

Annual Review



2020

Contents

Pg 03_**Forewords**

Pg 05_**Building the future**

Pg 09_**Excelling in education**

Pg 22_**Pioneering research with impact**

Pg 33_**Campus life**

Pg 43_**Realising our global vision**

Pg 47_**Inspiring people**

Pg 54_**Student experience**

Pg 59_**Ulster's response to
COVID-19**

Pg 63_**Financial summary**

Pg 66_**Governance**



VICE-CHANCELLOR

I am pleased to introduce our review of the 2019/20 academic year, during which I was privileged to take up the post of Vice Chancellor.

The 2019/20 academic year turned out to be a year which none of us could have anticipated and which none of us are ever likely to forget.

When I became Interim Vice-Chancellor in early March 2020, I could not have foreseen that, within a matter of weeks, we would be coming to terms with the magnitude of the global pandemic and the impact it would have on all aspects of society.

Together with the rest of the world, Ulster University has been reshaped during the pandemic. Our students and staff made incredible efforts to ensure that teaching of the highest quality continued in all our subject areas, ensuring that students were able to continue their programmes of study as planned.

I am immensely grateful for the dedication shown by our resilient and committed staff and students during this time.

I also want to acknowledge the work of colleagues on all our campus who made vital contributions to the fight against COVID-19. Across the institution, we mobilised our considerable research expertise, collaborated with partner organisations, industry and the general public, and made a tangible difference to the front-line response to the public health crisis. You can read about this in detail in this review.

We are continuing to play a crucial role in driving the economic recovery from the pandemic, including through the provision of free online courses to support those impacted by the pandemic to seek new employment opportunities.

In addition to how we responded to the pandemic, there were many other outstanding achievements during 2019/20.

The shortlisting of Ulster University in the University of the Year category in the prestigious Times Higher Education awards was particularly rewarding and was further testament to the dedication and positive impact of our staff teams across the institution.

Our School of Education at the Coleraine campus marked its 50th year and its excellence and strategic leadership was recognised in a report by the Education and Training Inspectorate. The report acknowledged Ulster's vital role in the changing landscape of teacher training and the education sector by preparing students for a rewarding career in the classroom and responding to the emerging demands of the curriculum and schools' leadership.

We have continued to develop innovative, progressive programmes, particularly in growth sectors of relevance to Northern Ireland's economy. For example, Ulster University Business School launched the pioneering Financial Technology degree, the first of its kind in the UK. The programme was developed in partnership with industry to meet the skills demand and graduate pipeline required to sustain Northern Ireland's excellence in FinTech.

Our outstanding research community continued to make its mark locally and much further afield. Activities ranged from our long-standing contribution to the brilliant NI Science Festival to securing funding from the UK Space Agency to assist the European Space Agency in determining the optimal route for the ExoMars rover, set to land on Mars in 2021. You can more about all of this in the pages that follow.

We were pleased to welcome HRH Princess Anne to open our new Spatial Computing and Neurotechnology Innovation Hub at the Magee campus. Building on our award-winning neurotechnology research at our Intelligent Systems Research Centre, the SCANI-hub enables research and education in the next wave of human-computer and human-machine interaction for able-bodied and physically impaired people.

Our teaching staff deliver a student learning experience that develops skills, raises ambitions and prepares future leaders. We were delighted that three of our professors joined the distinguished group of academics across the UK recognised for their outstanding impact on student outcomes and the teaching profession in higher education as National Teaching Fellows.

This reflects our commitment to teaching and the energy, drive and enthusiasm of those who nurture our students in their studies and in their chosen career paths.

Of course, the achievements of our students are equally inspiring, and I hope you enjoy finding out a little more about them. From diagnostic radiography to culinary arts, strategic partnerships with BDO and PWC to poetry competitions, you can read about just some of the activities that enrich the student experience at Ulster.

2019/20 was a truly extraordinary year for us all, made more remarkable by the agility, commitment and teamwork right across our University community, as we adapted to operate alongside the pandemic, delivering very many memorable moments in an unforgettable year.

PROFESSOR PAUL BARTHOLOMEW
VICE-CHANCELLOR



CHAIR OF COUNCIL

As I reflect on the year in review, I do so with great pride and gratitude for the incredible Ulster University staff who work so hard to deliver for our students and for our society.

It has been a particular privilege to witness the resilience, dedication and determination of our staff to continue the successful delivery of high quality teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, ably led by Professor Paul Bartholomew, first as Interim Vice-Chancellor before his permanent appointment to the post in August 2020.

I pay tribute to Paul's leadership and express my thanks, and those of the wider University Council, to our staff across all areas for their ongoing commitment.

I also want to extend my thanks to my University Council colleagues for the expertise, energy and enthusiasm that they bring to their roles, and for the support they provide to me as Chair of Council.

Despite the personal and professional challenges we have all faced, Ulster University continues to make its unique mark in Northern Ireland, through its regional mission delivered through our distinct campuses. In this regard, this year was no different as the University continued to invest in all four campuses, transforming the higher education landscape locally and playing our part in driving economic growth and confidence.

The new Belfast campus has continued to emerge on the northern edge of the city centre and is a catalyst for University-wide transformation. Despite the pandemic, building work continued safely and at pace, and borrowing some of its new and innovative learning spaces from developments at our Magee and Coleraine campuses.

With such breadth of subject expertise and truly special places in which to learn, Ulster University was delighted to partner with stakeholders across NI including Invest NI, Tourism NI, business, Colleges and local Councils, to establish a campaign that entreated young people to make their choice, their difference and their future in Northern Ireland. At a time when many may have been uncertain about making a choice that is far from home, this collective initiative reminded them of the many good reasons to pursue their ambitions locally.

Our continued partnership with local industry continues to expand learning opportunities, boost teaching capability and pave the way for confident careers. In just one of many examples of industry connectivity in action, Northern Ireland's largest IT company Allstate opened a new state-of-the-art computing lab at Ulster University's Magee campus, representing a major investment in educational resources for the Northwest region.

We're committed to each campus being a place where students have a rewarding experience, where our staff want to be, and where our local community wants to visit.

From hosting the popular Novosco IT camp at Jordanstown to the Community Big Day out on our expansive Coleraine estate, we open our doors to the vibrancy of life on campus. Our Magee campus took centre stage for International Nurses Day in May and was illuminated in blue to mark the profession in this most remarkable of years for our health service and our many nursing students and graduates on the NHS frontline. Each campus is a part of its community – from the Academy Restaurant serving up a special menu during Belfast Restaurant week, to our Magee campus making its residential accommodation available for health service staff from the Western Trust.

Our people continue to make Ulster University a rich, diverse and highly regarded partner in a range of sectors. From Professor Peter Flatt, Research Director of Biomedical Sciences at Ulster University being named as the leading insulin researcher in the UK to Professor Siobhan O'Neill being appointed as Northern Ireland's Interim Mental Health Champion and our sports development colleague Alison Moffit-Robinson being appointed Chef De Mission for NI Commonwealth Games team, this was another year in which our staff distinguished themselves in their areas of expertise and contribution.

Alongside all our local relationships and delivery, we maintain our global outlook, partnering with leading universities, embracing a highly multicultural community of learners, promoting a strong, internationally relevant curriculum, and delivering a transformative international experience for all students.

Welcoming international delegations, enabling work placements, scholarships and exchanges overseas and introducing a new Ulster College with Shaanxi University of Science and Technology in China, the year became an extraordinary one as the pandemic took hold globally. Undaunted, we hosted our first Agents' conference online and saw a 42% uplift in the number of international students choosing to study at Ulster.

And so, whether at home or overseas, our contribution makes a real difference – to individuals, to organisations and to communities. You'll read much more about the University, its people and its many partners, in this review of 2019-20.

JENNY PYPER
CHAIR OF COUNCIL



Building the future

Investing across all four campuses, we are transforming the higher education landscape, fuelling our infrastructure with passionate minds and helping to drive the local economy.

From our landmark Belfast campus development to new centres powered by innovative research and flexible learning spaces we are forging new ways of teaching, learning and discovering.

Belfast campus update

Work continued on our Greater Belfast Development with 45 companies working on site. Clear progress was made as we saw the high-level brick work on the Frederick street façade and glazing along York street being installed apace.

Most evident, perhaps, were two major steps forward. First was the removal of scaffolding and start of glazing on the “lantern”. This revealed the full impact of this landmark element of the new campus and made apparent its architectural connection to our current Belfast campus and its striking glass lantern structure. Secondly was the successful installation of the “sky bridge” that links the academic fingers stretching upwards along Frederick Street.

The fact that our Greater Belfast Development remained open and operational throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, is seen as leading best practice across the construction sector. Our contractor, Somague/Sacyr, worked swiftly and decisively from the outset to adhere to all government guidelines on health & safety and social distancing.

Our transformation projects also continued to progress well. The Staff Experience project team built a range of principles underpinning the key role our values will play as we all support each other during change and the Belfast campus relocation.



Ulster University's Belfast campus under construction

The Travel and Transport Project team has reviewed feedback from the parking strategy consultation. Information from the more than 230 responses received was critical in understanding colleagues' needs and expectations with regard to our travel strategy.

The Timetabling and Space Usage project led by Professor Brian Murphy held a “lessons learned” workshop with Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh, who have a similar timetabling process, to learn from their experience and help deliver a smooth transition into the new system.



Building the future

R&A Women in Golf Charter

As the first university to sign up to The R&A Women in Golf Charter, Ulster University pledged its commitment to increasing the number of women and girls playing and working in golf.

The Charter aims to inspire an industry-wide commitment to developing a more inclusive culture within golf around the world and enable more women and girls to flourish and maximise their potential at all levels of the sport.

Chair of Fair Admissions Review

Professor Paddy Nixon, former Vice-Chancellor, was named as Chair of the 'Fair admissions review' advisory group which is to review admissions practices to ensure they are fair, transparent and operating in the best interests of students.

Generation H: Discovering careers in the local Hospitality Industry

Ulster University Business School's Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, partnered with three secondary schools in North Belfast to pilot the Generation H #GenHUUBS project. This civic centred initiative, funded by the Garfield Weston Trust, sought to promote the career opportunities available in our exciting and expanding local hospitality industry.

Countdown to UU

The 'Countdown to UU' campaign rolled out to excite, reassure and prepare our new students before the start of the academic year. The objective of this campaign was to ensure that our students felt more prepared on arrival at UU. The project also aimed to coordinate the communications to students from UU through a single channel and voice, to support recruitment activities and conversion of applicants, to increase occupancy in student accommodation and take up of sports memberships.



Professor Karise Hutchinson, Provost Ulster University Coleraine campus; Niamh Lamond, Chief Operating Officer, Ulster University; Judith Allen, Ulster University Golf Scholar and Sports Studies student; and Jackie Davidson, Assistant Director – Golf Development at the R&A at signing of R&A Women in Golf Charter

Athena Swan Awards

The School of Engineering achieved an Athena SWAN Silver award in October 2019. This follows on from the award of a Bronze Athena SWAN in 2015, when a commitment was made to build an environment where staff and students from all backgrounds, cultures, status and gender could feel valued and welcome.



The School's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is clear, with steady progress made over the past four years across a range of areas.

Ulster University's School of Health Sciences has also retained their Athena SWAN Bronze award.

£1.3m Magee Library Transformation

Following a substantial summer refurbishment, with an investment of £1.3m, Ulster University opened its new look Magee library.

The state-of-the-art facility, spanning across three floors, provides a significant boost both to the Magee campus and the city with new social and collaborative learning spaces, group study pods and digital information hubs all designed to promote academic collaboration and social learning experiences, connecting the indoor academic environment with the external landscaped area at the heart of the campus.



Janet Peden, Librarian & Deputy Chief Digital and Information Officer, Dr. Malachy Ó Néill, Provost of the Magee Campus and Collette Cassidy, Former UUSU President, in the new Magee library



Pupils from the Belfast Model School for Girls are photographed with Martin Devaney, Culinary Training Officer in Department of Hospitality & Tourism Management during Generation H

Northern Ireland's largest IT company Allstate opened a new state-of-the-art computing lab at Ulster University's Magee campus, representing a major investment in educational resources for the North West region.

Allstate IT Lab Opens at the Magee campus

The lab is based within the School of Computing, Engineering and Intelligent Systems and will boost core teaching competencies in the areas of Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence, Information Technologies, Electronics and Embedded Systems, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering and Renewable Energy Engineering.

Celebrating World Town Planning Day 2019

Staff and students from Ulster University's Planning School (UPLAN), in the Belfast School of Architecture and the Built Environment, celebrated the 70th Anniversary of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)'s World Town Planning Day (WTPD) on 8 November. The event attracted approximately 100 year 13 and year 14 students from schools across Northern Ireland and from Belfast Metropolitan College and was based around the theme of 'Planning for the Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs).



Ulster University and Allstate representatives and students attend the launch of the new computing lab

Support for 'Life on Land' Sustainability Goal

Ulster University contributed to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15 'Life on Land' through our campus Biodiversity Management Plans, which are delivered by the Estates Services Grounds team and through the help of staff and student volunteers.

Ulster supported the #StudyInNorthernIreland campaign – The World is At Home

Ulster University worked with stakeholders across NI including Invest NI, Tourism NI, a range of business organisations and corporates, FE Colleges and local Councils, to establish a campaign that communicated what we all feel and need to say from NI plc. At a time when many young people may be uncertain about making a choice that is far from home, this communication reminded them of the good reasons to stay...."world class education, careers for the making and a lifestyle like no other" and entreated them to make "their choice, their difference, their future in Northern Ireland."



Dr Neale Blair, Associate Head, Belfast School of Architecture and the Built Environment, Dr Gavan Rafferty, Lecturer in Spatial Planning and Development, Janet Askew, Visiting Professor and keynote speaker, with pupils Matthew Sheard, Armagh Royal School, Katie McIntyre, Belfast Met., Joseph Butcher, St. Patrick's Grammar School, Armagh, Grainne Breslin-Stewart, St. Mary's College, Derry, and Leah Maguire, St Cecilia's College, Derry, during world town planning day



Excelling in education

From renowned teaching inspired by world-class research, to first-class resources and facilities, all within an inclusive, supportive learning environment, we place ambition at the heart of everything we do to ensure our students excel and unleash their full potential.

An outward looking university that is committed to widening access to education, our strong industry partnerships and dedicated and talented staff create an exceptional environment to prepare the minds that will make the future.

Ulster University's School of Education has been recognised for its excellence and strategic leadership in the Education Training Inspectorate's (ETI) most recent report.

Ulster University's School of Education recognised as excellent by industry inspectors

Ulster University's School of Education has been recognised for its excellence and strategic leadership in the Education Training Inspectorate's (ETI) most recent report.

Celebrating its 50th anniversary, the School of Education has played a vital role in the changing landscape of teacher training and the education sector by preparing students for a rewarding career in the classroom and responding to the emerging demands of the curriculum and schools' leadership.

Through the inspection and subsequent report, the ETI promotes the highest possible standards of learning, teaching, training and achievement throughout the education, training and youth sectors.

In terms of student wellbeing, the report applauded Ulster University's support services available to students in need of immediate assistance.



Pictured from left to right: Mark Potkewitz, Director of the Legal Innovation Centre; Jane Hollway, Co-Director of the Legal Innovation Centre, and Eugene McNamee, Professor Eugene McNamee, Head of School of

Legal Innovation Centre partners with AI Software Provider on delivery of 'Law Tech & Innovation in Practice 2019'

The Legal Innovation Centre at Ulster University and AI software provider, Neota Logic, partnered in the delivery of a leading-edge Law Tech and Innovation in Practice Course. In what is a first for legal education in Northern Ireland, our students had the opportunity to learn how to map, design and build digital legal solutions using the Neota Logic System.

With Neota Logic technology, students learn to develop application solutions to determine corporate structure. At the end of the workshop, there is an app ready to be deployed for 'client' use.

Faculty of Computing and Engineering and the Built Environment 'Innovation in Placement Awards 2019'

The Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment held an awards ceremony for its placement students at the Jordanstown Campus.

The Computing Winner Ross Walker was instrumental across a range of initiatives, including a Community of Practice for the Performance Engineering Service within company. These initiatives have directly ensured £35k of revenue and a contract renewal of £120k.

Krista Lee, the Engineering Winner, involved innovation in the field of Total Knee Arthroplasty (TKA) surgery, with significant potential benefits for both the surgeons and particularly the patients, as minimising the gaps between cut bone surface and the implant can improve implant acceptance and adhesion improving patient outcomes.



Innovation in Placement Award, Engineering winner was Krista Lee who is presented with her award by Professor Liam Maguire, Executive Dean, along with Professor Jonathan Wallace (on left) and Peter Curtin, Stryker

Excelling in education

Ulster University shortlisted in THE's 'University of the Year' Award

Ulster University was shortlisted in the 'University of the Year' category of the Times Higher Education (THE) Awards 2019, which are widely known as the 'Oscars of higher education'.

The 'University of the Year' is awarded to an institution that has demonstrated exceptional performance during the 2017-18 academic year, with research, teaching, access and business performance all taken into account. Judges have also looked for evidence of 'particular bold, imaginative and innovative initiatives during the 2017-18 academic year'.

Ulster University was also shortlisted in the category for 'Outstanding Strategic Planning Team' at the THE Awards.

The nomination recognised the work of the University's Strategic Planning and Performance Directorate in the delivery of the planning process, ensuring a golden thread runs between governmental policy, the institutional strategic plan, the faculty/departmental plans, and individual employees' personal objectives.

Ulster University named double winner at AGCAS Awards for Excellence 2019

Ulster University was named winner of the Strategic Innovation Award at the AGCAS Awards for Excellence, which is presented to the institution that can show the effective design or redesign of the way in which a service is delivered in order to adapt to changes and/or meet new demands, whether institutional, regional or sector-wide, and incorporating the use of new technologies.

Dr Rachel Shannon, Strategic Project Officer in Employability and Careers, was named winner of the Outstanding Newcomer Award for her 'outstanding initial contribution to the work of a member service'. Rachel has made a significant contribution to the work of the Employability and Careers Department at Ulster University and to the wider careers community.



Pictured from left to right: Dr Donna Caldwell, Employability Adviser; Mary Carson, Employability Adviser; Eilis Coyle, Employability Adviser; Dr Rachel Shannon, Strategic Project Officer; Damian McGivern, Director of Employability & Careers Development; Shauna McCloy, Head of Careers & Employability Services and Brian Byers, Employability Services Unit Manager at AGCAS Awards

The nomination recognised the work of the University's Strategic Planning and Performance Directorate in the delivery of the planning process, ensuring a golden thread runs between governmental policy, the institutional strategic plan, the faculty/departmental plans, and individual employees' personal objectives.

Distinguished Education Excellence Awards for Academic Year 2018-19

The Distinguished Education Excellence Awards recognise, reward and celebrate colleagues across Ulster University who demonstrate teaching and learner support excellence. The awards are designed to create a proactive learning community within Ulster where excellent practice can influence wider enhancement.

Early Career Educator

Winners:

Dr Priyank Shukla, School of Biomedical Sciences

Educational Leadership Award

Winners:

Nikki McQuillan, Dept of Hospitality and Tourism Management

Denise MacDermott, School of Applied Social and Policy Sciences

Dr Patrick Naughton, School of Biomedical Sciences

Collaborative Excellence Award

Winners:

Mark McCrory, Judith McKnight and Ian Smyth, Dept of Management and Leadership
Title: Returning the Point to PowerPoint



Professional Practice Innovation Award

Winners:

Kyle Ferguson, School of Sport
Title: Technology enhanced learning in sport

Dr Chris McGonigle and Andy Jaffrey, School of Geography and Environmental Sciences / ADDL
Title: vLog for Professional Practice (vPP)

Dr Andrea Reid, Dept of Management & Leadership
Title: Developing Consultancy Project Modules for Final Year Business Students

Janet Coulter, Belfast School of Art
Title: Creative Entrepreneurship: harnessing creative intellect to enhance employability

Dr Rachael Telford, School of Sport
Title: Careers In Sport website tool for pre-entry through to graduated sports students on their employability journey at Ulster

Dr Shane Wilson, School of Computing, Engineering & Intelligent Systems
Title: Transforming education through active learning, continuous feedback and the flipped classroom

Excelling in education

New and returning Ulster students encouraged to harness their entrepreneurial skills through UU Start programme

Ulster University undergraduate and postgraduate students now have free access to a comprehensive support programme to help them launch their own business. Over a quarter of students currently run or plan to run a business whilst they are at university and Ulster University's new UU Start programme offers support with product and service innovation, validation and acceleration.

The support for students through the UU Start Programme would not be possible without the kind support from Santander Universities.

Ulster University to take part in One World Festival

Ulster University is proud to support the newly formed One World Festival, an initiative from the Coalition of Aid and Development Agencies (CADA) in Northern Ireland.

The festival aims to increase awareness and understanding of the developing world and to encourage action in communities towards a just, peaceful and sustainable world.

There was a variety of exhibitions, talks, discussions and workshops taking place across Northern Ireland, which explored several global issues from a local perspective.

Choice Housing launches new scholarship programme with Ulster University

Ulster University, in partnership with Choice Housing, launched a new scholarship scheme that is aimed at supporting up to 15 students who face barriers to participating in higher education.

The initiative, which runs for five years, will provide financial assistance to three students per year for the lifetime of the project.



Pictured left to right: Tim Brundle, Director of Research and Impact at Ulster University, Naomi Browne, Student Enterprise Co-ordinator and Chris Shannon, Student Enterprise & Entrepreneurship Manager at launch of the UU Start programme



Pictured from left to right: Lawrence Jackson, Group Director of Corporate Services, Choice Housing, Sara Lynch, PASS – Peer Assisted Study Skills Co-ordinator (Placement Student), Karen Delgado, Head of Corporate Engagement, and Professor Brian Murphy, Director of Access Digital and Distributed Learning, Ulster University at launch of scholarship programme

Ulster University Gaelic Academy embarks on historic US tour

Ulster University's Gaelic Academy embarked on an extensive 12-day tour in the United States, which included visits to New York, Boston and Philadelphia.

The trip represented the first time that an Ulster University Academy has travelled to the United States, with its core aim to promote Gaelic Games in the US.



Photographed are: (Back) Karen Delgado, Head of Corporate Engagement, Ulster University; Martin Conlon, Keltbray; Finn McElroy, Ulster University; Michael McKernan, Ulster University; Andrew Burnside, Keltbray; Martina Madden, O'Neills. (Front) Pdraig Mc Grogan, Ulster University; Lord Mayor John Finucane.

Excelling in education

Ulster Students named winners at Jefferson University's Nexus Maximus event

Nexus Maximum is Jefferson's signature annual event that invites students from around the world and from a variety of disciplines, to visit Philadelphia to work collaboratively over a four-day period of intense workshops to address global urban challenges. It is an opportunity to collaborate with and learn from colleagues – faculty, students, and industry partners – to develop new innovations for healthy communities. The 2019 theme called for proposals promoting greater Civility in contemporary society.

Taking up the challenge were two Ulster students from the GoPhilly Healthy Communities team, Jonah Carty and Lauren Coulter — now final years in the School of Architecture and Built Environment's MSc Planning, Regeneration and Development course. They worked with Dr Golden to recruit four more final year students to participate from their course (Kyle McAdam, Hannah McVeigh, Ciara Mone, and Adam Trafford).



Ulster University students and staff at Jefferson University



Pictured from left to right: Jim Magilton, IFA Elite Performance Director; Oliver Doglia, Senior Football Development Manager at UEFA; David Martin (now former) President of IFA; Amanda Castray, Director of Campus Life, Ulster University; Michael O'Neill, former NI manager at launch of elite youth football academy

Ulster University hosts Northern Ireland's first elite youth football academy

Northern Ireland's first full-time residential academy for young footballers has been officially launched by the Irish Football Association.

Based at Ulster University's Jordanstown campus, the academy is fully endorsed by UEFA, European football's governing body, and operated by the Irish Football Association in conjunction with the university.

The Academy wins restaurant of the year award

The Academy, Ulster University's training restaurant has been named "Grub Club Restaurant of the Year" for 2018/19.

Established over 40 years ago, the Grub Club is an exclusive private dining club, which scours the whole of Northern Ireland to find the very best restaurants the region has to offer.

With strict criteria to select its winner based on the excellent calibre, integrity and innovation of its entire food, beverage and service offering, the Grub Club celebrates culinary excellence at its best.



Pictured from left to right: Callum Irwin, Final Year student on BSc Culinary Arts Management; Bruno Etienne, Culinary Training Officer; and Marianne Hood, Restaurant Training Officer; Bill McCann, Grub Club; Peter Lunn, President Grub Club; and Orlaith Fogarty, Final Year student International Hospitality Management accepting Grub Club 'Restaurant of the Year' award.

Ulster Academics lead the way at the 17th SCoTENS Annual Conference

Professor John Coolahan from NUI Maynooth and Professor Emeritus Harry McMahon from Ulster University had established SCoTENS in 2003 to create a safe space for teacher educators – North and South – to come together and discuss issues of common interest and to explore ways of co-operating closely together.

At this conference, Shauna McGill, Course Director for PGCE Primary from Ulster University's School of Education, along with a colleague from Dublin City University, Lorraine Harbison, were awarded the John Coolahan Award for their research report on 'Universal Design for Learning as a Context for embedding Technology in Primary School Mathematics'.

'Teacher Preparation in Northern Ireland: History, Policy and Future Directions', a new book by Ulster academics, was also launched at the 2019 SCoTENS event.

Visiting Professor Sean Farren, Professor Linda Clarke, Research Director for Education, and Dr Teresa O'Doherty, Principal of Marino College Dublin, co-wrote the book which provides the first history of teacher preparation in Northern Ireland.

Ulster University shortlisted for Gradireland Higher Education Awards 2019

These awards, now in their ninth year, recognise the success of higher education professionals and course providers and their delivery of interdisciplinary Masters and postgraduate programmes across the island of Ireland.



Visiting Professor Sean Farren, Professor Linda Clarke, Research Director for Education, and Dr Teresa O'Doherty, Principal of Marino College Dublin, are photographed along with Professor Marilyn Cochran-Smith at the SCoTENS Annual Conference

Ulster University courses were shortlisted in the following categories:

Best New Course

MSc Data Science, School of Computing, Engineering and Intelligent Systems

Postgraduate Course of the Year Award in Health Sciences

PgD / MSc Sport and Exercise Nutrition, School of Sport

Postgraduate Course of the Year in Law

LLM Access to Justice, School of Law

Postgraduate Course of the Year in Science

Postgraduate Certificate in Biomedical Science, School of Biomedical Sciences.

Excelling in education

Launch of Ulster's Advanced Mentoring Programme

Ulster University has launched the Advanced Mentoring Programme which is a tailored module for students who may require additional support for: Go Global, Self-Employment, Leadership, and Creative Arts.

The programme connects current students with a graduate of the University, someone with experience who can inspire and empower students to take control of their own careers, seek out opportunities for professional development and grow in self-confidence.

Triple Ulster University Journalism 'Awards for Excellence' nominations

Ulster University staff and students were shortlisted for three prestigious UK-wide industry awards for journalism excellence, in the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ).

The first NCTJ award nomination was for teaching innovation.

The second award nomination, for the Features category, was Masters' student Nick Winchester. Nick, who comes from England, was nominated for his feature which examined the experiences of a Syrian family and their difficulties in returning home from a refugee camp in the Lebanon.

The third award nomination, for the category of 'Top Scoop,' was for MA Journalism student Brendan Marshall from his reporting on the St Patrick's night tragedy at the Greenvale Hotel in Cookstown, Co Tyrone.



Pictured from left to right: Cathy Moore, Employability & Careers Consultant, Dr Thomas Maguire, Head of School of Arts and Humanities, Shauna McCloy, Head of Careers & Employability Services, Tara Cunningham, guest speaker and Roisin McNamara, Alumni Relations Manager, at the launch of the Advanced Mentoring Programme

CAQE Academic Excellence Awards

Six courses have received the University's Academic Excellence award for 2018/19. The £6k award recognises the delivery of exceptional performance, outcomes and innovation, and can be spent at the discretion of the programme team to support continued enhancements to the student learning experience.

The 2018/19 course awards were presented to:

- BSc Hons Community Youth Work
 - BA Hons Textile Art, Design and Fashion
 - BSc Hons Environmental Health
 - BSc Hons Dietetics
 - MPharm Hons Pharmacy
 - BSc Hons Nursing (Adult)
-

Ulster University Business School Partners with Kainos to Launch New Leadership Programme

Ulster University Business School and Kainos, digital services and platforms company, launched a unique training programme to further develop the company's talented leaders.

Kainos' new Inspiring Leaders Programme will comprise bespoke workshops, training and online learning delivered by Ulster University Business School and also includes a five a day study visit to the renowned Global Leadership Institute, Boston College. Successful completion of the programme will lead to a Postgraduate Certificate in Executive Leadership (level seven), awarded by Ulster University.

Excelling in education

Lecturer in Nursing and Drama students explore intergenerational trauma in new play

Drama students from Ulster University helped explore the intergenerational legacy of conflict 'First Response' in a new piece of testimonial theatre at The Playhouse, Derry~Londonderry and the Riverside Theatre, located on our Coleraine campus.

The 'First Response' project was led by the Playhouse's Theatre's Peacebuilding Academy (TPA), and is created and performed by individuals who were first at the scene of the shootings and atrocities during The Troubles.

Professional experience visit to London for Magee Law students

In early February 2020, a group of fourteen Law students from the Magee campus undertook a professional experience visit to London, organised by Employability & Careers, hosted by Morgan Stanley and sponsored by Santander Universities.

The purpose of the visit was to raise the aspirations, confidence and motivation of the Law students via meeting and learning from staff at large global companies keen to stress the employment opportunities available with their firms, and visiting iconic London-based legal landmarks such as the Old Bailey and Supreme Court. There was also a meeting and networking event with Ulster University alumni that have already successfully established their careers in London, and who are keen to give back and support our students.

Coppi Takeover at the Academy

Northern Ireland restaurateur Tony O'Neill, owner of the hugely popular Coppi and Buba, along with Coppi Executive Chef, Jonny Phillips worked alongside our Culinary Arts Management and International Hospitality Management students to deliver an exclusive evening menu full of culinary creativity.



Magee drama students rehearse the production of 'First responders', a project led by the Playhouse's Theatre's Peacebuilding Academy



Law students from Ulster University's Magee campus undertook a professional experience visit to London



Excelling in education

Ulster University wins award for Best International Collaboration – at the Education Awards

Ulster University and Experimental Design were named winner of Best International Collaboration at The Education Awards ceremony which took place on 20 February 2020 at The Ballsbridge Hotel, Dublin, for Future Screens NI initiative.

The Education Awards is the long-standing platform for recognising, encouraging and celebrating excellence in the education sector across the island of Ireland.

New UUBS partnership gives students cutting-edge Marketing experience

A partnership between Ulster University Business School and award-winning global marketing agency Marvel Marketers helped to inspire and educate the next generation of marketing experts by bringing the latest trends and techniques to academia in Northern Ireland.

Through this partnership, students were given the opportunity to participate in an innovative digital marketing bootcamp, enabling students to enhance their current academic studies from home.

Ulster University Business School supporting Leadership and Change

Ulster University Business School (UUBS) students experienced a novel learning approach when they visited Hillsborough Castle and Gardens as part of the Masters in Business Administration (MBA) with Advance Practice programme.

Hillsborough Castle is the case study for the assessment of one of the MBA modules, Leadership and Change, and Laura McCorry, Head of Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, delivered a presentation to the students, which was designed to support the students in their study of the leadership and multiple other changes surrounding this world class visitor attraction.



Moya Doherty, Future Screens NI Industrial Champion and co-founder of Riverdance, collected the award on behalf of Future Screens NI, and is photographed with Alex McDowell, who flew in from LA to represent Experimental Design at the awards ceremony.

Santander Universities Fund supports our future entrepreneurs

A fund from Santander Universities has helped recent Ulster University graduates who are self-employed to navigate their way through the turbulent COVID-19 pandemic. The Santander Universities Business Continuity and Recovery Fund is designed for Ulster University graduates who have started out on their own in the past year, with 28 graduates being awarded £1,000 each.

Ulster University ranked first in UK for Hospitality, Leisure, Recreation and Tourism courses in Complete University Guide 2021

Ulster's Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism courses have been ranked first out of 54 higher education institutions in the UK in the latest Complete University Guide 2021.

Subject specific course awards in the independent UK university league table are based on five core measures including; student satisfaction, research quality, research intensity, entry standards and graduate prospects.

CropSafe and Apex win UUSU Shark Tank competition

The annual Shark Tank competition is organised by the UUSU Enterprise Centre, which helps Ulster University students achieve their ambitions through a range of programmes, resources, advice sessions and funding opportunities

Micheál McLaughlin, co-founder of CropSafe- an app that uses satellite data to help farmers make more informed decisions regarding their crops, and first year software engineering student at UU won first prize in the tech category and received £2,500 start-up capital to further his business.

Andrew Chivers, founder of Apex Cycling Apparel - a company selling customisable cycling apparel, and final year Business Studies student, won first prize in the non-tech category and he receives £2,500 to help further develop his existing business.

**Ulster University's
Distinguished Education
Excellence Awards
recognise, reward and
celebrate colleagues
who demonstrate
teaching and learner
support excellence.**

**Distinguished Education Excellence
Award winners for 2019/20**

The Professional Practice Innovation Award
was given to:

James Houston, Lecturer in Psychology
– Mental Health, and Claire Mulrone,
Community Engagement Manager

Dr Trevor Cadden, Dept of Management,
Leadership & Marketing

Mark Donnelly, School of Computing

Fidelma Moran and Brenda O'Neill,
School of Health Sciences

Stephen McNamee, Department of
Accounting, Finance & Economics

Maria Mulhern, School of
Biomedical Sciences

Kristel Miller and Dr. Darryl Cummins,
Dept of Management, Leadership
& Marketing

Paul Joseph-Richard, Dept of Management,
Leadership & Marketing



Early Career Educator Award given to:

Dr John Bustard, Teaching Fellow – Digital Transformation in the Department
of Management, Ulster University Business School

Dr Victoria McCollum, Lecturer in Cinematic Arts, School of Arts and Humanities.

Dr Fodhla McGrane, Lecturer in Leadership, Ulster University Business School.

Sustained Educational Excellence Award went to:

Dr Neal Cook, Associate Head of School of Nursing.

Educational Leadership Award went to:

Louise O'Boyle, Acting Head of the Belfast School of Art.

Collaborative Excellence Award s were given to 3 teams:

Hazel Bruce, Lecturer in Textile Art, Belfast School of Art, led a team including:
Heather Burgess, Mo Morrow, Alison Gault, Lucy Smyth, Trish Belford, Mo Collins,
Dean Ligget, Mary Callan, Shonagh Galbraith, Kevin Burns, Jamie Kerr and Professor
Barbara Dass.

Dr Trevor Cadden, Senior Lecturer in Operations Management, Ulster University
Business School, led a team including: Mark McCrory, Nicholas Read, Dr.
Hadyn Bennett, Deborah Sloan, Nancy Brown, Dr. Darryl Cummins, Dr. Judith
McKnight, Professor Heather Farley, Professor Joan Ballantine, Dr. KristelwMiller and
Gerard McFall.

Sarah Penney (Lead), Lecturer in Nursing, School of Nursing, led a team including:
Gerard Baxter, Mary Marren, Bridie Logue and Janice Reid.

Excelling in education

Ulster University Business School Launch New Business Support Initiative

Ulster University Business School (UUBS) has unveiled a new portfolio of business support services to help organisations respond to current challenges presented by COVID-19 and plan for future recovery.

Services include free one-to-one business support sessions in a range of key business areas such as Marketing, Digital Strategy, Competitiveness, International Business, Leadership and Management.

The Ulster University Student Opportunity Fund

The Development and Alumni Relations Office (DARO) rebranded the Ulster University Student Fund, to be called The Ulster University Student Opportunity Fund.

Each scholarship name was amended to better show how it supports our students in realising their dreams, and these will now be known as:

- Academic Opportunity Scholarship – enhancing the academic experience for those students with ability and drive, especially those from low income families, to support them in reaching their potential.
- Travel Opportunity Scholarship – helping our students become global citizens and creating opportunities for life-changing international travel.
- Sport Talent Scholarships – supporting outstanding students to compete at a national and international level and to excel in their field.
- Academic Excellence Award – recognising the talents of our brightest students and encouraging our students to be ambitious.



Ulster University launches innovative FinTech degree

In response to sustained growth of the FinTech industry in Northern Ireland and to support the need for skilled financial technology graduates, Ulster University's Business School launched an innovative Financial Technology degree. The BSc (Hons) in Financial Technology is the first of its kind in the UK and has been developed in partnership with key industry partners to meet the huge skills demand and graduate pipeline required to sustain Northern Ireland's centre of excellence in FinTech.

Virtual Learning Festival - Meet Dr Emmet and his very friendly, very intelligent robot NAO

Ulster University's NAO robot made an appearance during an interactive session alongside Dr Emmett Kerr, Ulster University Lecturer in Mechanical Engineering at the Magee campus, as part of the Virtual Learning Festival.

The Virtual Learning Festival – the world's first – took place on Wednesday 1st July and Thursday 2nd July in the form of a series of information sessions, live presentations, short films and live chats covering a range of topics.



Dr Emmett Kerr

Excelling in education

Ulster University launched free online courses for workers affected by COVID-19

The Department for the Economy funded 500 places on the online courses which upskilling and retrained people whose jobs were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The courses, developed by Ulster University's Faculty of Computing, Engineering and Built Environment and Ulster University Business School were a direct response to the Department for the Economy's call for short-term skills interventions that will protect businesses, mitigate impact on the labour market, are relevant across sectors and are applicable to the greatest part of the workforce.

Digital showcase for the BSOA Class of 2020

The Belfast School of Art (BSOA) was determined to ensure that the 2020 graduating cohort would be celebrated through a range of alternative events over the coming year. One of the biggest challenges for the School was with regard to the Annual Degree Show, which could not go ahead in the same format as previous years.

The show has immense value to our students, their families and friends, and indeed the wider community, therefore, starting with a digital showcase of their work, the School planned events with industry and cultural partners that offered the same springboard into professional life which the annual degree show would have afforded previous



Work from the BSOA Class of 2020



Ulster University Nursing Students



Emma Hetherington's t-shirt design

COVID-19 related:

Student nurses join the fight against COVID-19

Over 600 final year Nursing and Midwifery students from Ulster University, Queen's University Belfast and Open University joined the fight against COVID-19 by entering the Health and Social Care (HSC) workforce early.

Ulster's Social Work students qualify early to support the most vulnerable in society

108 final year social work students from Ulster University completed their degrees early to join the workforce and support the most vulnerable in society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

These students joined colleagues across community and clinical settings to provide essential support to some of the most vulnerable and excluded in society.

Buy student Emma's t-shirt to support the National Emergencies Trust

Ulster University Graphic Design and Illustration student, Emma Hetherington's COVID-19 inspired 'Stay Home' t-shirt went on sale to support all the amazing frontline workers out there who are keeping the world turning.

"Stay Home," is a simplistic graphic tee printed on the back. The story behind it is from the news all we hear is 'Stay home, Save lives,' right now.

Local schools receive boost from Ulster University's School of Education

With the support of Lecturers at Ulster University, PGCE Primary student teachers created an electronic learning resource pack for parent and pupil learning, readily accessible at home for free via Google Classroom.

The pack contained a wide range of fun and exciting lessons, resources and learning activities suitable for all primary aged children in each area of learning.



Pioneering research with impact

Every day our cutting-edge research and innovation is making a difference to thousands of people and their communities.

Pioneering research with impact

Researchers develop the world's first computational model of decision-making uncertainty

Ulster University Researchers have developed the world's first biologically motivated, computational model that can quantify decision uncertainty and explain its effects on change-of-mind during decision-making processing. This could potentially be used by developers to create self-aware machines.

This exciting new work in Computational Neuroscience has shown for the first time that neural network models can be equipped with metacognition or self-awareness of their own actions and choices. The computer model can not only mimic brain activity observed in humans and some animals, but also replicate change-of-mind and error correction behaviour, which require "on-the-fly" metacognitive processing.

The senior author and researcher of the research work was Dr KongFatt Wong-Lin, along with Nadim Atiya, lead author of the paper and a PhD researcher at the ISRC. Other contributors of the research work were Prof. Girijesh Prasad and Dr. Iñaki Rañó, both from the ISRC.

Ulster's Doctoral College secures top 10 position in PhD rankings

The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES 2019) placed Ulster University in the top eight universities in the UK for postgraduate researcher satisfaction. The national benchmarking exercise surveys postgraduate research students from over 100 universities across the UK about their postgraduate research experience.



Dr KongFatt Wong-Lin and Nadim Atiya, lead author of the paper and a PhD researcher at the ISRC.



Ulster's PhD researchers graduating

The rankings reflect the University's investment in enhancements to resources, facilities, training and support for all PhD researchers; from dedicated social spaces on each campus to a bespoke Researcher Development Programme supporting the development of professional transferable skills.

Pioneering research with impact

Virtual Reality Research Laboratory hosts international Research Team

Ulster University hosted an international research initiative on developing next generation augmented reality research application for use in Education and Health.

During the week-long joint activity with the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), Trieste, Italy and an industry partner (Santasco, Milan, Italy), the researchers successfully delivered a prototype application of what is expected to become a first-of-its-kind Augmented Reality application framework known as 'ARTEH' – Augmented Reality Trainer for Education and Health.

UK Space Agency funding to explore Mars Rover route

Ulster University researchers were awarded funding from the UK Space Agency to assist the European Space Agency in determining the optimal route for the ExoMars rover, set to land on Mars in 2021.

The funding, part of a £375K award, secured by the Environmental Sciences Research Institute at Ulster University, will be used to investigate the effect of wind on the landing site for the ExoMars rover, a mission that will search for signs of past and present life on Mars and investigate how the water and geochemical environment varies.



Mars Rover

Cutting-edge research in children's visual health

A collaborative study between Ulster University and Technological University Dublin showed that children in the Republic of Ireland are four times more likely to suffer from amblyopia, more commonly known as a lazy eye, after the optimum treatment period, than children in Northern Ireland.

The two populations are broadly similar in terms of their genetic, demographic and ocular profiles but have very different public health and eye-care systems. Researchers attributed the disparity in vision outcomes of children across the border on differences in access to timely identification and treatment of lazy eye in the Republic.



The UEFA Research Grant Programme • Meeting of the Jury participants pose for a group photo at the UEFA headquarters, the House of European Football on June 17, 2019 in Nyon, Switzerland. This included Principal Investigator Dr Gavin Breslin, Sport and Exercise Psychologist, Ulster University.

Research tackles player wellbeing and transition out of football

A European-wide study by Ulster University into player career transition out of football to protect wellbeing provided key recommendations for UEFA, the administrative body for association football in Europe.

Like many sportspeople, footballers dedicate their lives to their sport. One serious injury, drop in form or termination of contract can bring flourishing careers and aspirations to an end and this research found that many footballers are ill-equipped to deal with this transition and the psychological consequences.

Funded by the UEFA Research Grant Programme, research was conducted to explore the views of football associations across Europe on dual careers, wellbeing of players and coaches and to provide recommendations on how football associations, players and coaches can be better supported.

Pioneering research with impact

C-TRIC celebrated 10th Anniversary

In September 2019, the Clinical Translational Research and Innovation Centre (C-TRIC) celebrated 10 years of a unique partnership between Derry City and Strabane District Council (DCSDC), Ulster University and the NHS through the Western Health and Social Care Trust (Western Trust).

Based on the Altnagelvin Hospital site in Derry-Londonderry, C-TRIC has been instrumental in facilitating healthcare research, by bringing together clinicians, university academic staff and industry to achieve better outcomes for patients both locally and internationally.

HR Excellence in Research Award

Ulster University was named as one of ten UK universities to have retained the HR Excellence in Research Award, accredited by Vitae, following our 6 year review.

The award recognises the positive actions the University has taken to support the career development of researchers, our commitment to improving the working conditions and career development of our research staff as well as the quantity, quality and impact of our research for the benefit of society and the economy.

Recognition at CIPR PRide Awards for GLAD study

Ulster University was among the winners at the 2019 CIPR PRide Awards, which celebrate Northern Ireland's thriving Public Relations industry. Finola Guinnane and Lee Campbell from the University's PR & Communications team collected the Silver award in the Healthcare category for the healthcare campaign - 'Genetic Links to Anxiety and Depression (GLAD) Study'.



Ulster University C-TRIC Team celebrating 10th anniversary



Finola Guinnane and Lee Campbell from the university's PR & Communications team collected the Silver award in the Healthcare category for the healthcare campaign - 'Genetic Links to Anxiety and Depression (GLAD) Study'.



Professor Tara Moore and Declan Cunnane, Chief Executive of NI Chest Heart and Stroke

Eye test for early detection of heart conditions

Ground-breaking research funded by NI Chest Heart and Stroke and which aims to predict the risk of a person developing a heart condition, is being developed here in Northern Ireland.

A team of professors and cardiology medics from Ulster University and Royal Victoria Hospital, supported by RMCC and the Heart Trust Fund, received an initial grant from Northern Ireland Chest Heart and Stroke in 2015 and from then, began working on a simple camera-based test looking at blood vessels at the front of the eye.

Pioneering research with impact

Embracing the power of AI to improve patient outcomes and cultivate new start-ups

Ulster University announced a new strategic relationship with Dell Technologies and NVIDIA at the Big Data Conference in Belfast that will see Northern Ireland's leading research centre harness the power of artificial intelligence (AI) to develop assistive living and healthcare technology that will help transform patient outcomes.

This partnership aims to implement a high-speed computing power platform required to train AI models on ever-larger datasets. This is the first Dell Tech AI Ready Solution deployed in the EMEA region and represents a significant investment from the University.

By putting in place next generation servers, high-performance computing (HPC) software and other supporting infrastructure, researchers at Ulster University will be able to apply AI to predict illnesses before they emerge and put in place preventative measures that help to treat patients from the comfort of their own homes.

Student game wins at International Educational Games Competition

Solar System Chase, an educational Amazon Alexa powered board game created by visiting international students and supervised by Ulster University staff, won the best student game at the seventh International Educational Games Competition in October 2019.

This is the second success in the competition for the Ulster team who previously won the best overall game for Circuit Warz in 2016. The project team, based in the School of Computing, Engineering and Intelligent Systems, included Niall McShane and Dr Joan Condell, who worked with visiting students from France and Finland on the game during recent summer placements.



Photographed at the launch of a new strategic partnership are (from left to right): Mark Hopkins, DELL Technologies; Dr Paul Beaney, Project Manager (ECME), Ulster University; Patrick Cullen, Business Integration Manager, Ulster University; Paul Brook, DELL Technologies; Andrew Ennis, Lecturer in Computer Science, Ulster University; Sam Trotter, DELL Technologies; Professor James McLaughlin, Head of School of Engineering, Ulster University; George Maybury, DELL Technologies; Craig Rhodes, nVidia and John O'Donoghue, DELL Technologies.

Academic shares research at Barcelona Football Club

Dr Chris Bleakley, Lecturer in Physiotherapy in the School of Health Sciences, delivered a keynote workshop on 'Chronic Ankle Instability' at Barcelona Football Club as part of their Sport Science Week, in October 2019.

FC Barcelona annually hosts Sports Science Week, organised by Barça Innovation Hub, bringing together more than 2,400 professionals from 40 countries to debate medicine, physiotherapy, nutrition and fitness training. During this conference, Dr Bleakley shared details of his research into the management of recurrent ankle injury, and his insights as a member of the International Ankle Consortium.



Dr Chris Bleakley delivering keynote workshop at Barcelona Football Club



Student game wins at International Educational Games Competition

Pioneering research with impact

Supporting Cancer Research UK's international consultation

Research and Impact at Ulster University was delighted to get involved in Cancer Research UK's international consultation, seizing the opportunity to run their own workshop exploring the greatest barriers in cancer research and identify ideas for the next round of Cancer Research UK's Grand Challenge.

The workshop, brought together a range of academics from Ulster University and Queen's University Belfast to the scientific consultation workshop. This was one of a small number of focused workshops held across Europe, aiming to help Cancer Research UK identify the next set of Grand Challenges.

Researching the potential of electric vehicles

Ulster University's SPIRE two project acquired an electric vehicle to support essential research that will aim to tackle the identified challenges and better inform policymakers and stakeholders and give direction to further research on the impact of electric vehicles on existing power distribution networks.



Pictured from left to right: Professor Liam Maguire, Executive Dean, Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment, Ulster University; Leanne Massey, SEUPB; Malcolm Robinson, Transmission Investment Engineer, NIE Networks; Professor Neil Hewitt, Professor of Energy and Director of Centre for Sustainable Technologies, Ulster University, are photographed with an electric vehicle (EV) which will allow researchers at Ulster University to explore the potential of this new technology.

First NI university to become a member of UPEN

Ulster University was the first university in Northern Ireland to become a member of the Universities Policies Engagement Network (UPEN).

UPEN is a network of UK universities who are working together to increase the public policy impact from their research, offering a dedicated contact point for policymakers and a collective response to requests for evidence.



Pictured from left to right: Professor Mark Tully, Professor of Public Health, Jess Sutcliffe, Senior Research Funding Manager, Cancer Research UK and Professor Liam Maguire, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment during the consultation workshop.

Princess Anne opens new Spatial Computing and Neurotechnology Innovation Hub

The Princess Royal visited Ulster University's Magee campus in January 2020 to officially open the new state-of-the-art Spatial Computing and Neurotechnology Innovation Hub (SCANi-hub).

The SCANi-hub uses cutting-edge technology to determine the body and brain's responses to stress, fatigue, achievement, awareness, error and threats in complex training and performance assessment scenarios simulated in virtual environments.

Established by Professor Damien Coyle and Dr Karl McCreadie at the Intelligent Systems Research Centre, the new SCANi-hub will also build on award-winning neurotechnology research at the centre enabling research and education in the next wave of human-computer and human-machine interaction for able-bodied and physically impaired people.



The Princess Royal officially opens UU's new SCANi-hub and is photographed along with Professor Damien Coyle, Professor of Neurotechnology and Director of the Intelligent Systems Research Centre and Research Director in the School of Computing, Engineering and Intelligent Systems.

Pioneering research with impact

Taking the lead on hydrogen safety training for first responders in Europe

Ulster University researchers from the Hydrogen Safety Engineering and Research Centre (HySAFER) coordinated HyResponder, a European project to develop and implement a sustainable “train the trainer” programme in hydrogen safety for first responders throughout Europe.

The €1m European project, Funded by Fuel Cell and Hydrogen Joint Undertaking (FCH 2 JU) under Horizon 2020, supported the commercialisation of fuel cell and hydrogen technologies by training responders, who are involved in both the permitting process and in tackling accidents with hydrogen transport and infrastructure. The project underpinned the improvement of resilience and preparedness through enhanced emergency planning, intervention tactics and strategy and in ensuring appropriate accident management and recovery.

Tipping Point: Britain, Brexit and Security in the 2020s

Ulster University was delighted to host the launch of Tipping Point: Britain, Brexit and Security in the 2020s to an invited audience of senior security personnel, diplomats and academics on the Belfast campus.

Professor Michael Clarke, Fellow of Kings College London and a recognised international expert on security and his co-author Helen Ramscar, Associate Fellow of the Royal United Services Institute, outlined the big security challenges facing the UK in the 2020s.



Professor Alastair Adair, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Ulster University, Helen Ramscar, Lord Lieutenant Mrs Fionnuala Jaye-O'Boyle, Professor Michael Clarke, Professor Duncan Morrow, Professor in School of Applied Social and Policy Sc. at Ulster University

NI Science Festival – Let your mind wonder!

Ulster University was once again a key partner in the Northern Ireland Science Festival, in February 2020.

We hosted a number of events throughout the festival to inspire all ages to get involved in STEM. The general public were invited to understand the science behind superheroes, take a trip to Westeros on a Game of Thrones landscape tour and learn how mental stimulation can help train our brains. They could also test themselves against the Belfast Giants to see what it takes to compete at their level and learn how to communicate and control games using brainwaves alone, and voyage into the exciting world of virtual reality.



Professor Tara Moore and Professor Eileen Harkin-Jones, from Ulster University, attended the launch of the WISE Ambassadors programme, which was launched by WISE's Patron, HRH, The Princess Royal, alongside Lead Ambassador Professor Dame Sue Hill, Chief Scientific Officer for NHS England and Helen Wollaston, Chief Executive of WISE

WISE membership

To mark the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, Ulster University was proud to be named a core member of the WISE Campaign, which enabled and energised people in business, industry and education to increase the participation, contribution and success of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

As a member of WISE, the university is now a part of a forward-thinking network of companies and organisations that are committed to actively support the attraction, retention and progression of women. Gender balance is vital to everyone, and through collaboration and sound research, WISE supports organisations that want systemic change, tackling the root causes of the problem not simply addressing the symptoms of women's under-representation in STEM.

Ulster and Queen's awarded £2.1m for state-of-the-art high performance computing facility

This facility will allow researchers to use high performance computing (HPC) technology to address some of society's biggest challenges.

Named 'Kelvin-2', the project has received the funding from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) via the Engineering and Physical Research Council (EPSRC).

The facility, which will be based at Queen's University's McClay Library, will be used to accelerate research in six specialist areas; neurotechnology and computational neuroscience, advanced chemistry, innovative drug delivery, precision medicine, metabolomics and hydrogen safety.

Leading role in smart and healthy ageing research

Ulster University and the Medicines Optimisation Innovation Centre (MOIC) within the Northern Health and Social Care Trust joined a major innovative interdisciplinary health research project aimed at helping Europe's ageing population to live actively and independently at home in their communities with the support of assisted living technology.

Funded by the European Commission under Horizon 2020, the research project has a value of €21m and consists of a consortium of 36 partners across 14 European countries, and will run for four years. Led by the ALL (Assisting Living & Learning) Institute at Maynooth University, it is the largest European Commission funded health research grant to ever be led by an Irish university. The SHAPES acronym stands for Smart and Healthy Ageing through People Engaging in supportive Systems.

Harnessing the power of mass spectrometry imaging for research into degenerative diseases

Ulster University's Mass Spectrometry Centre is pioneering mass spectrometry imaging (MSI) on the island of Ireland, spearheading the use of this innovative technology to uncover new treatments for common degenerative diseases.

Led by Dr Diego Cobice, the centre is part of an international collaborative network, with Ulster researchers working closely with MSI centres worldwide.

Hackathon creates digital solutions to support senior citizens

Computer programmers of all backgrounds participated in a 12-hour hackathon as part of the PLACE-EE project on the Coleraine campus.

The PLACE-EE project is a transnational partnership of public health agencies, local authorities, academics and ICT experts dedicated to improving the quality of life for older citizens. It is funded by the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme of the European Union with the aim to develop and implement sustainable solutions to encourage internet use and address the barriers to service access.

The hackathon challenged groups to develop proof of concepts for solutions designed to enable older citizens to stay engaged and connected in the digital environment. Mentors assisted developers throughout the event increasing participants programming and collaboration skills while adding to their professional portfolio. At the end of the hackathon, participants pitched to a panel of judges, including key public and community stakeholders.



Rachel Burn, Northern Periphery & Arctic Programme, Gerry Leavey, Bamford Centre, Professor Karise Hutchinson, Provost of the Coleraine campus and Roger O'Sullivan, Institute of Public Health in Ireland, attended the a 12-hour hackathon which was held on the Coleraine campus, as part of the PLACE-EE project

Pioneering research with impact

HESPA20 Performance Management Award winner

The Strategic Planning team at Ulster was named one of the HESPA20 Award winners, for the category of Performance Management, at the annual HESPA conference.

HESPA (Higher Education Strategic Planners Association) is the representative body for those working in strategy and planning in UK higher education, and the HESPA20 Performance Management Award recognises the best use of data-driven evaluation of an institution's performance, linked to actual improvements and achievements.

Transitional Justice Institute supports WPS@20 events

Ulster University's Transitional Justice Institute (TJI), a world-leading law-led multidisciplinary research centre focusing on transitional justice, hosted a series of events to mark the 20th anniversary of landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and used this important anniversary to reflect on two decades of the WPS agenda.

Your beach is changing: Scientists study coastal erosion at Murlough Beach

A team of coastal scientists from Ulster University conducted regular surveys of Co. Down's Newcastle to Dundrum (Murlough Bay) beach system to find out how and why our coastline changes. Their findings will be used to predict future changes to help better plan how we use and also protect our fragile coastal environment.

The work is part of the €6.4 million European environment project MarPAMM (Marine Protected Area Management and Monitoring) that will develop tools and plans to protect vulnerable marine habitats and species in the waters between Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Murlough Bay beach study explores how climate-related processes including sea-level rise and storms, may alter the physical environment that supports protected species and habitats on our coasts.



Alison Rankin, Director of Strategic Planning and Performance, collects the Performance Management Award for Ulster University at the HESPA annual award ceremony

Doctoral College hosts 3MT®

In June the Doctoral College ran the annual Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) competition for the third year. The 3MT® is a research communication competition, which challenges our PhD Researchers to present their research and its impact in just three minutes, using non-specialist language. The Winner of the 3MT® final was Emma Nolan from the School of Psychology with her presentation on 'How Does That Make You Feel? The Psychological Staple That Continues to Prompt Research'. Emma went through to represent Ulster in the UK Semi-Final of the national competition hosted by Vitae.



Illustration of zero emissions ferry

Experts help secure £33m grant to build zero emission ferries

A Belfast Maritime Consortium led by Artemis Technologies, with Ulster University as a core partner, has secured a £33m UK Government innovation grant to develop zero emissions ferries in the city that will revolutionise the future of maritime transport.

The 13 partner syndicate – which is a mix of established and young companies, including Belfast Harbour and Bombardier, academia and local public bodies – is the only Northern Irish or maritime recipient of the UK Research and Innovation flagship Strength in Places Fund.

Ulster's role in securing the funding harnesses the expertise of a multi-disciplinary team led by Professor Alistair McIlhagger of the School of Engineering and will facilitate the development of innovation-led, regional growth through a marine cluster and capitalises on research activities within both universities and the aerospace sector.

COVID-19 related research

Impact on Universal Credit as a result of COVID-19

Radical changes to Universal Credit are needed now more than ever to help families facing further hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, a new report says. The research team – led by the University of York in partnership with Ulster University – worked with people claiming Universal Credit (UC) in Northern Ireland to understand their experiences.

Self-isolation research

Ulster University and Anglia Ruskin University conducted an online research study to determine the public health implication of COVID-19 and how self-isolation influenced health and behaviour.

Professor Mark Tully, from the Institute of Mental Health Sciences at Ulster University, along with his colleague Dr Lee Smith in Anglia Ruskin University, invited those who were self-isolating to support their research by completing a short survey.

Academics and researchers supported UK Parliament efforts to tackle COVID-19 and its impacts

UK Parliament saw a surge in need for access to research expertise as it engaged with the COVID-19 outbreak. Ulster academics and researchers were invited to contribute to the Outbreak Expert Database and provide expert insights relating to both COVID-19 and its impact.

Parliament and Parliamentarians used these insights to help carry out their function effectively to represent the people, scrutinise the Government, debate important and pressing issues and pass legislation.



Mental health and social impacts of COVID-19

Psychologists at Ulster University and the University of Sheffield have teamed up to launch a study of the mental health and social impacts of the COVID-19 epidemic to understand how they affect the mental health and behaviour of UK citizens. A team of experts, led by Professor Richard Bentall at the University of Sheffield, surveyed 2,000 people in the UK and their findings have helped inform the better management of future public health crises.

School of Education study invited working parents to share home-schooling experiences

Dr Barbara Skinner, along with a team from the School of Education, invited Ulster University staff who were home-schooling whilst working at home during COVID-19, to take part in an innovative research study, 'Home-schooling and working parents during COVID-19: trials, joys and tribulations'.

The key aim of the study was to connect with parents through WhatsApp and Twitter to gather their views and experiences of home-schooling their children in the COVID-19 situation. The research team was interested in hearing about the highs and lows of home-schooling and how this particularly unusual time in our lives impacted on family dynamics and emotions.

COVID-19 related research

Local universities and AWARE NI tackle mental health in the workplace

Researchers from Ulster University and Queen's University Belfast, in collaboration with AWARE NI, developed an innovative pilot project to explore the link between mental health training and improvements in wellbeing in the workplace.

AWARE, in partnership with the technical design company Creativ3, developed an online stress reduction programme, iAmAWARE, with expert advice and input from the cross-university research team and employees at PwC and the McAvoys Group.

Exploring COVID-19 exposure and immunity in NI

Led by Professors Tara Moore and Jim McLaughlin, the novel PANDEMIC (Protective/risk factors, ANtibody response, Dna, gEnoMICs) study aimed to determine the extent of exposure and the immune response to the coronavirus in the general population of Northern Ireland. The study also investigated the genetic risk factors for COVID-19 symptoms.

Using Ulster University's COVID-19 app and the UK Government Rapid Test Consortium's highly sensitive lateral flow test, the project team recruited 3000 participants to get a better understanding of the number of people in NI who had been exposed to the virus and whether different age groups or ethnicities make antibodies.

The results from the study helped inform public policy and recovery strategy and also gave individuals peace of mind to return to work as the lockdown eased.



Ulster University researcher Dr Magda Bucholc has created a COVID-19 data tracker

Early return to campus as research recommenced

Ulster University campus research facilities were closed to all but essential COVID-19 research which was actively supporting the fight against coronavirus on many different fronts. Ulster saw an early return to campus for many of our researchers who contributed to vital research that could not be carried out at home.

The university developed robust policies and procedures to allow the return of researchers to the labs, and safely monitored and phased this return. Research was undertaken in line with guidance issued by the UK government including working in indoor labs and research facilities and similar environments.

Establishing and resourcing viral diagnostic tests

An example of partnership working, in response to COVID-19, was the work carried out with the Western Health and Social Care Trust (WHSCT), led by Professor Colum Walsh, in establishing and resourcing viral diagnostic tests.

Professor Colum Walsh, based in the Biomedical Sciences Research Institute at Coleraine (BMSRI), was the Diagnostics Lead in the COVID-19 Consortium and worked with Dr Vanesa Devine (C-TRIC), Dr Taranjit Singh Rai (C-TRIC, Northern Ireland Centre for Stratified Medicine), Dr. Coral Lapsley and Dr. Andrew English (Centre for Personalised Medicine (CPM), C-TRIC) and clinicians and biomedical scientists within the WHSCT, to establish and develop COVID-19 testing at Altnagelvin Hospital's laboratories.

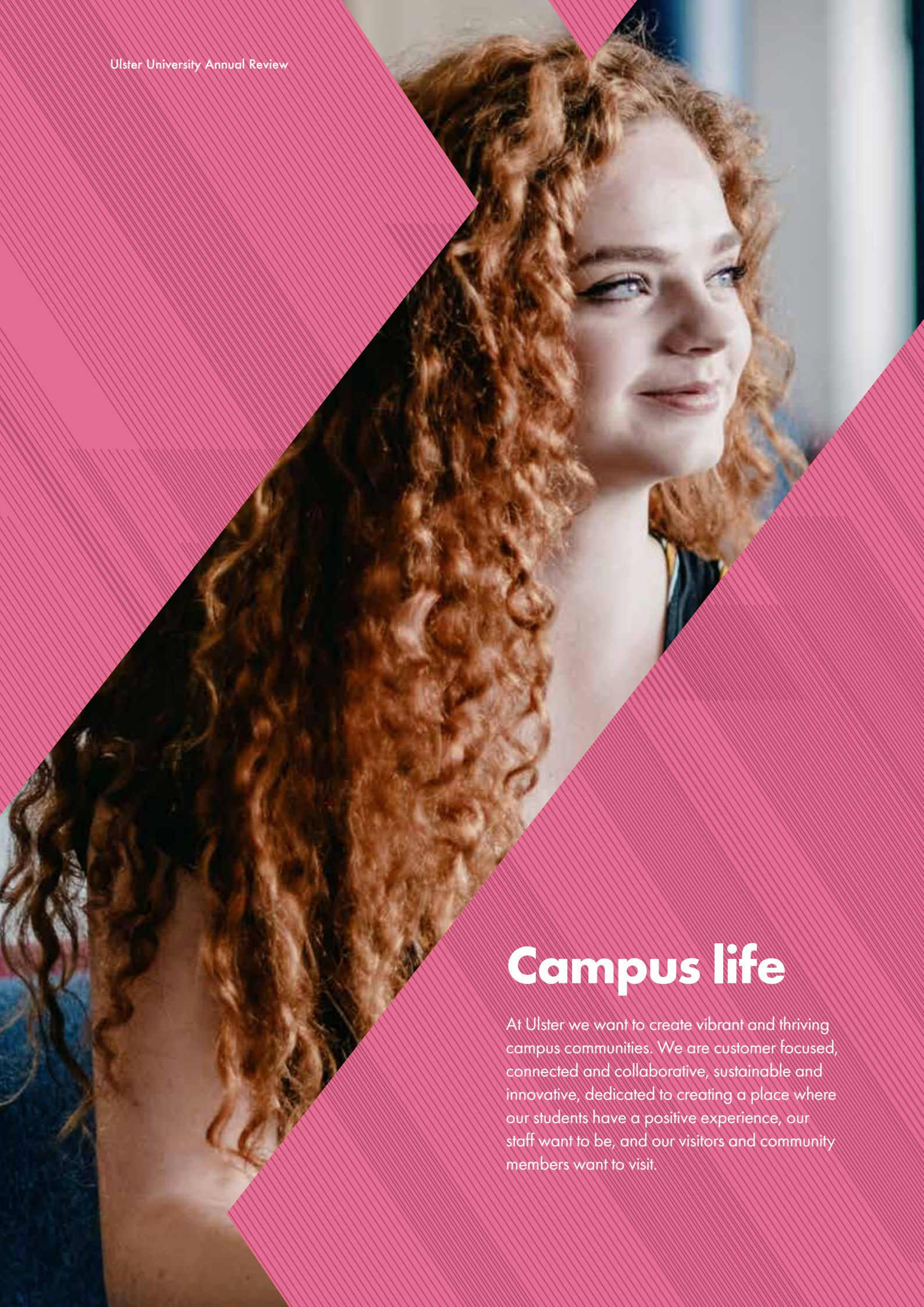
Professor Walsh, assisted by Dr Sara-Jayne Thursby (Biomedical Sciences Research Institute, Coleraine) and Dr Ben Wingfield (School of Computing, Engineering & Intelligent Systems, Magee/ CPM, C-TRIC) also assisted the Public Health Agency with 'Contact Tracing' of people who had exposure to COVID-19.

Along with Professor Tony Bjourson and a team from Ulster University, Professor Walsh helped raise £112,271 to purchase urgently needed robotics equipment for COVID-19 testing at Altnagelvin Hospital Laboratories. This automation equipment increased the daily testing capacity provided by the WHSCT.

Difficulties with supporting children's learning and well-being from home

Parents from across Northern Ireland with children in primary, post-primary and special schools overwhelmingly found supporting their children's learning from home and well-being challenging and difficult during lockdown. The Ulster University research uncovered that parents of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) found the change in routine and lack of additional support particularly difficult.

The research team from the UNESCO Centre, School of Education at Ulster University found, that while there was generally good support and communication from schools, principals and teachers, there was variance in terms of what parents received from schools, how they received it and opportunities for interaction between teachers and pupils.



Campus life

At Ulster we want to create vibrant and thriving campus communities. We are customer focused, connected and collaborative, sustainable and innovative, dedicated to creating a place where our students have a positive experience, our staff want to be, and our visitors and community members want to visit.

Campus life

'Diverse-Equal-Proud'

Ulster University staff, students and alumni came together to support and take part in the annual Pride Festivals being held across Northern Ireland.

Library at Jordanstown undergoes refurbishment

Refurbishment work was completed in the Library on the Jordanstown campus to further enhance the library space - this included creating new collaborative learning areas. The Library will be able to realise its vision to transform the experience of all users through the introduction of new and innovative services.



Guest Lecture delivered by Professor Christoph Bode, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich

Professor Christoph Bode, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, delivered a guest lecture 'Mary Shelley's Frankenstein: How German Is It?' at the Belfast campus.



Staff and students from Ulster University and UUSU taking part in the Belfast Pride Festival in August 2019.

50 school pupils to boost IT career changes in world-class environment (Novosco camp)

Novosco Camp in partnership with Ulster University returned. The five-day initiative, which is free to students aged 16-17 and enrolled at schools and colleges across Northern Ireland, provides first-hand, practical experience in the management and development of IT infrastructure and systems in a fun and engaging learning environment.



Olive Kanengoni (left), a pupil of Methodist College Belfast, Beth Dixon (right), who studies at St Mary's College Magherafelt, and John Toner (centre), a pupil at St Malachy's College Belfast, helped get this year's Novosco Camp underway. They are with Nicola Ayre of Ulster University's School of Computing and Patrick McAliskey, Managing Director of Novosco.



Photographed with Professor Christoph Bode at the event are (from left to right): Professor Raffaella Folli, Provost of the Belfast and Jordanstown campuses; Mrs Angela Welch, and Professor Jan Jedrzejewski, Professor of English and Comparative Literature

Campus life

Ulster University signs up to the Equality Commission NI's Mental Health Charter

Ulster University has signed up to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland's Mental Health Charter. This supports the university's commitment to promoting mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.

Riverside Youth Theatre selected for National Theatre London Connections Programme 2020

The Riverside Theatre, at the Coleraine campus, was selected by the National Theatre in London to take part in its Connections programme for 2020. Children and young people aged 12 – 18 years old performed new plays by up and coming playwrights, worked with a director from the National Theatre and had their work featured as part of the Connections Festival which took place from the third to the fifth of April 2020.

University's Naming Policy introduces The Birley Building

As part of Ulster's commitment to animate our campuses and create spaces which reflect our ethos, values and history, a Naming Policy has been developed to inform the future naming of spaces and buildings across all our campuses.

The first naming was the Birley Building, named after former Ulster University Vice-Chancellor Sir Derek Birley in recognition of his inspirational contribution to Higher Education in Northern Ireland.

Coleraine Campus Community Big Day Out

On Saturday 21 September 2019, Ulster University hosted a Community Big Day Out on the Coleraine campus. The local community were invited to enjoy a range of different fun activities for all the family.



Former Vice-Chancellor Professor Paddy Nixon signs the Mental Health Charter with Dr Evelyn Collins CBE, Chief Executive of the ECNI



Ulster University's Riverside Theatre



The Birley Building was officially named on 20 September 2019 by former Vice-Chancellor Professor Paddy Nixon



Coleraine campus Community Big Day Out

Campus life

Senior Government Minister tours Coleraine Campus to meet with students and staff - Northern Ireland Minister Robin Walker MP

Northern Ireland Minister Robin Walker MP visited Ulster University's Coleraine campus on 18 September 2019. He received a tour of the state-of-the-art biomedical research and teaching facilities accompanied by the Campus Provost Professor Karise Hutchinson and the Chief Executive of Causeway Coast and Glens Council, David Jackson.



David Jackson, Chief Executive of Causeway Coast and Glens Council; Professor Karise Hutchinson, Provost Coleraine Campus, Ulster University and Northern Ireland Minister Robin Walker MP, who visited the Coleraine campus on 18 September.

Ready Steady Cook Challenge proves a success in Coleraine

As a pilot project, undergraduate students from Nutrition, Food and Dietetics degrees at Ulster University worked in partnership with staff to deliver to support our important role in preparing pupils for the transition from school to university. Year 13 pupils from North Coast Integrated College and Loreto College were invited to participate in the Ready, Steady, Cook Challenge, which ran across five consecutive weeks, with a finale event on the Coleraine campus.



Professor Raffaella Folli, Provost of Belfast and Jordanstown, and Amanda Castray, the Director of Campus Life, welcomed the students whose artwork was chosen for the Legacy artwork project, to a launch on the Jordanstown campus. The selected artists, Karl Hagan, Sarah Cathers and Adam McIlwaine, are also photographed with Louise O'Boyle, Associate Head of Belfast School of Art.

Launch of Sustainability Smart Awards

Staff across the university were invited to register for the Sustainability Smart Awards, which are designed to encourage, recognise and celebrate the efforts of staff and students in making the University more socially responsible and sustainable.

Launch of Jordanstown Legacy Artwork

Our new Belfast campus is transforming higher education in the city, creating a dynamic teaching and learning environment. As the campus is expanded at Belfast and the move from Jordanstown for staff and students nears closer, an artwork project was devised to create an early opportunity to link the student and staff communities across both campuses ahead of the relocation.



Students taking part in the Ready Steady Cook Challenge in Ulster University

A new programme was launched for 2019/20 featuring an impressive range of musicians across a wide genre of music.

Music@One Programme announced at Magee

Music@One is a series of flagship events that highlights the vibrant culture of performance on the Magee Campus, coordinated and led within the School of Arts and Humanities. A new programme was launched for 2019/20 featuring an impressive range of musicians across a wide genre of music.

Enjoy the 'Taste the Island' initiative at The Academy Restaurant

Ulster University's Academy restaurant, took part in 'Taste the Island' initiative, which is delivered in conjunction with Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Fáilte Ireland to showcase local food and drink. The unique six course menu celebrated local produce and showcased the creativity of Ulster University culinary arts and hospitality degree students.

Sixth-Form English Literature Conference hosted on Coleraine campus

Pupils from 21 schools across Northern Ireland took part in a Sixth-Form English Literature Conference held on the Coleraine campus to find out more in-depth information about studying English at Ulster University.

The pupils were able to listen to our lecturers, discuss their AS / A Level English Literature topics and pick up lots of handy hints and tips to help them prepare for the exams.



The Academy Restaurant on the Belfast campus

Social Work Students support the Pantry Project to tackle Food Poverty in the North West

The 'Stand Up for Social Work' Society at Ulster University donated their contributions from their Christmas foodbank campaign to The Churches Trust Pantry Project. The Pantry Project feeds over 2,400 people a year with the ethos of community giving to community.

Christmas gift brings artistic masterpiece to the Belfast campus – 2nd annual Art Unwrapped exhibition

On 11 December 2019, Ulster University, Belfast City Council and National Museums NI came together in partnership to launch the second annual Art Unwrapped exhibition, on our Belfast campus. This special partnership has made possible the display of a most beautiful, magnificent and significant painting from the Ulster Museum's collection that would otherwise not be possible.



Eliza McGourty, Year 14 art student, Hazelwood Integrated College, Professor Raffaella Folli, Provost of the Belfast campus, Charlie Dodds, Year 13 art student Hazelwood Integrated College, Lisa Toland, Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development, Belfast City Council and Kathryn Thompson, CEO NMNI, photographed at the launch of 'Art Unwrapped'



The Christmas Hamper Handover on the Magee campus.

Campus life

Ulster Lecturer presents cheque to AWARE NI

£2,599.40 was raised for the charity AWARE NI at the annual Concrete Society for NI dinner, which was attended by 285 guests representing the leading companies in the industry. Dr Bryan J Magee organised this dinner with all money raised going to AWARE NI, the Depression Charity for Northern Ireland.

World-renowned artists and graduates Colin Davidson and Oliver Jeffers speak candidly on the secrets to their success

Belfast's Lyric Theatre played host to a special evening of art, discussion and insight.

Ulster University alumni and world-renowned artists Colin Davidson and Oliver Jeffers treated their audience to a fascinating and unique discussion as they shared career highlights and delved into how they started out in Northern Ireland, with their sense of place playing a vital role in shaping their works.

Students invited to apply for the Mind Your Mood Award

In 2018/19, the university launched the Mind Your Mood Award which provided grants to a maximum of £1,000 for student-focused projects. Students were invited to apply.

Wo/men's Network exhibition - 'Our Time and Contexts'

This exhibition was created to celebrate and promote the breadth of women's talents and skills from across the university.

The sixteen women photographed hail from the four campuses: Belfast, Coleraine, Jordanstown and Magee and were photographed in their places of work, within the context of Ulster University, illustrating the variance of existences and their spheres of influence.



Dr Bryan J Magee, Course Director of the MSc in Construction Business & Leadership and Chair of the Concrete Society for NI, presents a cheque to Lisa Abell-Farrelly, Corporate Relationship Officer with AWARE



Ulster University alumni and world-renowned artists Colin Davidson and Oliver Jeffers with Ulster University's Edward Friel, Director of Development and Alumni Relations and Professor Paul Seawright, Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Wo/men's Network exhibition was created to celebrate and promote the breadth of women's talents and skills from across the university.



Les Mills Fitness is now at Ulster University

Sport Services at Ulster University was delighted to announce that Les Mills is now at the Jordanstown campus. Attracting an international fitness brand like Les Mills to Ulster University means we can offer a greater variety of classes.

Applicant Days

The first of 2020's Applicant Days was held on the Coleraine Campus on Saturday 8 February. Almost 1,100 people attended the Applicant Day on the Coleraine Campus, which was opened by Professor Karise Hutchinson, Provost of Coleraine. Subject specific talks were well attended and tours of the campus were a big draw for those attending.



The Academy signs up to Belfast Restaurant Week 2020

Belfast Restaurant Week returned to Belfast City Centre and the Academy Restaurant on the Belfast campus took part. During the week, the Academy restaurant featured a special lunch menu.

Ulster University named as finalist in the National Student Housing Survey Awards

Ulster University received the great news of our success in the National Student Housing Survey (NSHS) results, where we achieved top five status and have been nominated for two awards – for the 'Best Application Experience' and also for the 'Best Moving in Experience'.



Campus life

Ulster Orchestra makes a welcome return to Coleraine after several years

Renowned conductor Anu Tali and violinist Lise Berthaud joined the full Ulster Orchestra for a very special performance in the Diamond Hall, on the Coleraine Campus as part of Ulster Orchestra's 'On Your Doorstep' concert series.

Ulster's Nurses of the future inspired by a past heroine

Students and staff from the Ulster University School of Nursing joined a celebration of the life and work of the world-renowned nurse Agnes Jones at St Mura's Church of Ireland in Fahan, County Donegal on 23 February 2020. Agnes Elizabeth Jones (1832 – 1868) of Fahan, County Donegal, Ireland is recognised as the founder of Public Health Nursing. Existing and potential students of nursing were inspired by this local heroine.

UUSU announce Student Officers elected for 2020/21

UUSU members elected their new Student Officer team for 2020-21! Members confounded all expectations at such an unprecedented time to register almost 6,000 votes across the seven Officer and 28 Academic Rep roles, which work on the ground to address any issues with the educational journey and experience of the student body.

University accommodation used for NHS staff

Following a request from the Western Trust, Ulster University, with its business partner DSV Ltd, worked together to make rooms at the Duncreggan Student Village on the Magee campus, available to health service staff working at the frontline.

These NHS workers needed accommodation as a result of cross contamination fears with regard to their family members.



Members from the Ulster Orchestra were joined by the Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens, Sean Bateson

Celebrating Women in Sport – UUSU Sport initiative

The 'Women in Sport Week' is a UUSU Sport initiative aimed to celebrate the sporting achievements of female athletes, the organisational skills of our female club leaders and the university's commitment to female participation in sport and physical activity.

Some of the women featured during the week included Amanda Castray – Director of Campus Life, Danielle Hill – Ulster University Swimming & Olympic hopeful and Katie McKeegan – Ulster University Rowing, Club Secretary.

Kindness focus for Mental Health Awareness Week 2020

During Mental Health Awareness Week, it was the perfect opportunity to show appreciation to those who are helping us, to take time to recognise the good that we receive and to respond by giving back.

During the week, the focus was on the power and potential of kindness. Kindness strengthens relationships, develops community and deepens solidarity.



Pictured from left to right: VP Education - Grace Boyle, VP Magee - Ryan Harling, VP Belfast - Robert Miller, President - Owen McCloskey, VP Sport & Wellbeing - Fintan Darragh, VP Coleraine - Curtis Donnan, VP Jordanstown - Rebecca Allen.



Professor Carol Curran

A message from Professor Carol Curran, Executive Dean, on International Nurses Day

"On International Nurse Day, I want to share my thoughts on a profession that is very dear to me.

When I began my own career in nursing more than 40 years ago, I could not have imagined that our health service would face a challenge of this magnitude. We are so incredibly proud of our students who have joined the frontline early, and of the commitment and positivity shown by the School of Nursing staff team in preparing our students for that challenge."

Ulster University student accommodation wins Best Moving In Experience Award

Ulster University was named the 2020 winner of the Best Moving In Experience Award in the National Student Housing Award. The Awards are based solely on direct feedback from tens of thousands of students from 225 educational establishments across the UK and Ireland.



Ulster University's Magee campus

Ulster University's Magee campus turned blue to mark International Nurses Day which took place on 12 May 2020.

The Riverside Theatre presents The Machine Stops, an online theatre performance

The Riverside Theatre, at Ulster University, presented their first co-produced piece of online live Zoom theatre with the Big Telly Theatre Company.

The production was The Machine Stops by EM Foster which imagines a future where people live underground in isolated cells where communication can only take place by audio or visual devices.



The Machine Stops cast

Campus life

Ulster University's CCRG raises over £1500 for Cancer Focus NI

Ulster University's Cancer Care Research Group (CCRG) at Institute of Nursing & Health Research, had a great weekend 'Clocking the Kms' for Cancer Focus NI at different idyllic landscapes throughout Northern Ireland. The group raised an impressive £1502 for the charity which has seen its fundraising income decrease during the coronavirus outbreak.

National Student Survey 2020 reveals 83% satisfaction rate for Ulster University

The 2020 National Student Survey (NSS) results revealed that Ulster University's overall satisfaction rate, in how our students rate the quality of our courses, was 83% (85% in 2019) which is the same as the sector average. The benchmark set for Ulster for 2020 was 82% and for the third consecutive year, the University has achieved results above benchmark expectation.



The Riverside Theatre set to run online Musical Theatre Summer Camp

The Riverside Theatre ran its Musical Theatre Summer Camp via Zoom. Designed for 8–18-year-olds, the camp aimed to provide a dynamic, nurturing, fun and focused environment for children and young people to learn key performance skills in musical theatre.



Cancer Care Research Group (CCRG) team at Ulster University undertook the 'Clocking the Kms' walk for Cancer Focus NI. From left to right: Dr Sean O'Connor, Sharon Bingham, Prof Eilis McCaughan, Dr Olufikayo Bamidele, Dr Cherith Semple, Jeff Hanna and Mariya Sotirova.

50th anniversary – Coleraine campus

Ulster University unveiled 'Towards Tomorrow' - a public art project to mark its 50th anniversary in Coleraine

This project was a partnership between Ulster University, the Garfield Weston Trust, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and The Honourable The Irish Society.



Photographed at the Towards Tomorrow sculpture unveiling in Coleraine are (from L to R): local visual artist Sara Cunningham-Bell, former Vice-Chancellor Professor Paddy Nixon and Professor Karise Hutchinson, Provost (Coleraine).



Realising our global vision

Our global vision is premised on building a globally engaged and globally relevant university; one which collaborates with the leading universities in the world and that attracts the highest quality staff and students. We want to embrace a highly multicultural community of learners, promote a strong, internationally relevant curriculum, and deliver a transformative international experience for all students.

Realising our global vision

Students go global with international placements

Ulster University students Beth Montgomery and Kyle Johnston took part in international work placements last summer, through the British Council's IAESTE (International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience) programme. This is an exchange initiative which sees students from science, engineering, technology or applied arts subjects undertake paid industry placements in one of 80 countries.

Beth, from Larne, is currently studying for a BSc in Biomedical Science and spent her summer working in Ghana at a research centre specialising in tropical medicine, while Kyle, a Civil Engineering student from Bangor, worked in Korea at The Korea Institute of Geoscience and Mineral Resources (KIGAM).

A further 28 students took part in short-term international mobility programmes, including an academic visit at the Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, work placements in Australia and Boston and an immersive cultural trip to the Berlin Film Festival.



Ulster students Beth Montgomery and Kyle Johnston were selected to take part in the British Council's IAESTE (International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience) programme



Visitors from Hubei Normal University, China, who undertook the UUBS Summer School

Annual Hubei Normal Summer School

Ulster University welcomed a delegation of visitors from Hubei Normal University, China, who undertook the Ulster University Business School's Summer School.

Throughout China there are approximately 200 universities that are referred to as 'normal' universities that specialise in training teachers, and Ulster has partnered with Hubei Normal University which is the host university in China for Ulster's Confucius Institute. Every year, its teachers come to Ulster to roll out the Mandarin teaching programme across Northern Ireland.

A presentation of certificates was held to mark the completion of the summer school with Professor Raffaella Folli presenting the Certificates of Completion to 15 delegates and two members of staff.

Students secure place on US scholarship programme

54 students from across Northern Ireland jetted off to study in the USA in August 2019, including 23 Ulster University students, having been selected to take part in the British Council's prestigious Study USA programme.

The students spent the academic year studying business or STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) related subjects in American colleges, across 34 States, with the aim of developing their career prospects when they return to Northern Ireland.



23 students from Ulster University were selected to take part in the British Council's prestigious Study USA programme

Realising our global vision

Partnership with Shaanxi University of Science and Technology to establish Ulster College in Northern China

Hundreds of Chinese students registered to attend Ulster College in Xi'an China last academic year in an international partnership that brings together the teaching expertise of Ulster University and Shaanxi University of Science and Technology (SUST).

Situated in Shaanxi Province in Northern China, Ulster College opened in September 2019 and offers Chinese students Ulster University's undergraduate programmes in the areas of Mechanical Engineering, Technology with Design and Computer Science.

Courses will have a focus on practical skills, informed by research, employer feedback and professional body standards to ensure Ulster College students will graduate with industry-ready skills to secure a graduate job. Students studying at Ulster College will also have the option to complete part of their degree at Ulster University's Belfast or Jordanstown campuses.

Chair of the UUKi Outward Mobility Group

Mehvish Ashfaq, Assistant Director and Head of Global Opportunities and Experience, was appointed the new Chair of the Universities UK International (UUKi) Outward Mobility Network, taking over from King's College London.

This network, with representation from over 90 universities across the UK, is the interface between UK Higher Education institutions and UUKi as related to the provision of outward mobility.

The UK has an ambitious strategy for outward mobility seeking 'to double the percentage of UK-domiciled, full-time, first degree students who undertake international placements as part of their higher education programmes... to 13% in 2020'. This will create a new generation of global graduates and a higher education culture in which international opportunities are an aspiration for all students.



Ulster College Open Day at SUST

Workshop at Masaryk University

Dr Peadar Davis, Senior Lecturer in Property Appraisal and Management at Ulster University, facilitated a workshop at the Faculty of Law, Masaryk University, based in Brno, Czech Republic, where he is a Visiting Professor. Dr Davis was one of an international team of experts from the UK and South Africa who participated in a series of lectures regarding property tax (the tax called Rates in Northern Ireland).

Ulster University Confucius Institute – Chinese New Year Celebration

A celebration was held to mark the Chinese New Year 2020 on 18 January 2020 in the Waterfront Hall, Belfast. During the event, guests were treated to a performance by Guizhou Song and Dance Troupe. Established in 1956, the Guizhou Song and Dance Troupe is a professional, highly influential performing arts group with a diverse repertoire of dance drama, opera, ethnic dance and music, many of which are original works.

The troupe has a cast and crew of more than 200, specialising in artistic creation featuring ethnic characteristics of Guizhou and has won many awards in competitions for the unique folk customs they portray and artistic styles they manifest.

This event was kindly sponsored by Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Belfast, Belfast City Council, Department of Education and The Executive Office.



Professor Paddy Nixon, former Vice-Chancellor of Ulster University and Professor Shuzhi Yao, Party Secretary of SUST are photographed at the official launch of Ulster College in Northern China

Realising our global vision

Ulster University supports Pakistan Science Fair Award

Computing students from four universities in Pakistan showcased a range of innovative technology ideas at the Pakistan Science Fair on Tuesday 28 January in Islamabad. Noor Binte Amir, from the National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST) was the winner with her poster entitled 'FLOWLINES Tackling Body Image Issues Using AI-Based AutoDraw Art in Air'.

The winning entry examined ethics in technological advancements, and proposed using creativity within technology to overcome modern mental health issues. Noor received an 80% scholarship to study a Masters in Data Science, Artificial Intelligence or Internet of Things at Ulster University, with two runners up securing a 50% tuition fee scholarship.

International Partnership Project delivered virtually to UUBS students

An innovative international partnership between Ulster University Business School (UUBS), Kempten University of Applied Sciences (Germany) and Lapland University of Applied Sciences in Finland equipped UUBS students with valuable entrepreneurial leadership and marketing skills through the '3 Nations Project' in April 2019.

Over 30 Masters students studying from the three institutions participated in the entrepreneurial marketing and business innovation programme that required participants to devise, develop and pitch a new business idea.

Now in its final year, the '3 Nations project' aims to develop entrepreneurial capability and confidence through guided experience and practice, whilst fostering an entrepreneurial marketing mind-set within the student cohorts through experience in enterprise learning activities.



Computing students from across Pakistan competing to win a scholarship to study at Ulster University at the Pakistan Science Award Fair

Ulster hosts its first remote annual International Agent Conference

June 2020 saw Ulster's annual International Agent Conference take place online, attracting a global audience of more than 230 agents from 10 nationalities. The event was opened by a welcome from the Deputy Vice Chancellor and featured Faculty overviews from the University's Associate Deans for Global Engagement, insights to the student experience and life in Northern Ireland, as well as updates from admissions and compliance.

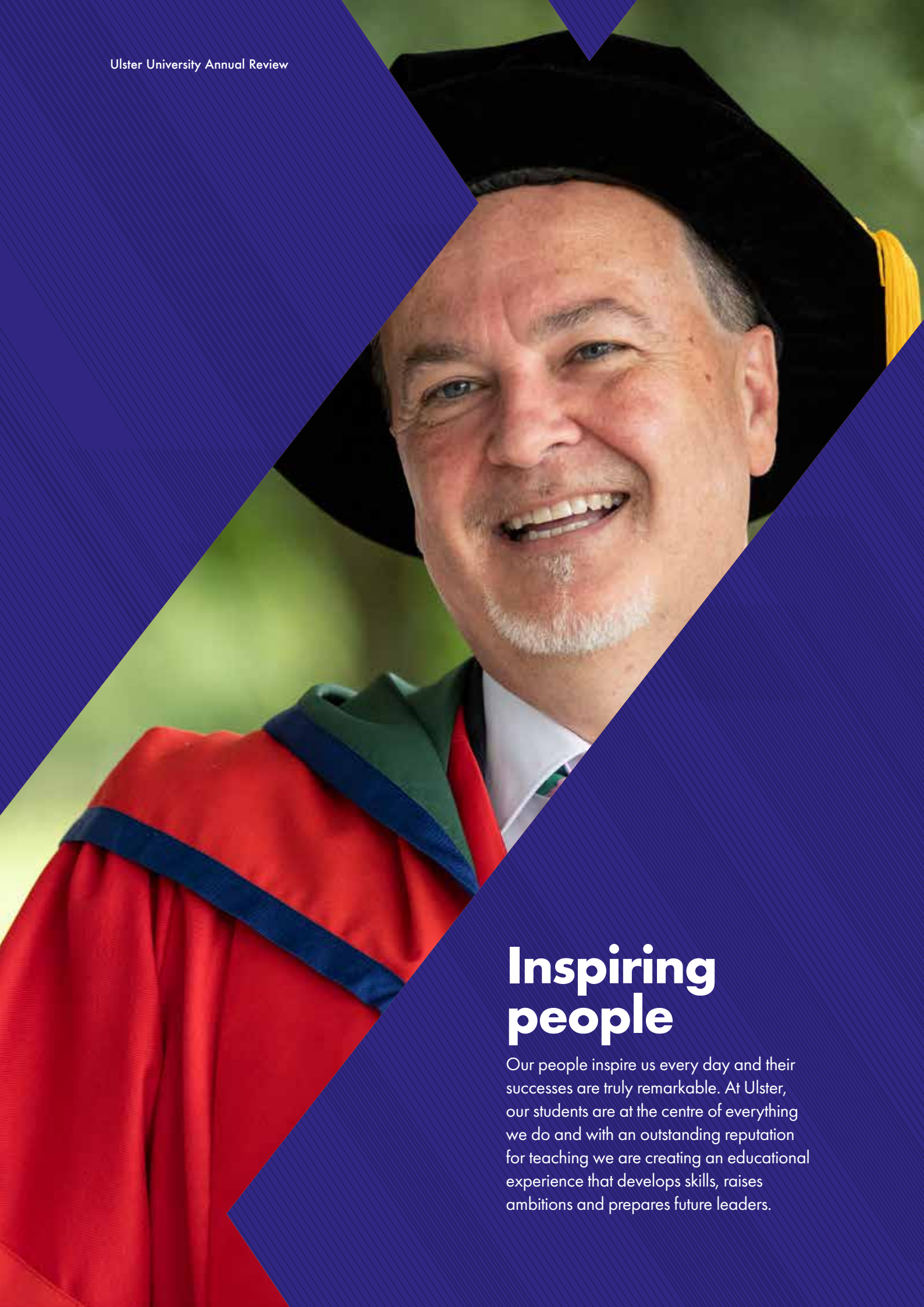
Catriona McCarthy, Director for Global Engagement, commented:

"Our conference builds not only on the success of last year's event, but also upon an already strong programme of global outreach, which has included the delivery of 90 online sessions to some 1,300 attendees. I am delighted at what the team has been able to achieve by way of quality engagement and outreach, despite the restrictions in place."

International Student Recruitment Soars at Ulster

The number of international students choosing Ulster as their study destination grew by 42.5% on the previous year. Prospective students were supported in their decision-making process by the Global Recruitment and Engagement team delivering over 200 information sessions, which attracted more than 5,000 attendees.

In July, a peak conversion period, webinars on highly popular topics such as "Living in Northern Ireland" and "Graduate Opportunities in Northern Ireland" were delivered in partnership with key stakeholders including Belfast City Council, Invest Northern Ireland, Tourism NI and Ulster University Economic Policy Centre. Both events attracted almost 350 registrations, demonstrating the importance of raising awareness of Northern Ireland as a study and post-study destination as part of the conversion process.



Inspiring people

Our people inspire us every day and their successes are truly remarkable. At Ulster, our students are at the centre of everything we do and with an outstanding reputation for teaching we are creating an educational experience that develops skills, raises ambitions and prepares future leaders.

Inspiring people

Ulster University Professor named number one insulin researcher in the UK

Professor Peter Flatt, Research Director of Biomedical Sciences at Ulster University has been named as the leading insulin researcher in the UK.

The list of the top 30 insulin researchers in the UK, based on the significance and impact of research published by the authors, was produced by Expertscape and published in association with Diabetes Times.



Professor Peter Flatt

Dr Stan Neal Book Launch: Singapore, Chinese Migration and the Making of the British Empire

Dr Stan Neal (John Springhall Post-Doctoral Lecturer in Modern British / Imperial History) launched his new book 'Singapore, Chinese Migration and the Making of the British Empire'.

'Women in Leadership' event inspires alumni and friends in Dublin

Ulster University's Development and Alumni Relations Office (DARO) in partnership with Ulster University Business School (UUBS) hosted a 'Women in Leadership' event on 3 September 2019, during which a panel of alumnae discussed their careers, shared their business challenges and successes.



Dr Liz Doherty, Dr Malachy Ó Néill and Professor Colin Turner

Celebrating outstanding academic impact

Three of Ulster University's teaching staff have been recognised in Advance HE's National Teaching Fellowship (NTF) Scheme this year.

Dr Liz Doherty from the School of Arts and Humanities, Dr Malachy Ó Néill, Provost of Magee, and Professor Colin Turner, School of Engineering, join a distinguished group of academics across the UK recognised for their outstanding impact on student outcomes and the teaching profession in higher education.



Women in Leadership event with Ulster University graduates

Inspiring people

Lecturer producing 100 PPE visors a day from home

Dr Aaron McConville, Lecturer in Electronic Engineering at Ulster University has transformed his study into a PPE production line.

Using 3D printers that he has built and assembled at home over the years, Dr McConville printed protective face shields for frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic.

In November 2020 Dr Aaron McConville very sadly passed away. From teaching to research, volunteering to winning awards, Aaron was exemplar in everything he did for Ulster University and in particular, the School of Engineering.



Dr Aaron McConville



Ronnie and Liz Millar celebrating their retirement

Husband and Wife team retire from Ulster after 40 years

Two of Ulster's long-standing members of staff, husband and wife team, Ronnie and Liz Millar retired on 19 June 2020. Liz is an administrator in the School of Psychology and has worked at Ulster for 40 years, while her husband, Ronnie Millar, who has worked at the university for 38 years, both retired on the same day.

Appointment to Interim Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland

Professor Siobhán O'Neill, Professor of Mental Health Sciences at Ulster University, accepted the role of interim Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland.

Professor O'Neill is one of Northern Ireland's leading experts in the field of mental health and is known for her active and passionate involvement in suicide prevention.

Fellow of the Joint University Council

[Professor Paul Carmichael](#), Associate Dean (Global Engagement) in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, is one of six esteemed academics from across the UK to be recognised as a Fellow of the Joint University Council (FJUC) for his outstanding contribution and leadership in the field of public administration.



Professor Paul Carmichael

Inspiring people

Professor Victor Gault appointed as Associate Dean for Research and Impact

Professor Victor Gault was appointed as the new Associate Dean for Research and Impact in the Faculty of Life and Health Sciences.

Victor's relationship with Ulster began as a PhD researcher in the School of Biomedical Sciences where he worked in the area of peptide therapeutics for the treatment of type 2 diabetes. Following this, he was appointed as Research Associate in the School of Biomedical Sciences, and then his career progressed to Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Professor, Head of School and now Associate Dean.



Professor Victor Gault



Maths Week honour for University Lecturer and Maths Author, Dr Mark McCartney pictured with his Ulster University colleagues Professor Hui Wang, Dr Nicola Ayre, Emeritus Professor Ken Houston and Dr David Glass.

Maths Week honour for Dr Mark McCartney

Dr Mark McCartney, a Senior Lecturer in Mathematics from Ulster University, has been honoured as this year's recipient of Maths Week Ireland's award for 'Raising Public Awareness of Maths', making him the first person from Northern Ireland to receive this honour, since its foundation in 2006.

Staff member Mickey Rooney named winner during the launch of RUA's annual exhibition

At Ulster University, we have a vibrant community of talented and skilled staff members and one of our colleagues in Student Administration, Mickey Rooney, was named winner of the 'Irish News Prize for a work depicting the theme of Ireland today', which he collected at the RUA's annual art exhibition.

Mickey had entered two images for the awards, one called 'orange' and one called 'green', with both depicting modern life in Ireland.



Mickey Rooney

Professor Sonja McIlfatrick, Head of the School of Nursing at Ulster University, was awarded a Fellowship by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN).

Prestigious Nursing Fellowship Award

Professor McIlfatrick is a leading clinician with over twenty years' experience in nursing and palliative care practice, education and research. She has secured substantial research funding and produced highly cited papers with over 1,200 citations since 2014, underlining the high esteem with which she is held in her field.

Appointment to Chef de Mission on NI Commonwealth Games Council

The Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council announced the senior leadership group for TeamNI. The team will be led by Chef de Mission Alison Moffitt-Robinson, who will fit her duties around her full-time job at Ulster University, where she works in Sports Development.

Applicant Days

The first of 2020's Applicant Days was held on the Coleraine Campus on Saturday 8 February. Almost 1,100 people attended the Applicant Day on the Coleraine Campus, which was opened by Professor Karise Hutchinson, Provost of Coleraine. Subject specific talks were well attended and tours of the campus were a big draw for those attending.



Professor Sonja McIlfatrick

Winter Graduation stories - December 2019:

Mature student confronts fears to graduate with Masters in Law

Julie Smyth-Leddy, a mum of five and budding businesswoman from Derry~Londonderry graduated with a Masters in Law at Ulster University's Belfast Campus. With big plans after graduation, Julie is looking ahead to building a life-coaching business and wishes to combine her legal background with her passion for people.

Hockey star graduates with Masters in Biomedical Engineering

MSc Biomedical Engineering student Megan Frazer from Co. Derry~Londonderry, graduated after successfully managing to balance her studies, a full-time hockey career and a few injuries along the way.



MSc Biomedical Engineering graduate Megan Frazer

Inspiring people

Inspirational international student graduates with distinction

Colombian student, Luisa Fernanda Romero Munoz graduated from Ulster University with an MSc in International Tourism Management, with Distinction, leaving an exceptional legacy behind. Arriving in Northern Ireland in 2018, the remarkable young woman was nominated for the John RE Scott Convocation Post Graduate Award for her efforts in peace building, social enterprise and services to humanity.

Ulster University's "singing nurse" graduates

Student nurse Brittany McArthur made headlines earlier this year as the sensational 'singing nurse', however, this success did not divert her from academic ambition, and graduated from Ulster University, as she looks forward to a bright future in the medical industry.

Eamon Mullan to step down as University Secretary after 16 years' service

Eamon Mullan, University Secretary, stepped down from his role after sixteen years of service. He is photographed with Ulster University Chancellor Dr James Nesbitt and Edward Friel, Director of Development and Alumni Relations.

Summer graduation stories - July 2020:

Celebrating the Class of 2020 – Graduation arrangements for summer 2020

National restrictions, put in place due to COVID-19, have meant that the University had to make the very difficult decision to postpone the summer graduation ceremonies, however, we did not want the summer graduation period to go without recognition. As such, a working group co-ordinated by Student Administration, planned a 'Celebration Event' for graduates to recognise their achievements and to convey the #ProudofUU message.



Luisa Fernanda Romero Munoz

Shannon Grant

Callum Irwin

Award winning chef Callum Irwin adds first class honours degree to his list of accolades

Ballyclare man Callum Irwin has added a first class honours degree from Ulster University in Culinary Arts Management to his recent list of accolades, which include winner of Féile Masterchef, winner of 25th Anniversary celebrity dinner at the Michelin Starred The Fat Duck in Berkshire and playing a role in helping the Muddlers Club Belfast secure its first Michelin Star.

Ulster University graduate overcomes cancer and hopes to help others facing difficulties

Ulster University student, Shannon Grant, graduated with a BSc in Social Policy.

Resident of Newtownabbey, Shannon overcame her battle with cancer while studying, ultimately gaining a 2.1 for her hard work.

First Class Honours for First Graduate in the family

First in his family to go to university, Wallace Bruce graduated with a first class honours in Media Studies and Production and a diploma in International Studies with distinction from Ulster University. He also received the RTE prize for achieving the highest overall mark on his course.

Masters student completes her degree while working on the frontline during the pandemic

Ulster University graduate, Jasmine Neil, graduated with an MSc in Human Nutrition. While completing her masters amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Jasmine worked on the frontline both as a care assistant and as a volunteer Emergency Transport Attendant with St John Ambulance Northern Ireland (SJA NI).

Ulster University golf star "on course" for career success

Niamh Ward, who graduated with a first-class honours degree in Accountancy, has been excelling on the putting greens and fairways as well as in the classroom.

Niamh's golf game has since gone from strength to strength, winning the Irish Intervarsity Golf Championships in 2018 and 2019. She is only UU student ever to retain an Intervarsity Golf title in consecutive years.

A photograph of two male students walking towards the camera on a paved path. The student on the left is wearing a bright red hoodie and dark trousers, smiling. The student on the right is wearing a blue hoodie, glasses, and a backpack, also smiling. In the background, there is a large, historic stone building and a yellow street sign. The image is framed by large orange diagonal shapes on the left and bottom right.

Student experience

It's the student experience at Ulster that sets us apart. We provide opportunities to help open doors and transform lives. We support our students throughout their journey, from before the application stage, through to graduation and beyond.

Student experience

Rising PhD stars in Nutrition scoop prestigious awards at FENS conference

Dr Aoife Caffrey, Ulster University PhD graduate and Research Associate in Nutrition and the Ageing Brain (VALID Project) in the Northern Ireland Centre for Food and Health (NICHE), won the DSM Bright Science Award 2019 for 'Innovative PhD research in human sciences', at the international Federation of European Nutrition Societies (FENS) conference.

Aoife was selected as one of four finalists from across Europe and invited to present her research at the special symposium at FENS 2019, with nominees judged on both the quality of their scientific research and connection to the theme.



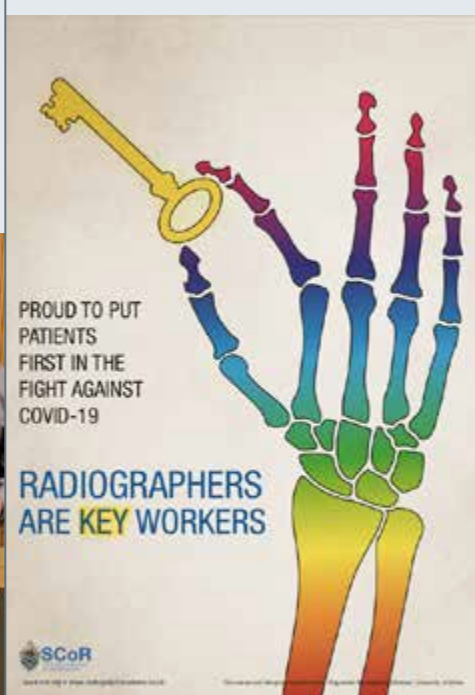
Dr Aoife Caffrey, Ulster University PhD graduate and Research Associate in NICHE, is awarded the DSM Bright Science Award 2019 for Innovative PhD research in human sciences, at this year's FENS conference

Student wins Society and College of Radiographers Poster Award

Ulster University second-year Diagnostic Radiography student Ellen Grew was named one of last year's winners of the Society of Radiographers' World Radiography Day poster competition.

The theme of Ellen's winning poster is set around the COVID-19 crisis and the recognition of radiographers as frontline workers.

The competition was open to all registered members of the Society of Radiographers, including qualified practitioners as well as students. The winning posters are sent to more than a thousand radiography departments across the UK to promote radiography as a career and its vital role in contributing to modern healthcare by increasing public awareness of diagnostic imaging and radiation therapy.



Ellen Grew's winning Society and College of Radiographers Poster design



BSc Culinary Arts Management student, Niall Courtney, reached the National Competition Qualifier for the WorldSkills UK Culinary Arts Competition

Ulster student competes for WorldSkills UK Culinary Arts Team

Part-time BSc Culinary Arts Management student Niall Courtney successfully reached the National Competition Qualifier for the WorldSkills UK Culinary Arts Competition, making him one of only eight Health, Hospitality and Lifestyle student finalists in the Culinary Arts sector. This was a fantastic achievement and a first for Ulster University to be represented at WorldSkills UK LIVE.

Student experience

Oluwashina Akinsanmi wins UK 3MT People's Choice Award!

Oluwashina Akinsanmi, PhD Researcher in the School of Geography and Environmental Sciences, won the UK 3MT® People's Choice Award – Oluwashina competed in the UK Final of the UK Three Minute Thesis Competition held in Birmingham, delivering an outstanding presentation on 'Antibiotic Resistance Crisis: The Sawdust Redemption' to an audience of over 400 academics and researcher developers in higher education. The People's Choice Award was decided by the audience via an online poll.

Simplifying the Admissions Process for 2020

The Admissions team at Ulster University saw improvements in the speed and efficiency of their offer acceptance processing thanks to a new automated approach delivered by the Web Development team, ISD and the Banner Support team.

2020 offer acceptances came through the automatic accept/decline system, following UCAS issue of the AS12 confirmation email, speeding up the processing and freeing up teams from a previously manual process.

This is just one example of several business improvements that were introduced via the university's web platform, including real time reporting on offer status of students and an improved applicant experience.

Free Student Webinars to support recruitment online

Colleagues from the Market Engagement team, along with academic teaching staff from various faculties and departments as well as course tutors, hosted a series of webinars where our future students could engage with our staff and find out more about life at Ulster.

There was a packed schedule of sessions planned across April and May. Each seminar lasted 45 minutes and covered a different topic, from how to apply to UU, parents' talks, career options, specific course information, find out more about each campus, faculty focuses and much more.



Oluwashina Akinsanmi

Reaching out to schoolboys at 'Men in Nursing' event

The School of Nursing hosted a 'Men in Nursing' event, where over 40 Year Nine to Year Eleven school boys were given an insight into nursing. This project aimed to address the stereotypical view of nursing as a female-only profession and in doing increase boy's knowledge and awareness about nursing and to influence perceptions so that they would consider nursing as a viable career option in the future.

The schoolchildren came from Holy Cross College in Strabane to this event which was held on the Magee campus, and they had the opportunity to experience various aspects of nursing including clinical skills and mental health nursing.



Ulster University students and staff at the 'Men in Nursing' event in Magee

Student experience

Enhancing the admissions experience

To ensure a smooth process during an anxious time, prior to the clearing period in 2019, Ulster teams introduced a series of enhancements to improve the admissions process for both incoming students and the staff who support them. Developments included:

- Advanced agreement on grade flexibility and subjects going into Clearing ahead of A level results day, to assist in prompt decision making
- A suite of communications for each category of applicant
- Automated acceptance of offer to improve applicant experience
- Introduction of an enquiry form to filter enquiries and speed up offer making

The confirmation and clearing process is a very busy time for academic and professional staff and the enhancements introduced assisted in the hugely important job of delivering a positive first impression and a warm and supportive welcome to Ulster University.

Applicant events across campuses

Over 2500 young people and parents were welcomed onto campus during March for last year's Applicant Events. With Student Recruitment being one of our three core priorities, colleagues from Faculties, Marketing & Communications, Campus Life and UUSU collaborated to achieve increased attendances that were up by 44% at Coleraine, 129% at Magee, 29% in Belfast and 57% at Jordanstown.

These applicant events provided an opportunity to reinforce the many reasons to choose Ulster University; exploring all aspects of student life – from subject learning and career prospects to student wellbeing. Attendance and feedback from these events was encouraging and reflected a committed team effort from professional services, academic colleagues and the current student body.



Applicant Day Jordanstown campus

St. Joseph's Boys' High School (Newry) awarded Ulster University Endeavour Cup

Ulster University's Endeavour Cup was presented to St Joseph's Boys' High School in Newry for their work on the Broader Horizons project.

The staff and pupils had demonstrated their excellence through participation in the Ulster University project which had recognised non-academic achievements such as an increase in self-esteem and overcoming personal obstacles.

The Endeavour Cup is a recognition of schools and their pupils, and will support transformation within communities, as part of the North Belfast Community Benefit Framework.

Department of English launches Year 13 Poetry Competition

Ulster University's Department of English invited English Literature Year 13 pupils to participate in its Poetry Competition. The theme of the competition was 'climate' which affects us all and often impacts day-to-day life.

The competition was open to English Literature, Year 13, pupils in schools across Northern Ireland and was judged by a panel from the Ulster University English Literature team and Seamus Heaney HomePlace.

Launch of UnLockU to support graduates of 2020

UnLockU, an employability programme by Ulster, launched in June 2020 and was designed to support students graduating in 2020 through enhancing their network, developing their skills and providing professional careers guidance.

The three step programme offered one-on-one support for students from Employability Advisors as well as subject and sector-focused support through networking events, running through the month of July.



Monique Hart, Lecturer in Occupational Therapy and Dr Greg Kelly, Reader at Ulster University, presented the Endeavour Cup to Mrs Muckian, English teacher at St Joseph's Boys' High School Newry

Student experience

Staff invited to share ideas as Ulster University extends strategic partnership with PwC

In September 2019 Ulster University and PwC launched a three-year partnership which will focus on employability, skills and the Future of Work, building on PwC's sponsorship of the Ulster University EDGE skills awards.

Through the partnership, Ulster University and PwC will seek to provide strategic development opportunities to University students and staff supporting our ambitions to prepare for future of work and future of education challenges.

Enhanced career opportunities for students through BDO Interview Award

Accounting students at Ulster University were given the opportunity to enhance their employability skills and kick-start their careers thanks to the BDO Interview Award.

The award process is organised by Ulster University's Business School and the Employability and Careers Department and includes skill training provided by senior staff at BDO Northern Ireland.

Celebrating another spin-out success

We were proud to celebrate the success of Haru Ltd and the support provided to our student and graduate entrepreneurs through UUSU and Innovation Ulster Limited (Ulster University's technology commercialisation company).

By helping our multi-award winning student entrepreneurs, over 150 businesses have been established in the last two years. Haru is one such business, created by Ulster University student Jacques Hill, along with his business partner Sam Lynas.

Haru is a third-party platform, offering a variety of features that enable charity shops to accurately price, upload and sell items online. The platform uses proprietary algorithms to guide users on what price to list items at online and instore based on demand, quality and rarity of the item.



Professor Paul Bartholomew, Vice-Chancellor and Lynne Rainey, PwC Deals Partner and NI Student Recruitment lead, welcomed the three-year partnership launch with Philip Black, Business Economics student and placement student with PwC.

Ulster University website ranked Top 10 in Accessibility across the UK

The latest Silkide Index ranked Ulster University in 6th place across all universities in the UK for website accessibility. The Index measures websites by their digital accessibility in relation to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1, the legal standard required of all public sector websites by September 2020. A multitude of features such as screen reader compatibility, text and image legibility and mobile accessibility are measured and ranked through the Index.

Ulster's NSS ratings indicate high level of student satisfaction

The 2019 National Student Survey (NSS) results revealed that Ulster University significantly outperformed the sector in how our students rate the quality of our courses.

The University benchmark as set by the Office for Students was 83% and in 2019 Ulster achieved an overall satisfaction score of 85%.



Ulster's Response to COVID-19

As an extraordinary academic year unfolded, we reiterated our priority to support our students to ensure that they would keep safe, keep learning and keep their degree and career plans firmly on track.

Our operational response

In March 2020, as the world faced the unimaginable disruption that was to arise as the pandemic took hold, we took the unprecedented decision to close our campuses for teaching and social activities. The safety and wellbeing of our entire University community of staff and students, and of our wider community was, and remains, our top priority.

Our track record in digital delivery and blended learning served us well as we moved to remote work and study. In support of this, we provided guidance, support and solutions to assist staff and students through this time, as we all adapted to a new way of life.

We created COVID-19 webpages as a central point of information to assist us all in navigating the challenges and necessary adjustments, including procedures for reporting and self-isolation. Regular updates to staff and students helped to ensure that we were engaged, informed and reassured as together we settled into a different way of working and studying.

We continued to monitor the evolving circumstances and ensured that our planning and delivery always reflected the government and public health guidance in place to keep our community safe, supported by thorough risk assessment and the input from our Independent Expert Advisory panel. Our immediate leadership response soon became a Recovery Planning Group, to steer the organisation and its people through the months ahead.



Staff, student and applicant wellbeing

Alongside the many practical and operational arrangements, we recognised the anxiety that this once-in-a-generation public health crisis could cause for our staff and students and so our staff and student wellbeing teams were on hand with guidance and support. We understood that both remote work and study, and the gradual return to campus for essential work and study brought different worries.

From March 2020, we introduced protective measures and requirements in our student accommodation so that our residents were safe and comfortable, and we took great care to make sure that all students were warmly welcomed, fully supported and well settled in their home from home.

Across primary, post primary, further and higher education, learning had evolved in ways we could never have imagined. Recognising the anxiety for year 14 pupils hoping to join us from September 2020, we supported teachers, students and parents every step of the way. We worked closely with the awarding bodies, teachers and other stakeholders to ensure that applicants were kept fully informed throughout the application, offer-making and admissions processes.

Supporting the safe return to campus

By May of 2020, we shared our approach to the incoming academic year to give staff, returning students and applicants as much certainty as possible, outlining that our first term would commence as planned on 21 September and we were prepared to deliver lectures and other teaching online for Semester One.

We confirmed that some on-campus activities would take place, based on a robust local risk assessment, and priority would be given to using campus spaces for practice-based learning activities including lab work. We also assured our students that we would continue to make it possible for them to engage in their programme of study in a meaningful and effective way.

As the year under review came to a close in August 2020, we were preparing to support the safe return to campus, welcoming those staff, returning students and those joining us for the first time to a different, but rich and rewarding blended learning environment.

We published details of those courses with a confirmed element of on-campus teaching; and confirmed that students on all other programmes could expect to follow their course entirely online. Those returning to campus for work or study were assured of a safe campus environment and our support to help them adjust to campus life in the context of COVID-19.

Our civic response

As a University, we acted promptly to lend our weight to the fight against coronavirus on many fronts; playing our part in tackling COVID-19 by harnessing our expertise and leveraging global networks to support the local, national and international response to this global pandemic.

Our experts worked directly with local and national governments to scale up screening and develop new antibody testing. Our data scientists worked as part of the local government task force to predict the trajectory of infection and vital PPE was manufactured at pace by staff and students from across the university.

We've always pioneered research that improves the lives of our communities and societies and addresses global challenges - and we continued to do so as we face the biggest public health challenge that most of us have seen in our lifetime.

Ulster University experts tackled the COVID-19 pandemic from every angle, with our researchers working on a number of COVID-19 related studies, from the physical study of the virus itself, to the implications of societal aspects of lockdown on mental health, education and the economy.

Newly established consortium tested up to 1,000 samples a day

The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI), Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University, formed a COVID-19 consortium to scale up diagnostic testing in Northern Ireland. This supported the health service and helped in the fight against COVID-19. DAERA's AFBI assisted the health service in testing up to 1,000 samples a day from suspect COVID-19 cases.



Professors joined Government led UK Rapid Test Consortium

Ulster University's Professor Tara Moore and Professor Jim McLaughlin were appointed to a Government led Rapid Test Consortium, via local company CIGA Healthcare. As the UK government began to review an exit strategy from the COVID-19 lockdown, testing and in particular accurate community testing was key to decision making at a Government Policy level.

This Consortium formed the UK Rapid Test Consortium (UK-RTC) to jointly develop and manufacture a COVID-19 Point of Care antibody test as part of the Government's five pillar national testing strategy for COVID-19.

Covid-19 tracker

Ulster University researcher Dr Magda Bucholc created a COVID-19 data tracker charting COVID-19 related positive cases, tests completed, and deaths in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The COVID-19 data tracker was available on the University's website allowing members of the public to access a visual comparator of collated COVID-19 data from official government and health sources across the island of Ireland.

COVID-19 symptom checker, diagnostic and contact tracker app

A team of researchers from Ulster University's School of Engineering and Computing, led by Professors Jim McLaughlin and Chris Nugent within the Connected Health Innovation Centre, developed an app to check for COVID-19 symptoms and provide advice.

The app collected information, checked for symptoms, helped to perform diagnostics and provided advice. Data from the app was also used to aid contact tracing and inform policy and decision makers in their overall recovery strategy. A novel add-on to improve overall result accuracy was the ability to read an antibody test result that was performed in the home setting.

Mental Health App

Developed by researchers from Ulster University and Cork Institute of Technology (CIT), 'ChatPal – Your Positive Psychology ChatBot' was the mental health app designed to support users' mental health and wellbeing and was funded by the EU and the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme.

The COVID-19 pandemic placed further pressure on already stretched mental health services. Helplines and online services were becoming the only viable option for mental health and wellbeing support. ChatPal was launched early to provide support during the unprecedented times. This was of particular concern for people living on their own who were feeling even more isolated and anxious.

Assessing antibody responses in COVID-19

Dr David Gibson lead an Ulster University Serology team (Dr Taranjit Singh Rai, Dr Andrew English, Dr Coral Lapsley - Northern Ireland Centre for Stratified Medicine, C-TRIC) that carried out work as part of NI COVID-19 Testing Scientific Advisory Consortium, to assess antibody responses in COVID-19 patients and provided seroprevalence data to the Department of Health and Public Health Agency in NI.



Financial summary

Financial Review

COVID-19 presented significant challenges for the University with students transferring to online learning and examinations from March 2020. Tuition fee income was maintained. In financial terms the main impact was on Residences, Sport and other trading areas of the University. This loss of income was mitigated by cost reductions due to campus closures. Overall the University finance performance was above target for the year.

Financial Statements

The financial statements comprise the financial results of the University consolidated with the results of its subsidiary company. The University is an independent educational charity whose legal status is derived from a Royal Charter granted in 1984. The distinctiveness of the University within the higher education sector places it within a small group of institutions that are research engaged and business focussed with significant commercialisation of research, major knowledge transfer relationships. It has a focus on contributing to economic, social and cultural development in Northern Ireland and its global standing.

Financial Health

Key performance indicators are set out opposite with an assessment on progress against the financial strategy target with **red** meaning action required, **amber** more work required and **green** on track. When taken together these measures reflect the strong governance and effective management of the University's resources in sustaining financial health in the short, medium and long term.

Financial Sustainability Indicators	2020 Actual	2019 Actual		Comments
Surplus/(Deficit) after taxation as a % of total income	7.8%	(13.2)%	●	This includes the credit of £18m from movement in the pension funds liabilities.
(Deficit)/Surplus as a % of income after deducting pension provision movement	(0.6)%	6.3%	●	This indicates the level of return necessary for investment in capital
Earnings before Interest, Tax, Depreciation and Amortisation (EBITDA)	£14.4m	£24.9m	●	This is a measure of operating surplus excluding accounting adjustments and finance charges. It is a good indicator of financial capability to service debt and/or capital expenditure from internally generated cash.
Liquidity ratio	70 days	129 days	●	This measures our ability to fund short term cash requirements.
Current assets to current liabilities	1.1:1	2.6:1	●	An indicator of financial strength to meet short term liabilities
% Income from Non-Government sources	25%	27%	●	This measures the diversification of income sources.

Summary of Financial Position

Key Performance Indicators from the financial statements

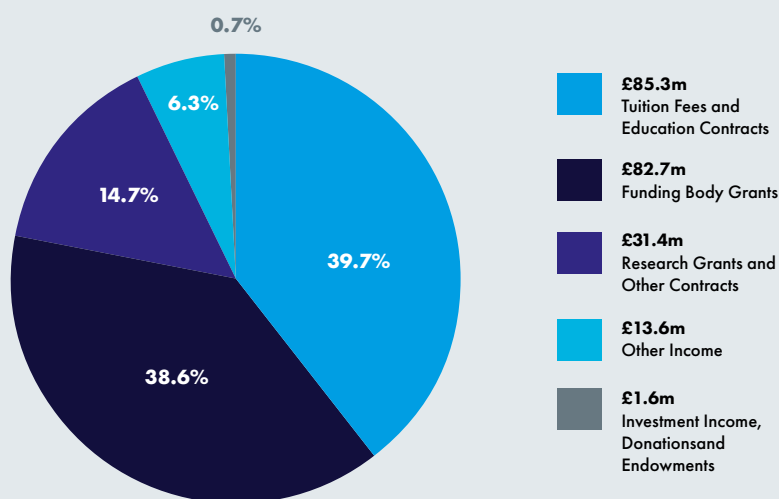
Year Ended 31 July	2020 £m	2019 £m	2018 £m	2017 £m	2016 £m
Total income	214.6	218.3	210.0	203.2	188.0
Surplus/(Deficit) before Gains and Losses	18.0	(32.2)	10.7	13.1	(3.6)
EBITDA	14.4	24.9	20.9	32.9	19.9
Net assets	255.7	262.3	308.7	277.3	259.6

How we allocated our resources 2019/20



These tables provide further information on the University's financial statements.

Sources of Income 2019/20



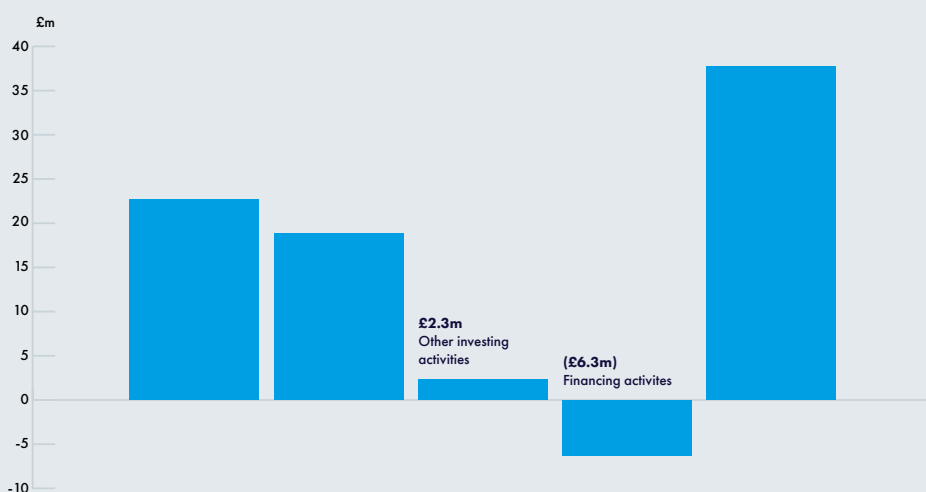
Treasury, Borrowings and Investments

Net cash decreased by £45.6m during the year. The movement in funds is summarised below:-

	2020 £m	2019 £m	Change £m
Investments & short term desposits	0.0	66.0	(66.0)
Cash at bank & in hand	37.7	22.8	14.9
Bank and other loans	(66.1)	(71.6)	5.5
Net cash	(28.4)	17.2	(45.6)

The main movement in cash is the impact of net capital expenditure during the year of £65.6m of which £61.5m relates to the Belfast development.

Cashflow Statement 2019/20





Governance 2019-2020

Council Composition

Ex-Officio Members

Pro-Chancellors

Mrs J Pyper
Mr A Langan (until 27/01/20)
Dr E Way (from 20/06/20)

Vice-Chancellor

Professor P Nixon (until 29/02/20)
Professor P Bartholomew (Interim Vice-Chancellor from 01/03/20 – 16/08/20)

Honorary Treasurer

Mr D Clements

President of the Students' Union

Mr A McAnallen

Appointed Members

Eight persons not being members of staff or students of the University
Mrs M Lindsay
Mr P Lobban
Dr P McNaney
Mrs H Quigley
Mr P Sheridan (from 09/11/19)
Mr R Sloan
Dr J Stuart
Mrs E Way (until 20/06/20)

Elected Members

Two members of Academic Staff
Professor K Burnett
Ms G Horgan

One member of Academic-Related Staff
Mrs H Bingham

One member of Non-Academic Staff
Vacancy

Audit Committee Composition

Members appointed by the Council
Mr A Langan (Chair until 02/12/19)
Dr E Way (Chair from 03/02/20)
Mrs H Quigley
Mrs H Bingham
Professor K Burnett

Council Committee

Governance, Nominations and Remuneration

Committee Composition

Chair of Council

Mrs J Pyper

Vice-Chancellor

Professor P Nixon (until 29/02/20)
Professor P Bartholomew (Interim Vice-Chancellor from 01/03/20 – 6/08/20)

Honorary Treasurer

Mr D Clements

Council Members

Dr E Way (from 07/02/20)
Mr A Langan (until 27/01/20)
Dr J Stuart

Independent Members

Mr D Bingham
Two Vacancies

Statement of Primary Responsibilities

The Council has adopted a statement of primary responsibilities which is available for download at: <https://ulster.ac.uk/statementofprimaryresponsibilities>



Annual
Review

19/20