



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

## The Senate, 16 June 2010

### 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 26 April 2010.

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 Annual HEFCE grant letter

In March the University received its annual grant letter from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) with details of the University's recurrent grant for 2010-11 (accounting for around a third of its annual income). This confirms that the overall recurrent grant funding for 2010-11 will reduce slightly by 0.05% compared to 2009-10. This is in line with the University's expectations, reflects the position in the financial forecasts and compares against a sector average increase of 0.4%. However, it still presents considerable challenges, because after inflation has been factored in, it means a larger decrease in real terms. This re-emphasises the need to focus on finding efficiencies to reduce costs, and to pursue opportunities to increase income from other non-HEFCE sources. For further details, see 3.2 below.

##### 1.2 Government Budget 2010

The Government Budget 2010 on 24 March included an announcement of an allocation of an additional £270m to universities and colleges in 2010-11 to support 20,000 extra student places and improve efficiency. Other relevant elements included the establishment of a University Enterprise Capital Fund to provide early stage funding for the commercialisation of university innovations.

##### 1.3 Secretary of State's speech to Lord Dearing Memorial Conference

In this speech (11 February 2010), Lord Mandelson re-emphasised many of the themes laid out in his letter of December 2009 to HEFCE on HE funding for 2010-11:

- that the HE system is fundamental to the UK's capacity to grow and prosper;
- expansion and widening of access to HE while being mindful of the costs to the public purse;
- expansion through flexible and part-time study and two-year programmes, with a shift away from full-time three-year places;

- ensuring that 75% of Britons have a higher or advanced qualification by the time they reach 30, with expansion in alternatives to university such as Advanced Apprenticeships;
- expansion in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and other 'economically essential' disciplines.

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/clientmicrosite/content/Detail.aspx?ReleaseID=411156&NewsAreaID=2&ClientID=431>

#### **1.4 Browne Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance**

The Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance (the Browne Review) was launched in November 2009. The review is tasked with making recommendations to Government on the future of fees policy and financial support for full and part-time undergraduate and postgraduate students.

The review received over 80 responses (available on its website) to its first call for evidence, which sought views on the strengths and weaknesses of the current system of higher education teaching funding and student finance. It has now issued a call for proposals for the future funding of teaching within the UK higher education system, looking at teaching funding and student finance as an inter-related whole. The paper accompanying the second call summarises the pressures and trends relevant to reform of the current system. The review will report later in the year, after the general election.

<http://hereview.independent.gov.uk/hereview/call-for-proposals/>

#### **1.5 New Industry, New Jobs - One Year On**

Lord Mandelson spoke at a conference on 17 March marking one year on from the publication of 'New Industry, New Jobs' (NINJ), which aimed to set the policy and investment frameworks for industrial and economic renewal in Britain. He referred to the need for government encouragement and incentive to underpin a new wave of private sector investment in business creation and job creation, especially in technology-driven and export oriented industries.

The three strands of government support outlined in NINJ were:

- investing in the basic capabilities UK firms and workers draw on when they compete in markets - skills, science and technology, infrastructure and access to financial support for enterprise;
- targeted interventions in individual growing markets and sectors;
- a wider, more sophisticated understanding of supply chains in the UK.

Announcements were made at the conference to take the NINJ agenda forward. These included:

- the UK Commission for Employment and Skills' first annual UK Skills Audit; and a £50m joint investment programme to provide matched funding for employers investing in the areas highlighted by the UKCES report;
- up to £16m for the development of new sector skills academies in rail engineering, logistics, biotechnology and composites process industries, and green building services technologies;
- the conditional offer of an £80m loan to Sheffield Forgemasters to commission the construction of a 15kilotonne press and associated finishing workshop, to boost Britain's civil nuclear supply chain and its global competitiveness in this area;

- co-funding of up to 1,000 apprenticeships per year in the nuclear energy sector.

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/News/Speeches/mandelson-ninj-conference>

## 1.6 Innovation: the 'Hauser Report', published 25 March

A report for the Government by Dr Hermann Hauser, the Cambridge-based technology entrepreneur, entitled 'The Current and Future Role of Technology and Innovation Centres in the UK', makes recommendations on 'translational infrastructure' to bridge the gap between universities and industry. The report praises the high class of innovation within the UK but claims that the current form of dispersed centres for development wasted money and needed more focus. Lord Mandelson has backed Hauser's recommendation that sustained and substantive support be provided for an elite group of Technology and Innovation Centres, branded 'Clerk Maxwell' Centres, which would aim to exploit the most promising new technologies where the UK might gain competitive advantage.

Funding of £200m over the next 10 years is envisaged. However, the Government will not develop its strategy and funding for the centres before the next pre-Budget report later this year. The Technology Strategy Board will now consult on what technologies should receive public support and draw up shortlist for the pre-Budget report. The Conservatives have indicated that they may take a similar approach if they win the general election.

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/publications>

## 2. ACADEMIC STRATEGY

### 2.1 Student numbers

- Figures for applications for 2010 entry as at 1 March 2010 show increases on the previous year as follows:
  - Home undergraduate: +18%
  - Overseas undergraduate: +41%
  - Home postgraduate taught: +32%
  - Overseas postgraduate taught: +16%
  - Home postgraduate research: +35%
  - Overseas postgraduate research: +14%
- Student number targets for the period 2010-11 to 2013-14 for all categories of students are currently being finalised. Targets are being set at faculty and department level according to previous allocation patterns and include a degree of 'stretch' to provide a cushion between assumptions made in the financial forecasts and assumptions made in budget setting. Corporate level intake targets for inclusion in the University's financial forecast income projections have also been agreed.
- The University Executive Board (UEB) has endorsed Faculty plans to increase student numbers in categories not subject to the HEFCE cap. Prudent student number projections to inform the financial forecasts have been set to enable departments to stretch to reach their ambitions without overstretching the resulting financial forecasts.

- UEB is currently considering how the University may, in the future, choose to move towards supporting Government policy to encourage an increase in the number of students in a range of Science, Technology, Engineering and Medicine (STEM) subjects to meet national demand from 2011-12 onwards.
- 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, a task and finish group has been working to address the recommendations agreed with HEFCE and to implement the changes to the Student Records System necessary to bring the University's reporting further in line with the HEFCE definitions.

## **2.2 General planning**

- As part of the annual planning round, UEB has considered plans for the five faculties as well as an overview paper highlighting the emerging strategic objectives and priorities. Planning meetings for professional services departments are currently taking place and outcomes will be considered by UEB, prior to the process of budget setting taking place.
- The Senate Budget Committee continues to monitor the development of resource allocation and to scrutinise the University's processes for budget setting and the allocation of resource.

## **2.3 Risk management**

- A report on the development and monitoring of the Corporate Risk Register appears as a separate item in the papers for this meeting of Council. Faculties and professional services have updated their risk registers and the UEB's Risk Review Group has received presentations on the risks faced by Engineering, Science and Social Sciences in order to seek assurance on the implementation of the University's Risk Management processes and to understand more clearly the risks faced by individual faculties.

## **2.4 University performance metrics / tables**

The 2010 Guardian Postgraduate Tables were published on 16 February 2010. The University appears in 26 of the 45 subject areas for which tables are provided. The tables cover Master's degrees, including MBAs and other postgraduate qualifications, such as the PGCE. They do not rank institutions, but allow users to compare universities against a range of measures and rank them against these individual measures.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/series/postgraduate-subject-tables-2009-10>

## **3. FINANCE**

### **3.1 Financial headlines to 31 January 2010 (second quarter results)**

- The key headlines from the results are as follows:
  - as at 31 January 2010 the operating deficit was £0.7m against a budgeted deficit of £11.4m for the year to date, giving a positive difference of £10.7m;
  - total income was £203.1m against a budget to date of £199.0m giving a positive difference of £4.1m;
  - total expenditure was £203.8m, including indirect costs, against a budget to date of £210.4m giving a positive difference of £6.6m.
- Academic Fee and Support Grant income is £4.8m higher than budget, comprising additional income from Doctoral Training Accounts of £1.5m and £3.3m from other fees, of which £0.8m is attributable to services rendered activities. The additional

Doctoral Training Account income is matched by additional expenditure.

- Non-research is £8.4m less than the budget to date, which includes underspends on academic core expenditure of £5.2m, Professional Services departmental expenditure of £3.0m and shared services expenditure of £2.2m. These are offset by other expenditure being £2.0m higher than the profiled budget. The principle cause of this difference is the additional Doctoral Training Account activity noted above.
- Although the results show a small operating deficit, there are areas of activity showing adverse results. These include OFFA, where expenditure is £0.6m higher than planned due to the high take up of bursaries. In addition, the level of voids in Residential accommodation is expected to result in a deficit by the year end. These cost pressures will be reviewed in preparing the forecast outturn for 2009-10, which was considered by UEB on 30 March and will be available to Finance Committee on 19 May, along with draft budgets and forecasts.

### **3.2 HEFCE grant letter**

As noted at 1.1 above, HEFCE has announced provisional recurrent funding allocations for the academic year 2010-11:

- The University sees a decrease of 0.05% in its recurrent funding (£115.5m in 2010-11 compared with £115.6m in 2009-10) compared with a sector average increase 0.4%. This is in line with the position in our financial forecasts.
- The recurrent teaching grant is £67.7m (2009-10: £68.2m), representing a decrease of 0.8% compared to a sector decrease of 0.2%.
- The recurrent research grant is £46.0m (2009-10: £45.6m), representing an increase of 1.5%, excluding transitional quality-related (QR) research funding, compared to a sector increase of 2.0%.
- Other recurrent funding (HEIF) is £1.9m (2009/10: £1.8m), representing an increase of 5.2% compared to a sector increase of 11.9%.
- HEFCE has introduced a steeper funding 'slope' for QR funding (which is based on quality and volume of research activity for each Unit of Assessment (UoA), and the 'unit of resource' for that UoA nationally for all subjects by increasing the weightings for research activity rated 2\*, 3\* and 4\* from the current 1:3:7 to 1:3:9).
- The University's contract range position is now -2.5%, giving the University a slightly higher unit of resource than the calculated notional grant.
- HEFCE has stated institutions will be notified of any reductions to their teaching capital investment funding for 2010-11 in June 2010.
- When final grant allocations are confirmed in July 2010, it is expected that reductions will be applied to some institutions in relation to over-recruitment of new entrants in 2009/10. This will not apply to the University.
- Future adjustments to funding could arise as HEFCE reserves the right to adjust funding allocations for the 2010-11 academic year based on confirmation from BIS of funding for the 2011-12 financial year.

### **3.3 HEFCE consultations:**

#### **(a) Revisions to the Financial Memorandum and Regulating Higher Education Institutions as Charities**

- For both consultations a number of working groups were set up involving colleagues and lay members of Finance Committee appropriate to the particular proposals.

Feedback was also sought from the Risk Review Group, Audit Committee and various representative bodies within the sector.

- Legal opinion was also sought covering some areas of the documents with regard to HEFCE's powers to introduce the changes. This was on a shared cost basis as the concerns were not unique to Sheffield. The results of this legal advice indicate that HEFCE are acting within their powers to make the changes and that the University would not be acting ultra vires in accepting them, but that more clarification is needed by HEFCE on the processes that would be followed if certain actions are being pursued. The specific points arising from the legal advice have been included within the final responses submitted to HEFCE.
- The final draft responses were reviewed and approved by the UEB and the Chair of Audit Committee and they have been submitted to HEFCE in line with their deadlines.
- A copy of the full responses is available on the Council's MUSE site.

#### **(b) Capital Investment Framework**

- This consultation concerned the future assessment process proposed by HEFCE for the allocation of capital funding. Reducing carbon emissions and space usage are key criteria against which institutions will be assessed. The University's response to the consultation were approved by the Estates and Capital Sub-Group and submitted to HEFCE to meet the deadline of 12 March.

#### **3.4 TRAC update**

- The adjusted deficit under the Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) methodology for the year ended 31 July 2009 has been calculated as £23.8m, £19m more than the previous year's deficit, compared to a £22.5m reported fall in the operating surplus/deficit position in the Financial Statements.
- The surplus on Publicly Funded Teaching has fallen from 18.8% in 2007-08 to 6.4% in 2008-09 reflecting the overall operating deficit, as well as the application of new cost drivers from the latest Time Allocation Survey results and revisions to the treatment of Teaching support costs.

#### **3.5 Financial Forecasts**

- The annual forecasting process has recently begun for the five-year period 2009-10 to 2013-14. This year the two potential future funding scenarios previously agreed by Council are being modelled to reflect potential grant and research income reductions over the forecast period.
- The forecasts will be presented to Council in July 2010 for purposes of approving budgets for 2010-11, and again in November 2010 for final approval prior to submission to HEFCE.

### **4. CAPITAL PROJECTS**

#### **4.1 General**

- As at 28 February 2010 the total approved capital programme budget supported by HEFCE (CIF) was £79.1m, of which 16% was funded by the University, with the remaining 84% funded by external sponsors, including HEFCE. The cumulative spend against this budget as at 28 February 2009 was £31.5m. The balance of HEFCE CIF funds must be spent by 31 March 2011. In respect of non-HEFCE CIF funded projects, £24m will be spent during the period to 2013.

## **4.2 CIF programme 2008-11**

- All projects in the original approved CIF 1 funded programme have now proceeded and are on site or complete, with the exception of the Jessop Edwardian Project which was postponed by UEB following a review in January 2010. All projects are running to programme with the exception of the CHELSI refurbishment for which significant unforeseen asbestos contamination problems have been encountered and dealt with. The delay is six weeks.
- UEB has considered how the surplus funds now available from Jessop Edwardian and other projects should be used and has approved their re-allocation to support a number of maintenance projects.
- A full review of the financial position of the CIF 1 programme has taken place to ensure that expenditure of HEFCE funds takes place within the specified timescales. A further review will take place in June 2010. A review of part of the CIF 1 programme by HEFCE, relating to projects brought forward to 2009-10 fiscal year, is anticipated in April 2010.
- Lord Mandelson's letter to HEFCE (December 2010) indicated a potential claw-back of £84 million across the sector on 2010-11 allocations of CIF1 capital. The precise impact of this on the University is not yet known, but is anticipated to be under £1m. Formal notification is expected in June 2010.

## **4.3 Future Capital Pipeline 2011-14**

- The current Estate Strategy and Capital Plan covers the period to March 2011. Work has now commenced on the development of a strategy for the period 2011-14 (likely to correspond to the funding period for CIF2).
- No information has yet emerged from HEFCE on either the level of capital allocations under CIF2 or the criteria for assessment and subsequent allocations to institutions. HEFCE has carried out a consultation process regarding CIF2 criteria and metrics for evaluation (see 3.3(b) above).
- Full clarity on funding is unlikely to emerge before a general election and a subsequent spending review. Based on various publications and statements made to-date by HEFCE, UUK and others, however, the following can be expected:
  - Funding is likely to be linked to institutional policies, planning and performance on carbon dioxide emissions and space reduction.
  - The University will be re-assessed for continued institutional 'light touch' status in 2010. Any capital funding will be released by formula to 'light touch' institutions (as CIF1) and without centrally set criteria. If light touch is not achieved there is likely to be an element of hold-back.

## **5. STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

### **5.1 Progress against KPIs**

- The Annual Reflection process has been carried out in relation to learning, teaching and the student experience in all departments, and action plans are being drawn up for areas where the need for improvements has been identified.
- The first in a rolling programme of Periodic Review visits was made to the Department of Animal and Plant Sciences on 9-10 March. A panel of academic peers, professional service staff and students visited the Department and found many areas of good practice to commend, including the Department's strong ethos of research-

led teaching, excellent support for students and robust systems for managing assessment.

## **5.2 Strategic developments in learning and teaching**

- As part of a work stream focusing on Sustainable Excellence in Teaching (SET) aspirations, Faculties have identified 57 programmes with a small number of enrolled students to be discontinued once current cohorts have completed their studies.
- Further to the development of a University-wide resource utilisation framework, timetabling pilots are being carried out in the Faculties of Engineering and Arts & Humanities.
- The University has been selected as one of the institutions to participate in the second phase of the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) trial. The aim is to provide a fuller and deeper record than the standard transcript currently available in many HEIs. Pilot work within selected departments will be arranged shortly by the University steering group.

## **5.3 External reviews**

- The University has recently responded to a number of external reviews and consultations relating to aspects of quality assurance, including the External Examiner system, the QAA's arrangements for Institutional Audit, the QAA's Academic Infrastructure, and also the Browne review on student funding (see 1.4 above). The outcomes of these reviews are expected to have an impact on the way the University assures quality in the future and on its funding.

## **5.4 Other student-related matters**

- National policies and procedures on Points Based Immigration for international students continue to develop. A number of policy announcements have been made in recent weeks, including the proposed introduction of a new category of 'Highly Trusted' sponsor for the purposes of the immigration legislation. The Home Office has also issued a guidance document on student recruitment practices. Both developments have led to considerable debate in the sector and the University is actively engaging with the relevant sector groups and professional associations to manage the implications. The policy and process landscape is a rapidly shifting picture and there seems little likelihood of stability in the immediate future.

# **6. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION**

## **6.1 Progress against KPIs**

- New awards for the 12 months ended February 2010 totalled £95m, compared with £84.5m at the end of February 2009. The order book for research work to be undertaken is £184m. Indications are that the research forecast for 2009-10 will be in line with budget with income of £93m and research net contribution of £19.9m.
- Significant recent awards include:
  - Professor Robert Poole (MBB) has been awarded £1m from the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC). The project brings together a multidisciplinary team of scientists, comprising molecular biologists, biochemists, mathematicians and computer scientists to use Systems Biology to study the response of a bacterium to oxygen in its environment.

- Professor John Brazier (SchARR) has secured £2.6m from the Department of Health Policy Research programme for an economics evaluation unit, with the University of York.

## **6.2 Research and Innovation news**

- Research and Innovation Services together with the Faculty Director of Research and Innovation and colleagues from the White Rose University Consortium, have co-ordinated a bid to the ESRC for Doctoral Training Centre (DTC) status for the Social Sciences. ESRC has changed its previous system of giving recognition to particular programmes of study, to one in which DTC status is given to universities that can provide high quality research training across a number of disciplinary pathways and programmes in an outstanding research environment. Less than 25 DTCs are likely to be awarded across the UK.
- The University has been selected as the preferred bidder by the EPSRC to establish and maintain an Epitaxy Centre. This tender is effectively for the continuation of the National III-V Centre, currently hosted at the University. The award of the tender is worth £10m to the University over five years.
- Following a University Impact Workshop in December 2009, a number of initiatives are in progress, including the development of a web based impact toolkit to assist staff in identifying pathways to impact and in disseminating the outcomes of their research, and the provision of training to support staff in using the media to disseminate the public value of the University's research.

## **6.3 Doctoral development**

- The UEB has approved a proposal by the PGR Task and Finish Group to design a new Doctoral Development Programme to replace the existing Research Training Programme for PhD students. Under the auspices of the Doctoral and Researcher Development Committee, faculties are exploring the introduction and implementation of the new Programme, which is focused on a portfolio of generic, subject specific and professional skills. The Programme will be considered by the Senate in June 2010.

## **6.4 National Review of Postgraduate Education**

- A report commissioned by Lord Mandelson, 'One Step Beyond: Making the Most of Postgraduate Education', was published on 31 March by an Advisory Group chaired by Sir Adrian Smith, Director General of Science and Research in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and including the Vice-Chancellor.
- The report highlights that almost 25% of students studying in UK HEIs are at postgraduate level, with half of the international students studying in the UK taking a postgraduate qualification. The report identifies that UK postgraduate education is an asset and that effort will be needed to maintain global competitive advantage. Among the recommendations are that:
  - more should be done to identify and promote the economic and social value of PG study;
  - there should be a strategic approach to linking pg study with employer needs;
  - there should be a single comprehensive source of information about pg study;
  - doctoral training and careers advice should be strengthened;
  - access to pg study should be widened;

- there should be a review of the level of government investment in pg provision in the light of its importance to the UK research base and economy and society.

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/one-step-beyond>

## **6.5 Research Excellence Framework**

- HEFCE has published an initial response to the recent REF consultation. The key points to note are that:
  - there will be four main panels (Medicine & Biological Sciences, Physical Science & Engineering, Social Sciences and Arts & Humanities);
  - there will be between 30 and 40 sub-panels, the exact number to be determined with input from Main Panel Chairs Designate, currently being recruited;
  - the challenging nature of assessing non-academic impact is recognised; HEFCE is currently running an 'impact pilot exercise' with 29 institutions, the outcome of which will not be known until late 2010 and will be critical in developing a robust methodology for assessment;
  - the relative weightings assigned to research outputs, impact and research environment are yet to be determined.
- It seems increasingly unlikely that there will be an assessment exercise in 2013 (census date in 2012), given the significant number of elements of the framework that remain undecided.

## **7. HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **7.1 Outstanding achievements**

- Emeritus Professor Keith Branigan (Archaeology) has received the Institute for Aegean Prehistory (INSTAP) medal at the 14<sup>th</sup> Sheffield Aegean Round Table.
- The Academy of Social Sciences has conferred the award of Academician on Professors Heather Campbell and John Henneberry (Town and Regional Planning).
- Professor Tony Crook (Town and Regional Planning) has been appointed as an independent member on the Board of the newly formed National Tenant Voice, which has been established to give tenants living in social housing in England a stronger consumer voice so that they may better influence national policy as it affects them.
- Dr Terry Lamb (Education) has been awarded the title of Chevalier dans l'ordre des Palmes Académiques for his work to establish a joint Anglo-French qualification and his longstanding services to language teaching.
- Professor Suzanne Mason (Health and Related Research) has become the first woman to be awarded a Personal Chair in Emergency Medicine in the UK.
- Professor Mike Parker Pearson (Archaeology) has been named Archaeologist of the Year at the Current Archaeology Awards. His Stonehenge Riverside Project also received the award for this year's best research project in archaeology, following an online vote by readers of Britain's biggest archaeology magazine.

### **7.2 Review of the University of Sheffield Pension Scheme (USPS)**

- As previously reported to Council, this project has been initiated to review the pension provision for USPS eligible staff, and to identify, recommend and implement approved changes that enable the pension provision for USPS-eligible members to be sustainable, affordable and consistent with the University's Human Resource

strategies, over the long term.

- The project team comprises the Director and Deputy Director of Finance, the Director and Deputy Director of Human Resource Management, the Head of Financial Services and the HR Manager (Reward & Benefits).
- The governance structure for the project team is now in place. Terms of Reference for the project team have been agreed and a sub-group of Council chaired by Tony Pedder has been established to oversee progress, outcomes and implementation of the project and to ensure due process is followed. Trustees and trade union colleagues have been informed of the review and kept up to date with progress. A report from the Council sub-group appears as a separate item in the papers for this meeting of the Council.
- The project team is close to appointing pensions advisers to the project following a full tender process. The advisers will be instrumental in helping to design potential changes to the USPS, and identifying ways of reducing risk for the University.
- The project team have commenced communications with affected staff. To date this has been through attendance at team meetings in a range of University departments. This process is continuing and will be followed up with more detailed communications as the project progresses. Web-based information with FAQs is available at:  
<http://www.shef.ac.uk/uspsreview>
- The project is planned to conclude in April 2011 with any agreed changes taking effect from this date.

### **7.3 Leadership development**

- The University plans to introduce a leadership development programme for its senior leaders. Following an extensive tender process The Work Foundation, a provider with a proven track record of delivering innovative and cutting edge leadership development, has been engaged to provide support for the University.
- An orientation phase is now under way with a view to designing and co-creating a bespoke programme for the University. Consultations will be held with a steering group and selected stakeholders over the spring and summer. The first cohort will begin the programme in September 2010. The Work Foundation have initially been contracted to work with the University on four six-month programmes, each for 20 participants, over the course of two years.

### **7.4 Vetting and Barring Scheme**

- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) has established the Vetting and Barring Scheme to ensure that everyone working in regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults is checked and registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), in order to strengthen safeguards for children and vulnerable adults.
- From 1 November 2010 employers will be legally required to check that new employees in the scope of the scheme are registered. Employers will have from 1 April 2011 until 1 July 2015 to ensure all those already working with vulnerable groups are registered.
- The Scheme will support existing recruitment and employment practices already in place at the University including the criminal record checks currently undertaken for staff working in positions of trust or with vulnerable groups.

## **7.5 Staff Development Week**

- Staff Development week will take place from 10-14 May and will showcase the breadth and diversity of the University's staff development. Organised and managed by the Department of Human Resources, it will feature 29 different training and development events delivered by staff from across the University, and including specific sessions to support academics, researchers and technical staff; well-being focussed sessions for staff and those involved with students; and personal development training.

## **8. EVENTS, EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND MEDIA COVERAGE**

### **8.1 Events**

- A quiz night for staff and alumni took place on 4 March and was attended by 360 people.
- On 10 March the Rt Hon Rhodri Morgan, until recently First Minister of the Assembly for Wales, gave the first in a series of lectures to mark the centenary of the Sheffield and District Cambrian Society, a joint event with the University. The lecture was fully subscribed, with 400 attendees.
- University Officers took part in the Legal Service held at Sheffield Cathedral on 21 March.

### **8.2 External relations: international**

- Discussions have continued with Omar Al Mukhtar and El Fateh Universities in Libya to explore collaboration opportunities, particularly in the area of joint Masters and PhD programmes and short course provision. A visit by the Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellors for External Affairs, Medicine and Science took place in late March to continue face-to-face discussions. Applications for an initial intake of OMU students have been received and are being reviewed by departments.
- The University hosted the first Forum for Saudi Female Scholars at The Ridge on 27 March. This was attended by 100 postgraduate Saudi students from around the UK, as well as VIPs from the Saudi Embassy and the Saudi Cultural Bureau. The event received extensive press coverage in the Kingdom and the surrounding states.
- The University has hosted a number of high profile inward visits over the past period. These included:
  - a British Council Inward Mission for East Asian Vice-Chancellors, involving six vice chancellors from universities in Singapore, Japan, Indonesia, and Taiwan, as part of the wider British Council 'Going Global 4' initiative;
  - visits from representatives of three Japanese universities (Waseda, Kyushu and Kanazawa);
  - a visit to the AMRC by delegation from the Japanese Ministry of Trade and high-profile Japanese companies.
- The University is to become part of the Santander Universities network of universities in the UK, South America, Spain and Portugal. A donation from Santander of £50k in the first year will provide funding for scholarships, research mobility, student enterprise activities, and awards for non-academic student achievement. Negotiations are underway to secure additional scholarship funding through this agreement.

### 8.3 External relations: regional/national

- The University has become an official Patron of the Sheffield Chamber of Commerce for 2010 and is working with the Chamber and other Patrons to organise a number of high profile events for the Sheffield business community over the course of the year.
- A relationship building event was held in February for key individuals in Rotherham Council, Rotherham NHS and Rotherham College. Follow-on discussions concerning potential collaborations continue.

### 8.4 External relations: community

- A major Corporate Social Responsibility project is being developed to encourage members of the University community to become more aware of their impact on the environment, and change their behaviours to help reduce their carbon footprint.
- A number of City-wide events have been supported, including the Big Spring Clean, Sheffield Showcase, Sheffield Alcohol Review, Off the Shelf, British University Championships, and the Sheffield City of Culture 2013 bid.

### 8.5 Media coverage

- The University generated 850 articles in the press and media between January 2010 and 23 March 2010. This amounted to £3,214,080 in AVE – in other words the amount the coverage would have cost if paid for in terms of advertising. This included coverage in *The International Herald Tribune*, *BBC Radio 4*, *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mail*, *Nature*, *Science*, *Metro*, *Times Higher Education*, *The Times Educational Supplement*, *BBC Radio Sheffield*, *BBC Radio Scotland*, *Yorkshire Post* and *Sheffield Telegraph*.
- Researchers in the Department of Physics and Astronomy have discovered a stellar-mass black hole, further away than any such object previously known. This story featured in *BBC News Online*, *BBC Radio Sheffield*, *Astronomy Now*, *Yorkshire Post*, *Sheffield Telegraph*, *Astronomy.com*, *Space* and *Universe Today*.
- The January degree ceremonies, which included the award of honorary degrees to Jessica Ennis and Barry Hines, were featured in *The Daily Telegraph*, *Metro*, *ITV Calendar*, *Yorkshire Post*, *Sheffield Telegraph* and *Sheffield Star*.
- Professor Mike Parker Pearson (Archaeology) has discovered the fossilised eggs of an extinct elephant bird in Madagascar, from which the DNA has since been extracted. This story featured in *BBC News Online*, *The Independent*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *BBC Radio Scotland* and the *Yorkshire Post*.

### 8.6 Internal Communications

- The Vice Chancellor gave his annual address to on 15 February 2010. The focus was looking ahead at the coming year, a move away from the usual format of reviewing the previous year. This new format was very well received, and attendance levels were high. A video and transcript of the address has been posted onto the Vice-Chancellor's web pages:  
<http://www.shef.ac.uk/vc/>
- An Internal Communicators Network has been established, to enable sharing of best practice in Internal Communications techniques across the University.

## 8.7 Awards

- The University has received national acclaim after being named as one of the top five universities in the UK in the *Times Higher Education* Student Experience Survey. Students also rated Sheffield as number one in the country for its library, and joint top (with Loughborough) for its Union of Students.
- Two Professional Services departments have been shortlisted in the *Times Higher Education* Leadership and Management Awards 2010. The Student Services Department has been shortlisted for 'Outstanding Student Services Team' on the basis of excellence in service strategy, integration, innovation and evaluation. The Department of Human Resources has been short-listed in the 'Outstanding HR Team' category for the second consecutive year, on the basis of overall strategic performance, initiatives to support the institution's strategic plan and contribution to improving institutional performance. The awards are designed to celebrate the sector's leadership, management, financial and business skills and showcase the innovation, teamwork and commercial acumen of UK HEIs.