



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

The Senate, 17 June 2009

Report of the Vice-Chancellor

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper presents a summary of key background information on recent developments, and is based on the Vice-Chancellor's report to Council on 27 April 2009.

The Vice-Chancellor will introduce the report at the meeting and will provide members of the Senate with the opportunity to raise questions on any aspect of the report.

1. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Science budget to be protected in recession

In a public lecture at the University of Oxford on 27 February, the Prime Minister said that developing a strong science base would provide the route out of the economic downturn and would produce jobs and prosperity in the future, and pledged that the science budget would be ring-fenced until 2014.

<http://www.number10.gov.uk/Page18472>

1.2 Government policy on research

A speech by John Denham, Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills, to the Royal Academy of Engineering (19 February 2009) summarised Government policy on research. In describing the long term relationship between the research base and the UK's economic future, he rejected the idea that fundamental research should be cut to provide extra support for applied research, but stressed the need to be far more conscious of the links between research funding decisions and the long term national economic interest. He mentioned specifically:

- more effective collaboration with industry, perhaps through teams which cut across institutional boundaries;
- strengthening the UK's key areas of national competitiveness through the research base;
- critical mass in and incentives for researchers for knowledge transfer activities;
- Research Councils' funding to universities according to their critical mass of academic excellence.

http://www.dius.gov.uk/news_and_speeches/speeches/john_denham/rae.aspx

1.3 Science and Innovation Strategy

Lord Drayson, Minister of State for Science and Innovation, gave two speeches in recent months about investment in science and innovation. His theme was that the UK, as part of a clear economic strategy, should make strategic choices about investment in science and innovation to favour those areas in which the UK has clear competitive advantage.

The criteria, he argued, should be:

- where the growth opportunities over the next 20 years will be significant;
- where the UK has a realistic prospect of being number one or number two in the world;
- where the UK has a real competitive advantage (e.g. Life Sciences).

http://www.dius.gov.uk/news_and_speeches/speeches/lord_drayson/fst.aspx

http://www.dius.gov.uk/news_and_speeches/speeches/lord_drayson/amsf_lecture.aspx

1.4 HE Debate Conference, 24 February 2009

The theme of the debate, led by John Denham, was: 'How can our HE system remain world class 10-15 years from now?' Points highlighted included:

- The UK needs to put resource into HE over the next 10-15 years. This will need compelling arguments about return on investment, and delivery of society's needs in both teaching and research.
- Growth in higher education will be delivered through an increase in the number of part-time students, as demographic changes mean a falling number of 18 year olds.
- This growth in the number of part-time students will require the development of more flexible, credit-based degrees and for the ability to complete a degree through study at more than one institution. More work-related or work-based study is envisaged.
- There is a need for clear public policy on pgt and pgr; including responsibility for funding.

http://www.dius.gov.uk/speeches/denham_he_debate_240209.html

1.5 The sustainability of learning and teaching in English Higher Education

A report for HEFCE warns that the quality and reputation of English HE is at real risk because of a lack of funding. The UK has invested less in HE than the OECD average, and much less than some key competitors. Threats to sustainability are being felt particularly in three areas: accessibility of staff to students; physical infrastructure; and student support services. The unit of funding per student is improving from its low-point of the late 1990s; and there have been improvements in efficiency and productivity. The report recommends action that could be taken by Government and by the sector to move towards sustainability.

<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/finance/fundinghe/trac/fssg/#fssgreport>

2. ACADEMIC STRATEGY

2.1 Student numbers

- The position with regard to applications is as follows:
 - Home undergraduate: +7% as at 15 January UCAS deadline. The Strike Rate (students holding conditional offers and accepting Sheffield as their firm choice) is the highest ever at 29.3%, compared to 27.3 in 2008. Work is ongoing to ensure that the University remains within its HEFCE quota.
 - Home pgt: applications as at 1 April are slightly increased on 2008, following three months of falling applications. Some potential may exist to recruit additional students in the current economic climate and action is being taken to focus on this opportunity.
 - Home pgr: applications as at 1 April have increased by 150 on 2008 but

recruitment of additional students is dependent on funding.

- Overseas ug: +12.3% as at 1 April.
- Overseas pgt: +37% as at 1 April. Growth in applications, particularly at pgt level, is linked to the current relative weakness of pound sterling and favourable exchange rates. The impact of global recession may, however, impact negatively on conversion rates.
- Overseas pgr: +9.7% as at 1 April.
- The University Executive Board has approved targets for overall student number and for individual academic departments for 2009-10 to 2013-14 for all categories of students. These targets include a degree of 'stretch' to provide a cushion between assumptions made in the financial forecasts and assumptions made in budget setting. In summary, the proposed intake target for 2009-10 will change as follows:
 - Overseas ug full-time to increase from 527 to 557;
 - Overseas pgt full-time to increase from 1,098 to 1,118;
 - Home pgt full-time to increase from 843 to 855;
 - Home pgr full-time to increase from 274 to 293;
 - Home pgt distance learning to increase from 199 to 200;
 - Overseas pgr full-time to reduce from 264 to 254.
- In response to the recommendations in the final report of the July 2008 HEFCE audit of the annual Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES) submission, the University has drafted and submitted an action plan to HEFCE. The University has been asked following the audit to adjust its recording of non-completions, and this will result in a claw-back of £280k in 2008-09. This change is also being experienced in other HEIs across the sector.

2.2 Academic planning

- The University Executive Board has approved a draft planning statement which summarises the outcomes of the 2008-09 planning round. This will be shared with all faculties, departments and services, and UEB is seeking feedback on the statement in order to prepare more detailed plans for the University and faculties..
- The Senate Budget Committee has received the first and second Quarterly Financial Reports. The Committee has also received further information regarding the development of the Resource Allocation Model and has considered the development of management information through the MI View project to develop a dashboard of key management information available via a web-based interface.

2.3 University performance metrics / tables

- The Guardian Postgraduate Tables were published for the first time in February 2009, and cover Master's degrees in 45 subject areas, including MBAs and other qualifications such as the PGCE. The tables do not rank institutions, but allow users to compare universities against a range of criteria and rank them against these criteria if they wish. The University appears in 19 of the 45 subjects listed in the Tables, analysis of which has highlighted a number of issues which effect their validity, including:
 - the exclusion of a table for Architecture;
 - lack of information about the source or year of the data used to compile the

tables;

- the use of the undergraduate mapping of an institution's departments to subject tables, which results in the University being excluded from some tables (eg Education and Nursing) where we only have postgraduate provision;
- the use of staff/student ratio (SSR) and expenditure data based on combined values for undergraduate and postgraduate students, which gives a misleading picture.

3. FINANCE

3.1 HEFCE grant settlement 2009-10: initial headlines

- The provisional HEFCE Grant Settlement for 2009-10 was announced on 4 March 2009. The total HEFCE recurrent grant to the University of Sheffield is £116.4m, with £69.0m for teaching funding, £45.6m for research funding and £1.8m for HEIF (Higher Education Innovation Fund). Overall, the University of Sheffield sees an increase of 1.89% in its recurrent funding compared to 2008-09. The University's provisional grant settlement is disappointing at 0.4% less than allowed for in the most recent Financial Forecasts approved in November 2008.

3.2 Financial headlines

- The financial results to 31 January 2009 have been circulated to Council members.
- The highlights of the results for the six months ended 31 January 2009 are as follows:
 - total income of £207.3m against a budget of £199.3m;
 - total expenditure of £199.8m against a budget of £201.1m;
 - operating surplus of £7.6m against a budgeted deficit of £1.9m.
- The key reasons for the variance are as follows:
 - Accounting for DTA activity continues to show significant variances to budget, both for income and expenditure of £3.2m. These activities should not generate a contribution for the University so by the end of the financial year the contribution from these activities should be nil.
 - Tuition fee income is currently showing a positive variance of £1.2m.
 - Residences and Catering is showing an adverse variance of £1.1m which is expected to worsen by the financial year end.
 - Academic departments are reporting a core positive contribution of £2.1m.
 - The contribution from research grants and contracts is showing an adverse variance of £0.4m.
 - Expenditure in professional and shared services is showing a positive variance of £4.2m, much of which is caused by timing differences, such as for utilities.
- It should be noted that although the results for the first six months of the year show a positive variance against the profiled budget there are a number of items which will impact on the year end position. These include an expected flattening in levels of research activity. The value of new awards in March 2009 was £9.4m and the moving average of new awards shows a continued downward trend (see Appendix 1).

3.3 Financial Forecasts

- The financial forecasting process to establish the overall expected income and

expenditure of all University activities for the period 2008-09 to 2012-13 has commenced. The collation of information has been restructured to reflect changes in the University organisational structure. Whilst information about academic departments will be prepared at departmental level, it will be collated at Faculty level so that there is a forecast for each Faculty.

- The forecasts will inform the budget setting process by determining the income and expenditure account for a given year. The forecasts will be provisionally agreed in June 2009 so that the 2009-10 budgets can be set. They will be revisited prior to submission to HEFCE in November 2009 as part of the year end process and will be updated to reflect any material changes in expectations.

3.4 Pension costs

- The actuarial valuations from 2008 have now been concluded for both the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) and the University of Sheffield Pension Scheme (USPS). The dates of these valuations were 31 March 2008 and do not reflect further recent declines in investment values. The actuarial valuations conclude that liabilities have significantly increased in each scheme and that future service costs of the schemes are rising so that:
 - USS total future service contributions will rise by 2.0% to 22.35% with effect from 1 October 2009. In the absence of the contributions forming part of the pay negotiations, the default position is that the increase will be borne by the employer. At the actuarial valuation date USS was 103% funded.
 - USPS total future service contributions will rise by 4.7% to 20.4% with effect from 1 April 2009, with this split between the University at 13.6% and the employee at 6.8%. This compares to the previous rates of 9.7% and 6.0% respectively. At the date of the actuarial valuation the scheme was 74% funded, so the University will also be paying increased deficit contributions rising from 8.0% to 14.6% over the next 12 years.
- Whilst the University is keen to continue with final salary pension schemes, their affordability is essential. With longevity, pay and investment performance each increasing the expected gap between assets and liabilities, the escalating costs of these schemes must be taken into account when reviewing total staff costs and when considering the University's long-term financial sustainability.

3.5 Resource Allocation Model

- Further work has been undertaken on modelling the outcomes of the proposed Resource Allocation Model (RAM) with particular focus being placed on the use of cost drivers for apportioning the cost of professional services and shared costs to faculties. It is intended to ensure that these costs are allocated in an equitable and transparent manner that reflects, as far as possible, the way in which they are incurred. Modifications of the model will be ongoing as the budgeting process continues, with a view to the RAM being used for setting 2009-10 budgets.

4. CAPITAL PROJECTS

4.1 General

- The total approved Capital Programme budget at February 2009 equated to £119.9m, 37% of which is funded by the University with the remaining 63% funded via external sponsors such as HEFCE. The cumulative spend against this budget was £49.8m with £70.1m forecast to be spent in the next 4 years.

- The Capital Programme now includes the approved HEFCE Capital Investment Framework (CIF) projects.

4.2 HEFCE CIF programme 2008-11

- The CIF Programme of projects was ratified by Finance Committee on 2 February 2009 and Council on 16 February 2009.
- The business case for the Environmental Control System (ECS) project will be presented to the Estates Capital Sub Group (ECSG) on 13 May 2009 following further validation of identified cost savings.
- The University Executive Board's Estates and Capital Sub-Group has recommended approval of the Learning Hub. Finance Committee has approved this business case in advance of UEB review due to the timing of meetings and UEB will review the case on 21 April 2009. Chair's approval from Finance Committee will be sought following the outcome of UEB.
- The SITRaN project has been reviewed by all committees and it was agreed that approval be granted subject to final sign-off by the Vice-Chancellor once legal agreements with the Sheffield Institute Foundation are in place.

4.3 Bringing forward HEFCE CIF capital spending

- In December 2008 and January 2009, HEFCE asked all universities to review capital investment plans for 2010-11 with a view to bringing forward capital spend. The University responded informing HEFCE that, at the time of writing, this was not possible due to delays finalising the CIF Programme of projects.
- In February 2009 a third letter was received from HEFCE requesting that HEIs take a further look at their capital programme of spend to see if any projects could be carried forward into the period 2009-10. Following discussion at meetings of the Estates and Capital Sub-Group and the University Executive Board, it was decided that the ChELSI project would be brought forward into the current CIF Programme. The cash flow associated with the ChELSI project means that £2.6m of CIF money can be carried forward into the period ended March 2010. HEFCE were notified of this on 25 March 2009.
- The University Executive Board has endorsed the decision to proceed with the ChELSI project (£4.87m) funded from savings anticipated as a result of lower tender prices on other projects and reductions in scope and specifications.

4.4 Future capital pipeline 2011-14

- The current Estates Strategy covers the period 2008-2011. Work has begun to develop a strategy for the period 2011-2014. Any future funding from HEFCE is likely to focus on the environmental impact of our investment.

4.5 Student accommodation: Student Village

- The 3,008 rooms at The Endcliffe Village are now fully operational, with only the reinstatement of the Paddock and completion of the service yard for The Edge to be completed.
- Construction activity is now focussed on the Ranmoor site, where 1,183 rooms are due to be handed over in September 2009, along with The Ridge, which will provide central welfare and social facilities.

4.6 Contracts for Capacity

- 1,779 city centre rooms have been secured for 2008-09 in partnership with private

providers. Negotiations are now underway for the provision for 2009-10, but it is expected that the number of rooms and partners will be reduced due to the prospect of having new rooms available in The Ranmoor Village.

4.7 Apple disposals project

- The remaining six street properties from the Apple portfolio are to be auctioned.
- Changes to the design and density of the Tipton scheme to reflect the Planning Inspector's comments have been incorporated by the Miller team. It is anticipated that the scheme will go out for re-consultation within the next period, prior to re-determination by Planning Board.

4.8 Student Residences Strategy review

- The Student Residences Strategy was approved by University Council in June 2004, and the external environment in which it operates has now changed significantly, with changes to student finance, the addition of new interests in student housing within the city, considerable fluctuations in price inflation, and a general economic downturn.
- A review of the Student Residences Strategy is now underway involving Accommodation and Campus Services, Student Services, SRAM, and the Students' Union. The review is being chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Learning and Teaching. Its overall aims are:
 - to reflect on the existing strategy, examine relevant benchmarks, and recommend any modifications to the strategy;
 - to review operational issues both within Accommodation and Campus Services and in the wider University, to ensure that the University has a sustainable and varied offer of accommodation for its students;
 - to consider the overall residential estate, with particular consideration to the University's retained properties and their future.
- Recommendations from the review will be made initially to UEB.

4.9 Student Accommodation Survey

- The University's annual Accommodation Survey (conducted in mid-November, two months after students' arrival) received an excellent response, with over 28% of residents completing the questionnaire. Overall satisfaction with University / Catalyst / Partner accommodation is 73% (up from 65% last year). There were significant increases in students' satisfaction in the areas of customer services, resident support, safety and security of accommodation, helpfulness of staff and Catalyst accommodation.

5. STUDENT EXPERIENCE

5.1 Progress against KPIs

Annual Reflection, the revised version of the Annual Review of Learning and Teaching, has been completed in all departments. Although in general assessment and feedback continues to be an area in need of improvement, several examples of good practice have been identified will be shared within the relevant Faculties.

5.2 Strategic developments in learning and teaching

- The review of enterprise in the University, led by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Learning and Teaching, has been completed and a report will be circulated shortly.

This includes recommendations relating to the range of enterprise-related opportunities for students and the organisational structure and funding needed to deliver them.

5.3 Key projects

- As part of the Inclusive Learning and Teaching project, eleven projects are being implemented within academic departments. These cover a broad range of topics including enhancing the sense of community, re-integration of students following a period of absence, and enhancing inclusive policy for disabled students. More than 200 students have been engaged with these departmental projects and this number is expected to grow.

5.4 International Student Barometer

- The University is participating in the ISB for the second year running. This survey compares key aspects of international students' experiences and covers nearly 57,000 students in over 60 institutions. Results for the Autumn 2008 survey have recently been received, and analysis indicates high levels of satisfaction among UoS students in respect of the Union of Students, Student Services Information Desk (SSiD), clubs and societies, the International Office, the expertise of lecturers and IT support. Areas in which lower levels of satisfaction levels were reported include living costs, work experience and financial support. Overall, the results for the University are comparable with those for the Russell Group as a whole.

5.5 Other student-related matters

- The Faculty of Sciences is implementing a Student Ambassador scheme, based on the Centre for Inquiry-based Learning in Arts and Social Sciences (CILASS) model.
- The Faculty of Social Sciences is setting up a student-led Faculty learning and teaching newsletter.
- The national Mentoring and Befriending Foundation has visited the Student Services Department to film staff and students involved in the University's peer mentoring scheme for students ('Sheffield Mentors'). This is in preparation for a new DVD which will feature good practice in mentoring.
- Sharmin Islam, an undergraduate student of Chemical Engineering and Chemistry, has been recognised as a regional runner-up in the British Council's 2009 International Student Awards (known as 'SHINE'). These awards celebrate the whole international student experience, including students' achievements and contributions to life in the UK.
- Andrew West, Director of Student Services, has been appointed to a new national Higher Education Advisory Board established by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for HE (OIA). The University will be hosting a visit from the OIA later in the year.

6. RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

6.1 Progress against KPIs

- New research awards for the 12 months ended February 2009 totalled £84.5m which compares with £83m at the end of February 2008. This figure falls short of the £90m required to underpin the latest financial forecast. Research strategy was the focus of a recent University Executive Board away day, which recognised the need to maintain competitiveness and act on opportunities afforded by the new Faculty

structures.

- The University's HEFCE recurrent funding allocation for 2009-10 includes an increase of 1.3% in Quality Related (QR) research funding over the previous year. The average increase for the Russell Group (+ York) was 2.1%. QR funding is determined by four factors: the volume of research activity in a Unit of Assessment (i.e. the number of fte included); the quality profile; the weighting attached to the quality profile (4* = 7; 3* = 3; 2* = 1) and the unit of resource for each UoA.

6.2 Research and Innovation news

- A group of investigators led by Dr Giuseppe Battaglia (Engineering Materials) has secured a research grant of £2.2m from EPSRC to investigate the development of novel strategies to overcome obstacles in the delivery of therapeutic agents to the central nervous system.
- The University has won £5.75m of funding from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) as part of its £55m programme to facilitate and expand the transfer of engineering and physical sciences research from HEIs to the benefit of society. Sheffield is one of only 12 UK universities to receive an institutional Knowledge Transfer Account (KTA) as part of this programme; receiving the second highest level of funding awarded.
- The University has recently achieved the position of number one in the UK with regard to the number of live Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) it hosts, having been second to Queens University Belfast for several years. The University current has 33 projects with a total value of £4.5m. KTPs involve a partnership between a company and the University in which a recent graduate works full-time within the company on a project central to the development of its business and is jointly supervised by company personnel and a senior member of academic staff.

6.3 Research student matters

- The University has been awarded funding for 72 PhD students and 110 Professional and Research Preparation Masters students over the next five years via the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Block Grant Partnership. The University was one of the most successful institutions of the 48 to receive funding, excelling in Archaeology, Philosophy, History and English Language and Literature. The AHRC has indicated that the University was awarded funding on the basis of strong evidence that it excels at strategic planning and a track record of delivery of very high quality postgraduate research and training across the arts and humanities and social sciences.

7. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

7.1 Report of the meeting of the Senate held on 18 March 2009

Matters considered and approved by the Senate included the following:

- A report from the Vice-Chancellor covering the following matters:
 - an analysis of the results of the Research Assessment Exercise;
 - details of the HEFCE grant allocation for 2009-10 and an update on budget setting;
 - an update on the current planning round, which had so far focused on faculty ambitions and visions, and on the strategies to be adopted in the cross-cutting areas of Learning and Teaching, Research and Innovation and External Affairs,

and in the Professional Services.

- an update on UEB's strategic discussion on the future size and shape of the University (previously reported to the Council in February 2009);
- an update on challenges facing the HE sector.
- Approval of three new EPSRC Doctoral Training Centre(DTC) research degree programmes, together with amendments to the General Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research necessary to make provision for programmes offered under the aegis of the DTCs.
- Approval of a recommendation that the period in which a PhD student may change from full-time to part-time candidature be extended from two years and four months to the end of the third year.
- Approval of a recommendation that the normal period of registration for MD and DSc candidates be reduced from three years to two years, in line with practice elsewhere.
- In preparation for the introduction of new pre-HE qualifications in England, approval of the following:
 - the level of detail to be provided by the University in respect of Advanced Diploma entry requirements;
 - a revised generic statement on the 14-19 Diplomas;
 - guidance for A-level subject combinations and a 'General Studies Statement for Admissions Policy'.
- Agreement that work should commence to develop a new Widening Participation Strategy and Access Agreement. This will fulfil HEFCE's request that HEIs submit a strategic assessment articulating their commitment to widening participation.
- Approval of amendments to the General Regulations following the usual annual review and consultation.
- Consideration of amendments to the Ordinances and Regulations of Council necessary to reflect the University's new organisational structure. These are now recommended to Council for approval (see Agenda item 11).
- Approval of a recommendation that CiCs undertake work to assess the feasibility of introducing central timetabling.
- Approval of a number of new and significantly amended programmes of study.

8. HUMAN RESOURCES

8.1 Outstanding achievements

These include the following who have received external recognition:

- Tony Crook, Professor of Housing Studies and former Pro-Vice-Chancellor, has been appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees of Shelter, the national housing and homelessness charity, with effect from 1 May 2009.
- Professors Tony Payne and Martin Smith (Politics) have been elected to the Academy of Social Sciences.
- Dr Patrice Van Cleemput (School of Health and Related Research) was shortlisted for the Akinsanya Award of the Research Society of the Royal College of Nursing. She was nominated for her valuable research on how gypsies and travellers access

health care and their requirements for 'culturally safe' services.

- Yorick Wilks, Professor of Artificial Intelligence in the Department of Computer Science, has received the British Computer Society's Lovelace Medal for his significant contribution to the development of information technology. Previous winners of the Lovelace Medal include Sir Tim Berners-Lee in 2006 for his invention of the World Wide Web in 1989.

8.2 Pay negotiations

- All unions, including UCU, have now agreed to new national level pay negotiating arrangements and to national pay negotiating meeting for the current round have been held. The vast majority of HEIs (152 in total) have confirmed that they will be participating in national pay bargaining.
- The unions are seeking a pay agreement that builds upon recent pay increases in a one year deal (only one claim includes a specific figure - as previously reported, UCU have submitted a claim for June 2009 RPI plus 5% or 8%, whichever is the higher).
- The employers have advised the unions of the current difficult economic climate; funding constraints; the escalating cost of pensions; and the need to balance any increases in staff costs with the desire to protect jobs.
- UCU are currently balloting their members about pay and job security: the ballot closes on 22 May 2009. Employers have advised UCU that jobs cannot be guaranteed at national level and thus any commitment can only be made locally. A number of universities are challenging the information provided by UCU regarding balloting arrangements.
- The Vice-Chancellor has offered to meet with the local UCU.

8.3 Professorial pay scheme

- The outcome of the professorial pay review – the three banded University of Sheffield Professorial Pay Scheme, was launched in February. All professors were sent information including a brochure, which details the scheme, outlines the associated procedures, and provides commentary on the key concerns raised during consultation. Professors were invited to make their submissions by 6 April.
- Submissions will be reviewed by Heads of Department and Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors before being assessed by the University panel in June.
- The scheme includes a link between the Staff Review and Development Scheme and the annual Professorial Salary Review. It also includes the Heads' Contribution Scheme, a transparent bonus scheme for Heads of Department and Faculty Directors. Further information about the scheme can be found on the website www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/prof.

8.4 Pilot mentoring programme for female academics in STEM subjects

- To address the issue of under-representation of women at senior levels and to improve the career development of women in senior academic positions, a pilot mentoring programme has been run for women lecturers in SETM.
- Mentoring is a positive step towards the promotion and encouragement of staff, especially helping to develop and support women in their careers so that they feel able to put themselves forward for more senior positions and to increase the number of women currently in and developing into senior roles.
- The pilot mentoring programme gave 10 women the opportunity to be in a mentoring relationship with a female professor. Feedback provided confirms that the mentees felt motivated and empowered into identifying their own goals and

feedback from the mentors showed that they too are learning from the experience and getting as much from it as their mentees are.

- This mentoring scheme forms part of a much wider programme of initiatives to support female staff.

9. MEDIA COVERAGE AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

9.1 Events

- The University hosted a series of events as part of National Science and Engineering Week (6-15 March 2009). This included a lecture by Professor Paul Hatton (Engineering Materials) on the subject of 'Cybermen and superhumans: converging technologies in the 21st century'.
- The University is holding a series of talks throughout the Spring for the 2009 Arts-Science Encounters programme. This will bring together researchers from across the University's five faculties and recognised individuals from the worlds of arts and science.
- The Edward Bramley Sheffield Law Lecture was delivered on 5 March by Dr John Sentamu, Archbishop of York, who spoke on the subject of 'Law, religion and morals'.
- The 18th Sir Arthur Hall Memorial Lecture took place on 19 March. Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Chief Executive of the Medical Research Council spoke on 'Our responsibilities and the opportunities of improving healthcare in developing countries'.
- The University participated in the annual Legal Service in Sheffield Cathedral on 29 March.
- The University has unveiled its innovative Arthur Willis Environment Centre. Designed by Bond Bryan Architects, the £4.4m facility is named after the late Emeritus Professor of Botany and will allow scientists to carry out experiments in controlled environmental conditions, simulating temperatures from different regions, as well as future climate scenarios.
- SheffieldVolunteering's annual 'Just Do It' event took place on 14-15 March and saw over 150 students take part in a variety of activities across the city.

9.2 External relations

- An occupation of University lecture theatres and exhibition space by student and other protesters was brought to a peaceful end on 25 March. Protesters raised concerns about the conflict in Gaza, amongst other issues. The University declined to negotiate with the occupiers, but held a dialogue with legitimate student representatives from all backgrounds.
- Several successful international business visits have been undertaken by members of the University Executive Board and colleagues:
 - Sharjah and the Middle East: outcomes of this visit included the opportunity for future discussions with the Sheikh of Sharjah concerning collaboration with the University; the possibility of research collaboration with the two universities of Sharjah and development of links with funding agencies in the UEA; and identification of a number of alumni possibilities in Dubai.
 - Singapore, Australia, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Vietnam: this visit included a busy schedule of sessions to explore/further develop research collaborations, government relations and student exchanges, as well as alumni events at the High Commissions in Hong Kong and Singapore, and in Sydney.

- A visit from the UK's Deputy Ambassador to Vietnam (a Sheffield alumnus) was hosted in March. The visiting group included journalists from Vietnam and a spokesperson from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The programme included a variety of activities to showcase both Sheffield the City, and Sheffield the University.
- An inaugural Business Symposium was hosted by the Vice-Chancellor and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for External Affairs in February with senior representatives from local professional services firms. A series of follow-on events is planned.
- A joint University of Sheffield/Sheffield Hallam University dinner was held in January with local MPs to update them on university developments, and how the two universities are supporting local initiatives.
- A joint bid by the University and Sheffield Hallam University to HEFCE's Economic Challenge Investment Fund (ECIF) has been successful. The UoS/SHU programme has secured £800k from HEFCE and matched funding from Yorkshire Forward. It aims to galvanise the resources and expertise of the two universities, in partnership with the region's colleges, in direct actions to assist individuals, employers and communities within the Sheffield City region who have been affected by the economic downturn.

9.3 Community relations

- Instances of student misconduct and late night antisocial behaviour in areas with a high proportion of students are causing concern. The appointment of two student representatives to attend various local forum meetings to hear local residents' views, and to contribute generally to local community initiatives has been welcomed. The subject of community relations will also be considered by a new Corporate Social Responsibility group, chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for External Affairs and reporting to UEB.
- 'Student Week' – a week-long event celebrating the vibrancy and contribution that University students bring to the City of Sheffield – is being planned, in conjunction with Sheffield City Council and Sheffield Hallam University.

9.4 Media coverage

- 624 clips were received in the period 26 January to 26 March 2009, from a range of press and media, including *BBC 1*, *BBC News 24*, *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Observer*, *Times Higher Education*, *Architects Journal*, *Building Engineer*, *British Medical Journal*, *New Scientist*, *Flight International*, and other regional publications.
- Research into alcohol pricing and promotion by Dr Petra Meier and colleagues from the University's School of Health and Related Research (ScHARR) received extensive coverage after comments by the Chief Medical Officer brought the topic into the spotlight once more. The research was mentioned in a number of national publications including *The Times*, and *The Guardian*, with the researchers also providing interviews on *BBC 2's Daily Politics Show*, and *BBC News 24*.
- The Circus of Wonders exhibition put together by Professor Vanessa Toulmin, Director of the National Fairground Archive, received coverage in both *The Times* and *The Independent*, as well as featuring in all three local newspapers.
- The ESRC Festival of Social Science took place at the University from 6-13 March and received extensive local coverage, with a talk by Professor Colin Hay (Politics) also featuring in *The Economist*.

9.5 Awards

- The University's Men's Lacrosse Team won the National British Universities and College Sports (BUCS) Championships finals, which were held in Sheffield.
- The Information Commons building has received the Best Building Award at the inaugural Sheffield Design Awards.
- SheffieldVolunteering, based in the Union of Students, has received a High Sheriff Badge in recognition of its positive impact on the local community. The award seeks to recognise groups, individuals or organisations which have made a sustained and voluntary effort to help local communities. SheffieldVolunteering has also been recognised as 'Volunteering Team of the Year' at the Higher Education Volunteering Awards.

Research awards

