

Sent: 15 December 2017 11:55

Subject: A Christmas message from the Vice-Chancellor

Dear Colleagues,

As this Term and 2017 draw to a close may I thank you all for your ongoing dedication and hard work on behalf of Durham University. It has been a very successful year for the University and I am deeply grateful for the part that each of you has played in this success.

Delivering the Strategy

It has been a busy Term, at the end of a busy calendar year, particularly as we have moved from development of our *University Strategy, 2017-2027*, to implementation.

You will have received regular updates on Faculty developments and the Durham DOES programme and might know that a lot of work is being undertaken to develop our Estate. We have already installed new sports pitches at Maiden Castle and begun work on site for the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Early in 2018 we hope to be granted planning permission for the Mount Oswald Colleges project.

A huge amount of work has been undertaken over the past year to deliver the repurposing of The Queen's Campus in Stockton. This Term we have seen a first group of academic programmes relocate to Durham City, Ustinov College move into a first-class new home at Sheraton Park and John Snow and Stephenson Colleges establish bases in Durham City.

We are now investing in the Howlands site, Rowan House, the Psychology Department, DUBS and the Bill Bryson Library to ensure we are ready for the second phase of relocation in 2018/19.

The International Study Centre (ISC) has enjoyed a [successful first Term](#) at Queen's Campus, with over 400 students from 30 countries already developing their language and study skills, and more arriving in January.

ISC students are developing links with academic departments and student clubs and societies in Durham City and we look forward to a large number of ISC students joining Durham University degree courses next year.

Looking ahead, the ISC will be consolidated into the Holliday Building, allowing the wider repurposing of Queen's Campus, about which we will say more in 2018.

You can keep up to date with the latest news on the *Strategy* at www.durham.ac.uk/strategy2027 and Estates Developments in particular at www.durham.ac.uk/estates-developments. We continue to welcome your feedback as implementation progresses.

Staff achievements

Sadly, it is not possible here to mention all the outstanding achievements of academic and professional service colleagues across the year, but in the last Term alone:

- The Parent-Infant Sleep Lab has been notified that it will be awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher Education, along with the University, at Buckingham Palace on 22 February 2018. Many congratulations to Professor Helen Ball and her team for being recognised in this way within the national honours system;
- Our Sexual Violence Task Force was Highly Commended in the *Outstanding Support for Students* category at the Times Higher Education Awards held in London on 30 November. Again, many congratulations to all the team members involved;

- Professor John Girkin (Physics) has been elected a Fellow of The Optical Society for his work using adaptive optics to study biophysical applications;
- We were ranked fifth in the UK in The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2018;
- Our research and teaching was again recognised as amongst the best in the world in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings by Subject;
- As a University we played a major role in the Lumiere light festival, inspiring and hosting a number of installations – many thanks to all our staff and student members who helped with the festival, which I am sure all of us greatly enjoyed;
- The Durham Energy Institute has joined forces with colleagues at Newcastle and Northumbria universities to found the North East Centre for Energy Materials;
- Our Communications Team won Gold for Outstanding In-house Public Relations Team and Silver for Best Publication (Dialogue magazine) and Education Communications Campaign (Stellar profile for Durham Cosmology) at the Chartered Institute of Public Relations North East PRide Awards; and
- We were a major partner in the Durham Book Festival, sponsoring the Festival Laureate and hosting linked events and exhibitions.

I have also been very pleased to welcome Judith Toland as our new Director of Business Transformation, and am looking forward to Professor Claire O'Malley joining as our first Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global) in January 2018, with David Loudon following shortly thereafter as our new Director of Estates and Facilities.

Developing partnerships

I am encouraged that a number of key partnerships have been formed and developed over recent months. We are working with The Auckland Project on The Durham Commission on Creativity and Education. And, under our Memorandum of Understanding with Durham County Council, we are working together to attract talent, money and business to County Durham.

Work is also progressing with the Auckland Castle Trust to develop The Zurbarán Centre for Spanish and Latin American Art in Bishop Auckland and with the Trustees of Ushaw College to develop an International Residential Research Library just west of Durham City.

We are a university rooted in and respectful of the communities that host us. That is why I am very pleased to be working with the Durham Miners' Association and other bodies to ensure new students arriving in Durham are given more opportunities to develop an understanding of our county and its people. Alan Houston and Owen Adams will be working with local leaders to develop a new induction video ahead of academic year 2018/19.

Investing in our people

I wrote to all staff members in November regarding the Staff Survey 2017 and we are committed to following up key outcomes through our [action plan](#). As an employer we are constantly looking to see what more we can do for our staff members and to this end I would encourage all colleagues to browse the MyDurham staff benefits portal.

I am also very pleased that we have joined together with the County Durham Community Foundation to launch the Durham University Community Fund, which is supporting a range of charities and good causes, and I hope some of you might become involved with this project.

Student achievements

The creativity, dedication and talent of our students continues to impress and inspire me, and I congratulate all of them on their achievements this past year, whether at University or College levels or through the societies of the Durham Students' Union.

If you have not yet had the pleasure of taking in a student Christmas concert, I thoroughly recommend you do so. Nearly 600 of our students are performing, and there are [events](#) right up to the end of Term.

I try to get down to Maiden Castle at the weekend as much as I can to watch our sporting teams and I have been hugely privileged this term to watch DUOS performing a challenging repertoire in Elvet Methodist Church on Saturday 25 November – including a spectacular rendition of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony –

and a joint performance in the same venue this week of our Chamber Choir and Northern Lights: again, a stunning evening.

Looking ahead

Finally, my personal thanks once again to all of you for your contributions through the past year. We all know it has been a year of change and that there are more changes to work through in 2018, but I firmly believe the University is in a strong and strengthening position as we move into the New Year.

With best wishes for a restful break and a happy 2018.

Stuart



Professor Stuart Corbridge
Vice-Chancellor and Warden

Sent: 11 April 2017 08:51

Subject: Associate Provost

Dear colleague,

I am delighted to report that Professor Emma Flynn has been appointed to the role of Associate Provost. Emma will provide senior academic leadership in a wide range of University matters to support the delivery of the new University strategy, with particular emphasis on supporting faculty matters, planning and driving forward the University's equality and diversity strategic goals for all staff and students.

Emma is a Professor in the School of Education with research interests in socio-cognitive development, including social learning, trust, and the acquisition, transmission and evolution of cultural behaviours. Emma is currently Deputy Head of Faculty (Research) in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Health, where she provides strategic leadership in sustaining and developing research and impact excellence and oversight of the Faculty's Athena Swan submissions. She will take up her new post from July 1st 2017.

Kind regards,

Stuart



Professor Stuart Corbridge
Vice-Chancellor and Warden

Sent: 29 March 2017 09:59

Subject: Britain's exit from the European Union – an update

Dear Colleagues,

You will be aware that Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty is being triggered today; this Treaty gives Britain the right to leave the European Union and outlines the procedure for doing so. The two-year process of negotiations around Britain's departure from the European Union will now begin.

It therefore seems like an appropriate time for me to outline the University's position and our plans for continuing to support our staff and students.

Of course, it is still not entirely clear what the implications will be for Durham and the higher education sector, but we will continue to lobby through Universities UK (UUK) and the Russell Group for the rights of EU citizens to remain in the UK and continuing access to EU research funding. We will also continue to make the case for immigration and work regimes which properly value and facilitate the contributions of international staff and students.

We do not expect significant changes during this two year timeframe, but we are mindful that this is a worrying time for many staff members, and in particular for the University's non-UK EU staff members, as well as for current and prospective (and many past) students from across the European Union.

Please be assured that we are offering support to you through this period of negotiation and we will be holding a Town Hall meeting on **Monday 24 April, 2-3pm in D110, Dawson Building, Durham City**. This will be led by me, together with colleagues, and the session will provide an opportunity for you to raise any questions and concerns and to help us to understand how we can better assist you.

Places are limited, so please confirm your attendance by emailing: communications.team@durham.ac.uk.

In the meantime, if you have any queries about how Brexit might affect you, please look first at the [FAQ section](#) of the University's dedicated Brexit microsite. You may also find the [Brexit FAQs](#) on the UUK website helpful. If you have any specific concerns that are not addressed here, please complete the [Staff Enquiry form](#) which will be directed to the person or team best placed to help.

I would like to re-iterate that Durham University is immensely proud of the contributions of all of our staff members and students who come from diverse nationalities and cultural backgrounds. We flourish because we are an inclusive and outward looking community.

Some academic colleagues in Law and the Business School have written [thought leadership pieces](#) about different aspects of Brexit which provide useful insight into the challenges ahead.

Our [Brexit microsite](#) will be updated regularly, so I would encourage you to check this for more information.

Best wishes,

Professor Stuart Corbridge
Vice-Chancellor and Warden



Professor Stuart Corbridge
Vice-Chancellor and Warden

Sent:

23 May 2017 09:58

Subject:

Durham University Strategy 2017-2027

Dear colleague,

As you will know, in December 2016 the University's Council approved our new University Strategy 2017-2027, which includes ambitious proposals to ensure our long-term sustainability and continued world-leading position in research, education and the wider student experience.

Implementation of the Strategy is now well under way, overseen by the Strategy Delivery Board, which I am chairing, with regular reporting into UEC, Senate and Council.

Over the last few days we have begun introducing the Strategy to key external partners and stakeholders. This has been very successful and I am sure will lead to exciting new collaborations and partnerships in the months and years ahead.

Throughout the development of the Strategy we worked to engage colleagues, students and the wider University community as fully as possible, including through Town Hall meetings and our interactive Strategy website.

I am pleased to let you know that much more information about the Strategy is now available online at www.durham.ac.uk/strategy2027, including a series of videos and a downloadable PDF of the Strategy summary document. At least one more video is planned.

As well as the publicly-available content there are also specific pages for staff and students where you can read the Academic and Enabling Strategies, as well as updates on specific projects such as *Durham DOES* and the Queen's Campus transition. I encourage you to take the time to familiarise yourself with these pages.

These web pages are intended to provide an overview of the Strategy. We will be saying more about specific proposals contained within the Strategy at the appropriate times, as individual projects are brought forward.

As I have said previously, the Strategy is a living document and we continue to welcome your constructive engagement in its delivery. If you have comments or suggestions you can make these via the online comments form at: www.dur.ac.uk/strategy2027/local/information/getinvolved or by emailing: university.strategy@durham.ac.uk

Thank you all for your continued engagement and hard work.

Best wishes,

Stuart Corbridge



Professor Stuart Corbridge
Vice-Chancellor and Warden
Durham University

Sent: 12 July 2017 10:15

Subject: Durham University Voluntary Severance Scheme 2017

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to update you on the University's voluntary severance (VS) scheme at Durham. Please note that any communications on the VS scheme at Queen's Campus, Stockton will be delivered separately to staff where relevant.

A University panel, whose membership includes the University Executive and the Director of Human Resources & Organisation Development, has made final decisions on staff VS applications. The process included consultation with managers, consideration of the application details and an assessment of the impact on each department.

Decisions have been shared with managers and individual VS applicants via their manager.

As previously advised, University Trade Union representatives have continued to be part of our consultation process.

All staff who have been approved for VS now have until 31 July 2017 to confirm whether or not they wish to take up the offer. Staff who do accept their offer will leave the University by 31 October 2017, with individual leaving dates to be negotiated with managers.

UEC leads are working with managers to ensure a smooth transition.

The VS scheme is on track to help deliver the aims of the Durham DOES programme. I hope to be in a position to update you on progress later in the year.

Support for all staff has been readily available throughout this process and continues to be. If you have any queries or comments please speak with your line manager and/or go to the voluntary severance website at www.durham.ac.uk/hr/policies/vs for further information, or use the dedicated email address: hr.vs@durham.ac.uk

Once again, many thanks for your support throughout this process.

Best wishes,

Stuart Corbridge
Vice-Chancellor and Warden

Sent: 31 October 2017 15:54

Subject: Launch of the Durham University Community Fund

Dear Colleague,

I am very pleased to inform you that we are launching the new Durham University Community Fund today. The Fund has been set up to provide grants to a range of charities and non-profit organisations that our staff and students already support through volunteering.

The aim of the Fund is to allow the University and our staff to support a range of charities via a staff-specific fund, in an easy and tax efficient manner. The Fund is held and managed independently by County Durham Community Foundation.

There are two exciting and innovative elements to the Fund. Firstly staff will be given the opportunity to be involved in the process by voting on the charitable themes supported and then voting to choose the actual charities that will receive grants.

Furthermore, for the first year of operation the University will match all staff donations up to a maximum of £10,000, plus County Durham Community Foundation will also provide a similar match of £8,000 net of their administrative costs. Therefore the impact of even small donations could have a major impact on these community partners

- *For example: By using Payroll Giving, for a standard rate taxpayer, a donation of £20 per month would actually only cost the staff member £16 per month and, including the match funding, could deliver a total of £672 into the Fund, at the end of year one, to be distributed to our community partners.*

This is an easy way for staff to get involved in supporting local charities and for the University to support the invaluable work that our community partners undertake.

Further information on how you can get involved is provided on the Community Fund website:
www.durham.ac.uk/communityfund

Kind regards,

Professor Stuart Corbridge



Professor Stuart Corbridge
Vice-Chancellor and Warden

Sent: 25 October 2017 16:34

Subject: Message from the Vice-Chancellor

Dear colleagues,

You may be aware from recent media reports that Chris Heaton-Harris (MP) has written to every Vice Chancellor in England asking for the names of academic colleagues who are engaged in teaching 'European affairs', with particular reference to Brexit. He also asked to see syllabus materials and online content.

Durham University received his letter last week. I declined to reply and issued the following statement to The Chronicle and BBC Radio 4 yesterday:

"Professor Stuart Corbridge, Vice-Chancellor, Durham University, said: 'We have received the letter. We did not reply. It suggests a challenge to academic freedom that I find alarming. We endorse the statement by Alistair Jarvis.'

Alistair Jarvis, Chief Executive of Universities UK, said: 'I would ask that Chris Heaton-Harris MP explains his motive for asking universities to share names of their European studies Professors, their course content and lecture notes. This request suggests an alarming attempt to censor or challenge academic freedom. It is essential that universities remain places where free speech flourishes. This means protecting independence in academic study, encouraging rigorous debate and providing opportunities to hear and challenge a diverse range of views.'"

I will continue to uphold the University's commitment to academic freedom, free speech and informed debate, all of which are central to the values we declare and hold dear.

With best wishes,

Professor Stuart Corbridge



Professor Stuart Corbridge
Vice-Chancellor and Warden

Sent:

06 July 2017 11:34

Subject:

New Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global)

Dear colleagues,

I am very pleased to announce that Professor Claire O'Malley has been appointed as the new Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global), (PVC-G), following a competitive recruitment process. Claire is currently Vice Provost (Research and Knowledge Exchange) at the University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus (UNMC) and will take up her position at Durham on Monday 15 January 2018.

The interview panel and I were extremely impressed with her significant experience of the global higher education sector and her vast array of skills, knowledge and experience. Claire will enhance an already strong senior leadership team and will support the University in achieving our ambitious international agenda.

As PVC-G, Claire will be responsible for the strategic leadership and implementation of the University's international agenda, a key part of our *University Strategy, 2017-2027*. Claire will build strong networks internationally and strengthen the University's global profile. She will also ensure that we continue to thrive as an institution that promotes inter-cultural learning and an ever stronger sense of global citizenship.

As Vice Provost (Research and Knowledge Exchange) of UNMC, Claire is responsible for the strategic direction of the campus for Research and Knowledge Exchange, including facilitating links with Nottingham campuses in the UK and China.

Prior to her current role, Claire served as Dean of the Faculty of Science at UNMC and Dean of the Graduate School at the University of Nottingham UK. Prior to joining the University of Nottingham, she worked at the University of California San Diego, the University of Sussex and the Open University. She recently served on Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Research Committee and was a previous Vice Chair of the ESRC Grants Board.

Internationally, Claire is currently Chair of the Research and Innovation Committee for the EU-Malaysia Chamber of Commerce and Industry and serves on a number of international funding committees and the editorial board of the International Journal of Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning. She is a past President and an Inaugural Fellow of the International Society of the Learning Sciences.

Claire is a psychologist whose research interests are in human-computer interaction and technology enhanced learning.

I am sure you will all join me in giving Claire a warm welcome.

Best wishes,

Professor Stuart Corbridge



Professor Stuart Corbridge
Vice-Chancellor and Warden

Sent: 12 May 2017 09:03

Subject: Professor Andrea Noble

Dear colleagues,

It is with great sadness that I must inform you of the passing away of Professor Andrea Noble (School of Modern Languages and Cultures) in Mexico City this week.

Professor Noble was a celebrated Latin Americanist with particular expertise in visual culture studies and Mexican cultural history. She began working at Durham University in 1998, playing a leading role in the School of Modern Languages and in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, serving as Deputy Head of Faculty for Research from 2009 to 2012.

In 2013, she embarked upon an extended research trip to Mexico, supported by a prestigious Marie Curie International Fellowship, which enabled her to undertake ground-breaking work in the field of Mexican history and to secure funding from the AHRC to develop a world-leading collaborative research project, *Cold War Camera*, which investigates photography's role in the global Cold War.

Our thoughts are with Andrea's family and friends at this sad time.

We will be in touch with updates regarding the commemoration of Andrea's life in due course.

Stuart Corbridge



Professor Stuart Corbridge
Vice-Chancellor and Warden

Sent:

15 May 2017 12:54

Subject:

Ransomware: protecting the University and each other

Dear all,

You will be aware of reports over the weekend about the high level of ransomware attacks seen in organisations across the globe recently. As a large organisation, the University is likely to be a target for ransomware and as this particular threat is evolving at speed, we all need to remain on alert and take steps to protect ourselves and the University.

As with other malicious software: do not open attachments or links from people you don't know, or where the item is out of context with the sender or unexpected (please check directly with the sender if you have even the slightest doubt).

If you think you may have opened an infected attachment or link, call the IT Service Desk immediately (0191 334 1515 or extension 41515).

If you are using your own machine on the University's network, you must take the following steps to limit the loss of your information in the event you become a victim of ransomware or any other malicious software.

- Ensure that your operating system (e.g. Windows) and security software is updated with the latest patches. The major software providers have already issued updates for known vulnerabilities.
- Take regular back-ups and store them on a removable hard drive (unplug this when you've finished your back-up) and also save a copy in an appropriate cloud storage service.
- If you are affected by a ransomware attack, advice as to what to do can be found on the Government and the Police IT security web pages (search for **getsafeonline** and/or **action fraud police** in your chosen web browser). Read it now so you know what to do.

Computing and Information Services have plans in place to try to limit any potential impacts of a ransomware attack however, as recent news reports have illustrated, the preference is not to have to implement them. We all have a part to play in that, so please read the advice here and in the recent email from the IT Service Desk (dated 11 May), take any necessary actions and remain vigilant.

Best wishes,

Stuart Corbridge



Professor Stuart Corbridge
Vice-Chancellor and Warden

Sent: 01 December 2017 14:27

Subject: Research that helps parents and babies sleep better gets Royal approval

Message from Professor Stuart Corbridge, Vice-Chancellor, Durham University

I am very proud to let you know that the research carried out by the team in our Parent-Infant Sleep Lab has been given the Royal seal of approval. The University has been awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher Education - the highest accolade for any academic institution and part of the national honours system in the UK. The prize from the Royal Anniversary Trust is in recognition of the "leading influential research on parent-infant sleep with a widely-used public information service".

The Lab's work, led by Professor Helen Ball, has substantially increased parents' understanding of babies' sleep, how best to care for babies during the night and how best to keep them safe when asleep. The team's expertise and research is used by organisations in the UK and beyond.

You can find out more from www.dur.ac.uk/sleep.lab/researchaward

Best wishes,

Stuart

Sent:

01 February 2017 15:52

Subject:

Sexual violence and misconduct

Dear Colleagues,

You may have seen reports in the media regarding sexual violence and misconduct in our community.

As a University community, we value respect and diversity in a supportive and open culture. Durham University is clear that sexual violence and misconduct will not be tolerated in any form.

We recognise this is a matter of international concern and we are writing to assure you the University is continuing to take steps to tackle this issue, working with the student body, staff, and external partners.

Our goal is to create a safe learning and working environment where individuals feel respected and confident that their concerns will be listened to and appropriate action taken.

We recognise there is more to do in this area and we think it's important to have an open conversation.

To this end, we are holding staff 'town hall' meetings in Durham and Stockton next week to discuss sexual violence and misconduct in our University.

The meetings will be an opportunity for you to talk with members of the University senior management team, as well as Students' Union representatives, in an honest and constructive way.

The staff meetings are as follows:

Durham: Monday 6 February 2.45pm-3.45pm, D110, Dawson Building

Queen's Campus: Thursday 9 February 10.45am-11.45am, D010, Ebsworth Building

Everyone is welcome to attend. We will hold separate meetings for all students, also next week, to make sure we give all of our community the chance to engage.

There will also be further opportunities to engage on this issue and we will be keeping you informed.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or suggestions please contact the Sexual Violence and Misconduct Operations Group at durham.svmog@durham.ac.uk

Yours sincerely,

Professor Stuart Corbridge, Vice-Chancellor
Alice Dee, President, Durham Students' Union

Sent: 01 November 2017 14:03
Subject: Staff Survey 2017 – Next Steps

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to thank those of you who completed the Staff Survey 2017 for taking the time to do so earlier this year. The survey provides an invaluable insight into where staff believe we are doing well, and where they feel improvements can be made. I am fully committed, along with my fellow UEC members, to taking positive action over the coming months on the issues raised.

You can view the overall results on our Staff Survey web pages at www.durham.ac.uk/hr/staffsurvey2017/results.

I am now writing to outline our plan of action. UEC and the Staff Survey Working Group have reviewed all of the results and these, along with the outcomes of further consultation with colleagues across the University, have informed our University-wide action plan.

This action plan has been approved by UEC and is also published on the University website www.durham.ac.uk/hr/staffsurvey2017/results.

Next steps

Next week UEC leads will be contacting each Head of Department and College to provide them with the detailed results for their area.

Guidance on developing a tailored, local action plan, in addition to the University-wide action plan, will also be provided.

Our Staff Survey Working Group will continue to meet and will monitor progress across the University.

Thank you for your continued support with this important initiative.

Best wishes,

Professor Stuart Corbridge



Professor Stuart Corbridge
Vice-Chancellor and Warden