Any other business

Spring 2015

Digging deep
Mining for success at the National Coal Mining Museum

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- The “Democratic Deficit”
- Taking the lead with top grocery retailer
- Placement student of the year

A Bridge to a better society

Events Management graduate Sam sets up her own charity
One of the recent awards won by the University that has meant a great deal to us, especially in the Business School, was being named the Times Higher Education’s Entrepreneurial University of the Year 2012. It was great to see the University’s entrepreneurial spirit and support for enterprise and initiative recognised.

So much for ‘entrepreneurial’. But what do you think of when you visualise ‘the University’ that is entrepreneurial? Is it a set of buildings with professors and lecturers beavering away inside, perhaps teaching rows of students in the lecture theatre – the kind of thing that you typically see in films? Well, this certainly happens, but there is much more to a great university education than that. Here at the Business School we strongly believe that the best way for students to learn is not only by listening and reading, but also by doing.

We build into the curriculum lots of activities that give our students an opportunity to practise what we preach, be creative and learn deeply by means of practical action, but we also foster an environment where regardless of their subject area, students can be inspired and bring their ideas to life. It doesn’t matter if you’re studying accountancy, marketing or events management; we will do our best to nurture your vision and talent.

This issue of AOB showcases some great examples of students showing their initiative, whether we consider Sam Forrest’s innovative ‘Media Mash’, Samantha Bridge’s humanitarian project, or Kara Atkin’s drive to move forward within Sainsbury’s. I hope you enjoy reading about them, and the other stories too.

Professor Chris Cowton
Dean of the Business School
Cutbacks in legal aid are leading to “a decimation of access to justice”, claimed ‘radical lawyer’ Michael Mansfield QC, when he spoke at the Business School in February.

The controversial lawyer delivered a lecture entitled “The Democratic Deficit” at the second annual Social Justice Lecture to a packed audience of students, staff and guests from local law firms. The series is inspired by the innovative town centre Legal Advice Clinic (LAC) launched by law lecturers and students and now marking its first anniversary.

Before the lecture, a five-strong student team from the LAC described the venture, how it was inspired by the cuts in legal aid, and they provided facts and figures that illustrated the demand for its services. Their seamless presentation earned applause from the audience and was praised by Michael Mansfield – but he added that he wished their work was not necessary. He claimed that the Government’s cuts in Legal Aid – under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act – were motivated not by economic necessity, but by dogma.

He drew on a sequence of high profile cases and campaigns in which he has been involved in order to illustrate his theory that a “baton of change” was passed on by individuals and groups who had the “courage and will” to seek transparency and accountability from the authorities and politicians.

He cited the Stephen Lawrence case and the persistence of the murdered teenager’s parents in their quest for justice. Doreen Lawrence was eventually elevated to the House of Lords – “an amazing transformation for an ordinary person”.

Mr Mansfield drew parallels with episodes such as Bloody Sunday in Ulster, the Marseennes river boat disaster on the Thames, the Hillsborough tragedy and the Iraq War, when, he said, the public was misled and the democratic system failed. In all of these cases, families had been persistent in their demands for transparency and they had challenged the “collusion” that Mr Mansfield believes is at the heart of the political establishment.

He claimed that an opportunity had arisen for people to say “enough is enough” and he argued that a democratic revolution is taking place, symbolised by a sequence of Reimagining Democracy meetings taking place in several large UK cities.

The Social Justice Lecture was introduced by Sean Curley, Head of the Law School. He raised the legacy of Magna Carta – which reminded the king that the law was above him – and he paid tribute to Michael Mansfield, who also “reminded the great and the powerful that they are subject to the law.”

Radical lawyer blasts cuts to legal aid

Law students Amy Watson and Jessica Carlin are two of the LAC advisors. We asked the girls to tell us more about their work: “As part of my role I interview clients on a range of legal issues and find out what it is that they need assistance with. The issue is then discussed at a selection panel where a supervisor and two other students help to decide whether we are able to advise the client. We then carry out legal research in the relevant area of law and form a letter of advice which is sent out to the client,” Amy described.

“I have seen a variety of cases ranging from family to employment to property. Each case has given me valuable experience in the legal sector that I do not believe I would have got from my studies,” Jess continued.

On account of their good work, both students received work placements with award-winning solicitors Ridley and Hall. “Ridley and Hall contacted our lecturer Phil Drake to offer work experience to students at the LAC. Amy and myself were shortlisted to attend an interview and explain the work we were carrying out. We both now attend placements once a week on a Monday.”

Working at the LAC has had a great effect on the girls’ personal development: “It has enabled me to achieve so much as my confidence and skills have developed significantly,” Amy said. Jessica adds: “It has been great legal experience and to all prospective students I would suggest they get involved in this fantastic project!”

The LAC has been shortlisted for the LawWorks and Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards 2015 in the category of ‘Best Contribution by a Team of Students’.

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An enterprising culture

The University is helping to create a vibrant entrepreneurial culture at Huddersfield. It wasn’t by accident that the University was awarded the ‘Entrepreneurial University of the Year’ award at the Times Higher Education awards in 2012. Building on the back of that recognition the University has supported an environment where student entrepreneurs can flourish.

The Duke of York Young Entrepreneur Centre, within the University of Huddersfield’s 3M Buckley Innovation Centre, was officially opened in 2013. Since then, over 130 students and businesses have used the centre as a hub of creative and enterprising business ideas. It provides the professional support services of IT, office space and meeting rooms to help get fledgling businesses off to a successful start.

Work placements are an essential part of many courses, but for students who don’t want to take the conventional route it’s not the only option; there’s the opportunity to undertake an Enterprise Placement Year where students can focus full-time on developing their own businesses. The University’s Enterprise Team also assists students and recent graduates to develop their business ideas through one-to-one meetings with their business advisors, a series of business skills events and where appropriate, access to proof of concept funding.

The range of student enterprise covers all areas of study in the University with new businesses offering goods and services in areas such as fashion, textiles, jewellery, technology and traditional retail sales.

At the Business School our own tradition of encouraging and supporting innovation is demonstrated in a number of courses such as Entrepreneurship and Business and Enterprise Development. The Enterprise Development degree is one of only a handful in the country that offers a ‘pracademic’ university experience which combines academic theory with practical support for students wishing to create a new business or social enterprise. This pioneering degree has heavy-weight backing too. Ex-Dragons’ Den panellist Theo Paphitis has supported and backed the degree since its inception in 2008. Enterprise Development students have also initiated a University wide student ‘Enterprise Society’ backed with funding and support from the Students’ Union. Chairman Peter Shaw commented that “We felt that the University of Huddersfield needed a student led organisation to help bring entrepreneurs together. Our aim is to involve hosting skill-building interactive workshops, guest speaking events as well as an opportunity for entrepreneurs and business-people to network together and build connections.”

Luca cooks up an Italian job

Since completing a degree in Business Management, Luca Margaglione has worked tirelessly on opening his own Italian takeaway business the Luca located in Lindley, Huddersfield.

The takeaway prides itself on delivering a truly authentic Italian experience gained through the culinary knowledge and skills from within the family, and the young entrepreneur is sure he has found a niche in the market to ensure its success.

“If you look around there are plenty of takeaways, but none of them specialise on one thing in particular. Giving the public an authentic and traditional Italian experience is our unique selling point,” said Luca.

Ewa aims to be Queen Bee

Final year International Business student Ewa Polewiska is looking to nature for the source of her enterprise. Ewa set up her company Bee4Bees to combine queen bee breeding with a range of bee products such as pure beeswax candle which she sells at local markets and craft fairs.

“If I took my placement year under the Enterprise Placement Year program, during which I started my own beekeeping business which is closely linked to my own passion and family tradition” describes Ewa. “It was a great experience and a big challenge. I became my own boss, had the opportunity to meet many people from different areas of study, took part in various events and worked in an amazing environment surrounded by strongly motivated young entrepreneurs. ”

Sam is Mashing it up

Second year student Sam Forrest set up his first company, Uni Media Mash Ltd, in early 2014. As a student on the Enterprise Development course the expectation is for those students to harness their entrepreneurial drive towards developing and launching their businesses during the lifecycle of their course and graduate with both a degree and a business. Sam is ahead of the curve, already enjoying national success for his innovative trading site.

“My company licenses its trading platform for use in universities, and is currently being run in 3 universities: Huddersfield (under the name HudBooks), Southampton and Exeter, and I aim to have it running in 10 more for the next academic year” explains Sam. “The website allows members to trade items easily and safely with other students from their university. I have always had an entrepreneurial spirit and have run a whole range of business ventures since an early age.”
Kulturfest
on placement in Germany

Like many of our placement students, Emma Denny is experiencing a new culture as well as adjusting to pressures of a one year full-time job position. The Advertising and Marketing Communications student is spending a year working in Stuttgart, Germany with Hewlett Packard (HP) as a Marketing Campaigns Intern.

The prospect of moving abroad as well as joining a global giant like HP really attracted Emma; “I currently live in the centre of Stuttgart, Germany. The actual move here was not too bad and once I arrived here, registering as a local resident, attaining a tax code and opening a bank account was fairly simple” explains Emma.

When Emma saw the position advertised through the Business School’s Placement Unit, she jumped at the chance for an overseas placement and the opportunity for some vital work experience in a marketing role.

“I’ve learnt so much and been given so much responsibility,” says Emma, who works with the Enterprise Services (ES) team in the Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) region, “My managers and team have very much dropped me in the deep end; however, for me personally, it has been the best learning curve I could have asked for.”

“I’ve had the opportunity to work with magazines, on social media, e-mail marketing, and events logistics and have a great relationship with my direct team as well as account executives all over the EMEA region” continues Emma. The level of responsibility given on a placement year can often surprise students, but Emma has thrived on the challenge; “I feel like I am actually helping and making an impact, rather than working on meaningless tasks, which makes me feel really valued as one of the team, and not just an intern. My confidence has improved greatly and I’ve learnt to believe in myself and my own capabilities. I get the opportunity to work in a fast-paced industry with a broad range of people and cultures which ensures that there’s never a dull moment.”

The opportunity to live abroad is a great bonus for Business School students who choose to take their placement year overseas and Emma has certainly thrown herself into the local culture: “I’ve been lucky enough to experience so many social and cultural events, such as the well-known Oktoberfest Festival and the German Christmas Markets which I visited in various different German cities. Also, due to the fact that Germany is so centrally located within Europe, I’ve had plenty of amazing opportunities to travel around Europe with other interns working in Stuttgart to places such as Budapest, Prague, Lake Blei, Florence and Brussels, to name a few. I also had the opportunity to attend the ‘HP Discover’ event in Barcelona.”

Emma sums up the benefits of her placement year: “Completing a placement year is definitely the best decision of my life so far; I have increased my confidence, my knowledge of business and marketing, met some amazing people in and out of work, as well as having fun at the same time!”

Emma Denny
**Olivia Turner**

Olivia is studying Business Management with Leadership. When it came to choosing the area in which she’d like to specialise, the flexibility of her course helped her make the right decision: “Out of all the universities I visited, Huddersfield offered the greatest range of courses and the flexibility to choose a pathway after my first year.” This suited me as my decision to study business was fairly last minute so I was unsure what aspects of business I would like to focus on. In the end I chose Leadership. I’m really glad that I chose it; I’m really fascinated by the module, it’s very interesting and challenges me to think outside the box.”

A project she found rewarding and enjoyable was the organisation of a charity event as part of her coursework: “I liked that myself and my group had creative freedom from beginning to end and that it was our full responsibility to see it through; this prompted me to choose an events placement.”

Olivia describes the Gala as the highlight of her year so far. “It is giving me so much experience and I am so grateful that the museum trusts me with the responsibility. It’s very interesting to see how an event can develop across a whole organisation and how much work goes in to put it together.”

As with any other role, Olivia’s placement comes with both opportunities and challenges, but she never let difficulties stand in her way: “The most challenging thing I’ve found was writing the content for the website as I have dyslexia, however I would never let this stop me achieving and I was very happy when I accomplished the task.”

Overall, Olivia is having a great time on her placement year. “I love all aspects of my job, every day is completely different and I’m constantly being asked to do new things.”

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**Olivia Turner is currently on her placement year as Events and Marketing Assistant for the National Coal Mining Museum. Located between Huddersfield and Wakefield on the site of a former coal mine, the Museum showcases the rich history and traditions of the mining industry in the UK. It is a new role for both Olivia and the Museum, as this is the first time they have taken a student on placement.**
Taking the lead

Business Management graduate Kara Atkin is currently training with Sainsbury’s to become an Online Groceries Manager. We caught up with her to talk about her journey from her time at Huddersfield to the promising start to her career she is experiencing now.

“It’s such a cliché, but I just felt so welcome,” Kara recalls about the first time she came to visit the Huddersfield campus on an Open Day. “The whole experience was a complete rollercoaster. Moving away from home, learning how to look after yourself, paying bills and having a good time whilst trying to study was a balancing act, yet the workload in the first year completely complemented that. Small issues such as learning how to reference were easily solved, and any help you needed was there. All you had to do was ask.”

“I only realised when I looked back that the biggest enjoyment I gained from university was self-confidence. When I first started, I was extremely quiet around new people, found it really tough to leave home and would never leave my comfort zone. However, thanks to lectures pushing me and practising skills such as delivering presentations I came out of my shell. I can confidently deliver presentations to senior management, positively lead a team and have the self-belief to always aim higher.”

Kara joined Sainsbury’s in her second year, working on the checkouts part-time. “I really enjoyed my job and began to think of it as a possible career path.” She took the initiative and approached her store manager to ask if she could shadow managers or help out in the store voluntarily in order to gain experience over summer. “The following week I sat down with my HR manager who showed me a range of things I could be involved in. I then began to complete careers fairs, school assemblies, mentoring and work in the community. After a month working closely with Senior Managers I was asked to go to the Store Manager’s office, it was at this point I was asked if I would enrol onto the Team Leader scheme within Sainsbury’s to become a supervisor with the company.”

The prospect of training to be Team Leader in parallel with her studies seems a bit daunting at first, but Kara’s worries proved to be unfounded. “The University and Sainsbury’s both attended to my needs and allowed me to follow both paths.”

Towards the end of my time with university, I began to think about what my career could look like. After speaking with my HR manager I was shown the Trainee Manager scheme which was open to internal and external applicants and was very similar to a graduate scheme. On a competitive salary, I would spend one year training with the company to become one of their department managers. And that is exactly what I did.”

Since graduating, Kara has worked across multiple departments training for different roles, moving from trainee manager to department manager to clothing manager. In January of this year, Kara was pleased to be given the opportunity to return to Huddersfield to train to be a Groceries Online Manager in the Sainsbury’s Shorehead store.

“I really enjoyed my job and began to think of it as a possible career path.”

“In my short time with Sainsbury’s, I have managed a full refit, taken my clothing team to 18th on the company and been recognised as part of Inspirational Women in Leadership, a programme that acknowledges and helps further mentor women who have achieved in managerial roles. Hopefully I will continue to progress within the company, and one day become a Store Manager myself and give to other hard working individuals.”
Events Management graduate Samantha Bridge has set up her own charity, The Bridge Project, which hopes to help overcome one of society’s increasing gaps, homelessness. “We aim to raise awareness of homelessness and to beat the stigma that comes along with it,” Sam described.

The charity began by putting together care packages and delivering them to people in need on the streets of Leeds. “The contents of the bag included items such as thermal socks, sandwiches or gloves, but by the second month we were handing out sleeping bags.”

The Bridge Project aims to deliver 100 sleeping bags to the homeless in 2015. Sam would like for her charity to go beyond handing essentials: “We hope to put at least two people into a Travelodge per month so that as they say ‘they can get a bath and a good night’s sleep’.”

“A more distant idea is to form a partnership with a local laundrette so that people who are homeless can wash their clothes more regularly. Also, to work with a local café to introduce suspended/pay it forward coffees, soups and pizza.”

The seeds for The Bridge Project were planted while Sam was still undergoing her Events Management course. To further support her charity, Sam hopes to organize an end of the year ‘Student Clear Out’, initiated by two of her lecturers who have fully supported the idea. “We also hope to hold bi-monthly free jumble sales for the homeless.”

Sam wishes that after she registers the charity and sets up a website it will receive even more support: “These things take time, especially alongside a full time job, but hopefully they will drive more donations and it means we can approach well-known brands such as Pret A Manger, who are known for their support of homelessness. Already, the donations and volunteering are flooding in so it’s exciting to see where this project will end up further down the line.”

We asked Sam how she found her time at Huddersfield: “The lecturers were always willing to help and you could pop into their office for advice at any time. The course content was well rounded and the trips to London and Scotland to visit event venues were a particular highlight of the course.”

“It was interesting to see events from a different angle and to learn how to market them to different audiences. The fundraising and creativity modules were also enjoyable and are aspects that I’ve found myself applying into everyday working life. The dissertation module, however challenging, was very rewarding and the long nights and many hours I poured into it taught me a lot about how far I could push myself.”

“The Business School has great facilities and it was great to have a sense of ‘home’ instead of being scattered across the University.”

In parallel with running her charity, Sam also has a full-time job as a Marketing Assistant in Leeds. As for the future…”Eventually, I’d like to work in an area that combines marketing and events for either a digital or film company. It’s important that the company has creative branding yet offers Freedom to introduce new ideas.”

If you’d like to learn more or get involved in The Bridge Project, follow them on social media:

Facebook.com/thebridgeproject2014
@thebridgeproject

“We aim to raise awareness of homelessness and to beat the stigma that comes along with it”

Samantha Bridge
Hasan has just attended the National Undergraduate Employability (NUE) Awards 2015 for Placement Student of the Year where he came in third out of over 400 nominations. To be selected as a finalist, the students had to have worked at a large company for over 48 weeks, time in which they must have made a significant impact on the business as a whole and stand out as exceptional in comparison to their peers.

There is no doubt that Hasan ticked all the boxes in his time at Rolls Royce. The impact of his work goes beyond the time he spent there as an intern, changing the way the company will carry out some of its procedures in the future: “I was given responsibility for a budget worth nearly £20m and successfully beat it by 20%, resulting in my methods and strategies being rolled out across the whole of Rolls Royce. I also created a bottom-up budget from scratch and a new reporting tool using Excel that gained plaudits across the whole company (including senior directors!) and began the roll-out program to other sites.”

“The highlight of my year has to be finding a fault with a supplier’s invoices. We had been dumped with £100k worth of unexplained invoices for some filters that we could not find anywhere in the building. I began investigating and realised that these were paid and we had been double charged. I set up a meeting with the suppliers and showed my findings. They agreed that a mistake had been made and promptly refunded us the £100k. If only I could keep 10% of everything I save!”

“I would definitely recommend the placement opportunity to everyone. You are given immense responsibility; it’s not just making tea or normal admin tasks every day! How many 19-20 year olds do you know that are given the responsibility to manage a budget worth nearly £20m?”

His first two years at the Business School helped Hasan prepare for the challenges and responsibilities that came with his role: “The University’s emphasis on employability allowed me to make a quick start. The presentation skills learnt during my first two years at university were vital. Admittedly at the start I was nervy and shy but towards the end I was competently presenting to senior directors.”

“The most surprising thing I learnt at university that helped me during my placement was the management practical sessions in Excel. I practically redesigned the whole of Rolls Royce’s financial reporting using the skills learnt in these sessions. I didn’t realise how vital these skills are in the working world until I was actually working.”

Hasan is aiming big for the future. After graduation, he wants to gain a professional qualification, then get a spot in a finance graduate scheme and work his way up through the company: “Using the knowledge and money gained in these roles I want to start up my own business that will be both profitable and help local communities, in particular, helping troubled youths.”

What the employers say

“Hasan has been a real asset, being the ‘go-to’ man for consumable spend, op costs, charge questions. Hasan is supportive, friendly and approachable which meant we worked effectively in resolving problems together.”

Nick MacPhail, Improvement Leader

“Hasan became a key member of the team and the processes he has put in place will certainly be continued as a vital part of running our business.”

Jody Coleman, PCF Manager

His end goal? “Happily retire at 40.”
We strongly believe in backing up academic knowledge with industry experience to ensure our graduates are well rounded and prepared for the diverse world of work. That’s why every single one of our courses offers workplace opportunities. Sandwich courses involve a 12 month work placement between the second and final year of study and are proving more popular than ever, with endless opportunities. Here are just a few of the places our students are currently located on placement.

Placement map

IN BRIEF

Doctoral student Charlotte Warin has recently been appointed to the British Academy of Management (BAM) Council. The Business Management graduate was fast-tracked to PhD study through a Scholarship scheme at the University after graduating with a 1st class honours degree. “In September of last year I attended the BAM conference in Belfast and had a really wonderful time, it really opened my eyes and fuelled my enthusiasm for academia! Since the conference I’ve kept a keen eye on BAM events and news, so when I discovered that the BAM Council was holding elections for Doctoral representatives I jumped at the chance.”

This year we’ve launched a unique Master’s course in Human Resource Management (HHRM) that takes you from undergraduate to postgraduate certification in just four years (five with a placement). It is the only such integrated programme in the country. Janet Handley, Head of the Department of People, Management and Organisations, described how; “It is a huge opportunity for those wanting to combine real-world HR and business experience with potential professional body membership and it culminates in the ultimately employable graduate.”

**Our Placement Unit among top in the country**

The Business School Placement Unit was shortlisted as one of the four finalists for Best University Placement Service as part of the National Undergraduate Employment Promotion Awards 2015. Making it to the final demonstrates the tireless and invaluable contributions that the Placement Unit team have made in helping our students apply and maximise their work experience opportunities.

**HUSSi in for the win**

Andy Chalmers is one of our Sports Promotion and Marketing students and a member of the Huddersfield University Snow Sport Inclusive (HUSSI) society. Andy and his team secured first place in the snowboarding relay at the British University Indoor Series North heat at Xscape, Castleford. The team will go forward for Best University Placement Service as part of the National Undergraduate Employment Promotion Awards 2015. Making it to the final demonstrates the tireless and invaluable contributions that the Placement Unit team have made in helping our students apply and maximise their work experience opportunities.
Open Day Diary

Visit us at the Business School on one of our undergraduate Open Days!

- Wednesday 24 June 2015
- Thursday 25 June 2015
- Saturday 19 September 2015
- Saturday 24 October 2015
- Friday 4 December 2015

Book now at www.hud.ac.uk/open-days

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