The Employability Points Rewards Evening

The Employability Points Rewards Evening took place on Tuesday 2 June 2015 at the Grimond Building on the University of Kent’s Canterbury campus.

Now in its fourth year, the University of Kent’s Employability Points (EP) scheme saw a record 5,126 students taking part, with 130 companies offering 567 prizes to its most engaged students.

Continued on page 2
Developed by Kent Innovation & Enterprise at the University, EP encourages students to develop personal and work skills of value to future employers and offers reward points for their active engagement in activities outside their degree programme.

These include: involvement with campus events; student mentoring; organising student society events; presenting at international conferences; volunteering; part-time employment; work placements; international study; and completion of a world language module.

The evening, which welcomed over 150 guests was sponsored by Santander Universities with Canterbury City Council sponsoring the promotional material for the ceremony. Students with the highest points were presented with prizes such as training programmes, paid internships and vouchers, all of which are provided by organisations or companies.

Mollie Ferguson, Student EP Ambassador was awarded for her hard work and dedication to the scheme with a limited edition University of Kent weather clock and flowers presented by Carole Barron, Director of Innovation & Enterprise on the evening.

Mollie said: ‘The Rewards evening was a fantastic opportunity for students to network with sponsors and supporters, and to inspire others to get more involved with the scheme in the future to reap the brilliant rewards available!’

Lord Mayor of Canterbury Councillor Sally Waters, representatives from Santander Universities, members of small and large businesses, Medway and Canterbury City Councils and the University’s Pro Vice-Chancellor of Teaching and Learning Professor Chris Davies were among the guests who attended the ceremony.

Professor Chris Davies said: ‘Over a quarter of all Kent’s students and over 130 employers are now engaged with the scheme. These two facts alone demonstrate the importance both students and employers place on the development of skills and experience within education. Kent is leading the way with this scheme, and it is clear that employers hold the scheme in high regard. Education is not just about gaining excellence in a discipline, it is also about education in the round, gaining life skills valuable beyond university. This scheme supports that mission in an excellent and progressive way.’

Carole Barron said: ‘The University is wholeheartedly committed to supporting all of its 20,000 students in their studies and through extra-curricular activities such as the Employability Points Scheme. The Scheme is valuable to our students and we would like to thank the great range of sponsors and partners who make it so successful.’

Marcus Wright, Enterprise Manager at Kent Innovation & Enterprise said: ‘It was amazing to see so many of our engaged students networking with both internal support staff who help disseminate the message of EP and a selection of our supporting companies. A tremendous celebration of success and all of our students should feel very proud of their achievements.’
Supporting economic growth

Record-breaking turnout at KEiBA ceremony

The University once again showed their commitment to the Kent business community by sponsoring the Technology category at the Kent Excellence in Business Awards (KEiBA).

More than 630 guests attended the award ceremony which took place at the Kent Event Centre in Detling on Thursday 25 June 2015.

This year’s event, staged by Kent County Council and the KM Group, was attended by a record number of 46 finalists across 15 categories.

Carole Barron, Director of Innovation & Enterprise at the University of Kent, teamed up with Dr Gary Robinson, the University’s Senior Commercialisation Manager, Lucy Druesne, Senior Operations Manager, and Pete Kenyon of Cripps lawyers to judge the Technology Business of the Year category.

The judges chose Chatham-based video games developer Dovetail Games as their category winner and were impressed by the company’s entrepreneurial spirit and ambition to become the world’s leading simulation gaming company.

Formerly known as Railsimulator.com, Dovetail Games specialises in virtual reality entertainment technology and develops and publishes trains, flight, and fishing video games. Dovetail’s products include the flagship Train Simulator that allows players to drive a variety of trains on iconic routes.

The company was awarded Medway Business of the Year in 2014 which prompted a visit to the firm’s headquarters by Prime Minister David Cameron.

Judges praised the firm’s ‘exceptional quality, impressive attention to detail, inspiring team, and clear display of excellence and passion for what they are doing’.

Carole Barron presented the award on behalf of the Games.

Mrs Barron said: ‘We have been impressed with the range of companies, and the breadth of products and services provided, clearly identifying Kent as home to a thriving tech community.

Dovetail Games is a young and dynamic company working with cutting edge technology and competing with global market leaders in its field. The company’s vision and focus clearly defines it as a business that will continue to make waves.’

For more information about the KEiBA Awards, please visit www.keiba.co.uk

Kent secures two Knowledge Transfer Partnerships with Priority Freight and Port of Dover

The University’s Kent Business School (KBS) has successfully secured two funded Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) to support Kent-based Priority Freight and the Port of Dover.

The Priority Freight project is a 30 month partnership involving KBS’ Professor Said Salhi, Dr Shaomin Wu and Dr Niaz Wassin who will help to embed new processes at Priority Freight, Dovetail’s company that provides logistics solutions to car manufacturers, global airlines and pharmaceutical giants.

The Port of Dover’s 24 month partnership involves KBS’ Dr Paola Scaparra and Dr Jesse O’Hanley who will redesign and improve traffic flow at the Port’s Eastern Docks and optimise the layout of the Port’s new Western Docks cargo terminal building.

As Professor Said Salhi said: ‘Both KTPs will enhance relationships with KBS in terms of future collaborations through MSc Logistics summer projects and internships and could support future grants. These KTPs also clearly endorse our support of the local economy in Kent.’

Dr Jesse O’Hanley said: ‘This is an exciting partnership that will use cutting-edge business analytics to drive long-term strategic developments at the Port of Dover. The potential for considerable operational efficiency gains at the Port and the wider impact this will have on traffic and the economy in the South East are considerable and make this a particularly noteworthy project.’

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships are a UK-wide Government programme helping businesses to improve their competitiveness and productivity through better use of knowledge, technology and skills that reside within the UK academic knowledge base.

If you would like to find out how a KTP can help your business, contact details can be found at the back of this newsletter.

University staff helping local business

The Head of Procurement, Don Bowman, has been working with the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce over the last year to improve the chances of local business securing work with the Public Sector, including the University itself.

The focus has largely been on small and medium sized businesses (SMEs), two workshops have already been held, including presentations on how to win Public Sector business delivered by Don Bowman.

On Tuesday 28 April over 100 SMEs gathered at Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce in Ashford for an event hosted by the University to give business owners the opportunity to meet buyers from across the Public Sector in Kent. The event also assisted SMEs in registering on portals to access public procurement opportunities.

The University’s Procurement Team, the Head of Trading within Kent Hospitality and the Estates Maintenance Manager were among those who attended from the University, along with colleagues from other Kent based Public Sector organisations.
How students can help your business

Employability Points Update

In the 2014-15 academic year, the University of Kent’s Employability Points (EP) Scheme saw a record 5,126 students take part with 130 businesses and organisations who offered over 550 opportunities to the most engaged students.

Points are awarded for student involvement in a range of activities, including part-time employment, volunteering, attending conferences and networking events, partaking in societies and sports teams, and much more.

Students can redeem their points for the opportunity to apply for rewards, offered by the external business community. Rewards offered in 2014-15 included paid internships with large corporations such as IBM and Alliance to public sector organisations, including Medway Council, Canterbury City Council and Kent County Council. Students were also rewarded with work experience and work shadowing placements with Historic Dockyard Chatham, Balreed, Canterbury Cathedral, Sleeping Giant Media and Santander Universities, to name just a few.

Reflecting on his experience, Kent Business student, Daniel Smith said: ‘The EP Scheme has been the most important thing I have done at university outside of my studies by far. The experience I have gained from the volunteering and rewards I have done are so valuable and have helped me feel more prepared from when I begin to look for work placements and graduate opportunities. I highly recommend being a part of the scheme as it is a fantastic way to become more employable.’

A number of large corporates, local SMEs and public sector organisations recognise the benefit of the scheme, to their own business and to students alike. Tomas Christodoulou, Talent Acquisition at Enterprise Rent-a-Car, commented: ‘In today’s graduate market, students need to be aware of their employability skills. Students gain employability skills through their extra-curricular activities.

Students should take the time to expand their CV, learn how to network and go out of their way to take on placements and work experience opportunities. The EP scheme redresses these students, the students who do more than just go to lectures but are invested in their future careers.’

Through engaging with the EP Scheme, businesses can meet their corporate social responsibility agendas, develop a closer relationship with the University of Kent and recruit students on a temporarily basis to undertake specific tasks.

Accordingly, the EP team are welcoming businesses and organisations to partner with the EP Scheme from September 2015 onwards, with the intention of placements being completed the following summer.

For more information, contact employabilitypoints@kent.ac.uk or telephone 01227 823109.

STOP PRESS!
The Employability Points scheme has been shortlisted for the Times Higher Award within the Best Student Support category. The winner will be revealed on 26 November.

Schoolchildren impressed judges with their innovative inventions at an annual competition at the University of Kent

Pupils from Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys, St Edmund’s School in Canterbury and Queen Elizabeth’s Grammar School in Faversham entered the Rotary Innovation Competition hosted by the Canterbury Rotary Club and Kent Innovation & Enterprise at the University.

Marcus Wright, Enterprise Manager and Gary Robinson, Senior Commercialisation Manager from the University formed the judging panel with Robert Boyd Howell, former President of the Rotary Club of Canterbury and Christian Wilse of Canterbury Sunrise Rotary Club.

The competition was supported by all three of the City’s Rotary Clubs together with the Kentish Gazette, with the prizes being donated by the Rotary Club of Canterbury and presented by Peter Hermitage, its current President.

Pupils were asked to think up ideas which are practical, innovative and capable of giving the greatest improvement to life. They submitted their ideas to the judges in advance and finalists were invited to the University on Wednesday 8 July to present their ideas in front of an audience and the judging panel.

After an ‘X Factor’ style vote from pupils, the judges gathered to make their decision. Anna Blandford from Queen Elizabeth’s Grammar School was revealed as the winner for her ‘Kuti Cube’ idea and received a £300 cheque donated by the Rotary Club.

Anna’s idea, ‘Kuti Cube’ is a toy storage device targeted at young children to encourage them to tidy away their playthings. The cubes would be made of durable, brightly coloured plastic and would flash and make noise until toys are tidied back into the boxes. The pupil got her inspiration for the innovative tidying solution after speaking to friends’ parents and conducting research.

Anna, 14, was delighted to be chosen as the winner. She said: ‘I do not feel like this has happened, I feel very surprised!’

Runners up were Simon Langton pupils Tom Jefferies, Joe McInally, Jack Watts and Sam Pritchard who pitched their idea for a teeth and gum cleaning device aimed at children and teenagers. They received a total of £100 for their idea.

Elected member of The Rotary Club of Canterbury Brian Dobinson said: ‘This year there were as twice as many entries as last year so it does indicate that there is an interest in young people to do something new. All the entries were very interesting and it showed these young people have worked hard at putting their ideas forward.’

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The University of Kent's short course programme continues to expand, with the addition of new and innovative workshops.

It is widely acknowledged that there is an urgent need for delivery of skills based training for the workforce. A recent survey by the CBI found that more than half of employers fear they will not be able to recruit enough high-skilled workers. The University of Kent is helping to address this need by delivery of specialist courses required by specific sectors.

In March and April this year our Centre for Research and Education in Forensic Psychology ran two one-day workshops, HCR20-V3 and RSVP which so well received by professionals in the field that we were planning to run them again in December.

The Centre for Child Protection will also be providing specialist training later this year.

Course title: Direct Work with Children
Course outline: This training session will specify the principles, theories and techniques of direct work and will emphasise that as well as understanding the behaviour of children and young people, it is equally important to understand his/her mind which is effectively achieved through applying the concept of mentalisation.

Cost: £199 per person
Date: Tuesday 6 October or Tuesday 3 November 2015
Time: 10.00-16.00
Venue: University of Kent, Tonbridge Centre

The School of Economics has developed a workshop for Economics teachers in response to the growing number of student and staff entrepreneurs.

In addition to Kent’s students, staff and recent alumni graduates from across the UK and worldwide will be able to access HIVE, firmly embracing the University’s European and international approach.‘

Focus on training

The University of Kent is helping to address this need by delivery of specialist courses required by specific sectors.

Course outline: This training session is aimed to provide school teachers with key knowledge from latest research on the 2007/2008 financial crisis. The session is designed to be beneficial in teaching the new topics introduced by examination boards starting September 2015.

Cost: £100 per person
Date: Monday 14 December 2015
Time: 09.00-17.00
Venue: University of Kent, Canterbury campus

The University’s training portfolio also includes workshops that will benefit delegates from all sectors, for example our School of Psychology’s upcoming leadership workshop.

Course title: Leadership in Challenging Times
Course outline: Many off-the-shelf workshops and self-help books about leadership focus on personality and individual characteristics of leaders. These approaches help us understand leadership, but lack the team element to leadership and the innovative value of this workshop will be that focus on group processes. The workshop focuses on how leaders are often in a dilemma since they must be representative of the team’s ethos but also need to take the team in a new direction.

Cost: £99 per person
Date: Friday 30 October 2015
Time: 09.00-17.00
Venue: University of Kent, Canterbury campus

Understanding the needs of the employer is our highest priority therefore all of our training can be delivered flexibly in the workplace for groups, tailored specifically for the organisation. If you are interested in finding out more please contact Kent Innovation & Enterprise. Contact details can be found at the back of the newsletter.

Hub for Innovation and Enterprise (HIVE)

The University’s dedicated incubator, Kent Enterprise Hub has moved and is being relaunched to enable the University to support its growing number of student and staff entrepreneurs.

HIVE (Hub for Innovation and Enterprise) based at the Canterbury Innovation Centre (CIC) will act as the new base for student entrepreneurship, start-up support and a start-up incubation space at the University.

The new open plan office environment includes hot desks for budding entrepreneurs all situated conveniently just a short distance from central campus amongst a thriving business environment within CIC.

HIVE is supported by two key strands – Student Enterprise to support students with their entrepreneurial ideas and Start Up for potential business owners looking to take their innovative ideas forward.

HIVE is able to support the growth of the company through a variety of additional services for up to three years providing a stable platform and base for the business. Entrepreneurs will be able to:
• Develop their business idea
• Access sector specific mentors
• Attend business advice sessions
• Attend seminars, exhibitions, monthly events and competitions

Marcus Wright, Enterprise Manager said: ‘After five years of dedicated incubation space and enterprise support for students, staff and alumni, it is fantastic to receive support from the University for the continuation and growth of these activities. Kent is recognised as leading the way in student enterprise and start-up creation.

In addition to Kent’s students, staff and recent alumni graduates from across the UK and worldwide will be able to access HIVE, firmly embracing the University’s European and international approach.‘

University of Kent

Pro Vice-Chancellor of Research and Innovation Professor Philippe De Wilde said: ‘Innovation and Enterprise will become more important for everybody in the University, from undergraduate students to senior staff. I am pleased that the Hub for Innovation and Enterprise has moved to the smart environment of the Canterbury Innovation Centre.’

If you are interested in launching your own start-up business or simply looking for professional advice to pursue your entrepreneurial dream, then contact the HIVE team at 01227 824641 or email hive@kent.ac.uk.

Follow HIVE on Twitter: @UniKentHive
Kent’s position as one of the UK’s leading universities has been reinforced by the Complete University Guide (CUG) 2016. For the second year running Kent has been ranked 22nd out of 126 institutions by the Guide. It also has four entries in the top 10 subject tables: Architecture (7th); Social Policy (9th); Hospitality, Leisure, Recreation and Tourism (9th); and American Studies (10th).

The CUG table is based on 10 measures that include research quality, research intensity and student satisfaction. Over the past nine months, Kent’s strengths in these areas have been reflected by outstanding results in the:

- Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014, where it was ranked 17th in the UK for research intensity and achieved the third largest increase of the top 50 research intensive universities for research power. Kent also achieved one of the largest increases in research funding following its REF success
- National Student Survey (NSS) 2014, where it was placed joint third in the category ‘overall satisfaction’ alongside universities such as Cambridge, Durham, Essex, Glasgow, Oxford and Surrey

For the CUG 2016, Kent also performed well in relation to entry standards, staff/student ratio, completion rates, good honours, graduate prospects, spending on academic services and campus facilities.

The University’s Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor, David Nightingale said: ‘Kent’s strong league table results continue with this latest announcement, which comes during what has been a highly successful year for the University. This result is also further good news for our students and staff, all of whom have helped establish Kent’s excellent reputation on the regional, national and international levels.

Kent’s strong research citations have contributed to its success in the 2015 Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings by Subject.

The rankings place Kent among the world’s elite institutions in eight of the 36 featured subjects and was among the top 150 in the world for Communication and Media Studies (Journalism), Law and Psychology.

Its subjects in the top 200 are: English Language and Literature; Geography (Conservation); Philosophy; Politics and International Studies; and Sociology.

The QS rankings reflect academic reputation, employer reputation and, through citations by research paper, research impact. For its latest report, QS evaluated 3,551 universities and ranked 894 institutions in total.

The University of Kent has achieved its highest league table position to date with a rise of four places in The Guardian University Guide 2016. Kent has also achieved a top ten position in ten subject areas, with a further 15 in the top 20.

Its top ten subjects are: Architecture 3rd; Drama and dance 10th; Economics 9th; English and creative writing 8th; Film production and photography 3rd; History of art 6th; Journalism 6th; Politics 10th; Religious studies and theology 8th; and Social policy 4th.

Its top 20 are: American Studies 11th; Anthropology 13th; Art 17th; Biosciences 20th; Classics and ancient history 14th; Design and crafts 18th; Forensic science and archaeology 19th; History 15th; Law 17th; Modern language and linguistics 15th; Pharmacy (Medway School of Pharmacy) 18th; Philosophy 17th; Social work 18th; Sociology 19th; and Sports science 14th.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Dame Julia Goodfellow, said: ‘This excellent news confirms Kent’s position as one of the best research and teaching universities in the UK. It is also further recognition and endorsement of the hard work and dedication of our staff, all of whom are determined to provide our students with a stimulating academic experience and invaluable preparation for the future.’
Spotlight on Kent staff

Professor receives OBE from HRH the Prince of Wales

Professor Sarah Spurgeon, Head of Engineering and Digital Arts (EDA) was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for her services to engineering in the New Year’s Honours 2015.

A Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering (FREng) and President of the Institute of Measurement and Control, she has a national and international track record as a control engineer.

She initially worked with the aerospace industry to develop and improve its control strategies, specifically with BAE Systems and Lucas Industries.

Away from aerospace, Professor Spurgeon has brought insights to the control of robotic limbs, monitoring of the restoration of function to human limbs and control of a range of vehicles.

Her research contributions were recognised by the award of an Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers’ (IEEE) Millennium Medal (2000) and the InstMC’s Honeywell International Medal (2010).

She has published more than 200 papers on control engineering.

Professor receives Wolfson Merit Award

Professor Adrian Podoleanu, of the School of Physical Sciences, has received a prestigious Royal Society Wolfson Research Merit Award.

Professor Podoleanu, who is Professor of Biomedical Optics, received the award in recognition of the pioneering research of the Applied Optics Group (AOG), which he leads.

The AOG is home to approximately fifteen academics, research staff and postgraduate students working on a range of projects. Most of their work is focused on the field of Optical Coherence Tomography, and has fed into both clinical use and industrial applications.

Jointly funded by the Wolfson Foundation and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the award scheme aims to provide universities with additional support to ‘enable them to attract science talent from overseas and retain respected UK scientists of outstanding achievement and potential’. The Royal Society is the UK’s national academy of science.

Beacon Observatory offers new opportunities for Astronomers

Secrets of the Solar System and our Galaxy will be unlocked with the opening of a new state-of-the-art observatory at Kent.

The Beacon Observatory is one of 12 Beacon Projects unveiled as part of the University’s 50th anniversary, to illustrate our distinctive strengths and provide a platform for future activities and aspirations.

The Observatory which will officially open in the new academic year is overseen by a team led by Dr Dirk Froebrich and Dr Mark Price, both Senior Lecturers in the Centre for Astrophysics and Planetary Science within the School of Physical Sciences (SPS).

Dr Froebrich said: ‘We were selected as a Beacon Project because our new Observatory really ticks all the boxes. It’s about teaching, scientific research and outreach to groups including local schools and amateur astronomers. It is also a real legacy and something we can be proud of!’

‘The old Observatory was completely outdated and hence hardly used. You had to sit within the dome during long cold nights to do the observations, so it was very challenging and uncomfortable to use.’

The successful bid for £100,000 has been used to buy a new dome, telescope, CCD camera and weather station, all from Baader Planetarium in Germany and to install them close to Park Wood on the Canterbury campus. The Observatory will be remote controllable and connected to the Internet so students and other users will be able to make observations from PCs located within SPS.

Dr Froebrich added: ‘Looking ahead, the new Observatory will help us attract the best students – for courses such as Astronomy and Astrophysics. In the longer-term, we would like to run an astronomy lab course using data obtained with the telescope. We’re also looking forward to using the Observatory during our annual residential Space School weekends and for other outreach activities with schoolchildren.’
Funding for business collaboration

EU Funding

As Horizon 2020 Funding approaches the end of its second year of funding, the message from the European Commission reflects how the programme is still evolving. The importance of innovation, business engagement and business growth are at the forefront of the EC priorities for Horizon 2020. This year has seen the launch of the new Fast Track to Innovation Pilot funding scheme, with open calls supporting close-to-market innovation activities in any area that is addressed within the Horizon 2020 calls.

The SME Instrument, a new funding scheme launched in January 2014 will continue until 2020, calls are prescriptive topics open to only SMEs with the possibility of subcontracting work to research organisation.

If you work in collaboration with the University of Kent on an EU or UK funding bid, there is a dedicated funding team at Kent Innovation & Enterprise that can support your application. For further information please contact entfunding@kent.ac.uk

University of Kent’s 50th anniversary events

Schools across the University will be hosting events and conferences to celebrate Kent’s 50th anniversary.

Engineering and Digital Arts

The School of Engineering and Digital Arts are hosting a series of one-off lectures to showcase the academic excellence and world-leading research within the school.

Engineering at the heart of society?

Speaker: Professor Sarah Spurgeon, OBE, Head of EDA

Time and date: Wednesday 21 October 2015, 18.00-19.00

In this lecture, Sarah will share her passion for engineering and discuss its role in society.

Radio Astronomy

Speaker: Dr Amelie Saintonge

Time and date: Wednesday 4 November 2015, 18.00-19.00

Dr Saintonge will talk about her work in the field of radio astronomy, in particular, the aspects of it relating to the formation and evolution of galaxies, and how radio telescopes can be used.

All lectures mentioned will take place at Jennison Lecture Theatre, Jennison Building at the University’s Canterbury campus.

To register your place, please email c.rbutter@kent.ac.uk or phone 01227 823251.

For more information on the EDA 50th lectures including speaker biographies, please visit wwweda.kent.ac.uk/school50th/lecture_series.aspx

Kent Innovation & Enterprise events

Kent Innovation & Enterprise hosts a variety of lectures, conferences, award ceremonies and networking events to showcase Innovation, Creativity and Enterprise (ICE) across the University. For more information on these events or to register your place, please get in touch using the Contact us details on this page.

Hold the date

Women in Enterprise

Time and date: Wednesday 18 November 2015, 10.45-16.00

Venue: Chaucer College, University Road, Canterbury

As part of the University of Kent’s 50th celebrations, the Women in Enterprise conference will showcase successful female entrepreneurs providing insight on their careers and demonstrating the ability of all women to achieve success in business. This event is kindly sponsored by the Kent Opportunity Fund and supported by The Institute of Directors.

The conferences will involve successful female entrepreneurs providing insight and talking about their professional journey, including their positive and difficult moments, and demonstrating the ability of all women to achieve success in business.

Contact us

The University established Kent Innovation & Enterprise as their central dedicated entry point for business engagement to help make it easier for you to connect with the University. Whatever your ambitions may be, we will help you on your way to achieve them with specialist expertise and cutting-edge facilities.

If you are interested in any article in this newsletter and would like to speak to us, then please email enterprise@kent.ac.uk or phone 01227 816032.

www.kent.ac.uk/enterprise

@ICE_UniKent

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