



## The Newsletter for all SchHARR graduates

Issue 1 March 2007



## ScHARR's new courses for Autumn '07

ScHARR will launch three new postgraduate programmes this year. Two will be run by ScHARR alone, while a third is a collaboration with the University's School of Management.

The **Master of Public Health (Health Services Research)** will provide comprehensive training in the techniques needed to analyse health services and systems, and for technology assessment. It will share some courses with ScHARR's **MPH**, but enable specialisation in health services research methods and economic evaluation. It is aimed at overseas and home students.

The second programme is the **MSc in Psychotherapy Studies**, a distance-learning programme that will examine current issues in psychotherapy. It builds on the existing pathway in ScHARR's **Medical and Health Sciences** degree, and uses the Internet to enable discussion among participants.

Finally, the **MSc in Health Services Management** is aimed at graduates seeking an entry-level management conversion course. It will build on the successful **MSc Management** run by the Sheffield Management School.

## And for 2008 ...

Plans are underway to start the **MPH (Health Management)** in 2008. This will incorporate existing units from the **MPH**, but with specialist units on management and leadership. It's aimed primarily at overseas public health clinicians and non-clinicians with management responsibilities.

## ... but a farewell

ScHARR decided last summer to close its undergraduate Health and Human Sciences programme so it can concentrate on developing its postgraduate portfolio. The course will phase out over the next three years. But plans are in place to ensure students will continue to enjoy the same quality of education while they complete their studies.

*If you would like one or more copies of the new ScHARR postgraduate marketing brochure to give to friends or colleagues who may be interested in studying at ScHARR, please e-mail [scharrtu@shef.ac.uk](mailto:scharrtu@shef.ac.uk) with your request, explaining you are a ScHARR graduate.*

## Class of Two Thousand Six

Congratulations to all those ScHARR students who graduated last year. We are all delighted with your success and wish you all the best for the future.

It's a great achievement to have completed your studies successfully and I am sure you are pleased the stress of working so hard is now over.

### Contact

But we hope you will keep in touch with us, as members of the wider ScHARR family.

The ScHARR alumni organisation has been set up for all our graduates. It's a way for us to stay in contact, but for you to keep in touch with your fellow graduates, to find out what's new and how your careers are progressing, whether you're in Sheffield or Senegal.

We have established a web site for our alumni, and hope this will soon include news of graduates as well as news about the School. This newsletter, **S1**, is a medium for you to use to pass on your news and views and will appear twice a year.

### Links

To keep the organisation going, we also want to recruit graduate contacts from each programme, to act as links. Find out more about our contacts on page 2.

### Nick Fox, Teaching Director

*The alumni web site is at*

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/scharr/alumni>

## Information Commons unveiled



*Ok, so this is an artist's impression of the building on the corner of the Ring Road and Brook Hill. But as I write, the scaffolding has come down and the fit out is underway, ready for the start of next academic session. The IC is massive, with 1300 study places, 500 PCs and 100,000 research volumes. Its open 24/7 too ...*

## Regent Court Circular

### Musical Chairs?

The landscape around SchARR is changing fast with the demolition of the ugly east wing of the Jessop Hospital (the grander Victorian part will be renovated). Until recently the Law department was going to move into the building to be erected on the site, but they are now off to the other end of the campus, to a building that housed the Nursing School (who are moving out of town altogether!) So our neighbours are most likely to be Modern Languages and other departments from the Arts Tower, which is due to be refurbished later this year. Other proposals for the Jessop site include a world-class Executive Education facility.

### Northern Winds

While we are on the subject of the St George's area around Regent Court, why does the University refer to this part of its real estate as the 'North Campus'? According to my map, it is due East of the bit around Firth Court and University House. And isn't the road running past us called West Street, not South Street ... ?

### Occupational mobility

The staff of our postgraduate programmes have been on their own carousel recently. Carolyn Murray has taken over as course director of the MSc in Health Economics and Management, adding to her duties as postgrad co-ordinator. Digby Tantam is now head of Psychoanalytic Studies while his role on Psychotherapy Studies has been taken on by Chris Blackmore. Paul Naylor (PSI) has become postgraduate tutor, a job previously occupied by Director of Teaching Nick Fox, and Jenny Freeman is now in charge of Medical and Health Sciences. Emma Nesbit will be missed by research students when she moves to the Law School this month. Deborah Owen, who retired as a course administrator last summer, was coaxed back just two months later to do her old job for a while longer.

### Little RAE of sunshine

So many staff in University departments are now involved in preparation for the Research Assessment Exercise (see the story on this page) that sometimes you wonder about the impact on productivity. At the last count about 20 of SchARR's academics are beavering away on the preparations, including most of the senior staff. It would take someone with a better calculator than Portobello to work out the staff hours devoted to this nationally. Did he only imagine the groan from the halls of UK academe when we learnt it would only be a year before the new system for research funding kicks in?

*'Portobello'*

# SchARR works hard for research accolades

SchARR hopes to confirm its reputation as one of the UK's top health services research centres in the forthcoming Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), which is being run in 2008 by the UK Higher Education Funding Council.

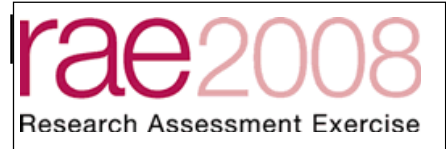
The Exercise will evaluate the quality of research undertaken in every University department in the country, and funding will be allocated to Universities on the basis of these judgements.

### Reputation

However the RAE counts for more than just money, as it will indicate the best departments in every subject, and that is an important reputation to possess. RAE ratings are also taken into account when deciding where to allocate studentships.

What the RAE means in practice is a lot of hard work: for the panel who will make the assessments, but also for departments such as SchARR as they prepare for the assessment.

The panel make their judgement based



on a number of factors, but most important is the quality of research papers produced by the School. These are the main 'outputs' that enable research to be assessed in terms of both its quality and its impact.

To prepare for the real assessment in 2008, the School has been busy seeking out the best papers written by its staff. Every academic member of staff has to choose their best four papers since 2001, and describe their other achievements such as editing journals or contributing to government policy.

Work to get SchARR the best rating has already started and is time-consuming. Ironically, the 2008 RAE will probably only affect funding for one year, before a new quantitative system of 'metrics' is introduced.

## Your Alumni Contacts

Keeping in touch with our alumni can be a problem: people move or change their e-mail addresses, take a different job or even move to another country.

To help us stay in contact we hope to recruit a network of alumni contacts from among our graduates. So far we have two, both graduates from the Master of Public Health: Ashutosh Mishra and Clara Mmata.

They will help us to build the database of our graduates. It will be a big job developing the alumni organisation: SchARR has had literally thousands of graduates since it began in the 1990s.

Of course, we don't just want to create a mailing list. We hope that our graduates will want to share their news, their successes and their progress with each other too. Staying in touch with the people who you studied with can be a pleasure as you think back to your days spent here in Sheffield.

**Could you be an alumni contact? We would like contacts for every SchARR course, past and present. Duties will include being a point of contact for graduates from your course and sending in news to S1. To find out more, contact Ashutosh or Clara at [scharralumni@shef.ac.uk](mailto:scharralumni@shef.ac.uk)**



*Ashutosh Mishra*

In this first issue of S1, we are including news about some of our recent developments, while on page 4, one of our alumni looks back on their time as a student in SchARR.

If you would like to be featured in S1, or on the alumni web pages, please send in your news and if possible a digital photo file to Ashutosh or Clara. Don't forget to include your dates and course of study.

## Down Memory Lane ...



Here's a look back to last summer, when some of the MPH class of 2006 posed for our photographer. Pictured are Victoria Loveseed, Shazia, Ijaz Chaudhry, Clare Bale, Gabriel Mba, Nicola Wing, John Featherstone, Lou Wilkins, Mohammad Sajjad, Oluwatobi Olure, Basma Albuhairan and George Rutten.

## Sheffield launches new PhD scholarship scheme

The University has introduced a new scheme to assist students from home and overseas to study for a PhD.

A generous number of scholarships providing fees and living expenses at either full research council rates (about £15 000 per year), or half this rate will be on offer to the best students. Each Faculty gets an allocation, so competition for the awards will be fierce between the four School's in the Medical Faculty. SchARR is now inviting applications from top students to study for a PhD from October 2007.

SchARR also has two quota awards from the Economic and Social Research Council for home/EU students who possess a recognised Master's degree.

**For more information about PhD funding, go to:**  
<http://www.shef.ac.uk/pgresearch/studentships>

### About S1, your newsletter

S1 is the newsletter of the SchARR alumni organisation. It is published twice yearly, and provides a link between SchARR and its graduates. If you would like to submit an item for publication in S1, please e-mail to [scharralumni@shef.ac.uk](mailto:scharralumni@shef.ac.uk). We particularly welcome news of graduates, and photographs.

This issue of S1 was edited by Nick Fox. Thanks to Chris Blackmore and Ashutosh Mishra.

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S1 is an informal newsletter, and the views expressed in it are those of its contributors. Nothing should be taken to reflect more broadly the views of SchARR or the University of Sheffield.

## Postgraduate numbers soar again

We thought last year was a good year for SchARR's graduate student numbers, but September 2006 confounded all expectations with another massive rise that brought 157 new postgraduate students to our doors..

Leading the way with another growth year was SchARR's highly successful MPH degree. With over 200 applications it was bound to be a large class this year, but eventually we were able to provide places for 50 new students, most of whom come from overseas. These numbers were swelled by the new Erasmus Mundus programme (see below).

But all our courses contributed to the rise. SchARR met and exceeded all its targets in September 2006. For undergraduate students, our target of 28 home/EU students was exceeded by three.

The pattern of postgraduate recruitment continues to swing towards overseas students, partly because the NHS no longer gives so much financial support to assist its staff to study for Masters degrees.

This was compensated by very strong overseas recruitment, exceeding the target of 33 with an intake of 64. Our overall PGT target of 104 students was therefore significantly exceeded, with a total intake of 123. We also accepted more postgraduate research students this year, with 15 new PhDs started during 2006.

## Erasmus programme is big hit with students

SchARR's latest success story is its innovative two-year Europubhealth programme that enables students to take the Sheffield MPH in year one, followed by an MPH at a European university in the second year.

Erasmus Mundus grants from the European Union are available for up to 15 students from countries outside Europe and, not surprisingly, applications for these places were strongly over-subscribed. But it wasn't just the offer of bursaries that attracted applications, and eventually we have been able to accommodate 23 Europubhealth students.

SchARR's Europubhealth partners are:

- Rennes University and National School of Public Health, France
- Andalusian School of Public Health, Spain
- Jagiellonian University, Poland and
- Copenhagen University, Denmark..

This cohort are now half way through their first year, and planning where to study next year.

**Find out more about Europubhealth at**  
<http://www.europubhealth.org/>

# My SchARR ...

## A Personal Look Back by Dr Ijaz Chaudhry (MPH 2006)

**The year I spent in SchARR during my MPH has certainly been a memorable experience.**

For many of us, especially the international students, the very thought of studying in a cosmopolitan environment was fascinating in itself.

We were given a warm welcome on the first day that included a lavish lunch with faculty members. The course director introduced us to the course in a very informal manner.

After a couple of days, the serious business of teaching began, with classes from morning to evening every day. A lot was taught and a lot was given for reading. A few of us (not aware of the timetable) became really alarmed and one may say somewhat depressed by the apparent enormity of the work! However, we heaved a sigh of relief when told that from the second week, there would only be two classes a week.

Almost all the lectures were conducted in a very friendly and relaxed environment. The lecturers were open to questions of all sorts and easily approachable (a pleasant surprise to many of the international students). A couple of modules proved to be very enjoyable. There was a lot of interaction in the Sociology module between students and teacher, which saw some really interesting discussions. The module 'Principles of Public Health' was also delivered in an interesting manner.

The modules were assessed by assignments, a strategy new for most of the international students. Hence they found the going tough during the first semester. Some of them even stumbled, mainly due to unawareness with the British system of education. Though gradually almost all of us got over the early jitters and performed far better in the second semester.

The course representative, John Featherstone, was elected by a popular vote of students, and proved to be an effective bridge between students and staff. We also had relaxing social interludes, with get-togethers in nearby restaurants at the end of the first semester and also at the beginning of the second (which also served as farewell to popular course director Paul Ward).

Towards the end of the second semester, a number of Public Health practitioners conducted lectures which gave a practical touch to the MPH, translating the theory learnt into real practice. A visit to a PCT was educational for the international students.



Then came the dissertation. The weekly seminars in the first semester helped us immensely in selecting an appropriate topic for dissertation. With able guidance from my dissertation supervisor, the once ominous looking dissertation was completed on time and successfully.

I'd feel guilty if our charming course administrator Charlotte Hollins was not mentioned. She was a great help, not only throughout the course but even afterwards! With the passage

of time, our batch of students progressed into a family; acquaintances were made, some of them seem to have developed into life-long friendships!

In all the MPH proved a great learning experience, not only giving me an understanding of public health, but also adding to my personal development.

**Tell us about your experiences when a student in SchARR. Send us 500 words about your time here, and a photo, either of you now, or when you were a student here.**

## Keep in touch!

If you're reading this, then hopefully you are still in touch with SchARR, and the University of Sheffield.

We are keen to make sure we don't lose contact with our graduates. So here are some of the things you can do to make sure we know how to contact you.

1. Make sure we have an up-to-date e-mail address. You can send your e-mail address to [scharralumni@shef.ac.uk](mailto:scharralumni@shef.ac.uk), or to your old course administrator if you prefer.
2. If you change your e-mail address, make sure you let us know!
3. Use 'Sheffield Reunited' to create a profile of yourself, so your old colleagues can keep in touch.
4. Send us some news about what you are doing. We will consider any news for publication in S1.
5. Become an alumni contact for your year (see page two for more details).
6. Let us know details of any of your former friends and colleagues from SchARR student days who are doing interesting things or making a mark, whether its in their professional or personal lives.

**E-mail: [scharralumni@shef.ac.uk](mailto:scharralumni@shef.ac.uk)**

**Alumni Organiser: Dr Sarah Barnes**