymes are added to animal feed to release otherwise insoluble phosphates and thus boost their nutritional benefits.

Prof David Russell (CHE) and Prof Rob Field (JIC) were awarded £242K BBSRC Follow on Funding to develop rapid diagnostics for human and avian influenza. Prof David Russell and Prof Rob Field (with Emma Meader, NNUH) also won £37.5K NRP Translational funding for a norovirus diagnostic.

Science has recently been awarded six Marie Curie (2 year) Fellowships (2 in BIO and 4 in CHE), and have been successful in being awarded a number of big research projects, most notably

- Dr Sonia Melendi-Espina (ENG/MTH): developing supercapacitors, EU, ~ £150k
- Prof Graham Finlayson (CMP): colour homography, EPSRC, ~ £500k
- Prof Andrew Lovett & Prof Kevin Hiscock (ENV): Wensum catchment project, DEFRA, ~ £600k
- Prof Matt Gage (BIO): Farm salmon genetic sterilisation, BBSRC, ~ £300k

Faculty of Social Sciences (Confidentiality status: point one has yet to be ratified and so is confidential until that time; other items are not confidential)

## **REDACTED**

The School of Psychology has been awarded Bronze Athena Swan for its progress in the area of equality and diversity.

Admissions continue to look very positive with the increased number of applications being followed by an increase in students converting their offer into a 'Firm' acceptance. We will of course need to wait until the results of 'A' levels to know the numbers that will actually arrive in September. There are already space challenges for some of the Schools which are growing but SSF is working to find short-term solutions via the Space Management Group but long-term solutions will be required.

The change by the UKVI in the number of global centres that will be recognised for Visa purposes in English Language assessment for INTO and other pathway providers is causing some concern (see above in Admissions). Some impact possible for 2015-16 but we are not able to predict accurately the impact in the long-term and are working on possible scenarios and responses.