



17

**Annual  
Review**

18

## Contents

<b>2</b>	Foreword
<b>4</b>	2017/18 Highlights
<b>6</b>	Our Year in Numbers
<b>8</b>	Building The Future
<b>12</b>	Excelling in Education
<b>20</b>	Pioneering Research and Impact
<b>30</b>	Ulster Life
<b>38</b>	Global Expansion
<b>42</b>	Inspiring People
<b>50</b>	Financial Review
<b>56</b>	Governance

# Foreword



The last 12 months have been extremely productive and rewarding for me as Chair of Council and for the whole of Ulster University. Significant steps have been taken towards achieving the objectives set out in our strategic plan, Five & Fifty, through the delivery of excellent teaching and research breakthroughs, resulting in civic impact and global recognition. We can be particularly proud of the outcome of the National Student Survey, supported by an excellent contribution on the part of our students to teaching excellence, through their extensive network of class representatives.

It has been a year of celebration for Ulster as the University's Coleraine campus reached its 50th year of teaching and research excellence. The milestone has been marked with a year-long programme of events inviting staff, students, alumni and the wider Coleraine community to share the journey from the past, to present and looking ahead to the future.

Investments in our physical estate are ensuring that Ulster University stands out from other institutions by providing high-quality, state-of-the-art facilities.

Our development of the Belfast campus continues to progress, despite delays earlier in the year. We have opened a new world-class teaching centre on the Magee campus, marking an £11m investment in the most modern and cutting-edge digitally enabled teaching facilities for our students. Facilities such as these are vital to ensuring we have the best quality environment for teaching and research, whilst also serving the needs of the wider community and supporting economic growth in our local areas, helping us fulfil our role as Northern Ireland's civic University.

This is not to say that the last 12 months have not been deeply challenging for the University, with no progress on our negotiations with government in regard to either income or various significant development projects, and the ongoing uncertainty around issues including Brexit and the political situation here. However, Ulster University continues to be ambitious in our vision and determined in our delivery.

The University's success is built upon a strong foundation of skilled and committed staff – both academic and professional.

From nursing and optometry to engineering and sociology, and everything in between, the progress and achievements you will read about in this review are testament to our staff.

As we invest in the physical surroundings to support academic excellence, it is our people and their successes that set the Ulster University experience apart. It is through the conviction, energy and enthusiasm of both staff and students that our plans will be brought to life.

This is my final year as Chair of Council. It has been a privilege to hold that role and I wish the University every success for the future.

John Hunter  
Chair of Council



We are also one of only eight universities in the UK to be selected to participate in a five-year research programme in partnership with BBC Research and Development, in looking at the use of data analytics in the media.

We continue to maximise our ability to develop valuable industry partnerships. From the announcement of our £5m Skills Development Initiative with Randox to the launch of our £7m joint research programme with BT to create 25 new university posts and 50 graduate posts in BT's new Global Development Centre in Belfast. The positions will look at the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things and Data Analytics, we are working with industry to understand and meet their needs.

As Northern Ireland's civic University, we bring our talents to bear on the most pressing problems in our society. Over one in four people in Northern Ireland will at some time experience mental health illness – a staggering figure. As the home to world-leading research and globally renowned researchers in this area, we launched the Institute of Mental Health Studies to bring together research from a number of disciplines to focus Ulster's efforts and to ultimately transform lives.

These achievements have all happened despite not having political agreement on a sustainable funding strategy for the sector, the collapse of the devolved administration, uncertainty over Brexit, and the discrepancy in funding between Ulster University and our competitors in the UK.

I am immensely proud that even with increasingly challenging political and financial circumstances, we continue to push boundaries, deliver academic and research excellence and maintain our position as the civic University for Northern Ireland.

Professor Paddy Nixon  
Vice-Chancellor and President

In my third annual review as Vice-Chancellor of Ulster University, I take great pride in the scale and significance of the achievements we have made over the last 12 months.

One of the most rewarding and invigorating achievements was the improvement in Ulster's position in the National Student Survey, moving up 67 places to 23rd in the UK. We outperformed the sector average by recording a satisfaction score of 87%. It is a remarkable achievement that entirely reflects the commitment and effort of our talented academic staff, as well as the many other colleagues who play an important role in delivering an outstanding student learning experience.

We take student experience seriously – not just for undergraduate students but for our postgraduates as well. This year we launched our Doctoral College offering consistently excellent PhD training across the University, nurturing the thriving research culture at Ulster. Since the launch of our Doctoral College, we have held our inaugural Festival of PhD Research and organised, with great success, the Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) academic competition for the first time.

Our dedication to providing a world-class student experience was further recognised this year by the Education Awards Ireland, who presented us with the Career Impact Strategy Award. This prestigious award recognises the University's commitment to supporting key sectors through producing industry-ready graduates, by working with our partners across all industries and sectors.

We have made significant progress in the delivery of the Five & Fifty Strategic Plan through our work with partners to drive education and learning, to create and communicate new knowledge and to transform complex theory into meaningful, social, cultural and economic impact.

A fantastic example of this is the investment of £20m in driving further growth in the creative economy, that is already worth over £1bn GVA to the Northern Ireland economy, by launching Ulster University's Creative Industries Institute in late 2017. The Institute is facilitating collaboration with industry, government and civic partners to develop industry-relevant research and nurturing the skills and experience required to maximise the opportunities in the fast-growing sector.



1



2



6



7



3

# 2017/18 Highlights

- 1. Ulster University teamed up with local community volunteers, Athletics NI and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council to launch a Junior Parkrun at the Jordanstown campus.
- 2. HRH The Prince of Wales visited Ulster University to celebrate 50 years of the Coleraine campus.
- 3. Local businessman Dr Terry Cross OBE donated £190,000 to Ulster University to develop the David Cross Research Fund in memory of his son who tragically died at the age of 33 from malignant melanoma, an aggressive form of skin cancer.
- 4. The Secret Postcards exhibition brought together art from leading professionals, celebrity artists, promising newcomers and talented amateurs in a display of over 200 large postcard sized (A5) drawings, photographs, paintings and prints.

- 5. Ulster University honorary graduate Dr Roma Downey officially opened the new multi-million pound teaching centre at the University's Magee campus.
- 6. Manchester United Foundation and Ulster University teamed up to engage and inspire pupils from local schools in Derry-Londonderry with "United... The Business", a pilot enterprise programme.
- 7. Ulster University law students moot at the Supreme Court in London for first time.
- 8. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond MP, visited Ulster University's Magee campus during a one-day visit to Northern Ireland. He met with the Vice-Chancellor and other senior staff to learn about the work of the University before taking a tour of the Intelligent Systems Research Centre.
- 9. Award-winning journalist and news presenter Jon Snow joined Ulster University's Professor Paul Moore for an 'In Conversation' event at St Anne's Cathedral.
- 10. Northern Ireland football manager Michael O'Neill gave Ulster University School of Sport students a masterclass in leadership as part of the School's Final Year Graduate Transition Programme.



8



4



5



9

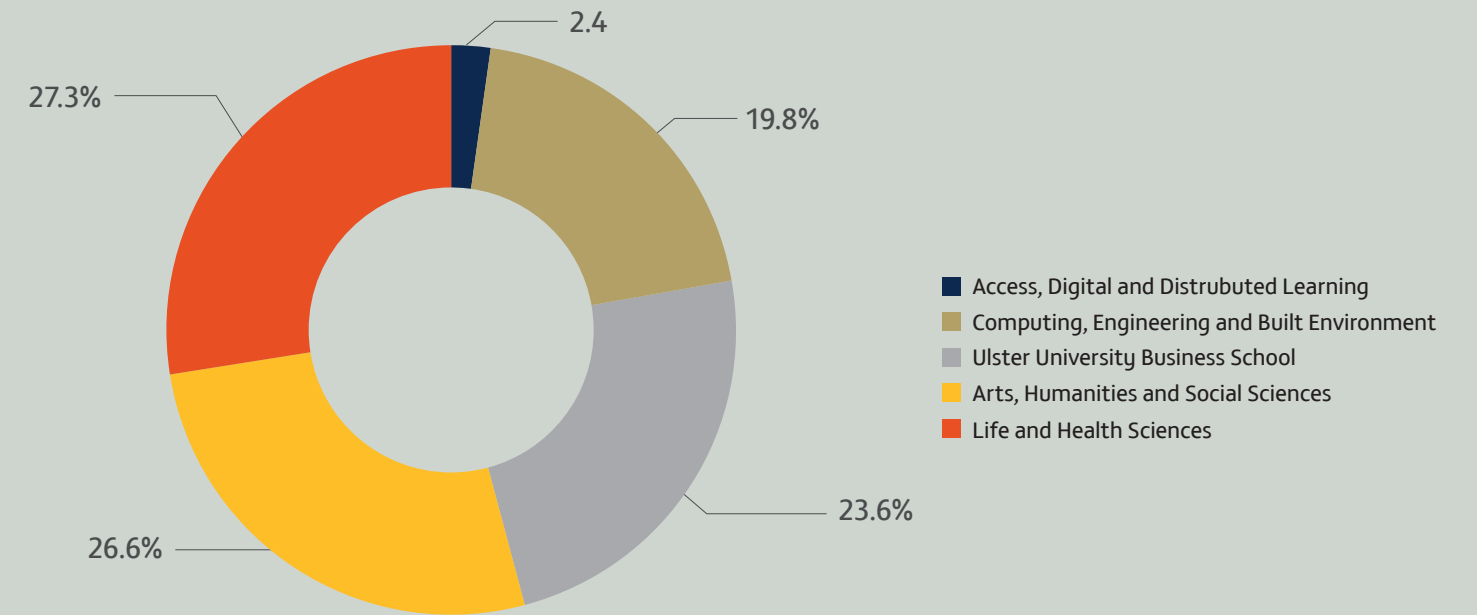


10

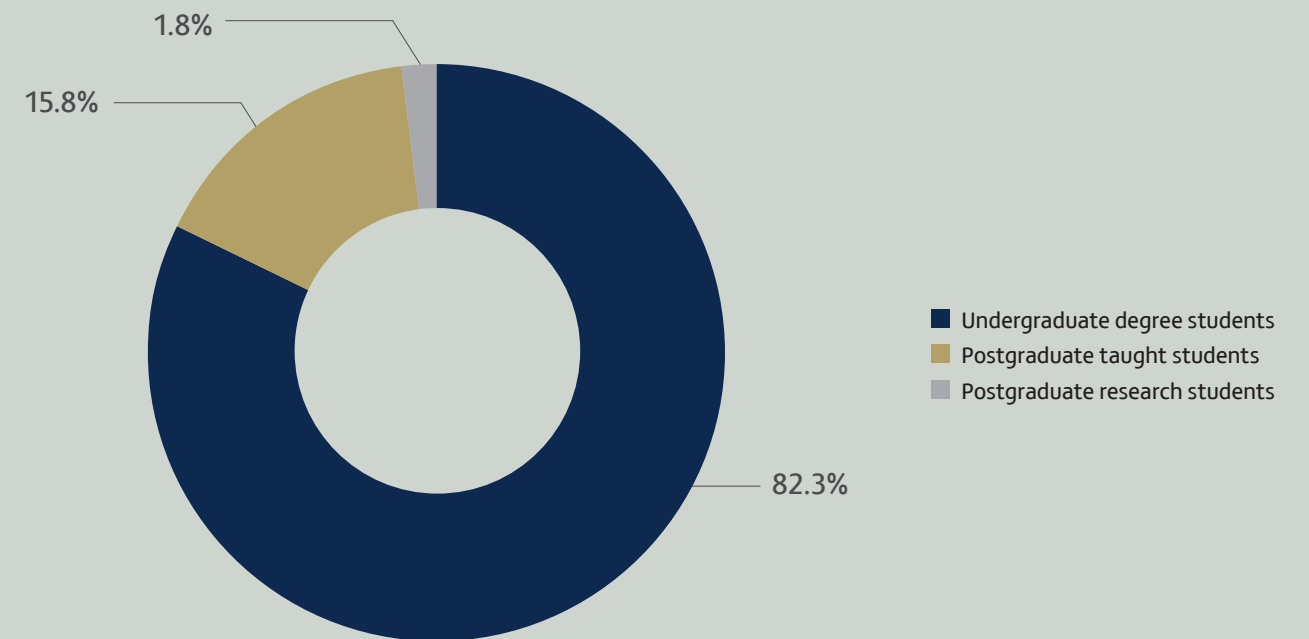
# OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

Over 25,000 students enrolled at Ulster are at the heart of everything that we do. We are committed to providing an educational experience that develops skills, raises ambitions and prepares future leaders in their chosen fields; transforming lives locally and globally. By enrolling at Ulster University, our students join a vibrant student community where there are new friendships to be made, ideas to be shared, thinking to be challenged and opportunities to be explored. Our teaching is underpinned by the world leading research carried out by our experts who make global pioneering breakthroughs and our high calibre of staff provide an outstanding environment and stimulating learning environment.

Student Numbers by Faculty 2017/18



Student Numbers by Study Level 2017/18



# BUILDING THE FUTURE

As Northern Ireland's largest university, investments have been made across all four campuses. Bringing together entrepreneurs, scientists, artists, industry leaders and world leading researchers to create a powerhouse of innovation and a key driver of the local economy.



## Over the past five years, the University has invested £27m in facilities for staff, students and the local community.

Ulster University's primary aim is to provide an exceptional student-centred learning environment and key milestones in building our future have been reached through the ongoing enhancement of our physical estate. This will help to deliver high-quality facilities for students, staff and the community.

### MAGEE

#### ENGAGING TEACHING AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Ongoing investment at Magee campus has provided state-of-the-art teaching, research and support facilities for students and staff. In January 2018, a new state-of-the-art £11m teaching centre was opened. A positive step in the realisation of the university's strategic vision for Magee and our commitment to expansion in Derry-Londonderry.

The four-storey facility, with a floor space of 4000 sq. metres, is attached to the existing library and includes three lecture theatres, 20 teaching rooms, open plan student hubs and a café. The new teaching block, officially opened by Ulster University honorary alumna, Dr Roma Downey, will facilitate a collaborative teaching approach and interactive learning experience, as well as offering fantastic conference facilities to Derry-Londonderry.

#### GRADUATE ENTRY MEDICAL SCHOOL (GEMS) PROPOSAL PROGRESSING

The proposal for a Graduate Entry Medical School (GEMS) has continued to develop. Feedback received from the Department of Health was actioned by a number of experts from Ulster University who resubmitted the outlined business plan.

Meanwhile, work has advanced to reach 'shovel-ready' status on the project through the development of a syllabus, curriculum and student placement programme, led by the appointment of Professor Louise Dubras as Foundation Dean for the School of Medicine.

GEMS will play a vital role in strengthening the health and social care workforce, developing highly skilled graduates who will help address current staff shortages and deliver the highest quality and safety of care.

### COLERAINE

#### 50TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

An important milestone was reached this year; the 50th anniversary of teaching and research excellence at Coleraine campus. The occasion was marked with 'Coleraine at 50', a year-long calendar of events, celebrating the last 50 years.

Part of the celebrations included a visit by HRH Prince of Wales who met staff and students from Ulster University, the Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens, Brenda Chivers, Manchester United legend Harry Gregg and a number of sports organisations from both within the University and the surrounding area.

During his visit, the Prince of Wales was given an overview of the history of the University, its integral role to Northern Ireland's first Enterprise Zone and the plans for the continued development of the campus.

As a lasting legacy, funding secured from Garfield Weston Trust, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and the Honourable Irish Society, will see a public art sculpture erected in Coleraine town to celebrate the 50th anniversary. Local artist Sara

Cunningham-Bell will design the sculpture with the help of local schools and wider community engagement.

#### INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Over the past five years, the University has invested £27m in facilities for staff, students and the local community. This year, building work progressed on the new School of Psychology, to include five high specification labs, to enable practical sessions with groups of up to 20 participants, the upgrade of experimental teaching suites for procedures involving human participation and four skills studies for larger group observational work. The new extension to the campus will also facilitate undergraduate teaching and research as the School makes its move from Magee to Coleraine.

Ulster University also remains committed to the creation of a School of Veterinary Medicine at Coleraine campus, aligned with our expertise in biomedical sciences and pharmacy. Discussions are ongoing with relevant professional bodies and stakeholders to create and implement an industry leading and market ready approach to veterinary education.

### JORDANSTOWN

#### CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

In December 2017, winter graduation ceremonies were held at Jordanstown campus for the last time. The occasion was marked with a special reception ahead of graduations moving to Belfast.

The University strengthened its relationship with the local community, launching Junior Parkrun in partnership with Athletics NI and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council. The 2km safe and free runs offers

locals the chance to engage with Ulster University and enjoy its assets.

In a bid to support the creative industries, Ulster University worked alongside NI Screen, turning Jordanstown campus into a film set for 'Normal People' starring local born Hollywood actor, Liam Neeson in July 2018.

#### ENHANCING FACILITIES

As progress continues with the plans to move much of the campus' operations to Belfast, Ulster University are committed to ensuring that Jordanstown campus remains an innovative and welcoming facility for students and staff.

In September 2017, learning spaces were created with the provision of over 600 study places across two floors of Jordanstown library. These spaces provide flexible options for studying with areas for single and group study and zones for silent, social learning. There is WIFI access throughout, with over 400 PCs, printing facilities and individual desks with power connections.

The staffroom received a makeover to provide a comfortable, modern space for

staff members to socialise and recharge and to improve the retail services available, the Spar store was refurbished.

### BELFAST

#### TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT

Work continues to progress on our transformative, future-orientated Belfast campus in the heart of the Cathedral Quarter. A space for problem-solving, research and innovation, Ulster University aims to be at the heart of collaborations that will be vital for transforming Belfast into a world-renowned centre for academic, business, industrial and cultural excellence.

Ulster University places economic contribution as central to its strategy; both via the pipeline of graduate talent and the direct impact of the £264m investment. Over 15,000 staff and students will move to Belfast, contributing an annual spend of approximately £100m.

The first phase of Ulster University's landmark development opened in October 2015 and is home to the Belfast School of Art and the UNIQUE art and design shop. This year, UNIQUE developed the Art Room

Project; a series of fun, free workshops for budding young artists aged 6 years+ focusing on printing, ceramics, weaving and more. The workshops, running between August and December, are sponsored by the Garfield Weston Trust and facilitated by current students and recent graduates.

#### CREATIVE HEART OF THE CITY

As part of Belfast campus' development, a significant investment of £20m has been pledged to creative industries. The opportunity to create a collaborative Creative and Digital Innovation Hub building will provide a home for the creative and digital sectors needing good connectivity, business support, funding and networking opportunities. This brand-new centre of innovation and research will connect our students and staff with visionary industries, some of which will be neighbours of the campus and will drive collaboration and consultation with industry, government and civic partners.

## Over 15,000 staff and students will move to Belfast, contributing an annual spend of approximately £100m.



# EXCELLING IN EDUCATION

At Ulster University we believe that excellence in education encompasses not just the academic rigour of our wide-ranging degree courses, but also the entire student experience.

We have a national and international reputation for teaching excellence and continue to build on this by creating exciting new courses that meet the needs of employers and the aspirations of students.

The quality, talent and dedication of Ulster University staff underpin the student experience which is further enhanced by a wide range of initiatives. This ensures we provide the best physical and social environment and deliver the personal welfare support that students need to develop into world-class graduates.

We are an outward-looking University that is committed to widening access to education. We have built strong partnerships across industry, which creates exceptional opportunities for our students.





In the last year, the number of students using active learning apps has risen by 258%, with 32,000 student joins.

#### THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

As part of the Learning Environment project, the University has not only investigated how to best use new learning spaces in Magee, Coleraine and Belfast campuses, but also how to utilise fixed environments and enable active learning through embracing learning technologies.

In the last year, the number of students using active learning apps has risen by 258%, with 32,000 student joins, helping to build staff and students' digital capabilities and to provide flexible, deeper learning opportunities, relevant to their success. A number of toolkits, in partnership with staff and students, have been developed to enhance the learning experiences for all.

#### INCLUSIVE LEARNING

Ulster University remains the largest recruiter of undergraduate students (19,160) on the island of Ireland and is the most equitable and inclusive University in

the profile of our students. The University welcomed 8,335 new undergraduates and supported over 4,500 students with Access bursaries. Learning gain was substantial with over 1,000 talented but less privileged students succeeding with good honours degrees and high levels of employability.

#### EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

Inclusive educational outreach to schools helped raise aspirations and increase attainment in preparation for higher level learning. Almost 1,800 pupils engaged in activities that pointed the NI curricula into our prospectus. This was aided by the University's partners including Manchester United Foundation, Barclays Bank, the Royal Academy of Engineering and LEGO.

#### SCIENCE SHOP

The Science Shop responded to social demand for knowledge in the form of real-world research with the voluntary

sector. Projects were undertaken by final-year students and their supervisors as part of their undergraduate programmes. Engaging over 63 community partners, Science Shop amassed over 4,500 days of expert voluntary civic contribution. During the year, 937 students undertook 210 projects across a range of disciplines, from the arts to the technologies. In this way, students developed a civic through line in their education to living-world research for civil society.

#### SUPPORTING EMPLOYABILITY

Ulster University's strategic plans place student employability and business engagement at the heart of our activities, ensuring that all learners are equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to excel in professional life. The University has developed an innovative and comprehensive employability and careers framework that is woven into the fabric of the curriculum, the students' learning experiences, and our co-curricular and extra-curricular provision. The framework has created an ecosystem of multiple, interconnected employability activities. In April 2018, Ulster University was awarded the Career Impact Strategy Award as part of the Education Awards, Ireland.

The employability framework provides an integrated and comprehensive view of the student employability journey, from initial career exploration through to application, registration, study and graduation. The framework supports faculties, schools and programmes to plan, develop and deliver their own student-centred approaches to employability. This approach has resulted in excellent outcomes in the most recent Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey, with 93% of our graduates in work or study within six months and 78% of leaver gaining professional level employment within the same period.

Almost 1,800 pupils engaged in activities that pointed the NI curricula into our prospectus.





Engaging over 63 community partners, Science Shop amassed over 4,500 days of expert voluntary civic contribution. During the year, 937 students undertook 210 projects across a range of disciplines from the arts to the technologies.

Work-based learning continues to be a key component of supporting student employability with over 2,000 annually undertaking a professional practice placement or a placement year.

#### BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Ulster University has an innovative and distinctive approach to employer engagement and business partnerships that supports the employability of students and graduates. The position of the four campuses allow us to fully engage with, and deliver, direct meaningful impact across the local business community. In 2017, Ulster University was the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce regional winner and UK national runner up in the Chamber of Commerce Award for Education and Business Engagement.

This year, over 250 employers took part in graduate and placement recruitment events, skills development workshops, spotlight showcases and guest lectures,

providing students with access to meaningful information, advice and support for finding internships, work placements and graduate jobs. A new employer account management system has established strategic graduate development schemes with some of the largest recruiters in Northern Ireland. Business briefings were hosted across our campuses where local businesses were presented with the economic outlook for 2018 and the ways in which the University can collaborate with businesses to drive graduate recruitment, business development, research and innovation.

Work-based learning continues to be a key component of supporting student employability, with over 2,000 annually undertaking a professional practice



Edge Excel Award Winners

placement or a placement year. Students receive a co-terminus award for a placement or approved study abroad.

Ulster University's second annual Impact Excellence Awards took place in May 2018 to recognise the transformational impact students, graduates and research are having on societies and economies across the globe. Leading organisations across a wide range of sectors were recognised for their commitment to pioneering research and graduate employability at this event.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland, Boston Scientific and local Health and Social Care Trusts were among the placement employers who were acknowledged by Ulster University for their role in supporting the next generation of highly skilled, industry-ready graduates. Industry partners were also recognised for research collaborations that have far-reaching impact beyond academia. These span across connected health, organisational change and strategy development and accessible creative technologies.

#### THE ULSTER EDGE AND EDGE EXCEL AWARD

The Ulster EDGE Award and EDGE Excel Award, sponsored by PwC, is a student employability award obtained by completing a range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Over 450 students graduated with the EDGE and EDGE Excel Award this year, completing over 2,000 activities including video elevator pitches. Heather Linden, BSc Hons Environmental Sciences student, was awarded Student of the Year.

#### DIGITAL SUPPORT

The Employability Portal platform saw major redevelopment with the focus on personalising the user interface and improving the student experience. The embedded Online Chat service, Interview Simulator tool, practice psychometric tests and the improvements in how students can see their EDGE Award progress in 'real-time', all positively influenced engagement.

As the gateway to work experience and placement opportunities, the

Ulster 'Recruit' platform also saw major redevelopment on both the student and employer interface showing a 100% increase in advertised placements and student applications.

#### NSS SUCCESS

More Ulster University students than ever took part in the 2018 National Student Survey (Ipsos MORI on behalf of the UK higher education funding bodies). Of eligible students, 76% responded across 51 subject areas, with more than half of those subjects achieving satisfaction levels of above 90% and the majority (76%) recording levels of satisfaction above the national average for the subject. With an overall satisfaction score of 87%, the University exceeded the NSS benchmark set for it by the Office for Students by 4% and the average for NI institutions by 3%.

#### STUDENT PARTNERSHIP

Working in collaboration with the Students' Union, a partnership agreement has been developed to formalise the University's

commitment to student engagement in all aspects of the development of its academic, cultural and social life and the support services it provides. The agreement is built on shared values with work underway to implement enhancements to current student representation. Students will be empowered to contribute to the University's further evolution, confident that their views will be valued and taken into account in the decision making processes.

Over 450 students graduated with the EDGE and EDGE Excel Award this year, completing over 2,000 activities.

Chamber Business Awards 2017





In the past year  
Ulster University  
secured £47.5m for its  
research, innovation  
and impact activity.

# PIONEERING RESEARCH AND IMPACT

Ulster University believes that excellence in research envisions an internationally engaged, research-led university, where both disciplinary excellence and impactful interdisciplinary research are undertaken across strategic research themes of social renewal, sustainability, healthy communities, and creativity and culture.

Social spaces for PhD researchers, known as The Doc@Ulster, were introduced on each campus to facilitate interdisciplinary interactions and to help our PhD researchers engage with each other.

The Research and Impact Strategy is now in its second year and significant steps have already been taken to improve the environment for researchers, in recognition that the success of the research strategy is dependent on our people. This includes the introduction of a suite of development and training programmes for our researchers, pump priming funds, new research infrastructure and new research systems to actively manage research activity and researcher profiles.

As an institution, we never lose sight of the power of research to change lives. Our researchers are effecting change through introducing clear water solutions in developing countries, through creating communication possibilities for people with brain injuries, through life changing interventions for people with mental health issues, through tackling current energy issues and in many other impactful ways.

#### FUNDING SUCCESS

Ulster University researchers continue to secure high levels of research funding from prestigious external sources. In the past year, 231 awards with a total value of almost £27m were secured, allowing Ulster's researchers to continue to undertake pioneering research in a wide range of disciplines that changes lives.

#### LAUNCH OF THE ULSTER UNIVERSITY DOCTORAL COLLEGE

The Doctoral College was launched this year with the aim of ensuring consistently excellent PhD training, contributing to the PhD experience and providing a thriving research culture.

Social spaces for PhD researchers, known as The Doc@Ulster, were introduced on each campus to facilitate interdisciplinary interactions and to help our PhD researchers engage with each other.

This year, the Doctoral College hosted the inaugural Festival of PhD Research on the Coleraine, Jordanstown and Magee campuses. The festival showcased and celebrated PhD research excellence at Ulster University under the themes of Creativity and Culture, Social Renewal, Sustainability and Healthy Communities.

Another first for the Doctoral College was its participation in the Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) Competition. The 3MT® is an international research communication competition, whereby PhD researchers are challenged to present their PhD thesis and its significance in just three minutes, in non-specialist language to a general audience. Ulster's winner in 2018 was Temilola Olukayode Olanrewaju who went on to successfully reach the semi-final of the competition. This was a fantastic achievement for Temilola and the Ulster University Doctoral College.





SiSaf Ltd has secured in excess of £10m of venture capital investment in 2018, the largest technology business investment in Northern Ireland over the past year.

#### COMMERCIALISATION OF ULSTER'S RESEARCH

The University continues to commercialise its research through spin-out companies, such as NeuroCONCISE. Offering wearable neurotechnology that interprets brainwaves and translates them into control signals, the technology can be used to communicate and interact with computers without moving – a movement free communication technology. Such innovations are currently being applied in areas such as videogaming, but NeuroCONCISE's focus is to help people with brain injuries. Following trauma, a patient's brain signals can be evaluated to aid doctors in making treatment decisions. Communicating with a sufferer can transform the lives of both patients and their families.

SiSaf Ltd is a specialty biopharmaceutical company with a unique patented next-generation drug delivery technology

that can elegantly solve even the most complex bioavailability challenges. The company has three inter-related revenue sources, providing formulation services and licensing SiSaf technology, selling SiSaf nano-silicon technology ingredients and specialty pharma-developing new drugs and products based on Sisaf Technology. The company has secured in excess of £10m of venture capital investment in 2018, the largest technology business investment in Northern Ireland over the past year.

This year Ulster University and Innovation Ulster Ltd welcomed the acquisition of BittWare by Molex. The digital signal processing spin-out EZ-DSP was acquired by BittWare in 2014. EZ-DSP had developed a strong client base including several international blue-chip customers. BittWare provided products to deliver processing power for demanding applications in data centre, military and aerospace, government and financial services. BittWare was itself acquired by Molex in 2018.

#### EXCHANGING KNOWLEDGE WITH PARTNERS

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) continue to play a significant role in establishing local companies as global players and industry leaders through open innovation collaborations with Ulster's researchers.

The University has a current portfolio of 16 KTPs worth £3.1m and a healthy pipeline of new applicants. Ulster has maintained its seventh place position against other UK universities in the UK KTP ranking list. Ulster University's KTP with CDE Global (CDE), led by Dr Justin Magee, was shortlisted in the Knowledge Exchange/Transfer Initiative of the Year category of the Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Awards 2018.

Consultancy continues to be a key mechanism of knowledge exchange for academics. As Northern Ireland's civic University, we use consultancy as a practical way to put our knowledge and expertise to work for the benefit of business and the wider community and have provided innovative business solutions to over 1,500 clients locally and internationally in the past five years.

#### ENABLING WIDER IMPACT FROM OUR RESEARCH

Ulster University is a partner in RTÉ Brainstorm, a media initiative designed to bring new thinking, new ideas and new perspectives from Irish third level institutions into the public domain. RTÉ Brainstorm is a new online platform for academics and researchers to publish a range of articles that reflect what is happening in the world around us and

communicate and stimulate fresh thinking on a broad range of current issues.

Together with a number of universities in Ireland, Ulster University is supporting the initiative to increase the profile of our academic and research output and share expertise and thought leadership. Many of our researchers have already had articles published on this platform and, with plans to expand RTÉ Brainstorm to include podcasts, events and radio broadcast commentary, there is potential to extend our research even further.

#### PIONEERING SAFE WATER SOLUTIONS

Ulster is leading on a £6m research project into low cost technologies for safe drinking water in developing regions. The SAFEWATER research programme is tackling a global challenge by looking at clean water solutions and the development of smart devices to quickly tell if water is safe to drink.

£4.7m of the funding is being provided by the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) Research Councils UK Collective Fund, and through the project Ulster University is joining forces with other partners across the globe to conduct the research. This includes academics in South America and NGOs already working in Columbia and Mexico.

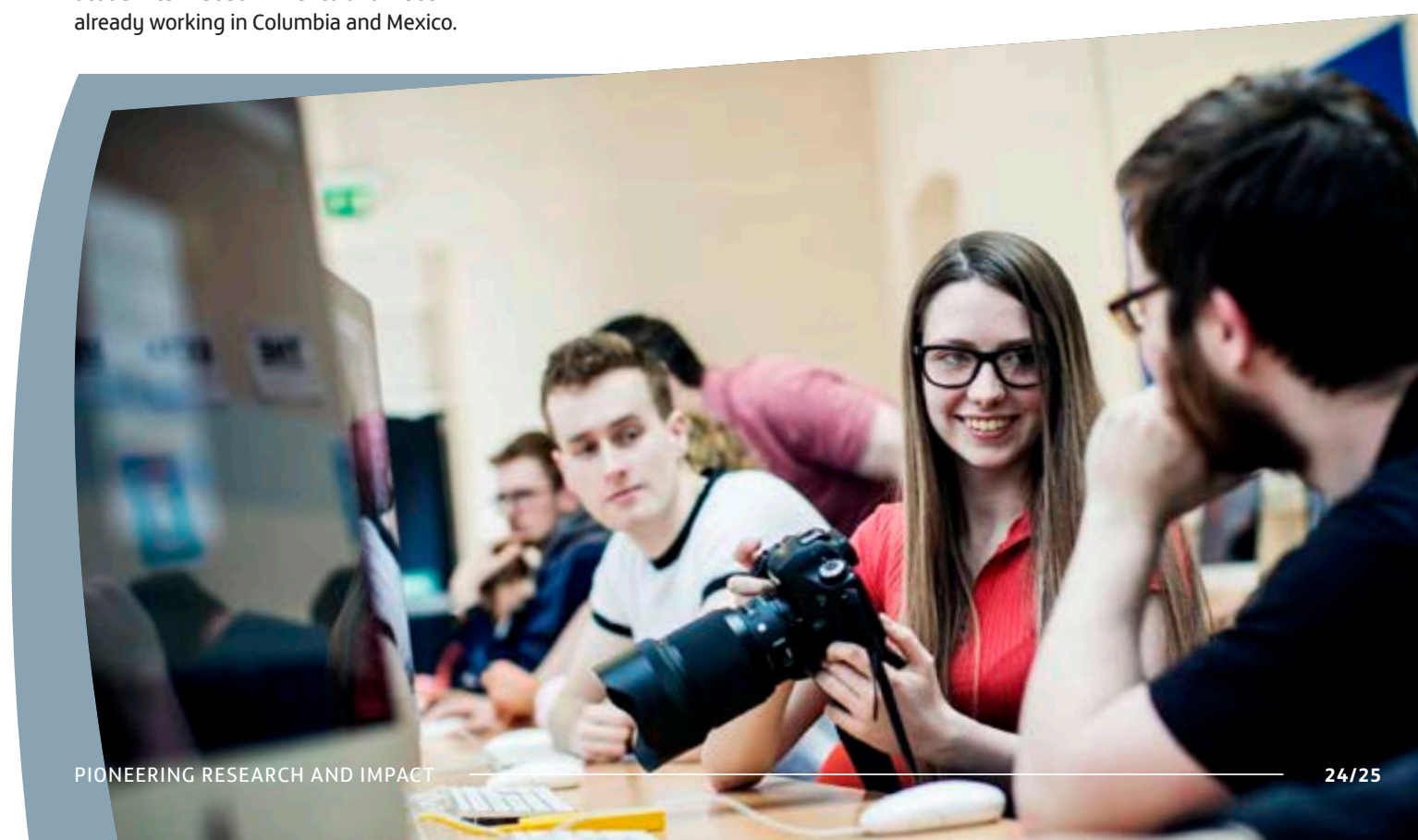
The Creative Industries sector is the fastest growing sector of the UK economy, contributing £1 billion GVA to the Northern Ireland economy

Led by Professor Tony Byrne, the project plays a critical role in helping to address one of the greatest global issues the developing world is facing today. Nearly 25% of the global population drink water that is not safe because of contamination that can cause deadly disease. Clean water saves lives and the SAFEWATER project will bring direct benefits to people living in developing countries.

#### AT THE FOREFRONT OF DATA SCIENCE RESEARCH

Ulster University has been announced as one of just eight UK universities to form a major five-year research partnership with BBC Research and Development to unlock the potential of data analysis in the media.

The Data Science Research Partnership will be at the forefront of machine learning in the media industry, helping create a more personal BBC that can inform, educate and entertain in new ways. Bringing together industry experts from across the BBC and world-leading UK data scientists from the Universities of Bristol, Manchester, Edinburgh and Surrey, Imperial College London, Queen Mary University of London, and University College London, Ulster University will contribute its wealth of research and sectoral expertise from media and journalism, film and television to data analytics.





Ulster University is building upon its existing, world-leading mental health research with the launch of a £5m Institute of Mental Health Sciences.

#### DRIVING GROWTH IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

The creative industries sector is the fastest growing sector of the UK economy, contributing £1 billion GVA to the Northern Ireland economy. To drive future growth in this critically important sector, Ulster University has launched a new £20m Creative Industries Institute.

The Institute brings together the University's existing world-leading research and teaching expertise across advertising and graphic design, animation, architecture, film and broadcasting, product design, creative technologies, fashion, music, drama and performing arts, photography and fine art.

Facilitating collaboration with industry, government and civic partners, the Institute will develop industry-relevant research delivering advances, maximise available resources, shape policy and nurture the skills and experience required to drive the economic, social and cultural regeneration of the region.

Ulster University's investment in the creative industries is part of the flagship £263m Belfast campus development. This is in addition to the new £9m media and broadcast facilities at the Coleraine campus and a £5m investment in posts to drive new courses and research in virtual and augmented reality, game design and post-production video effects. New research in the sector will also be supported through a £2.5m investment in PhD studentships in creative disciplines.

#### BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

With one in four people experiencing a mental health problem annually and Northern Ireland recording some of the highest rates of mental ill health and suicide in the UK, Ulster University is building upon its existing, world-leading mental health research with the launch of a £5m Institute of Mental Health Sciences.

Bringing together the University's world-leading research expertise across a range of disciplines, the Institute will deliver research that will transform the lives of those living with mental health issues and maximise the impact of Ulster University's mental health and wellbeing research.

The new Institute strategically aligns with the existing research and infrastructure related to mental health research at Ulster University and builds upon recent investments of £11m in the Centre for Stratified Medicine; £5m in a Functional Brain-Mapping Facility; and €8.6m of funding for the Centre for Precision Medicine. Over the next five years there will be investments in six new senior academic posts, 20 PhD studentships, postdoctoral research associates, a breadth of short courses, and the development of a new multi-disciplinary MSc in Mental Health Sciences.

Scientists aligned to the Institute will work collaboratively on research, which examines the genetic underpinnings of mental health all the way through to how mental ill health issues can be alleviated through interventions promoting physical exercise. This research will transform scientific breakthroughs into life-changing and lifesaving interventions and treatments for those with mental health issues.

#### DELIVERING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN LIFE SCIENCES

Ulster University and Randox Laboratories Ltd launched a £5m skills development initiative to support up to 10 individuals annually through PhD level study in the life sciences sector. Randox Industrial Doctoral Centre aims to encourage the development of advanced, higher-level skills in key industry sectors, reinforcing the University's position as one of the top universities for biomedical related research impact and, enhance Randox's competitiveness in the growing global healthcare sector.

Each year, up to 10 PhD researchers will be supported on a range of scientific projects, with the ultimate goal of new product development. They will have the opportunity to work on new research projects, driven by industry and jointly supervised by Ulster University and Randox, to enhance their own individual skill sets whilst delivering groundbreaking advances in the life sciences sector. Ulster University and Randox will each fully fund up to five PhD researchers annually.

To date PhD researchers enrolled in this new programme have started exciting projects in areas of medicine including mental health, diabetes and cancer, with more projects being developed. All projects share the common goal of delivering new diagnostic approaches for early detection of disease and earlier intervention where possible.



BT's Innovation Centre, Belfast

### BT PARTNERS WITH ULSTER UNIVERSITY IN MULTI-MILLION POUND INNOVATION CENTRE

The opening of BT's new multi-million pound Innovation Centre in Belfast will see BT and Ulster University undertake over £7m worth of joint research that will drive the creation of 25 new university research posts, alongside up to 50 new graduate roles in the BT Belfast Global Development Centre. The Centre will play a crucial role in BT's global research and development capability, focusing on advanced research into the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence and data analytics for customer experience, 5G communications and cyber security.

The BT Ireland Innovation Centre (BTIIC) will undertake an extensive programme of research and development that will cost an estimated £28.6m over the next five years.

For Ulster University, this ambitious industry partnership with BT is a unique collaboration opportunity. It builds upon two decades of our academic leadership in cognitive analytics and our recent £4m investment in a new data analytics research institute. Computing and engineering at Ulster University is at the forefront of diverse research excellence in data science and networks, equipping us to play an integral role in transformative communications.

### SUPPORTING NORTHERN IRELAND'S AGRI-FOOD SECTOR

The Agri-food Business Development Centre was established to provide sector specific support to Northern Ireland's local agri-food industry through the promotion of agri-food business education.

The Centre provides cutting-edge research and innovation that identifies new technologies, develops/improves products and processes and seeks new market opportunities which benefit agri-food businesses in Northern Ireland. Research-informed evidence is undertaken to support policy decisions for government departments, food body associations and other key industry stakeholders. Recently new PhD studentships have been established investigating food innovation within the marine industry.

The opening of BT's new multi-million pound Innovation Centre in Belfast will see BT and Ulster University undertake £7m worth of joint research.

The Centre continues to strengthen its relationships with key stakeholders including CAFRE, AFBI, Invest NI, Dairy UK, Retail NI and Food NI, to identify areas for future collaboration in research. Raising the Centre's international profile, networks have been established in the USA and Sri Lanka, with plans underway to establish networks in China.

### AWARDING EXCELLENCE IN IMPACT

The Impact Excellence Awards 2018 highlighted the positive impact our students and academic staff are having on societies and economies, both locally and internationally. Leading organisations across a wide range of sectors have been recognised for their commitment to pioneering research and graduate employability at these annual awards.

The event recognised the University's collaborations with partners in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors, both locally and globally.

On the night, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, Boston Scientific and local health and social care trusts were among the placement employers who were acknowledged by Ulster University for their role in supporting the next generation of highly skilled, industry-ready graduates.

For the first time, a category for international partners showcased excellence that comes from global connections including Spain, United States and Australia, where students have been working.

Ulster University also awarded their industry partners for research collaborations that have far-reaching impact beyond academia. These span across connected health, organisational change and strategy development and accessible creative technologies.

### IMPROVING CARDIOVASCULAR CARE

Ulster University is leading on a €8.2m EU-funded cross-border collaborative research centre to improve cardiovascular care. The Eastern Corridor Medical Engineering (ECME) centre will transform cardiac care in the region by developing new models of care, smart wearable technologies

and improved patient monitoring systems.

Cardiovascular (heart and circulatory) disease causes more than a quarter of all deaths in the UK; the ECME will see researchers from academia and industry collaborate with partners in the health and social care system to create better models of heart disease care and develop new medical grade wearables and remote monitoring systems to improve clinical outcomes and patient experience.

As well as having a significant impact on health and social care, economic benefits will also follow from the partnership. Working closely with industry and health care professionals, ECME will bring new and innovative products to the market

### PERSONALISING MEDICINE

Ulster University has established a Centre for Personalised Medicine, Clinical Decision Making and Patient Safety, which aims to dramatically improve clinical decision-making and tailored patient care in five priority disease areas.

The research project is a cross-border collaboration between the academic, clinical and commercial sectors and focuses on heart disease, emergency surgery, acute kidney injury, diabetes and dementia. The Centre's research will improve the health of tens of thousands of patients and help cut healthcare costs

dramatically in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and internationally.

The EU's INTERREG VA programme (managed by the Special EU Programmes Body), has awarded Ulster University €8.6m of funding for the Centre, which will have an overall cost of €9.89m. Personalised medicine, also known as precision or stratified medicine, is a move away from a 'one size fits all' approach to the treatment and care of patients with a particular condition to one that uses new approaches, including genomics, to better diagnose and manage patients' health and devise targeted therapies to treat their illnesses.

### MEETING FUTURE ELECTRICITY MARKET NEEDS

Ulster University's EU-funded €6.7m cross-border research project SPIRE 2 launched this year. The project will develop a range of consumer-owned energy storage resources to meet current and future electricity market needs. Its launch follows the UK Government's announcement of a complete transformation of how energy will be generated, stored and used in the future.

It is expected that SPIRE 2 will generate at least eight intellectual property disclosures in areas ranging from thermochemical material storage, to heat pump design and ways to prevent biofouling.



Impact Excellence Awards 2018



# ULSTER LIFE

Helping our students to reach their full potential, bring their talents to the attention of the world and engaging positively with the community is important in developing the leaders of the future and building a prosperous and confident Northern Ireland.

## Students at Coleraine and Magee campuses can now benefit from a £500,000 bedroom refurbishment programme.



### HOME TO ROOST

This year the University found a new home at Student Roost on Great Patrick Street, Belfast. An exciting two-year nominations agreement provides students with accommodation adjacent to the Belfast

campus and the lucky residents can avail of state-of-the-art accommodation facilities including an onsite gym, cinema room and bespoke study rooms.

Students at Coleraine and Magee campuses can now benefit from a £500,000 bedroom refurbishment programme and take advantage of increased Wi-Fi speeds.

The University also demonstrated its commitment to the student experience with the appointment of Residential Life Co-ordinators to develop and market the 350 events held annually within university accommodation.

### REFUEL REVIEW

Following a survey of students and staff in February 2018, the University has

developed new initiatives to support improved catering services to help feed hungry students.

A recent refurbishment of the SPAR in Jordanstown has been completed with new menu options including healthy salads and vegetarian offerings. The Magee campus welcomed the opening of the Scullery in February 2018; staff and students can now tuck into a varied menu with an emphasis on healthy and artisan choices, with vegetarian, vegan and gluten free dishes. Trained baristas are on hand with freshly brewed Matthew Algie coffee.

Every year 2.5bn takeaway coffee cups are used and thrown away with many ending up in landfill. Paper cups are not recyclable because of the plastic liner and coffee contamination so the university has taken steps to help reduce the amount of waste produced.

In June 2018, Mount Charles introduced non-plastic and compostable cups at all their campus catering outlets, in an effort to reduce environmental impact. Reusable 'Keep Cups', made from bamboo fibre or a standard disposable cup which is fully compostable, are available for purchase from Moka, UEat or Pango. Einstein's offers a Starbucks branded reusable 'Keep Cup', while in the Belfast campus food hall, an eco-cup, made from rice husk by-products can be purchased.

Reusing any coffee cup makes a difference, but bamboo is the eco-friendly choice as it can grow up to a meter a day, producing a fast renewing source of materials. The biodegradable cups made from bamboo are naturally sterile and are perfect for use in food and drink products and containers.



### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Throughout the year, Ulster University has engaged with the local community across a wide range of events.

Earlier this year, the School of Arts and Humanities presented Music @ONE at Magee campus. The programme of lunchtime performances from national and international artists offered an eclectic mix of musical genres, to appeal to a wide audience.

In the 2017-18 academic year, The Riverside Theatre enriched the campus life of its staff, students and local community by hosting 110 multi-genre performing arts events, 60 participatory arts workshops and four exhibitions in its gallery space. These events were attended by 25,000 adults and children, of which, 60 local schools and community groups accounted for 10% of the ticketed bookings. The Riverside Theatre's volunteer programme also engaged 50 people, including staff and EDGE Award accredited students, who contributed 2,400 hours of labour to the venue over the year.

An art exhibition with a difference, took place at Belfast campus - The Secret Postcards Exhibition. Leading professionals, celebrity artists, promising newcomers and talented amateurs displayed 200 pieces of art anonymously, charged at £60 each. Each postcard's artist was only revealed once purchased.

The University teamed up with local community volunteers, Athletics NI and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council to launch a Junior Parkrun at Jordanstown campus, in November 2017. The series of 2k runs for children aged

4-14 years, was a great way to encourage children in the local community to get active and have some fun.

### MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

A National Union of Students-Union of Students in Ireland (NUS-USI) student wellbeing survey reported that 78% of student respondents experienced mental health worries in the last year. In response to the growing student need, Ulster University has continued to enhance health and wellbeing support for students by investing in four new staff within the Student Support team, adding two Mental Health Practitioners and two Student Health and Wellbeing Advisers. These new staff complement the existing team, enabling them to proactively support students and staff in dealing with a range of mental health and wellbeing concerns. This includes helping students alleviate financial stress and in 2017/18 over 440 students attended Mind Your Money budgeting workshops across the four campuses.

The Mind Your Mood student led mental health campaign raised an impressive £23,000 in its second year, with thanks to the staff and students who got involved in fundraising activities. The funds raised enabled the delivery of Mind Your Mood activities that reached over 2,500 students, including workshops such as laughter yoga and mindfulness as well as targeted

bespoke sessions with course cohorts, sports clubs and societies. The team engaged with Ulster University's GAA team to adapt a regular training session and demonstrate the key concepts of how students can maintain positive mental health for life and there was greater focus on the 'break the stigma' theme with interactive student videos and events.

New initiatives for 2017/18 included the Mind Your Mood Awards, whereby four students received funding to develop their own mental health projects aimed at reducing stress and promoting positive mental health, as well as the introduction of the Mind Your Mood Ambassadors scheme. This scheme was designed to embed student champions across the university to promote Mind Your Mood initiatives at peer level and increase student engagement with the campaign and the range of mental health and wellbeing support available at Ulster.



The Secret Postcard Exhibition



The University witnessed its most successful year to date for philanthropy with over £6m being raised.

#### PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

The University witnessed its most successful year to date for philanthropy with over £6m being raised to enhance the students' academic experience and research impact. The largest private donation was made from the Moore family in recognition of the late Dr George Moore and his role as one of the founding fathers of data analytics. The £5m gift will support the establishment of an endowed Chair and an associated research fellow in data analytics at Magee campus.

At the celebration event to mark this investment, we welcomed Mrs Angela Moore, students, staff, donors, stakeholders and schools to hear Dr Mark Briers from the world-renowned Turing Institute talk about the exciting future of data analytics and the importance of this investment in this rapidly growing field.

Following on from a major University-wide sports sponsorship deal which sees the company supporting the kit and equipment for over 70 sports clubs including basketball, GAA, hockey, rugby and soccer, global healthcare company Randox deepened its support of Ulster University by choosing our student-led Mind Your Mood programme as one of its charities of the year. Between January and June 2018, Ulster University saw over 500 staff, students and alumni participate in a fundraising activity to help raise over £20,000 to support our students' mental well-being.

The year also saw more alumni, staff and friends than ever before donating to Ulster University which means philanthropy supported more students than in any previous year. Many donors attended the fifth Ulster University Scholarships and Awards ceremony which celebrates some of the most exceptional students – exceptional because of their commitment

to their education in the face of adversity, of their academic excellence, their innovative ideas or sporting achievements.

2018 saw the launch of an exciting new era of fundraising at Ulster. Ulster Uni Crowdfunding is a platform available to all Ulster students, offering them the chance to raise funds for their projects, clubs/ societies or entrepreneurial plans. As well as raising money for great projects, it also teaches students valuable entrepreneurial skills, the development of which is essential for the economic growth of our region.

In the first six months of going live, students raised over £12,000.

Ulster University is one of the first universities in the UK to roll-out a crowdfunding platform and, as an added bonus, Santander Universities agreed to provide match funding for all successful projects of up to 25% of the total raised.



### SPORTING SUCCESS

The University has remained committed to sports development with nearly 2,000 students taking part in club and social sport on a weekly basis. Sporting results exceeded expectations with 15 championship wins, 17 individual medals, 10 finalists and four European and world representatives. The 2018 Commonwealth Games was a proud moment for Ulster University who had 29 students, graduates and staff represent Northern Ireland.

In September 2017, Magee campus appointed a Sports Development Officer who has changed the face of sport drastically, working with Foyle Sailability and the Manchester United Foundation. This is the first time the Foundation delivered its education programme outside of Greater Manchester, focusing on 10 local schools with an aim to inspire young people to reach their full potential.

To support developments in sport, fundraising and sponsorship by the University's clubs achieved a staggering £176,000 and earlier this year, Ulster University announced Randox, a world leader in the in-vitro diagnostics industry, as a corporate sponsor.

Through funding received from the Department of Communities and Sport NI, an 'Active, Fit and Sporty' initiative as part of the 'Women in Sport Leadership' programme was rolled out. Female students could avail of gaining leadership accreditation and coaching qualifications, while women's only activities such as Zumba, self-defence and glow in the dark fitness classes helped to reduce barriers to participation by women.

The 2018 Commonwealth Games was a proud moment for Ulster University who had 29 students, graduates and staff represent Northern Ireland.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH SPORT

Through an exciting partnership between Sports Services and the Harry Gregg Foundation, Matt Lewsley was appointed Community Engagement Officer in June 2018. Based on the Coleraine campus, in addition to developing the scope of the community impact of the Harry Gregg Foundation, within and beyond football, Matt will develop existing and new sporting relationships across the community such as U3A, Causeway Community Tennis Club and Super Cup NI.

The Junior Elks Summer and Easter Camp programme at Jordanstown campus was hugely successful with 400 children, aged between 4 and 14 years old, taking part and getting active. Coleraine campus developed a new summer scheme, unique to Northern Ireland, merging physical activity with performance arts and dance. Delivered by Sports Services and the Riverside Theatre, excellent feedback was received and with financial subsidy, the scheme will be developed for the future.

In partnership with the governing bodies of athletics, basketball, cricket, gaelic games, rugby and women's football, sport

specific development officers continue to develop and deliver a comprehensive range of participation and performance programmes across the University campuses. Leadership workshops, coaching conferences, coach education courses, talent camps, weekly squad coaching and performance testing are a small sample of the activities that bring sports participants from across the community onto campus on a weekly basis.

The School of Sport Sports Outreach Unit (SO) delivered a series of outreach programmes within schools and communities using sport and physical activity as an educational tool. A total of 84 student volunteers were utilised to help reach young people in schools and communities at the greatest disadvantage, offering over 254,000 participation opportunities. As young enthusiastic role models, our students used sport and physical activity as a stimulus to engage children and young people, to encourage learning and influence behaviour leading to a brighter, healthier, positive future. The valued output of all programming delivered by SO during the year achieved £315,000 to the sport and physical activity sector in Northern Ireland.

# GLOBAL EXPANSION

Engaging with our international community through the creation of mutually beneficial partnerships, impactful research and through student and staff exchange is central to Ulster University's aim of delivering academic excellence and embedding Northern Ireland as a place of importance on the world stage. With ambitious targets and our commitment to global engagement at the very heart of our institutional objectives, we have witnessed a revitalisation of our internationalisation activity, and already we have seen our global engagement activity thrive.





The Global Engagement team has carried out 250 days of in-market activity to promote our programmes and offerings and this has generated over 11,000 enquiry leads.

In the past 12 months the Global Engagement team have expanded with the addition of four Regional Managers who, with a wider professional team, support recruitment. The key markets for focus are the Americas, Middle East and Africa, East Asia and South East Asia. Further support is provided by in-country staff in China, India and Pakistan.

To give them a flavour of Ulster University and Northern Ireland, an Agent Familiarisation event was held in June 2018. This attracted more than 50 agents from all over the world including China, India, Vietnam, Nigeria, Colombia and Peru. During their time here, they toured all four Ulster campuses and visited tourist attractions. The visit concluded with dinner at Belfast City Hall and has proved successful in raising awareness of the University in the agent's home countries.

In February 2018, Ulster University hosted the Commonwealth Summit at Belfast campus, bringing together a community of 53 nations. This was followed up with a Commonwealth Big

Lunch event, bringing people together to share food and experiences.

#### GLOBAL SUCCESS

The Florence Nightingale Foundation provides funding to awarded scholars to travel and study new models of care, patient safety and improvement projects, and bring back evidence to improve the care of patients in their local community and the wider UK.

Lecturers Stephanie Dunleavy and Seana Duggan, from the School of Nursing at Magee campus, were awarded Travel Scholarships from The Florence Nightingale Foundation and they took the opportunity to study best practice at Kent State University in Cleveland, Ohio. The key purpose of their visit was to explore the role of the Academic Clinical Tutor as a model of supporting nursing students in practice.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Paddy Nixon was awarded the prestigious Confucius Individual Performance Excellence Award at a ceremony in Xi'an in December 2017. The award recognises the Vice-Chancellor's commitment to the continued success of

the Confucius Institute at Ulster University and to increasing positive awareness of China in Northern Ireland.

The University's links with China were further strengthened by a high level Chinese delegation visit. Senior University representatives met with Chinese Provincial and Municipal leaders in Belfast, Coleraine, and Derry-Londonderry as part of the China-UK Regional Leaders Summit.

#### GLOBAL RECRUITMENT

This year, Ulster University welcomed an increasing number of international students with over 460 coming from 53 countries. This was aided by 203 Erasmus agreements with 175 institutions in 34 countries.

Looking ahead to the recruitment for 2018/19, the Global Engagement team has carried out 250 days of in-market activity to promote our programmes and offerings and this has generated over 11,000 enquiry leads. Along with improvements to the international application system, these leads have produced a 35% increase in international applications compared to the previous year. Working with all four faculties, the Global Engagement team in recruitment, admissions and compliance have supported conversion activities expanding the platforms used to include WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook and a new Ulster CampusConnect app that enables tailored communications with applicants in various markets.

Working closely with Central China Normal University (CCNU), Senior Lecturer from

the School of Sport, Kyle Ferguson and Associate Dean, Professor David Hassan travelled to Wuhan in China in May 2018. This visit was designed to deliver a range of short lectures to provide a taste of what Ulster can offer. Following this successful visit, a Summer Soccer School was established at Jordanstown campus with nine students and two members of staff travelling from China to take part in the programme. This programme further developed links between Ulster and CCNU, resulting in a visit of Senior Officers to Ulster in September 2018 to discuss articulation options to the BSc Hons Football Coaching and Business Management degree.

#### GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES

In October 2017, the University's GAA team departed on a historic two week tour of China as part of a wider programme of engagement in key international markets.

The team played several games to promote sporting excellence at Ulster University.

Students were given the opportunity to apply to go on an 'Experience China' trip with the Confucius Institute via a video application. The 22 participants took the opportunity to broaden their horizons and experience Chinese culture.

#### GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

Ulster University marked their 15-year relationship with Dongbei University of Finance and Economics (DUFE) in Dalian by welcoming delegates to Magee campus. The multi-faculty visit was supported by DARO, Research and Impact and C&M teams, with Professor Mark Durkin hosting a celebratory event. There was also a visit to DUFE by a delegation of senior staff which strengthened the partnership and has offered new opportunities.

The Belfast campus welcomed His Excellency, Mr Y.K. Sinha, The High Commissioner of India, for a working lunch and tour in March 2018.

Following an informal lunch, the delegation enjoyed a presentation in the digital animation studio by Professor

Greg Maguire, Professor of Animation in the Belfast School of Art and they met course director Alec Parkin and students of Creative Animation. Professor Maguire has developed a series of flexible learning programmes for industry which run concurrently with University taught content, ensuring content delivered is current and fit for purpose.

#### GLOBAL RESEARCH

Ulster University travelled to Hong Kong in March 2018 as one of the partners of the GREAT Festival of Innovation, to showcase its world-class research and innovation in healthcare and technology on the international stage.

Established to showcase the UK's creativity and leadership across a host of industry and education sectors, the GREAT Festival focuses on how innovation, technology and creativity will change the way we work, live, learn and play in the years to come and a team from Ulster attended, taking part in speaker sessions. The Festival showcased medical devices derived from Ulster University research which are making positive impacts on healthcare outcomes worldwide. Senior staff from Life and Health Sciences along with Research and Impact and Global Engagement used this opportunity to develop new links in the region.





# INSPIRING PEOPLE

Ulster University is about its people. Throughout our campuses we have a vibrant community of staff members, all talented and skilled individuals who inspire our students and prepare them for rewarding and diverse careers. Our students are at the centre of everything we do and with an outstanding reputation for teaching as well as world-class teaching facilities, we are creating an educational experience that develops skills, raises ambitions and prepares future leaders.

We have profiled some of the achievements of these inspiring graduates, staff and students.

## EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND RESEARCH

**Professor Helene McNulty**, Director of NICHE (the Nutrition Innovation Centre for Food and Health), was awarded the title of Fellow of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences (FIUNS) for her outstanding service to the cause of nutrition. Helene received the prestigious award during the International Congress of Nutrition in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She was joined by six NICHE representatives, three staff and three PhD students, **Katie Moore**, **Emma O'Sullivan** and **Aoife Caffrey**, who gave presentations of their work.

Nursing at Ulster University is ranked 33rd in the world and 6th in UK (QS World Rankings 2018) and this has been reflected in the recent success of its staff. **Dr Donna McConnell**, Lecturer in Nursing, has won the RCN Northern Ireland Nursing Research Award 2018. She was nominated for her research exploring person-centred practice within the emergency department.

Visiting Professor of Architecture **James Stevens Curl** was awarded the prestigious President's Medal from the British Academy for his contribution to the study



Clockwise:  
Dr Donna McConnell, James McKeever, Megan Frazer, Helene McNulty, Professor James Stevens Curl



Nursing at Ulster University is ranked 33rd in the world and 6th in UK.

of the History of Architecture in Britain and Ireland. The President's Medal rewards outstanding service to the cause of the humanities and social sciences.

Computing Science student **James McKeever** showcased his skills on a global stage at the world's largest gaming convention in California. James secured an all-expenses paid trip to BlizzCon 2017, representing Europe in the finals of the esports gaming tournament and landing fifth place in the process.

## ULSTER ON THE WORLD STAGE

**Ralf Sander**, Reader in Fine Art at Belfast School of Art, made an impact on the

global stage at the 2018 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in South Korea, after successfully creating a landmark outdoor sculpture for the PyeongChang Olympic Plaza. He was commissioned to create the bespoke outdoor exhibition, entitled Connected One, for the Cultural Olympiad during the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games.

## SPORTING SUCCESS

Biomedical Engineering student **Megan Frazer** is a hockey World Cup silver medallist having represented Ireland in the final. Two other team members have connections to Ulster, **Zoe Wilson** is studying Nutrition and Captain **Shirley McCay**, Ireland's most capped sportswoman with 273 caps, graduated with a BSc Hons Sport Studies (2009) and an Adv Cert in Management Practice (Sport) in 2015. The Ireland hockey coach **Graham Shaw** is also a BSc Sports Studies graduate (2006).

The XXI Commonwealth Games were held on the Gold Coast of Australia during April 2018 and for this, the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council 88-strong



Ralf Sander sculpture

team, across 13 sports, included 28 Ulster University students, staff and graduates. Their achievements at the Gold Coast 2018 demonstrate the impact they are making across a range of sports and other disciplines.

Business Studies graduate, **Gareth McAuley** represented Northern Ireland at this year's Commonwealth Games when he won a bronze medal in Skeet shooting. Gareth continues to work on qualifying for more GB Teams including the World Cups and World Championships. He represented GB in the World Cup in Tucson, USA and will continue to attend the GB Selection Shoots to qualify for more GB Teams in the future.

**Nigel McMullin**, a member of the grounds staff at the Coleraine campus, qualified for the 2018 Short Mat World Bowling Championships. The Short Mat Bowls World Championships are held every two years and Nigel, who has played short mat bowls for 25 years, attended this year's championships in Strömstad, Sweden.

## SUPER STUDENTS

**Luke Marshall** won the First Trust Bank Convocation Undergraduate Student of the Year Award for 2017, in recognition of his support for people with disabilities and his assistance in enabling them to take part in sporting activity. Luke represents Northern Ireland, playing for the Knights Wheelchair basketball team. In his second year at Ulster, Luke received Vice-Chancellor's funding which he used to pay for 10 sportschairs and he recruited a team to take part in the British Wheelchair Basketball University Championships. He was shortlisted in the 'Volunteer-Voluntary Project of the Year' category at UUSU Sporting Excellence Awards, for his work



Michael Jennings

with Ulster Sports Outreach on the eHoops and SportABILITY programme.

The First Trust Bank Ulster University Undergraduate Student of the Year Award for 2018 was awarded to **Michael Jennings** in recognition of his commitment to local and university life.



Luke Marshall

Michael graduated with a first-class honours degree in electronic engineering, and he is a STEM ambassador. He has volunteered in the Tutoring in Schools programme, and he helped found the Ulster Society of Student Engineers (USSE), which won Best New Society and runner-up Best Academic and Careers Society in the UK-wide National Societies Awards 2018.

The Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council 88-strong team, across 13 sports, included 28 Ulster University students, staff and graduates.



Emma Welsh

BSc Hons Environmental Health student **Emma Welsh** was recognised with a Waste Industry Safety and Health (WISH) NI Ambassador Award for her work on health and safety best practice in relation to vehicle and pedestrian segregation. This prize is a joint initiative between the University's Environmental Health team and the Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI).

Mechatronic Engineering student, **Conor McCollum** is one of 75 UK students to receive the Engineering Horizons Bursary from the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), which includes financial support towards studying. The bursary includes financial support towards studying in addition to mentoring and work experience placements through the IET's extensive networks. Having been awarded the bursary, Conor looks forward to having more time to focus on his course and serve as a STEM ambassador.





Dr Philip McDermott



Conor McCollum

Conor McCollum is one of 75 UK students to receive the Engineering Horizons Bursary from the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET).

Congratulations to Ulster University student **Jack Warnock** who was nominated for BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Music Award. Jack is studying Irish with Music at our Magee campus, and plays piano, guitar, banjo and sings. As a member of the traditional groups 'Cóiriú' and 'Meargánta', he has performed in the final of Siansa Gael Linn in the National Concert Hall and in the Royal Albert Hall, London.

#### HONOURS CONFERRED

The 2018 New Year Honours List recognised the academic leadership of two distinguished academics associated with Ulster University. **Professor Norman David Black BSc Hons PhD**, from our School of Engineering and former Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research), received a CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) for Services to Research Leadership, University Governance and Healthcare. Professor Black has built up an international reputation as an expert in connected health and a developer of practice and research in this field.

**Professor Gerard Patrick Parr**, former member of staff and Chair of Telecommunications Engineering at the School of Computing and Information Engineering in Coleraine, was made



Jack Warnock

a MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) for services to developing telecoms infrastructure in Northern Ireland. Professor Parr was appointed to the Strategic Advisory Team of the UK Engineering and Physical Science Research Council (EPSRC).

Alumna **Frances Hannaway** has been awarded a BEM in the Queen's Birthday Honours for services to the community in Northern Ireland. Frances graduated with a BSc Hons Social Work, having previously gained a BSc Hons Social Policy from the Jordanstown campus. The BEM nomination was based on Frances' time and commitment shown to the MY LACES



Patrick Richardson (Mentoring Young Looked After Children with Educational Support) programme

The 2018 New Year Honours List recognised the academic leadership of two distinguished academics associated with Ulster University.

and other volunteering work in the local community, for which she was also awarded an Ulster EDGE Award.

#### PRESIDENTIAL HONOUR

Ulster University graduate and local biomedical scientist **Alison Geddis** was named President of the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS). Having practised as a Biomedical Scientist for 30 years, Alison currently works as the Laboratory and Donor Services Manager for the Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service. She is the first IBMS president from Northern Ireland and the second female president in the history of the Institute, which was established in 1912.



Ulster students collect their RTS NI Award

#### ACCOLADES AND AWARDS

**Patrick Richardson**, Lecturer and Optometry Clinic Director with the School of Biomedical Sciences, won an AOP (Association of Optometrists) Award 2018 for Lecturer of the Year. Patrick has developed a Glaucoma Diagnosis and Management module for the University's MSc in Clinical Vision Science and a Professional Certificate in Glaucoma, which has been accredited by the College of Optometrists, and he is a founding member of Optometry Northern Ireland.

**Dr Philip McDermott**, Lecturer in Sociology at the Magee campus, collected a highly commended award at the Legal-Island Equality and Diversity Awards 2018 for his work in supporting diverse communities, particularly in the North West region. His focus is on the area of language policy and planning for (and by) migrant communities, and he works closely with a number of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) representing ethnic minority communities.

Ulster students collected several accolades at this year's Royal Television Society Northern Ireland (RTS NI) Student Television Awards, including winners in two

categories and one highly commended award. Ulster winners on the night included the Animation Category with 'Hunger' by **Matt McDyre, Scott Gill, Daniel Boyle, Hannah Loughridge and Hannah Turkington**, and a highly commended award in this category for 'To The Moon' by **Gianni Francesco De Giuseppe, Rhea Hanlon, Phillip McDowell and Ryan Beatty**. Ulster was also winner in the Comedy and Entertainment category for 'Take It From Me' by **Meghan Mc Ardle**, with the production team of **Nathan Stevenson, Ewan Beckett and Orla Finucane**. The winners go forward to the National RTS Student Media Awards to be held in London later in the year.



Alison Geddis



Dr Hugh McKenna

Graduate Erin O’Kane joins the Research team having won more awards than any other previous student at the School of Architecture and the Built Environment’s end of year show.



Erin O’Kane



Professor Tanya McCance

Graduate Erin O’Kane joins the Research team having won more awards than any other previous student at the School of Architecture and the Built Environment’s end of year show, including Hays Award for Best Placement Student, CIAT Region 15 Award for Technical Excellence, Graham Construction Award for BIM Excellence and Course Directors Prize for Top Overall Mark in the BSc Hons Architectural Technology and Management programme. Erin was named as the commended winner at the Student Award for Excellence in Architectural Technology 2018, held in London in September 2018.

To mark the 70th anniversary of the National Health Service (on 5 July 2018), a commemorative brochure was produced ‘70 NHS Years - A celebration of 70 influential nurses and midwives from 1948 – 2018’ which features two of Ulster’s prominent staff members Professor Hugh McKenna, Dean of Medical School Development and Professor Tanya McCance, Research Director for Nursing and Health Sciences, who have been influential in shaping the NHS and as such are an inspiration to the future generations of nurses we educate at Ulster.

HONORARY GRADUATES

Each year Ulster University honours distinguished individuals who merit special recognition for achievement

and distinction in a field or activity, and continue to make an impact on our society.

Professor Dermot Diamond received the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters (DLitt) in recognition of his services to science and his influence in traditional music.

Named as one of the most influential female tech executives in Silicon Valley, Sarah Friar, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Science (DSc) for distinguished service to the international technology industry.

Hollywood star, actor and singer from Derry-Londonderry, Bronagh Gallagher, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters (DLitt) for her outstanding contribution to the arts.

Internationally renowned optician, scholar and lens designer, Professor Mohammed Jalie, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Science (DSc) for his services to Ulster Optometry/Health.

Belfast-born design educator, Professor Alan Livingston CBE, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Fine Arts (DFA) for his services to Higher Education.

Former Dean of Belfast, The Very Reverend John Mann, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters (DLitt) for his civic contribution in Belfast.

With a reputation for outstanding and academic accomplishments, Professor Ed Marram received the honorary degree of

Bronagh Gallagher, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters (DLitt) for her outstanding contribution to the arts.

Dr Bronagh Gallagher



Doctor of Letters (DLitt) for his academic and technical accomplishments.

President of Ireland’s largest accountancy body and respected business mentor and advisor, Feargal McCormack, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Science (DSc) for his civic contributions.

The Very Reverend William Morton received the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters (DLitt) for his outstanding civic contribution to the community of Derry-Londonderry.

Artistic Director, Zoe Seaton, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Fine Arts (DFA) for her contribution to the arts.

Acclaimed pianist and vocal coach, Ingrid Surgenor, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters (DLitt) for her contribution to the arts.

Former Chief Executive of the Western Health and Social Care Trust, Elaine Way, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws (LLD) for her services to health.



Dr Dermot Diamond (above)



Dr Zoe Seaton (above)



Dr Alan Livingston (below)



Dr Elaine Way (below)

# FINANCIAL REVIEW

Despite the challenging political and economic environment, the University has successfully operated in line with the approved financial strategy targets for the last 12 months with a reported surplus before gains and loss of £10.7m against a surplus in the previous year of £13.1m. Included within this surplus was an award of £5m in support of a Chair and Research Fellow in data analytics. All these achievements have happened despite not having political agreement on a sustainable funding strategy for the sector and the continued disparity in funding between Ulster University and its UK competitors, the additional costs of supporting its regional mission through multiple campuses and increased cost pressures to support pension scheme deficits.



## 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.

### FUTURE FINANCIAL HEALTH

Key performance indicators are set out below 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	2018 Actual	2017 Actual		Comments
Surplus/(deficit) for the year as a % of total income	6.8%	7.1%	●	This indicates the level of return necessary for investment in capital.
Earnings before Interest, Tax, Depreciation and Amortisation (EBITDA)	£20.9m	£32.9m	●	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	211 days	239days	●	This measures our ability to fund short term cash requirements.
Current assets to current liabilities	3.4:1	3.6:1	●	An indicator of financial strength to meet short term liabilities.
% Income from Non-Government sources	26.0%	21.4%	●	This measures the diversification of income sources.

Financial Sustainability Indicators	2018 Actual	2017 Actual		Comments
Annual servicing cost of finance less than 6% of income (ASC)	2.48%	2.6%	●	
Net indebtedness less than 50% of net assets	N/A	N/A	●	Currently in a net cash position
EBITDA to ASC is greater than 1.5 times	4.01 times	6.31 times	●	

### LONG TERM BORROWING INDICATORS

Long term borrowing indicators are targets set within the Financial Memorandum and Banking Covenants established to support the Greater Belfast Development.

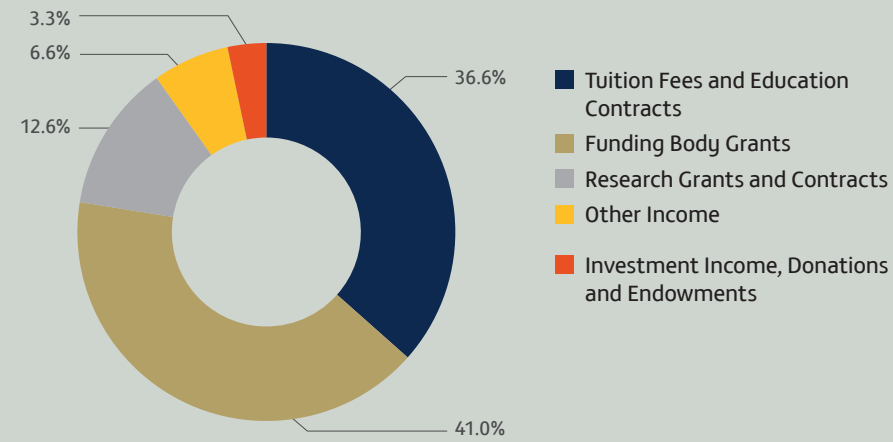
Year Ended 31 July	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Total income in £m	210.0	203.2	188.0	201.3	199.2
Surplus/(Deficit) before Gains and Losses	10.7	13.1	(3.6)	(7.4)	-
EBITDA £m	20.9	32.9	19.9	18.6	27.7
Net assets £m	308.7	277.3	259.6	264.5	282.9

### SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL POSITION

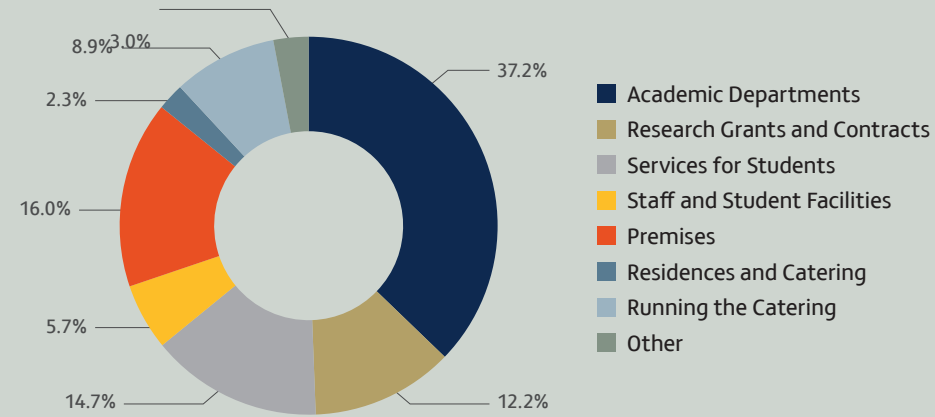
Key Performance Indicators from the financial statements.

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

### Where the Money Comes From - £210m

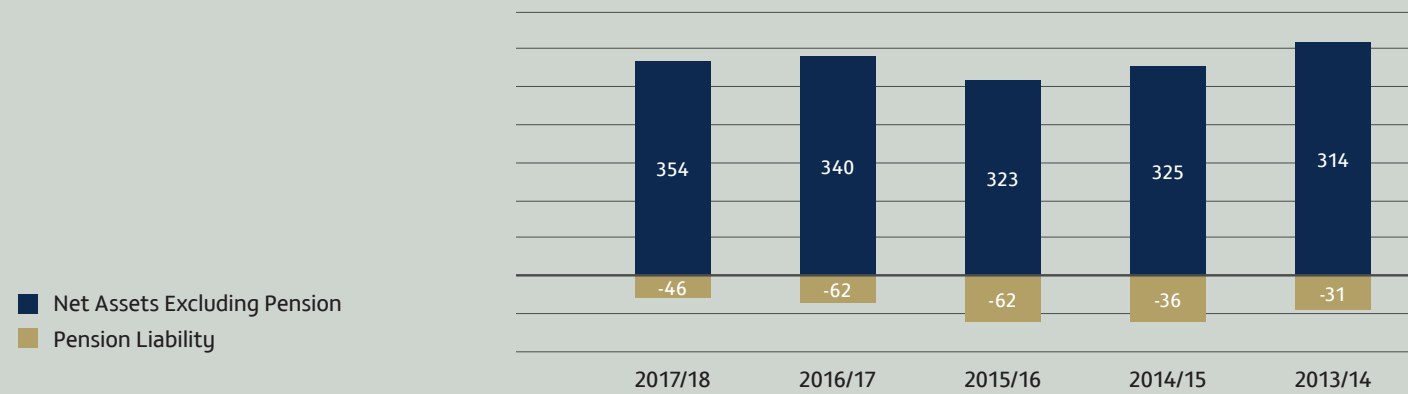


### How the University Spends the Money - £199m



The underlying financial strength of the University is demonstrated by the financial worth which is shown below:-

### Financial worth of the University 2013/14 to 2017/18

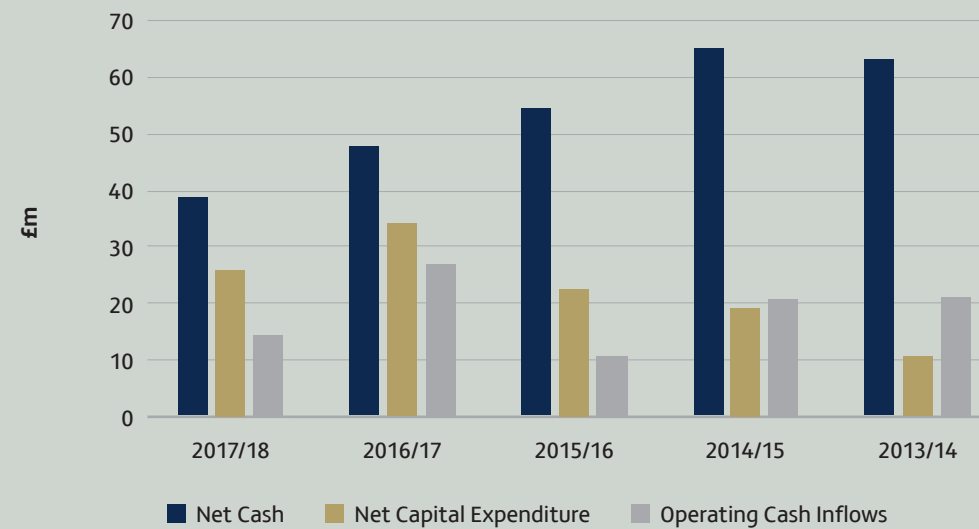


	2018 £m	2017 £m	change £m
Investments and short term deposits	94.0	107.2	(13.2)
Cash at bank and in hand	21.0	17.3	3.7
Bank loans	(77.1)	(77.3)	0.2
Net cash	37.9	47.2	(9.3)

### TREASURY, BORROWINGS AND INVESTMENTS

Net cash decreased by £9.3m during the year. The movement in funds is summarised here.

### CASH MOVEMENT AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE 2013/14 TO 2017/18



The main movement in cash is the impact of net capital expenditure during the year of £25.8m of which £23.4m relates to the Belfast development.

# Governance

## COUNCIL COMPOSITION

### EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Pro-Chancellors  
**Mr J Hunter**

Vice-Chancellor and President  
**Professor P Nixon**

Honorary Treasurer  
**Mr D Clements**

President of the Students' Union  
**Mr K McStravock**

### APPOINTED MEMBERS

*Eight persons not being members of staff or students of the University*

**Mr A Langan**  
**Mr P Lobban**  
**Ms M McKee**  
**Dr P McNaney**  
**Mrs J Pyper**  
**Mrs H Quigley**  
**Sir Robert Salisbury**  
**Dr J Stuart**  
**Mrs E Way** (from February 2018)

### ELECTED MEMBERS

*Two members of Academic Staff*  
**Professor M Stringer**  
**Dr K Burnett**

One member of Academic-Related Staff  
**Mrs H Bingham**

One member of Non-Academic Staff  
**Mrs L McKeown**

## AUDIT COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

*Members appointed by the Council*

**Mr A Langan** (Chair)  
**Mrs H Quigley** (acting Chair 2017-18)  
**Mrs H Bingham**  
**Dr K Burnett**  
**Ms M McKee**  
**Mrs J Pyper**  
**Mrs E Way** (from February 2018)

## COUNCIL COMMITTEE

### GOVERNANCE, NOMINATIONS AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

Chairman of Council  
**Mr J Hunter**

Vice-Chancellor and President  
**Professor P Nixon**

Honorary Treasurer  
**Mr D Clements**

Council members  
**Mr A Langan**  
**Mrs H Quigley** (for 2017-18)  
**Dr J Stuart**

Independent members  
**Ms K Erwin**  
**Dame Geraldine Keegan**  
**Professor D Licence**

## STATEMENT OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council has adopted a statement of primary responsibilities which is available for download at:

<https://ulster.ac.uk/statementofprimaryresponsibilities>

# Contacts

## Ulster University

Cromore Road  
Coleraine  
Co. Londonderry  
BT52 1SA  
T: +44 (0)28 7012 3456

## Governance Enquiries

T: +44 (0)28 7012 3502  
E: e.mullan@ulster.ac.uk

## Media Enquiries

PR and Communications  
T: +44 (0)28 9036 6178  
E: pressoffice@ulster.ac.uk

## Student Enquiries

- full-time and part-time undergraduate study and postgraduate study  
T: +44 (0)28 7012 4221  
E: registryce@ulster.ac.uk

## Prospective International Students

T: +44 (0)28 7012 4383  
E: global@ulster.ac.uk

## Research

### Study Opportunities

T: +44 (0)28 7012 3511  
E: t.grissam@ulster.ac.uk

### Business Enquiries

Department of Research and Impact  
T: +44 (0)28 9036 6326  
E: enquiry@ulster.ac.uk

### Graduate Enquiries

Development and Alumni Relations Office  
T: +44 (0)28 9536 7486  
E: alumni@ulster.ac.uk

### Donor Enquires

T: +44 (0)28 7012 3208  
E: giving@ulster.ac.uk

### Research Enquiries

Department of Research and Impact  
T: +44 (0)28 7012 4981  
E: w.aiken@ulster.ac.uk

This publication is available in alternative formats on request from the Marketing and Communications Department.

