

Management Matters



The newsletter of AMHEC

Summer 2010

Celebrating Fifty Years of AMHEC Facing higher challenges ahead



Colin Parkin, Chair – note the plaster on Colin's finger, the cake wasn't the only thing to be cut!

"This year's AMHEC conference was a fantastic opportunity to listen to some very knowledgeable speakers. I learnt a great deal and was able to gather a lot of important information for my university. It also provided an excellent opportunity to network with people from other higher education institutions. I would highly recommend attending next year."

Claire Lorrain,
Excellence Model Development Officer,
The University of Winchester.

Managers of higher education colleges and universities are being urged to do more for less; to provide UK global academic excellence at the same time as reducing costs, protecting quality and access as well as planning for an uncertain financial future.

The range of cuts already announced means around £1 billion will be cut from universities' budgets, research funds and student support over the coming three years with fears that more may follow. Storm clouds are gathering for the independent review of HE funding and student financing due out later this year.

At a time of severe economic pressures, the 50th Anniversary Conference of AMHEC in March brought together managers from across the sector at a two day event at the University of Chester to discuss a wide range of common concerns and issues.

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Founded in 1960, The Association promotes a forum for managers in Higher Education Colleges and Universities to share information and solutions across a diverse range of issues. The Association currently comprises 20 member institutions and over 140 individual members.

Campaign highlights economic role of creativity

Professor Elaine Thomas, Vice-Chancellor, describes a UCA-led campaign highlighting the key role played by creative arts disciplines in the UK economy

In July 2009, the Business Secretary, Lord Mandelson, announced that the Government was making an additional 10,000 university places available in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects to help stimulate economic growth. Unfortunately, the list of subjects to benefit from this support excluded creative arts disciplines such as Design, which have a vital role to play in the growth of the UK's creative economy. Further focus on STEM subjects was evident in the Government's Higher Ambitions report, published in November 2009, which argued for more enhanced support for STEM subjects.



Flower Vase, Ellinor Stenroos, BA (Hons) Silversmithing, Goldsmithing & Jewellery at UCA Rochester



Professor Elaine Thomas

To highlight the problem, UCA stimulated a debate about the importance of Design for the economy through articles in the national media, including The Guardian and Times Higher Education (THE). The campaign generated substantial regional coverage and international discussion in the 'blogosphere'. I was heartened by the level of interest and support from colleagues in both higher education and the wider creative sector.

Since then, I have written a detailed submission to Lord Mandelson, requesting that the decision to exclude Design be reviewed, explaining the integral nature of creative subjects to the STEM disciplines and their importance to the UK's international competitiveness. This has also generated significant press attention.

Here at UCA, we see creative arts disciplines as coterminous with the STEM subjects. Dynamic interaction between the two is critical to the development of new products and services and the generation of creative content for commercial exploitation. Many examples of such interaction exist, including the ingenious interface between technology and Design in Apple's hugely successful iPhone and iPod.



Azad Hosenbokus,
BA (Hons) Illustration at UCA Maidstone

The Digital Britain Report demonstrates that the creative sector is well placed to lead Britain out of recession and we should be investing in subjects like Design that can support economic growth. Furthermore, National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) analysis predicts a 4% growth in the creative industries sector between 2009 and 2013, more than double the rate of the rest of the economy. By 2013, it is forecast that there will be 180,000 creative businesses, compared to the current number of 148,000.



Untitled moment, Sarah Jameson,
BA (Hons) Photography at UCA Farnham

Yet whilst Government focus on STEM will provide more graduates with science and technology backgrounds, it will not produce the creative practitioners to realise the demand for creative content driven by the digital economy. In short we won't be able to capitalise on the 'big bang' in media and communications.

The worldwide digital economy is set to be worth \$1 trillion by 2010 and the UK could lose out on £6 billion by 2013 if it is not able to respond to global competition. Singapore, Finland and New Zealand are pursuing focused national strategies for creative growth. China's eleventh Five-Year Plan expresses the ambition to move from a 'Made in China' to a 'Designed in China' economy. And Nokia has recently established 'design oases' in Bangalore, India and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In such a competitive context, the UK's compartmentalisation of subject disciplines will be particularly damaging.



Keri Loveless
BA (Hons) Textiles for Fashion & Interiors at UCA Farnham

The separation of creative arts disciplines from the STEM subjects mirrors the growing concentration of the UK's science research resources into a small number of world-leading institutions. Ultimately, this will inhibit the development of the creative talent the UK needs if it is to exploit the huge and growing worldwide demand for creative content.

The creative industries have been one of Britain's great success stories and I will continue to lobby the Government to reconsider the critical role of creative arts disciplines in the future growth of this key sector.



Newman University College, small but big on quality

Situated in a suburb in the heart of the West Midlands, Newman University College is just eight miles from Birmingham City Centre, overlooking the Worcestershire countryside.

Best known for its high-quality initial teacher training degrees Newman has significantly expanded into other areas offering traditional single and combined honours degrees across a range of subject areas. For those already in employment, Newman's work-based part-time foundation degrees are more appropriate. In addition, research and postgraduate study continue to be important areas of work at the University College.



A brief history

Originally founded in 1968 to train teachers, Newman is a Catholic University College named after Cardinal John Henry Newman. A deeply spiritual man, Newman was an extraordinary thinker and one of the intellectual giants of the 19th century, whose explorations of the human intellectual and spiritual journey underpins the way we learn and teach at Newman.

In 2007 Newman was granted taught degree-awarding powers, enabling Newman to become a university college. This award was of significant importance to both Newman and the West Midlands as it further raised the status of higher education in the region and increased the range of possibilities for prospective students.

Student centred

As a student centred University College, Newman is renowned for supporting students and assisting them to reach their full potential, which is why it consistently scores highly (91% last year) for the quality of teaching in the National Student Survey. The priority of Newman staff is teaching and supporting students to prepare them for life after graduation.

The relatively small class sizes at Newman enable an interactive teaching style not possible in large lecture theatres. Students get more individual attention, as the staff to student ratio is excellent enabling more one-to-one support. This support enables Newman graduates to be independent, resourceful people who are confident in their abilities and find creative solutions to problems.

Graduate employment

Year-on-year Newman University College has one of the best graduate employment records of UK universities, with over 95% of graduates in employment or further study. Newman was also ranked in the top 20 for graduate employment rates in The Sunday Times University Guide 2010. This is largely down to the determination of our graduates, although the relevant curriculum, careers service and teaching at Newman gives graduates an advantage in what is now a very competitive graduate employment market.

Research focus

At Newman University College, research is a growing culture and is regarded as an integral part of scholarly activity. The research strategy at Newman aims to promote research

and scholarly activities across all schools and subject areas, enhancing the quality and volume of research and encouraging knowledge transfer into the community.

Business and community support

Newman University College makes a significant contribution to the West Midlands economy and is actively engaging in knowledge transfer activities with employers, to provide enterprise opportunities for graduates.

Newman was among the first in the region to offer work-based foundation degrees, the number and content of which continue to develop in response to employer feedback and needs. Parts of these programmes have also been taken up by organisations wishing to upgrade the skills, knowledge and awareness of their staff. Newman has also established an External Partnerships team to enhance our responsiveness to local and regional needs in targeting skills shortages.

Investing in the future

Over £20m is being invested on improving the campus for students, staff and the local community, including a new all weather sports pitch, refurbished lecture theatre with state-of-the-art lighting and audio visual facilities, and new study areas. The redevelopment programme will also see major modifications being made to several areas of the campus, including a vibrant new-build entrance that will provide an inspirational public face for the University College and, as well as addressing the educational needs of the student body, will be used for local community projects. This will incorporate a new state-of-the-art library and research centre, creating a modern and attractive learning environment that will enhance the student experience. Work began in early June 2010 and will be completed in phases. Newman is working hard to create a sustainable environment and is utilising the latest technology to control energy consumption and achieve carbon reduction targets by 2012.



www.newman.ac.uk

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The 50th Anniversary Conference of AMHEC 'Thinking the Unthinkable'

This year's anniversary conference attracted a record number of HE managers, all travelling to Cheshire in the common interest and purpose of helping to shape British universities for the next generation.

Professor Stuart Bartholomew, Principal of the Arts University College at Bournemouth gave a thought-provoking keynote speech, with his vision of the university sector in the future. His views included a more home based and electronically serviced higher education driven by technology, but not constrained by it, with students electronically mobile within an international setting.

Challenging presentations on the immediate and present state of higher education were given by Alice Hynes, Chief Executive of GuildHE, Steve Egan, Deputy Chief Executive HEFCE and Paula Shelley, Senior Human Resources Advisor, UCEA. These sessions developed the central theme of the conference, emphasising the need for institutions to develop significant agility to use the resources at their disposal to deliver effectively and efficiently in these turbulent economic times.

The conference covered a range of pertinent issues. Updates were given by Jeremy Coninx, Funding and Market Management Director, TDA as well as Anthony McClaran, Chief Executive, QAA. Issues on engaging tomorrow's workforce were presented by Mike Emmott, Advisor Employee Relations, CIPD with sector challenges in carbon management by Nick Coakley, Energy and Environmental Manager, York St John University. Aaron Porter, Vice President, NUS (HE) also gave his views about the importance of student engagement now and in the future.



After Dinner Speaker extraordinaire, Professor Tim Wheeler – Vice Chancellor & Principal, University of Chester

Eversheds provided an update on legal matters facing HE managers with Aspect Management and JISC Legal Services speaking on the development of shared legal services for the sector.

Professor Stuart Billingham, Pro Vice Chancellor External Affairs at York St John University spoke entertainingly about how far our institutions had come in the last 50 years, praising AMHEC institutions for "producing people that will change the world".

The 50th Anniversary Conference of AMHEC was fittingly concluded by Colin Parkin, Chair of AMHEC, who said: "This event has underlined the high level of current volatility as well as the rapid pace of change in the environment. Understandably all speakers emphasised the need for institutions to make their own strategic choices in order to build greater financial stability."

The excellent welcome at The University of Chester was typified by the high level of hospitality both through the day and evening, where delegates could continue discussions prompted by the day's business in more detail. A vote of thanks was expressed at the close of the conference to the sponsors for their generous support.

Conference sponsors: Actimum, Chartwells, Eversheds, NatWest Bank, Osbornes, Quadrant Visual Solutions.

Workshop 2010

Agility in Demanding Times

Thursday 9 -Friday 10 September, Edge Hill University

Following on from the successful AMHEC conference in March to inform sustainability strategies for our institutions, the question remains – are HEIs sufficiently agile to respond appropriately and efficiently to the present and future challenges? The BIS letter to Vice Chancellors and Principals of 26 May 2010 emphasised the need for institutions to 'adapt swiftly' to the constraints in public finance and think carefully about what we do and how we operate; undoubtedly requiring strong leadership.

This Workshop will provide opportunities to discuss how our HEIs will respond to the political and financial landscape and the importance of effective leadership through demanding times.

Put the date in your diary now! A full programme and booking details will be publicised shortly

Member Profile

Emma Wilkins

Director of Human Resources

York St John University



What is your role?

As Director of Human Resources, my role is to lead York St John's activities in relation to the recruitment, employment and development of staff. I am responsible for the University's HR Strategy and lead on Human Resource Management practices. At York St John, the Director of HR is also a member of the Senior Leadership Team which I think is a reflection of our culture; we place people at the heart of what we do and value their significant contribution to University life.

What is your background?

I was appointed to Director of HR at York St John in January 2010, prior to this I was Deputy Director for five years. Before York St John I was employed in a HR capacity at Warwick University and before that Winchester University, where I began my career in 1996. I studied Business Law at University which has proved invaluable since as I seem to spend a significant amount of my time wading through the never ending stream of European employment regulations, domestic legislation and case law.

I was recently elected to Vice Chair of AMHEC following two years on the Executive, am a member of the GuildHE HR Network Steering Group and most recently became a member of the new JNCHES Equalities Working Group which is considering strategic equality issues within the sector.

Why York St John?

York St John is an incredibly vibrant, challenging and inclusive place to work. From the moment I started working at Winchester in the late 90s I felt aligned and committed to the University values and direction, which I think is one of the major selling points for working within a GuildHE and/or AMHEC institution. When I moved to Warwick, whilst not a reflection on the University, it reinforced within me that I felt a better fit and more at home working within a smaller HEI. Also, I knew that I wanted to live in the north of the country so when the vacancy for Deputy Director of HR came up at York St John, I knew the position had to be mine and haven't looked back since!

What are your current priorities?

More than ever before, the value and effectiveness of the UK Higher Education system is under scrutiny. We are in very challenging times with a testing economic climate, public funding cuts, the Higher Ambitions agenda and constant press attention which seems to be increasingly negative. The need to achieve 'more for less' is an objective that will be testing HR

management and strategic approaches in many Universities. Maintaining employee engagement, commitment and enthusiasm at a time of undoubted change and uncertainty is therefore high on the agenda.

At the core of the solution must be good and effective University communication at all levels. Staff must have the opportunity to feed their views upwards, feel involved in decision making and well informed of any developments. York St John has good and established methods of communication, however we can always improve. One of my priorities over the next 12 months will be to determine an effective internal communications strategy that ensures maximum opportunity for dialogue, debate and understanding on a range of issues at University, department or team level.

We are currently conducting our third staff attitude survey which will help employees inform us of those areas that they feel need improvement to enhance their employment experience at York St John.

Our new Vice Chancellor, Professor David Fleming, joined us at the beginning of June, which presents an exciting opportunity for the University and one of my main priorities over the coming months will be to support, advise and work with him to help realise his vision for York St John.

AMHEC

I clearly couldn't talk about my future priorities in Management Matters without mentioning my new role as Vice Chair of AMHEC. Following yet another successful annual conference, this time in Chester, it is clear that AMHEC offers real benefit for its members as well as the sector and we now need to start thinking about how we can best promote this.

Work-life balance

Being with friends is my main enjoyment outside of work. However, whilst I wouldn't describe myself as an enthusiast, I do like to run and have competed in a half marathon – something I will never do again! I am also an aerobics instructor and really enjoy putting people through their paces whilst I shout at and 'observe' the class. My main challenge this summer will be to complete the Moonwalk in Edinburgh to raise money for vital breast cancer causes. 26.2 gruelling miles around the city in the dark - can't wait!

By the way... if you want to sponsor me visit: www.walkthewalkfundraising.org/emma_wilkins

AMHEC NEWS

Chair's Welcome

Welcome to this issue of Management Matters on the 50th Anniversary of the Association. Our superb lead article comes from the University of Creative Arts and our Feature article I'm pleased to say is on one of our founder member institutions. The annual conference appropriately titled "Thinking the Unthinkable" was I have to say absolutely superb. Delegates benefited from a challenging programme, a tremendous line up on eminent speakers covering a wide range of key topics, and, as ever, the legendary Chester University hospitality. It was particularly pleasing to see so many of our Honorary Members in attendance, in particular Ralph Wilkinson (my old boss) and Stuart Dobbin who kindly responded on behalf of the Association at the Conference Dinner.

I'm delighted to be able to report, especially in these challenging but exciting times, that our finances are in good shape and that our membership remains high. Members attending the AGM supported a proposal to change the strap line of the Association to "The Association of Managers in Higher Education" which I truly believe is more reflective of the membership profile, the brand AMHEC will remain the same.

The Executive Team have identified the increased profiling and marketing of the Association as a key objective for the coming year. Please note the details for this year's annual Workshop at Edge Hill University. I look forward to working with the Executive Team over the coming year and to the opportunities to support the membership and increase the profile of this very special Association.

Very best wishes, Colin Parkin

Pastures New

Jo Woodland resigned from her post at the University of Winchester, and consequently her role of Administrator to AMHEC to develop her Internet Bulb business. Jo did an absolutely fantastic job in support of AMHEC, in particular, in organising the annual Conferences and Workshops. We wish Jo well with her new venture.

Our best wishes also go to:

Professor Dianne Willcocks CBE, former Vice Chancellor of York St John University; Professor Willcocks was a staunch supporter and ambassador for the Association and we wish her well with her Leadership Consultancy and her board roles on a number of Charities and Trusts.

Pamela Taylor former Principal at Newman University College, we wish Pamela all the best for the future.

AMHEC Executive Team

The AGM meeting ratified the membership of your Executive Team:

Colin Parkin	Chair, York St John University
Emma Wilkins	Vice Chair, York St John University
Diane Oldaker	Treasurer, Newman University College
Anthony Parker	University of Chester
Karen Pendlebury	Winchester University
Jonathan Peel	Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music & Dance
Graham Fairlie	University of Chester
John Elsworth	Honorary Auditor, Winchester University

Our sincere thanks and best wishes go to Anne Dixon on her retirement and on becoming an Honorary Member of the Association and to John Elsworth and Lesley Munroe whose term of office had expired. We are indebted to all three colleagues for their energy, enthusiasm and commitment.

New Appointments

Congratulations to:

Professor David Fleming who took up his appointment as Vice Chancellor at York St John University on the 1st June 2010. Professor Fleming was formerly Deputy Vice Chancellor at Sunderland University.

Professor Peter Rolf Lutzeier on his appointment as Principal at Newman University College.

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Current Members

Bath Spa University, Arts University College at Bournemouth, Bishop Grosseteste University College Lincoln, Canterbury Christ Church University, University of Chester, University of Chichester, Edge Hill University, Liverpool Hope University, Newman University College, Norwich University College of the Arts, University of Cumbria, St Mary's University College, Belfast, St Mary's University College, Twickenham, Stranmillis University College, Belfast, Leeds Trinity University College, Trinity College Carmarthen, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, University for the Creative Arts, University of Winchester, York St John University.