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University of Leicester



LEICESTER: 'AN INSTITUTION ON THE UP'

► The University of Leicester is 'an institution on the up' according to the Sunday Times University Guide published on September 10.

Leicester's excellent results in the 2005 and 2006 National Student Survey are cited as is the awarding of £9.5m in funding for three CETLS. It 'shows the funding council is impressed too' says the report.

Leicester, ranked 24, is rated excellent for 19 subject areas

Funding Boost for World-Leading Engineering Research Group

► University of Leicester control engineers have been awarded a Platform Grant of £435,000 from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council. Platform funding provides baseline support for the retention of key research staff with the aim of giving stability to world-class groups.

The Leicester Control team, led by Professor Ian Postlethwaite, will use the funding to continue research into the Control of Complex Systems, from uninhabited air vehicles to biological networks, developing analysis and design techniques that are practical and easy to use.

The funding will enable the group to maintain important links with international partners and with some of the top UK industries, including BAE Systems, Westland Helicopters, QinetiQ, TRWconekt and BOC Edwards.

The grant will also support speculative research at the life sciences interface, and modelling analysis tools previously developed for aerospace problems are now finding application in Systems Biology.

Professor Ian Postlethwaite commented:

"Platform Grants are very difficult to get. They only go to world-leading groups and so we are delighted with this award, which is our second Platform Grant. We will use it to retain some key researchers, to do some speculative research in Systems Biology and to maintain our strong international collaborations".

Leicester Shortlisted for Top University Award - For Second Successive Year

► For the second successive year, the University of Leicester has been shortlisted for the prestigious title of Higher Education Institution of the Year by the Times Higher Education Supplement (THES).

Professor Ken Pounds CBE, FRS, Emeritus Professor of Space Physics at the University of Leicester has also been shortlisted for the THES Lifetime Achievement Award.

The THES, in describing the university said:

"...by any measure, it is one of the best"

The University this year broke into The Times' newspaper top 20 ranking of UK universities for the first time and was also ranked as the top mainstream English university for student satisfaction in the National Student Survey.

Leicester has also joined the 1994 Group – a coalition of universities that share a

commitment to research excellence, high quality teaching and an outstanding student experience.

"To be shortlisted last year in the inaugural THES Awards for the prestigious title of Institution of the Year was great for Leicester- but to achieve it twice in succession is a feather in our cap," said Richard Taylor Director of Marketing.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Robert Burgess said

"For the University to reach the final shortlist for this award yet again is a splendid achievement. It recognizes the enormous contribution that staff and students make to our success story. It is a testament to the innovative teaching and research, the quality of our provision and the imaginative developments that are taking place on our campus. All members of the University can be very proud of this nomination."



Martin Cullen, President of the Students' Union said:

"It is fantastic and well deserved news that the University has been short listed for this award for a second year running. The Students' Union works in close partnership with the University to enhance and support the student experience. The success of this partnership can be seen from the fact that in 2005 the Students' Union was named Students' Union of the Year, gained Investors in People status, and was rated the best Entertainments Venue in Leicester, successes that have no doubt been a factor in achieving this nomination."

Leicester is competing against Nottingham, Leeds Met, Aberdeen and Kent for the prize. The decisions will be announced on November 15.

HOPE FOR MAJOR ADVANCE IN FIGHTING WORLD KILLER DISEASE

► University of Leicester scientists are heading a worldwide research project which could revolutionise the diagnosis and treatment of diarrhoea in children in developing countries.

The four-year project, the results of which are now being piloted in four hospitals in India, will offer a means of identifying the two most deadly forms of the disease quickly, cheaply and with little training necessary for practitioners.

The implications for improving children's health could be

enormous. Diarrhoea is a major killer in developing countries. World Health Organisation statistics indicate that more than 2 million people die each year from the effects of diarrhoea, most of them children under five years old.

Diarrhoea is caused by a range of bacterial, viral and parasitic organisms, and is usually spread by contaminated water and poor sanitation. Two particular bacteria, enteropathogenic E.coli (EPEC), which causes a persistent infection lasting more than 14 days, and

Shigella, the cause of dysentery - are the most deadly in terms of killing children. They cause only 20% of cases of diarrhoea but result in 60% of deaths. It is these two killers - EPEC and Shigella - that the Leicester-led project is targeting.

Peter Williams, Professor of Microbiology in the Department of Genetics, and Leicester colleagues Uta Praekelt and Marie Singer, are working with scientists at the Robert Koch Institute in Germany and Anna University in Chennai India, and with doctors at the Christian Medical College in Vellore, India, and at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Their project, called the European-Asian Challenge to Childhood Diarrhoea, or EACH-Child currently receives funding of 1m from the European Union, but in its earlier stages it was supported by an Academic Links Scheme funded by the British Council and the Indian University Grants Commission.



UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ANNOUNCES PREMIER BENEFACTOR OF ICONIC NEW LIBRARY



David and Laura Wilson with Professor Bob Burgess at the site of the new Library development.

► The University of Leicester has announced that David Wilson, Chairman of Leicestershire based construction group, Wilson Bowden plc, is donating £2 million as flagship funding towards the creation of an iconic new Library at the heart of the campus.

The landmark building, which will be named the David Wilson Library after its premier benefactor, heralds a new era in the life of the University and physically underpins the University's commitment to academic excellence.

The £27.9m remodelled Library, the scheme of Leicester Academic Library Services, has been designed to meet the needs of a University with a projected student population of 22,000.

Stunning contemporary design combined with state-of-the-art technology will transform the Library's physical environment to create a light, welcoming space - an inspirational place to study. A distinctive feature of the new building will be four central atria, allowing natural light to cascade into the heart of the building. A new façade will also provide more natural light as well as dramatically improving energy efficiency.

The building is designed to meet the BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Energy Assessment Method) 'Excellent' rating. This is the highest level that can be achieved and clearly demonstrates that Leicester is taking a lead in the HE sector by utilising a standard that few other institutions have

used or attained.

The remodelled Library will house:

- study spaces for 1,500 students
- group study rooms
- increased IT facilities
- a 200-seat postgraduate area
- seminar rooms offering flexibility of space
- a 500-seat lecture theatre – the largest on campus
- a café
- bookshop
- careers library

The lecture theatre will enable recording links to other lecture theatres on campus and web-casting across the world. It is expected to attract international and national conferences and company events.

Access to a wealth of networked resources and the digital library will be delivered through wireless technology and well-equipped computer areas throughout the Library. The building will increase shelving capacity overall to 38 km – enough to accommodate 20 years' growth in the printed collections. Radio-frequency identification technology will be brought into play to enable students to self-issue books, enhancing the building's ability to serve students effectively.

David Wilson said: "The whole of my childhood and adult life has been spent living and working in Leicestershire. I am a great believer in creating one's opportunities in life, and I hope that the success of my own organisation is testament to that. However, there is nothing that

can substitute a good grounding in life – both through your family and your education. I believe that the new facilities that will be offered through the library development programme will greatly enhance the University's impact on students' lives, and be a valuable aid to the University's long term ambitions, and I am delighted to be involved at the outset."

Librarian Christine Fyfe said: "David Wilson's generous funding will provide facilities that improve educational opportunities for future generations of students.

"We are very excited about building a Library for the 21st century which is both innovative and accessible. The Library is at the heart of the University's intellectual life. What we are creating is a landmark building in tune with the aspirations of the University, with access to study space, printed collections and the latest digital information. We believe it will have a real sense of place."

University Vice-Chancellor, Professor Robert Burgess said: "The University of Leicester would like to offer its thanks to David Wilson for his hugely generous support and for becoming premier benefactor of the iconic new Library – to be known henceforth as the David Wilson Library - which will shape the future of educational provision at Leicester.

"This is an exciting project in the centre of the campus – we wish to create an iconic building of which the University can be justifiably proud. I am very enthusiastic about

this development. We have visited libraries in the US to see the kind of developments that have taken place in order to inform our own ideas. This building is crucial for the success of the University in terms of research, teaching and learning. It heralds a new era for the University of Leicester."

Martin Cullen, President of the Students' Union, said: "The Library is at the very heart of the University, as students across all academic disciplines interact with it on a daily basis throughout their studies, and it is therefore crucial that the Library provision at a top University like Leicester is of an excellent standard.

"The development ensures that the Library provision at the University of Leicester will be second to none, and will be another significant factor in the continually improving student experience at the University of Leicester. I am also certain that the new Library will be a major factor in helping to ensure that Leicester retains its status as one of the top Universities in the UK.

"The University of Leicester Students' Union would like to offer its thanks to David Wilson for his very generous contribution to the Library project, as it is certain that each and every student that uses the Library will benefit from a better University experience thanks to his huge generosity." ◻



£6M REFURBISHMENT COMPLETED FOR HOME OF WORLD CLASS RESEARCH

► The University has successfully completed a £6M refurbishment of the Adrian building - the location where the revolutionary technique of genetic fingerprinting was discovered - which forms part of the Faculty of Medicine and Biological Sciences.

In total, over 130 rooms and laboratories have been refurbished while the building was still operational. The project was jointly funded by the Science Research Investment Fund (a joint initiative by the Office of Science and Technology and the Department for Education and Skills) and the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning for Genetics Education (funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England). The refurbishment also providing state of the art teaching laboratories with the latest audio, video and computer facilities.

The building also houses a dedicated 'Biobator' suite, funded by the East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA) which has been created to nurture the relationship between research and business.

Dr Annette Cashmore, Director of the CETL in Genetics, said:

"The new facilities are fantastic. This is going to have a major impact on research and teaching- the open plan facilities for research allow for improved communication channels and interaction between researchers.

"Another key advantage is that genetics education is occurring amidst a world-class research centre. The synergy between education, research and industrial collaboration is a key feature of activity in the newly refurbished Adrian Building." 



SPATIAL DATA COLLECTION AND VISUALISATION: SPLINT CETL

► The Department of Geography, University of Leicester is home to the £4.4 million HEFCE-funded Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) with the title 'Spatial Literacy IN Teaching' (SPLINT). This is a 5-year collaborative programme (2005-2010) between three universities (including UCL and Nottingham) with Leicester as lead site, to develop both the pedagogy and technologies used for spatial thinking and spatial literacy across arts, humanities and science disciplines.

As part of SPLINT-funded capital development, the Department of Geography has just completed a major programme of installation and refurbishment in order to provide a virtual reality (VR) theatre along with laboratories of high-specification PCs and UNIX workstations running a wide variety of GIS, image analysis and modelling software. It is our aim for the VR theatre to be used to foster inter-disciplinary collaboration connected with spatial literacy both in regard to teaching and also research projects. We have been delighted to work this summer with Carlo de Lillo of the Psychology department on an ongoing project investigating on spatial memory, while Richard Taylor (Marketing) has sponsored the development of the 3D campus model. We have no doubt that there is considerable

untapped potential for the construction and use of VR models across a wide range of disciplines at the University of Leicester, ranging from the visualisation of chemical models, geological structures, magnetic force fields, to anatomical structures and reconstructed archaeological monuments.


Additional SPLINT-funded capital development supports mobile field-based spatial data collection and visualisation. Resources include 22 Dell Axim 55v PDAs equipped with with Sifir III Chip Bluetooth GPS, rugged cases and geographical and navigation software, and 11 Itronix rugged PC tablets. We have also purchased 12 Ixus 60 cameras and waterproof cases for student group and dissertation work, 2 Canon EOS digital SLRs and 2 Sony HDR-HCI high resolution video cameras for modelling and archive research by staff and students. The arrival of 12 Ipods, for the development of audio-visual teaching strategies within field courses in the first instance, reflects SPLINT's association with the University's pioneering Impala project (<http://www.impala.ac.uk/>). Just as for our VR theatre, it is our aim for the SPLINT field-based spatial data collection sets to be used more widely across the University to foster spatial literacy over a range of disciplines. Discussions have begun with the Departments of Geology and



Archaeology on the possibilities for enhancing their practical classes with digital geographical and photo media and we look forward to seeing these early exchanges develop momentum as the equipment arrives. For those readers in less traditionally 'spatial' disciplines, it could be that small location-aware devices could facilitate a move towards contextual learning currently gathering momentum in e-learning circles. Possibilities for developing historical, architectural or sociological audio or photographic commentaries that change with location are just a few examples that could enhance your teaching.

We welcome visitors to our facilities and if you are interested in spatial data collection and visualisation and any potential collaboration with SPLINT, please contact any of the people listed below. A detailed web site is currently under construction however a summary of the goals of SPLINT can be found at <http://www.le.ac.uk/cetl/splint.html>.

Dr Nick Tate (njt9, ext 1320) – Director of SPLINT CETL

Dr Claire Jarvis (chj2, ext 3808) – University of Leicester SPLINT Site Manager. 



A New Virtual Training Environment To Support Researchers Using Online Research Methods

► Researchers in the Department of Geography and University of Leicester have developed a new virtual training environment to support researchers using online research methods. 'Exploring Online Methods in a Virtual Training Environment' was developed by Clare Madge (Geography), Henrietta O'Connor (CLMS), Rob Shaw (Geography), Jane Wellens (SDU) and Tristram Hooley (EDSC) as part of the ESRC's Research Methods Programme (Phase 2). The training package aims to enhance understanding of online research methods through the production and evaluation of a training portal targeted at the social science community. The

training package focuses specifically on the potentials and problems of online research methods. It provides self-supporting online training covering theoretical, practical and technical aspects of online research methods including web-based questionnaires, virtual synchronous and asynchronous interviews. It also draws on successful good practice case studies, covers associated ethical issues, explores appropriate technology to facilitate high quality online research and provides important resource links. Each module contains reading materials and learning activities designed to allow researchers to follow the

training package as a course, or to locate and work on specific areas independently of the whole. Throughout, the package emphasises the team's belief that there is a need for online researchers to tread with caution and practice their 'craft' with reflexivity. They strongly believe that online research is not going to replace onsite research but rather it is another option in the researchers' methodological 'toolkit'. Therefore the use of online research methods must be carefully considered and their long-term success will ultimately depend on the quality and credibility of the information that



they generate. This training in online research methods will be expanded in 2007 through the TRI-ORM project (Training Researchers in Online Research Methods) recently funded by the ESRC through the Researcher Development Initiative. The resource can be accessed from <http://www.geog.le.ac.uk/orm/>

Dr Clare Madge (cm12, ext 3643)



(L-R) Chancellor Sir Peter Williams, Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess and Dr Derek Raine, Director of the piCETL at its opening.

NEW INVESTMENT AT LEICESTER TO ADDRESS DECLINE OF PHYSICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

► In response to concerns over the decline in science in the UK, the University of Leicester is helping to set the pace of curriculum development in physics in higher education.

New investment in Physics teaching facilities has led to the development of the new Physics Innovations Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (piCETL)+

involving Leicester, The Open University and the University of Reading. The Director of Physics Innovation CETL, Dr Robert Lambourne, of The Open University was at the launch event of the Leicester facilities on 2 October, along with members of local industry, school teachers and academics.

Prominent guests included the

Chancellor of the University Sir Peter Williams, Author and Broadcaster Professor Jack Cohen, Professor of Education Professor Maggi Savin-Baden and Mr Stephen Woolf, President of the Leicester Chamber of Commerce & Industry. The Centre was opened by the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Robert Burgess followed by a short introduction by Dr Derek Raine, director of the CETL.

Dr Raine said:

"Our role at Leicester will be to lead innovation in curriculum development in order to increase recognition of physics as an important and rewarding undertaking and to provide the graduates crucial to our technical,

knowledge-based economy.

"The launch event will give guests the opportunity to see how much is changing in the delivery and content of physics education and to experience the new physical environment we are creating for our students of the future.

"The event will enable us to present not only the developments within physics but also our creation of a new Science programme in higher education that embodies physics, alongside the other sciences, in its societal context. Our aim is to engage a new scientifically trained cohort of students in wealth creation, particularly in the East Midlands region."



'HOT JUPITERS' FOUND BY LEICESTER SCIENTISTS

► Finding planets that pass in front of their parent stars is so important to understanding how planets form that the European Space Agency will shortly launch the 35M COROT satellite to find them. But a team of UK, French and Swiss astronomers is already paving the way from the ground, with an announcement of the discovery of two new Jupiter-sized planets around stars in the constellations of Andromeda and Delphinus. They are among the hottest planets yet discovered. Their atmospheres are slowly being whipped away into space by the searing radiation from their parent stars.

Scientists from the University of Leicester's Department of Physics & Astronomy were among the UK team who spotted the first signs of the planets using the SuperWASP (Wide Angle Search for Planets) telescope on La Palma. Using wide-angle camera lenses, backed by top-quality CCD cameras, the SuperWASP telescope has been repeatedly surveying several million stars over vast swathes of the sky, looking for the tiny dips in the starlight caused when a planet passes in front of its star. This is known as a transit.

Confirmation of the new finds came earlier this month when the team joined forces with the Swiss and French users of SOPHIE, a powerful new French-built instrument at the Observatoire de Haute-Provence in the Pyrenees. SOPHIE was able to detect a slight wobble in each star's motion as the planets orbited around them. Together the two types of observation confirmed the existence and nature of the planets. The partnership between the two instruments is particularly powerful – SuperWASP finds candidate planets and determines their radii, and SOPHIE confirms their nature and weighs them.

"We were all elated when the news came through confirming the first discovery. But this is just the start for us — we will continue surveying the sky for several more years, and we expect to find dozens more planets", said Dr Richard West, who led the project at Leicester. ☺

Course Receives Accreditation from The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors



Dr Rob Tovey, Director of Education and Training at the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors presents the Certificate of Accreditation to Professor Bob Burgess, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leicester, in the presence of members of the RICS and the University's Department of Geography.

► The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) has endorsed a postgraduate qualification from the University of Leicester by providing it with an official accreditation, the first act of a new educational partnership between the two institutions.

The M.Sc. in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) offered by the University of Leicester's Department of Geography has gained recognition from the RICS,

joining a select number of GIS course providers with this endorsement. This success comes fast on the heels of recent recognition by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) which has awarded the course more studentships than any other M.Sc. in GIS in the country.

At a presentation ceremony on 14 August, Dr Rob Tovey, Director of Education and Training presented an accreditation certificate to Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess,

in the presence of others from the RICS and the Department of Geography.

Dr Nicholas Tate, of the Department of Geography, said:

"This is a tremendous coup for the department, which enhances the employability of graduates of the M.Sc in GIS course. Accreditation from the RICS reflects the quality of both teaching and research environments within the department." ☺

SOUTH ASIAN MEN SUFFER MORE URINARY PROBLEMS

► South Asian men have more urinary problems than white men, but are only half as likely to seek help, according to a study of just under 8,000 men published in the September issue of the urology journal BJU International.

The study involved the Mid-Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust, the University of Leicester and Leicestershire MRC Incontinence Study Team.

Men over 40 living in Leicestershire, UK, were selected at random from the lists of family

doctors and sent a postal questionnaire asking them about urinary symptoms, problems and use of local health services.

7,810 men completed the questionnaire – an overall response rate of 64 per cent. Although the response rate from South Asian men was lower – at 39 per cent – comparisons with the 2001 census showed that the respondents were representative of the age, socio-economic status and health profile of the area.

More than a third of the 409

South Asian men who replied (37 per cent), described at least one significant urinary problem, compared with 29 per cent of the white men in the study.

Around a third of the men in each ethnic group told researchers that they felt that they needed help with their urinary problem. Yet only a quarter of the South Asian men (25 per cent) who fell into this category had actually sought help for their problems, compared with more than half of the white men (53 per cent). ☺



NEW BID TO INSPIRE UNIVERSITY COMPUTER SCIENCE APPLICATIONS

► A think-tank on how to stem the decline in university computer science applications met at the University to identify new ways to improve the appeal of the subject to school leavers.

The meeting debated how to rid the image of computer science as boring and uninspiring, and how to show school students that the subject is exciting and challenging.

The organisers, Drs Roy Crole and Reiko Heckel of the Department of Computer Science at the University of Leicester said: "During the last

five years, the UK, and indeed other western countries, have seen a considerable reduction in the number of students applying to universities to study undergraduate courses in the broad area of Computer Science. Yet, there is no shortage of jobs in Information Technology.

"In order to learn more about the underlying issues, the University of Leicester decided to organise a workshop during which a number of questions were debated such as:

- How do we encourage more

young people to study IT/CS?

- How should we describe University IT/CS to young people - and what should we inform them about?
- What examples of role models from the professions can we present?
- How do we convince young people that IT/CS can be interesting and challenging?
- What kinds of interactions with schools are worth pursuing?"

LEICESTER SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN UK TOP 20

► The University has been ranked among the top 20 teacher-training establishments in the UK - and has been selected as among the top-five climbers in a new league table.

The table, compiled by the Centre for Education and Employment Research at the University of Buckingham, is based on the Performance Profiles of the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA).

Leicester is placed in the top 20 having risen from 46th in 2004 to 20th this year, making it one of the top five climbers in the UK. Leicester's partner college, Newman in Birmingham, rose 28 places and is the fourth highest climber.

The league tables are based on three criteria - the degree classifications of the recruits to PGCE, the current Ofsted grading for the courses, and the proportion of successful students who obtain posts in teaching.

The University of Leicester School of Education provides PGCE training for 111 graduates in preparation for teaching in Primary Schools, and 214 graduates for teaching Secondary Citizenship, English, English and Media, Geography, History, Mathematics, Modern Languages, Science and Social Science. The training programmes are provided in partnership with over 150 local schools.

Richard Aplin, Deputy Director of the School of Education, said: "This is a welcome recognition of the high quality of the training provided by the University and schools in our partnerships, the commitment of our student teachers, and the impressive record of employability of those who complete the course successfully".

Evidence to Waist: New Links Between Obesity and Health Risks Revealed

► There is overwhelming evidence that abdominal obesity is a major clinical and public health issue and therefore there is a strong case for routine measurement of waist circumference to screen for individuals at high risk of cardiovascular disease.

Dr Kamlesh Khunti, Senior Clinical Lecturer in the Department of Health Sciences at the University of Leicester, will argue this case at the 2006 Frank May Prize Lecture on Wednesday 1 November.

Obesity has now become a worldwide epidemic. Its prevalence has trebled in the last 20 years, and currently over half of women and two-thirds of men in the UK are either overweight or obese. Cardiovascular disease remains the number one cause of death, despite recent advances in cardiovascular care, such as the

introduction of new effective drugs.

Dr Khunti commented:

"The prevalence of abdominal obesity is increasing markedly and is emerging as an important underlying cause of multiple cardiovascular risk factors.

"Health professionals in clinical practice and patients are accustomed to the measurement of weight or body mass index to quantify obesity. However, waist circumference is a better marker for increased cardiovascular risk and there is an urgent need for increasing awareness of the risks associated with abdominal obesity."

Dr Kamlesh Khunti's lecture, entitled 'Prevention of Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease: Evidence to Waist', will take place at 5.30pm on Wednesday 1 November in the Frank and



Dr Kamlesh Khunti delivers The Frank May Lecture on 1 November.

Katherine May Lecture Theatre in the Henry Wellcome Building at the University of Leicester. It is open to the public and free of charge.



Introductory Address by New Registrar

► All members of administrative and non-academic staff were invited to attend an introductory address by new Registrar, Dave Hall, on Monday 2 October.

Dave began by highlighting how all non-academic staff have a common cause in supporting the academic mission of the university.

In order to do that effectively, we need to:

- understand our respective roles in the context of the roles of our colleagues;
- recognise that we're all working for the same institution and that we have a common aim; that is the protection and development of the university; talk to each other.

Dave went on to say that in working together we can make a real difference and that is what we all need to strive for.

About Dave Hall

Dave gave information about his career history saying that he started life in university management at the University of Warwick in 1991, fresh from being President of the Students' Union at the University of Reading. He left Warwick in 2001 to take up the post of Academic Registrar at the University of Birmingham. "And then of course I was extremely fortunate to land this job!"

Challenges

He said Leicester is a University with huge potential. To exploit this, there are six major challenges:

1. Develop a strategic vision and plan for the University which differentiates it from its peers and is understood and owned by the whole community;
2. Raise the profile of the University to achieve for it the reputation it deserves;
3. Identify opportunities to generate income.
4. Ensure a widespread service culture
5. Review the structure and organisation of both the academic

departments and administrative offices to determine whether or not the existing structure is fit for purpose over the longer term.

6. Continue the investment in our estate, the services and facilities.

There is of course, one other challenge for us to be greener and more efficient in the use of our resources.

"In order for any organisation to develop an effective strategy it has to have a vision, it has to have an idea of what it is, the reason for its existence. It has to be able to articulate what it does; why it does it; what are the values it holds and how it is different from its peers. It also requires a communications strategy which allows all members of staff to articulate their organisation's vision and its long-term strategic objectives and to understand how what they do day-to-day fits in with the vision and strategy."

Dave showed a picture of a P38 Lockheed Lightning, a fighter aircraft that saw service with the United States Air Force throughout World War Two. In 1943, workers at the Lockheed factory went on strike. The managers were furious and confused this was almost an act of treason. An investigation into the strike found that workers didn't know what they were producing because the construction process had been broken down into so many small parts. There was no sense that they were engaged in building a war-winning fighter plane.

To address this, a fully equipped P38 Lightning was parked in front of the factory gates, so that every morning workers could see what they were building.

Every organisation has its P38 Lightning, and everybody who works for an organisation needs to understand what it is.

What should we park outside the gates of the University?

A big pile of cash?

To represent the University's aim to cut its deficit and generate a surplus? The money is vital, but it's not at the heart of what we're about as a University.

Students?

"Should we encase a couple of students in plastic and park them outside the front gates? They would represent the University's mission to deliver high quality education. I'm not sure we'd get planning permission, and anyway, teaching and learning is only one element of the University's mission."

Research?

How about if we asked Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys to stand out front as a symbol of the life-changing research taking place here? I don't think symbols of teaching or research capture what is at the heart of a university, because at the heart of a university is something much less tangible, it's more of an idea or belief.

Holy Grail?

So how about hanging Rossetti's *The Damsel of the Sacred Grail* outside the front gates? We could use the Holy Grail as a symbol of the heart of a university:

- It represents something which is eagerly sought after – representing the efforts of our students and researchers.
- It symbolises something which is essentially good; reflecting our belief that what we do is "a good thing".
- Its meaning and its history are the subject of endless speculation and debate, all in search of "the truth"; representative of the mission of the academic community, a search for truth.

The Grail is also said to hold the power of life over death, an idea contained within the University's motto:

"Ut vitam habeant", that they

may have life.

If the University can be represented by the Holy Grail, that is the search for a better life, then the role of the administration and the support services is to help defend the Grail.

The idea for a University in Leicester was first mooted as a living memorial to those who died during the war: 'that they may have life'.

It is possible to understand the University as a memorial, not simply because the institution's founders wanted it to retain the memory of those who lost their lives in the Great War, but because it offers hope for the future, that by remembering the dead we pay more attention to the living, and are inspired to want to help build a better world for those who will come after us.

So we don't need to park a P38 Lockheed Lightning at our front gates, it's already there:

The University is here, "that they may have life." The "they" is us and those who come after us, and "life" is an awareness of being alive and striving to make a difference.

"And I don't mean simply that through its teaching students get degrees which will help them get better jobs and earn more money, nor that its research helps improve the quality of people's lives. I mean that through its commitment to reason and the potential of the human mind, its commitment to understand reality without recourse to faith or magic, it helps and inspires its staff and its students to develop the skills necessary to live a considered life, one which attaches meaning and value to immaterial things."

This is an edited version of the Registrars address. To view the full version, please visit <http://www.le.ac.uk/press/dhintroduct/addressesstaff.html>



Study Identifies Links Between Musical Tastes and Lifestyle

► The music we listen to can tell a lot more than you might think about what kind of people we are, according to research findings by a University of Leicester psychologist.

Now, Dr Adrian North is extending his research worldwide. He is looking for 10,000 people from all over the world to take part in an online survey at www.musicaltastetest.com, stating their preference from over 50 musical styles and completing a questionnaire.

The survey, funded by the British Academy, will help Dr North and his team determine to what extent people's musical tastes can be predicted on the basis of basic demographic information, such as age, sex and earnings.

Dr North said, "Although we know a lot about musical preference, musicaltastetest.com is the largest ever academic survey of who likes what. Nothing on this scale has ever been attempted before."

Related research by Dr North about to be published in the journal *Psychology of Music* shows that a person's musical preference tells a great deal about their lifestyle and interests. Over 2,500 people in the UK were asked to state which musical styles they liked most, and then complete a questionnaire about their living arrangements, political and moral beliefs, travel, personal finances, education, employment, health, media preferences, and leisure time interests.



Dr Adrian North is leading a worldwide study on musical tastes and lifestyle.

When it comes to relationships, beliefs and breaking the law, fans of different musical styles gave very different responses, with fans of hip-hop and dance music standing out in particular.

You can read the results of the study on eBulletin.

► About 25 per cent of us will experience the effects of anxiety disorders at some point in our lives, with sometimes dire repercussions for friends, family and our own well-being. Yet little is known about the molecular mechanisms in the brain which contribute to stress-induced anxiety.

A neuroscientist at the University of Leicester has recently been awarded major EU funding amounting to 1.7m over four years to investigate how fear and anxiety are formed in the brain, in a project that could lead to more efficient ways of treating stress-related conditions.

Dr Robert Pawlak, a researcher in the University's Department of Cell Physiology and Pharmacology, has received the prestigious Marie Curie Excellence Grant to support his

HOW FEAR AND ANXIETY ARE FORMED

research project which will look at the mechanisms in the brain that lead to anxiety.

Fear memories are encoded as changes in neuronal connections called synapses, in a process known as plasticity. Dr Pawlak and his colleagues have recently shown that proteases (proteins that cut other proteins) play a critical role in this process and significantly contribute to fear and anxiety related to stress.

Dr Blair Grubb, Head of the Department of Cell Physiology and Pharmacology, added:

"EU Marie Curie Excellence Grants are extremely competitive and it is a major achievement that Robert Pawlak has made a successful application so early on in his independent research career.

"Robert is one of a number of neuroscientists working in this department and this grant award adds significantly to our research profile in this general area. The proposed research programme will make a major contribution to our understanding of how stress leads to fear and anxiety."



Dr Robert Pawlak has received the prestigious Marie Curie Excellence Grant.

SIBERIA FACES MELTDOWN

► A stark warning that Siberia 'faces meltdown' has been issued by experts at a global warming conference at the University.

The Climate and Land Surface Systems Interaction Centre at the University hosted an international scientific Symposium on "Environmental change in Siberia – Insights from Earth Observation and modelling". Around 30 participating scientists from the UK, Russia,

Austria, France, Italy and Germany presented new findings on the rapidly occurring environmental changes in the vast Siberian forest tracts. The Symposium brought together leading scientists from different disciplines who have been developing new information systems based on satellites, field data and climate models.

University of Leicester's Professor Heiko Balzter, who has studied

satellite images of Siberia for the past eight years, said: "Siberia is a hotspot in the global climate system. Because the Siberian ecosystems are largely temperature controlled the region is strongly affected by global warming. Large amounts of greenhouse gases are currently locked in the permafrost and in organic soils, and if released could accelerate the greenhouse effect."

According to the latest

meteorological data, Siberia seems to warm up even faster than previously predicted by the Hadley Centre climate model. The warming trend affects mainly the winter months and leads to an earlier snow melt. The resulting earlier onset of spring can be detected from a range of satellites, and is believed to be advancing by as much as 0.5 to 1 day per year since satellite observations began in 1982.



EUROPEAN ACCOLADE FOR LEICESTER LAW PROGRAMME

► A distance learning programme run by the University of Leicester Department of Law has been designated a Jean Monnet Module of Excellence by the European Union, and will receive European funding of 15,000 over three years

Module 1 of the University's European Union Law Distance Learning LLM Programme has been selected for co-financing through the European Commission Jean Monnet Action Programme.

The Module was selected following an evaluation by a team of high level experts in European Union integration studies and will receive funding support for a period of three years.

Dr Adam Cygan, Director of the EU Distance Learning Programme, commented:

"This Module is the first of four Modules that comprise the LLM in EU law by distance learning, and the co-financing is recognition of the high quality teaching that is offered by the EU distance learning programme.

"In 2006 the Faculty of Law at Leicester will have been educating by distance learning for twenty years. The LLM in EU law has been fully revised for 2006 and will offer students a broader choice of subjects and opportunity to specialise. In addition a new Postgraduate Certificate in EU law will also be offered from 2006.

"These developments bring together the Faculty's considerable academic strength in EU law and will offer students a comprehensive and up to date education in EU law." 🗨️

STUDENTS GIVE LEICESTER THE THUMBS UP

► The University of Leicester has emerged triumphant for the second year running in the National Student Survey, results.

The University was again ranked joint top among mainstream English universities and many subject areas were identified as leaders in the UK for student satisfaction and teaching quality.

Using the full data from both surveys the University is ranked joint first in the UK for student satisfaction in Mathematics (out of 50 universities) and English (out of 93 universities) as well as Media and Communication (out of 40 universities), Physical Geography (out of 54 universities) and Electrical Engineering (out of 44 universities).

In total, 14 subject areas out of 19 submitted were ranked in the top 10 in the country for student satisfaction.

This follows previous successes demonstrating the high quality teaching on offer at Leicester-teaching in 18 subject areas has

been graded Excellent by the Quality Assurance Agency - including 14 successive scores - a consistent run of success matched by just one other UK University.

Over the two years of the national survey, the University of Leicester is ranked joint first among universities teaching full-time students.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess said: "This is a splendid set of results that again demonstrates that our students are very impressed with their University careers.

"This important national survey demonstrates that Leicester's success is not a one-off: we are consistently ranked among the leaders in the UK for student satisfaction.

"Our staff are to be congratulated on another marvellous set of outcomes."

The Results:

Leicester subject areas ranked in top 10 in the UK for student satisfaction:

English (1/93) Mathematics

(1/54) Media and Communications (1/40) Physical Geography (1/54) Economics (2/46) Mechanical Engineering (2/43) Electrical Engineering (1/44) Physical Science (4/58) Law (4/73) Medicine (4/21) Politics (7/60) History and Archaeology (10/87) Biological Sciences (10/73) Management (6/71)

Overall the University was ranked joint first among 2006 mainstream English universities and joint third among UK universities teaching full-time students.

The NSS is the cornerstone of the UK's independent quality assurance framework and is designed to inform prospective students about what and where to study.

Questions on the NSS cover the following topics (University of Leicester's rank amongst mainstream English universities shown):

- the teaching on the course (Joint 1st)
- assessment and feedback (Joint 1st)
- academic support (Joint 2nd)
- organisation and management (Joint 1st)
- learning resources (Joint 7th)
- personal development (Joint 1st)
- overall satisfaction (Joint 1st) 🗨️

VIRULENCE OF TB STRAIN IN LEICESTER OUTBREAK CAUSED BY 'UNUSUAL' MECHANISM

► Scientists have identified a mechanism that contributes to the virulence of a particular strain of tuberculosis, making it appear more likely to lead to disease than other strains

In 2001, this strain, known as CH, was responsible for a major school outbreak of TB in Leicester thought to have infected at least 254 pupils.

In general, most people infected with Mycobacterium tuberculosis,

the bacterium that causes TB, will not show any symptoms. It is thought that one third of all people carry the bacteria, yet less than one in ten will develop TB. However, almost a quarter of the people infected with the CH strain required treatment for the disease. Left untreated, TB can prove fatal.

Now, a team jointly led by Dr Robert Wilkinson at the Wellcome Trust Centre for Clinical Tropical Medicine, Imperial College

London, and Professor Mike Barer at the University of Leicester, has identified a segment of the CH genome which, when absent, modifies the immune system's response to the strain and make it more likely to lead to disease. The findings of their research were published in Proceedings of the National Academy Sciences of the USA. The research was funded by the Wellcome Trust and the Medical Research Council. 🗨️



LEICESTER RESEARCH ARCHIVE REACHES 100

► Leicester Research Archive is the University's open access research repository: a full text database of research articles and other publications produced by University members. The Archive is run by the Library, with support from the Computer Centre. Everything in the Archive is freely available to all readers.

Recently, the Archive added the 100th item, Social support networks and type of neurotic symptom among adults in British households, by

Professor Terry Brugha, of the Department of Health Sciences, and colleagues.

Leicester Research Archive is the place to put your work if you are mandated by your funding body to place your work in an institutional repository. It is the place to put it if you want to bring your research to the attention of a wider audience and promote the work of your group or department.

The Library will archive your work for you, and will check that copyright

is not being breached by the act of archiving. Everything in the Archive gets a permanent URL, which you can send to colleagues or use to link to your work.

A formal launch of the Archive takes place as part of the University Research Committee meeting on 6th December.

If you would like to archive your work, or would like to discuss anything further, please contact Keith Nockels, LRA Project Manager, on ext. 3101, or email Ira@le.ac.uk.

Leicester Archaeologists Discover Rare Collapsed Roman Wall

► The team from ULAS – University of Leicester Archaeological Services – have been carrying out a series of major excavations since 2004 (on behalf of Hammerson and Hermes) within this 10.2 hectare site, earmarked for the £350m New Shires mixed-use development which will regenerate a substantial portion of the City centre.

The collapsed wall is one of only a few examples known from Roman Britain and is believed to be part of the east wall of one of Roman Leicester's public buildings – the macellum or market hall, constructed in the 3rd century AD. The wall would have stood over 7.5m in height and at least 16m long, making it comparable with the Jewry Wall in Leicester, one of the tallest upstanding Roman walls in Britain. The fabric of the collapsed wall includes a number of tile courses and the remains of an archway, together with evidence for 'putlog holes', square holes to accommodate scaffolding poles during construction.

Text study

► Psychologists at the University of Leicester are to investigate texting language to provide new tools for criminal investigation.

The forensic linguistic study based in the Forensic Section of the School of Psychology will examine how well an individual can be identified by their texting style.

A prior case where this was used was the investigation of murder a few years ago. At the 2002 trial an alibi was broken based on the evidence that the murderer and not the victim had sent crucial messages from her phone. Text analyses revealed that the texts had

not been written by the victim herself, but that they had been faked to deflect suspicion from the killer as there were a number of differences in the texting styles between the victim and murderer. Linguistic analysis is therefore a useful tool which can reveal secrets within the criminal investigation, which otherwise would not be apparent. This present study aims to develop the technique further by investigating text language and style.

The innovative six-month study will assess similarities and differences in texting style,

between texts sent by individuals and within and between networks of people who frequently text one another. The researchers are inviting ordinary people to help them with the study by completing an anonymous on-line questionnaire. Although forensic authorship analysis is a growing area of research, this is the first study to focus on mobile phone texting.

The research is being conducted by Dr. Tim Grant, forensic linguist at the University's School of Psychology.

1. City Schools Art Exhibition 'Roots: Laying Foundations for Creative Growth'. A link to an image gallery can be found at the bottom of the page

The University was pleased once again to host the City Schools Art Exhibition. In previous years, this exhibition has formed part of the broader programme of events within the University Arts Week in March. However, the outstanding success of this event in previous years led to schools asking for more exhibition space and so the event was moved to the summer term. The exhibition was entitled *Roots: Laying Foundations for Creative Growth* and was shown in both Parkside and Cityside of the 2nd floor of the Charles Wilson Building, twice the area of previous years.

2. Dynamic DNA Day at University of Leicester

How does DNA help to solve crimes? How can it be used to identify victims in mass disasters? How can you extract DNA from a banana?

The answers to these and much more were available at Genie CETL, University of Leicester, on September 14 when a Dynamic DNA Day was held.

The event was organised by Britain's only 5-star research ranked Genetics Department which houses a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. 275 Year 9 students converged on campus during the day for a variety of activities

3. Leicester Scientists Watch Mother Nature Breathing In

Earth Observation Scientists at the University of Leicester have been able to measure from space for the first time signals showing the amount of carbon dioxide taken up by plants, in a project hailed by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) as one of its top achievements of the year. Using the Scanning Imaging Absorption Spectrometer for Atmospheric Chartography (SCIAMACHY) on Envisat, the largest

Earth observation satellite ever built, they can measure atmospheric trace gases through the observation of reflected and scattered sunlight.

4. University of Leicester Team Finds its First Planets Around Distant Stars - see story page 6.

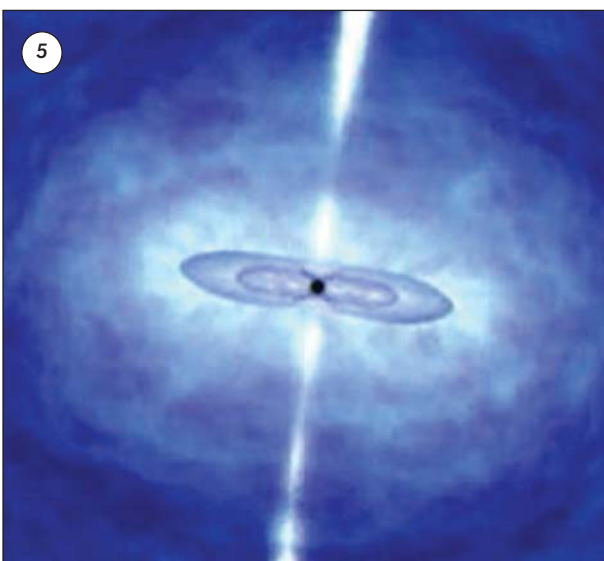
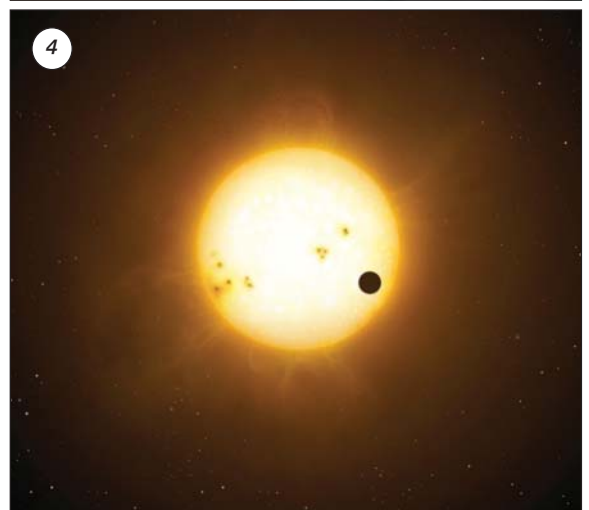
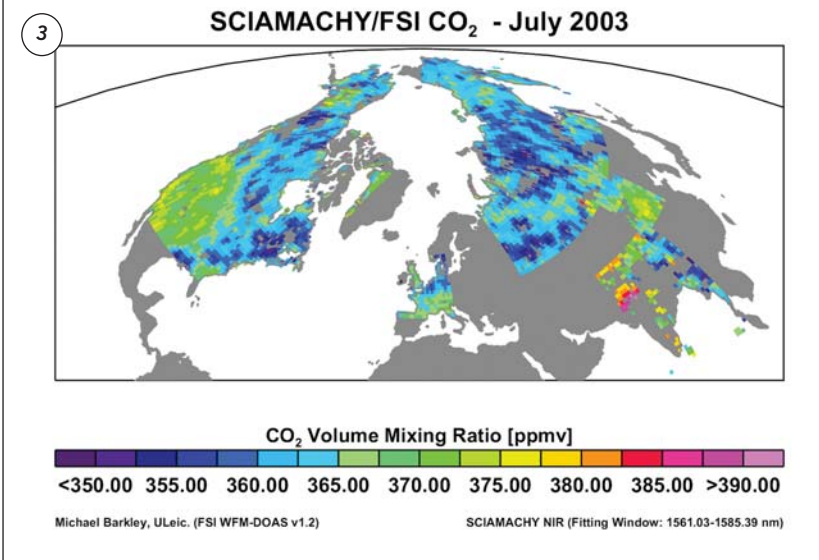
5. Death of a Star University of Leicester scientists watch supernova in real-time

For the first time a star has been observed in real-time as it goes supernova – a mind bogglingly powerful explosion as the star ends its life, the resulting cosmic eruption briefly outshining an entire galaxy. Scientists from the University of Leicester's renowned Space Research Centre were among UK scientists, in collaboration with international colleagues, who used NASA's Swift satellite and a combination of orbiting and ground-based observatories to catch a supernova in the act of exploding. The results, including an associated and

intriguing Gamma Ray Burst (GRB), appeared in 31 August issue of Nature.

6. Champagne Celebration at New Hall

The Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess celebrated the opening of Leicester's latest residential and conference facility with a champagne reception on 20 October. The £25m New Hall in Manor Road accommodates 746 students, 581 of whom will be housed in the new pavilions. Director of Residential and Catering Services Tim Wragg said: "This Hall will set the standard for student accommodation and conferences. I believe it is amongst the best in the UK and was designed to meet the needs of students now and in the future." Among those attending the reception was John Hallam (right) from Hallam Builders who completed the hall ahead of schedule.



Captions for photostop on page 11

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