

Issue thirteen summer 2013 www.mmu.ac.uk

Success

The University for World-Class Professionals



Manchester
Metropolitan
University

The business of law

**Manchester Law School
special**



Opinion

Dianne Thompson CBE
on aiming high in life

Features

The truth about
modern couples

Research

Innovative research
from across the
University

Meet Our Alumni

Restaurateur Lisa Tse
shares her skills and
knowledge

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Success

Issue thirteen summer 2013
Success is published by Manchester
Metropolitan University

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Is UK Higher Education a success or a failure?

There has been much press interest in the impact of the new free market and fee regime on UK Higher Education, and as we approach the second year of entry, it is timely to reflect upon the sector's successes and failures. The principles driving the new HE Policy Framework are relatively uncontested, namely:

1. Graduates should make a contribution towards the cost of their Higher Education.
2. A free market should be created, differentiated by price and quality.
3. Potential students should be provided with information to help them make intelligent choices.

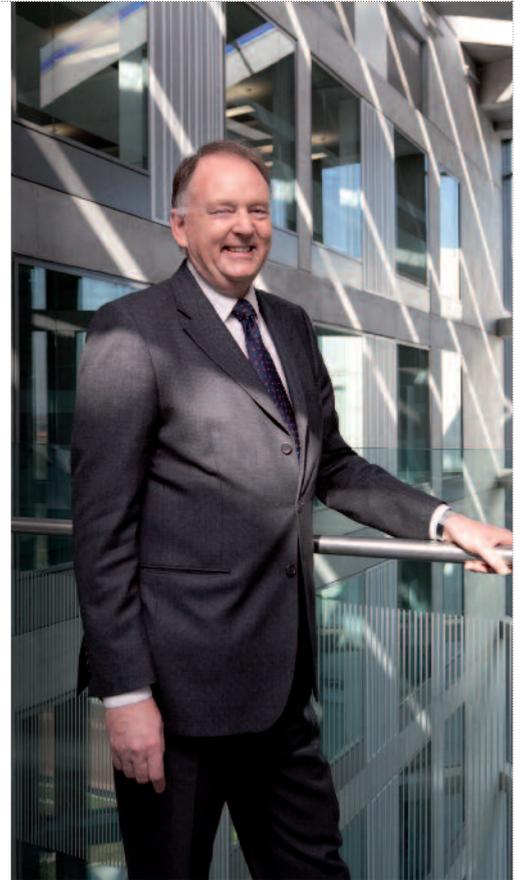
In 2013, we are beginning to see the real impact of the free market with students making clearly informed choices, which are having a big impact on the popularity of courses and universities. We are approaching the closure of the 2013 UCAS application cycle and some key trends are emerging. There is a modest bounce back across the sector, with an increase in applications (compared to 2012) of 3%, but this varies by region. The North West in 2013 has a more modest increase of 1.9%, although this is on the back of a 15% decrease in total applications between entry for 2011 and 2012.

Manchester Metropolitan University has seen an increase of 8% with a significant rise in our absolute numbers

of unconditional and conditional first choices. This is great news for us, and an indicator that the values and reputation of the 'University for World-Class Professionals' are well received. Whilst this is a sign of success for MMU, it comes with downsides, as some of our region's universities are experiencing a further downturn in their undergraduate applications for entry this September.

It is clear that the introduction of much higher tuition fees is having an impact. This is the Government's free market in action, allowing students access to more comparative institutional information than ever before to choose their university. This commoditisation does ignore the broader benefits of Higher Education to society, the regions and the UK; it also has a major impact for universities such as MMU and our ability to help.

Since 1824, we have a proud history of providing accessible education to all students with the ability to succeed, and an unshakeable belief that going to university can transform a person's future. We already give more money in bursaries and scholarships than any other UK university (over £13m in 2012) to over 44% of new first year students from low-income backgrounds. Some of this funding is also in part thanks to our donors and benefactors who play a key role in supporting our aims and ambitions through private and corporate donations – for which we are very grateful.



Whilst the future for Higher Education may be somewhat uncertain, my priority is to ensure that MMU enters this new era with a very strong proposition and solid reputation. A £350m investment in world-class buildings, services and facilities, and a sound financial footing are backed by a commitment to first-class academic and professional staff to make our students' experience as good as it can be. And as always, my absolute priority is to ensure that our great University goes from strength to strength.

Professor John Brooks
Vice-Chancellor
Manchester Metropolitan University



Manchester School of Art 175th celebration

This year marks 175 years of the Manchester School of Art, and to celebrate there will be 175 public events and exhibitions, several overseas, which will present challenging and spectacular art from staff, students and alumni.

The programme will further cement the School's place as one of the oldest (1838) and largest providers of art and design courses in the UK, with a history encompassing crucial moments in the women's liberation movement and Manchester's art history.

The 175 anniversary events will not only celebrate the School's rich heritage but will also look to the future with the opening of the £34m Manchester School of Art building, in which many high profile events, such as the annual degree show, fashion shows, the MA show and art school conversations, will be held.

Events within the 175 programme will be recognisable by the 175 branding designed exclusively for Manchester School of Art by internationally renowned designer, Ian Anderson, from The Designers Republic.

www.artdes.mmu.ac.uk/175

Guardian award for student experience

The University has won the Student Experience Award at the inaugural *Guardian* University Awards.

Presenting the award, BBC education correspondent Reeta Chakrabarti said the University's project to improve the academic experience, called EQAL, was "ambitious in its pace and scale" and was "quite exceptional".

EQAL has seen the University transform its undergraduate curriculum, processes and learning technology to improve student learning and satisfaction, and led to a six per cent jump in satisfaction in the National Student Survey.

Vice-Chancellor Professor John Brooks said EQAL had "helped put the student academic experience at the heart of everything we do" and said it was a proud day for everyone to win the first ever *Guardian* Student Experience Award.

Boxing champion tests mouthguards

Boxing champion Amir Khan made a special trip to the University's Cheshire campus to take part in tests on mouthguards.

The sports star travelled to Crewe with the team from Piranha Guard to test the protection given by their product, and also took time out to speak to the University's boxing club.

The testing was carried out by the sports science team at the University,

led by Dr Keith Winwood, senior lecturer in biomechanics at the Institute for Performance Research, part of the Department of Exercise and Sports Science. Also working on the project were Craig Boyd, Christopher Maryan and Clare Pheasey.

Dr Winwood said: "We were very excited to work with Amir; he was a true professional and a gentleman. Facial injury in sport can have serious implications to athletes and sports participants and trying to raise the awareness of these issues is crucial for their reduction."



Cheshire students learn from the best

Students at the University's Cheshire campus have had the opportunity to learn from the very best at a weekend workshop with Heineken International.

Heineken International's area export manager Naheed Younis (pictured), who studied business and finance at the University and who was profiled in the last issue of *Success*, organised the

mock assessment centre for eight final year students who received advice on everything from CVs and interviews to presenting business ideas.

Four final year students have also been given the chance to take part in a hands-on two month project helping to develop a beer brand within Manchester.

'iThink Therefore iPad?' conference



North West educators are welcoming the technical revolution in the classroom with the help of the University.

The 'iThink Therefore iPad?' conference at Manchester Central explored the potential mobile technology has to transform learning from early years through to Higher Education.

Duncan Silcock, a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Education says: "We saw the potential and how big this could be in schools and started to look at training

UK Nuclear Apprentice of the Year

Bachelor of Engineering student Andrew Hudson has been named UK Nuclear Apprentice of the Year at the UK Nuclear Skills Awards.

Part-time Andrew Hudson, 22, also won the Supply Chain Nuclear Apprentice of the Year category.

After leaving college, Andrew completed an advanced engineering apprenticeship in science, engineering and manufacturing technologies via Training 2000 and is now in his first year of a part-time B Eng in mechanical engineering at the University.

His degree is sponsored by his employer, Lancashire-based Graham Engineering Ltd and he shares his week between study and his industry position.

During his apprenticeship, Andrew developed an interest in robotics, which has led to him becoming the lead programmer at the company.

Graham Engineering's managing director Ian Bannister said: "Andrew's success underpins the huge skill base across the SME aspect of the nuclear supply chain, and demonstrates the high technical capability that is available to be utilised to train our new generation engineers."

teachers and educators on the best ways to utilise this technology.

"Used well, a personalised device such as an iPad has the potential to revolutionise education and we want to support schools to develop this."

Around 280 delegates including representatives from the Department for Education's Innovation Unit attended the event to look in detail at classroom uses for Apple's iPad, iPad Mini and iPod Touch.



Informing aviation policy

Environmental scientists from the University are advising on one of the key transport questions for the UK – the future of London’s airports.

Professor Paul Hooper has been appointed by Mayor of London Boris Johnson to address what he calls the “nation’s aviation crisis”.

Professor Hooper, who has previously advised Heathrow on environmental management, is part of a select ‘Peer Review Group’ invited by Transport for London to provide independent advice and expertise to the Mayor, in a personal capacity.

The panel are tasked with reviewing the work of the TfL to ensure it is robust and credible ahead of a submission to the Davies Commission, one of the advisers to which is Professor Callum Thomas, Chair of Sustainable Aviation at the University’s Centre for Aviation Transport and the Environment.

Professor Thomas, a former executive at Manchester Airport, is one of the pioneers of environmental management at airports worldwide.

www.cate.mmu.ac.uk

Nursing’s double win



Nursing at Manchester Metropolitan University is the best in the country – according to students.

Staff at the Gaskell campus have earned the title Nursing Education Provider of the Year (Pre-Registration), and also won Partnership of the Year with Stockport NHS in the Student Times Nursing Awards 2013.

Paul Tubbs, Head of Nursing, said: “It means a lot to be given these awards by the students. What it reflects is the quality of the programme and the feeling among the students that we provide the best education.”

He put the win down to the high level of personal support that is offered to students, and the teamwork that takes place within the department, praising Jacqui Gladwin and her team for creating such a positive atmosphere among the staff and students.

The awards come after Nursing courses at the University were named in the Top 20 nationally in the Complete University Guide 2014.

“Employability among MMU students is very high because they have good levels of clinical skills, they’re well educated and highly professional.”

Nursing is among the courses moving to brand new premises at the University’s new £139m Birley Fields campus in September 2014.

James Brownhill Memorial Award

The second annual awards in memory of a MMU student who died while climbing in the French Alps were presented in May.

Jodie Wynne (pictured holding shield) received the James Brownhill Memorial Award for Clinical Excellence in recognition of her outstanding work while on clinical placement practice for her physiotherapy degree.

Physiotherapy programme leader Janet Rooney said: “James excelled in clinical practice and so it is only fitting that to remember him we present the award to

the student who in their final year gained the highest marks for their clinical placements.”

James had just completed his degree in physiotherapy when he was killed while climbing in Chamonix in 2011. His climbing partner, Dave Evans, also died in the accident. His parents Gary and Christine Brownhill set up the prize in memory of James who was just 22 when he died. The prize will continue to be awarded for the next 10 years.

www.jbmf.co.uk



Aiming higher

Dianne Thompson CBE, University Chancellor and CEO of Camelot Group of Companies, which is responsible for operating the UK National Lottery, shares some advice about the importance of aiming high in life.



I am frequently asked questions about my career, and how I ended up doing what I do. It is a combination of many things, including very hard work, being in the right place at the right time, constantly learning, and knowing and networking with good people. In this column, I want to talk about aiming higher – setting the bar as high as possible in whatever you choose to do in life.

I often use the phrase ‘aim high’ in business and in private. For many, it tends not to be so much about aiming high and possibly falling short, but is rather about aiming relatively low and getting there easily. And that’s understandable. Many of us are tempted to remain in our comfort zones, and so do not set challenging targets or ambitions for fear of not reaching them or because they seem unobtainable – so we think: “Why bother trying?”

Personally, I believe that having a series of priorities that balance your current situation with your medium and long-term goals is the way to go. Maintaining perspective on your achievements to date and your current situation, whilst developing your career and life-aims is an important balance to get right. If necessary, write your goals down and make it a part of your plan to develop

them over time, returning to them and adjusting them accordingly. If you are true to yourself, these goals will stretch you and will serve as tangible targets to aim for, both in your career and in your personal life. I have learnt from a wide range of people during my career and they all manage to maintain perspective, whilst striving for multiple goals both personally and professionally.

Seek out role models and mentors, find people both in business and in life who inspire you and don’t be afraid to think that you too can be like them. Believing in yourself is half of the battle in achieving success in any sphere – if you don’t, it’s almost impossible to make others believe in you. And if you aim high and don’t quite get there, you can be almost certain that you’ll still have got an awful lot further than you would if you hadn’t tried in the first place.

Developing your personal life and career is a continuous journey of knowledge, experience, networking and improvement. If you do not set goals for improvement, then you are likely to remain rooted in your comfort zone. You may actively decide that you are happiest in this zone and that any progression is not wanted or sought. But I think if we’re honest, most of us want to keep moving on and developing

in both our professional and private lives. And unless we’re very lucky, things are unlikely to just fall into our laps. We have to make them happen.

In business, we carefully plan strategy, tactics and budget for a year or more in advance, often with stretching targets that make us aim higher. I would counsel that at least once a year, we should all review our career, our lives and our future direction and apply the same rigour as a business does to achieving future targets.

Applying the same logic to our work and personal lives is a good discipline to get into. Whether you are contemplating further study, a change of career, a promotion or achieving a personal goal like buying a house, or running a marathon, then actively working towards the goal you have set will ensure you have examined your options and are channelling your energies in the right direction.

Don’t be afraid and just go for it – it has certainly worked for me!

Dianne Thompson CBE graduated from Manchester Polytechnic in French and English and was a Business School Lecturer in the 1980s.

The business of law

In the midst of a huge shift in the way legal services are delivered, Miceál Barden, Head of the Manchester Law School, discusses how new legal sector models for education are being shaped.



Legal services are being commoditised. The traditional roles are being broken down into smaller processes and this is creating lucrative opportunities for professionals in the legal sector to enter into new models for legal service delivery. Paralegalism is set to become a legitimate graduate career and The Co-operative is already rewarding their Probate Case Handlers with an annual salary of £50,000.

We are working in partnership with the Co-operative to face this evolution of service that will effectively turn them into one of the largest legal services providers in the country. The professional development we will offer their employees means they will be able to progress with professional agility in this time of unprecedented change.

Joint strengths of business and law

The link between business and law is becoming more prominent in a marketplace that is taking ownership of legal services within its own commercial context. This impacts on how legal education will be strategically delivered in the future. The Business School and Manchester Law School merged last year to become the Faculty of Business and Law to address this change. We can use the joint strength of our history and expertise to provide thorough legal education training for these new times.

The shift is also framed by the Legal Education and Training Review, which looks to ensure that the future system of

legal training and education meets the needs of consumers, and in effect meets the need for career opportunities for those undertaking such training.

While we recognise these exciting new conditions, we are also committed to delivering the full picture of law. Law degree programmes will always be highly regarded academic achievements and we will continue to produce fully-qualified legal professionals who are able to work both nationally and internationally. Employability statistics for our law graduates stand at an impressive 96% for our most recent cohort alone. Ultimately, law is a discipline that has the ability to exist in its own sector and be transferred into a range of other relevant contexts.

Importance of partnerships

We are working to synthesise the elements that are in crisis within the sector and streamline a service by working closely with firms in order to support and develop their workforce.

Our vision is to be a professional and inclusive learning community, which values and realises the potential of every student and member of staff.

Strategic partnerships have always been of immense importance to the Law School. We work with a wide array of top law firms and organisations across the North West and beyond. Our professional partners include New Charter Housing Trust Group, a £90m-turnover social housing provider employing some 800 people, and Duncan Gibbins Solicitors which offers two annual scholarships.

In addition, we offer continuous professional development routes through which those already working in the sector can elect to take unit options from our postgraduate courses in order to enrich and support their development.

Building a Law School for the future

We have the expertise to develop legal professionals for the new market who have the qualifications and skills to make their firms grow – and we are already in the business of training graduates and professionals for the new legal services world.

Co-operative Legal Services is the paradigm example of the future of legal services. They are at the forefront of this systemic change and as their training partner we have remodelled what a university Law School is capable of delivering.

www.law.mmu.ac.uk

Strategic partnerships

Duncan Gibbins Solicitors

Law student Holly Saunders was awarded the prestigious Duncan Gibbins Solicitors prize after just one semester. The honour came after Holly ranked top

of her year group with a score of 85% for her Tort Law mooting assignment.

The awards are organised by the Duncan Gibbins Academy and the University's careers service to help students stand out in the job market.



Holly Saunders with Shereef Hosny from Duncan Gibbins

The Co-operative Legal Services

Manchester Law School is to run an academy for The Co-operative Legal Services – a venture adapting to changes in the legal market enabling The Co-operative to become the first major high street brand to offer consumers a full range of legal services.

The academy will offer employees on different career paths the opportunity to develop skills, build knowledge and deliver the highest standards of customer service.

Raising the bar

Manchester Law School became the first place to study for the Bar outside London in the 1990s and *Success* meets some of the alumni who have qualified since then.

As a child, Robert Monks harboured two ambitions: one to become a Barrister-at-Law, the other to drive. It was the latter which came to the fore first and saw him become a driver, trucking across Europe before his work as a union rep opened the doors to a career change, which has taken him to the top of his profession.

As General Secretary of the United Road Transport Union, Rob is responsible for 14,000 members and 125 years of tradition in protecting their rights and interests.

Coming to the law as a mature student, Rob had graduated in 1999, and practised at chambers in Leeds and London until the opportunity to lead his union arose in 2002.

“For someone who has been a committed Trade Unionist from his teens, the opportunity to become a national General Secretary was a proud moment and too good an opportunity to miss,” he says. “I feel that, through my legal training, I have been able to give something back to the movement, by helping many members in the decisions that I take.”

So, what are his personal yardsticks of success? “In my current role, success is when you have been able to help someone whom is unable to help themselves. For them then to say ‘thank you’ . . . now that is success. It can only be achieved by hard work and dedication.”



Victoria Hanley-Emilsson is a polymath who in her early thirties has risen to a senior legal post in the European Union in Brussels.

A pure maths graduate, Victoria speaks six languages, and has three degrees in law, including a barrister’s qualification from MMU.

“On completion of my undergraduate degree, I was struggling to find a relevant profession,” she admits, “but pursuing a career in law has allowed me to apply the logic of my maths and interpretation of my languages skills in a way that has clear impact on people’s lives.

“Being from the North West, I was delighted to discover that there were quality Bar Vocational Courses outside of London and having already undertaken a Masters degree in Manchester, I had become quite attached to the city.”

Victoria stays in touch with her fellow Bar course graduates who, she says, have taken quite different paths: the criminal Bar, the London commercial Bar and practise within firms of solicitors.

She herself worked at a string of law firms in Manchester, Brussels and Paris before working in London for Ofcom and then beating off fierce competition to land her current post as a high-flying lawyer at the Court of Justice in

Luxembourg, where she works to keep the EU abreast of legal developments in the UK.



Podcasting barristers Kirstin Beswick and Ben Knight love mixing law with a bit of showbiz!

Both self-employed barristers based at Central Chambers in Manchester, Ben and Kirstin are responsible for NorthPod Law, a podcast blog which they refer to as 'The Show'.

NorthPod Law presents updates on legal matters in the public eye and provides a useful update tool for those in the justice system as well as non-lawyers who want to hear the legal reality behind the headlines.

"Since we started, we have tried to do a bit of myth-busting where high-profile cases are misreported," says Ben. "We do legal updating in areas like crime, family, personal injury, intellectual property and immigration.

"We have covered the 'No to PCT' and 'No to QASA' campaigns and produced a live netcast from MMU with a panel of experts on why those schemes are bad for the future of the professions and for the justice system."

Says Kirstin: "We've been remarkably good at predicting future legal events

and outcomes. The show's really hard work but very rewarding. We're loving it."

Kirstin had always wanted to be a barrister after watching *Crown Court* as a young child but had never thought someone with her background could do it. She says: "Instead I went on to do a degree in Maths at St Andrews University. Then I discovered you could do the CPE and BVC (as it was then) at MMU.

"I was really lucky and had a great tutor group on the BVC. Nearly all of us got pupillage eventually. All 12 of us helped one another on the course and were prepared to give each other truthful, constructive feedback. It meant that when I left MMU I was about as prepared as you can be for a career as an advocate."

Ben studied law as an undergraduate in Sheffield and then Paris before coming to Bar School at MMU. "Going into publicly-funded areas such as crime and family law, I really didn't think I could afford to study in London or survive there financially during pupillage. Manchester seemed like the obvious alternative.

"I work alongside and against graduates of the BVC (BPTC as it is



now) every day and I am sometimes against former tutors in court.

"MMU was good at providing links to the profession on the circuit. That's a big deal if you aim to work in this area. It really helps to have met counsel from pretty much every chambers in Manchester/Liverpool. "

"The advocacy sessions with counsel were as much about making contacts as they were about learning practical advocacy. Kirstin and I even teach on them ourselves now."

www.northpodlaw.co.uk



Before her legal career, Lucy Mair worked in the field of human rights for over a decade, most recently at Human Rights Watch, during which time she opened and managed the first Jerusalem field office and researched and authored several full-length human rights reports.

She has also worked as a freelance consultant for international aid agencies and holds a Masters degree in Human Rights from Columbia University.

Lucy studied for both the Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL) and Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC) at Manchester Law School and says: "I studied for my GDL at Manchester Law School and so it was the obvious place to continue my professional training and

complete my BPTC qualification. I was keen to study at a university rather than a commercial provider, and to have access to all the specialist research as well as teaching facilities and high quality of tutors."

After completing her studies at MMU, Lucy was called to the Bar in 2011 and undertook pupillage at Garden Court North Chambers. After the completion of her pupillage, Lucy was taken on as a tenant and practises in immigration, prison and public law.

"I practise in areas of law that I feel passionately about and where I hope we, as barristers, can make a tangible difference in the lives of vulnerable and marginalised individuals."

www.law.mmu.ac.uk

Judgement call

His Honour Judge Iain Hamilton tells *Success* about his career as a circuit judge.

It was a local chip shop owner who suggested Iain Hamilton should study law due to his obvious talent for a good debate.

After a BA (Hons) in Law at Manchester Polytechnic in 1973 and training as a solicitor, he started at a small firm in Stockport on just £8 a week.

His Honour Judge Hamilton now sits as circuit judge in family cases at Manchester Civil Justice Centre and criminal cases at Manchester Crown Court.

He was appointed Designated Family Judge for Greater Manchester in 2005 and is a nominated judge for the Court of Protection dealing with welfare issues in vulnerable adults.

It was through his early career in different roles that Judge Hamilton developed an interest in family law. By 1994, he was largely specialising in this area and was headhunted to join the Manchester practice of Jones, Maidment & Wilson (now JMW). He became the head of their Family Department until his appointment to the circuit bench six years later.

Along the way, changes in the law around divorce, domestic violence and children afforded him opportunities to develop his skills further in these areas. He said: "When I started working I realised the law could be an effective tool to help people deal with all manner of difficulties especially in the fields of crime and family.

"Being the Designated Family Judge of the biggest care centre outside London is very demanding. However, it is not only a privilege that allows me to make a real contribution to the area but it is, in my view, one of the best jobs a family judge could have.

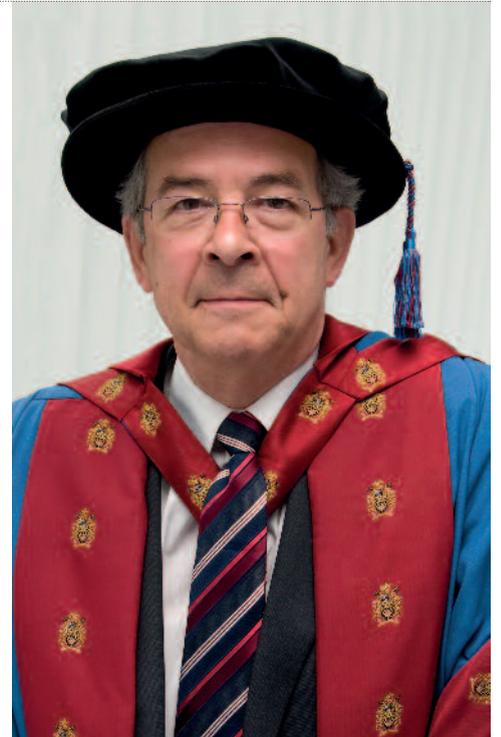
"People and their social and family relationship problems interest me. I think I have always had a strong sense of justice and fair play."

Due to the ever-changing nature of law and public perceptions of duties of care, Judge Hamilton is aware of the issues and challenges facing his profession in the future.

He continued: "Much media criticism of those involved in child protection and social work practice is not truly justified. Widespread criticisms are levelled against practitioners based on a limited number of cases that the media have given a high profile. Broadly speaking, those who do their jobs properly and conscientiously will avoid unjust criticism.

"The family justice system is about to undergo some significant changes in modernisation and reform. I have the task of leading the judicial input and helping to shape the culture and practice of professionals to enable us all to deliver quicker but well-informed decisions and welfare outcomes for children."

Judge Hamilton's ties to the city and Manchester Metropolitan University



remain strong with his wife and daughter both completing courses here and his son having strong links with the area. He was made an Honorary Doctor of Health at MMU in July 2010 (as pictured).

Faced with work of such social importance, Judge Hamilton is grateful for the training on which his expertise was built.

"Manchester Polytechnic gave me a well-rounded and practical appreciation of a broad spectrum of subjects which I was subsequently able to apply in practice," he said.

"The Legal Practice Course and the Bar Professional Training Course run by MMU are highly regarded within the professions locally and the University's influence is widespread among the legal sector."

Experts in their field

Mandy Isles, a principal lecturer on the Legal Practice Course, has been made a Deputy District Judge for the North of England and will sit in civil hearings on issues such as disputes, divorce and insolvency.

Senior lecturer **Geraldine O'Donnell** has been appointed a Tribunal Judge and will be part of The First-tier Tribunal,

which deal with appeals against decisions made by the Department for Work and Pensions, as well as other Government departments and local authorities.

Colleagues Margaret McDonald and Mark Benson are also Deputy District Judges, while Nessa Sharkett sits as an Employment Tribunal Chair.

Root and branch

Researchers in the School of Science and the Environment discuss the growing challenges facing forests across the globe.



Ash dieback

When ash dieback hit the headlines, Dr Robin Sen, a reader in soil microbial ecology and biotechnology, was among the first experts to appear on national TV and radio to explain the nature and gravity of the threat.

The disease is caused by a fungus, *Chalara fraxinea*, which has spread through Europe killing up to 80 per cent of ash trees in the last two decades. There appears to be limited host resistance to this devastating infection.

Dr Sen, who has extensive experience of working in forest microbial ecology and pathology, is greatly concerned by the loss of forestry and, particularly, mycology from British university curricula, which he feels has negatively impacted on research and development in the UK. In *The Times*, he stated that: "Education and research funding in forestry has dwindled so far that the UK now faces a forest ecosystem services crisis at this critical juncture."

He has also said in the BBC interviews that the loss of millions of ash trees would be a massive blow to UK biodiversity and ecosystem services at a time of increasing pressures linked to climate change.

He is now advising the Government's Parliamentary and Scientific Committee and its President Lord Jenkin on tree disease control and biosecurity risks associated with imports of wood biomass for electricity generation. Information he provided has been used in Parliamentary Questions tabled to the Government.

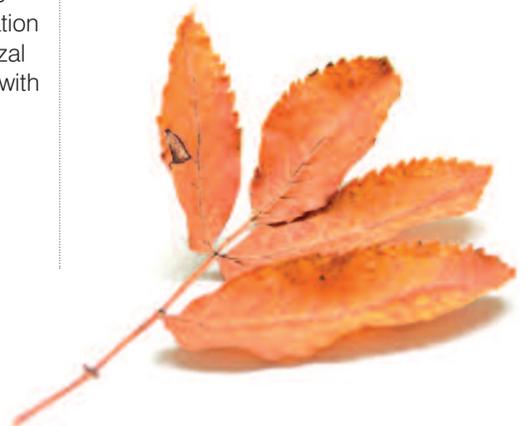
"It is well established that global agro-forestry trading, lacking strictly enforced bio-security controls, presents ideal conditions for the rapid spread of diseases such as ash dieback," says Dr Sen. "The import of ash seedlings from nurseries in other European countries with high prevalence of the disease should have rung alarm bells long before now."



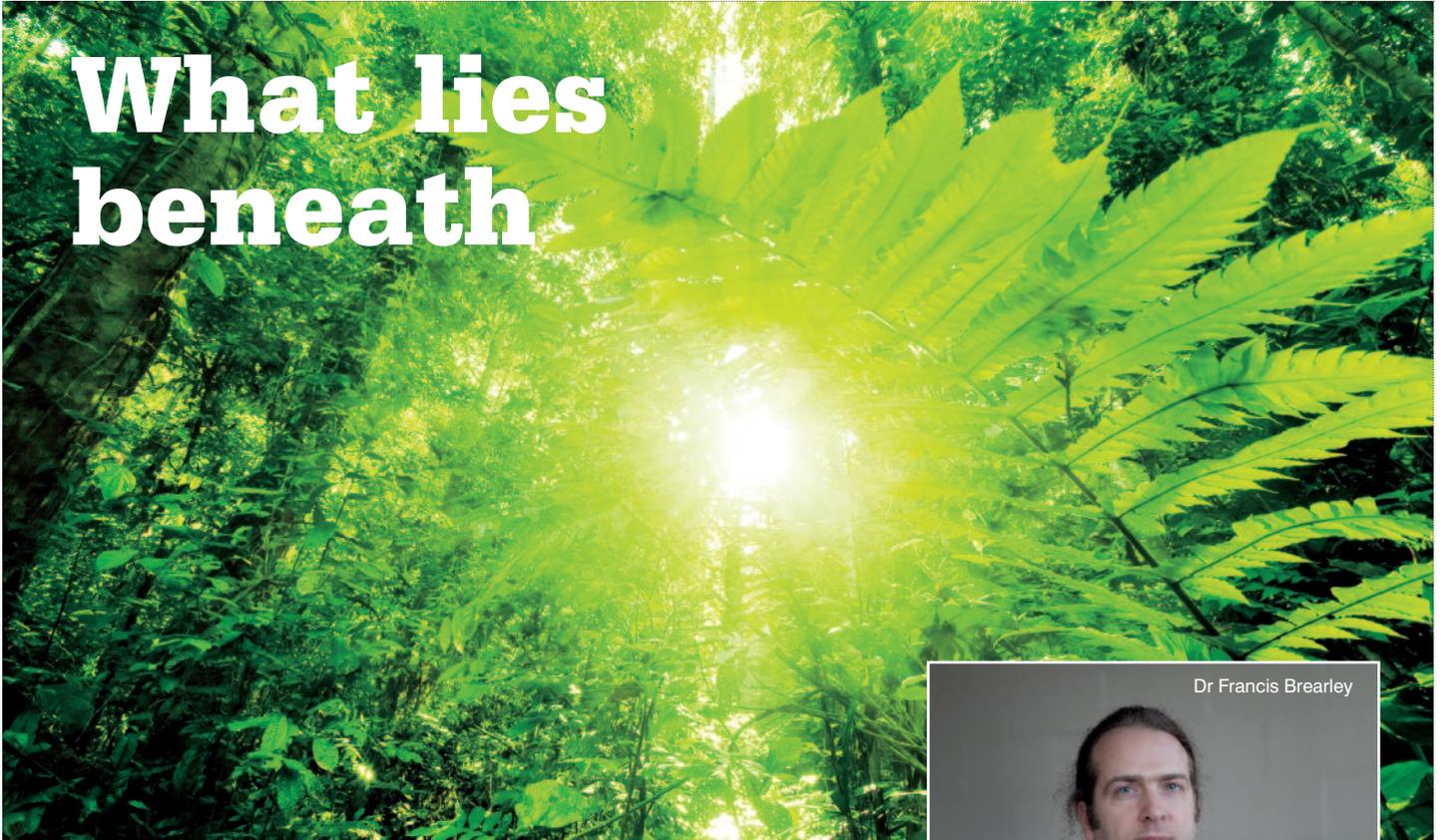
Ash was a common sight across the UK and particularly in the Peak District National Park, and its loss is having catastrophic consequences. Dr Sen insists that investment is now essential to recover lost capacity and expertise: "We need to forge closer partnerships with international organisations to develop an early warning system to ensure rapid control and management of emerging diseases."

Among projects, he is also working with the Forestry Commission on developing low-input sustainable production of nursery Scots pine tree seedlings that involves novel application of beneficial root symbiotic mycorrhizal fungi. It is hoped fungal interactions with tree roots could help trigger ash defence responses.

"Education and research funding in forestry has dwindled so far that the UK now faces a forest ecosystem services crisis at this critical juncture."



What lies beneath



Dr Francis Brearley

Climatic and human impacts are creating a combined threat to much of the tropical rainforest, with implications for ecosystems and animal life, according to Dr Francis Brearley, Senior Lecturer in Ecology.

And with the increased disturbance and destruction of primary forests, understanding the dynamics and recovery of emerging secondary forests is of increasing importance.

Dr Brearley specialises in diversity in tropical forests, analysing the linkages between diversity below and above the ground to analyse how human disturbances and interactions affect tropical biodiversity.

Since 1998 he has been conducting ongoing research in Borneo, where there is a large demand for land and timber, looking specifically at re-growth of forests following disturbance.

He explains: "We have a series of trees marked out in permanent quadrats of 50 metres square. We know when the forest was cut down and the age of the

secondary forest so we can look at the changes in species composition over time. The younger forests are dominated by a few species, maybe 10 or 15. The community becomes more even and more diverse over time.

"Ultimately we'd expect some sort of convergence with the undisturbed forest but that would certainly be over 100 years. So we need to establish the attributes of these secondary ecosystems. In the tropics, now, we have a mosaic of systems, some undisturbed, some highly disturbed, some recovering and some converted to agriculture."

In French Guiana deforestation levels are low, where, as part of the EU, there is less pressure and demand for land.

Dr Brearley's objective is to determine the species diversity beneath the land surface: "We know that tropical forests are some of the most diverse ecosystems above ground but are they equally diverse below ground? Looking at one type of fungi, we initially found that the diversity below ground was

fairly similar to temperate ecosystems. Now we want to discover if below ground is somehow different by extending that to other groups of organisms.

"Clearly micro-organisms are important; some improve plant nutrient uptake and many break down organic matter and make it available to plants. They are influential in affecting a whole range of greenhouse and other gases. Micro-organisms functioning below ground are vital. We're walking on them every day but we don't give them sufficient thought."

www.sste.mmu.ac.uk

Breaking down barriers

Mohammad Habeebullah OBE hopes that his gift to establish a scholarship for multimedia journalism at the University will help to address some of the misconceptions associated with Black and Minority Ethnic communities.



“Communication is the best way to break down misunderstanding.” So says Mohammad Habeebullah OBE, the former Rochdale youth worker and community figurehead who has funded the Al-Habeeb Scholarship for students applying to study for the MA in Multimedia Journalism at the University.

The donation, which will provide one award of £5,000 over each of the next four years, is aimed at students with an interest in the issues facing the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities.

Mr Habeebullah, who completed his postgraduate studies in Youth and Community Work at the University’s Faculty of Education in 1981, says he hopes the move will help break down some of the myths surrounding BME communities.

He says: “I am involved in a lot of social and community work and projects surrounding cohesion among communities. What I noticed is that sometimes, particularly with second generation people, there is a bit of a misconception in terms of expressing their feelings – BME communities’ issues can be stereotyped and there are a lot of myths.

“I hope this scholarship will bring professionals into TV, radio, newspapers, and continue these discussions to help the community. All of us have something to contribute.”

MA Multimedia Journalism Programme Leader Mandy Leigh said: “We are absolutely delighted that Mr Habeebullah chose students on our innovative Journalism Masters degree to benefit from this very generous scholarship. As a former newspaper editor I am well aware that black and ethnic minorities are seriously under represented in newsrooms across the UK. Hopefully the students who benefit from this scholarship will be encouraged to redress the balance and raise awareness of news and issues affecting those communities.”

Born in Bangladesh, Mr Habeebullah moved to Britain 40 years ago and now lives in Prestwich. For the last 20 years he has been a magistrate in Rochdale, a position which has strongly shaped his view of how we should deal with young people in danger of going off the rails.

“As a magistrate I see the effect of poverty and lack of opportunities,” he says. “People need help and training to get out of that cycle.”

Talking about the rise in the number of radical young people both in the Muslim community and in far-right organisations, he says: “I feel there is not enough context for these young people to come together and learn about each other’s cultures. This country is a melting pot, just like the US, and we can all bring something to society.”

“We have all taken from society and in a small way we are now established – now it is time to give back.”

Speaking to him, the idea that everyone can give something back is a recurring theme, and clearly one that informs all or Mr Habeebullah’s work, from the Kashmir Youth Project that he helped found more than 25 years ago, and which has since trained more than two thousand young people and adults in accredited courses, to the MMU scholarship and his related work in high schools.

“My feeling is that every individual must contribute,” he says. “We have all taken from society and in a small way we are now established – now it is time to give back.”

Later, he adds: “Rochdale was where the Co-operative Society started – they had ideas, not necessarily money. Those ideas not only improved the local community, they sold nationally and internationally and now people all over the world are using the Co-operative model.

“Our people have a lot of potential – we need to help nurture that. That’s what I think everyone should do. Everyone has something to contribute, it’s just a case of finding it.”

Although it is more than 30 years since Mr Habeebullah studied at MMU, his memories of his time here are still strong, and he credits his teachers with helping him become the man he is today. “I had a good time at MMU,” he says. “The teachers were very friendly and we were allowed to reach our potential. The environment helps you develop yourself – they were always open to ideas. One particular highlight was having the chance to go and look at youth services in Holland – to be able to compare different youth services across Europe was very interesting and useful.”

He adds that he is “very proud” to be a graduate, can see “a great future for the University” and is “impressed with the work the University does in going out to help disadvantaged students.”

“Those of us who have gone from the University take those ethics that first you help support yourself and then you give something back,” he says.

He said the highlights of his career since leaving University have included setting up the Kashmir Youth Project and receiving his OBE at Buckingham Palace last December.

“It was a surprise when I found out I had been nominated for an OBE,” he says. “The feeling that the community groups felt I had done something worthwhile is remarkable. I felt I was going in the place of a lot of other volunteers so it was also for them – I’m representing their hard work up and down the country.”

**For more about postgraduate scholarships, go to:
www.mmu.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/scholarships**

Helping to grow small businesses

Manchester Metropolitan University boasts one of the UK's leading small business research centres – and one of its flagship projects is backing the men and women behind these firms to get the region's economy back on track.

The Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses* programme, run from the University's Business School, has worked with more than 100 firms across the North West to mentor managers and entrepreneurs to success.

The initiative, which is supported by the Goldman Sachs Foundation, is designed for leaders of established small businesses who are hand-picked for their potential to drive growth.

Participants benefit from a high quality, comprehensive package of support and expertise to help them take their businesses to the next level and one of those already to benefit is Andy Southern, the second-generation business owner of Stockport-based Windmill Tapes and Labels.

The business was one of the first participants in the elite programme and Mr Southern says working with MMU's experts and exploiting their impressive contacts book has helped him develop a strategy for growth which is already paying off with increased orders and additional recruits, taking his workforce from 34 to 50 employees.

Andy, who started working for his father's business 25 years ago, completed the intensive four-month programme which combines sessions

with experts on skill development, with action learning and solution-sharing with like-minded business people.

Earlier this summer, an independent report on the Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses* programme underlined the impact of the scheme since its launch in 2010. The report – *Stimulating Small Business Growth* – charts the rise of the first 250 enterprises to have completed the intensive programme, run in the North West with MMU, and also in Leeds, Birmingham and London.

Data collected independently from programme alumni and published in the progress report indicates that the intervention is helping participants grow jobs and turnover.

Of those small businesses surveyed:

- 77% reported that they were employing more people than 12 months previously
- 66% had increased their turnover year-on-year
- 53% had increased profitability
- 92% of the participants were more confident in their ability to grow their business

The report highlights that the programme is creating regional and national networks of ambitious business owners who provide support to one another – increasing confidence, morale and resilience and creating new business opportunities. Over half of participants have found new clients for their businesses through their new contacts.

Andy Southern



“Small businesses are fundamental to economic growth and innovation, creating new jobs and generating wealth.”

Lynn Martin, co-author of the report and Professor of Entrepreneurship, said: “Small businesses are fundamental to economic growth and innovation, creating new jobs and generating wealth. In these tough trading times, alumni from the *10,000 Small Businesses* are a beacon, showing how business can really be done.

“This is a programme that has brought them deep learning, from the course and from each other, new ideas, new ways to do things, new contacts and a strong set of relationships with regional and national entrepreneurs.”

www.mmu.ac.uk/business

In pursuit of *excellence*

Manchester Metropolitan University is known for its excellence in teaching more than its research. But all that is about to change with the University setting out highly ambitious plans to be a top research university by 2025.

While many universities are tightening their belts and focussing their resources on their traditional strengths, Vice-Chancellor John Brooks is driving the University to new heights on all fronts, insisting that success in research underpins the quality of all our work in learning, teaching and enterprise.

“The function of any university is relatively simple, to create new knowledge, to exploit new knowledge and to communicate knowledge, i.e. Research, Enterprise and Teaching,” he says. “The strategic judgement is to have the appropriate level of investment in each.”

Our ambition – to be the leading new university for research – is far from pie-in-the-sky. For the past decade, government assessments of research quality have seen MMU quietly progress and excel in a broad span of research with considerable impacts in industry and on the professions.

The most recent Research Assessment Exercise – akin to an Ofsted report on research – confirmed we had “world class” research in 12 subject areas and work of “international excellence” in all 17 fields of research we undertake.

The ‘road map’ to further success is to

be published shortly by Professor Sir David Melville CBE, a former vice-chancellor of Kent and Middlesex universities and MMU Governor, whose strategic look at output, culture and support considers how our researchers connect to the wider economy and the social fabric of the region.

Professor Dave Raper, Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange, said: “Sir David’s report is the start of a new chapter for us that will build income, reputation and strengthen our impact on the region and beyond.”

www.mmu.ac.uk/research

Is the government blocking legitimate aspiration?

The call to raise young people’s aspirations in Britain may be undermined by a division in social class, according to research from the Faculty of Education.

Dr Kim Allen’s paper on what motivates young people to be successful for the Economic and Social Research Council notes that while the Government displays a ‘Thatcherite’ mantra of

backing people who ‘want to get ahead’, their definition of what this means is based on the practices and privileges of the upper classes.

Critiquing the Coalition’s social mobility strategy ‘Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers’, she points out that Government is labelling aspirations themselves as desirable and undesirable and may be promoting

inequality in a society where attending a Russell group university is seen as valid whereas appearing on *X-Factor* is not.

“There is an ‘us and them’ rhetoric between the middle and working classes, and we see a policy which obscures and negates the presence of institutionalised discrimination, restricted opportunities and endemic inequalities in the labour market and education system that shape who can go where.”

www.esri.mmu.ac.uk



Surface engineering breakthrough

A new method to 'engineer' surfaces has important applications for the manufacture of engine components, car body parts and the nuclear industry.

MAX phase surface coatings have high temperature stability, are thermal shock resistant, electrically conductive and show excellent radiation damage resistance.

But because they require high temperatures for their formation, their use in industry was limited. For instance, steel substrates would be damaged at the high temperatures needed to apply the coating.

In a research programme funded by the Engineering and Physical Research Sciences Council, Professor John

Colligon and Dr Vladimir Vishnyakov have developed a method to form a MAX phase material at 650°C, much lower than previously possible.

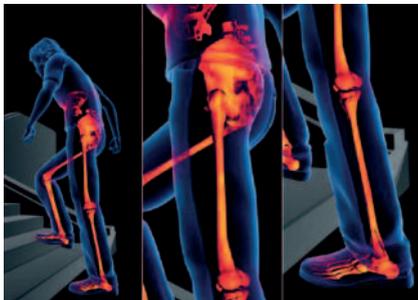
Professor Colligon explains: "To be any use to industry, coating of an engineering component must not in any way destroy the properties of the substrate material.

"This MAX phase material, having the chemical formula Ti_3SiC_2 , can now be applied at much lower temperatures meaning it can now be deposited on a wide range of substrates, such as steel. Once formed this coating is stable to temperatures above 1500°C offering many engineering applications."

www.sci-eng.mmu.ac.uk



Mobile technology to help diabetics



The University is using mobile technology to combat a side-effect of diabetes, which costs the NHS £1bn a year.

Diabetic neuropathy – a loss of sensation in the limbs – means that high pressures placed on the soles of the feet cannot be detected, leading to a high risk of ulcers, infections and reinfections.

To help solve this problem, a team from the School of Healthcare Science is testing an innovative biofeedback system that uses shoe insoles to act as an early warning system. Diabetics may

not be able to feel the problem, but they can see it in real time on a mobile phone. Dr Neil Reeves, said: "The risk for long-term infection, hospitalisation and, frequently, amputation are high. Apart from the human suffering, the problem is costing the health service around a tenth of its entire annual budget for managing diabetes."

Neil is working with the Central Manchester University Hospitals to trial the bio-tech insoles and to advise patients of changes to their walking habits.

www.shs.mmu.ac.uk

A Manchester biologist took her 'lab' to Parliament to attract support for up and coming researchers.

Dr Kirsty Shaw, a forensic biologist in the Faculty of Science and Engineering, showcased her research with mini portable laboratories and their applications in forensic, archaeological and healthcare work.

So-called 'Labs-on-a-Chip' can potentially save millions in expensive laboratories and chemicals and also produce far quicker results in the field or at a crime scene.

One of her studies proved the miniature labs to be effective in proving the sex of ancient human bones at an archaeological dig, using a miniature DNA test on a small glass 'chip'.

The 'chips' act as a miniature set of flasks and test tubes scaling multiple lab processes down to a hand held operation.

Dr Shaw's research was shortlisted from thousands as one of the few which appeared in the Houses of Parliament as part of *SET for Britain*, a showcase of



Dr Kirsty Shaw

new and upcoming research in Physics, Biology, Chemistry and Engineering.

Kirsty said: "Traditional laboratory tests are prohibitively expensive in many archaeological digs, so we are missing out on lots of information and interesting history.

"The use of mini portable labs is opening up all sorts of possibilities, for instance at

crime scenes, where blood samples can be used to help identify a person's DNA. Andrew Miller MP, Chairman of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee, said: "This annual competition is an important date in the parliamentary calendar because it gives MPs an opportunity to speak to a wide range of the country's best young researchers."

www.sste.mmu.ac.uk

Lab-on-chip technology has potential



Researchers at the University believe they may have found a way to 'sneak' nutrients into children's snacks.

The team from the Manchester Food Research Centre has been testing snacks made from fruit powders by a process called extrusion against popular brands Quavers and Wotsits – which are made the same way – and found that the nutrient content was considerably higher.

Researchers find nutritional snacking option

And in taste tests with schoolchildren in Manchester, the fruit snacks scored a creditable four out of five.

Staff researchers Valentina Stojceska and Andrew Plunkett, and student Ruth Potter – who chose to research the project for her final year dissertation – asked children to rate the appearance and taste of the samples on a scale of one to five.

The tangerine and apple flavoured snacks scored the most highly, with banana being the least favourite among the children.

Dr Stojceska said: "This type of research could help fight childhood obesity and make snacking more healthy.

"While it is too early to say what commercial opportunities this might present, there is currently very little information about this field and it will give direction to manufacturers in terms of producing this sort of snack."

Extruded snacks are those which are cooked, pressurised and then pushed out of a die which produces the particular snack shape. It is a short-time, high-temperature and low-cost technology.

This research could lead to the first fruit-based extruded snacks intended for children on the UK market.

www.foodresearchcentre.co.uk

Heart of the matter

A new book by Dr Jenny van Hooff, Lecturer in Sociology, looks at whether heterosexual relationships have become more intimate and equal over the past forty years.

Think that the days of women doing the cooking, cleaning and washing while their partners watch the football or nip down the pub are long gone? Think again . . .

A book by sociology lecturer Dr Jenny van Hooff suggests that relationships between young modern couples are no more equal than in the previous generation.

In her new book, *Modern Couples? Continuity and Change in Heterosexual Relationships*, Dr van Hooff suggests that despite the fact that cohabiting heterosexual couples often believe

themselves to be more equal than their predecessors, the day-to-day reality is that they still operate within strict gender stereotypes.

She said that the couples she interviewed displayed “increasing expectations of equality which are undermined by the social realities of living in a co-resident heterosexual partnership.”

In short, no matter how much both sides wish to have an equal relationship, somehow it is still the women who are picking their partners’ underpants up off the floor.

Furthermore, she added that “Couples expend more effort in defending the inequalities within their relationships than in seeking to change them.”

The book is broken down into sections looking at commitment, finances, housework, sex, love, intimacy and lifestyle. Dr van Hooff interviewed a number of cohabiting couples aged between 20 and 35, and a number of older couples who were aged in their 50s and had all been married for more than 25 years.

She found several startling examples that bring into question two opposing





strands of previous research in the field which suggested that couple relationships were either becoming more equal or breaking down entirely.

The interviews showed that among the younger couples, women's careers were not considered as important as their partners'. Greater gender equality in the workplace has not automatically resulted in the "democratisation of heterosexual relationships" – for example, one woman questioned said she does more housework because her partner's job was "more stressful" than hers, despite the fact that they are both doctors, earning the same salaries.

Similarly when it came to housework, Dr van Hooff found that while the ideology is one of equality, this does not translate into practice – there was a difference between what the couples said and what they did, and more often it was the woman who was tasked with household chores while the man took on only the "glamorous" options, such as cooking.

She also found that sexual experiences have changed between the generations, with the younger couples happier to discuss sex outside marriage, but at the same time admitting they were pressurised by constant surveys published in the media about what is "normal". In contrast to the older couples, the younger couples did not talk about sex in terms of reproduction, but as with other areas of their relationships the pressure was on the female partner to make sure her man was satisfied.

Dr van Hooff also found that women tend to attach more importance to intimacy and communication than men, with younger women saying their partners do not take emotional communication as seriously; while men said they feel pressurised into talking about how they feel by their partners.

Modern Couples? Continuity and Change in Heterosexual Relationships is published by Ashgate.

www.sociology.mmu.ac.uk

Five interesting facts about couples

Dr van Hooff is not alone in her area of expertise; researchers around the world continue to try to understand the complexities of couples:

1. Columbia University announced earlier this year that couples who reported a high level of emotional closeness were not necessarily the happiest. Rather, they said, couples whose 'actual' level of happiness was closest to their 'ideal' level of happiness were the most satisfied.
2. The University of Cincinnati carried out an exploration of the effect on couples of each other's habits, and found that it was more likely to be love in sickness rather than in health, as intimate partners were more likely to pick up bad habits such as smoking and drinking from each other, rather than reducing those habits.
3. The University of California, Davis found that – incredibly – couples in romantic relationships would start to breathe in time with each other, and their heart rates would synchronise.
4. The Oxford Internet Institute found that too much social media activity could damage strong relationships. They said it was possible that the increasing complexity of maintaining numerous communications threads would start to undermine the relationship.
5. Kansas State University found that talking really was key to a happy relationship – their study found that young adults who had rewarding conversations with their partner were less likely to hold on to stress and anger, and reported higher levels of satisfaction with their relationship.

Mother Tongue Other Tongue

A major project taking place in the Faculty of Humanities, Languages and Social Science this year is Mother Tongue Other Tongue, a multilingual poetry competition launched by the Poet Laureate, Carol Ann Duffy.

At the launch of Mother Tongue Other Tongue earlier this year, Carol Ann Duffy, who is also Professor of Poetry at the University, said that poetry could help heal the differences between cultures.

She said: "Differences in language or culture are often considered to be barriers to communication but the language of poetry is spoken all over the world and all cultures have their own poets and poetry.

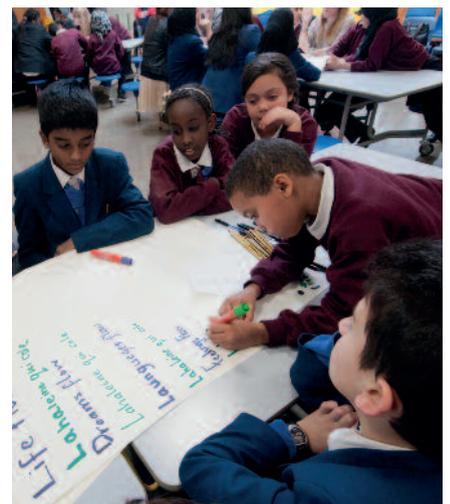
"If children can use the language of poetry to share their languages and cultures, perhaps these barriers can be removed for adults. Maybe we can learn to appreciate each other's differences and similarities."

Mother Tongue Other Tongue is run by MMU and Routes into Languages. The project is a series of regional competitions, which will be split into two parts. 'Mother Tongue' will see children who do not have English as a first language write about what a lullaby, poem or song in their native language means to them, while as part of 'Other Tongue' pupils will create an original poem in a second language that they are learning at school.

Sharon Handley, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Languages and Social Science, said: "Mother Tongue Other Tongue is a celebration of the linguistic



Carol Ann Duffy with children taking part in the project



diversity of the North West where more than 150 languages are spoken, encouraging pupils to value the cultures and stories behind those languages.

“Paradoxically, there is a decline in the number of students studying languages in schools and, according to the Confederation of British Industry, UK businesses are losing trade due to lack of language skills. In other words, learning a foreign language can give students

the edge when it comes to applying for jobs and I hope this project will encourage some pupils to do just that!”

Entries have been flooding in since January, and the judging process will start soon. Schools from across all regions of the UK will come to the University in November for a celebration event when the winners will be announced.

The launch took place at Webster Primary School, in Hulme, and the head teacher Jeremy Jackson said: “We do value the multitude of languages spoken here at school, but the pressure is always on to get pupils up to speed with their English very quickly. It is refreshing, therefore, to have the opportunity to hear the children use their languages in a creative and collaborative way.”

“Differences in language or culture are often considered to be barriers to communication but the language of poetry is spoken all over the world and all cultures have their own poets and poetry.”



One of the partners of Mother Tongue Other Tongue is the Manchester Mela, the annual celebration of South Asian culture in the city.

Mela organiser Suhail Khan said: “In South Asia, where Mela originates, poetry is a key part of people’s upbringing. In Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka spoken word poetry has created positive identities, relationships and a voice for millions of people.

“Mother Tongue Other Tongue is a fascinating project for young people of all cultures to come together and broaden their life experiences through poetry as an art form that has worldwide reach.”

Already this year the Mela organisers have nominated a number of South Asian poets, including Chris Jam, Shamshad Khan and Anjum Malik to work with schools in Manchester.

And University students will be staffing a multicultural storytelling tent at the Mela’s main event in Platt Fields Park on 6 and 7 July.

Kaye Tew, who is leading the Mother Tongue Other Tongue project at the University, said: “This is a wonderful opportunity to work with the Mela, and we are delighted that Suhail invited us to be a part of the event.”

Reaching out

Mother Tongue Other Tongue is just one example of the work the University does in reaching out to the community and encouraging children from diverse backgrounds to consider the option of going to University.

Dr Handley said: “I am delighted with the response to this innovative project, which has captured the imagination of pupils around the country. It is part of a much broader portfolio of activities designed to create opportunities for pupils in local schools to engage with the Faculty and gain an insight into university education, such as the Manchester Children’s Book Festival which will run again in 2014.

“I hope that the benefits go beyond the language competition itself, so that pupils who would not normally have considered a university education see that it could be an option for them, possibly studying a language.”

www.hlss.mmu.ac.uk

All in a good cause

For two weeks in May, a team of students, trained and employed by the University, took to the phones to talk to alumni.



Student caller Rachel Taylor, who is studying for the BA (Hons) Primary Education

The telephone campaign, which will take place every year, is one of the ways the University is staying in touch with its alumni.

During the calls, alumni updated their contact and career details, and talked to the callers about their own student experiences and what they did after graduation. Many graduates shared advice with the student callers – and volunteered to get involved in projects that give students the knowledge and skills they need to go into their chosen professions.

The team spoke to nearly 500 alumni in the two-week period and gathered news, updates, feedback on alumni activities and communications, plus many different offers of career support.

Another aspect of the phone campaign was to invite alumni to make a gift towards one of three project areas: scholarships, bursaries and 'greatest need'.

By establishing new scholarships for students, the University aims to help future generations of students pursue their dreams of entering higher

education, irrespective of their social or cultural background. Gifts directed to this area will fund new scholarships. It is then vital that once a person has decided to study here, they can access extra financial support should they need it. The bursaries area will fund additional hardship bursaries.

We also want to make sure that those students who do study at the University have a first-class learning experience so the area of 'greatest need' allows MMU to direct funds to priority projects.

The University has a proud history of providing accessible education to a diverse student community. Although the last 25 years have brought about many changes to the sector, especially to student funding, MMU still believes that going to university can transform a person's future – and this is why donations from alumni and other benefactors can play a vital role.

To date alumni have pledged almost £15,000 towards this year's projects, which means we will be able to make significant improvements to the lives of our students – helping them come to university and assisting them while they are here.

The student callers, who represented most of the University's faculties, took part in weekend training and on-going supervision during the appeal, which meant they gained valuable experience and skills for their CVs and future careers.

Student caller Anna Ykhlef, who is studying for a BA (Hons) in Criminology and Sociology, said: "I am really grateful for the opportunity I had to take part in this campaign – I've learnt a lot and met some lovely people."

Thank you to all the alumni who have chosen to support the MMU Fund so generously.

If you would like to find out more about the fund and its project areas, or would like to support this year's campaign, please go to: www.mmu.ac.uk/giving

Graduating à la mode

As the end of term approached, final year fashion students proved that they have the talent to make it in the fashion industry.

Models strutted their stuff at the Manchester School of Art fashion show in front of an appreciative audience who were keen to spot the design world's 'next big thing'.

With alumni including Sarah Burton OBE, now Creative Director at Alexander McQueen, and Agi Mdimulla, of menswear label Agi & Sam, new graduates have big (and stylish) footsteps to follow in.

Eighteen students from the BA (Hons) Fashion course also had the opportunity to send their designs down the catwalk at this year's Graduate Fashion Week, the biggest event of the year for fashion students.

Held at Earl's Court, in London, the event was attended by fashion editors, scouts and buyers from top fashion houses.



Manchester School of Art fashion show

This is the first year that Hollings Faculty was represented at Graduate Fashion Week.

The Faculty hosted a stand at the Graduate Fashion Week exhibition, which ran alongside the catwalk shows from 2 to 5 June.

Alison Welsh, Head of Clothing Design Technology at Hollings, said: "The lucky students selected to showcase their work on the Hollings stand at GFW will gain a valuable insight into their portfolios and will possibly be offered employment. The students working at the event will also have the opportunity to meet key influential members of the trade on the stand, and submit their work for prestigious awards."

Four fashion students have already made their mark and bagged contracts with top designers – even before graduating.

Rebecca Howarth won the inaugural British Fashion Council/Topman Graduate Design programme, and will start a 12-month paid internship this summer.

And Jessica Cooper, Ria Leape and Stephanie Wood were offered jobs as design assistants at Abercrombie and

Fitch HQ in Ohio after a rigorous interview process.

Rebecca's achievement was all the more remarkable because she has mostly designed womenswear throughout her course.

All three students winning jobs at Abercrombie and Fitch spoke of the overwhelming excitement that came with being told they had beaten such stiff competition to the prize.



Rebecca Howarth

Jessica Cooper

Ria Leape

Stephanie Wood

Advantage your career

We asked three postgraduates to explain what drew them to their courses and how they see their postgraduate studies benefitting their careers.

Amer Ashraf Janjua

Masters in Accounting and Finance
Faculty of Business and Law

After graduating with an undergraduate degree in Accounting and Financial Studies from the University of Central Lancashire, Amer planned to start the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) professional qualification straight away.

The nearest place to his home that provided ACCA was the Business School at MMU. While applying to the University, he discovered that there was a new full-time MSc in Accounting and Finance, which is based on ACCA P1, P2, P3 and P4 papers.

Amer said: "By doing the MSc instead, I was going to get a Masters degree and a taste of what ACCA was like – and it has turned out to be a sound decision.

"The tutors on this course are all highly qualified, with vast experience in their

field of work. The study material provided in the lectures can even be used to attempt the ACCA exams, although extra work is required to ensure that you are fully prepared.

"I believe having a Masters qualification gave me a competitive advantage compared to just having my undergraduate degree."

Amer is currently working as an Accounts Analyst for e-commerce company EMS Internet Ltd, based in Warrington.



Maxine Horne

PhD by Research
Faculty of Health, Psychology
and Social Care

Maxine enjoyed a community-centric career before life at MMU, which she plans to build upon with her PhD research. Equipped with a PGCE and a PG Certificate in Dance and Somatic Well-being from different institutions, she taught adult education and children's dance, coached after-school sport and worked as a freelance community arts practitioner.

Now in the Faculty of Health, Psychology and Social Care's Research Institute for Health and Social Change,

her PhD research, Aging Well and Embodiment, is centred on using community dance to help mitigate the effects of loneliness in older people.

She explains: "The plan is to start some exploratory workshops with elderly participants in the local community, and eventually produce a programme of workshops that will enable people to make connections and reduce social isolation."

Maxine is delighted to be working in the RIHSC, saying: "It's great being a part of an institute with a real passion for innovative, worthwhile and person-centred research. I want to develop my research skills to prove the worth of the arts and health work my colleagues and I do."

She says she has always found her subject fascinating and enjoyed reading



about it: "Now I have the chance to really immerse myself in the topic and contribute to the current thinking in the arts around health, ageing, community and creativity."

Helen Standing

Masters in Public Relations
Faculty of Business and Law

Helen Standing graduated from the University with an MA in Public Relations (now available as MSc Public Relations). Voted Outstanding Young Communicator of 2010 at the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire CIPR PRide Awards, and named one of *PR Week's* Top 29 Under 29 nationally in 2011, Helen firmly believes the skills and confidence she gained while studying at MMU are the foundation of her career success to date.

"After graduating with a degree in English and Philosophy, I wanted something which would make me stand out from other arts graduates in the business world. In my final year, I became interested in PR. I applied to

MMU because of the reputation of the course within the profession and its track record of graduates succeeding in a highly competitive industry.

"The MA provided a bridge between university and the world of work. I was making industry contacts, planning placements and the applied knowledge gave the course a 'grown up' feel. It opened my eyes to working as part of a team on real life projects in a professional environment.

"The Masters proved to be much more than a course – it was the basis of my career. Every client I work with expects more than 'PR for PR's sake'. My training at MMU has enabled me to meet these additional challenges with confidence."

Helen Standing now has her own digital communications consultancy business called Engage Comms Ltd, based in Yorkshire.



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The taste of success

Restaurateur and entrepreneur Lisa Tse talks about her latest business ventures and why she is now sharing her experience and knowledge with Business School students as a Visiting Fellow.

Business School graduate Lisa says this has not always been the case and it was her time at Manchester Metropolitan University that ignited her entrepreneurial spirit.

She said: "I was always in the bottom class in school and was on the verge of failing but as soon as I started university I found myself in the top 10 in my classes.

"When I started at MMU I felt it changed me as a person. I became more confident and I discovered my real passion for business. I am thankful to the University for that and the drive they instilled in me."

Lisa's rise in the world of business looks set to continue with her named as Entrepreneur of the Year at the Inspiring Women Awards in May and also 'highly commended' in the Asian Women of Achievement Awards in the same week. Her influence will now be spread to future entrepreneurs in the Business School with her receiving a Visiting Enterprise Fellowship at MMU's Business School.

She continued: "I hope to inspire students by showing them that if I can achieve what I have with my background of not excelling in school, then they can achieve anything with the chances they are given in the Business School."

"I want to show them how what they are learning can be applied out in the real world and to make their studies relevant to them.

"As the employment market gets even tougher I want to show them how to stand out in a crowd and use their full potential. The quality of students that come out of MMU is very high and they have incredible potential."

Lisa will use the honorary role to mentor management students and alumni, guest lecture on key business issues and share her extensive entrepreneurial knowledge with the business leaders of the future.

Professor Ruth Ashford, Dean of the Faculty of Business and Law, said: "Lisa is inspirational and we are extremely proud that she is so successful in her business as one of our alumni. She is a true role model for our students and so to honour Lisa as a Visiting Fellow is very important to us."



Sweet Mandarin restaurant is offering free samples of their gluten free, vegan accredited dipping sauces to fellow MMU alumni (subject to limited availability). Email helen@sweetmandarin.com with the subject heading 'MMU Alumni Offer' and your name, address and preferred flavour from a choice of barbecue, sweet chilli, and sweet and sour.

www.sweetmandarin.com

When Sweet Mandarin opened in 2004, sisters Lisa and Helen Tse aimed to create a family-run restaurant serving great home-cooked food.

Since then the restaurant in Manchester's Northern Quarter has come a long way and developed a strong reputation securing a series of awards.

The success of the restaurant, and Sweet Mandarin-branded sauces now being shipped across the globe, has boiled down to hard work and a passion for business.

Sweet Mandarin appetisers

- Voted Gordon Ramsay's Best Local Chinese Restaurant 2009-2010
- £50,000 funding secured from BBC's *Dragon's Den* for dipping sauces, 2012
- Sainsbury's and Selfridges distribution deals for dipping sauce range, 2012



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