

2012 ANNUAL REVIEW



 University of
ULSTER

YEAR IN FOCUS

RIISING TO THE CHALLENGE



Welcome to the University of Ulster's Annual Review for 2012.

You will find detailed coverage of the University's activities across our four campuses here in Northern Ireland and further afield online at ulster.ac.uk/annualreview

This year's web-based review is more dynamic than ever, with rich media content in the form of video and podcasts complementing copy and pictures, and providing a real flavour of our dynamic and modern institution.

As always, our Vice-Chancellor, Professor Richard Barnett, and Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council, Gerry Mallon, introduce the review of a year that has been a challenging one for us and all other higher education institutions here in the UK and beyond.

We are more than equal to the challenge, however, and our summary of the 12-month period illustrates our achievements in all aspects of our work which focus on achieving the goals set out in our Corporate Plan. The results of this focus were witnessed in many successful outcomes – not least by the fact that in 2012 we received over 34,000 undergraduate applications, our highest number ever.

Everyone associated with the University was delighted to see our Chancellor, Dr James Nesbitt, able to devote more time to this position in the latter half of the year with staff, students and guests enthused by his commitment to Ulster. He is undoubtedly a true ambassador for the University and one who inspires everyone he meets in this role.

To hear more about Dr Nesbitt's visits to the University in 2012, see and hear highlights from all areas of our business, and find out more about our development plans going forward please visit ulster.ac.uk/annualreview

DEVELOPMENT

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE



We are justifiably proud of our staff and students' academic achievements and the contribution they make to all aspects of building a better Northern Ireland.

No other institution has done more to ensure that everyone with the aptitude and appetite to learn, whatever their background, has an opportunity to do so. And no other institution has enabled as many local people to acquire or upgrade their skills – one in 15 adults in Northern Ireland.

To enhance this position, we have an ambitious programme of development centred on both Greater Belfast and the North West.

In spring 2012, designs for our modern 21st century campus in Belfast were revealed. Stunning architects' impressions and images of the new development, built around the existing campus in York Street, hit the headlines and showed plans for both the exterior façade and the interior configuration of the building – designed to enhance the student experience and maximise shared teaching and learning and research and innovation activities.

Later in the year we also revealed our Jordanstown Masterplan concept proposal outlining the future vision for the site. The central focus of this Masterplan is a proposal to create an urban village-style residential

development, including mixed use community facilities which will become an integral part of the area, creating an exciting and vibrant place to live.

While the Greater Belfast Development programme will simply see a relocation of students and staff from Jordanstown into Belfast, it is in the North West that our plans for growth are focused.

This expansion in student numbers will be concentrated at Magee campus where the University has an exclusive option to purchase Foyle College lands in future – allowing us to almost double our physical footprint in Derry~Londonderry. This plan continues to move nearer fruition as all additional places awarded by the Northern Ireland government in the last two years have been allocated to this campus – over the next three years, full-time undergraduate places will expand by approximately 570 students.

Visit ulster.ac.uk/annualreview/2012/development to find out more.

A PROFESSIONAL FOCUS

The activities associated with our Teaching and Learning focus on the principles of providing 'professional education for professional life', 'enhancing employability' and providing 'access for all'.



All three come together in our partnership with the QA Business School, one of the UK's leading learning and training providers. In 2012, the University signed a formal agreement which means the QA Business School delivers selected business and computing programmes on our behalf at University of Ulster London and Birmingham branch campuses.

There is no better accolade for any organisation than satisfied customers, and the results of the National Student Survey (NSS) 2012 showed an improvement for Ulster in all areas. Based on the findings of the sector-wide initiative which asks final year undergraduates to give feedback on their courses in a nationally recognised format, overall 86% of Ulster respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of their course.

Employability continues to be high on the agenda – especially in the current economic climate – with many events taking place to assist job prospects. Our long-standing track record in offering degrees which provide placement opportunities and professional

accreditation contributes significantly to this, as does development of new initiatives such as the Professional Experience Programme (PEP) which offers top graduates a six-month internship with a local employer as well as a Graduate Certificate in Professional Practice, complete with a £5,750 bursary.

In widening access, Ulster continues to be recognised as leading the sector through development of unique programmes that are bespoke to us and our audiences. In 2012 we introduced Your University and Your Community, the banner under which all our outreach, widening access and community relations activities will be promoted and delivered going forward.

Further information on these developments and news from throughout 2012 on our teaching and learning can be found at ulster.ac.uk/annualreview/2012/teaching_and_learning

AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH

As a modern institution, being innovative is integral to our approach throughout the University and nowhere more so than in our research, innovation and creative ventures.

In 2012, our new Research and Innovation strategy was produced, aiming to strengthen our capabilities in applied and curiosity-driven research, alongside innovation initiatives designed to build on the positive impact our work has on the economic, social and cultural life of Northern Ireland and beyond.

Significant achievements in 2012 include breakthroughs in coastal and Alzheimer's research; the establishment of the Northern Ireland Connected Health Innovation Centre (CHIC); and a heating system pioneered by Ulster researchers showcased in London as one of UK's most innovative new products.

Creatively we remain ahead of the competition in Northern Ireland with an unparalleled portfolio of cultural and artistic endeavours produced by our students and staff.

At a time when spending money on an arts qualification might be questioned, in 2012 we showcased a number of high-profile successful projects which demonstrate the value of such study in shaping exciting and dynamic careers in the rapidly growing creative industries sector.



We also played a pivotal role in the development of the programme for the UK City of Culture 2013 and are proud hosts of many events at our Magee campus.

Highlights of our ground breaking research, innovation success stories and creative projects are at ulster.ac.uk/annualreview/2012/research



INCREASINGLY INTERNATIONAL

The University's global impact is far reaching and continues to extend further each year.



Our most high-profile and prestigious international partnership was formally launched in 2012 by China's most senior female politician Madame Liu Yandong. The Confucius Institute at the University of Ulster (CIUU) represents a significant milestone in Northern Ireland and Chinese relations and is indicative of our growing global reputation.

Our bid for the institute was chosen by the Chinese Ministry of Education's Council for the Chinese Language, Hanban, in 2011 and since then we have further developed our relationship with our partner university Zhejiang University of Media and Communication, based in south east China, as well as introducing a number of Chinese language initiatives here in Northern Ireland.

Elsewhere on the world map, 2012 has seen us establish new relationships and build on existing collaborations with educational and industry partners in many countries including the USA, Australia, Ghana, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and India.

This international reach was perfectly illustrated last spring with the University's first graduation ceremony in Saudi Arabia taking place for graduates of the BSc Hons Nursing Studies – with the ceremony for the next cohort of successful students due to take place in spring 2013.

Find out more about our global reach at ulster.ac.uk/annualreview/2012/global_connections

MEMORABLE MOMENTS

PICTURE PERFECT

A picture tells a thousand words - and also illustrates an institution's creativity and vibrancy in a way that no other medium can.

Our Memorable Moments section provides a month by month journey around the University of Ulster, using pictures, video and podcast to highlight some of the memorable events, announcements and new initiatives that took place in 2012.

We hope you enjoy them.

ulster.ac.uk/annualreview/2012/memorable_moments





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