

Review

Quality across the board key to another successful year

Although we were operating in an extremely challenging economic climate last year, we managed a very successful twelve months.

Our academic quality ratings remained high, as did the breadth and depth of our research programme. We continued to make good progress in the National Student Survey, which measures student satisfaction, and our student numbers continued to grow. Our financial standing is good and improved further in the year.

In November last year we received national recognition for the quality of the student experience at Sunderland when we were awarded the Times Higher Education Student Experience Award 2010.

One of the contributing factors in receiving this award was the continued development of our estate. Two of the most important developments in our £75m building programme were completed in the past year.

The £12m CitySpace building, chosen as a 2012 pre-games training provider, has been a resounding success. The sports and social facility has also played host to a range of high profile sporting events over the past year.

In December last year the £8.5m Sciences Complex opened its doors, signalling a new era in science provision at the University.

The new facility will deliver research with 'real world' impact – research that can be quickly transferred from the laboratory into the public domain, be it new drugs and therapies, improved health practices or benefits to the environment.

A range of health issues affecting the North-East will be supported through the new development. For example, we are committed to expanding our provision of continuing professional development programmes for NHS professionals in areas such as management of chronic heart failure; stroke management; and, practice development in infection control, mental health and Parkinson's disease.

The University will work closely with businesses and organisations in the health sector to allow them access to leading science experts and some of the most up-to-date facilities in the UK.

The new complex is yet another example of the University's commitment to its civic responsibilities. We very much see ourselves as part of our community, our city and indeed our region.

That commitment was recognised last year with the unveiling of the City Council's Sunderland Economic Masterplan, which mapped out a vision for the next 10-15 years.

On the basis of our outstanding record as a key 'city asset' and our partnership working in the City, the University has been recognised and placed at the heart of the new strategy. The long term aim is to use the City's assets to create wealth and jobs. The Masterplan highlights how the University can continue to build and grow the foundations for this by promoting enterprise, improving the City's reputation and influence and fostering cultural change.

Over the coming months we will be working with the City to help deliver this bold Masterplan, along with other key partners.

Over the past year we have been working with close partners abroad to help extend our international reach. For example, we were the first UK institution to receive a licence to operate in Vietnam last year. We also continue to grow in existing markets such as China, Malaysia and India. This year we celebrate the 10th anniversary of our relationship with partners in Pakistan.

The University's success, at home and abroad, rests as always on the strength of its staff and students. Again, over the past year they have both been recognised for their excellence.

Design and Technology academic Professor Stephanie Atkinson achieved the highest honour available in her field when she received the Outstanding Contribution to Design and Technology Education Award from the Design and Technology Association. Stephanie made headlines almost five decades ago when she became the UK's first female woodwork teacher.

Academics Alistair Irons and Kevin Petrie were recognised nationally for their innovative approaches to higher education and received National Teaching Fellowships from the Higher Education Academy.

Research by Dr David Baglee and Dr Mike Knowles at AMAP is expected to save the world's shipping industry millions of pounds in repairs to vessels after developing a computerised warning system which keeps the 'lifeblood' of a ship flowing.

The Community Spirit award was presented to students working on 107 Spark FM – the University's radio station – by the Student Radio Association,

The Cystinosis Foundation UK last year funded research by PhD student Lisa Frost who chemically modified a drug – eradicating its unpleasant elements – that is used to treat cystinosis.

Sports Science graduate Michael Oliver made Premiership history when he became the youngest person, at 25, to referee a Barclays Premier League match, when he took charge of Birmingham City versus Blackburn Rovers.

The list goes on.

As always, I would like to offer my warmest thanks to all our staff and students for the part they played in making last year so successful. There is a real togetherness at the University, which will stand us in good stead for the challenging times ahead.

Professor Peter Fidler
Vice-Chancellor
University of Sunderland





In the media...

I had heard quite a bit about the facilities at the University of Sunderland's Media Centre prior to my visit last year. However, I was still taken aback by what I saw. The quality of the TV, radio, multi-media and print journalism facilities is amongst the best in the UK. And by that I mean in the industry, not just within universities.

That investment in technology and teaching makes the student experience here outstanding. The students I spoke to were certainly very pleased and energised by the quality of education they were receiving. I had the pleasure of hosting their final year awards ceremony and I was genuinely impressed with their production skills.

What's impressive about the media offer at Sunderland is that as a student you get the whole package – a quality education from leading academics and practitioners, use of industry standard equipment and access to the big media companies such as ITN, Johnston Press and the BBC.

All of this makes Sunderland students a very marketable commodity, and it's no surprise that they are working with leading producers, publishers and broadcasters.

Although Media seems to be a relatively new discipline within higher education, Sunderland last year celebrated its 35th anniversary for teaching media related programmes. It now offers one of the most comprehensive ranges of media

subjects in the UK. What has changed over the past three decades is the quality of facilities from which the 1,000 students at Sunderland now learn.

Students have access to seventy post production and multi-media suites, 50 Sony HD cameras and four Steadicam kits. Those studying journalism and PR have five dedicated newsrooms. Radio students enjoy three industry-compatible live-to-air studios, a radio drama studio, voice-over booths and digital editing suites. There's an HD television studio, a green screen studio and a 24 hour radio station Spark FM. They're now launching a television channel – Spark TV.

How times have changed. I remember when I started in the 1970s, the approach to training was "sink or swim" – a sort of Darwinism founded on the belief that only the best would survive. Slowly but surely the truth dawned upon bosses, and educators alike, that natural talent needed more. Gifted students required the benefit of the experience of practitioners, the latest equipment as used in the industry and the time and space to master it.

That is what students now expect and from what I saw last year at Sunderland they are not being let down. From an employment point of view they are a dream. They are able to enter the workplace and hit the ground running – no time consuming and costly training.

This is probably why companies are keen to associate themselves with Sunderland. For instance, last year ITN – which provides news for ITV and Channel 4, and for whom I work – became the University's official Broadcast News Partner. This has considerably enriched the student experience and there have been numerous examples of student and staff placements. I even appeared myself on the Spark FM General Election coverage back in May.

Those who weren't producing the Spark show worked as runners for ITN during our own marathon broadcast.

ITN is one of the major industry organisations represented on the University's Media Advisory Board, set up last year. The BBC, ITV, Northern Film and Media, Johnston Press, Bauer Radio, The Amazing Group and Dene Films are also members. The group offers valuable knowledge and experience about the industry and helps to steer the academic provision at Sunderland.

Groups like this, along with leading media academics, headed up by Graeme Thompson, the former MD of ITV Tyne Tees, will keep Sunderland's media offer very attractive for years to come, even in what will inevitably be a difficult climate for higher education. I say that because I have seen that offer close up.

Alastair Stewart OBE
Newscaster
ITN



...spotlight

When I visited Sunderland and saw the facilities I knew I didn't want to go anywhere else. I felt at home from day one – my brother was so impressed with Sunderland when visiting me that he is now studying at the University.

The excellent course and first-class facilities gave me a fantastic grounding in journalism, as did the opportunity to take part in a range of extra-curriculum work such as editing the student magazine and getting involved in news blog sites.

In fact, working on a website led to me being invited by the Guardian to do a podcast for the Student Media Conference. This led to a job offer as a trainee reporter, before I'd even graduated.

There's no doubt the University of Sunderland has provided the right platform to get me to where I am. It gave me the direction and the skills that I needed.

Sunderland is at the cutting edge of media, which has given me the edge to keep ahead of my competitors.

Josh Halliday
Trainee Reporter
The Guardian



Widening access...

The constituency I represent in Parliament is next door to Sunderland, so many of my constituents benefit from a Sunderland education. An important part of that education, however, comes from the increasingly international character of the University.

I believe strongly that everyone from politicians and business people to academics around the world need to stand up for an inclusive and balanced form of globalisation.

The University of Sunderland, as it showed again last year, is well placed to play its part in this as it has firmly established itself as an international university with a reputation that extends across the globe.

From the initial contacts established with Norway back in the 1960s, thanks to the shipbuilding links, to being the first UK university in 2010 to receive a licence to operate in Vietnam, the University has extended its global reach and reputation.

Last year, Sunderland had more than 2,000 students from over 100 countries studying at the institution – from India, China, Nigeria, Malaysia and Pakistan to Greece, France and Germany. A further 4,500 students are benefiting from programmes the University delivers overseas.

The links the University is making with other countries are also tangible and long-term. Last year, for example, the University celebrated a 10-year partnership with Pakistan, which has seen student numbers grow from single figures into the hundreds. In fact, Sunderland is now one of the top recruiting universities in Pakistan.

There are currently three academics from different Pakistan universities studying PhDs at the University of Sunderland, sponsored by the higher education commission, which is an illustration of what the Ministry of Education in Pakistan feels about Sunderland in terms of quality of education.

China's education sector is expected to grow tenfold between now and 2025 and the Indian Government wants to create 60 million new university places and provide vocational training for 500 million more Indians over the next 10 years.

The English language and the global reputation of the British education system means that time-served and experienced international universities like Sunderland will be very well placed to respond to this rising demand.

After all graduates are increasingly mobile and require skills and qualifications that are transnational.

The prospect is not just of more international students coming to the region, welcome though they are. What is more important than the income from these ventures are the links forged and the ties built between them, that will go on to mutually serve each other well – culturally, politically and commercially – in the years to come.

The University of Sunderland has a dedicated international team in place at the University and crucially a full support team for students who assist with everything from visa guidance and travelling advice to free pick-ups from the airport on arrival and help arranging accommodation.

Don't just take it from me – word of mouth recommendations from students who have studied at Sunderland and then returned home are the ultimate recommendation and the best form of marketing there is.

Rt Hon David Miliband MP
South Shields



...on the global highway

Celebrating a 10-year partnership between the University of Sunderland and Pakistan last year was a momentous milestone.

A decade ago the demand for a UK education from Pakistani students was considerable, but the UK system was not well placed to cater for this demand. The University of Sunderland was one of the first universities to see this, and acted accordingly.

Problems with issues like visas were ironed out by staff, allowing high quality Pakistani students to reach their goals of achieving a UK higher education. Crucially, from the start the University established a presence within Pakistan, opening of an office in Karachi. This allowed us to help students on a range of issues.

In 1999 there were no Pakistani students at Sunderland. The University has since welcomed thousands. Many remain and contribute socially, culturally and economically to the City.

Humair Ahmad
Regional Manager Pakistan
University of Sunderland



Right place...

Sunderland Football Club and the University of Sunderland began work last year on strengthening further what is already a long-standing and beneficial partnership, not only for both organisations but for the City.

One area we both identified for formal development was student work placements and internships.

In recent years the number of students being placed at the Club to support our work, in areas such as marketing, media, human resources, IT and events has grown, so much so that there's now a benefit in formalising this process.

I believe strongly in the value of work placements, both from the point of view of an employer and a student. I have seen first-hand the benefit from both sides.

I joined Sunderland Football Club in 1992 on work placement while studying for a degree in Business Studies at the University of Sunderland.

While it can be a daunting experience for students going into the workplace for the first time, the skills I gained, and the support I received, at the University served me well. I was able to hit the ground running, and I think the football club was surprised by the level of student it was getting.

Joining Sunderland at what was a hugely important time for the club and the industry was an eye-opener. The club was looking to build a new stadium and to float on the Stock Exchange, so it presented a unique opportunity.

When I joined Sunderland the marketing, PR and commercial function in football was still in its infancy, so to be involved at such a key time for the development of both the club and the football industry was invaluable.

Since then Sunderland has moved to a world-class stadium and has seen its turnover grow 15 fold. Many of the departments that report to me now – from marketing and sponsorship to PR and communications – didn't even exist on my first day.

I've remained at the club and gone on to join the board of directors. As Marketing and Commercial Director I have actively encouraged work placements and taken on many.

The Sunderland students we've had in our business, particularly last year, have been a real credit to the University. They are very well-equipped with the all round skills and attributes you would hope to see. As well as possessing the academic knowledge, they are professional, communicate well, work hard, and are committed and flexible.

They fit into the business seamlessly and it's not long before most are actively involved in helping move the club forward. Their level of professionalism is exceptional.

A large proportion of the students we have had on placement have either been taken on by us or have been highly recommended by us to other organisations, and subsequently gained employment.

I have no doubt that students who go on placements are better placed to start their careers after graduating and the businesses which take them on placement benefit equally as much.

It's no surprise to learn that 120 Sunderland students went out on placement and internships last year to support the region's businesses. I'm sure many of them will return to those businesses in a full-time capacity and I fully expect more to pass through our doors and stay with us in the future.

Lesley Callaghan

Marketing and Commercial Director
Sunderland AFC

...right time

Going on placement while studying at Sunderland is one of the best things I've done, as it helped me massively to achieve my goal.

I have always wanted to be a sports journalist. Last year, thanks to my tutor, I secured a two-week placement with the BBC. I was lucky enough to travel to South Africa after being selected to provide blog updates on the 2010 Football World Cup for BBC Sport.

The placement led to me being offered a job with the BBC last year. I'm now part of the BBC North's Developing Talent Scheme, working on major national sporting events.

I now feel so much more confident in my abilities and I'm prepared to take on any challenge. The placement, and the education and support I received from my journalism tutors, has been invaluable. I'm doing a job I have always wanted to do – that's what university has done for me.

Nadia Haif

Broadcast Journalism Graduate
University of Sunderland





Playing a fine...

At Sage we believe that strong partnerships and relationships go hand-in-hand with success in business.

It is clear, certainly looking at the past year, that the University of Sunderland has a similar ethic, putting business at the heart of its growth strategy and in doing so forging fruitful relationships that embed enterprise into learning.

Quite simply, the University listens to the needs of business and organisations and offers relevant and effective expertise and facilities.

Sage is one of the UK's leading software development companies, supplying business software and services to 6.1 million customers worldwide, and the business has been able to grow here in the North-East thanks to a steady supply of highly skilled graduates.

Due to our relationship with Sunderland, we have also been able to have input into this learning process.

The University of Sunderland has a proven track record of supplying business with specialist people, specialist knowledge and specialist facilities to support them during all stages of development.

We now run a mutually beneficial internship programme with the University of Sunderland that is genuinely helping us to move forward with our research and development.

Last year we took on three computing undergraduates from the University who are currently working on a year-long placement at Sage.

They are working alongside our highly skilled software architects, developers, business analysts, test technicians and technical authors, gaining new skills and invaluable experience along the way in what is the only FTSE100 software company in the UK.

The University's commitment to software and enterprise goes even further than the courses on offer. Through the Sunderland Software Hatchery, the University of Sunderland continues its commitment to help students develop their software skills once they have graduated.

The Software Hatchery is working with high-calibre graduates and postgraduates to develop their business ideas and utilise their skills to set up their own software ventures. This is an incredibly exciting development that is helping to raise the North-East's profile as a world-leading centre for science and computing.

The University is also a key partner in Sunderland Software City which is equipping students with the techniques they need to become successful entrepreneurs and further establishing the region's profile in this sector.

The approach the University of Sunderland is taking, as the past year shows, is really paying dividends and its links within the business community is helping to tailor courses that are attracting top students from around the UK and the world.

We are not the only ones benefiting from the approach at Sunderland. Over the last year the University has placed interns

with 120 businesses and organisations across the region – businesses of all sizes and from a wide cross section of sectors.

Sunderland is doing well in attracting students from outside the region and it is important that we retain their skills here once they have finished their studies by linking them directly into career opportunities locally.

The University has always had an active and practical relationship with the business community which it has demonstrated for decades and this expertise is something that is constantly being built on and adapted.

The once thriving coal and shipbuilding industries enjoyed skilled graduates from mining engineering and marine courses.

The arrival of Nissan prompted the University to listen and respond rapidly and, it works closely with the multi-national giant, providing a new generation of engineers through a masters graduate programme.

This forward-thinking approach has also been applied to the developing service and software sectors.

The University of Sunderland is in a privileged position of having the potent combination of years of experience and expertise and the vision to react to change that will see it continue to thrive as it serves and boosts the local and regional economy.

Paul Stobart
Chief Executive Officer
Sage UK Ltd



...supporting role

When I was choosing a university, Sunderland impressed me the most as it definitely provided the best and most varied computing course.

Without doubt being a student at Sunderland also opened the door for me to start a work placement last year at a company as prestigious as Sage – I think the fact that Sunderland is the only university Sage takes students from says an awful lot.

Working at Sage is a huge opportunity for me and it's amazing to get the chance to work alongside IT professionals from a range of backgrounds – I'm just trying to absorb as much as I can out of the experience.

This placement has made me realise how relevant the skills are that I have been taught so far at Sunderland as practically everything I have learned has come up.

It is also broadening my skills and horizons and I know I'll go back to the University for my final year more determined than ever to make the most of the opportunities offered to me.

Elliott Perry
BA (Hons) Business Computing student
University of Sunderland



Campus design gets...

Design and architecture can say so much about an organisation. They reveal everything from their beliefs and ambitions to their confidence and position in society.

Over the past year the University of Sunderland, through the dramatic redesign of its City Campus, has been letting the City and the region know what it stands for, and where it is going.

Buildings such as the wonderful CitySpace and Sciences Complex, which I visited last year, are offering a great student experience.

The days of learning in your own confined space with your books all round you are diminishing. Learning today is also about sharing knowledge with your peers. To do this students need social space – the University has this in abundance.

It has created an environment that meets exactly the needs of the modern day student. It's relatively easy to create an impressive looking building but its strength lies in how well it works internally for its users. This is where the University of Sunderland has been very successful.

However, the new City Campus offers more than a strong student experience. The design and architecture has done

two other things. It has changed the landscape of the centre of the City and, more importantly, it has made the University accessible to the general public – something most universities struggle to do.

Through its design, the University is saying it is more than just an educator. It is saying it is a true civic partner and is proactively encouraging its community to interact with it.

In the past, City Campus, which sits on Chester Road, was used as a thoroughfare to the City. The public didn't take notice of the buildings around them. This has changed, and nowhere is it more evident than with the opening last year of the new Sciences Complex and the Quad open space adjoining it.

Getting the public to feel part of a university is a difficult thing to achieve. Attracting them into areas such as science is an even harder challenge. But with the new Complex and Quad that is what the University of Sunderland is aiming to do, and I feel they will succeed.

What the University hopes to achieve is to show that science is not this high-brow discipline but something that is relatively easy to understand and how it impacts on our everyday lives. The Sciences

Complex will, of course, deliver high-end R&D and high quality science graduates, but it is extra special in the sense it is also thinking about its community and its civic responsibilities. The open and welcoming design of the new building and external layout will play a large part in this. What's great to see is that people can no longer walk down Chester Road without realising they are in a defined space and that space is open and accessible to them.

The community now use buildings such as CitySpace – be it to exercise or call in for a coffee or a bite to eat. The long-term plan is to turn that casual visit into a more permanent one and attract more people to higher education, and the benefits this brings to a city – socially culturally, and financially.

I believe strongly in the University of Sunderland's approach of attracting people with talent, regardless of background, into higher education. The fact that design and architecture, highlighted so well last year, are central to that philosophy is, for me as an architect, an added bonus.

George Clark
Architect & TV presenter

...the perfect treatment

George's point about design fulfilling the needs of its users is so right. I say that as a very satisfied occupant of CitySpace.

Sunderland's offer for top athletes is world-class. I have considerable experience with Olympians, and I was excited to bring that expertise to Sunderland. Location was important and the opportunity for the clinic to be at CitySpace was exciting. Having a clinic that opens on to a first-class fitness suite means we offer a complete package.

It's been an amazing year for the clinic and we are a big part of the University and the community. Previously, the standard of care we offered was reserved for top athletes, but we are showing that it is equally suitable to the person on the street.

I believe the University's ability to provide world-class expertise in the field of sports injury is a major selling point in attracting foreign national teams prior to the Olympic and Commonwealth Games to venues like CitySpace.

Penny Macutkiewicz
Partner
The Performance Clinic





Raising our voice at a national level

I have long held the belief that for Sunderland to grow and prosper into an attractive, inclusive city it is imperative that it has an effective economic regeneration plan.

It was very heartening, therefore, to see the launch of the Sunderland Economic Masterplan last year – a bold 15-year vision for the future prosperity of the City, and its people.

It was equally pleasing to see that at the heart of this Masterplan is the University of Sunderland. My relationship with the University, and in particular it's Vice-Chancellor through our work on regeneration projects, is many years old, so I fully understand why it is central to the success of the Masterplan. The University's ethos, vision and strategy fit so well with the City Council's aims for Sunderland.

The University showed again last year that it is such a strong civic partner, supporting the physical, social, economic and cultural needs of the City – from the creation of CitySpace and the Sciences Complex to the successful delivery of an undergraduate internship programme to support business and industry in the City.

Part of my role as MP for Sunderland Central will be to support the University as it pushes forward with the delivery of the aims set down in the Masterplan. This I will do at a local, regional and national level.

Julie Elliott MP
Sunderland Central

The political decisions taken last year by the Coalition Government relating to the higher education sector have had such a dramatic impact on universities, including the University of Sunderland. This is a very challenging time indeed for the sector.

Fortunately, Sunderland is in a relatively strong position. Its student numbers are strong, as is its reputation for academic quality and research. It has a good financial base and investment in its estate, highlighted last year with CitySpace and the Sciences Complex, will serve it well for the future. Importantly, the student experience is very strong, so much so that the University was awarded the prestigious Times Higher Student Experience Award in late 2010.

However, due to the huge cuts imposed on the sector, and the enforced tuition fees increase, the University, like all other universities, is facing several challenges – one of which I have seen first-hand.

The proposed changes to the international student visa regime (Tier 4) could significantly hamper the growth of the University's international student numbers, leading to a potential £25m shortfall per year for the City.

I am a member of the Home Affairs Select Committee and last year we launched an enquiry into the impact of the proposed changes. I have fed the University's views into the Committee and I hope its report is constructive and stresses the impact that the proposed changes could have on universities like Sunderland.

The City's future prosperity is inextricably linked to the success of the University of Sunderland. Therefore, I will do all that I can to ensure it has the best possible environment to achieve its vision and objectives.

Bridget Phillipson MP
Houghton and Sunderland South

Last year I became a Shadow Education Minister, taking on responsibility for children and families, which includes areas such as child poverty, early years education, school meals and special educational needs, among others.

I was delighted, therefore, to see the University of Sunderland set up the Centre for Pedagogy last year.

The Centre will build on a tradition of research into pedagogy at the University in all its forms, covering every stage of life and learning from infancy to adulthood.

I am sure that the Centre's studies into the relationship between teaching and learning will be an excellent resource on which I can draw in my new role. It will allow access to the latest research and information and will undoubtedly help me and my colleagues in the Labour education team to hold the Government to account on its changes to the schools system, as well as develop our own policy in the years to come.

The University of Sunderland's Faculty of Education and Society has a strong national reputation for excellence and carries out a range of national pilots for governments and educational bodies and organisations.

The Faculty already has the well established and highly regarded Sunderland Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (SUNCETT) and the Centre for Children, Young People and Families.

The Centre for Pedagogy will, I'm sure, be a very effective and influential addition. It has the potential to improve teaching and learning for the benefit of the whole of society, and I will do all I can to help give it a voice, particularly at a national level.

Sharon Hodgson MP
Washington and Sunderland West



Helping to deliver...

Over the past year my company has been helping Sunderland City Council press home the Sunderland Economic Masterplan – an ambitious but certainly achievable vision for the City's future over the next 15 years.

The Masterplan offers a bold blueprint to help make the City more prosperous – economically, culturally and socially. At the heart of this is the University of Sunderland.

At the launch last year the University was rightly identified as being central to the success of the Masterplan. The aim is for Sunderland to be a vibrant, creative and attractive city, with a strong learning ethic and a focus on developing and supporting enterprise. The University will be key in the delivery of this.

Universities are vital instruments in the creation of a knowledge-based city. If graduates can be retained, they can create a more skilled labour force. University research and technological developments should be commercialised in collaboration with local industry.

The University of Sunderland is excellent at this. Sunderland graduates are making a difference across a range of companies in the City.

One of the University's key strengths is its integration with, and support for business and industry. There is a wealth of examples I could give, some of which are in this Annual Review.

It is heartening for the City to see one of the University's main objectives is to support the Sunderland's economy through its links with business. Its relationship with large multinationals like Nissan and BT is well documented, but so too, crucially, is its support for SMEs. The University interacts and supports companies from across many sectors.

Last year for instance it showed it is well placed to help drive the regional investment in the digital industry. As a key player in Sunderland Software City, which is inspiring and encouraging the growth of the software industry, the University is providing the City with highly skilled graduates.

The development of the digital sector in the City is a tremendous opportunity to drive up skills, boost enterprise rates and make Sunderland more attractive to investors.

The University's entrepreneurial orientation and its support for innovation are going to serve the City well.

Universities can also drive cultural change through engaging with its communities. The University of Sunderland, as residents know, is a shining example of a civic university.

The institution is acutely aware of its standing in the City, and its responsibilities. At the heart of its ethos is inclusiveness. Not only does it regularly attract the Sunderland community to its campuses, it also proactively goes out to offer support to them as well as highlight the importance of higher education.

Thousands upon thousands of Sunderland people have benefited from the University's philosophy that those with talent and potential, regardless of background, should have the opportunity to benefit from higher education. Over the years the reward for the City has been immeasurable.

The success of the Sunderland Economic Masterplan will depend largely on two of the University's key strategic aims. To continue to be able to widen access to higher education and to support business and industry.

Based on last year, and previous years, the City Council can rest assured that the University of Sunderland will be at the forefront of helping deliver a new and prosperous era for a very deserving population.

Jon McLeod
Chairman
Corporate Communications &
Public Affairs
Weber Shandwick



...an economy of scale

Through its work with industry, the University demonstrates why it's at the heart of Sunderland's economic vision. It's no surprise the University is playing a major part in the City's future, as it is already working closely with businesses like ours.

Our pharmaceutical research company is helping improve anti-malaria care for millions of people. Through our partnership with the University we have brought forward new products which are aiding the production of anti-malarial medications on a worldwide basis.

Over the past year we have worked with Chemispec, the analytical services arm of the University. Its expertise has been invaluable. Their approach epitomises the University's attitude and is exactly how a modern university should be developing its role.

The University is outstanding in its approach and attitude. It listens to the needs of business and develops courses to suit the market. The University is playing a vital role in helping business thrive in our economy.

Neil Sullivan
Managing Director
SensaPharm



From world-leading experts...

The automotive industry is going through a major transitional period, with many hurdles to overcome as we move towards a lower carbon economy.

The North-East is hoping to play a major role in that transition as it has distinguished itself as the first specialised region for ultra-low carbon vehicles.

Not only will the region take part in the world's largest trial testing of the day-to-day viability of electric vehicles, but the expertise that exists here and the partnerships that are well established between industry and the education sector should help the entire UK car industry to make the most of the opportunities this new era presents.

Being part of a global business, we are in the enviable position of having such an innovative university partner on our doorstep. The past year highlights that only too well.

Any collaboration is only as effective as the people in it and the ideas and the energy they bring to it, which is what makes the partnership that exists between Nissan and the University of Sunderland so rewarding.

The level and quality of innovation that the University is known for nationally stems, undoubtedly, from the world-leading engineering researchers and academics that reside in the institution. These academics are not only reacting to change, they are driving it.

The pro-active knowledge and advanced thinking that exists among these special people has established a creative hub of expertise that is helping to boost innovation and accelerate business growth in this important area of green industry.

Through its groundbreaking AMAP centre, which is part of the Faculty of Applied Sciences, the University of Sunderland offers an extension of our own research and development facilities.

The expertise that exists within AMAP is indeed groundbreaking and covers everything from knowledge of industrial applications and digital engineering technologies to innovative research in automotive, manufacturing and maintenance engineering, as well as ultra low carbon vehicle technology.

All of this can be transferred to the automotive industry and Nissan supply the University with a number of vehicles for their research. Staff are constantly active in a wide range of important R&D projects including electric vehicles, hybrid electric vehicle technology and fuel cells.

Last year the University also introduced the UK's first MSc programme in Low Carbon Vehicle Technology. The course involves a combination of advanced lecture material and work-based learning projects centred on topical industrial problems.

This provides engineers working in the Low Carbon Vehicle industry with a great opportunity to study part-time and gain an advanced qualification in this fast moving area of technology. More importantly, it helps ensure they keep ahead of the game.

The University has also helped to train thousands of Nissan engineers as design systems have been changed and upgraded and the facilities at the University in terms of CAT systems are second to none.

All the innovative research and work being carried out at the University is fed back to the students, which is helping to create a steady stream of highly-skilled engineers that are in demand from some of the biggest names in the industry.

The University, and particularly its academic staff, is rightly gaining a reputation of being a leader in the engineering and automotive industries and the exciting partnership between the institution and Nissan is producing a range of groundbreaking projects that will come to fruition on the forecourt.

This creative hub is not just good for the North-East, but for the whole of the UK. It should help to attract foreign investment and secure the UK's place as a global leader in the hi-tech manufacturing and automotive industries – promoting the UK as a key player in the global car industry of the future.

Trevor Mann
Senior Vice-President
Nissan Motor Manufacturing UK Ltd



...to world-leading exports

Sunderland stands out because of the flexibility of its research and the quality of its academics. While being renowned for their work in the automotive sector they cross over industries with ease. Last year's completion of The Poseidon project highlighted this well. This groundbreaking research has the potential to save the shipping industry millions in vessel repairs.

The University and BP Marine formed part of a consortium to develop a warning system to analyse lube oil in ships' engines. Lube oil is the lifeblood of engines and any significant contamination leaves a vessel in a vulnerable position. The University's AMAP team developed a software programme for a prototype sensor-based processing unit – the Poseidon system, designed to act like a black box attached to the ship's main engine to monitor the lubricated system. When you consider we supply lubricants to a quarter of the world's fleet, the impact of Poseidon could be substantial and has helped the University establish its expertise within the marine industry.

Geoff Kimber
Team Leader, Marine Engine Lubricants
Technical Support, BP Marine

Accolades and Awards

Our staff and students

- A team of scientists from the Faculty of Applied Sciences carried out research that could dramatically increase the chances of preserving organs for donation from heart attack victims.
- Scientists from the Faculty of Applied Sciences gave the medical world a timely insight after discovering the illegal drug mephedrone varies in quality so much that users could be at risk of overdosing.
- Professor Stephanie Atkinson received the Outstanding Contribution to Design and Technology Education Award, for services to her discipline – the highest award in her field. Stephanie made the headlines five decades earlier when she became the UK's first female woodwork teacher.
- Paul Bradley, sport and exercise physiologist at the University, presented his research into scientific techniques to boost athletes' performance on the football pitch at the World Science and Soccer Conference in South Africa.
- Photographer Paul Alexander Knox, who graduated from the University in 2007 with a first class honours degree in photography, was awarded an Honourable Mention at the International Photography Awards for his work showing how compulsory purchase orders impact on communities.
- The College of Mental Health Pharmacists awarded University of Sunderland pharmacy graduate Hannah Beba this year's Undergraduate Pharmacy Bursary in recognition for her pioneering research in the field of genetics, which has the potential to treat diseases such as cancer and Parkinson's.

Our curriculum

- The University came out top in the UK for student experience at the sector's most prestigious national awards. Sunderland beat all other universities to be crowned the winner of the 2010 Student Experience at the Times Higher Education Awards.
- The Faculty of Business and Law was placed best in the North-East in the Guardian League Tables 2011.
- The University's law degree was the first in the UK to introduce Space Law as part of its course. The new course looks at specific legislative issues for the expanding privatisation of the new space sector.

Our partners

- ITN became the University's official news broadcast partner. ITN's managing editor Robin Elias joined the University's media advisory board, which will result in collaboration on work placements, masterclasses and research.
- Gareth Ziyambi, the former lead physiotherapist for the British diving team, joined The Performance Clinic, based in CitySpace. The Performance Clinic provides world-class physiotherapy and sports injury rehabilitation to staff, students and the public. He joins former Team GB physiotherapist Penny Macutkiewicz at the clinic.

- Some of the region's largest businesses, including Sunderland AFC, Johnston Press, Berghaus, Helena Biosciences and the GT Group benefited from the University's Graduate Internship Scheme. The University worked closely with 150 organisations placing over 70 Sunderland graduates in these businesses, ensuring firms a minimum of six months' worth of high-quality expertise.
- The University of Sunderland was the first UK institution to receive a licence to operate its programmes in Vietnam.

Our environment

- CitySpace won the regeneration category at the 2010 Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors North East Renaissance Awards.
- Sunderland became the first university in the North-East to install Electric Vehicle charging posts. This summer will see the low carbon shuttle bus service transporting students across the city in clean, green, safe vehicles.
- The University's Carbon Management Plan, a document which will have a major long-term effect on how we work, live, travel and do business was launched. The University is dedicated to helping the higher education sector reach the Government's carbon reduction targets of 48% by 2020 and 80% by 2050.
- Last year saw the opening of the Students' Union Green Centre, an evolving concept that hopes to create a focal point for students with an interest in environmental awareness, recycling and generally reducing the impact on the planet.



Professor Stephanie Atkinson



Gareth Ziyambi



New electric charging point

Review Jan 2010 – Dec 2010

January 2010

- Jewellery and Silversmithing students James Hughes and Rachel Wojcik were named among the best in the UK after receiving bursaries from England's most prestigious and oldest craft guild, the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths.

February 2010

- Sunderland Business School's pioneering Centre for Research into the Experience Economy began a major two year project into key employment and skills issues facing the North-East region.

March 2010

- The new series of Dr Who was launched at the University with a visit from the Doctor Matt Smith and his assistant Karen Gillan.
- The Community Spirit award was presented to the University's student radio station 107 Spark FM at this year's Student Radio Conference, in recognition of its efforts to engage with the local community.

April 2010

- Some of the North-East's top political names took to the stage for a lively election debate hosted by the BBC at the University's CitySpace. Nick Brown, William Hague and Sir Alan Beith took part in the debate.

May 2010

- University media students were employed as runners for ITN during the May General Election while Sports Journalism students Nadia Haif and Kevin Moeliker won placements to provide FIFA World Cup coverage for BBC Sport.

June 2010

- Three computing students were selected for placements at Sage UK Ltd, one of the UK's leading software development companies.
- CitySpace won a North-East Royal Institute of British Architects Award for its architectural excellence.

July 2010

- Four times Olympic Champion Michael Johnson received an Honorary Award from the University of Sunderland for his outstanding contribution to athletics.

August 2010

- Sport and Exercise Development graduate Michael Oliver made history when he became the Premiership's youngest referee.

September 2010

- Sports Studies graduate Katy McLean was part of the England Women's Rugby Team which reached the finals of the Rugby World Cup.

October 2010

- BBC Radio 3 hosted a lively debate about the future of higher education at the University's National Glass Centre.

December 2010

- The University led a research project analysing ships log books in the Arctic between 1750 and 1850 to increase a scientific understanding of climate change in such an environmentally important region.

Honorary Awards

– Age UK Sunderland

– Jeff Brown

North-East journalist and news presenter

– Ron Coles

Award-winning radio producer and director

– John Hays

Managing Director of the UK's largest independently owned travel agents

– Melanie Hill

North-East actress

– Michael Johnson

Four-time Olympic Champion

– Trevor Mann

Senior Vice-President for Nissan Europe

– Tom and Jocelyn Maxfield

Entrepreneurs

– Chris Mullin

Author, journalist and former MP

– Umesh Patel MBE

Pharmacist

– Dato' Sri Tee Keat Ong

Malaysian politician



Jeff Brown



Melanie Hill



Michael Johnson

Facts and Figures

Income (£,000) for the year ended 31 July 2010

Funding Body Grants	£48,653
Tuition Fees	£57,797
Research Contracts	£1,615
Other Income	£18,011
Endowment and Investment	£118
Profit on sale of Fixed Assets	£1
Total	£126,195

All Staff (FTE) as at 1 December 2009

Faculty/Service	
Applied Sciences	270
Arts, Design and Media	155
Business and Law	99
Education and Society	174
University Support Services	609
Total	1,307

Student Enrolment as at 1 December 2009

Part-time Home and EU Undergraduate	6,252
Full-time Home and EU Undergraduate	7,368
Part-time Overseas Undergraduate	208
Full-time Overseas Undergraduate	1,091
Home and EU Postgraduate Taught	1,060
Overseas Postgraduate Taught	792
Postgraduate Research	208
Total	16,979

The University Executive

Professor Peter Fidler
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive
Professor Fidler has overall responsibility for the leadership and executive management of the institution and is accountable to the Board of Governors.

Shirley Atkinson
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Resources and Corporate Services)
Ms Atkinson is responsible for corporate planning and overall resource management: the financial, estates and facilities, marketing and communications, libraries and IT, human resources, student and learning support, legal governance and business assurance services.

Professor Peter Strike
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Professor Strike is responsible for research, knowledge exchange and business engagement.

Professor Julie Mennell
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Professor Mennell's responsibilities encompass student recruitment, academic programmes and partnerships, and the student learning experience.

Professor John MacIntyre
Pro Vice-Chancellor
Professor MacIntyre's responsibilities include science, technology and the regional economy.

Professor Gary Holmes
Pro Vice-Chancellor
Professor Holmes has responsibility for learning, teaching and academic programmes.

The Board of Governors

P Callaghan Chair
C Green Deputy Chair
C Barnes (term ended June 2010)
W Ault
Lady C Irvine MBE
S Din
C Jobe
S Forster (on sabbatical until July 2011)
D Curtis (term commenced July 2010)
A Donoghue
Cllr C Gofton
G Tuckwell (term ended June 2010)
N Bellamy (term commenced July 2010)
S Cain
P Rushton (term ended June 2010)
J Fowler (term commenced July 2010)
L West (term ended June 2010)
D Owens (term ended June 2010)
A Leadbitter (term commenced July 2010)

Prepared for the challenge ahead

Maintaining the success and achievements that you have read about in this Annual Review will be a substantial challenge this year.

Almost all organisations partly or fully funded by Government are facing considerable reductions in their budgets. The University sector, for instance, is looking at a serious cut in grant funding over the next 4-5 years. Even with a proposed increase in tuition fees, which carries with it some serious concerns, the majority of universities will be looking at a shortfall in their income.

While universities struggle with resource issues, students will expect more for the increased fees they will be expected to pay. And rightly so.

Our biggest challenge this year, and beyond, will be to not only maintain the student experience, but to enhance it.

A high quality teaching experience, a fully supportive student experience and value for money will be at the forefront of students' minds when choosing which university to attend. We have great strengths in these respects, and therefore much to build on. We believe in good teaching at the heart of the student experience.

Moreover, we equip our students with the academic skills that they will need but equally important, the life skills and links with business and industry that can give them that competitive edge in a fiercely contested jobs market.

Students benefit from our long standing relationship with business – from SMEs to large multinationals. We have shown through our work with global companies

such as Nissan and Sage, as well as firms like Sensapharm, that we offer a strong and varied service, be it our staff, students, graduates or facilities.

We will continue to work closely with business over the next year to help improve the experience of our students, as well as help companies stay competitive in this biting economic recession.

A significant amount of our energy will be spent helping deliver the Sunderland Economic Masterplan. We will be supporting the City's aim to increase wealth and jobs, through areas such as software, renewables and low carbon, with a strong emphasis on enterprise.

Alongside this, we will be taking the University's and the City's messages about our visions for the future to our international partners and markets.

The key for any business to continued success is to adapt to changing conditions. That is something for which we are recognised nationally, and something we will continue to do.

Our main focus for the next year, as is always the case, is to ensure we offer as many people with talent and potential, regardless of background, the chance to join us and take that life-changing opportunity that has benefited so many people, who have enjoyed and succeeded in our University community.

Professor Peter Fidler
Vice-Chancellor
University of Sunderland



The University's Vision

To be recognised as one of a new generation of great civic universities – innovative, accessible, inspirational and outward looking; with international reach and remarkable local impact.

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