

AberNEWS

ISSUE 19 - October 2014

Aberystwyth...one of the best places in the world to be a student



Members of the Aber870 team

Aber870 Staff Challenge

To celebrate the second anniversary of the opening of the Wales Coast Path, staff from across the University took part in the Aber870 Challenge from May to July.

Sixty-one members of staff participated, each committing to swim, cycle, walk or run a distance of their choice.

The challenge was organised to raise money for Wales Air Ambulance, the Vice-Chancellor's Charity of the year for 2013/14. Now in its third year, the Vice-Chancellor's Charity of the Year appeal seeks to raise vital funds for a worthy cause.

Speaking about the Aber870 challenge, Jackie Sayce, one of the co-ordinators said: "The collective distance travelled was intended to equal the length of the Welsh coast, 870 miles, and the total fundraising target was £870. In fact we smashed through both targets, travelling just under 10,000 miles and raising almost £1,000.

"Some colleagues were very inventive in how they made up their miles, including lawn mowing, spinning, pram pushing and riding a horse.

"Although there was a slightly competitive edge to the challenge, this was all in good spirits, and it was mainly about the overall team effort. We hope to build on the team success of Aber870 by organising more staff-led initiatives in the future - all suggestions welcome!"

The chosen charity for 2014/15, voted for by students and staff, is the Aberystwyth Lifeboat and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). The University looks forward to working with the Aberystwyth Lifeboat and the RNLI team during the year.

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NEWS



Summer University success

Whilst most young people would generally take the summer holiday off from their studies, 79 young students decided to opt for six weeks of lectures, research and presentations at this year's Aberystwyth Summer University.

The Summer University is a flagship widening access programme aimed at those who are at least 17 years old and can demonstrate the commitment and motivation to successfully complete the programme. The students live or go to school / college in a Welsh Communities First area, or are from a care / care leaver background, or are the first from their family or community to go to university.

According to Dr Debra Croft, Manager of the Aberystwyth Summer University, its strength lies in allowing a large group of students to come together for an extended period to study subjects of their own choosing, taught by academics in the Departments, mirroring university life as realistically as possible.

SMB shortlisted as Business School of the Year

The School of Management and Business has been shortlisted for the prestigious Business School of the Year Award at the Times Higher Education Awards 2014.



For 10 years, the Times Higher Education Awards have provided a sparkling backdrop for UK universities and colleges to celebrate the best teams and individuals in higher education, and the most successful institutions. The awards recognise exceptional talent, dedication and innovation across the board, from research to widening participation, teaching to entrepreneurship.

The winners of Business School of the Year will be revealed at a glittering awards ceremony on Thursday 27 November at London's Grosvenor House Hotel.

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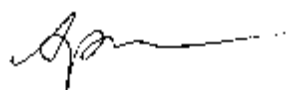
This is always one of my favourite times of the year as we welcome our new and returning students for the beginning of the academic year.

Joining us this year will be an amazing 32 new undergraduates from our Summer University – 23 from the 2013 cohort, 3 from 2012, and 6 coming straight in from the 2014 programme (most Summer University students go back to school or College, so we can expect a substantial number more from the 2014 programme next year). Earlier this month, I was really delighted to receive information from Debra Croft in CWPSI, the Centre for Widening Participation and Social Inclusion, about the destinations of our 2013 Summer University cohort. Of 83 Summer University graduates last year, 57, or 69%, already have places confirmed in Higher Education, with 3 going on to apprenticeships, and 4 having secured employment. 16 young people are returning to school or College for an additional year, so again we'd expect that 69% going into HE to increase again in summer 2015. Very well done to Debra, Roger Morel and their team, including a range of previous Summer University participants who come back as group leaders, for a consistently beneficial, effective and much appreciated programme.

We've also had a very successful Clearing campaign, and we know from anecdotal evidence that some students who recently arrived in Aber would not have been accessing higher education at all now without the contact they had with us through the Clearing lines or immediately before results day. This shows how the University can be adaptable when confronted with very different behaviour, both by applicants (who are increasingly applying for the first time after their results are in), and other universities. We have this year seen applicants collecting offers during Clearing and then opting for Aber in a carefully considered way, often following a visit – so again, very many thanks to all those involved.

However, we are going to have to continue to be adaptable because there are even more changes on the agenda next year. The cap is right off student recruitment in England in 2015-16, meaning at least another 30,000 places available across the Bridge; and applicant behaviour continues to change against a demographic background where the number of 18-year-olds is in decline up to about 2020. Recruitment is everyone's job for the foreseeable future!

So, welcome to the new world – which also involves Aber getting out there to parts of the globe it hasn't had much interaction with before. Our entrepreneurial activity is increasing by the month, and becoming a much more important part of our portfolio. You should expect to hear more over the coming year about Aber activity in London; about our Foundation programme in Dubai; and our increasing range of international partnerships. By far the biggest news is Mauritius – our partners have been visiting Aberystwyth over the summer, meeting our very active and engaged Mauritius team. Our branch campus is under construction right now, and we have recently had the excellent news of Mauritius Tertiary Education Commission full approval for our proposed programmes. Mauritius warmly welcomes international students, and is marketing itself as the ocean economy (great for research links with IBERS), and as the new gateway to Africa. We look forward to more of our subject areas becoming involved in future, and to finding out whether Indian Ocean sunsets can possibly rival the one I'm watching now over Cardigan Bay...



Professor April McMahon, Vice-Chancellor



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From the four corners of the library

It's late summer and the view west from Level F of the Hugh Owen Library, out over the town, past Old College and across the blue splendour of Cardigan Bay is a joy to behold.

For the Collection Management team, however, there is no time to stop and stare. Over the summer, they undertook a huge reorganisation project to interfile quarto (or oversize) books, previously shelved separately, into their main subject holdings.

Easy, you might think. Surely it's just a question of moving a few books around, and making space for the larger books. The work of but a moment. Of course, it's not that simple.

The larger books are too tall to fit within the seven-shelf structure on Level F. Therefore, it has been necessary to remodel the shelving into a six-shelf format to accommodate the quarto size books.

How much shelving are we talking about here?

Eight and a half thousand metres.

Let me say that again: eight and a half thousand metres of shelving.

That would take Mo Farah about twenty-five minutes to run the length of, or, if you want to put it another way, piled end-on-end, they would reach beyond the height of Mount Everest. And, of course, before you can rearrange the shelves, all the books have to be taken off them.

Here come some more stats. In the eight weeks that the job took, the team moved approximately 252,000 books and 63,000 journals. A total of 315,000 items removed from, and subsequently returned to, the shelves.



So what has been the reasoning behind this epic undertaking? Let's look at an example. If you wanted to consult Keith Roberts' book on Edgar Degas, you would find from Primo that the book was on Level F of the Hugh Owen Library with the Class Mark HD553.D3.R6 Qto. But if you didn't know that 'Qto' at the end of the Class Mark signified that the book was oversize and you went to the section of shelving where the HD books are held you wouldn't have found the book there. And even if you did know what those three letters signified, would you know where the oversize books were shelved?

Prior to the reorganisation, all quarto books were shelved in the four corners of Level F. Many users were unaware of this, and even if they were aware, oftentimes the books were difficult to locate. With the consolidation of all standard and quarto size books into the main holdings, the process of locating books will from now on be much more intuitive and much less frustrating for all users.

So high up in Hugh Owen this summer, whilst there might have been some banging and some of the tables may have been requisitioned for temporary book storage (as the picture will attest) the upheaval will all have been worth it in the end.

International Open Access Week

International Open Access Week, 20–26 October 2014, offers an opportunity for the academic and research community to learn more about the potential benefits of Open Access (OA) – free, immediate, online access to results of scholarly research, and the right to use and re-use those results.

OA has the power to transform the way research and scientific inquiry is conducted; with research funders and Funding Councils alike recently launching OA policies.

However, the implementation of OA is not without its issues. The University's OA working group, an Information Services and Department of Research, Business and Innovation collaboration, invites AU academics and researchers to a series of events scheduled across OA week. These events include:

- Q & A session with HEFCE HE Policy Advisor Ben Johnson, and representatives from the publishing community - Arts Centre Cinema, morning of Friday 24 October.
- PURE refresher training session, 12pm Wednesday 22 October, Hugh Owen Training Room. Spaces bookable via CDSAP webpages.
- Research publications copyright workshop with AU Data Protection and Copyright Manager, Dr Jonathan Davies; please send us or bring along licences/copyright agreements which you have been asked to sign when publishing articles.

Send licences (or screenshots of licences) and any questions to openaccess@aber.ac.uk

NEWS

Centre opened to develop new learning and teaching materials

A new centre that facilitates the creation of multimedia learning resources using audio, video and animation to improve and enrich the student learning experience, has been opened in the Hugh Owen Building on Penglais Campus.

Aber Academy provides training for members of staff on how to use technology effectively, and space to exchange ideas and share good practice in learning and teaching.

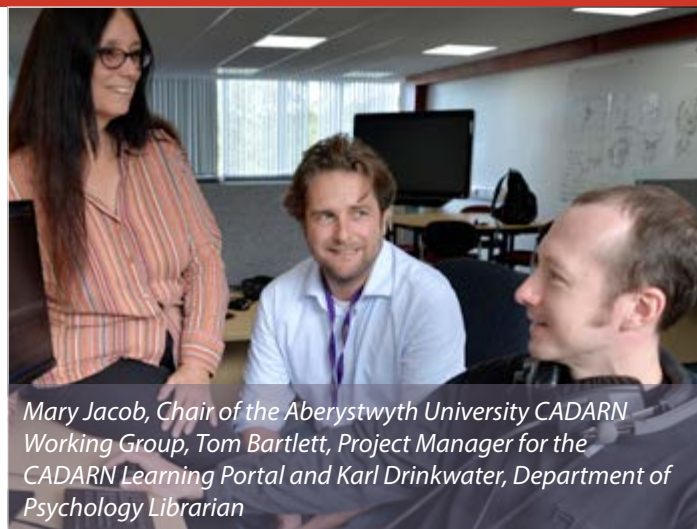
Facilities including a media lab and a recording studio, and equipment such as cameras, camcorders and microphones, can be used and borrowed by staff to help with the delivery of lectures, research or presentations.

The £200,000 investment has been jointly funded by the University and the CADARN Learning Portal, which promotes and facilitates technology enhanced learning across higher education institutions in Wales.

The Academy has been developed largely in response to feedback from students in the National Student Survey, the annual Information Services Users Survey and learner experience studies undertaken in 2010 and 2013.

Students responding to the surveys indicated clearly they were looking for more video and audio content, and a richer virtual and interactive learning experience.

Recognising the importance of student feedback, an Academy Forum is also being established where students will be able



Mary Jacob, Chair of the Aberystwyth University CADARN Working Group, Tom Bartlett, Project Manager for the CADARN Learning Portal and Karl Drinkwater, Department of Psychology Librarian

to give their opinion on new material, provide feedback on learning and teaching initiatives and contribute ideas about future developments.

Mary Jacob, Chair of the Aberystwyth University CADARN Working Group adds, "We are delighted to make this provision to help academics enrich their teaching through the use of media and enhance the student experience. The Academy Forum will provide a way for any interested staff and students to come together as a community of practice to promote excellence in learning and teaching."

More information about the Academy can be found here: <http://nexus.aber.ac.uk/xwiki/bin/view/Main/Aber+Academy>

Members of staff interested in using the facilities, receiving training, who would like to join the Academy Forum or speak to the University's E-learning Group about developing learning material should e-mail acistaff@aber.ac.uk

Young 'graduates' celebrate transition to primary school

The University celebrated its youngest ever 'graduates' on 18 July when four children at Penglais Nursery, part of Aberystwyth University Childcare, donned miniature purple graduation robes and mortar boards in an inaugural celebration for children moving from the nursery to 'big school'.

Lorenzo Pretta (4), Amelie Hamilton-Frisby (3), Oscar Kelsey (3) and Ruby Evans (4) invited their friends and parents to the event, held at the nursery.

Parents and peers enjoyed a slideshow of photos of the children, a short narrative about each child and songs performed by the graduates themselves before they went up one by one for the presentation of their certificates by Faye Ap Geraint, nursery manager.

The youngsters, who start in local primary schools in September, then went outside for photos in the glorious sunshine before



'Graduates' Lorenzo Pretta, Amelie Hamilton-Frisby, Oscar Kelsey and Ruby Evans. Photograph courtesy of the Cambrian News, www.cambrian-news.co.uk

enjoying a selection of refreshments, including a lemon cheesecake the 3+ group had made themselves.

Meithrin leader Anna Evans said "The day was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the achievements of each of these individuals and say goodbye to the children, many of whom have been with us since they were babies."

The nursery plans to continue to hold graduations on a termly basis, for each cohort of children moving up to school.

George Whitefield at 300

Dr David Ceri Jones from the Department of History and Welsh History organised and hosted an international conference at Pembroke College, Oxford from 25-27 June, aimed at reassessing the life and legacy of George Whitefield (1714-70) on the occasion of the tercentenary of his birth.



Dr David Ceri Jones

Much less familiar today than his contemporary John Wesley, George Whitefield was one of the best-known people throughout the mid eighteenth-century North Atlantic world.

An Anglican clergyman, originally from Gloucester, Whitefield's itinerant preaching fuelled Protestant and evangelical renewal movements in England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, parts of Europe and all thirteen of

the American colonies.

He was one of the fathers of Methodism, a founder of Calvinistic Methodism, but also the leading itinerant and trans-Atlantic preacher of the evangelical movement in its first phase.

Sometimes called the 'Apostle of the English Empire', he crossed the Atlantic on thirteen occasions and often preached in the open-air to crowds well in excess of 20,000 in both Britain and America.

His own fame and popularity were such that he has been called 'Anglo-America's first religious celebrity'.

Yet that celebrity and fame has distorted later understandings of him. He became a religious hero to some, but remained a villain to others.

His writing and papers were subjected to over-enthusiastic editors who wished to celebrate his achievements, preserve his reputation, or popularise him, rather than to properly understand him in his eighteenth-century context.

The Whitefield tercentenary has therefore been an ideal moment to begin the process of reassessment.

Arranged in partnership with the Manchester Wesley Research Centre, the Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History and the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University, the 'George Whitefield at 300 International Tercentenary

Conference' attracted over a hundred delegates, and almost sixty speakers, from all corners of the British Isles, the United States, Australia and New Zealand.

Speakers examined many aspects of Whitefield's life, including his relationship with the Church of England, his appropriation of Enlightenment thought, his advocacy of slavery, his charismatic preaching, his championing of Calvinist theology, and his practicing of religious revivalism.

Dr David Ceri Jones explains: "The conference marks an important first step in the reassessment of George Whitefield, but this process has only just begun. There are further exciting developments to come in the next few years which will see Aberystwyth working in close collaboration with institutions on both sides of the Atlantic, as befits a project focusing on a trans-Atlantic eighteenth-century superstar like George Whitefield."

A selection of sixteen essays from the conference will be published in *George Whitefield: Life, Context and Legacy* by Oxford University Press in due course, and Dr Jones has also recently received a major research project grant from the Leverhulme Trust which, in partnership with the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale, will see the production of the first edition of Whitefield's trans-Atlantic correspondence.



George Whitefield by John Russell.
Oil on canvas laid on board, c.1770
© National Portrait Gallery



Meirion Davies (SELL), editor of *Le Nouveau Dico*, and Delyth Ifan, Editor/Project Manager at CAA.

New French-Welsh Dictionary

Cyhoeddwr Adnoddau Addysg (CAA), the educational resource publisher within the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, has published a new French-Welsh dictionary. Funded by a grant from the Welsh Government's Department for Education and Skills, *Le Nouveau Dico* will be an asset to anyone wishing to learn French or to broaden their knowledge of the French language. It will be particularly useful for school pupils and especially those studying GCSE French through the medium of Welsh.

Le Nouveau Dico also contains a grammar section, which includes French verb tables, phrases relevant to the topics studied in the GCSE course, and guidance on how to write letters, emails and text messages.

For further details visit: www.aber.ac.uk/en/caa-catalog/dangos.php?lang=en&ISBN=9781845215408 or telephone CAA directly on 01970 622128.

HUMAN RESOURCES



Corporate Health Standard success

The University has achieved the Bronze Award in the Corporate Health Standard (CHS), an initiative run by the Welsh Government and the quality mark for workplace health promotion in Wales.

Organisations are assessed across four levels from bronze, silver, gold and platinum categories in relation to

their practices to promote the health and well-being of their employees.

The feedback the University received from the assessors was very positive: "Aberystwyth University has made a strong start on the CHS journey; the assessors noted elements of both the silver and gold criteria during the assessment visit. They are delighted to award the University the bronze Corporate Health Standard award and wish them every success on their journey towards the silver level. Well done!"

The University is now working towards the Silver Award and aims to achieve this in academic year 2014/15.

We would like to thank the Corporate Health Steering Group and the staff who have worked to achieve this award and will keep you updated on progress.

Gender Equality Award

The University has been recognised for its progress in advancing gender equality in arts, humanities and social science careers in higher education.

Aberystwyth has achieved Bronze level in the Equality Challenge Unit's (ECU) trial gender equality charter mark (GEM) – the first award scheme of its kind for these disciplines.

Based on the principles of ECU's highly successful Athena SWAN Charter for women in science, the gender equality charter mark aims to address chronic gender imbalance and underrepresentation in the arts, humanities and social sciences.

The Bronze level, the highest level award this year, is the first step in the process showing a strong commitment to specific actions and building a culture that will improve the representation, progression and success of both staff and students.

While the charter has a particular focus on the underrepresentation of women in senior roles, it will also encourage progress on the underrepresentation of men in subjects such as teaching and social work and also seeks to address the unfair treatment often experienced by trans people.

ECU is currently finalising the format of the future charter based on feedback from trial participants, with a view to aligning it more closely with the Athena SWAN charter. All institutions and arts, humanities and social science departments will be able to take part in the charter mark process in 2015.

Pensions update

AUPAS

Following a consultation period with affected staff and Trades Unions, this summer the University Council made the difficult decision to close the Aberystwyth University Pension Scheme (AUPAS) by 31 March 2015.

As a result, a working party which includes representatives of relevant Trades Unions is talking with advisors about procuring a suitable alternative scheme. The University Executive will carefully consider a variety of options suggested by the working party before an extensive procurement exercise begins with a view to having a viable alternative in place next year.

USS

An update on the USS developments indicates that the expected deficit at the March 2014 valuation is likely to be substantial.

Universities UK, representing the employers (150+ universities who are members of the scheme on behalf of academic and related staff) are entering into consultation with USS about benefit reform.

It is expected that a decision on possible changes will be taken in November of this year and it is likely that one of the decisions taken will be to close the final salary scheme in its current form to existing members.

In 2015 consultation will take place with individual employers as well as discussions with UCU, the Trade Union representing the majority of affected employees.

Policies and procedures

The following policies and procedures, which apply to all staff, have been agreed by the Trade Unions.

1. A revised Disciplinary Procedure which replaced Statute 9, Part III for academic and academic related staff from 1 August 2014.
2. A new Redeployment policy.
3. A new Redundancy Avoidance Procedure which replaced Statute 9, Part II for academic and academic related staff from 1 August 2014.
4. A new Drug & Alcohol Policy as part of our health and wellbeing strategy.

Details can be found at www.aber.ac.uk/en/hr/policy-and-procedure/ together with the relevant Collective Agreements.

Any questions about these new or revised policies and procedures should be addressed to your HR Manager:

www.aber.ac.uk/en/hr/hr-team/hrmanagers/

What a year! Following the 1 year milestone since the formation of Research, Business & Innovation on 1 August, we've been reflecting on our achievements, both supporting colleagues across the University and working in partnership with external organisations. You'll see some of the highlights over these pages; from a personal perspective, some of the stand out moments are:

- delivering REF2014 two days before the deadline (the results go public on 18 December 2014)
- completing the merger of the Research Office and CCS involving restructuring into six specialist functions

- refreshing the Aberystwyth University Business Network, with a great turn out for a talk by the HR Director of VW Group UK in May. More exciting talks in collaboration with the School of Management and Business are underway for this year.

We've achieved a lot in this 'bedding down' year and I'm really proud of my team, everyone has contributed to a smooth merger and our successes. The next year has a lot of exciting opportunities, and we are all looking forward to working with you – so please get in touch, especially if you have feedback or ideas you would like to share.

Gary Reed
Director, RB&I

'1 Year In' 2013-14 Highlights

13 new invention disclosures and innovations



1 patent granted in an overseas territory



2 non-exclusive licenses issued to industry



Research Development Officers, including the IBERS team, supported **>£63 million research applications** from **336 Principle Investigators**



123 Postgraduate students

undertook industry linked Masters / PhDs through the KESS and ATM Programmes.



REF2014 was submitted 2 days prior to the official deadline and included:

- **17 Units of Assessment**
- **1122 research outputs**
- **23% of submissions** joint with Bangor University
- **77% of the REF eligible population** of AU researchers submitted to an increased quality threshold of **>2.75 Grade Point Average**
- **50 impact case studies**
- **25 CPD training sessions** were developed, organised and hosted;
- **259 delegates** from a variety of businesses / organisations attended
- **404 legal agreements** were reviewed
- **>2300** students, graduates, staff and external guests **attended research and enterprise themed events**
- **Database compiled of 288** businesses actively engaging in research and enterprise activities at AU (2012 – 2014)

RESEARCH, BUSINESS & INNOVATION

Event Highlights 2013-14

RB&I coordinated and supported a wide programme of events including:

>150 attendees took part in **20 Bitesize Training Events** for researchers

22 early career researchers from 6 Institutes were selected to take part in the recently launched **Grants Factory programme**

7 Research Café events **>95 delegates**

145 staff and students attended **Research Ethics and Integrity Training**



2 Aberystwyth University Business Network Events

658 students, graduates, staff and others interested in enterprise attended **36 enterprise support events**

68 colleagues attended the United Kingdom Research Office (UKRO) Annual Visit to AU

>1000 people attended **12 C3W Public Lectures** over 9 months, with **a further 500 watching** the lectures remotely

196 staff attended **training sessions** relating to REF, Impact, Open Access and PURE

What we do:

Interdisciplinary Research Development	Offering direct support to academics in preparing and submitting grant applications across all disciplines and funders.
Business Development	Bringing academics and businesses together on Enterprise and Innovation. Proactively engaging with external organisations and identifying translational opportunities for Aberystwyth University.
RB&I Project Management and Quality Assurance	Monitoring large Research and Enterprise projects' performance and sharing good project management practice.
REF and Research Monitoring	Research information management and reporting to promote the development of excellent research that makes an impact.
RB&I Finance	Supporting the costing of Research and Enterprise proposals. Providing financial management of grants with regular expenditure statements and reports for Principal Investigators, Institutes and University management.
RB&I Contracts and Policies	Reviewing contracts relating to Research and Enterprise activities across the University and negotiating with partners.

Administrative and marketing functions work across the Department to support the services offered to staff, students and external customers.

Department of Research, Business & Innovation, Visualisation Centre, Penglais Campus

01970 622385 – drbi@aber.ac.uk

FEATURE



Dr Anoush Simon

Popular culture opens book on public library crisis

Dr Anoush Simon is a senior lecturer in the Department of Information Studies. Her research and teaching interests centre on the impact of technology on society and in particular the information profession, and the information society; social exclusion and the digital divide; ICT and community; gender and technology and the careers and motivations of library workers.

Can soap operas tell us anything meaningful about ourselves and the way we live? Do they document our times? I imagine they aim to, although many of us will dismiss them as fluff. Nevertheless even a casual viewer would note, over the years, their engagement with a range of issues from drug addiction to terminal illness to religious fanaticism.

So as a librarian, and a researcher in Information Studies, I have been very interested in a recent story development on *Coronation Street*.

The geography of Weatherfield has been extended. It transpires that they have – or had – a local library. The council want to close it down and it's time for a campaign! This is facilitated by the recent arrival of a new character, tough-talking librarian Yasmeen Nazir. She quickly puts paid to Roy Cropper's well-meaning petition, arguing that the council will only respond to direct action – in this case, a sit-in at the library on the day it closes. E-mails to a local councillor, and the threat of a social media campaign, secure the library a stay of execution. The celebrations are short-lived however as our heroes soon hear that the library is on fire, no doubt an act of revenge against their campaigning.

The admittedly unlikely torching of the public library following Roy and Yasmeen's victory (they earned the right to appeal the closure) was clearly a device to get us to the story's mother-lode – which is that the café 'Roy's Rolls' is to double up as a community (volunteer-run) library. And Roy has, I think, met his intellectual match in Yasmeen, whose cries of "[I am] an experienced, fully qualified Librarian" and "It was a vocation!" must have warmed the hearts of at least a few qualified, graduate, chartered, passionate and committed librarians.

In recent weeks the storyline has given way to far more dramatic ones, but I am hoping it will resurface in the near future, as what it has been successful in doing is pointing out some of the very serious issues facing public libraries today. For example, running and maintaining a voluntary library is a huge and legally complex challenge, and opinions on their success, validity and long-term future are far from clear cut.

Also in the course of four or five episodes we have had reference to the library as a safe space, a community space, a place to do homework, a provider of books and information for the socially excluded, a bridge for the digital divide, a repository of social history, and a focus for memories of a lifetime of use.

As a researcher, one of the areas I am interested in is the idea of information 'poverty' and the digital divide – the impact on individuals, communities and indeed countries of not having easy access to high-quality information. These days, this inevitably includes access to the internet and the burgeoning range of information sources available there.

A case in point is government information. This is increasingly available primarily online, and the Government's Digital Strategy aspires to 'digital by default', i.e. everyone who needs to apply for welfare benefits or other types of support, does so online.

This is fine if you have fast and easy access to the internet and already use it all the time; it is very easy to think that everyone has this. But research from Citizen's Advice Scotland (www.cas.org.uk/publications/offline-and-left-behind) indicates that their clients, the very people who may need to access these benefits, are also those most likely to have restricted or low levels of internet access, experience and confidence – certainly lower than the general population.

The UK Government has identified libraries as one source of support for those who are having trouble navigating the job-seeking and benefits-application form jungle. How realistic this is in the context of the cuts and closures highlighted here remains to be seen – although we know that libraries are already doing good work in this regard (and have been for many years). Swansea Libraries (www.swansea.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=57117) provide us with just one example of the range of classes and support available for people wishing to develop their online skills.

This has inspired my own current research project (funded in part by the University's David Hughes Parry Award Scheme) investigating the impact of 'digital by default' on libraries in

STUDENT NEWS

Showcasing student life with *get fresh!* 2014



It's been a busy month here at the Union, as we've prepared to welcome our new student cohort and run our busiest Freshers' Week yet.

Part of the Union's function is to contribute to the experience our students have at Aberystwyth, and key to this is ensuring they receive a warm and friendly welcome. Throughout Freshers' Week, we operate under a single aim – to ensure all students are able to see and sample everything that student life in Aberystwyth has to offer.

We kicked off proceedings with our annual Sports Week event, which saw 80 new students arrive early for the chance to sample the massive choice of sports clubs on offer to them, making friends along the way.

Once term began, we hosted a variety of induction events to help students find their way, which included an introduction to what we do here at the Union, as well as specific welcome events for international, postgrad and mature students.

Once again, our annual Freshers' Fair event surpassed expectations, with over 5000 students visiting daily. The event showcased the array of sports clubs, societies and volunteering projects operated by the Union, and provided the perfect opportunity for students to jump straight in and get involved from the get-go.

In the evenings, the Union became a hive of entertainment, with a massive range of events including The Big Quiz and Comedy Works, as well as the ever-popular club and celebrity appearance events.

A crucial part in delivering all of this has been our amazing army of volunteers, our Freshers' Heroes. These Heroes, usually 2nd or 3rd year students, give up their Freshers' Weekend and several days afterwards to don our red Heroes t-shirt. Throughout this period, they're out and about on campus, welcoming new students, directing them to where they need to be and answering questions which only a current student could answer. Without a doubt, these individuals are shining examples of the generous and helpful students we have here in Aberystwyth.

Jamie Barker - AUSU Marketing & Communications Manager



Food & Drink



Clothing



Essentials

Students' Union Shop

Opening Hours

Mon-Fri 8:30-6pm | Sat 11am-5pm

facebook.com/UMaberSU 01970621725 @union.shop@aber.ac.uk



Wales. Because it is central, crucial to diverse communities in Wales, I am interested in the kind of enquiries libraries are receiving about 'digital by default', the concerns they and their users have, and how they are responding to this new information need.

So the huge problems facing our public libraries (and indeed the local authorities who have to make these difficult decisions), the threat to, or closure of, small community libraries, and the devastating impact on communities or individuals that may result, has actually been talked about in a prime-time soap which is one of the most watched programmes on UK television. It brings the issue into popular focus, and helps to underline the value of libraries to communities for a range of reasons; and it gives me heart.

Article modified from a guest blog originally published at:
<http://libalyson.wordpress.com/>

SPOTLIGHT



Professor Neil Glasser

Person Profile - Professor Neil Glasser

For this edition of AberNEWS we spoke to Professor Neil Glasser, Director of the Institute of Geography, History, Politics and Psychology (IGHPP), and Professor of Physical Geography in the Department of Geography and Earth Sciences.

What is your academic area of expertise?

My research covers many aspects of climate change and its effects on ice sheets, glaciers and sea-level. I have been lucky enough to undertake fieldwork research in many parts of the world including Greenland, Antarctica, Patagonia, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Svalbard, the Andes and the Himalayas. Most of my teaching is in Physical Geography, including glaciology, glacial geomorphology and glacial geology.

What does your job entail?

It is incredibly varied. IGHPP contains the Departments of Geography & Earth Sciences, History & Welsh History, International Politics, and recently also Psychology. I knew the Department of Geography & Earth Sciences very well because it is my “home” Department but I have had to learn fast about the other three Departments. IGHPP is large – with over 120 full-time academic staff, over 20 support staff and a thriving Postgraduate community – so one of the challenges has been to get to grips with the great variety of work that goes on and how to use this to develop an academic strategy for the future. I guess you could say that my job is now mainly academic administration, rather than teaching or research. I am really lucky because I am surrounded by great people, and this makes the job so much easier.

What is a typical day like?

It is probably a cliché to say there is no such thing as a typical day, but I can give you a list of the types of activities that I get up to. I spend a lot of time meeting and speaking to people as well as writing and answering emails, and I attend a lot of face-to-face meetings. These could be anything from planning meetings, meetings to set and review budgets, dealing with Human Resource issues, staff mentoring meetings, dealing with student enquiries, or sitting on University-level appointment panels,

promotion panels and many other University committees.

I am a member of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) Peer Review College, so I spend a fair bit of time reviewing research grant applications. I also serve as an editor for two large academic journals (*the Journal of Glaciology* and *Quaternary Science Reviews*) so that also takes time; reading manuscripts, finding reviewers for manuscripts, dealing with authors and making decisions on papers.

I have a number of PhD students in various stages of their graduate studies, so I also have regular progress meetings with them and spend time reading and commenting on their work.

I also continue with my research interests in Glaciology. I am currently working on a number of research papers with various collaborators, writing a research grant proposal to fund my research in Antarctica, and am involved in the new Swedish-UK-US-Norwegian-German project ‘MAGIC-DML’ that will look at past vertical ice thicknesses in the Dronning Maud Land (DML) area of Antarctica.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Family time is important to me. I live right by the sea in Aberystwyth and spend a lot of my spare time out-and-about taking photographs of sunsets on the beach, going on camping and mountain-biking trips or walking in the hills or at Ynys Las. I am also a big football fan, although in recent years I have watched more games than I have played....



San Rafael Glacier in Patagonia



San Rafael Glacier in Patagonia

ABER PEOPLE

Appointments

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND CREATIVE WRITING



Dr Louise Marshall has been appointed as Head of the Department of English and Creative Writing. Until recently Dr Marshall was Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Institute of Literature, Language and Creative Arts, and her academic work focuses on Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature. She takes over from Dr Elisabeth Salter who has moved to the University of Hull to become Professor of English and Head of the Department of English.

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Dr Nigel Holt has been appointed Head of the Department of Psychology. Dr Holt was previously Director of International and External Relations at the Institute of Human Sciences and Senior Lecturer in Psychology. His research interests are in the relationship between sound and different aspects of cognition including memory, attention and performance. He takes over from Professor Kate Bullen who has been appointed the University's Director of Ethics and Equality.



DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS

Professor Simon Cox has been appointed Head of Department of Mathematics. Professor Cox's research interests include biological morphology, foam drainage and foam rheology. Professor Cox's appointment follows the establishment of Mathematics as a separate academic department within the Institute of Mathematics, Physics and Computer Science.



DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE, FILM AND TELEVISION STUDIES

Dr Anwen Jones has been appointed Head of the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies. Until recently she was Director of Learning and Teaching in the Department and is Chair of the Aberystwyth University branch of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. Her research interests are in national theatre in Wales in the European context, French drama and drama and theatre in Wales and in Welsh. Dr Jones succeeds Dr Jamie Medhurst.



RESEARCH, IMPACT AND EXCELLENCE

Professor Colin McInnes from the Department of International Politics has been appointed the new Professor of Research, Impact and Excellence. The new role will involve promoting research excellence across the University and specifically monitoring, advising and preparing Institutes and Departments at Aberystwyth for the next Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2020.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

Andy Wainwright has been appointed as the University's Fire Safety Advisor. Andy has 25 years' experience as a Fire Officer with Cheshire, and latterly Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service. He has a degree in Fire Engineering and holds qualifications in health and safety, advanced investigative practice, and electrical installations. He is an active member of the Institute of Fire Engineers representing Mid and West Wales on the Engineering Council UK.



Retirements



Dr Hywel Davies retired in June as Director of Admissions and Recruitment, after 34 years of diligent service to Aberystwyth. His loyalty and unflinching dedication

will not be forgotten by colleagues who have worked with him over the years.

As a practised and inspirational public speaker, Hywel will continue to fly the flag for Higher Education in Wales and will also have time to pursue his many other interests.

All the very best for your retirement Hywel.

Dr Russell Davies recently retired as the University's Marketing Manager. After 31 years of service at Aberystwyth, including some time spent lecturing in the Department of History and Welsh History, Russell plans to spend the next few months writing more books on Welsh social history, and is looking forward to spending time with his family and maintaining his love of painting, photography, and gardening. Wishing you a long, happy retirement Russell.



Mrs Jane Watts retired from the Institute of Biological Environmental and Rural Sciences at the end of August after 38 years of service at AU. Jane started work in the University Registry in 1976 and joined the Department of Botany and Microbiology in 1982.

She worked for seven Directors of Biological Sciences at the University before becoming Head of IBERS administration when it was formed in 2008. Happy retirement Jane.



Obituaries

Professor Dave Barnes (1955 - 2014)

Dave Barnes was Professor of Space and Planetary Robotics at the Department of Computer Science.

Originally from Blackburn, he graduated from the University of Bradford (1980) before going on to complete a Masters degree in Machine Intelligence and Robotics at Queen Mary College University of London, and a PhD in Artificial Intelligence and Robotics here at Aberystwyth in 1985.

Dave played a key role in the development of the robotic arm that featured on the Beagle 2 Lander mission to Mars and worked closely with the late Professor Colin Pillinger.

Dave was a member of the UK STFC Aurora Advisory Committee (AurAC) since 2005, and represented the interests of the UK EPSRC community on issues relating to the ESA Aurora Programme and Planetary Exploration.

He was a founding member of the UK Space and Planetary Robotics Network, and a member of the UK STFC Particle Physics, Astronomy and Nuclear Physics Science Committee (PPAN).

He was a member of the ESA ExoMars Rover team, and was researching autonomous science sample acquisition methods for the ExoMars mission, which is scheduled for 2018.

He was a Co-investigator for the mission's Panoramic Camera (PanCam) science instrument. As a member of the PanCam 3D Vision Team, his responsibilities included PanCam modelling, simulation, image data processing and science data visualisation.

More recently he was central to the initial developments for the proposed Spaceport project through his work with the Wales Academic Space Partnership.

Professor Dave Barnes died on 25 July 2014, aged 58.



Geoff Constable (1957 - 2014)

Geoff Constable joined the University in 1995, and worked in a number of roles over a period of nineteen years, most recently as Liaison Officer for the HEFCW-funded CADARN Learning Portal, a national project working with academic staff creating educational media to inspire new students into higher education.

Geoff was a qualified teacher and graduate of the University of Kent, Canterbury and Aberystwyth University where he completed an MSc in Computer Science in 1994.

Geoff joined the Department of Computer Science in 1995, and worked in a number of roles and projects, including the 'MICE-NSC' project, webmaster, multicast IP deployment, UK-wide Video Technologies Advisory Service, IP 'Quality



of Service' studies, rural network deployment, the use of communications and IT, and a large European-funded software engineering project called SCREEN.

In 2001, Geoff joined the Welsh Video Network (WVN) Support Centre, a pioneering and global leading initiative established with staff based at Swansea and Aberystwyth. Geoff was appointed Video Services Support officer, and worked there until 2012 supporting many thousands of users of the WVN.

Geoff had been a long standing member of the local UCU Exec and the Health, Safety and Environment representative, and worked tirelessly in these roles supporting the Union and the interests of its members at Aberystwyth.

A champion of green and environmental causes Geoff was successful in raising the profile of these issues at a University level. He was involved in two Green ICT projects exploring the carbon emissions savings that can be made by using information and communications technologies effectively. Recently he was responsible for setting up the organic vegetable box scheme and was a central part of the Information Services Green Impact team.

Geoff Constable died on 30 July 2014, aged 57 years.

Professor Ivor Gowan (1922 - 2014)

Professor Ivor Gowan was Head of the Department of Political Science at Aberystwyth from 1965 to 1988, and Vice Principal for a period.

Ivor and his wife, Gwen, were devoted to the then University College of Wales, Aberystwyth and he played a large part in the governance of the College. He was greatly interested in devolution in Wales. He also played a substantial role in encouraging international students to study at Aberystwyth.

Professor Ivor Gowan died on 8 August 2014 at the age of 92.

Dr Boris Mitavskiy (1976 - 2014)

Dr Boris Mitavskiy started his employment with the University on 1 May 2011 as a Research Assistant in Evolutionary Computation, funded by the EPSRC, within the Department of Computer Science.

He obtained his PhD in Mathematics from the University of Michigan following the completion of his BS in Mathematics undertaken at Arizona State University.

Dr Mitavskiy came to Aberystwyth having held positions in the Universities of Sheffield, Birmingham and the A* Bioinformatics Institute in Singapore. Boris, together with two other authors won the best paper of the year award in 2009 from the *International Journal on Intelligent Computing and Cybernetics*.

During his time at the University, he worked on the "Evolutionary Approximation Algorithms for Optimization: Algorithm Design and Complexity Analysis" project, a joint project with partners at the University of Birmingham focusing on designing and analysing evolutionary approximation algorithms for hard optimization problems like scheduling and routing.



The project involved the study and comparison of different types of evolutionary algorithms, including genetic algorithms, artificial immune algorithms, ant colony optimization and estimation of distribution algorithms, and brought traditional theoretical computer science and evolutionary computation together.

Dr Boris Mitavskiy died on 10 July 2014, aged 38.

Professor David Robert Gwilliam (1953 – 2014)

Professor Gwilliam worked for the University from 1978 until 1989, returning in 1992 when he was appointed to an Ernst and Young Chair. He remained here until he took a Chair at Exeter University where he was Head of Department until his retirement in October 2013.

David Gwilliam was born in Bromsgrove, Worcestershire on 12 March 1953. After moving to London, he attended Dulwich Hamlet school and then Birkenhead School on the Wirral peninsula.

From there, he went up to Trinity College Cambridge in 1971, where he was awarded an Exhibition to read Economics. He would return to Cambridge, as a Fellow of Churchill College, following his qualification as a Chartered Accountant with Price Waterhouse.

Subsequently, he held Chairs in Accounting at Aberystwyth and Exeter Universities and was a visiting professor at the London School of Economics and at Australia's Monash University (Melbourne) and a member of the Accounting & Finance Panel of the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise.

He gave the 7th Tom Robertson Memorial Lecture at Edinburgh University in 1989 and the PD Leake Lecture at the Institute of Chartered Accountancy of England & Wales in 2003.

In 2013, he was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the British Accounting & Finance Association, on whose Conference of Professors he had been a very active and influential member.

Professor David Robert Gwilliam passed away on 31 August 2014 aged 61 years.



Annwen Frost (1946 - 2014)

It is with great sadness that we note the death of Mrs Annwen Frost, who passed away on 10 September, 2014, at the age of 67.

Annwen joined the Continuing Education Department as a Secretary for Welsh for Adults in 1995. She also worked for a time at the Welsh Language Teaching Centre, on the University of Wales Trinity Saint David campus, Lampeter, with the Lecturer with responsibility for Welsh for Adults.

Annwen's contribution was very important to the development of Aberystwyth University's role as a provider of Welsh for Adults intensive and higher courses over a wide area, stretching from Harlech in the north to Llandeilo in the south and St Davids in the west. Annwen moved to do the same job in the new Centre for Continuing Education, 10 Laura Place, Aberystwyth, in 2003.

Annwen coordinated the Summer Course, a residential summer course for Welsh learners of all standards, which takes place on Penglais Campus every summer, until she took early retirement in 2011 due to long term illness.

She will be remembered as a highly motivated and conscientious person, who was extremely well-liked by all who came into contact with her. Her enthusiasm for the work she did was infectious. Her cheerful personality and positive attitude were very much appreciated by her colleagues and students alike. She was always willing to go the extra mile to help others, and promote the cause of Welsh for Adults.

TaMed Da & TaMedbach, Penbryn

Our award winning restaurant offers quality food and value for money.

For the up to date opening times please visit:

www.aber.ac.uk/en/hospitality/opening-hours/

or the noticeboard in Penbryn Reception

We also have the newspapers daily, a TV and a decking area for when the weather is fine.

Gwasanaethau Croeso - Hospitality Services

WHAT'S ON

SCHOOL OF ART EXHIBITIONS

Monday 13 October – Friday 21 November

'Contemporary Chinese Printmaking'

Curated by Paul Croft who recently travelled to Changsha, this exhibition includes prints by artists from The Hunan Printmaker's Association and by students from Changsha Central South University, Hunan University of Science and Technology, and Changsha Normal University.



Li Zhao Exciting Years lithograph

Monday 1 December – Friday 6 February

'(Im)memorabilia: Ephemerality, Resonance and the Collector's Item'

An exhibition curated by Harry Heuser.

'Mythscales in the Watery Realm'

A Collaborative Art-Science Project print exhibition between Aberystwyth Printmakers and IMPRESS, Brisbane. Funded by the Australian Research Council and Wales Arts International.



Jenny Sanzaro-Nishimura Flow serigraph

Susan Fraser-Hughes: PhD Exhibition

An exhibition of works by PhD Fine Art student, Susan Fraser-Hughes.

AUTUMN SEASON AT THE ARTS CENTRE

Reflections of War Season

This autumn, as we commemorate WW1, the Arts Centre presents a series of events investigating, interpreting and taking inspiration from the effects of war across the globe and across the centuries.

Work includes:

Tim Shaw RA exhibition **Black Smoke Rising** in Gallery 1 (4 October – 22 November), an extraordinarily powerful exhibition speaking of human conflict through the ages. Tim will be giving a free talk about his work on 3 October.



Tim Shaw

War Correspondents by Helen Chadwick (21 October), a poignant song-theatre performance using real life testimonies to depict the extraordinary stories and life-changing experiences of war journalists.

Rites of War by Gravity & Levity (8 November) is a moving aerial dance performance portraying the impact of war on ordinary people, fused with film, poetry, music and news commentary. BBC Afghanistan correspondent, David Loyn, who advised on the production is originally from Bontgoch.



Rites of War

A special public symposium **Politics, Performance and Ethics** is being organised in partnership with the Department of International Politics.

Workshops are on offer with both *War Correspondents* and *Rites of War*.

For more information on all these events, visit the Arts Centre's website:

www.aberystwythartscentre.co.uk

Abertoir is coming!

The ninth Wales Abertoir Horror Festival runs from 11- 16 November at the Arts Centre - six jam packed days of film premieres, classic favourites, talks, music and theatre.

Special events include a special 3D screening of the Vincent Price classic *House of Wax*; guest appearances from horror favourite, actor Ian McCulloch; a debate on video nasties led by Professor Martin Barker; a special trip on board the 'Abertoir Express' as the Vale of Rheidol railway hosts an evening of storytelling and a performance of *Horror Express* on the platform itself; and a performance of HP Lovecraft's *The Temple*, an atmospheric adaptation of the tale of possession and madness. A must!

All the latest details on the Abertoir website: www.abertoir.co.uk



The Temple

INSTITUTES AND ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS

Who's Who

INSTITUTE OF BIOLOGICAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND RURAL SCIENCES



Institute Director
 Professor Mike Gooding
(begins in post 1 October)
 TBC
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Institute Manager
 Emyr Phillips
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Further information: www.aber.ac.uk/en/ibers/

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Institute Director
 Professor Tim Woods
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 01970 621775



Institute Manager
 Annette Davies
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 01970 628683

The Careers Service, International English Centre (IEC), Learning Support, the Centre for the Development of Staff and Academic Practice (CDSAP), and the Graduate School are also contained within the Institute of Education, Graduate and Professional Development.

School of Education and Lifelong Learning



Director: Professor Malcolm Thomas
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Further information: www.aber.ac.uk/en/university/institutes/iepgd/

INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, POLITICS AND PSYCHOLOGY



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Department of History and Welsh History



Head of Department:
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Department of Psychology



Head of Department:
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Department of International Politics



Head of Department:
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INSTITUTES AND ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS

INSTITUTE OF LITERATURE, LANGUAGES & CREATIVE ARTS (ILLCA)



Institute Director
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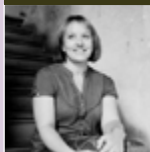


Institute Manager
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Aberystwyth Arts Centre and the University Music Centre are also contained within the Institute of Literature, Languages & Creative Arts.

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School of Art



Head of Department:
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Department of English and Creative Writing



Head of Department:
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Department of European Languages



Head of Department:
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Department of Welsh



Head of Department:
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INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, LAW & INFORMATION SCIENCE



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Department of Law and Criminology



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Department of Information Studies



Head of Department:
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School of Management and Business



Head of Department:
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INSTITUTE OF MATHEMATICS, PHYSICS AND COMPUTER SCIENCE



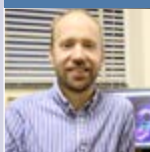
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Head of Department:
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Department of Mathematics



Head of Department:
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