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Tens of thousands spent honouring “worthy” figures

● £40,000 spent on associated costs in the last four years

Rose Troup Buchanan
DEPUTY EDITOR

IT HAS emerged that the University spends thousands of pounds on entertaining significant public figures and awarding them honorary degrees.

The figures, obtained by *Nouse*, detail that the University has paid out over £40,000 on hospitality, accommodation, and travel expenses in connection with various “worthy” individuals since March 2008.

£41,420.90 has been spent entertaining figures such as: the former York student and author Anthony Horowitz, film maker Ken Loach, China’s Health Minister Chen Zhu, and the anti-apartheid campaigner Albie Sachs. Archbishop John Sentamu, who recently made headlines with his views on traditional marriage, was also awarded an honorary doctorate in 2010.

The amount spent on hosting these figures is equivalent to funding 28 individual bursaries, for those students coming from the lowest bracket of housing income.

Tim Ellis, YUSU President, said: “It is important that the University is very careful with how money is being spent and ensures that it is beneficial to the whole University community.”

In 2008 a graduation ceremony featuring Dr David Neave, a prominent local historian, cost the University £2,085. Dr Neave was the only graduate recognised at the event.

On the 20th January of this year, £2,500 was spent in hospitality costs for the single graduation ceremony. The graduation ceremony involved only four honor-

ary graduates: Sir Mark Walport, Professor Dame Sally Davies, Dr Thomas Brewer, and Lyse Doucet. The detailed expenses listed: “dinner, leaflets, guest book, photos and frames, DVDs, certificates” among others, in explanation of the cost.

The University has defended this record by stating: “We regard honorary degrees as an integral part of our graduation ceremonies. All members of the University community have the opportunity to take part by nominating worthy individuals.”

However, the University managed to spend under £1000 for only a single graduate ceremony, out of 11 held in the past five years. The individuals honoured came to York in January 2010, for the post-graduate ceremony.

A University spokesperson went on to say that although there was often “nil cost for many of our honorary graduates”, it offers to pay the travel costs for overseas honorary degree graduates as a matter of courtesy.

In January of last year the University gave three honorary degrees to Professor Archie Howie, Dame Emma Kirby, and Penelope Worsley. The costs involved in entertaining these three figures surmounted £1,300, and included such expenses as photo frames, DVDs, and leaflets. In July of the same year, the University managed to spend £6,256 honouring nine individuals at a graduate ceremony. The costs listed were of a similar nature.

The exposure of these expenses

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Potential designs revealed



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Alcuin drop out rate highest of all colleges

ALCUIN HAS emerged as the college with the highest drop out rate so far this year. Figures obtained by *Nouse* shows double the rate compared to nearly all other colleges. There have been a range of suggestions as to why this is from Alcuin students and the University.

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Female professors still underrepresented

THE NUMBER of female professors at the University has increased by one per cent in the last two years, however the latest figures reveal only 24 per cent of professors at the University are women. Despite the slight upward trajectory, the apparent discrepancy is a source of concern for female academic staff.

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Criticism over Derwent anti-theft campaign

DERWENT COLLEGE’S JCR welfare team have launched a campaign to raise students’ awareness of security issues. The team left ‘Nicked’ stickers on valuable items in unlocked student rooms, however, some students have deplored this as an invasion of privacy.

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comes against a back-drop of departmental cuts, and falling building standards. Departments are being told to save space and to contain costs by the University, in order to help plug a funding gap of millions of pounds. Additionally, as reported previously by *Nouse*, many of the CLASP buildings on the Heslington West campus are in need of "urgent" renovation.

The £40,000 expended is more than double that of Newcastle University, which was heavily criticised last year for cashing out £14,656 on entertaining notable national and international figures over a period of three years. Kings College London was also revealed to have spent £30,250 on honorary graduates.

Honorary degrees have come under discussion in the national press, with commentators questioning their worth in the face of education cuts and increasing economic austerity.

Last year, Scottish universities were caught out after having spent over £100,000 collectively on awarding honorary degrees. The University of St. Andrews was one of the more prolific spenders, after it was revealed the university had spent £60,000 on entertaining such dignitaries as Dame Judi Dench, and leading Scottish lawyer, Baroness Helena Kennedy.



GEORGI MABEE

Honorary degree graduates have been shown to cost into the thousands

Additionally, the University of York, from 2008, elected to hold graduation ceremonies in China. This was a decision taken to better accommodate the increasing number of Chinese students at York, and to help to facilitate their families being able to attend. There had been complaints made in the past

that international students' families were forced to travel distances of over 10,000 miles in order to attend their relation's graduation, and as a result many did not attend and missed the big event.

However, the ceremony in April 2010 cost the University over £11,000. It was held in Bei-

jing, China. The honorary graduates were three Chinese scientists: Minister Chen Zhu, Professor Wei Yu, and Professor He Jifeng. There were also 159 students who graduated at that ceremony and the University put on a dinner for 350 guests.

There are plans to hold another graduation ceremony in China in 2013. As of 2010 there were 750 students from China studying at York. There are currently over 1,000 graduates living in China.

The figures relate to the asso-

"It is important that the University is very careful with how money is being spent"

YUSU President
Tim Ellis

ciated costs of graduation ceremonies themselves, and are specifically the costs incurred by having such individuals involved in the ceremony itself. The costing for honorary graduates includes travel expenses, accommodation requirements, and the cost of entertaining the individuals. The figures obtained do not state whether the honorary graduates even attend the dinners in the wake of the graduation ceremony.

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Student research proposed at Parliament

PhD student Rosemary Wilson, and Postdoctoral Research Fellow Dr James Fox, have entered a unique national competition, SET for Britain, in which their posters on research will be judged against other current scientific research from around the country. Rosemary Wilson's research focuses on the difference in DNA in cancerous cells, whilst Dr Fox is currently researching the 'clinical markers of disease progression'. Dr Fox said: "SET for Britain is a unique opportunity to illustrate first-hand the breadth and depth of the science occurring in research institutes."

Halifax's ongoing shower issues resolved

The University's Accommodation Services hosted a focus group for Halifax students affected by the recent shower problems. It confirmed that 32 showers were affected and that nearly all cases are now fixed. Concerns however remain over communication about the incident, and some students are planning to make compensation claims against the University. Fairfax House students made a successful compensation claim to the University last year about the substandard accommodation they believed they had received.

Award winning author has given a talk at York

Award-winning local author Matt Haig will give a brief talk at James College on 5th March at 7.15pm, with Q&A followed by a wine reception. The talk and reception were held in the James College Central JCR. Matt Haig's latest book, *The Radleys* was shortlisted for the 'Best Popular Fiction of the Year' at the Galaxy National book awards and is set for a BBC dramatisation. *The Last Family in England* is with Brad Pitt's Plan B and *The Possession of Mr Cave* is with Parallel Films.

Reporting by Lizze Lynch, Ross D'lima, and Matthew Dowds

UCAS application alterations face opposition

Thomas Cox
NEWS REPORTER

UCAS HAS proposed changes to its application process that would be implemented in 2016.

The 1994 Group, of which York is one of 19 members, has voiced concerns that many of its establishments have "little option but to opt out of the post-results system" UCAS plans, because of the fear that assessment of students will not be as reliable or thorough due to the shortened applications window, admissions being more reliant on exam results alone and less on influencing factors such as students'

backgrounds. Under these reforms, students would sit their A Level exams six weeks earlier, receiving results in July rather than August. Post qualification applications (PQAs), such as interviews, would then be introduced. Candidates would also make just two applications considerably narrowing the choice of course and university available.

The reforms are due to the fact that below 10 per cent of UK applicants have three accurate grade predictions.

York is unlikely to join this potential movement, a Spokesperson for the University said: "We share

the reservations expressed about some of the more radical changes currently under discussion. However, the University of York is not contemplating leaving (or threatening to leave) UCAS."

This is possibly due to the late start of York's Autumn term, beginning in early October some weeks after the majority of universities, meaning York would not have to alter its current terms to cater for PQAs.

The Russell Group, Million+, and the University Alliance groups also opposed the changes, saying that "aspiration" choices of ambitious students are less likely mean-

ing less depth in applicants, and that there would be too much focus on A-Level students over older applicants. Universities UK have advised "alternative solutions".

This active resistance has substantially deflated the 2016 proposals' chances of being realised, as UCAS is funded by universities' subscriptions.

Smaller 2014 UCAS changes are more likely to be realised. For example, allowing multiple personal statements which would simplify the procedure for students desiring different course applications.

UCAS will announce its recommendations at the end of March.

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Vanbrugh JCRC express “disappointment” as V-bar renovation under question again

Rose Troup Buchanan
DEPUTY EDITOR

COMMERCIAL SERVICES have released provisional plans for the refurbishment of V-Bar, however, they have stated that there is no confirmed date for the renovation.

This is despite Vanbrugh JCRC announcing last October that V-bar’s refurbishment had been confirmed and was going ahead for the beginning of the coming academic year.

Jon Greenwood, Director of Commercial Services, has stated that although there are future plans for the refurbishment of V-Bar he still cannot confirm when the update will happen.

Kallum Taylor, former Vanbrugh Chair, has said that he did receive confirmation of the expected date of the refurbishment.

Taylor added: “They shouldn’t come out announcing one thing and then altering this behind the scenes.”

He expressed his hope that the new Vanbrugh JCRC were still pushing for the renovation to happen.

The JCRC received a presentation by a representative from Commercial Services last term aimed at discussing possible designs for the renovation.

Matt Stephenson, current Vanbrugh Chair, said: “I am bitterly



The Vanbrugh JCRC had thought the V-bar refurbishment plans were confirmed, but timings are still uncertain

disappointed that Commercial Services have let us down with the refurbishment of V-Bar. I think that it is a massive shame for all Vanbrugh students, as they deserve better.”

Commercial Services have explained that the money that will be used for the refurbishment is not part of the capital program, which is approved by the Vice-Chancellor and allocated towards certain projects.

Instead, the money funding the renovation will come from the capi-

tal generated by the bar’s profits.

However, Rena Quarton, Commercial Services’ Business Development Manager, stated in August 2011, that V-Bar’s refurbishment was “not in the university’s capital budget for the 2011/12 financial year,” and as a result not viable to proceed.

It has been estimated that the work would require £135,753 plus VAT.

Stephenson outlined the current position his JCRC is in: “I am

currently working with Commercial Services and the University to see what options the college can take, and I will be taking every action possible to try and secure this long-delayed refurbishment.”

It is one of these designs that Commercial Services have released. But this is only one of three possible options for the refurbishment, and Greenwood was keen to stress to that it was contingent upon what the final (as yet unseen) design would cost. One design has already

been discarded after it was deemed too expensive by Commercial Services.

The designs released to *Nouse* are by West Yorkshire design firm, Stonehouse. Stonehouse is a company dedicated to “ethical business practices” and have worked on a wide range of projects.

“I am bitterly disappointed that Commercial Services have let us down with the refurbishment of V-Bar”

Vanbrugh JCRC Chair
Matt Stephenson

They are a consultancy, design, and bespoke furniture design team. The University has used this company before in designing the refurbishment of Heslington Hall, and the National Science Learning Centre.

Taylor, the former Vanbrugh Chair, campaigned strongly for the renovation of his college’s bar. When the expected refurbishment was announced, Taylor incorporated the announcement into his successful campaign for YUSU President earlier this month.

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College drop-out rate highest in Alcuin

Neil Johnston
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

ALCUIN COLLEGE has seen almost double the drop-out rate of all other undergraduate colleges with the exception of James this year. Statistics reveal that 40 students have left Alcuin this term.

It appears the drop-out rate is a new problem for this year, as previously only 75 students asked to leave in the whole of last year. This was similar to the rate for other colleges.

However, Pascal Dubois, Alcuin JCRC Chair, told *Nouse* that: “The actual reasons provoking a student to leave are impossible to prove without asking each individual student.”

Tony Ward, Alcuin Provost, said that he doesn’t believe there are any new reasons for students to drop-out this year.

“I monitor our dropout rate throughout the year to identify whether we have any problems that merit investigation. Each year we have a general level of turnover of students but there is no particular pattern in it in any one year.”

“This year, there are no problems that I am aware of that are causing students to want to leave our college. Feedback I receive is

that the feelings towards the college are very good.”

But Ashleigh Goodes, a first-year Psychology student said: “While things aren’t too bad socially in individual blocks, there seems to be no community vibe. There never seems to be much going on and it’s very quiet. Someone in the block

“While things aren’t too bad socially in individual blocks, there seems to be no community vibe”

Alcuin first-year Psychology student
Ashleigh Goodes

next to us moved to Halifax because they wanted to be somewhere better socially.”

Helena Doyle, a first-year Physics student, commented on the drop-out figures: “Sometimes it feels very anti-social here. Everyone sticks to their blocks. We saw something typical of this the other day when we tried to get people round for a barbecue and no one wanted to mix.”

Another Alcuin student commented, “I think part of the prob-



B-Henry’s is Alcuin’s college bar and one of Alcuin students’ social areas

lem is that B-Henry’s is not very good. Other colleges have D-bar or V-bar where they are actually the hubs of the college.

“It may seem odd but in some ways the good accommodation in Alcuin could be a disadvantage. Lots of people stay in their rooms a lot of the time because they’re happy with what they’ve got there.”

In 2010-2011 Goodricke had the highest drop-out rate with 90 students leaving the college. It has

been suggested that one of the factors that contributed to students dropping out is Goodricke’s isolation from the rest of the University campus.

Commenting on last year’s high drop-out rate Emily Niamh Miller, the Goodricke JCRC Chair, said: “All JCRCs work alongside their College teams to provide excellent welfare support, but sometimes university, or at least this University, just isn’t right for someone.”

Miller continued that it was vital that student drop-outs were not perceived as a sign of failure on the side of the University or on the college system.

She added: “That being said, we do, of course, work closely with our College Welfare Team to continually better the college experience for our students, both on and off-campus.”

The University believes that there is always going to be variation in drop-out rates between the different colleges and there will be students who feel University was not the right decision for them.

Jane Grenville, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Students, commented: “In any population, and the University of York student body is no exception, there are people who fall ill, have personal difficulties or who have family issues to which they must attend.

“Sometimes these are so serious that some students have no option but to withdraw from their studies. Others may have to withdraw only temporarily.

She added: “Nevertheless, our rate of withdrawals compares well with our competitor universities. It is very difficult to generalise, because each individual’s circumstances are different.”

Female professors continue to be

HULL UNIVERSITY

Notable Female Professors

Mary Warnock

Britain's leading moral philosopher is a former academic and headmistress who has chaired influential government reports on special-needs education and human embryology, which led to the legalisation of embryo research.

Mary Beard

A Professor of Classics at the University of Cambridge and a fellow of Newnham College. She is the Classics editor of the Times Literary Supplement, and a distinguished author. Beard caused after 9/11, writing that America 'had it coming'.

Lisa Jardine

A Professor of Renaissance studies, with books on Shakespeare and Francis Bacon to her name. Has also championed the sciences and is head of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority.

Kay Davies

In the 1980s the Oxford professor and human geneticist helped develop the antenatal screening test for muscular dystrophy; isolating the gene sequence which was instrumental in treating the condition.

Athene Donald

The Cambridge professor and most senior British woman in physics was given a DBE this year. Her research into the way molecules and cells function has implications for sufferers of Alzheimer's disease and the development of hip replacements and prosthetic limbs.

Sue Ion

The former head of technology at British Nuclear Fuels Limited, Dame Sue is a visiting professor and government adviser. According to the engineer, anyone who believes that renewable energies can replace nuclear is 'living in cloud-cuckoo land'.

Laura Hughes
NEWS EDITOR

RECENT FIGURES have revealed just 24 per cent of University of York professors are female, up only 1 per cent from 2010.

Despite pledging commitment to the cause two years ago, the one percent increase in female professors is a source of concern for certain members of female staff.

Celia Kitzinger, a Professor of Conversion Analysis, Gender and Sexuality in the Department of Sociology at the University, has called the figures, "depressingly low despite the upward trend." Kitzinger has recently been appointed as a member of University Promotions Committee.

An investigation carried out by *Nouse* in 2010, revealed 23 per cent of professors working at the University were female. The University said at the time that it was, "committed to the implementation and monitoring of equality and diversity," and "recognise[s] that there is more to do".

A University stated: "The number of female professors at York is on an upward trajectory.

"Nevertheless, we are not complacent and we recognise that we have more work to do to achieve an equitable gender balance at professional level."

Despite the general lack of female participation in the field of science and apparent under-representation of women in departments of engineering and technology across the country, York is the only British University to have an academic department win the Gold Athena Swan Award. In 2007 the Chemistry department was recognised for its high levels of female employment practice.

The University Promotions Committee recently collected statistics on the numbers of women who apply for promotion to become professors, and the percentage of those who are successful compared with male applicants. Kitzinger confirmed the study found no evidence of discrimination against women.



Despite equal numbers of male and female staff across the country the number of female professors remain low

Academic applications to the University, in the years 2008-2011, reveal that 32.9 per cent of candidates were female. In 2011, the elec-

"[The figures are] depressingly low despite the upward trend"

Professor in the Sociology Department
Celia Kitzinger

tronics department had one female professor, whilst there were four in the computer sciences department.

This apparent gender gap, however, does not extend to the whole field of academic university staff, with women forming 44.2 per cent of the academic community as a whole.

Bob Hughes, YUSU Welfare Officer, told *Nouse*: "Although it is encouraging to see a rise in the numbers, it is still a low percentage.

"But I think, and hope, that the academic culture is moving towards a more inclusive atmosphere, and I think that the rising numbers

of female professors will help foster an environment where more women feel included and respected, particularly at the more senior levels."

The independent higher education statistics producer HESA, has revealed that across the UK, 19.8 per cent of professors were women in 2010/11. There are currently 242 professors at York; 57 of which are female. The number of female professors at the University of Oxford, is only 9.4 per cent. In sharp contrast, ninety per cent of professors on the teaching staff at Leeds Trinity are women.

The studies indicate a four percent increase in the number of female professors at UK Universities in the last year. Further figures show there were close to 3,500 female professors in 2010, out of a total 17,500.

Sally Hunt, the University and College Union's General Secretary, has advocated that "universities still have more to do to ensure that staff are promoted on merit irrespective of their background or gender. Students want to be taught by the best and brightest, and staff want to

work in universities where gender is not an issue."

David Duncan, the University Academic Registrar, commented that he does not believe, "there is clear evidence that either women or men are more reluctant to apply for academic promotion, or that one gender is more successful than the other."

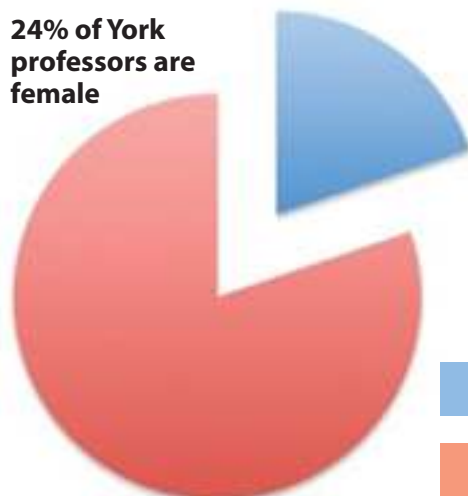
Nationally, 17,465 academic staff contracts state the title of 'Professor' within them. Of these 19.8 per cent were female, 7.3 per cent were from an ethnic minority and 16.7 per cent were of non-UK nationality.

The University College Union's latest Annual Survey of hours and earnings, revealed a fourteen percent pay gap in higher education teaching professionals' pay and a six percent gap at professional level.

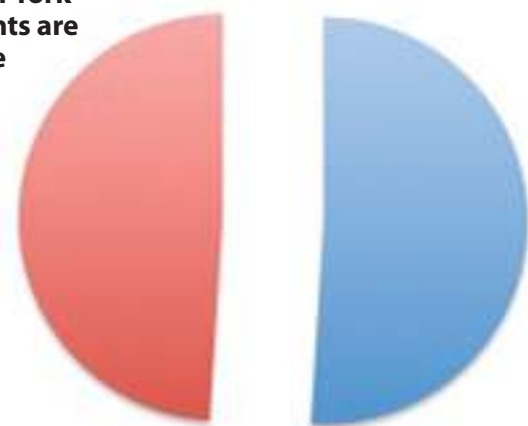
A spokesperson for the Fawcett Society, the UK's leading campaign for equality between women claims: "40 years after the Equal Pay Act, women can expect to earn 15.5 per cent less than men. Some 45,000 women are currently fighting equal pay claims."

Gender statistics

24% of York professors are female



54% of York students are female



44.2% of all academics nationally are female

Female
Male

marginalised

UNIVERSITY OF YORK



COMMENT

Martin Spurr



Despite the semblance of equality of opportunity at York, we should be concerned about the lack of progress in increasing the number of female professors over the last few years.

Gender discrimination in the workplace twenty or thirty years ago was obvious and prevalent. Today, through a series of government policies and a change in social attitude the effect has been reduced.

However, it still remains hidden in certain areas. The University does not discriminate on gender when choosing who your next professor should be, but still less than one in four professors are female.

This figure is “depressingly low”, as Professor Kitzinger puts it, and has not increased dramatically over the last few years. While the University claims the number of female professors employed is on an upward trend, the 2012 statistic is little better than the figure produced by a *Nouse* investigation two years ago.

But surely equality of opportunity is the right way to go? As long

as everyone has the right to apply on an equal footing, everything should be just fine and dandy. But it isn't.

There is no point acknowledging that there should be more female professors, but then waiting twenty or thirty years for that to materialise in practice. If you know something is wrong, that something is out of kilter, it should be addressed. The watchman who protects the city and fails to see the enemy approaching is merely incompetent, but the watchman who sees an army advancing and yet fails to sound the alarm, neglects his duties as a guardian.

The University should actively promote female over male professors. Some may say that this is discrimination. But addressing an imbalance, compared to doing nothing, seems to be the better option to me.

There is gender inequality at York. There is no denying that. Therefore, there must be a proactive approach to quickly reverse this disparity in order to enhance York's reputation. But even if the reputation of the institution is not the main focus, realising a greater equality of genders in the workplace should be a maxim in itself.

We can talk forever about how much society has progressed, how women are now treated as equal. All of this is good news and we should

recognize these achievements. But it is pointless if the reality of life does not correlate with our accepted views and opinions. We all think gender equality is right, but when it comes to real life we are wary of actively addressing this divide.

Yes, the best people should get the best jobs. An equal 50:50 split between men and women is not necessarily desirable. Yet, having more than three times as many male academic staff than female should not be tolerated. I don't believe this is a fair reflection upon who the best people for the job were. If more men applied, greater measures to increase the number of female applicants must be seen as the way to go.

Affirmative action policies do not seem typically British. The ‘no discrimination is best’ approach seems to have great resonance within British society. But attacking the problem in this way does not mean there is no discrimination.

This would be a good and fair option if everyone had an equal starting point – but they don't. Action has to happen to reduce the gap before a clean slate can be applied. But currently, the slow progress and lack of proactive measures to address the imbalance is justifying the continual under-representation of women. This is not an approach I feel comfortable with and one the University shouldn't either.

Non-academic staff at York outnumber academic employees by 25 per cent

Rose Troup Buchanan
DEPUTY EDITOR

IT HAS been revealed that the University employs significantly more non-academic personnel than academic.

Figures released by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), showed that York has just under 600 more non-academic employees.

The University has defended this record by stating that: “We have not reduced academic staff numbers at all. We benchmarked our support structure against other universities recently and found ourselves relatively lean compared with all our major competitors. The support numbers include cleaning, catering, gardening, maintenance staff.”

According to the data released, the University currently employs 1,420 academic staff and 1,995 non-academic staff.

Graeme Osborn, YUSU Academic Officer, said: “The University needs to make sure that it has the right balance of staff to deliver the quality of education and experience that students expect.”

However, the University has called the statistics “misleading”, stating that the proportion of employees is unclear as “Oxford has

many more support staff than York, but a substantial proportion of them are employed in the colleges”.

The national average for the proportion of academic to non-academics is 47 per cent per cent. York is slightly below the national average, with 41 per cent of its staff non-academic.

The average wage of a university professor in 2008 was £69,870. Senior lecturers were paid £46,319, whilst lecturers received £38,105. In comparison librarians, newly qualified, can expect to receive between £21,000 to £24,000.

The individual salaries for

“The University needs to make sure it has the right balance of staff to deliver quality of education and experience that students expect.”

YUSU Academic Officer
Graeme Osborn

University employees are not available publicly, as this falls within the Data Protection Act.

Within national statistics the largest proportion of non-academic employees are firstly librarians and their assistants, then non-academic professionals, and then those indi-



The University of York currently employs 1,420 academic staff and 1,995 non-academic staff on its books

viduals working in laboratories at universities.

Nationally, women are statistically far more likely to be employed by higher educational institutions as non-academic staff, than academic. There are 123,600 female non-academic staff to 73,915 male non-academics employed by UK universities.

Of the total, 62.6 per cent of non-academics working in a university environment are female.

These figures appear against a back-drop of widespread higher education cuts. Nationally, universities are facing a tougher economic climate as estimates for slashed budgets have projected figures into the billions.

On a local level, although the University is in better financial condition than many of its closest competitors, departments have been asked to implement money-saving actions in an attempt to help ease

the funding gap.

The universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Kings College London all have a better proportion of academics to non-academics. Kings College London boasts 1270 more academics than non-academic employees.

Scottish universities have been recorded as having a worse record, with some institutions totalling more than a 1,000 more non-academics.

ROBBOPHOTOS

News

More students choose to study abroad as participation doubles

ERIK ECKEL



The University of California, Berkeley is one of the international institutions where students can study abroad

Martin Spurr
EDITOR

STUDENTS AT York are increasingly attracted by foreign universities as the number of participants in the study abroad programme has doubled in the last three years.

FOI figures show that 142 students travelled to 17 different countries this year, compared to only 72 in the year 2009/10.

The last year has seen a dramatic increase, but female students are still almost twice as likely to de-

cide to spend part of their degree abroad.

The University has identified the “growing interest from students in international opportunities, [with] the relocation of the Study Abroad Office to Derwent College where it is much more visible, and substantially more events and talks for students on campus” as reasons for the dramatic rise.

Recent research also suggests that international experience in an ever-increasing globalised economy is vital. A British Council sur-

vey last year suggested that many employers were finding it difficult to recruit employees with a “global outlook”.

Business representatives, in the survey, also expressed concern that in the UK young people’s “horizons are not broad enough” for an interconnected and globalised economy.

The University spokesperson added: “There is a lot of evidence that some kind of international experience - gap years, study abroad, summer schools, internships etc improve students’ employability

and help them to navigate the world in future life (and career).”

The Language and Linguistic Department send the most students to partner universities across the world. Interestingly however, members of the Chemistry Department came next with 44 students this year travelling to countries such as: Germany, the Netherlands, Singapore and Australia.

History, English and Biology students are also among the most keen to spend time abroad and the University has indicated that it is hoping to increase the numbers studying abroad each year even further.

Last summer David Willets, the Universities Minister, said: “I would like to see them be able to raise enough funds to set up more operations abroad. I would like to see greater mutual recognition of qualifications so that a student born in Britain can build up credits for a British degree while studying abroad.”

In the £2 million package to improve the student experience, announced before Christmas, the University outlined its plans to fund an International Study Centre for York students.

This would allow York students to study for four to six weeks abroad in the summer.

Missing teen still not found

Stephanie Milsom
NEWS REPORTER

THE SEARCH continues for York teenager Jordan Sullivan, who was last seen almost a month ago.

Jordan, 19, from Acomb, was last seen running naked towards the River Ouse on Tuesday 14th February. His possessions were later found nearby.

Despite extensive searches from the emergency services, underwater divers and mountain rescue, Jordan’s whereabouts are still unknown, and police are unable to account for his actions. Jordan’s family, friends and colleagues, who describe him as ‘popular’ and ‘a rising star’, are extremely saddened by his disappearance, and continue to urge him to return home.

The York Press published a letter written by his 10-year-old brother, Wesley Sullivan, asking for him to come “home safe and well or at least get in touch”.

Police divers explored the River Ouse on Wednesday, searching the stretch of river in the area where the York teenager was last seen. Divers have been required to search the river for several missing people on a number of occasions in the past year.

Staff join calls for a Sustainability Officer

SALLY GRANGER

Ross D’Lima
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

THE UNIVERSITY has been criticised for showing “a lot of talk but not enough action” on the issue of sustainability, from the Chair of the University’s Sustainability Forum.

The criticism comes amid growing pressure from York’s People and Planet society and the Sustainability Forum for the University to appoint a Sustainability Officer.

Speaking to *Nouse*, Dr Merran Toerien, a research fellow in the Sociology Department, and Chair of the Sustainability Forum, expressed disappointment with the University’s efforts on sustainability.

She stated that: “There is not enough clear evidence from the top down that the university supports, or is willing and committed to putting sustainability at the top of the agenda.”

She added: “Compared to other strands of the University’s Plan, such as internationalisation, the University’s efforts have been poor... There is a lot of talk but not enough action.”

Elizabeth Heaps, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Estates and Strategic Projects, recently commented that: “The University Plan gives equal prominence to sustainability, excellence, inclusivity and internationalisation.”

However, Toerien stated that

while there are lots of “little initiatives” and that there is “stuff going on behind the scenes”, York is “falling far behind other universities in terms of organised effort”.

The criticism comes following *Nouse*’s recent revelation that Professor Colin Campbell, another member of the Sustainability Forum, had been told that the University sees sustainability as “just eco-bling”. This followed a study, conducted by Professor Campbell,

“The University are not putting their money where [their] mouth is”

Research Fellow
Dr Merran Toerien

that compared the University’s sustainability with other institutions, where York was ranked 83rd.

The Sustainability Forum, a discussion group for staff and post graduate students, has been “liaising” with students to help put pressure on the University’s approach to sustainability.

The Forum informed People and Planet of a Senior Management Strategy meeting on Wednesday, in which staff, but no students had been invited to ask questions on the subject of sustainability.

Approximately 15 members

of People and Planet subsequently protested outside of the event. Phoebe Cullingworth, Environment and Ethics Officer, entered the meeting uninvited and presented a petition, signed by over 250 people, requesting that a permanent Sustainability Officer be elected.

Heaps, one of the University’s ‘Sustainability Champions’, who spoke at the event, said in response to the petition that: “It is something we need to consider. We’ll definitely have a look at it”. She emphasised that the University do already have staff committed to sustainability.

The campaign highlights that while the University has members of staff involved with sustainability, no member of staff hold it as their only responsibility.

Toerien has confirmed that the Forum “very strongly support the campaign.” She added that depending on the outcome of the next Sustainable Development Working Group meeting, the Sustainability Forum and People and Planet may engage in “more formal cooperation”.

Toerien also implored more staff members to engage with campaigning for sustainability in some way.

Andreas Gabrielsen, Campaigns Officer, said: “I believe that there are matters in which staff definitely should campaign with students”.



Campaigners want the University to appoint a new Sustainability Officer

Derwent's 'Nicked' campaign causes controversy

Laura Hughes
Ellis Goldney Sidley

A LARGE number of Derwent students have reacted angrily after their College Welfare team launched its 'Nicked' campaign.

The college's Chair and Welfare representatives checked approximately 100 student bedrooms, and entered 45 per cent of rooms that were left unlocked, placing stickers on items to demonstrate that they could have been stolen.

The JCRC members involved did not remove students belongings and were in the room for a couple of seconds. However when the results were announced, via the scheme's Facebook group, there was a widely critical response from students.

Francesca Knight, the Derwent JCRC Chair, along with Katy Tinman and Benjamin Clynes, the college's Welfare reps, inspected the rooms between 5:30 and 7:30 in the evening, during Derwent's dining hours. The initiative was an attempt to improve personal security around the college, after a YUSU survey revealed that 35 per cent of Derwent students feel unsafe.

The campaign is similar to a number of projects run by the police nationally and by other Universities and Students' Unions. The JCRC knocked on every door, and only tried to open the door if there was no response.

Derwent's current JCRC are



The notes, saying 'Nicked', were put in unlocked Derwent students' rooms

pushing the University for improvements to security. Currently all requests for better lighting and CCTV cameras have been rejected by the University, on the grounds that residents do not maintain the basic security of keeping the doors to their blocks or rooms locked.

Tinman, the Welfare Representative, commented: "All Der-

went students need to be aware that this was a campaign intended to promote personal safety and security within the college without raising vulnerability or compromising any of the current security measures. Myself, Cesca and Ben did not wish to upset any students - this was ultimately done to improve student welfare."

The campaign had the full support of Derwent's provost Rob Aitken, as well as campus security and YUSU. Students were warned by the Provost that their insurance was invalid if rooms were unlocked.

Critics of the campaign have cited the Terms and Conditions of Residence, in which University staff have to give 48 hours' notice of any visits. In response, Derwent's administrator, Chris Unwin commented on the Facebook group: "If

"This was a campaign to promote personal safety and security"

Derwent Welfare Rep
Katy Tinman

we had done this, everyone would have been aware in advance of what was going on, there would have been no element of surprise."

Francesca Knight has adamantly defended the campaign. "We found a laptop that was clearly visible in every room we went in, and also saw some keys and key cards lying around. Bearing in mind we ran in and ran out in a few seconds it is scary how quickly these things could have been taken.

It was suggested that we do something within the college to show we are doing our bit to promote personal safety and college se-

curity in order to back up our pleas to the university for more cameras in the college nucleus".

Flavio Newcomb, a second-year Derwent student, posted on the Facebook page: "There is stuff people keep in their room that they don't want others to see. In my opinion, that counts for more of a welfare loss than a welfare gain - how can people with serious issues trust the Welfare reps, knowing [they've] walked into their room when they weren't there. The aim is understandable but the way this has been carried out really isn't."

Provost Rob Aitken said he was "disappointed in the comments on the Nicked Facebook events page particularly those from 2nd years from whom I would have expected a more responsible attitude."

Bob Hughes, YUSU Welfare Officer, expressed his delight at the campaign's initiative: "Personal belongings can be stolen in a matter of seconds. Hard-hitting campaigns like this can sometimes be shocking, but students are talking about security now, and if more students start locking their doors as a result, then I call that a big success."

Hughes confirmed that YUSU will review the college's campaign but hopes, "that these important and shocking findings will add weight and immediacy to the University's actions."

LEADER >> Page 12

York students lay out plans for NUS walkout

Lizzie Lynch
NEWS REPORTER

STUDENTS FROM the University of York, York St. John University, and York College will take to the streets on 14th March in protest against government changes to Higher Education.

Responding to what Liam Burns, President of the NUS, claimed to be "under the radar" changes to Britain's education system, a collection of students across York will assemble on each of the Higher Education campuses to vocalise their opposition.

Izaak Wilson, a key coordinator in the protests and a student at the University of York, believes the changes to be "disastrous".

Like the government's defeat over workfare reforms, Wilson hopes the event on 14th March will raise the profile of the coalition's changes to higher education.

Current plans have provisionally outlined that students assemble at Vanburgh Paradise at 1:15pm this Wednesday before heading to the central rally at King's Square.

Whilst the Facebook Event showed only 69 members attending at the end of last week, Burns has encouraged organisers to "clear

out the lecture theatres" on the day.

A recent report by Parliamentary aid Paul Bolton illustrates that the government's changes will result in Britain's university fees ranking as second highest in the developed world.

The Institute for Public Policy Research, an independent think tank, also formulated a study that has found 44 per cent of young adults believe they will not be as well off as their parents due to the current economic climate.

Recent figures released by the

"[It's an] opportunity to send a very clear message to this wrecking-ball government"

Vanbrugh Campaign representative
Josiah Mortimer

Office of National Statistics reveal the employment rate gap between young and older workers has risen to 8.9 percentage points from 0.2 in eight years.

This, accompanied with Burn's strong rhetoric, has resulted in hundreds of Higher Education institutions pledging to show their sup-

port through protest against the "privatisation of higher education" between 12th and 16th March.

Josiah Mortimer, Vanbrugh Environment and Campaign representative, stated the planned walkouts and rallies signal "a huge step forward" and offer the "opportunity to send a very clear message to this wrecking-ball government".

Mortimer has stated that the University of York Campaigns Committee is "fully behind" the protests, and the current campaigns officer has given the organisers "his full backing, including use of Campaigns Committee resources."

Co-campaigns officers elect, Ben Dilks and Megan Cross, have also come out in support of the day of action, stating they were "really pleased to see so many York students supporting the NUS' 'Walk-out Wednesday'. Together we can send a strong message to the government that their unrelenting attacks on education are wrong".

Paul Marshall, head of the 1994 Group of research universities has recently said cutting £940m from higher education funding by July 2012 will send out "exactly the wrong message" on the economy.



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News

Alcuin

Alcuin College is having a quiz with punch at the JCR Wednesday week 10 at 8pm. There is an entrance fee of £1.50. Alcuin are looking for students to contribute ideas for next term's events and are holding an open meeting Tuesday week ten at 6:30 in the Alcuin JCR.

Derwent

Derwent College are hosting a Great Block Bake Off all day on Tuesday. Students can go to the JCR to sample cakes and other delicious food. After having a sample of each of the cook's efforts, contestants will rate the cakes out of 10. There is a suggested donation £1.50 for RAG.

Goodricke

Goodricke College apologised for an illicit canvassing email for the YUSU elections which was sent out via its mailing list system to residents of the college. College authorities are investigating how the mailing list was accessed without authorisation.

Halifax

Halifax have launched a new brand of events under the banner of XTRA PRESENTS. The college has already held two events under the brand; Xtreme Pub Golf and a UV rave Rave in JJs.

James

This year's Photography Competition is offering a special prize for the best entry from a James College resident. The closing date for entries is 16th April. Each category winner and runner-up will receive a cash prize, and there will be overall prizes for the best overall entry and best entry from a James student.

Langwith

Student Jack Baker became landlord of The Courtyard for a week to raise money for RAG. During the week it was rebranded 'The Baker's Dozen'. He claimed that "I'm in the Courtyard near enough every day as it is, so I think it's great that I finally have a chance to pretend to own it".

Vanbrugh

Vanbrugh College is hosting an evening of Comedy including stand-up acts and ComedySoc's improv troupe 'The Shambles' in the JCR Tuesday week 10 at 8pm.

Wentworth

The GSA are planning a weekend trip to London which will leave on 17th March at 8:30am and will last two nights. Contact the GSA for further information.

Reporting by Tim Wingard, Laura Hughes and Neil Johnston

Election turnout breaks recent YUSU records

Alex Osborne
NEWS REPORTER

AT THE end of a week of fierce campaigning, YUSU Elections' turnout hit 36.8 per cent, with 5,720 unique voters casting a total of 40,218 ballots, which based on last year's figures would place YUSU's election turnout as the third highest in the country.

These figures far surpass the previous five years' statistics, perhaps indicating that students have been more engaged by 2012's, highly contested, positions. Tim Ellis, the current YUSU President, noted: "We are extremely pleased to see not only such a high turnout, but also a marked improvement in the percentage of females running for officer position, which is great. YUSU is now one of the most engaged Unions in the country and this is great news for York students.

"There is still room for improvement and it is now the job of YUSU to ensure that we are delivering what our members want."

This year saw numerous records and trends broken; there were a record 53 candidates for the positions available compared to 38 in 2010. There were also candidates running for all positions, and each Sabb position had both male and female candidates - this has not been the case in previous years.

Although these figures are to be celebrated, nationally turnout remains relatively low at universities. The University of Sheffield recently set a national record for student union election turnout, with 8,543 unique voters casting ballots - this is the first time any students' union elections has exceeded 8,000 votes. This transfers to a turnout of around 36 per cent.

Sheffield's current student un-



AGATHA TORRANCE

Hundreds came to see the results of this year's hotly contested elections

ion president, Thom Arnold, commented that: "It's fantastic, it's vitally important that we have students who are interested in having their say and making sure they are represented.

"Students are becoming more

"We are extremely pleased to see such a high turnout. YUSU is now one of the most engaged Unions in the country."

YUSU President
Tim Ellis

interested in understanding the wider issues around Higher Education and the changes in policies which is stimulating a response to get more involved."

While record breaking figures such as these do set a precedent and encourage higher turnout in future, the size of universities' student bodies does need to be considered, and

this is perhaps indicative of a wider social issue that universities across the UK consistently fail to engage even half of the student body to vote in students' union elections.

The University of Warwick this year saw 5,883 students vote in union elections, which equates to roughly 27 per cent turnout, and UCL saw a record-breaking 3,500 voters cast ballots, but these figures represent just 15.4 per cent of the student body.

Aberystwyth University students' union elections saw a turnout of 23 per cent, while Plymouth saw 5,914 students voting, which is 24 per cent of the electorate.

York's turnout does imply a greater level of student activism and interest. But the challenge for Kallum Taylor and YUSU as a whole, is to maintain an interest in the union's activity throughout the year and not just for the month of February, as well as encouraging students to take this interest to next year's elections.

Society funding problems

Neil Johnston
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

YUSU HAS been accused of ignoring concerns raised by a society about allocating funding.

The society which currently runs the website Shrilla.co.uk applied for ratification as a publication and hoped to secure funding for two editions a year.

Whilst the society was successfully ratified, they did not receive funding and the society claim there was no justification and that subsequent questions have been ignored.

Dominic Falcao and Amy Beecher claim they had a unique publication dedicating their content topics to those concerning gender and equality.

Falcao and Beecher argue it would be incredibly difficult for a publication dealing with issues that are heavily stigmatised to obtain independent funding.

The society claim their appeal to YUSU has been left unanswered since February 12th and that their appeal has not even been acknowledged.

According to the society founders, five different publications applied for ratification during the last window of applications but none were granted by YUSU.

Falcao has accused YUSU of a lack of clarity on their qualifications for funding. Although he was

"We are left in limbo, unrated but with a proposal and counter proposal sitting on the table simultaneously"

Dominic Falcao

Kellogg's congratulate 'Special K'

Andy Davis
NEWS REPORTER

KELLOGG'S HAVE shown their enthusiasm for the newly elected YUSU president Kallum Taylor by sending two congratulatory crates of their breakfast cereal.

There was earlier speculation that Taylor's use of the 'Special K' logo and trademarked name during his campaign for president had landed him in legal trouble.

However, Taylor told *Nouse* that after he had finished his campaign he contacted Kellogg's: "to thank them for not nailing me for using their brand".

Kellogg's were said to have been "quite cool" about the situation, offering their congratulations and saying they would like to send two cases of their Special K cereal.

The representative from Kellogg's added they were 'flattered'. The surprising package of 20 boxes of cereal arrived on Friday afternoon.



JONO HODSON

Kallum appeared delighted with the special delivery sent by Kellogs

assured that there was no cap on publications, he says Shrilla was told that there were clear grounds on which applications are assessed but they have been unable to obtain a copy of these.

Falcao commented on the issue saying: "This is an issue that could have been cleared up with a single email. Yet instead it has dragged on for a month."

He added, "We are left in limbo, un-rated but with a proposal and counter-proposal sitting on the table simultaneously."

James Croydon, Student Activities Officer, defended YUSU's position: "The committee originally agreed to ratify the society, but only as a blog site and not a printed publication.

"It was felt that there were already publications that comment pieces could be made in and as a result an additional publication was not required.

"Shrilla have appealed against the Societies Committee decision, and as a result the appeal will be heard in a meeting of the societies committee next week."

US universities: what can we learn?

As higher fees hit UK universities, is there a danger of a US style system? **Martin Spurr** talks to Jane Grenville who recently went to visit the American high fees economy.

DAVID MICHAEL MORRIS

The Liberal Democrats may have promised not to raise tuition fees, but, along with their Conservative colleagues, they did. From October the first batch of students paying £9,000 will begin their university life at York expecting value for money. American university students have had to pay considerably higher fees for many years, yet US institutions dominate the world top 100 rankings. Resolving the dilemma between higher fees and value for money is a crucial step towards maintaining York as one of the best universities in the country: to achieve this the University is seeking to learn from its American counterparts.

A group of the senior management team at York recently went to visit five American universities with a purpose to look at “a high fees economy, see how American universities spend high fees, how they mitigate against high fees for students from low-income families and how they approach student support,” according to Jane Grenville, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for students.

Their chosen institutions comprised of three private and two public universities with fees ranging from £29,000 a year to £4,425 for in-state students. Grenville explained: “Fees impact upon the relationship between universities and students quite a lot in America. There is a huge variety and the private universities spend a lot of money. The interesting thing is that everywhere we went we got the sense that, in the private universities, there is an upward spiral going on.”

This upward spiral is a result of the consumer approach that has been implemented. The demand for value for money from students pressures universities to invest in student support, but in order to do so fees must rise, which leads to students demanding more for their money, “an upward spiral of high fees creating demand, creating high fees, creating demand”, as Grenville puts it.

The closer relationship between students and universities is seen by many as one of the advantages of higher fees, yet the danger is that students become over-reliant

upon the services that are on offer. Universities are meant to prepare students for the outside world, but Grenville suggests that in America the higher fees have meant that “they are sending out a generation of over-reliant and under-resilient students who are used to having everything for them on campus.

“This has brought me back with the mantra: we want to use the money to produce five star graduates, not a five star hotel.”

But in a consumer-led university world, does it really matter that American universities are spending more on student support than on academic endeavours? Universities used to dictate the rules, but now students are supposed to. Is the increased power students supposedly have with higher UK fees more important than what the institution thinks is best for their students? I am unsure, but Grenville said she noticed the increased pressure upon students in the US system.

“There was a really strong sense of very anxious students, because in a high fee regime there is a lot of pressure on you. The whole thing



In a system where students yield more power, will the student or academic experience be the most important?

“The whole thing was a bit like being in a pressure cooker”

was a bit like being in a pressure cooker. Senior staff that we talked to were very outspoken about what was happening - there was a real sense that the whole thing has gone out of kilter.”

Out of kilter it may be, but the majority of the best universities in

the world are American. With this in mind, perhaps the worry over increased tuition fees in the UK is overrated.

“The American system is arguably on an unstable financial level. The fees in the UK at the moment are a third of the fees in

private schools, but about comparable to in-state students in public universities. Might Oxford and Cambridge decide to get out of the state-supported system and go private - they might. But one of the things you need to bear in mind is endowments. The endowment at Duke is \$5.7 billion and the smallest, [out of the universities we visited] at Mount Holyoke, is \$488 million. There are no endowments at any UK university that compare; at York there is an empty tin called endowments.”

The important point is that it's vital UK universities understand how the American system works and the pitfalls of it. Students can now study in Hong Kong, with change for the air fares home. Many European universities teach in English and have comparatively insignificant fees. Application figures under the new fee regime in the UK have held up well so far, but future years could be leaner.

Grenville is wary of getting into “an arms race about student services at York”, but increasingly students are judging their university

choice upon non-academic related issues.

“I don't want people to be living in fourth rate accommodation. We are not going to say that we have come back from America, seen that they have spent too much money on this, and then stop the refurbishments on Heslington West. We are going to get everything to a reasonable level, but we are not going to fall into an upward spiral.”

Next year will see the UK move into a higher fees economy and learning from the successes and failures of the American system must be made a priority. Greater investment is being made into the student experience, but with fewer resources than their American counterparts the million-dollar question is whether UK universities, like York, will resist the urge to butter-up prospective students with token gifts.

The financially unstable American system still dominates the university world rankings and it is up to UK universities to decide whether promises of home comforts are what students really desire.



“

The UK isn't ready for a high fees system. In America so many more alumni give money to universities, we don't have that culture in the UK yet.

Rachel Banning-Lover,
Spent her second-year at the University of California, Berkeley

“

It's not a fully private system in the UK because the government raised the fee system artificially. Whereas in the United States, the universities can set their own practice.

Nick Skeavo,
Spent his second-year at the University of Pennsylvania

”

”

Comment



comment@nouse.co.uk
www.nouse.co.uk/comment

Ginny Mills



Jungle madness: the dangers of a growing global beauty trend

Fashion in the west persists in reflecting only the most superficial aspects of non-western influence, yet exports even racial ideals

I have a confession: despite surviving almost three years of ridicule for being a History of Art student at the hands of pretty much every other kind of student at York, I'm hopeless at fashion. I don't understand phrases like "cape-shouldered jackets" or "disco chic skirts". I will never know why it's ok to wear jodhpurs and Hunter wellies in a rendition of 'country chic' but not a flat cap and tweed, and I have a profound curiosity for people who would prefer to look fashionable than to wear clothes which flatter them. Refer to the mind boggling combination of pompoms, woolly socks and ostrich feathers of the Alexander McQueen 2012 catwalk. Despite this, even I couldn't fail to notice that London Fashion Week was happening and saw something which got me thinking.

It was this idea of the 'exotic' or 'oriental' which manages to sidle into almost any fashion-related column. I'm reminded of the film, *The Devil Wears Prada*, in which models are bedecked in 'primitive' masks and leopard print, and encouraged to growl at the camera in Central Park. Not only mortifying for everyone involved, but also baffling: what are these girls misguidedly representing?

I know it's a rom-com and thus not even slightly indicative of real life, but what people conceive of as beautiful is a growing phenomenon. South Korea has recently become one of the largest cosmetic surgery centres in the world, with an enormous slice of the population paying for surgery to synthetically create the western 'double eyelid'. And, while South Korea has just 1,200

certified plastic surgeons, thousands more are operating without proper qualifications, leading to a drop in the price of plastic surgery, with double-eyelid surgery being procured for as little as \$800. It is also estimated that half of South Korean women in their twenties have had some form of cosmetic surgery.

According to some, the rise of China as a world power has encouraged an increased interest in the 'oriental' in the west, but anyone who's ever studied colonial orientalism would know that these ideals of the exotic 'other' have been circulating for centuries.

The reality is that, while the west rehashes its own perceptions of 'otherness' inspired by the 'oriental', these cultures seek to

westernise themselves. It's a global trend which has seen non-western cultures increasingly embracing the bleaching of skin, undergoing eye and nose jobs, and facial con-

"these ideals of the exotic 'other' have been circulating for centuries"

tour surgery, suggesting that to look western and to be beautiful are the same thing. Conversely, western fashion which ostensibly reacts to the 'oriental' propagates snippets

from the familiar fashionable tips of 'other-culture' icebergs, rather than engaging with reality. The result is that instead of being interesting or edgy, fashion houses only ever call on the most westernised aspects of 'oriental' culture.

As well as setting its own unrealistic ideals which propagate the notion that to be six foot and skinny is to be normal, western fashion is having a striking and sinister impact on the face of beauty worldwide.

The danger of this ever-growing trend should not be forgotten, before those genuine cultural identities begin to slip through our fingers, even as we clutch one of the animal-skin handbags parading the menagerie of the London Fashion Week catwalk.

BRANDON SEAGER



Josh Boswell



Honorary ceremonies are less than trim

Comment Editor

It never ceases to amaze me how large institutions are so adept at spending vast amounts of money on pointless endeavours. The University of York is no exception. Since March 2008, the University has spent over £40,000 on expenses and ceremonies for honorary degree recipients, more than twice that of Newcastle University.

This is absurd. Around campus, buildings are crumbling into an unsafe state for want of investment, and the University's butchers mandate their departments to trim what little fat remains from their already emaciated budgets. Meanwhile, honorary alumni tuck into their honorary meals with gusto.

As a business plan targeted at attracting funding or with the aim of raising the profile of the university, there could be some justification for awarding honorary degrees. But this is only a valid strategy to the extent that a better investment elsewhere is unavailable.

The University is facing diminishing revenues, with everyday costs such as energy creeping up and significant maintenance work that can only be postponed for so long. It's these budgetary issues that need confronting first and foremost, in order to ensure any investment is providing a solid return.

So where is the return from a £2500 dinner? In some diapha-

nous idea of the University's status? The value of my degree is not boosted because a few academic B-

"we need a serious change from the current attitude of the University"

listers sat on the table next to me at a graduation do.

The official response to *Nouse's*

FOI request is maddening. A University representative blithely stated, "all members of the University community have the opportunity to take part by nominating worthy individuals," as if our ability to engage in this budgetary farce makes it any more acceptable.

Why should I want to nominate an individual who has no relevance to my graduation, is neither a member nor a tangible sponsor of the institution that is awarding me my degree, who will not better my employment prospects as a result - to indulge in a party at our expense, for what is essentially a matter of pride.

The voice of reason suggests a

sunny middle ground, populated by daisies and buttercups, where we can revel in the esteem of honorary degree ceremonies with more prudent budgets. Yet only one ceremony since 2008 has cost less than £1000.

We need a serious change from the current attitude of the University; an attitude that finds it acceptable to spend £11,000 on a single ceremony in China. A single ceremony. I've heard there's no such thing as a free lunch, but that's ridiculous.

I would suggest the butcher be a little more prudent with his cash cow before he feeds it all - hooves to horns - to his hungry friends.

BRANDON SEAGER



What it means to be Indian

Rohan Banerjee



Running for YUSU's Racial Equalities Officer has made me think hard about how best to integrate different cultures and overcome ignorance. And the way to fight ignorance is with information: of others' cultures, customs, and traditions. If you are a British Indian, then aside from having an extended family that could populate a small Yorkshire village, unnaturally combed hair and a flawless academic record, you will be aware of the complex issues that our frustrating but ultimately hilarious culture brings to the fore. For example, why does tupperware turn our mothers into kleptomaniacs and why are we always late? Why do our parents insist on leaving the plastic on electrical appliances for as long as humanly possible? Why is three helpings at dinner never enough? Why do our grandparents unscrupulously attempt to match-make on our behalf with any Indian friend we introduce them to of the opposite sex? I want everyone to understand what it means to be Indian.

It is at best difficult, although be aware you can always do better than your best. It's as much of an experience as it is an ethnicity, and a roller coaster one at that. Five A's at A-Level? Why not Six? It doesn't matter that you only did four subjects. And as for higher education, university presents a number of difficult decisions for us Indians, like whether to study Medicine or Law.

In general, being Indian is always eventful, with an engagement, wedding or exam result at least every three months, and these events are common knowledge to every other Indian within a 50 mile radius. But the invention of Facebook has also enhanced the scope of the Indian grapevine. Our mothers have come a long way since the standard issue Nokia 3310, and now gossip can be internationalised and immortalised online. White girlfriend in York? Front page news in Uttar Pradesh.

But notwithstanding religious dietary requirements, I have no beef with being Indian. In fact, it has had some great advantages. The tupperware stockpile ("just in case") was great for building forts as a kid. My mother's frightening glare at every B grade on a report card has made me hard working and ambitious, albeit terrified, and her hospitality goes unmatched, insisting I should always bring friends (plural) to dinner. While shaving from the age of 11 and living my entire university life under despotic surveillance can at times be a struggle, I've come to embrace this culture with an ironic enthusiasm.

I believe it is only through understanding each other's cultural idiosyncrasies that we can truly understand each other.

Organ donation is a moral not legal obligation

Caitlin O'Kelly



Donation is an act of charity that will only be degraded by making it compulsory, whilst development of the 'opt-in' approach preserves fundamental rights

The ratio of organ donors to recipients has been a problem in the UK for years, with what sounds like a staggering 18 million people registered. Yet the demand is still not being met. More than 10,000 people in the UK are currently awaiting transplant, and it is estimated that each year more than three a day die before an organ match cannot be found. Numbers on the Organ Donation register have seen a 25 per cent increase in recent years, but clearly more must be done to mobilise the apathetic to register.

As a result of these concerns the British Medical Association has suggested the introduction of an "opt-out" system of organ donation, to remove the possibility of families refusing donation out of ignorance of their loved one's stance on the issue. Currently, 43 per cent of bereaved families refuse to allow donation because it has not been declared one way or another. The "opt-out" system would presume consent unless the individual had actively declined, thus stripping the family of their legal authority over the fate of their loved one. A bill introducing a form of "opt-out" donation policy is set to enter the Welsh Parliament this summer, and is likely to become legislation by 2015.

But concern must be held for the rights of the deceased and for the grief of their next of kin. To assume consent, instead of encouraging the generosity of actively signing up is surely wrong, especially given individual preferences and religious observances. In assuming

consent it is implied that organs are not the full property of the owner, but a material need for the state, commodifying organ donation.

While almost a third of people in the UK are now registered, the UK transplant service has set a target of a 50 per cent increase in willing donors by 2013, an implausible target without legislation of this kind, but a necessary increase to help save those 10,000 lives. Donation should be seen as an opportunity to give something back to society, and to benefit or save the

"concern must be held for the rights of the deceased and for the grief of the next of kin"

life of another person, through an action that does no harm to yourself. A study by the Organ Donation Taskforce showed that while the public generally are open to the possibility of organ donation, with only about 14 per cent of people being wholly against joining the register, the main problem was the lack of awareness and clarity. Increased publicity of signing-up is needed, rather than just an option tacked onto the provisional licence application form.

There is no clear choice, and there are many other different strategies that may be put into

place, such as mandated choice or incentives. Mandated choice, where people are forced to make a decision but there is no presumed consent, seems a far more acceptable way to meet targets. But the incentives scheme is just as grating as a "hard opt-out" system - it suggests the possibility of those on the donor register being higher up on transplant lists if they themselves are ever in need, degrading the generosity of individuals to seemingly a selfish pursuit of health security.

The number of willing donors must increase to save lives, but this comes into conflict with the moral values of society. An "opt-out" system implies that the organs that sustain you and that you were born with are not your property unless you actively claim them. In place of this bill, and as suggested by the Organ Donation Taskforce, surely an improved opt-in system would be more acceptable, where education and encouragement are the key factors in increasing consent.

The number of people on the Organ Donation Register has seen a "staggering" increase within the last five years, a trend that hopefully will only increase as the blood and transplant service spread awareness for the need. Rather than risking the Brazilian mistake of legislative reversal after the public alienation caused by their "opt-out" system, let us first attempt to improve the awareness and effectiveness of the "opt-in" system and save ourselves from hurriedly implementing a policy likely to create a public backlash that is mired in religious and ethical objections.

Follow the debate:
Comment online at
nouse.co.uk/comment



Budgets should not stand on ceremony

Honorary doctorates have several attributes that can make them a worthwhile endeavour for the University. Some indicate the University's academic respect for and interest in the field of the honorary alumni's degree. Some are an advertising exercise, bringing big names to campus hoping some of their renown will rub off on the institution. And some are pretty clearly a form of reciprocation for generous personal donations.

But as with any financial decision, the money spent on their ceremonies requires context within the rest of the budget and review to see if we can achieve the same benefits for a lower cost. On both of these counts the excessive nature of the honorary alumni's ceremony expenses should be called into question.

These ceremonies seem to spare no expense, appearing more than a little frivolous given the unpredictable and indefinite nature of their benefit to the University and to us students.

York should celebrate academics of importance and eminence but this celebration must be tailored to the fact that we do not have bottomless pockets from which to pay for extravagant events and costly expenses.

V bar plans needed confirmation

It seemed last year that the Vanbrugh JCRC, under the leadership of the next YUSU President Kallum Taylor, had finally triumphed in their lobby of commercial services. Their proposed renovation of V Bar was apparently accepted by the University, and it looked like one of the most popular campus bars was set for a much needed face lift. Several plans have been drawn up for the long, over-due renovation, which was thought would be implemented by August of this year.

However, Commercial Services now claim they did not confirm any such agreement, but merely had discussions with the JCRC about the proposed plans. The current controversy reeks of a reneged agreement - the university is squeezing budgets all round campus and student led renovation plans that will only benefit students are some of the first cuts to be made. If Commercial Services did indeed make a promise to the Vanbrugh JCRC that should be a binding commitment, not an optional extra that can be swept aside on a budgetary whim.

But if it transpires no such firm agreement was confirmed, there may also be a criticism to be made of the committee here. Before telling college members that plans will be going ahead and basing future JCRC policy on those plans, they should have made sure they had a permanent, non-verbal agreement with Commercial Services over the renovation.

Security trumps privacy

Feathers were ruffled this week as the venerable welfare team of Derwent 'invaded' freshers' rooms, in an attempt to encourage the locking of doors. A worthwhile cause perhaps, but the variety of miniature essays engendered by this on facebook, surrounding the issue of privacy, suggest that this is not the case. There is clearly a debate, otherwise for what reason would maintenance, cleaning and fire services provide a day or more's notice of their entry to our accommodation.

However, the welfare team's actions were an effective demonstration that the privacy against which people were protesting was effectively forfeited by the very act of leaving the door unlocked. Furthermore, in what sense was privacy actually compromised?

The welfare reps are both students, were elected to represent the College, and were in student rooms with the sole purpose of performing that duty for which they were elected: to maintain student welfare. The outrage among a large proportion of Derwent college members is unjustified, students should simply accept that they have been caught out and perhaps,



More Murdoch should not be shunned outright



Thomas Byrne

I admire Rupert Murdoch. For this confession I fully expect a bashing from the types who indulge in self-satisfied back-patting, each competing to see who can be the best middle class red top-trashing liberal.

Maybe Murdoch-bashing is somewhat deserved. The Murdoch press has had a poisonous effect on our political culture, but there are good reasons to hate his corporation, News International, and bad ones. Sadly at the Leveson inquiry the proceedings have been dominated by the bad, and by doing so they risk permanently damaging the freedom of the press in ways which Murdoch never could.

The inquiry has seen a cohort of celebrities, politicians and media outlets demanding that there be regulation on how much market share that Murdoch papers can have because he dares to make a popular newspaper. If this were a genuine concern then we would see the same campaigns launched against the BBC, which holds much more control over the share of news that people read.

Those who bemoan media plurality rarely mention that it is the profits from the Sun that manage to keep the loss leading quality paper The Times afloat. And for that reason we should lament the closing of the News of the World, and celebrate its reopening under the new moniker of The Sun on Sun-

day. Perhaps not for its analytic integrity, but for keeping a large section of the population informed and involved.

But we should be wary of the corporation. News International lied to the police, parliament, and the Press Complaints Commission. The relationship that the Murdoch press has with the political elite and the police services has allowed them to enjoy an impunity no-one should be accorded. Sinister restrictions to press freedoms have come from this unreasonable influence.

Lives have been ruined by the nature in which the Murdoch press have harassed them in their private life, but Murdoch is not solely to blame for the conduct of the entire paparazzi. And before clamouring for an end to the free press we

need to remember how the crimes that took place were revealed. By the power of the free press itself: the insistence of campaigners at the Guardian newspaper. After all their hard work the inquiry now seeks to destroy the tools that we have to uncover such corruption.

If we really want to preserve the services that the media provides however, we must challenge the premise that it significantly influences the way we act. Murdoch is in fact rather like the Wizard of Oz. Politicians feel they must candour to his whims in order to gain public support, but the evidence shows this is as fictional as Baum's creation. Unless journalists of the free press stop buying into this myth then the politicians will continue to play Smithers to Murdoch's Monty



Alex Slingsby

Deputy
 Comment
 Editor



We must take responsibility for our Facebook accounts

Since erupting onto our computer screens seven years ago, Facebook has become a worldwide phenomenon. It has spread across the world like a social pandemic, immersing itself into everyday life. Facebook was originally intended as an online 'hub' where you could find out everything you need to know about the flatmates, classmates, or even the girl you liked, without having to go all old-fashioned and actually speak to them. But as Facebook made its way across the World, cracks began to emerge as far as 'personal information' is concerned.

Whether it's a 'frape', a friend request from someone you never met, or a computer-destroying virus you sent to almost all of your friends by mistake, everyone on Facebook is at risk from some kind of privacy concern. This is why the 'Zuckerburgs' of Facebook have the age limit set at 13 (not that anyone pays much attention to that) and the option of changing your profile to 'private'. There are an estimated 750 million people hooked up to Facebook right now, more than the world population 200 years ago.

Which is why I was so shocked when I came across a hate group on Facebook named 'Finding the

unwashed'. It targeted people in the local area who favoured the left-wing political groups, "lefties or commies", finding them and then posting personal details onto the site, for everyone else to actively pursue. The anonymous creators managed to exploit the personal details of other people, while they themselves remained protected.

Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook's creator, was also a victim of a pri-

"Cracks began to emerge as far as 'personal information' is concerned"

vacuity attack. Zuckerberg's private photos, including images of him and his girlfriend, were published by HackerNews, a widely-read software development site, to demonstrate just how public a 'private' Facebook profile can be.

Photos taken on that drunken night out a couple of weeks ago could rise to the surface of the social networking world. Loopholes,

such as the one exploited to Zuckerberg's embarrassment, will always be found in a network with the global span of Facebook.

The problem is that you cannot possibly protect your personal information once it's on Facebook, even if you do make the conscious (and sensible) decision to change all of your settings to 'private'. All it takes is one of your 850 'friends' that you don't actually know to pass on your email address to someone else you definitely don't know, or someone to hack into your account. Suddenly, any personal information you have added to Facebook is now public. The only way you can avoid something like this is to monitor what is actually put online from the start. If Facebook was privatised completely, the whole idea would be redundant.

Next time you change your settings to private/friends only, just remember that any piece of information about you and your life will always find a way to leak onto the mainstream internet. Nobody is safe with such a large amount of personal information on the internet and there is no way Facebook can have any control over what is and isn't posted with such a large and international readership.



James Paton

Living Wage Campaign misses obvious solution

Lowering taxes is a more precise way to counter diminishing disposable incomes, without hurting small businesses

I want higher real wages for the lowest paid but the Living Wage Campaign has got it all wrong. There are huge problems with the concept, and the campaigners persist in looking at nominal wages and not prices. The solution is simple and they could save their time and energy if they did some simple arithmetic.

The first issue that the Living Wage Campaign needs to learn from the National Minimum Wage is that different areas have different price levels. London and the Southeast are generally more expensive than areas such as Wales, the Northeast, Southwest, and pretty much everywhere else.

We need to have a regional minimum wage, and the concept of the Living Wage must also be properly regionalised to avoid this mistake. The hourly London Living Wage is £8.30 but the 'Outside of London Living Wage' is £7.20. This is far too broad as £7.20 per hour goes much further in the Northeast than it does in the Southeast.

If we're talking about real wages, price changes caused by excessive money printing is key. From 1997, the monetary base has been expanded threefold to £2.1 trillion,

and a lot of this newly created money ended up in the housing market, pushing house prices to all-time highs.

Landlords invested in housing and rent prices were pushed up as a result, hitting those on low incomes - hence the need for a £20 billion Housing Benefit bill for those struggling to keep a roof over their head. Having the Bank of England press work like library printers on deadline day hurts the poorest the most.

Firms' supply is severely impeded too, thanks to restrictive planning laws that affect the price of almost everything.

Rent prices are rising as people are pushed onto the rental market due to the lack of supply of affordable housing and commercial space from counterproductive planning legislation.

Many small businesses now use the Internet as their shop, and their homes as their offices because of expensive High Street rental prices that need to self-correct. But again, these shortfalls depend on different areas in the country, and so any proposed solution will have to be regionalised.

But if the government and

large firms that employ a substantial amount of the workforce starts to pay the Living Wage to low skilled workers, unskilled wages will be forced up elsewhere in the economy. Given the potential this has to really hurt the 4.7 million small and medium size enterprises that are struggling to turn a profit, the only result we will see is even higher prices from these businesses

“the only result we will see is even higher prices to cover the cost of wage increases”

to cover the cost of wage increases.

The Living Wage Campaigners have not taken these issues into account and are barking up the wrong tree. There is one solution that Tim Worstall has been going on about for a while and it would help all full-time minimum wage workers actually achieve the living wage: stop taxing the working poor so much.

Raise the Personal Allowance to £12,000 and abolish National Insurance Contributions for those on the National Minimum Wage and hey presto, these workers have the Living Wage. It may cost the government £30 billion, but savings on Working Tax Credits and all the accompanying administration costs would offset this. In addition, further cuts to government spending and entitlements for top-rate taxpayers will balance this policy out.

It has the potential for growth too, with individuals - and not inefficient spendthrift government officials - spending their hard earned cash.

All sides of the current debate must remember that a living wage depends not just on the size of your pay packet, but on prices too. Focusing purely on nominal wages and not looking at the real problem of rising prices is economically illiterate.

So my advice to the Living Wage Campaigners? Lobby the treasury for tax cuts not wage legislation in the upcoming budget to help the most vulnerable achieve a better standard of living, without penalising local businesses.

Nouse welcomes your comments and letters. Please indicate if they are not intended for publication. Email letters@nouse.co.uk or write to: Nouse, Grimston House, Vanbrugh College. Alternatively, comment on www.nouse.co.uk

Comment Bites: from the Nouse website

Carney embroiled in Facebook dispute

James Carney says:
February 21, 2012 at 12:43 pm

I wanted to raise the point that these individuals were not partaking in any activism with a realistically positive outcome. They were involved in petty arguments which, after they had concluded, had reached no satisfactory conclusion, with no opinions of those involved changing. This is what trolling is in a basic sense.

I am an advocate of free speech and, in this case, I felt political correctness had been taken way too far. The internet should not be policed in such a way that individuals become scared to share material through fear it may be interpreted as their personal outlook.

Cat Wayland says:
February 21, 2012 at 6:00 pm

James proclaims himself an advocate of free speech. I am also an advocate of free speech; by extension I am therefore also an advocate of open debate. The right to freedom of speech, however, does not entail the right not to be argued with or the right not to be criticised. I appreciate that James created the meme in question to entertain, albeit at the expense of a group of people who are deeply committed to changing aspects of our society

The Burning Question

This edition, Nouse asked:

“Do you think the new YUSU team will benefit you?”

142 people voted, with the majority stating NO



41 people voted Yes (29%)

55 people voted No (39%)

46 people voted Don't Care (32%)

we feel there is reasonable justification for changing. Again, this is open to debate. However, what I refuse to tolerate in both a personal and official capacity, are 'jokes' that are made at the grave expense of York students' physical and mental health and wellbeing

AdN says:
February 24, 2012 at 7:50 pm

I'm getting a little bit sick of being told that I am some sort of woman-hating, rape-facilitating, chauvinist "LAD" because if I laughed at a joke that somebody else doesn't like. I am going to go out on a limb here and suggest that some of the people who laugh at these jokes CAN tell the difference between the joke, and actual violence against women. The line is not blurred. There is no confusion.

As it happened: YUSU 2012 Election results

James Can't-ney says:
March 1, 2012 at 10:40 pm

22.38 That is an absolutely atrocious picture of Alan Belmore. Poor fella.

Orthodontist says:
March 1, 2012 at 10:45 pm

Good teeth though....

As it happened: YUSU Election Candidate Question Time

ChalkArtist says:
February 16, 2012 at 8:08 pm

Forget postering. Why is chalking the sidewalks fine-worthy?

Prompt repayment is to be welcomed

Ben says:
February 22, 2012 at 11:54 am

Typical Nouse editorial: The richest in our society should pay the least for their education. Disgusting. Before you start throwing around terms like 'social mobility' perhaps you should consider the implications of penalising those who aren't fortunate enough to walk into a graduate job that allows them to pay off £30000 of debt in a lump sum.

MoneySaver says:
February 22, 2012 at 3:23 pm

@Ben
You have completely missed the point of what is a refreshingly common-sense article. At no point

does it say that the richest in society should pay the least for their education. In fact, it points out that those who are both rich enough and choose to pay off debt early will pay far more than the average graduate on a lower income.

Despite the loss of interest accrual over 25 years, up-front payment will still tend to be worth more in real terms than gradual repayment over 25 years, even if the graduate in question is earning an above-average income for that period.

Time to change the NHS or risk losing it all

Matt Sharp says:
February 21, 2012 at 3:49 pm

“The BMA and NCS hate the thought of change.”

Maybe they're just tired of it? There have been innumerable, smaller changes, to the NHS over the previous decades.

Matthew Rice says:
February 21, 2012 at 6:57 pm

I don't know why you have only mentioned the BMA and RCS specifically and not the Royal College of Nursing (against the bill), the RCGP (against the bill), the RC of Psychiatrists etc. etc. who are all against it. Even the Faculty of Public Health [...] are against the bill.



Unions launch 'name and shame' Living Wage campaign

Josiah Mortimer
POLITICAL REPORTER

ON MONDAY a group of York students launched a campaign for a 'living wage' to be paid to all university staff.

In 1999, the Labour government introduced the minimum wage - from 1st April all employers had to pay their workers at least £3.60 an hour. Many on the right of the political spectrum argued that doing so would cripple employment and actually disadvantage the workers it attempted to help. The policy is, however, now widely embraced.

Since its introduction the wage has risen by over 20 per cent in real terms - it now stands at £6.08. Some, however, are clamouring for a 'living wage' of £7.20 to be paid nationwide. The National Union of Students and Unison have launched an initiative to 'name and shame' universities that do not pay it. They have given universities six months "to get their house in order".

A recent Freedom of Information request found that 644 staff at York were paid less than the living wage in 2010/11. It has been estimated that the University of Cambridge also employs over 1,000 people on less than it. The Centre for Research in Social Policy has argued that such a level of pay is necessary "to provide a minimum socially acceptable standard of living for low earners."

The national campaign was an-



A group of York students are working with Unison and others to lobby for a new 'living wage' nationwide

nounced at Unison's Higher Education Conference last week. On campus the campaign now has the backing of David Miliband, Caroline Lucas, the Green Party leader, and Richard Wilkinson, a prominent researcher on inequality.

Jon Richards, Unison Head of Education, highlighted how an agreement has been reached with the Association of Colleges to pay the wage to further education

workers, and called for similar action for university workers. Richard Wilkinson, at the York launch, struck an optimistic note, saying, "I am quite sure you will win this."

However, the Labour controlled York Council recently rejected an amendment, by the Liberal Democrats, to their budget that would pay a living wage to all council staff.

Dannie Grufferty, NUS Vice-

President, said: "The difference between the minimum wage and a living wage is the difference between constant money worries and being able to make ends meet. It also makes sense for employers who'll see a rise in productivity and greater retention of staff."

Campaigners at the University of York expect to meet with senior management in the coming weeks to assess the proposal.

No 10 rejects EU's call for quotas

Viktoria Dahlrot
POLITICAL REPORTER

THE EUROPEAN Union is considering introducing quotas to increase the proportion of women on corporate boards. However, most EU member states are against the proposal, arguing that quotas should not be enforced on a European level.

Last year, Viviane Redding, European Justice Commissioner, initiated the "Women on the Board Pledge for Europe," with the aim that women will hold 30 per cent of top positions by 2015 and 40 per cent by 2020. Redding is urging for stronger measures towards equality, but only 24 countries have signed the pledge thus far.

Redding argues that self-regulation is not enough and that in countries with quotas the amount of women in business has increased substantially. If the increase of women in high positions continues at today's rate, achieving the goal of 40 per cent of top positions being held by women would take 40



Justice Commissioner Redding is determined to see greater equality

years. "I'm not a fanatic about quotas... but I like the results quotas bring," Redding said.

Whilst the European Parliament calls for legislation on gender equality, most member states favour industry codes of conduct or national quotas over EU legisla-

tion.

In the UK, companies work towards a voluntary target of 25 per cent of female representatives in boardrooms by 2015. Some countries, such as France and Italy have introduced national quotas.

When David Cameron attend-

ed the Northern Future Forum in Sweden in February he commented that quotas were a last resort, but he would not want them enforced on a EU level.

Helena Morrissey, who founded the '30% Club', which works towards gender equality in the boardroom, says that, "investors don't want quotas, boards don't want quotas and women don't want quotas".

In Norway, which has gender quotas, 40 per cent of directors are women, but only 2 per cent of CEOs are female. Thus quotas might fix the problem on the surface, but they don't actually address the issues behind gender inequality.

Just as the EU argues more female board members will improve businesses, critics say that this is essentially irrelevant.

However, globally-renowned consultancy firm Ernst & Young recently discovered that companies with more female board members tend to make more profit. This is reason enough to consider quotas as a feasible option.



UK:



France:



Syria:



Australia:



Russia:

The West only acts in its interests

Ed Schwitzer

On the face of it recent events in the Middle East might be cause for some optimism. Instead of the horrific mess that emerged from the interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, recent Western interventionism seem to be gaining more positive results.

In Libya, air support allowed the rebels to fight back against Gaddafi and in turn, protect the thousands of innocent lives that he had promised to extinguish. Equally, western values, especially through social networking sites such as Twitter, fuelled much of the defiance of the Arab Spring. It seemed as though Western liberal values were finally becoming embraced (consensually) by the masses in the Arab world.

However, other events confirm that the West's foreign policy is still firmly grounded in realist self-interest. America's longstanding relationship with Israel still influences many of its decisions regarding the Middle East. By attending events such as the pro-Israel conference in Washington, President Obama once again emphasises that the US is not an impartial observer. Instead, they are a superpower inextricably involved in the power struggles of the region. The fact is that the West has interests in the Middle East which are not based on or even compatible with humanitarianism.

A further, blatant example of this is the west's relationship with the Gulf Arab states. Whilst it is keen to support strongly coercive measures like sanctions or military strikes against Libya, Iran and Syria, when Bahrain (with Saudi Arabia's assistance) puts down pro-democracy protests all they get is a quiet phone call from President Obama calling for restraint.

Even more crucially, it is embedded in the memory of both Arabs and Iranians that Britain and America have, for the past century, intervened in their domestic affairs for their own strategic interests. One has to think only of the over-



THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

The West's current strategy is self-interested; foreign oppression must be tackled in a better and fairer way

throw of Iran's democratically elected Prime Minister in 1953 in direct response to his nationalisation of the oil industry to remember how

"The West's foreign policy is still grounded in realist self-interest"

strongly this is the case.

So what does this contradiction mean in practice? The effect is that even when the west puts forward genuine proposals in an attempt to protect human lives, such action is

deeply mistrusted. One can look at the removal of Western NGOs from Egypt recently as an example of this suspicion.

But this is only a small example of a wider problem. Other countries in the world, most importantly Russia and China given their positions on the Security Council, will continue to be extremely apprehensive about supporting Western initiatives to 'protect lives' given the fact they know there is always likely to be other factors which the west is taking in to consideration.

Countries around the world will be justifiably sceptical about America's criticism of Syrian and Iranian oppression given the fact that they know the reason for the critique is not driven by the desire

to protect human life but rather as part of a political game they are playing in the Middle East.

No Western initiatives will succeed in this area until they can remove all doubt that they are doing it for the right reasons. Furthermore, the consequence of this is less global support for humanitarian missions in general, something which will have grave consequences for the lives of the most vulnerable around the globe.

The west's attitude in dealing with foreign oppression is at best confused and at worst contradictory. In order to effectively protect human lives abroad it will have to disavow its old penchant for self-interested, manipulative foreign policy.

Tweets



@GeorgeMonbiot
George Monbiot,
The Guardian

"MoD has now named the 6 soldiers killed in #Afghanistan. Less clear about why this war is being fought."

8 March '12



@RupertMurdoch
Rupert Murdoch,
Newspaper proprietor

"Great few hours in Berlin. Papers much to teach us. Just showed what popular papers can do for public, getting rid of corrupted president."

3 March '12



@anntreneman
Ann Treneman,
The Times

"More random info from mother of parliaments: the 19 chauffeurs employed by the lords spiritual (ie bishops) earn 23,000 pnds each."

8 March '12



@WilliamJHague
William Hague,
Foreign Secretary

"We are working hard to ensure Joseph Kony is brought to justice, LRA atrocities are ended and civilians protected #kony2012."

8 March '12



@kevinpp24
Kevin Pietersen,
England cricketer

"International Women's Day????? Wasn't that yesterday, the day before that & also tomorrow too?? #everyday."

8 March '12



60% think the richer should pay more in tax in order for the lower paid to pay less.

ComRes/Independent, Feb 28



Only 18% think the Occupy movement achieved something; 71% think it didn't.

YouGov/Sunday Times, Feb 12



53% think more competition will undermine the NHS; only 39% think it will be beneficial.

ICM/Guardian, Feb 21



78% think the government should stop sending funds to Argentina through international institutions.

ComRes, Feb 29



Only 33% think the government should push through its NHS reforms; 52% think they shouldn't.

ICM/ Guardian, Feb 21



Nearly twice as many people trust Labour (37%) as the Tories (19%) on the NHS.

ComRes/5Live, Feb 21

Politics

Women's Day: is one day enough?

LOOKING4POETRY

Josh Boswell

Last Thursday, the world observed the 101st International Women's Day (IWD), and the UK in particular hosted 435 of the 1606 events that celebrated, commemorated, and raised awareness of the struggles women of all nations continue to face.

This global event first began in 1910 at the second International Conference of Working Women, where German politician Clara Zetkin proposed the idea, to unanimous agreement. The initial concept was to choose one day when women of all countries could together press for their demands.

The fight for women's rights has progressed since then. Women's suffrage is now a feature of almost all countries in the world, and in the UK last year the pay gap fell below 10 per cent for the first time. Furthermore, 85 per cent of countries have improved conditions for women over the past six years.

But we still have a long way to go. In the UK, one day was devoted to women last week. Seven were devoted to pies. As the stony, maternal voice of Dame Judi Dench tells us in Director Sam Taylor Wood's short film released for IWD last year, women do two-thirds of work worldwide, but earn 10 per cent of the total income and just one per cent of property. 60 million are assaulted on their way to school. In the UK, two women are killed every week by their current or former partner.

Evidently there is still work to be done in bringing men and women to parity. International Women's Day is a time to celebrate female achievement and an opportunity to raise awareness of persistent inequality. But it is just one day. The whole construction of this event is set up to provide 24 hours of activism and worldwide press coverage. But once it is over, the media juggernaut marches on. Women put down their placards and return to their underpaid, under-represented, under-recognised lives and the world forgets about women's rights for another year.



The 101st International Women's Day was held on 8th March 2012 and was celebrated throughout the world

The fight for gender equality is a process, not an event, but International Women's Day allows the media and ourselves to treat it as a mere occasion. In order to continue change in society's embedded prejudices we need constant pressure and ongoing and consistent reminders that women are just as competent and deserving as men.

Every day we need to be asked – or better still ask ourselves – why there is only one woman for every four men in parliament, why only 5.7 per cent of board-level directors of FTSE-150 companies are female,

and why the gender pay gap of full and part-time work is 19.5 per cent.

These are problems that require both lobbying to government and grass roots movements from commendable organisations such as the Women's Institute or Business and Professional Women UK (BPW), which are not solved by a day of protest and campaigning, however coordinated and pervasive.

As part of an ongoing global movement, International Women's Day has value as a platform for launching campaigns or a target

for aspirations. But it also carries a significant danger of packaging up the fight for equal representation of half the world's population into one event that can be sold to audiences today and then discarded tomorrow. It takes the focus away from the truth of the matter: that these injustices still persist after more than 100 years of campaigning; that they still may not be solved in another 100 years' time; and that they sure as hell won't be solved if we only devote one day from 365 with real attention and energy to the issue.

Work experience is unpaid for a reason

Tom Witherow

Last week saw the Coalition government water down its controversial plans to fine benefit claimants who did not do voluntary work experience. Over 34,000 people took part in the scheme in 2011, but controversy has led to big names dropping out, with Sainsbury's and Tesco's hitting the headlines.

The furore over the possibility of claimants working for nothing brings to mind the informal unpaid internships endemic at Westminster. When the Prime Minister admitted last year to giving his neighbour unpaid work experience in his Witney constituency office he was widely criticised, but he should be applauded for having done so.

"It makes business sense not to pay interns"

It makes business sense to not pay such interns. Those doing work experience are not a key part of a business. Yes, in certain cases, notably small businesses, their ideas, innovations and hard-work act as drivers. But on the whole they trawl the internet for research, swat up on the difference between Darjeeling and Lapsang Souchong, and try to stay awake through any meetings at which they happen to wangle a seat.

It is not worth the cost of recruiting the most talented individuals when you know your neighbour, nephew, godson or whoever is a capable human being, able to do basic tasks and keep out of the way.

Internships that require skills are generally competitive – application for law firms and the banking sector are rigorous, even for short work experience opportunities. Go to the Foreign Office website and you'll find they only accept economics undergraduates for their summer internships.

But the more pertinent question is, what can the government actually do? As Cameron told *The Daily Telegraph*: nothing. "Of course, you're going to have interns from all sorts of contacts. Friendly, political, whatever." Giving friends a lift is part and parcel of human custom.

Cameron's legislation allowing unemployment benefit to be claimed concurrently with unpaid work is a positive step. Any more, although perhaps admirable, is futile. The government is, and should be, focusing resources on those who do not have the raw skills to fulfil their potential, and should not intervene in the market of those who already do.

Upcoming events

3rd May: London votes

National politics will take a backseat on 3rd May when Boris Johnson and Ken Livingstone again battle to become Mayor of London.

6th May: French Presidential election

Nicholas Sarkozy will attempt to win re-election against the Socialist Party's François Hollande, who recently called for a 75 per cent top tax rate and is ahead of Sarkozy in the polls.

8th May: Maurice Glasman visits York

The 'Blue Labour' thinker has called for a return to Labour's founding values, and a rejection of New Labour.

9th July: York's 800th anniversary

York became a self-governing city when King John granted it a royal charter in 1212. 9th July marks the 800th anniversary.

Measuring British happiness

The Coalition's plans for a 'happiness index' were met with widespread scorn last year. Adam Seldon argues they should not have been.

What is the role of government? What are the duties it has towards the citizens which elected it? Political philosophers have mulled over such baffling concepts for centuries. Owing to time constraints and a general lack of enthusiasm for undertaking such a daunting task, I have given it little thought.

Nonetheless, the plans for a 'happiness index', are a welcome initiative that rightly emphasises that a government shouldn't restrict itself to improving the economy. For too long economics has been obsessed with the approach that happiness can be achieved by maximising income. As Robert Kennedy once pointed out, GDP measured everything "except that which makes life worthwhile".

The government directed the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to carry out the first stage of the process in July 2011. 34,000 members of the public were asked how they think well-being should be measured. Respondents focused on health, friends, family and job satisfaction.

But does this project actually have any worth? In these economically strained times, surely such nonsense is an irresponsible waste of money and time. The responses from the 34,000 aren't exactly revelatory. But these spurious arguments are predicated on the cynical presumption that this is pointless, that nothing useful can come out of it.

The four questions which the ONS are asking are additions to surveys which they already carry



The Lord's Cricket Ground: for many a source of great happiness, perhaps only in the last few years though

out, meaning that logistically it is very simple. Initial estimates suggest the plan will cost around £2 million – an infinitesimal amount of a government's budget.

Whilst a relatively small cost is not a sufficient reason to justify a project, the optimist has a multitude of supporting arguments which can be employed to appease the cynic. The direction and attitude which the happiness index encourages is one that should be strived for. The project is not suddenly going to shoot the United Kingdom to the top of the United Nations Human Development Index. But the belief that the govern-

ment, when formulating its policies, should give deeper consideration to the well-being of the population is a

“The index encourages us to ask fundamental questions”

noble and altruistic perspective.

People that cause social problems and crime are almost uniformly unhappy. Bigots and those bedevilled by hatred are often un-

happy. A government identifying what makes people happy and applying such findings to policies is a refreshing take on social policy.

It is a more sophisticated, less superficial approach which can perhaps help us in enduring social problems that the current model fails to solve. As the New Labour years showed, throwing billions of pounds at health or education doesn't necessarily improve things.

Evidence persistently shows that whilst money helps, you can't buy happiness. People take decisions which make little sense financially, but which they feel can improve their happiness, like leaving

a big city job to become a teacher. The economist Tim Hartford has highlighted data which demonstrates that people are far happier when undertaking spiritual activities like praying, compared to when they are doing money-related matters like shopping.

Richard Layard, the Government's 'happiness czar', and co-founder of the Action for Happiness Movement, has pointed out that initial data from the ONS has found that the government is neglecting certain areas. Respondents to surveys have consistently placed mental health at the top of the list of what makes them happy. Mental health is an area that the government has never given much time to, but the data will hopefully push the government to explore an important area which has been given insufficient priority.

As is widely acknowledged, one of the most unedifying aspects which capitalism encourages is obsessive materialism – frivolous societies which lack an appreciation of what really matters.

The 'happiness index' encourages society to have a debate on a subject which some people find uncomfortably personal, an explanation perhaps why some people are against it.

But it encourages us to consider really fundamental questions about human existence. What is true happiness? Why are some happy and others not? If a government has a clearer idea of the answers to these questions, then the application of such knowledge to policy could really improve our society.



THE LAST WORD

“We should rationally engage with religion rather than dismissing it completely”





The many placebo effects of caffeine

James Cameron
SCIENCE REPORTER

CAFFEINE IS the most widely accepted and used drug on the planet and it pervades student culture in many ways, from the hard working student on an all-nighter with coffee close to hand, to the countless Jägerbombs and vodka Red Bulls consumed on a standard night out.

But how exactly does it work? Every second you're awake your neurones are firing, filling your head with numerous ideas. When firing, they release a by-product called Adenosine. Levels of this molecule are monitored by your nervous system by several receptors specific to, and activated by, Adenosine. Once detected levels reach a certain point, your body begins to exhibit symptoms of tiredness.

Enter Caffeine. Caffeine is Adenosine's doppelganger, it fits right into the A1 Adenosine receptor. However, unlike Adenosine, caffeine doesn't activate these receptors; it just sits there blocking the receptors that normally measure the amount of adenosine there is in the body. With these receptors now blocked the natural stimulants of the brain, the neurotransmitters, Dopamine, and perhaps the less well-known Glutamate, increase in



ZACH "PIE" INGLIS

Caffeine takes roughly half an hour to be fully absorbed into the bloodstream, it won't give you an instant hit

activity. Dopamine and Glutamate are very important in signalling between neurons and also in the brain. This is what is responsible for the energy boost.

While most people associate coffee with a kick of energy, caffeine is more like a rock under your brake pedal, stopping you from

slowing down, rather than the real kick you think you are getting. Although caffeine will prevent you from getting tired for a while, it isn't the only molecule acting on your energy levels and sadly won't stop you from feeling tired if you've been up for three days.

Another misconception around

caffeine is to do with the speed with which it affects you. People associate caffeine with a 'kick' of energy. However, depending on your metabolism, caffeine takes around 15-30 minutes to be fully absorbed into your bloodstream. This means that the instantaneous jolt most people feel is probably an exam-

ple of the placebo effect, in which people associate the taste of coffee with an increase in energy, and so feel energised even if caffeine's true effects haven't started yet. Caffeine also persists in the bloodstream a lot longer than maybe most people would suspect. It takes around six hours for the concentration or amount to reduce by half, again, depending on your metabolism. This means that if you have a strong double espresso (200mg caffeine) at five pm you'll still have around 100mg in your bloodstream by 11pm.

For many students caffeine is seen as a necessity for any last minute exam cramming. However, many studies have shown that caffeine consumption, whilst improving attention and perceived alertness, actually does little to increase one's ability to learn and retain new knowledge. And when put up against a short nap, caffeine performs poorly.

Responsible for giving quicker responses, increasing wakefulness, and improving performance during attention and concentration tasks, not however for better memory and learning, Caffeine should be thought of as a useful tool to allow you to work more than you should, not more effectively.

Top five: greatest discoveries by students

Ben Rodway
SCIENCE REPORTER

1. Ernest Duchesne Penicillin

Indeed it was the rediscovery of penicillin by Alexander Fleming in 1928 and subsequent refinement by Florey and Chain that produced the ubiquitous form used and overused today. But the original discovery of penicillin from *Penicillium Notatum* was in fact made by Duchesne, a French medical student who in 1897 submitted his conclusions as part of a doctorate degree paper. Duchesne was 23 at the time of his discovery, and sadly this was a key contributor in the lack of recognition he received for his work. How-

ever in 1949, five years after Fleming was awarded the Nobel Prize, Duchesne was honoured.

2. Yale University Students Polyurethane-degrading Fungus

The discovery of a plastic-eating fungus, the plastic in question represents a major contributor to landfill - polyurethane. Found in the Amazon rainforest by the Yale's Rainforest Expedition and Laboratory, participants collected plants and cultured the micro-organisms residing in their tissues. Two distinct isolates of *Pestalotiopsis* microspora were identified to utilise polyurethane as their sole carbon source when grown with or without oxygen. Normally, *Pestalotiopsis*

species cause disease in nonspecific plants but it's hoped the fungus will help bioremediation work, using microbes to clean up pollutants.

3. West Virginia High School Pulsars

Shay Bloxton was just 15 at the time of her discovery in 2009 when she, and others, analysed data output from the giant Robert C. Byrd Green Bank radio telescope. Her finding was evidence of a new millisecond pulsar - a rotating superdense star. These emit lighthouse-like beams that emanate through space to create a radio pulse here on Earth. Variation in pulse arrival times gives insight into the character of gravitational waves.

4. Paul Langerhans Insulin-producing β -cells

Prior to the discovery of insulin, diabetes was feared as a disease that would lead to the patient's death. The only understanding of the disease came from the observation that giving a sufferer sugar worsens their condition; this meant that the best treatment available was dietary. During the 19th Century it was noted that there was a high coincidence between diabetes and pancreas damage. In 1869, a German medical student, Paul Langerhans, identified cells of previously unknown function - insulin-producing β -cells. Clusters of these unknown cells were later described as islets of Langerhans and their loss

was later shown to epitomise Type I diabetes.

5. Martin Flack Sinoatrial Node

The sinoatrial node is the natural-pacemaker of the heart composed of modified myocytes, contracting cells found in muscle, that unusually do not contract. Flack, a post graduate medical student, and colleague Arthur Keith were accredited with its 1907 discovery, answering the mystery of how the heart beats. Their fundamental work helped the development of artificial pacemakers. These began with a 1926 apparatus that "plugged into a lighting point" and evolved to what are commonly implanted today.

Science Miscellany

Emma Webb takes a look at a few light hearted scientific discoveries, experiments and explanations



FICUSDESK

Candy ingredients are heated into a syrup then exposed to pressurised carbon dioxide before being cooled.

The carbonated candy now has high pressure bubbles trapped inside, which burst on contact with your hot saliva. This rapid CO₂ expansion causes a fizzing and popping, releasing the tingle on your tongue when eating sweets made in this way.

The pop in popping candy

Levitating frogs

K-IDEAS



Radboud University in the Netherlands has made a live frog fly.

It was placed into such a strong magnetic field that all the atoms inside it acted like very small magnets themselves (due to the motion of electrons) which repelled the larger magnet.

This force overcame gravity, allowing levitation. Concerns were raised over the welfare of the frog, but there was no affect because all of the frog's atoms were acting in unison.

Drifting away

Recent research suggests that one long sleep may not always be best, **James McAuliffe** looks at the perils of maximising your daily working hours

WARM SLEEPY



The majority of first-year undergraduates would allude to a significant alteration in sleep patterns upon starting university. Report deadlines looming, pulling all nighters - many aspects of student life come into full conflict with traditional sleeping patterns. But it has been suggested that there are alternative sleep cycles available and that the human body can adapt to an alternative sleep pattern.

The idea that alternative sleep patterns might be possible stems from the fact that not all sleep is equal. Sleep consists of several different stages each characterised by unique psychological and physiological changes. In short, the stages of sleep can be summarised as light sleep followed by a period of deep sleep (known as slow wave sleep or SWS) and the rapid eye movement stage (REM). On average, a person sleeping for the usual eight or so hours will go through a cycle of the stages somewhere between four to five times in one night, each lasting for 90 minutes.

The REM sleep stage is characterised by a rapid and random movement of the eyes and is accompanied by vivid dreaming and a state of temporary muscle paralysis (known as muscle atonia) to prevent dreams from being physically

acted out. REM is argued to be one of the most important sleep stages as studies have shown that it is associated with processing information gathered during the day and long-term memory formation. It has been shown that in people deprived of sleep during a night, the initial first stages of sleep are compressed and the latter slow wave sleep stages, and particularly REM, are entered more rapidly.

Several alternative sleep cycles have been proposed and attempted. They aim to develop a more efficient sleeping style whereby time spent asleep is minimised and the number of awake hours available for productive activity, socialising, work and creative projects, is maximised. The majority of people will be familiar with what is known as a monophasic sleep cycle. This is one long period of sleep every 24 hours.

However, a biphasic sleeping pattern will be far more readily recognised by most university students. Also adopted by inhabitants of hot Mediterranean climates, it consists of a four to four and a half hour sleep during the night, followed by a 90 minute nap around midday.

Two more unusual styles, termed 'The Everyman' and 'The Uberman' by alternative sleep enthusiasts, are based on a polyphasic

sleep pattern. The Everyman sleep cycle consists of a long 'core' nap of around three hours supplemented with several 20 - 30 minute naps throughout a 24 hour period, cutting total sleep time down to around four and a half hours a day.

The Uberman takes this idea to an extreme and consists of only six 20 - 30 minute naps every 24

"The long-term health implications of cutting down these stages would be impossible to predict"

hours. This cuts the total sleep time down to a mind bogglingly small three hours a day. Polyphasic sleep is often practiced by competitive solo yacht racers and soldiers because of the need to be frequently awake and in a state of readiness.

Although the idea of extending available waking hours might seem attractive, there is evidence to show that an entirely Uberman approach to sleeping might not be realistically attainable or even desirable.

Firstly, adjusting to a new sleeping pattern is believed to take on average around two weeks. Even

those who claim to have successfully achieved a polyphasic schedule have reported they soon had to give it up due to incompatibility with a predominantly monophasic world.

It has been claimed that a host of famous thinkers, notably Da Vinci, Jefferson and Einstein, have for some periods of their lives slept polyphasically. However, these claims are largely unsubstantiated and a polyphasic sleep pattern may actually reduce creative output.

Furthermore, little research has been done on the long term health effects of adopting a polyphasic sleep cycle. The sleep stages prior to REM are thought to be required for body maintenance, stimulating growth and development, repairing muscles and tissues, and boosting your immune system.

The long-term health implications of cutting down these stages would be impossible to predict. Recent research has also shown that there may be a genetic factor involved in how much sleep an individual requires.

So for the average student, the Uberman approach to sleeping might be best left for times of imminent deadlines and the best advice would be to listen to the body's natural feelings as an indication of how much shut eye to take each night.

Genius by nature?

Richard Seager

I'd like to think that anyone, if they put their mind to it, can achieve anything. But recent scientific research suggests that this may not be the case.

Take the Bronte family for example. All three sisters were literary geniuses. But was their intelligence passed on down the generations? Scientists at MIT have found a gene which they believe to be the "Learning gene". They deactivated this gene in mice and found that the mice could no longer be conditioned; a basic learning response, to associate one thing with another. Could it be that in geniuses this gene is some how over expressed?

Dr Ognjen Amidzic has studied the brains of both Grand Master chess players and average players. He found that while playing, the Masters' brains are most active in the frontal lobes, the region responsible for problem solving, while the average chess player's brain was most active in the temporal lobes, responsible for short term memory. Dr Ognjen believes that we are born with a predisposition to be able to do certain tasks well or not. In other words, no matter how hard someone trains and studies chess strategy, they will never show Grand Master brain activity. Moreover, Grand Masters' brains would have always showed this pattern.

Now there's something to think about. If our genes and brain structure dictate what we can and can't do, may we be trying in vain to become a genius at something that our genetics simply will not allow? Would we understand the laws of gravity if Sir Isaac Newton had a different brain activity pattern?

However, not all genius may be a result of genetics. Autism is a genetic condition which makes it hard to communicate and relate to others. Derek Paravicini was born autistic. Since the age of four he has learnt to play the piano with extraordinary talent. This did not come naturally to him and is in fact the result of thousands of hours of practice. Not all autistic people possess an incredible talent, such as Derek's, which suggests that the cause of such a skill is not genetic.

Maybe we do not have a say in the limit of our intelligence. Or, a more comforting thought is that maybe it just takes thousands of hours of hard graft.

JENNY DOWNING

A duck's foot

BAROCKSCHLOSS



Ducks are from the family Anatidae and are found everywhere except Antarctica.

An adult male is a drake, female is a hen or duck, their baby is a duckling and a group is called a raft, team or paddling. Their feet never get cold as they have few nerves, muscles and blood vessels and their eyes have three lids.

Want to write for us?

ELECTIONS for a brand new
Science Editor and
Deputy Science Editor

TONIGHT: 6:30pm in P/L/002

You might think producing up to a pint of sweat a day is what makes your socks stink, but you're wrong.

It's actually a skin dwelling bacteria which is a natural part of human flora. It eats up sweat and dead skin whilst excreting the smelly substance, so to keep clean, air your shoes and you'll be alright.

Smelly feet

Sport

PARK LIFE

Dan Holland
SPORTS EDITOR

The world of York Sport is non-stop at the minute, as we reach what Sir Alex Ferguson would call "squeaky bum time".

White Rose Varsity is fast fading into a distant memory, the BUCS season and this term's college sport are reaching their climax, and a certain tournament held in Lancaster is lurking just around the corner.

A busy time, then, for all involved – the upper echelons of the York Sport Committee, the competitors, and of course we humble student reporters.

In fact, the multitude of fixtures has already got my friends and family describing me as a tired old hack.

In BUCS, many of our teams are limping over the finish line thanks to a punishing schedule heavily disrupted by the weather.

Special mention must go to the likes of fencing, women's hockey, women's rugby and men's badminton for their stellar efforts this campaign, as their finishes make for pleasant reading on the notoriously

"Many of our teams are limping over the finish line"

unnavigable BUCS website.

But, as I attempt to peruse my way through, there are still a few teams who face a challenge over the next week or so.

The men's football firsts may be suffering the consequences of their spectacular Cup run, as they face a crunch showdown with bottom club Hull on Wednesday, needing a point to survive.

And the men's hockey team have made life difficult for themselves after defeat to Leeds last week meant that even a win this Wednesday on the JLD might not be good enough to escape relegation.

A day of last-minute escapes worthy of Wigan, West Brom and West Ham beckons.

I can see the frantic fans now, scrambling around the Sports Centre to try and get an update on the matches elsewhere, though let's hope we can avoid the sides playing out a drab result that suits both teams à la West Germany and Austria at the 1982 World Cup.

College football ended in suitably understated fashion this weekend after a severely curtailed season, as the College Cup creeps to the forefront of the teams' minds.

And on top of that, the college rugby final between Derwent and Alcuin is on Wednesday, with Derwent surely out for revenge after losing to Alcuin in the group stages of Sunday's 10s tournament, where they eventually ran out as runners up to James.

Is that all? Oh yes, it's the small matter of Roses in week two of the Summer term. Here we go again.

AVB sacking shows Chelsea have much to learn

Luke Gardener
DEPUTY SPORTS EDITOR

THE SACKING of Andre Villas-Boas after just nine months in charge at Stamford Bridge doesn't make much sense, but it came as a shock to few football fans.

The Chelsea owner, Roman Abramovich has shown little patience in the past with the sacking of Luiz Felipe Scolari and even Carlo Ancelotti after a successful reign. Ancelotti was sacked for failing to win a trophy in his second season despite doing the double the previous season and being well supported by the Chelsea faithful.

It could even be said that the departure of Jose Mourinho from the club was instigated by Abramovich and his insistence on being heavily involved in the manager's running of the club.

The bookmakers have installed Mourinho as favourite but this seems unlikely due to his current success with Real Madrid. They look as if they are going to finally knock Barcelona off their perch and take the La Liga title for the first time since 2008.

Other names being linked with Chelsea are Pep Guardiola of Barcelona, who is currently negotiating a new contract with the Catalan giants and Rafa Benitez, the former Liverpool manager who masterminded unlikely Champions League success for the Merseyside team.

It is well known that Abramovich wants Champions League glory above all else and these managers



Villas-Boas was sacked by Chelsea last week after joining in the summer

have a proven track record in the competition with three wins between them.

The sacking of AVB though, would have made more sense had one of the preferred managerial choices been available to take over instantly. Neither Mourinho nor Guardiola are without a job. However, appointing Roberto Di Matteo in the interim period may suggest that Chelsea have someone lined up to take over in the summer.

If this is the case, why not wait until the end of the season to dismiss Villas-Boas rather than upset the stability of the club now?

Despite Chelsea being a huge worldwide club, they could have learned something from the approach of Sunderland in hiring

Martin O'Neill to replace Steve Bruce. Sunderland knew they needed a change of manager and dealt with the transition quietly and quickly to ensure as little controversy as possible.

When a new manager is appointed rapidly, the media are busy conversing about the replacement and the fans immediately start looking to the future rather than berating the previous regime or the decision made by the chairman.

This is why the selection of Di Matteo as the temporary replacement makes little sense as nobody believes he has a real chance of taking up the post permanently.

The lesson to be learned is that you should only sack a manager if you know you can trade up. Sun-

derland did it with O'Neill, Newcastle with Alan Pardew, and Manchester City with Roberto Mancini; three spectacular exemplars.

Villas-Boas was given the remit to take Chelsea through a stage of transition, yet he has been sacked just as he is starting to implement his ideas. Admittedly, fans and pundits have been baffled by decisions such as dropping Frank Lampard, but the signings of Juan Mata, Raul Meireles and Gary Cahill suggest that AVB had the full backing and support of his owner. However, at just 34 years of age Villas-Boas lacked the support of his players, leaving him little hope of maintaining a successful tenure at the helm of Chelsea.

Despite sacking Villas-Boas, Abramovich has made it clear that the players are at fault for the dismissal, but with just over a quarter of the season remaining, they have a lot of work to do to qualify for the Champions League.

And if they don't, the likelihood of seeing Mourinho or Guardiola in the Stamford Bridge dug-out is almost inconceivable. In fact, the 'Special One' could decide that White Hart Lane is a better destination than Stamford Bridge should Harry Redknapp take the England job.

What is clear is that at some point Abramovich is going to have to back a manager over his players or the Chelsea circus will continue in seasons to come and could end in disaster after disaster for the London club.

A hat-trick of F1 Championships for Vettel?

Andrew Derlien
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

THIS SUNDAY sees the green light go out on the 2012 Formula One season in Melbourne, Australia.

With an unprecedented six world champions on the grid this year, fans are in for some great action over the course of the 20 races that stand between the sport's leading drivers and potential championship glory.

The pecking order between the top teams remains unclear after pre-season testing, which is why I present my top three Championship predictions with more than a little caution.

Here they are:

1st. Sebastian Vettel (GER)

So soon after a stunning 2011 season that included 11 wins and 15 pole positions, it's hard to look beyond Vettel to make it a hat-trick of consecutive world titles this year.

Still only 24, the German made a great leap forward last year, barely putting a foot wrong after an error-strewn 2010.

At such a young age, he drew comparisons with Ayrton Senna from Martin Brundle, and showed maturity beyond his years with a controlled, calculated approach to race strategies.

His dominant team have looked quick in pre-season testing once again, but it certainly won't

be quite so easy for Vettel this time around.

2nd. Lewis Hamilton (GBR)

After a disastrous 2011 which saw him brushed aside by teammate Jenson Button, many armchair pundits have written off Hamilton as spoilt and over-rated.

They'll be in for a shock this year. In a sport that is so hard to forecast, one of the few things you can be sure of in 2012 is that the man from Stevenage will be back to the top.

McLaren have avoided the problems that beset their pre-season last year, and Hamilton ap-

pears to be more focused on winning than ever after resolving some of the personal issues that affected his driving.

He still is, and always will be, a phenomenal talent.

3rd. Mark Webber (AUS)

Webber came within a whisker of winning the title in 2010, leading the standings for most of the season before being pipped by Vettel at the last race in Abu Dhabi.

Last year was a different story however, and the Australian was comprehensively beaten by his younger teammate.

The good news for Webber is

that he can only get closer to Vettel this year, and he can take further confidence from the apparent strength of Red Bull's new challenger.

Winning the title may be a step too far, but the veteran will be aiming to finish ahead of the McLarens in what is likely to be his final season at Red Bull.

To use the words of a typically to the point Kimi Räikkönen last week, "There is no point to guess here. I don't know who's going to be the fastest. Nobody knows."

Even so, you can see my full top 10 "guesses", and join in the debate, online at nouse.co.uk.

NIC_R



Sebastian Vettel will look to secure a third consecutive Championship win, after dominating last time out

A bright future

Will Light speaks to the Swimming and Water Polo Club as they prepare for a move that will have huge implications

PHILIPPA GRAFTON

One of the most noticeable flaws in York's diverse sports programme is its lack of watersports facilities.

It has been an obvious Achilles' heel for years, and yet, in spite of this, York's swimming and water polo scene continues to go from strength to strength, regularly beating some of Britain's top establishments with only a fraction of the resources at their disposal. As the opening of the new Sports Village is now mere months away, it seems that finally swimming and water polo will move from the periphery to a deserved place at the heart of the York's sporting establishment.

It is a brisk Wednesday evening when I head to watch one of the club's three weekly practices. Arriving slightly early, I expected an awkward wait for the team to arrive, but the pool was already a bustling hive of activity, the swimmers waiting on the sidelines ready to take full advantage of their time in the pool. It is this sort of effort that has resulted in UYSWC's convincing rise in the hierarchy of the sport, achieving BUCS promotion last season and consistently punching well above their weight.

Men's swimming captain Chris Unsworth, has no doubt of the source of their recent success: "Our achievements are due purely to the efforts that the members put in. We have to work very hard."

Looking around the slightly Soviet surrounds of the Archbishop Holgate Pool, it is not hard to see why this extra application is needed. The pool is extremely basic, a world away from the plush facilities of the top teams in the league.

It is a situation that Cesca Baguley, Club President, is resigned to, saying, "It's not a nice pool. Last year, it wasn't cleaned and it got so dirty that we couldn't see the end



The Swimming and Water Polo Club are set to build on their impressive performances as they move to Hes East

of the pool. The heating's not that reliable, it's awful changing in the winter. But it's the only thing we've got, at the moment we have no other options."

Obviously, the transition to the Heslington East facilities will have enormous repercussions for the club. Unsworth says: "At the moment, because of the facilities, a lot of swimmers are put off from coming here. The new pool is going to completely change the structure of the club. We'll be looking for a massive increase in performance; already swimmers of a national standard, Olympic trialists, are taking an interest in coming to York."

One of the most dedicated members of the club is coach Darren Burchell, who can claim much responsibility in the progress of the swim team since he began his role in 2007. Working full time as an electrical engineer, he still finds the effort to coach in the evenings, but

with the increase in training next year, his role remains unconfirmed.

He stresses the importance of the new facilities, but warns against the complacency they may bring. "There's going to be a huge difference in training next year, no doubt about it. We're hopefully go-

"Our achievements are purely due to the effort that the members put in"

Men's Swimming Captain
Chris Unsworth

ing to be shifting from three hours training a week to 14," he said.

"Alongside that, we'll need a professional, full-time coach. With that set-up, we could be producing national standard swimmers; the full-time coach is absolutely vital."

After an hour of almost continual lengths, two dozen swim-

mers emerged from the water. Most didn't even look out of breath after their exertions, and I'll admit to a certain amount of envy for a level of fitness that I'll never be able to aspire to. Some even remained for the water polo practice that followed, another sport that stands to gain from the new facilities.

Men's goalkeeper and captain Chris Snowden commented: "Currently, we get about 15, 16 guys regularly turning up to training. It's 13 players for a team, so it's okay. But these are usually people that have played before, at school or clubs, so next year it'd be great to be attracting people that haven't played before but have a bit of potential."

"Good water polo players need to be reasonably strong swimmers. Generally, it's short and sharp sprints, not long distance stuff. With training, the fitness aspects can be picked up fairly quickly. A decent throwing arm is needed as

well," says Snowden.

When asked about its vicious reputation, he was quick to dispel the rumours: "It's not really bad, you get the occasional elbow and kick, but when that happens you give back what you get. I'd never say it was vicious, maybe just a bit rough, probably less so than rugby. The worst injury I've had was a broken finger, and that was from the ball."

The team performed well this year in BUCS, placing third in a tough league. "That was probably our biggest achievement," says the captain. "It was a good third, we handed out two thrashings, and lost narrowly twice. We were also the Roses Team of the Year last year, so it'd be good to do well again this time around. The main aim will be expansion with the new pool. With that, I think we can push for promotion, we were so close this year. With the women's team, I think improvement will be their objective."

As the players began a practice match, the pace of the sport was immediately evident. The passing between players flowed seamlessly, whilst shots were stunningly fast, leaving the goalkeepers little to no chance when facing efforts from close range. It was an impressive mixture of endurance and skill, and it is a pity that the sport has such a small exposure on campus.

Since the announcement of the plans for the new Sports Village, it has been clear that UYSWC would benefit most from its completion. It seems that, even with their presently limited resources at present, they are pushing hard against their restrictive boundaries. With deserved funding now being thrust their way, the achievements of these dedicated and hardy individuals certainly should be watched over the next year or so.

Stalemate leaves football firsts close to drop zone

PHILIPPA GRAFTON

Luke Gardener
DEPUTY SPORTS EDITOR

IN A game of few chances on a sun-bathed 22 Acres, York knew that a win would mean escape from the threat of relegation from the BUCS Northern Conference 2B.

But despite their second half pressure it wasn't to be, as they were held to a 0-0 draw by Leeds seconds on Sunday.

The result now means that they face the bottom team, Hull, in their final game needing a point to ensure their survival.

The match started slowly as both teams looked worried about making crucial mistakes as Leeds knew they could also mathematically be relegated.

The best chances throughout the match came from set pieces, with the long throws of Tom Brandreth causing the Leeds defence all sorts of problems. One of these throws was cleared by the Leeds defence at the expense of a corner which was taken by the impressive

Ollie Harrison.

The corner led to a goalmouth scramble, but Dan Jones was unable to poke home past the onrushing goalkeeper from Leeds.

The brightest moment of the half for the home side came from a Leeds free kick which looked like it could threaten York goalkeeper Dom McMahon's goal.

York countered with pace as the aerial power of Oscar Lynch set them on their way, with Jack Beadle flicking on to Phil Taylor.

James Davies had made a lambasting run forwards and had it not been for the Leeds defender tracking his movement, he would have had a free header at the back post from the resulting Taylor cross.

At half time it was 0-0 and neither team had created anything clear cut. Going into the second half it was notable that York tried to play with higher tempo to their play.

Beadle tried to drive his team forwards with some fast-paced, mazy runs, one of which resulted

in a shot from Matt Mawdesley but he was only able to drag his effort wide.

York played down the left hand side on multiple occasions with Harrison making himself a nuisance to the Leeds right back, winning multiple free kicks in dangerous areas.

Harrison's play resulted in York's best chance of the match as Davies crossed the ball in and Lynch met the ball with his head, forcing a splendid save from the Hull keeper. Despite their best efforts, the goal was not to come for York and they lamented the lack of chances they were able to create.

After the match, the home players were disappointed but captain Dan Turley was adamant that the result was far better than a loss, as it means they now need just a point against Hull on Wednesday to survive.

Turley stated: "We now know exactly what we have to do come the match against Hull. I can't fault the effort of the players today; it



York must take a point against Hull on Wednesday to avoid relegation

was unfortunate that we couldn't get a winning goal."

York will be favourites to survive going up against Hull on Wednesday but they must be more clinical in front of goal to gain a victory. It was the second time in a matter of days that York had faced

Leeds seconds, after they lost 2-0 in their Northern Conference Cup semi-final in Leeds last Wednesday.

That brought to an end a superb cup run, which has been in stark contrast to the side's poor league form; they have won just once in the league this season.

Sport

James strike late on to draw in league decider

PHILIPPA GRAFTON



James captain Richard Baxter fires in his side's late equaliser in their pulsating 3-3 draw with Halifax on Sunday

Dan Holland
SPORTS EDITOR

JAMES PRODUCED a stunning late comeback to earn a 3-3 draw with Halifax, securing top spot in this term's curtailed college football season in the process.

Halifax led 3-1 with 20 minutes to play, but goals from James Briars and captain Richard Baxter secured a point for James in the final game of the Spring Term.

The match began with a se-

ries of missed chances from either side, with both being forced to field somewhat understrength teams. Some sloppy 'Fax defending allowed Briars to go clean through on goal, but his effort struck the base of the post.

Halifax soon took control of possession and Hamish Denham missed two glorious opportunities, placing a shot wide before trying to audaciously chip James keeper Andy Kirkwood from 20 yards when he had time to pick his spot.

Winger Ben Cooke was pulling the strings for James, but after he missed a golden chance of his own, they were made to pay as Halifax took the lead.

A lovely passing move culminated in Denham playing in Jake Mundy, who slid his shot confidently past Kirkwood.

For much of the half, James struggled to create many clear-cut chances, but they equalised shortly before half-time.

Cooke rounded Halifax stop-

per Jonny Sim and pulled a hanging cross to the back post, where Briars was on hand to sweep home a stylish volley.

James were very much in the ascendancy at this point, with Cooke going close on two occasions, but 'Fax grabbed the lead once more at the start of the second half.

Denham found the ball at his feet after a scramble in the box, and although his first effort was saved, the striker managed to prod home the rebound whilst on the ground.

James were rattled, and were hugely fortunate not to fall further behind, as Denham hit the post before Tom Patrickson was denied, first by Kirkwood, and then by a man on the line.

Kirkwood was the hero once more as he tipped over Connor Meckin's long range piledriver in spectacular fashion.

It was 3-1 soon after, though, as Denham chased down a loose ball and was rewarded for his bravery, colliding with Kirkwood as he headed in, though a wrist injury would force him off.

The match seemed to be dead and buried, but James weren't beaten yet, and Briars gave them hope when he scored a well-placed half-volley after picking up Simon Kreienbaum's pass.

The striker, as well as central midfielder Baxter, both had chanc-

es to level the match, only to send their respective headers wide of the mark.

But the equaliser did come with 10 minutes left, Briars showing great trickery to jink away from the Halifax defence and crossing for Baxter to convert clinically past the helpless Sim.

The result puts James and Halifax level on seven points at the top of the table, but James will take this term's crown due to their superior goal difference, largely because of their 5-0 win over Vanbrugh in the term's opening game.

Afterwards, James skipper Baxter was delighted with the resilience his side showed, saying: "From 3-1 down with 20 minutes to go, to come back and look like the most likely team to win really demonstrates the mental side of the game that we've got this season, so we have to be delighted."

Meanwhile, Halifax captain Jack Beadle, who was among a number of 'Fax's University-level players to miss the match, commented: "I'm a little disappointed to let two late goals in, but ultimately it was a good chance for us to have a look at some of our other players."

"We can now look forward to the College Cup, where I think both of these teams are going to be favourites, so I can't be too disappointed today."

Alcuin shock Derwent in college football finale

PHILIPPA GRAFTON

Nouse Sport Team

ALCUIN SECURED a surprise win over Derwent, earning a 1-0 victory thanks to a fine move and finish from Alcuin striker Alex Brown.

Brown was played through by Will Taylor and managed to expertly lob the Derwent goalkeeper Seb Treasure to give his team all three points.

Before the game, most would have picked Derwent to win, but Alcuin showed that they have the players to pose a real challenge in the College Cup when all their players are available. They dominated the second half and created far better opportunities for themselves than Derwent were able to.

The first half was a cagey affair with both midfields cancelling one another out. The only opportunities were long range efforts from outside the area with neither goalkeeper being troubled.

The best chances for Derwent came from corners taken by Jake Farrell, which caused the Alcuin defence serious problems.

The second half saw Alcuin overpower their opponents in midfield with the performances of Will Dodgson and Will Taylor particularly impressive. Their link play with Brown troubled the Derwent defence throughout and had it not been for the crucial interventions of central defender Andy Jeffreys, Alcuin could have been further ahead.

It was not to be for Derwent, as Alcuin were the only team who looked like winning the match,

and had they been more ruthless in front of goal they could have made a real statement of intent before the start of next term's College Cup.

After the match, Derwent captain Joe Boughtflower stated that his team were "missing players" but this was "no excuse and Alcuin deserved their victory."

Alcuin captain, Brad Wood was pleased with the "brilliant performance all round" and said that the victory "sets the team up for the College Cup next term."

Vanbrugh finished off their Spring League campaign with a comfortable 3-1 victory over Wentworth. After a relatively even start to the game, Vanbrugh took the lead on the quarter of an hour mark when striker Elliot Rous Ross finished clinically from a precise John Sanderson through ball.

This goal seemed to fill the Vanbrugh side with confidence and they were soon threatening a second. First, the impressive John Sanderson struck a fierce shot narrowly wide of the Wentworth goal and soon after a dangerous Ben Stanier corner forced a goalmouth scramble that was only ended by a goal-line clearance.

Vanbrugh kept up this pressure and were deservedly rewarded with a second goal five minutes before half time. It was route one football at its best as an excellent kick from Vanbrugh goalkeeper James Wilson bounced over the Wentworth backline and released Rous Ross, who reacted quickly to bravely head over the Wentworth goalkeeper.



Action from Vanbrugh's 3-1 win over Wentworth in Sunday's football

The second half began as the first ended, with Vanbrugh on the front foot searching for more goals. They didn't have to wait long, as a clever pass from midfielder Kieran O'Dwyer dissected the Wentworth defence and was finished clinically by striker Tom Parish.

With the score at 3-0, the game looked as good as over, however to Wentworth's credit they persevered and managed a well-worked consolation goal with 10 minutes to go. Good build up play saw Wentworth's Andrea Marcheggiano re-

lease his fellow midfielder Wayne Paes, who gave Wilson no chance with a low finish.

Vanbrugh captain Wilson was pleased with his side's performance, saying: "We played the beautiful game well and it was good to get some revenge after last term."

Wentworth skipper Paes was upbeat despite the defeat, saying: "We put Vanbrugh under good pressure in the first half and if we had kept the ball better in midfield then we could have done better. Overall, Vanbrugh deserved it."

In Saturday's re-arranged fixture, Goodricke secured a 2-0 win over Langwith thanks to goals from co-captains Matt Thomas and Sam Lewis.

Goodricke started brightly, with Christian Hammer heading over from a corner, before Thomas fired a spectacular volley narrowly wide with Langwith keeper Kris Cheshire stranded.

However, the men in yellow should have taken the lead when the ball fell to Matt Jones inside the area, but he could only fire his shot straight at Ed Foster.

And they were made to pay before half-time, as Thomas' effort from outside the box was deflected, slightly wrong-footing Cheshire.

It was 2-0 shortly after the break, as Lewis found himself unmarked to head in a cross from the left. Langwith pressed for a way back into the game but were lacking a cutting edge, meaning Goodricke earned their only win of the term.

Goodricke co-captain Christian Hammer commented afterwards: "We were lucky to have some nice conditions today. We knocked it around well today, and it shows we're in good shape for [the] College Cup next term."

His Langwith counterpart Andy Hutt added: "We conceded some really sloppy goals today, and though we had a few chances we needed to show a bit more composure."

Reporting by Luke Gardener, Mike Sutcliffe, Dan Holland and Neil Johnston.

Successful end to season for Centurions

Toby Salisbury
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

YORK CENTURIONS secured their fifth win of the season to cap off a successful campaign, although this was followed by defeat in their final game.

Due to poor weather before the Christmas break, the Centurions faced two games in quick succession, the first against arch rivals, Lancaster Bombers, and the second against the undefeated Sheffield Hallam Warriors just three days

later.

With both games being played away from home, it promised to be a challenging week.

At Lancaster, York received the ball first and the Centurions' offence ran the ball consistently through fullback Nick Walter and running back Timi Agwoje.

York's defence also dominated early on, with Lancaster's offensive line powerless to resist veteran behemoth Mikey Porter who dominated the middle of the field and forced Lancaster to run outside

into the arms of York's outstanding linebacker corps.

The breakthrough came in the form of a touchdown for Agwoje, who followed good blocking downfield into the end zone.

Lancaster's lack of posts meant there was no kicking field goals or conversions and a two point conversion attempt by York was snuffed out by the Lancaster defence.

The Centurions didn't have to wait long for another score, with quarterback Robert Wickham bringing his good form from the

Varsity game over to Lancaster.

A long pass to rookie utility player Robin Gill set up the offence with good field position, Wickham then took it upon himself to personally run in a touchdown and two point conversion to send the Centurions into halftime 14-0 up.

After the break the Bombers began to find success in the passing game as York's defensive backs could not capitalise on several easy chances to intercept the ball.

As a result, the Bombers were eventually able to bundle their way into the end zone following a dubious call for pass interference.

After the conversion was stopped the York offence took to the field to build on their 14-6 lead.

Sadly, mistakes in the red zone stopped an effective York offence from scoring as fumbles gave possession back to Lancaster twice. Lancaster were able to pass the ball into the end zone and ensure a nervous finish for the Centurions.

After again successfully stopping the conversion attempt the Centurions were able to see the game through and win 14-12, a score margin which was very flattering on a poor Lancaster team.

Three days later, an injury hit Centurions squad made their way to Sheffield to play Hallam Warriors, a team who beat Lancaster 97-0 and had won all seven of their previous games.

It promised to be a tough game for York.

Against the odds the Centurions took a 6-0 lead through a Wickham pass to veteran tight end James Durham. Unfortunately the gutsy start was short-lived and the half ended 28-6 to the Warriors.

The third quarter saw Hallam drive up the score as York's passing game was halted not only by Hallam's impressive defence but by biting winds and a hail storm.

At 42-6, things looked ominous but when the wind and the hail stopped, corner back Seb Booth came onto the field as a wide receiver and after two snaps of the ball he had his first touchdown as a Centurion, utilising his blistering pace to get in front of his man and catch a beautifully delivered Wickham pass.

Hard hitting from the Centurions defensive line limited the Warriors to one more score and the game finished at 48-12.

This crop of Centurions are the most successful to date and they can be proud of their five wins from eight games this season.

Sam Asfahani, York Sport President and Centurions founder, said: "I'm proud we're improving. This club has come a long since my first year when it didn't even exist. I really love that we're getting a lot of respect as a club now."

The squad now eagerly look forward to avenging last year's Roses defeat to Lancaster and completing the double over them this season.



The Centurions ended the season with victory over Lancaster Bombers and defeat to Sheffield Hallam Warriors

Brilliant James victorious in College Rugby 10s

Will Light
DEPUTY SPORTS EDITOR

JAMES COLLEGE'S claim to be the 'rugby college' has taken some serious knocks over the past year, most notably after the sensational combination of defeat by Derwent in the rugby final and a disappointing fourth place finish in the 10s.

On Sunday, however, they showed the first signs of getting back on course after a strong showing throughout the College 10s tournament, culminating in a comfortable win over rivals Derwent 17-5 in the final.

The tournament was played in perfect conditions, the elements finally on the side of sport after such a disrupted term.

The first round saw the eight colleges divided into two groups of four, with one featuring Derwent, Alcuin, Vanbrugh and Langwith, and the other James, Goodricke, Wentworth and Halifax. The Wentworth team was comprised principally from a pool of University players, and as such were banned from qualifying for the semi-finals.

The most interesting result emerging from the first round of fixtures was Alcuin's 10-5 victory over a Derwent side undefeated since October, courtesy of tries from Alex Cormack and Joe Cooper, a result that Alcuin will hope bodes well for Wednesday's college rugby final.

However, other matches largely went to plan, and, discounting

the predictably dominant Wentworth side, teams representing Derwent, James, Alcuin and Halifax won places in the semi-finals.

The first semi-final saw James dispatch of Alcuin with consummate ease, winning 26-0.

Alcuin had faded fast since their great early performances, and a lethal James attack was able to slice the Reds apart. Oli Woodward and Phil Scott were instrumental as they scored two tries apiece.

Meanwhile, the other semi-final saw Derwent hit their stride as they beat Halifax 15-0. The team that so dominated the college league this season had yet to find their most electrifying form, but even in a lower gear, they still offered plenty of threat.

They were able to coast past Halifax, after Jamie Criswell, Tolga Nekar and Ed Kemp all slid over for a comprehensive win.

Before the climax of another Derwent versus James final, third place was to be decided between Alcuin and Halifax. This was won by Halifax, who overturned Alcuin 15-10 in a closely fought encounter.

However, the match was abandoned after a worrying neck injury to an Alcuin player, warranting an ambulance and causing a lengthy delay on the pitch. The wait served only to increase tensions before the final, and after kick-off, it was Derwent who came out the fastest.

Rapid passing to the right wing allowed Ed Kemp to bundle over

under heavy pressure. This was a very bright start by Derwent, but it was very quickly answered by college rugby veteran Alex Muntus, who scored a sensational individual try from a cheeky chip and run.

He was able to sprint away from the Derwent defence, finishing it himself without support.

Although the match remained extremely open, it was played mostly in the middle of the park, and with no further score in the first half, it remained all to play for.

It was James who broke the deadlock soon into the second half, again courtesy of the prodigious

talents of Muntus. Running onto a ball from his scrum half, Muntus burst through the Derwent line at the half way mark.

With little opposition, he swallo dived flamboyantly over for the try, although he appeared to almost drop the ball in mid-air. Fortunately for his dignity, he recovered well enough to secure the points.

This shook Derwent to the core, and their hopes of victory seemed to vanish altogether when Phil Scott added James' third.

He received the ball on the left wing from the scrum, and, with a sharp sprint, found his way over the

line and resulting in a 17-5 scoreline at the final whistle.

James' captain, and two try hero, Alex Muntus was over the moon with the win. He said: "Obviously I'm delighted, it's great to bring the trophy back."

"I want to take the opportunity to thank Charlotte Winter and Sam Ashafani for organising it all, they've been brilliant."

On the subject of his swallow dive, Muntus added: "I think we've got a healthy college spirit at James, but I think I would have been on the receiving end of a bit of banter if I'd messed that up."

AGATHA TORRANCE



James celebrate winning this year's rugby 10s tournament, after beating rivals Derwent 17-5 in Sunday's final

New era for UYSWC

Will Light talks to the Swimming and Water Polo Club about their future facilities

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Weekend football roundup

Reports on the weekend's college and University football matches inside

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AGATHA TORRANCE



AGATHA TORRANCE



James defeat Derwent 17-5 to claim victory in College Rugby 10s >> Page 23

York Sport requests new funding for Autumn pre-season training camp

Dan Holland
SPORTS EDITOR

YORK SPORT are putting together proposals to provide a pre-season training camp for the next academic year, it has been confirmed.

The estimated cost of the programme is £3,700, around three quarters of which would be supplied by a grant from the York Annual Fund, should the application be successful.

The training camp is designed to give all sports clubs the opportunity to build up their fitness, as well as giving new first-year students a better opportunity to train with their prospective new teams

before the start of the new BUCS campaign.

The application is being made now in order to give clubs the chance to frame their own training schedules around the planned events.

Usually, the BUCS season starts in weeks one or two of the Autumn Term for most clubs, something that often puts York teams at a disadvantage because of the late start to studies compared to their opposition.

Whilst many other universities have several weeks to prepare their teams, most at York have little or no training time before the first round of fixtures.

Sam Asfahani, York Sport President, commented: "The problem is that we're one of the latest universities to start, so often we're just not as prepared as our opponents for the first matches.

"Hopefully this is something that a pre-season camp would help to alleviate."

The scheme would operate in the week running up to the start of term, much like the current pre-season camps operated by the Rugby Club and the York Centurions American Football team.

Each morning there would be fitness and conditioning sessions, comprising of events such as Zumba and aerobics which clubs could

sign up to, with evenings dedicated to classroom sessions on topics such as nutrition, injuries, facilities and physiotherapy.

This would leave afternoons free for clubs to work on their own individual training regimes based on skills and tactics.

There is also a plan to invite an international athlete to speak about their experience of balancing their degree studies with their sporting activities on the Saturday, before an event in The Lounge.

Asfahani added: "The idea is to run free fitness sessions in the morning and classroom sessions in the evening.

"The reason we've structured

it this way is so that the clubs have most of the day to run their own training.

"The ideal outcome is that we can better prepare our clubs, giving them more of a fighting chance at the start of the season.

"We really want to see a direct outcome in the results and performances of our clubs compared to what we usually see at the start of the BUCS season."

York Sport have also applied for a second grant from the York Annual Fund to help subsidise the purchase of a new coxless pairs rowing boat, the cost of which is estimated at between £5000 and £6000.

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