

Bulletin

This Issue • Honorary degrees • Sculpture exhibition • New appointments and awards

Leicester Joins Select Coalition of Internationally Recognised Universities

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER INVITED TO JOIN THE 1994 GROUP

▶ The University of Leicester has been invited to join the 1994 Group - a coalition of internationally recognised research intensive universities.

Leicester will join institutions including Warwick, Durham, York and Surrey amongst others.

The 1994 Group of internationally

renowned universities engaged in leading-edge research and high-quality teaching is committed to meeting the diverse needs of students, staff and policy makers.

The 1994 Group provides a framework for collaboration between research-intensive universities in the UK. The aim of this collaboration is

to enhance the ability of member universities to act collectively where appropriate whilst maintaining their individuality and thriving in the highly competitive higher education sector.

The distinction of joining this prestigious group follows a number of recent significant achievements for the University of Leicester:

- Leicester broke into the top 20 of the 2006 Times Good University Guide for the first time
- Leicester was ranked joint first - among universities teaching full-time students - in the inaugural National Student Survey
- Leicester's £300m investment in research and teaching excellence - among the biggest of any university in the UK - is seeing state-of-the-art facilities come on stream

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New Registrar appointed at Leicester see page 10.

LEICESTER BREAKS INTO TOP 20 OF THE TIMES LEAGUE TABLE

▶ The University of Leicester has broken into the top 20 of The Times newspaper Good University Guide league table where it is ranked 18th in the UK out of 110 universities.

Leicester climbed 6 places from last year's ranking to its highest ever position.

A key reason behind the rise was the University's recent success in the National Student Survey. Director of Marketing Richard Taylor said: "The University of Leicester is the UK's top ranked University for teaching quality and overall satisfaction amongst universities teaching full time students and was rated joint 1st in the UK in the 2005 National Student Survey.

"Breaking into the top 20 is further evidence of Leicester's rising fortunes and of our investment in high quality teaching and research beginning to pay off.

"The Times league table also reveals we are a leading university for student completion-over 95% who come to Leicester go on to gain an award."

"Our ranking in The Times league

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SAYING IT WITH FLOWERS: Professor Ian Lauder presents Jackie Marriott with a floral tribute for her tremendous service to the University. Full story Page 9





LEICESTER BREAKS INTO TOP 20 OF THE TIMES LEAGUE TABLE

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table is an important result for Leicester which will have international ramifications. Students use league tables as a guide to UK universities and, as such, it is important for Leicester to be confirmed among the leading institutions in the country."

18th overall Leicester was also ranked:

- 3rd for teaching satisfaction
- 5th for student facilities
- 6th for student completion

Leicester Attains its Highest Ranking in Guardian Table

► The University of Leicester has attained its highest ever ranking in The Guardian league tables, being placed 25th- up 8 places on last year. A number of subjects were ranked in the top 20 in the UK:

- American Studies 4th
- Bio Sciences 15th
- Computer Science 18th
- Earth Sciences 14th
- General Engineering 7th
- English 14th
- Maths 10th
- Medicine 7th
- Physics 13th

The supplement carries a number of images of the University.

LEICESTER SCIENTIST LEADING THE WAY IN BREAST CANCER RESEARCH

► Breast Cancer Campaign has awarded a grant of £74,400 to Professor Rosemary Walker at the University of Leicester.

Professor Walker will examine the differences that exist in the myoepithelial cells of breast tissue taken from breast cancer patients and healthy individuals. She believes that these differences could be a contributing factor to the development of breast cancer.

Professor Walker says:

"Discovering a specific change in the myoepithelial cells of breast tissue taken from patients could help to pinpoint a biological factor, which pre-determines whether a person is at higher risk of developing breast cancer."

Leicester Joins 1994 Group

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• Joining the 1994 Group of research-intensive universities will have a significant impact said Vice-Chancellor Professor Bob Burgess.

"This is a milestone for Leicester - the impact of which extends far beyond one of perception. It places Leicester in a group alongside our research intensive peers as we continue to raise our game nationally and internationally.

"Universities like Leicester are competing internationally for the best students, for top-ranking staff and for research grants. Being part of a select group of leading UK universities provides us with a competitive edge on a global stage.

"The 1994 Group has become an increasingly powerful voice within the higher education sector. The group incorporates a diverse range

of universities with strong research portfolios and a reputation for teaching excellence. Vice-Chancellors of the member universities meet regularly and a number of specialist groups have been formed to consider sector wide issues in areas such as finance and human resources.

"I am delighted that Leicester has achieved this distinction as we approach our Golden Jubilee year in 2007 - it will make the celebrations all the more significant."

Current members of the 1994 Group are: St Andrews, Durham, Lancaster, York, Warwick, Reading, East Anglia, Essex, Birkbeck, Goldsmiths, Royal Holloway, LSE, Surrey, Bath, Sussex and Exeter.

The Group's main aims are to: secure widespread recognition that enables it to influence decision and policy making groups; achieve awareness and profile that underpins the ambitions of member

universities in global markets; promote the need for diverse and distributed centres for research and teaching excellence; share good practice that enhances the staff and student experience; provide services that enable members to respond flexibly and rapidly to developing market conditions.

Group members are committed to shared values. These are that: institutional identities and tradition can be respected and aligned with innovative thinking; research intensive universities should play a full role at local, regional, national and international level; high quality research and teaching are mutually supportive and should reinforce each other; students and staff from diverse backgrounds should be enabled to maximise their potential in a well-maintained environment that provides a stimulating choice of academic, cultural, and social opportunities.

New Languages at Leicester Programme Takes Off

► Launched in September 2005 by the School of Modern Languages, Languages at Leicester - L@L for short - has completed a successful first year. The University has approved plans for an expansion of the programme in 2006-07. L@L provides tuition at low cost in a variety of languages from beginner's level upwards. It is open to all students, except those taking specialist languages degrees, and to staff in all categories at the University of Leicester. It is also available, at different pricing, to staff and students at De Montfort, making it the first such Institution-Wide Languages Programme in the UK serving more than one university.

In 2005-06 nearly 400 learners were enrolled. They were taught by a team of 22 tutors providing 27 classes per week. Classes ran at various levels in French, Spanish,

German and Italian, and at beginners level only in Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Russian. Most classes took place from 4.30 or on Wednesdays from 1.30.

L@L courses are designed to introduce adult learners to the target language as a practical skill for use in everyday communication or for business purposes, both orally and in writing. The tutors are either native speakers or have degrees in the language concerned, and all have a PGCE or comparable teaching qualification. There is no formal teaching of grammar, and classes are normally kept to 15 or below to ensure individual participation.

Feedback from learners in the first year was enthusiastic, with 90% of respondents rating their class 1 or 2 on a scale of 1 to 5. One participant in advanced Spanish wrote "Far easier to learn than languages at school -

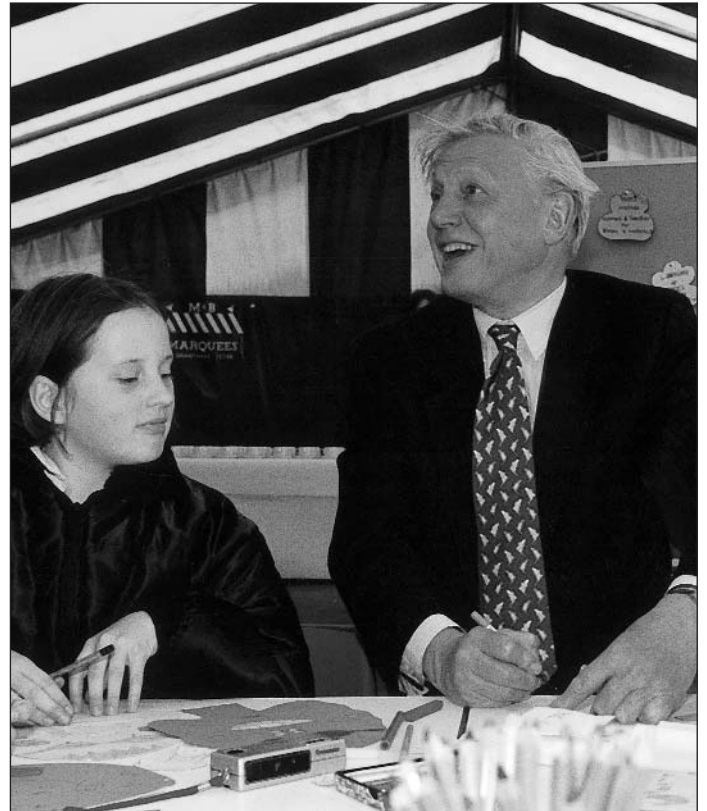
interactive and enjoyable", and a beginner in Japanese commented "A great opportunity for an insight into a language so different from my own - I'd recommend it to anybody". Certificates of proficiency were issued to learners who opted to take tests at the end of the courses.

In 2006-07 the administrative infrastructure of L@L will be expanded to cope with the high demand for classes, and the programme will be opened to the general public, although university staff and students will still receive a discount of nearly 30% on tuition charges. Languages other than those listed above will be offered if there is demand for them.

Further details are available on the L@L website (www.le.ac.uk/ml/lal) or from the L@L administrator, Mary Needham, on extension 2662 or email mn29@le.ac.uk



Lord Attenborough, pictured in front of a portrait of his father, will receive the award of Honorary Distinguished Fellow along with his brother, Sir David Attenborough, right, pictured at the University's Attenborough Arboretum.



Attenborough Brothers Honoured by Leicester

ACCOLADES FOR 13 PEOPLE AT DEGREE CONGREGATIONS

▶ Lord Attenborough and Sir David Attenborough are to be awarded the title of Distinguished Honorary Fellow at degree congregations in July at the University of Leicester.

They are among a number of distinguished people receiving accolades from the University for distinctive contributions and achievements within their respective fields.

The award of Distinguished Honorary Fellow is an accolade from the University in recognition of a record of continuing distinguished service to the University. It can be held by a maximum of 24 people at any one time.

A total of 11 people will also receive honorary degrees from the University at ceremonies to be held in De Montfort Hall from 11 July - 14 July.

DISTINGUISHED HONORARY FELLOWS:

Lord Attenborough -13th July (pm)

Sir David Attenborough -13th July (pm)

HONORANDS

Ms Patricia Barker – Doctor of Letters -11th July (pm)
Novelist

Mr Norman Rosenthal –Doctor of Letters - 11th July (pm)
Leicester graduate. Exhibitions Secretary, Royal Academy of Arts

Professor Richard Holmes – Doctor of Letters - 12th July (am)
Professor of Military and Security Studies, Cranfield University

Sir Mike Tomlinson- Doctor of Letters - 12th July (am)
Former HM Chief Inspector of Schools; Chairman of Hackney Education Trust

Ms Marina Warner- Doctor of Letters -12th July (pm)
Writer and Critic

Mr John Bloor –Doctor of Laws - 13th July (am)
Owner of Bloor Holdings, leading Midlands housebuilder with numerous subsidiary interests, including Triumph

Professor Martin Taylor –Doctor of Science- 13th July (am)
Professor of Pure Mathematics, University of Manchester

Professor Dame Carol Black –Doctor of Science-14th July (am)
President, Royal College of Physicians; Professor of Rheumatology,UCL

Professor Sir George Radda –Doctor of Science-14th July (am)
Former Chief Executive of the Medical Research Council

The Rt Hon The Baroness Amos – Doctor of Laws- 14th July (pm)
Leader of the House of Lords since 2003

Professor Laurie Taylor –Doctor of Letters- 14th July (pm)
Leicester graduate. Former Professor of Sociology at York. THES columnist.



Angels: Harmony, Marble by Helaine Blumenfeld.

► Following the huge success of its previous summer 'Sculpture in the Garden' exhibitions, the University of Leicester is mounting its fifth annual sculpture exhibition in the Harold Martin Botanic Garden, Oadby, Leicester.

With an Object in Mind maintains the quality, innovation and excitement of previous years, with 40 works from seven sculptors who are known nationally and internationally.

The 16-acre landscaped garden offers an idyllic setting for an exhibition and all the artists have chosen the area which best complements their work, the remarkable quality of the gardens giving dimension to their exhibits.

The artists whose work is to be displayed are: Helaine Blumenfeld, John Sidney Carter, Deirdre Hubbard, Roland Piché, Christy Symington, Guy Portelli and Marcus Vergette. Only Roland Piché and Guy Portelli have not shown in the Harold Martin Botanic Garden before.

This exhibition presents a remarkable opportunity to see several works from each of these important sculptors and to consider

the interrelationships of the different artists' work.

Professor Bill Forster, who is co-organiser of the exhibition,

WITH AN OBJECT IN MIND

commented: "Each of the artists is exploring sense and sensibilities as well as relationships and aspects of humanity, in ways which widen perception and deepen understanding. Each work of art is an act of sharing."

His fellow organiser, sculptor Helaine Blumenfeld, added: "The seven sculptors participating vary in age from 30s to 70s but they all have an interest in the natural world and a belief in the value of craft, vision and tradition. Each has developed an intensely personal and recognisable style. They share a belief in the power of art to spiritualise. Above all they believe that quality is always at the centre of the 'cutting edge' whether the work is figurative, abstract or conceptual, using conventional materials or those never used before.

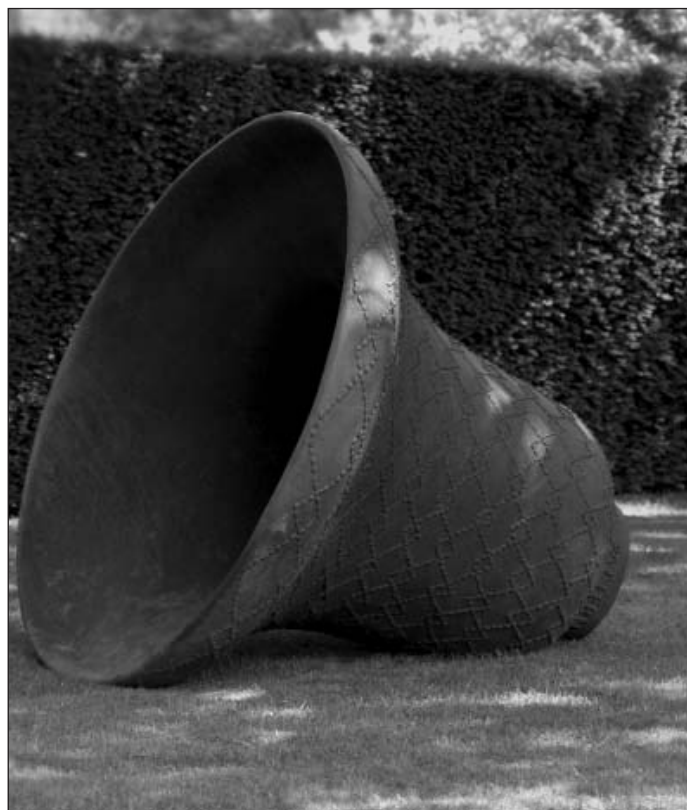
"It is the quality, imagination, and vision of the sculpture that pushes the frontiers. All of the artists in this

exhibition are innovators. They belong to the true avant garde, to those artists who have worked through a tradition and pushed the boundaries forward."

Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leicester Professor Robert Burgess commented: "We are delighted to welcome such a prestigious group of artists to the University for this year's exhibition. The popularity of the University's sculpture exhibitions has increased every year, reaching people

in and beyond the region and offering them the opportunity to see innovative works of art – some on a very grand scale indeed – by internationally-known sculptors in the beautiful setting of the gardens."

With an Object in Mind, the University of Leicester 2006 'Sculpture in the Garden' exhibition, opens on 1st July and runs until 23rd September 2006. It is open daily from 10am to 4pm and entry is free. ☺



Marcus Vergette, Pattern Maker - cast iron.

OPEN DAY

► The next Botanic Garden Open day and plant sale is on Sunday 2nd July 2006, and it will also be open as part of the National Gardens Scheme on 30th July 2006

The occasion will also offer people an opportunity to view the international Sculpture exhibition. The Open Day, from 11am-5pm, features:

- Plant Sale with Specialist Nurseries
- Sculpture Exhibition
- Horticultural Society Displays
- Adagio Acrobats
- Art Exhibition by Peter Welton
- Bumble Bee Trail
- Face Painting
- Pond Dipping
- Bouncy Castle
- Fairground Organ
- Brass Band
- Guided Tours

• Open Day Admission £3, children free ☺



Advanced Microscopy Centre

► A new Advanced Microscopy Centre has been created for the Faculty of Science funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

The aim of the Advanced Microscopy Centre is to equip researchers from the Faculty of Science with state of the art facilities to enable high quality research and training in the nano and micro scale characterization of materials. The Centre obtained £1.48M of funding for four instruments which are located in the Faculty of Science. The Advanced Microscopy Centre will be fully commissioned by May 2006 and alongside the instruments there are comprehensive specimen preparation facilities.

The instruments in the Advanced Microscopy Centre are:

- A Field Emission Gun Scanning Electron Microscope (FEGSEM) equipped with X-ray Microanalysis and Electron Backscattered Diffraction Facilities for high resolution imaging of materials.

The Sirion has an in-lens detection system that allows ultra-high resolution imaging in both secondary and back-scattered modes at voltages down to 500V. The EBSD system provides information on the grain orientation within samples and allows the influence of texture on mechanical properties to be determined.

- A Transmission Electron Microscope (TEM) with X-ray Microanalysis and scanning transmission electron microscopy detectors. The transmission electron microscope allows information on the morphology, composition, crystallography of materials to be obtained at high resolutions.

- An Ultra-High Vacuum Scanning Tunnelling Microscope (UHV-STM). The UHV-STM is capable of obtaining atomic resolution images of a surface and by operating at cryogenic temperatures and applying magnetic fields the magnetic behaviour of materials can be studied.



The Vice-Chancellor officially opened the new Advanced Microscopy Centre in the Faculty of Science, funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

- A Scanning Probe Microscope (SPM). The SPM works by scanning a tip across a sample surface and measuring the forces between the tip and surface. The technique allows the topography of samples to be determined at near atomic resolution. Additionally, tip-sample interactions can be influenced by the mechanical,

electrical and magnetic properties of materials allowing insights into the nanoscale behaviour of materials.

The enhanced facilities in the Faculty of Science have already led to significant success in terms of attracting funding for projects from the EC, EPSRC and for developing projects with industry. ☺

£2M Boost for Leicester Stroke and Diabetes Patients

► Three University of Leicester doctors, based at Leicester Royal Infirmary and Leicester General Hospital, are to lead two flagship Local Research Networks (LRNs) with the aim of preventing the development of stroke and diabetes and improving outcomes for patients with these conditions.

They are to receive major funding worth more than £2m

over 3 years to establish the two Local Research Networks, appointed by the UK Clinical Research Network and the Department of Health.

The Trent Local Research Network for Stroke will be led by Dr Tom Robinson (University of Leicester Department of Cardiovascular Sciences), based at the Leicester General Hospital.

The funding will support Dr Robinson's work as Director of the Local Research Network, including financing a network manager based in Leicester and research staff throughout the Trent region.

The Diabetes Clinical Research Network will be jointly led by Professor Melanie Davies (Professor of Diabetes Medicine at the University's Department of

Cardiovascular Sciences, Leicester Royal Infirmary) and Dr Kamlesh Khunti (University of Leicester Department of Health Sciences).

Each LRN will receive an average of £300-£400k annually to employ dedicated research nurses and similar staff, who will support the clinical teams studies in hospital. ☺



Lifelong Learning, Older People and Society

▶ Older people who take lifelong learning courses are less likely to end up dependent, house-bound with a care structure, or in nursing homes or hospitals. They are also more likely to continue to contribute to society in a variety of ways.

Yet, changes in the ways lifelong learning courses are funded, with public money going only to accredited courses with some vocational purpose, discriminates against the kinds of courses many people want to take in their pre-retirement and retirement years.

Entitled, 'Lifelong Learning, Older People and Society', a series of seminars at the University of Leicester Institute of Lifelong Learning will explore issues surrounding education, learning and older people, the implications for society as a whole and different areas of related public policy.

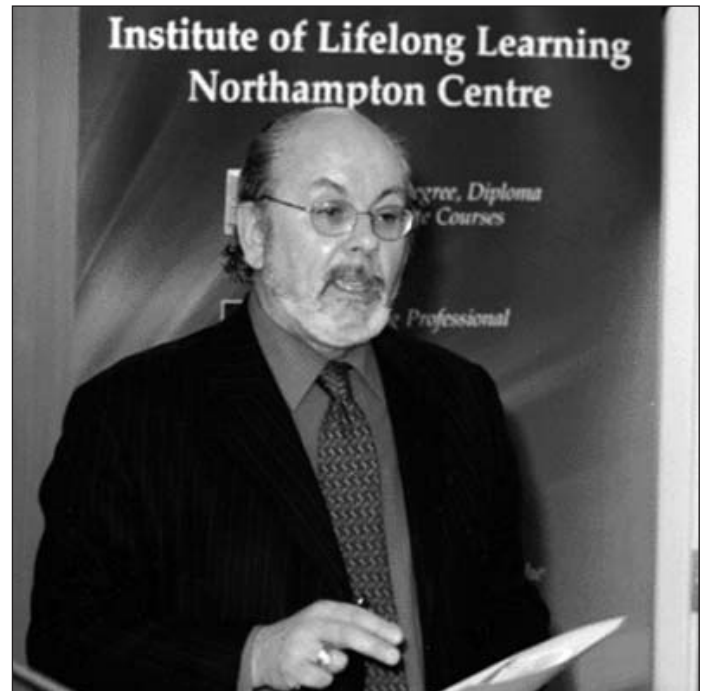
Professor John Benyon, Director of Lifelong Learning at the University of Leicester, commented:

"There is a huge demand for

education from people over 50, but policies of government agencies like the DfES, HEFCE and the Learning and Skills Council appear to have downgraded courses for older people. When I first came into Adult Education 25 years ago, the majority of our programmes were non-accredited courses and the world was not a worse place for that. I will go to my grave saying there is nothing wrong with wanting to learn for the sake of it.

"Education for education's sake is a good thing – it enriches the lives of individuals and communities. However, since we are not funded for non-accredited courses we have to make them self-funding which inevitably excludes those who cannot afford the fees and limits the sorts of courses that we can put on."

The seminars are being run in conjunction with NIACE, the Leicester-based agency which promotes adult education. Jim Soulsby, the NIACE officer with responsibility for work in this field,



'I will go to my grave saying there is nothing wrong with wanting to learn for the sake of it.' Professor John Benyon-Institute of Lifelong Learning.

and Dr David Wilson, Visiting Research Fellow at the Institute of Lifelong Learning, are working with John Benyon on the project.

Professor Benyon said:

"An important issue in current society is the decline in political engagement and 'good citizenship'. We are looking, for instance, at how lifelong learning activities can enable

older people to play a larger role in local politics, with a better understanding of how to campaign for better neighbourhoods and so on. We have to hope that by joining with other organisations, and running a national campaign, we can persuade the government of the importance of reinstating funding for lifelong learning courses for older people." 🗣️

HOW THE LATEST LEARNING TECHNOLOGY TAKES THE RAP



Professor Gilly Salmon is leading a project to optimise student learning.

▶ The University of Leicester is spearheading research on how student learning can be enhanced by downloading audio onto personal MP3 players –known as podcasting.

The research seeks to develop a model for optimising student learning –taking the focus away from content delivery. For example, the research will investigate including a joke or a rap as part of the podcast.

A workshop on 2 June at the University of Leicester brought together experts in the field from across the UK to investigate how the latest technologies can ensure that learning is continuously with students rather than bring them constantly to campus!

Now, following £40,000 funding from the Higher Education Academy, the Beyond Distance Research

Alliance based at the University will be working with the Royal Veterinary College, University of Gloucestershire and Kingston University on a 12-month research project called IMPALA- Informal Mobile Podcasting and Learning Adaptation.

Professor of eLearning at Leicester, Professor Gilly Salmon, is leading the project and her work, along with that of Professor John Fothergill, University of Leicester Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Learning and Teaching, features prominently in the research.

Richard Mobbs, Head of Learning Technolog, said universities need to think about delivering education to where the student wants it - and not to where institutions say they will get it.

"The teaching and learning process is very complicated but we know that

we learn best of all when we want to learn and that requires having easy access to the learning materials. Virtual Learning Environments facilitate on demand learning but they still require that the learner has Internet access. So what can be better than to give the learner portable learning materials.

"To this end we need to deliver the resources to the student and not the student to the resources."

The podcast model is 10 minutes long in three parts:

- up-to-date world news relevant to learning that week
- feedback and feedforward on learning and collaborative team work that week
- a fun part eg joke or rap 🗣️



► Researchers simulating conditions of reduced cabin pressure and reduced oxygen levels, such as may be encountered during an 8-hour aeroplane flight, found no increase in the activation of the blood clotting system among healthy individuals, according to a study in JAMA. (Journal of the American Association).

Venous thromboembolism, a term used to describe deep vein thrombosis (DVT; blood clots forming in the veins) and pulmonary embolism (clots passing to the lungs where they may obstruct the blood flow), has been associated with long-haul air travel, but it has been unclear whether this is due to the effects of sitting for a long time, or whether there is a relationship with some other specific factor in the aeroplane environment, according to background information in the article. One hypothesis has been that hypoxia (reduced oxygen in the blood), associated with the decreased cabin pressure that occurs at altitude, produces changes in the blood that increase the risk for blood clots.

Dr William D. Toff, from the University of Leicester's Department of Cardiovascular Sciences and colleagues –including in the UK Professor Mike Greaves, Head of the University of Aberdeen's School of Medicine –conducted a study, from September 2003 to November 2005, to assess the effects of hypobaric (reduced air pressure) and hypoxia, similar to that which

No Link Between Low Air-Pressure on Long-Haul Flights and DVT says New Study

might be encountered during commercial air travel, on a variety of markers of activation of the haemostatic (blood clotting) system.


The study included 73 healthy volunteers who spent 8 hours seated in a hypobaric chamber and were exposed to hypobaric hypoxia, similar to the conditions of reduced aeroplane cabin pressure that might occur during a long-haul flight (cabin pressure may be reduced to the equivalent of that at an altitude of about 8,000 feet). Blood was drawn before and after exposure to assess activation of factors associated with haemostasis (blood clotting). Similar measurements were taken of the same volunteers, on a separate occasion, before and after they spent 8 hours seated in a controlled environment, equivalent to atmospheric conditions at ground level (normobaric exposure).

The study was a collaboration between the Universities of Leicester and Aberdeen. The chamber studies were performed at the RAF Centre of Aviation Medicine at Henlow in

Bedfordshire and Aberdeen. Analysis of blood samples was performed at Leicester and Aberdeen, and also by colleagues at the Academic Medical Center at the University of Amsterdam.

The researchers found that when comparing the results between the normobaric and the hypobaric exposures, there was no significant difference in the overall change for markers of coagulation activation (clot formation), fibrinolysis (the normal breakdown of small, naturally occurring blood clots), activation of platelets (small cells in the blood that clump together when stimulated to promote clot formation), and activation of endothelial cells (the cells that line the interior surface of blood vessels).

Dr Toff said:

"Our study provides, for the first time, a carefully controlled assessment of the effects on blood clotting of the low air pressure and low oxygen level that might be found during a long-haul flight. We found no evidence that these conditions cause activation of the blood clotting mechanism." 

Star Project

► A collaboration between the University of Leicester Space Research Centre and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is about to reach a new stage as hardware built at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research in Mumbai is sent to Leicester for integration into an x-ray camera.

The camera will eventually be returned to India for installation into Astrosat, India's first national astronomy satellite. The five instruments in Astrosat's payload will observe exotic objects and phenomena such as black holes, neutron stars, and active galaxies at a number of different wavelengths simultaneously, from the ultraviolet band to energetic x-rays.

Leicester is providing the expertise and support to build the CCD camera for the Soft X-ray Telescope (SXT) on Astrosat.

Guy Peters, Astrosat Project Manager UK at the University of Leicester's Space Research Centre, explained the significance of the mission:

"Each of Astrosat's five instruments is looking at different regions of the electromagnetic spectrum which allows simultaneous measurements to be taken across a wide range of energies."

ISRO approached the University of Leicester Space Research Centre to undertake the SXT camera development because of its acclaimed track record in spacecraft design in missions such as Swift and XMM-Newton and the experience gained from its laboratory programmes leading to CCD camera designs with high resolution and sensitivity and low mass.

While the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research has built the main telescope body and mirror Leicester has provided the camera, supported the project through consultancy and will calibrate and integrate the camera at the Space Research Centre." 

'CYBERMUMS' GIVE BIRTH TO NEW PROJECT

► A trail-blazing research project started by academics at the University has paved the way for a new generation of academics.

'Cyberparents' – a project by University of Leicester academics Clare Madge and Henrietta O'Connor –started in 1998 in order to examine how new parents used the web for information and as a form of social support.

Such has been the success of this project that the researchers secured funding from the Economic and Social Research Council to create an

online resource that explains how others could follow in their cybersteps. It has been launched at the Royal Statistical Society in London and is available at <http://www.geog.le.ac.uk/orm>.

Henrietta O'Connor, lecturer at the University of Leicester, said:

"In 1998 I began working with Clare Madge on a research project which aimed to examine how, why and in what ways new parents were using parenting websites. While neither of us were technical experts we adapted and transferred

traditional research methods to the internet; starting with an online questionnaire aimed at new parents.

"The response that we received to the questionnaire was surprising. Lots of new parents responded quickly and some agreed to a follow up interview, but they were dispersed all over the world. We decided to abandon our original plan of conducting interviews face to face and explored ways in which we could interview their respondents online."

Hence Cyberparents was born. 



► The University has launched a new commercial service provided by the Department of Mathematics' Quantitative Modelling Unit (QMU).

Financial exposure in the traded markets requires benchmarking, calibration, risk profiling and assessment along with stable and robust pricing and trading systems. QMU provides banks and other financial institutions with solutions to their financial and risk managements needs.

QMU brings together experts in quantitative finance and risk managements with leaders from the fields of computer science,

New Commercial Service at University

mathematics, physics and a range of to the highly quantitative disciplines. The ability to cross-fertilise ideas between subjects, whilst offering an independent problem solving service and thought process, allows for unique and effective solutions.

All QMU consultants have vast experience of project and time management having worked on high profile, pressured and

challenging projects in the past. The services provided by the Unit are not limited to financial applications and consultants will discuss your particular needs and offer solutions.

- To introduce this innovative solution QMU offers you the opportunity to meet with members of the Unit on a totally free, no obligation basis, in order for you to fully appreciate the complexity of the skills offered by the QMU. The

commercial services of the Unit are available to University Departments, local/regional businesses, UK and international organisations/institutions.

For more information please contact: Professor Jeremy Levesley
Director Quantitative Modelling Unit
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Tel: +44 (0) 116 252 3897

• Email: jl1@le.ac.uk

• Web: www.qmu.le.ac.uk/qmu

TEACHING EXCELLENCE SHOWCASED

► Cutting-edge teaching and learning methods in higher education are being harnessed creatively across the East Midlands to inject excitement into learning.

The East Midlands network of Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) showcased its ground-breaking work at a special launch event which took place in Nottingham on June 1.

The national Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) initiative aims to reward excellent teaching practice in higher education institutions and to further invest in that practice to deliver substantial benefits to students, teachers and institutions. Funded with £315 million over five years from the Higher Education Funding Council for England, it represents the largest ever single investment initiative in teaching and learning in higher education.

Nine of the CETLs in the East Midlands have joined forces in a unique partnership to share best practice and promote collaboration. Leicester is associated with three CETLs in Genetics, Geography and Physics and Astronomy.

Bare Faced Cheek Lands University in Oxford English Dictionary

► The University featured in BBC Two's popular factual programme *Balderdash & Piffle* broadcast on April 16. The special follow-up programme to the hit series cited the University for the very first written record of the word MOONIE.

The word is used in the November 13 1987 issue of the students' newspaper *Ripple*, describing the range of Rag fundraising stunts that were on offer at the time. Rag - which stands for Raising and Giving-

sees students collect money for charity and good causes.

As part of Students' Union's Rag Week, students could pay for a number of 'squads' to undertake a range of activities. These include:

The Moonie Squad: For a payment of £3, the 'bare cheeked boys return to horrify you with their behinds,' states the notice in *Ripple*.

The OED describes a moonie as 'an act of exposing one's buttocks' and cites the earliest use of the word as

being in 1990.

However, as a result of the programme, a graduate has recalled the use of the word in *Ripple* three years earlier- and the University Library has a copy of the paper from 1987.

A spokesperson for the University -which is also the base of the national English Association -said:

"It is pleasing that the students have continued adding to the richness of the English language!"

UNIVERSITY LAUNCHES HIGHER EDUCATION CARBON MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

► The University has committed itself to protect the environment by looking into ways of reducing carbon emissions over the next eleven months

The programme will develop priorities and set a timescale for the Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan (SIP).

A spokesperson for the University said:

"The programme fits in very well with our aims in reducing our energy and water use through various measures that can be taken by staff and students without adversely

affecting our work or comfort conditions. With the new directives that the higher education sector needs to comply, I am in no doubt this programme will help us to meet those compliances and prove to be cost effective for the University."

The Energy Management Working Group will reconvene with representatives from each faculty and consider the existing energy management arrangements, raise awareness of energy issues and identify potential energy saving measures.

The Chair of the Energy

Management Working Group, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Postlethwaite, is keen to drive this Higher Education Carbon Management Programme forward. The committee will be looking into reducing our environmental impact, extend the life of fossil fuel supplies and reducing energy costs so that we can allocate more funds to teaching and research.

For more information about the HECM programme please contact Chrispal Anand at the Energy Management Function on 0116 252 2308 or email cpa4@le.ac.uk



Investment in Space Age Science

▶ A high-tech Leicester firm announced that it has won a prestigious Government grant to help develop its revolutionary new technology which uses space-age science to increase medical understanding

BioAstral Limited is a spin-out company from the University and combines the joint expertise of the University's Space Research Centre and its School of Biological Sciences.

The Department of Trade &

Industry (DTI) has now backed BioAstral with a £72,000 grant to help develop new systems which bring space imaging technology to bear on medical diagnostics and drug discovery. The DTI Grant for Research and Development came through the East Midlands Development Agency and is being matched by a further £53,000 raised by BioAstral's shareholders.


The start-up funding will be used to build an advanced prototype instrument to detect the

smallest changes in human genes.

Dr Trude Schwarzacher of Leicester's School of Biological Sciences and a founder of BioAstral explained:

"Microscopic changes in people's genes can cause serious and long term diseases. Our powerful new system will enable researchers to detect these changes and to get more accurate results on a larger scale than ever before. This should lead to better understanding of diseases and to

the development of new and more effective treatments."

BioAstral Limited employs advanced space-science imaging technology to address the needs of biomedical research. The emerging Company, founded in 2004 and based at the University, is currently focussed on the research, development and application of instrumentation for significantly improved imaging and the interpretation of microarray-based diagnostics. 

People



DOUBLE CELEBRATION FOR JACKIE

Tribute to a 'remarkably long and successful career'

▶ On June 2nd Jackie Marriott celebrated her 65th birthday and with it her retirement from the University of Leicester. Her retirement was marked by a reception in the Medical School attended by a large number of people including the Dean of the Medical School, the Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar. They gathered to recognise a remarkably long and successful career which began at the University in 1962 as a Clerk in the Registry. Jackie was appointed as Secretary to Professor Robert Kilpatrick (now Lord Kilpatrick) in 1982 having apparently been instructed by the Dean to ignore an offer of a position working for Dr David Morton.

She worked closely with Robert Kilpatrick in this embryonic stage of the Medical School involving as it did repeated high level interaction with the local NHS as

well as the then Vice-Chancellor Mr (now Sir) Maurice Shock. If this was not daunting enough she was also called upon to ensure that the Dean's problems with his diabetes were properly managed.

In 1990 she found herself working for a new Dean when Professor Frank Harris was appointed. The period up to Frank's effective retirement in 1999 was characterised by further expansion of the School and the establishment of the collaboration with the University of Warwick to create the Leicester Warwick Medical School. The period also marked the creation of the Council of Heads of Medical Schools which Frank was involved in launching as its first secretary. Jackie worked closely with the first full-time executive director of CHMS (Mr Michael Powell) and more recently with his

replacement, Dr Katie Petty-Saphon.

Jackie's final Dean was Professor Ian Lauder who took over as acting Dean in October 1999 and then as Dean of the Leicester Warwick Medical School in 2000. This most recent and final phase of Jackie's career has seen the Medical School interacting with the merged University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust. Her retirement also corresponds with the separation of the new Warwick Medical School to recreate a University of Leicester School of Medicine.

The guests who attended her retirement reception on Wednesday 17th May fittingly reflected the various phases of her career. They included Mr Gerry Cinderby from the former Leicestershire Health Authority, Barbara Anderson from CHMS,

Heather Parnham from the Chief Executive/Chairman's office at UHL and Mrs Marianne Mann from the Warwick Medical School Dean's office. Amazingly, despite numerous phone calls from Barbara, Heather and Marianne, Jackie had never met any of them in person until her retirement reception. Dr Frank May and his wife Katherine were also present as were virtually all of the Medical School's administrative staff as well as many others from the main campus.

The reception concluded with speeches from Professor Lauder and from Jackie herself who was presented with a variety of retirement gifts including a paid visit to Ragdale Hall.

All in all it was a wonderful way to recognise a long and distinguished career at the University of Leicester characterised as it was by professionalism, loyalty, discretion and total reliability. It will be a very hard act to follow!

Professor Ian Lauder 



Student at No 10!

▶ James O'Rourke, a student on the Foundation Degree Managing Voluntary and Community Organisations, was at no 10 Downing Street, to receive an accolade for his work in the community sector

James, who has embarked on the new Foundation Degree operating at the University of Leicester, Northampton Centre, since January this year and he is a leading charity worker and has worked tirelessly for the residents of the Thorplands area.

Jim was the recipient of a NIACE Adult Learners Award last year and he has gone on to undertake the first year of a three year Foundation Degree at the University's Centre in Northampton. ☺

LEICESTER PROFESSOR HONoured BY OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

▶ Oxford University Press is establishing a prize to celebrate the success of the best-selling title Business Research Methods, and to reward high quality research.

'The Bryman and Bell Prize' is an award of £100 of books to the best undergraduate student studying in each UK Business School. Alan Bryman is a professor in the University of Leicester's Management Centre, and Emma Bell is a senior lecturer at Queen Mary College, University of London. The prize can be awarded to the student who has made the most significant achievement or progress with a business research project over the course of the academic year.

Professor Martin Parker, Director of Research for the Management Centre, commented:

'We are really pleased that Professor Bryman's work has been recognised in this way. It reflects well on the breadth and quality of research that is being undertaken in Management at Leicester.' ☺

New Registrar and Secretary



David Hall starts as the new Registrar and Secretary from 1 September.

▶ When David Hall rolls up his sleeves and gets to work as the new Registrar and Secretary at the University of Leicester- it won't be for his tattoos alone that he will be noticed.

For the 41-year-old ex-soldier, who served with the Green Jackets, is a man with a mission –to ensure that the University enhances its reputation for excellence even further.

It is an ambition that is in keeping with the University's own aspirations: Leicester is a top-20 ranked research University; it is engaged in a £300m Development programme –amongst the biggest of any university- and it is ranked top for student satisfaction amongst universities with full-time provision.

The former squaddie has a wealth of experience in the university sector, joining Leicester from Birmingham where, as Academic Registrar since 2001, he has led a team of over 250 staff and handles a budget of £13.25m.

He has been in charge of marketing, recruitment, and had overarching responsibility for all aspects of the student experience, resource allocation, academic quality and corporate planning. He has been heavily involved in sharpening the institution's focus on the wider student experience and developing the strategic image of the University.

Mr Hall has served as Director of Research and Development Services

at Warwick University and has managed planning and resource allocation and all undergraduate matters; admissions, registration, student records, student finance and examinations.

As a student at the University of Reading, where he gained a first-class honours degree in History and Sociology, he was President of the Students' Union and went on to become Accommodation Manager.

Mr Hall said:

"I'm absolutely delighted to be offered the opportunity to serve the University of Leicester and to lead its administrative operations. It's a fascinating time to be working in higher education. Those universities which seize the opportunities of competition and globalisation will secure their futures as independent and internationally respected centres of enquiry and learning. Leicester already has an excellent reputation and an enviable track record of success.

"I know that the University plays an important role within the region and I'm sure that the rich diversity of the city of Leicester will be an important aspect of the institution's strategies to retain a broad student profile and strengthen its international reputation."

Birmingham-born Mr Hall, who is married with two children - his wife formerly worked in Leicester - will succeed Mr Keith Julian as Registrar and Secretary who retires on 31 July 2006 after over 34 years' service to the University. He has been Registrar and Secretary since 1993. ☺

Leicester student is 'Highly Commended'

▶ A Leicester student, Gbolahan Fagbure, is one of four international students in the East Midlands region to be awarded a runner-up prize in a national competition.

Now in its fourth year, the Shine International Student Awards 2006 is a major awards scheme from the British Council – the UK's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. The awards recognise international students who are getting the most out of

their UK experience.

Students were asked to write a 'letter home', composed as if for relatives, friends or former teachers back home, explaining how they are making the most of their time studying in the UK.

Gbolahan is a final year BA Management Studies student from Nigeria. Since his arrival in the UK he has dedicated himself to helping others through charity fundraising, as well as working hard to develop himself personally. Earlier this year, he and four other

Management Studies students were second runners-up in the final of the IBM University Business Challenge. Gbolahan also designs, markets and sells his own shirts, works as a Student Brand Manager for a leading graduate recruitment agency and has managed to fit in part-time jobs in Diversity Now, Gap and Barclays Bank.

Gbolahan will receive a commemorative certificate and a voucher in recognition of his achievement. ☺



RETIREMENT: Pauline Miles was the longest serving member of the Finance Office, successfully completing 41 years' service.

Pauline Miles Retires after 41 Years' Service

▶ On 31st March 2006, friends and colleagues from the Finance Office and other parts of the University, gathered to say goodbye to Miss Pauline Miles and to wish her a long and happy retirement.

Pauline was the longest serving member of the Finance Office, successfully completing 41 years' service, having joined the University as a Clerk in 1965.

James Hunt, Director of Finance, on presenting Pauline with gifts and cards from her colleagues in the office, drew attention to Pauline's

initial starting salary with the University which was some £530 per annum.

Pauline's long career in the University culminated with her appointment in 1989 to the post of Senior Executive Clerk in the Payroll Section of the Finance Office. Mr Hunt commented on the importance of that role in terms of meeting deadlines for payrolls, the strict confidentiality of the work and the highly committed and conscientious approach that Pauline took to her job.

The gathering was made all the

more enjoyable by Pauline's speech, which identified the very significant changes that had occurred during her time at the University, with many major new buildings being built and the size and shape of the University changing quite remarkably. The eagle-eyed amongst those present could not help but notice that Pauline spoke off notes written on the reverse of a set of P45s!

Colleagues wished Pauline a long and happy retirement which would give her more time to follow her hobbies of gardening, poetry and her love of the island of Sardinia. 🍷

1. University's MP Returns to Campus Former University of Leicester student and MP for Leicester South Sir Peter Soulsby visited the University on 25 April

He visited the School of Education, including the Science Learning Centre East Midlands, and Medical School and met with, amongst others, Professor Paul Cooper, Director of the School of Education, Professor Ian Lauder, Dean of the Medical School, Professor Mike Barer, Department of Infection, Immunity and Inflammation and Professor Kilian Mellon, Department of Urology.

2. Hatton family visit What do Laurel and Hardy and 2000 rare books have in common with the University?

On Tuesday, 30th May the Centre for English Local History and the University Library welcomed two grandchildren of Thomas Hatton, an early benefactor of the University of Leicester. Christine and Paul Hatton were able to view examples from the nearly 2,000 rare books from the Hatton Topographical Library that their grandfather had donated to the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland College in 1920. This generous gift formed the nucleus of the University Library's exceptional English local history collections. Thomas Hatton

(1876 - 1943) led, by all accounts, a colourful life. Born in Manchester, he began work as a junior clerk in a corset factory in Market Harborough later moving to Leicester where he set up his own boot manufacturing business. He had interests in book collecting, crossword promotion, greyhound racing and boxing. On one trip to America he was photographed with Laurel and Hardy - all three men wearing the trademark bowler hat.

3. Conference and Residential Facility Takes Shape A multi-million pound investment in new residential and conference facilities at the University of Leicester is rapidly taking shape

The first accommodation pavilion at The University of Leicester's New Hall meeting, accommodation and dining development, is now complete, with others following close behind. With completion set for September 2006 major works started on the facilities building over the Easter vacation, which will house three large meeting rooms accommodating up to 150 delegates. Two rooms can be divided in to smaller meeting areas offering organisers adaptable meeting spaces with natural daylight and flexible seating arrangements.

4. Festival of Postgraduate Research

The Festival of Postgraduate Research presented a superb opportunity to see and hear what the University's research students are researching

The event took place on Tuesday 13th June 2006 and consisted of an exhibition in which 50 postgraduates presented their work in the form of a poster, explaining to a broad spectrum of attendees from outside as well as within the University, the real world implications of their research. Pictured are award winners and sponsors.

5. Engineering Society's Micromouse Competition Engineering competition highlights wealth of technical ability

The LUSU Engineering Society held its first ever Micromouse competition on 10 May 2006 at the Engineering Department Foyer. The objective was for teams to build an autonomous self-contained robot (the Micromouse) to negotiate a maze in the shortest time. The competition was coordinated by Dr. Royan Ong with the help of committee members Ian Robinson, Sam English, Faizal Mahmud, Anup Das and Sompoo Ceessay.

National Award for 'Outstanding' Young Scientist

▶ A Leicester scientist specialising in cancer research has won a national Young Scientist of the Year award.

Dr Karen Brown, from Islington, London, collected the prestigious award from the United Kingdom Environmental Mutagen Society in recognition of her outstanding contribution to her field.

Dr Brown is a senior lecturer in the Cancer Biomarkers and Prevention Group, Department of Cancer Studies and Molecular Medicine at the University of Leicester. 🍷

Japanese Delegation Visits University

▶ The University has played host to a visit from a senior Japanese delegation as a prelude to hosting an educational conference on campus.

The First Secretary for Education at the Japanese Embassy, Mr Anzawa, met with University staff from the School of Education and the Vice-Chancellor's Office.

Dr Rosie Sage, Director of Studies at the Centre for Innovation in Raising Educational Achievement, said the visit follows from ongoing work the Centre has with Nara University, Japan, and contacts the Centre has made through the Parliamentary Group and the Nissan Institute at Oxford, who hosted the dissemination of the Centre's first research visit.

Dr Sage said: "The embassy delegation informed us that the research we had been doing in Japan had had real impact and generated great interest that had been reported in journals and conferences in Japan. We discussed our next visit to Japan in May when we are looking at the relationship between narrative competence and expertise in number in early years settings to then compare with British students. The English team were working with the Japanese team on a journal that included both Japanese and English papers in both languages." 🍷



Captions for photostop on page 11

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