A newsletter created by postgraduates for postgraduates
Hello everyone, and welcome to the Autumn edition of the GradPost.

To start with, we want to extend our congratulations to everyone who has handed in their final dissertation. It has been a long journey for all of us, and we wish all the best to those who have come to the end of their degree. To those of you who are still working on your dissertation or thesis we wish you the best of luck! As endings go, this will be the final issue of some of us will be working on within an editorial capacity, and while we are sad to say goodbye, we would also like to thank everybody for their support throughout the past year. We thank you for the wonderful memories you have provided us, and it has been an amazing experience working on the GradPost. On a different note, we also want to welcome all the new students this Autumn term and we hope that you have an incredible time at Kent and embrace the opportunities available to postgraduate students. Therefore, we have prepared an edition of reviews of the events supported by the Graduate School and introductions to Kent and Canterbury.

We will be starting off as usual with a word from our Kent Graduate Student Association (KGSA) President, Vid Čalovski, followed by a review of the recent KGSA-hosted Edinburgh trip. Louise Willis and Chioma Amadi will be telling you the best ways to ‘Get Involved’ on and off campus, with articles looking at the top ten things to do in Canterbury and how to best utilise the opportunities the University offers. We will hear from Dan Stocker-Williams about the story behind the Gulbenkian in our regular ‘Face Behind the Building’ feature, after which Hannah Huxley will present a piece on ‘Found in Translation’, a postgraduate conference organised by postgraduates in the School of English. Finally, be sure to keep a look out for articles on the Global Skills Award, the Researcher Development Programme, Inspire Gather and reviews of the Postgraduate Home/Less Conference and Postgraduate Research Festival as they are, or are the result of, initiatives offered by the Graduate School.

We hope you enjoy reading this publication as much as we have enjoyed working on it and all the past publications we have contributed to. While we may no longer play a part in future publications, we certainly hope that some of you will bring fresh ideas to enrich future editions of the GradPost. As always, do contact us at grad-editors@kent.ac.uk if you would like to make a contribution. Thank you for making this an exciting year and we wish all the best to your future endeavours, whatever they may be.

Editors
Jian Wei-Jeanson Gan Lim
MA in the Contemporary
Frances Reading
MA in English and American Literature
Maria Christine Sveidahl Sommer
MA in Curating

A warm welcome

Kent Graduate Student Association

A message from your KGSA President

Hello and welcome!

My name is Vid Čalovski and I am the President of the Kent Graduate Student Association (KGSA). Let me start by welcoming new students to the University. I am sure you will enjoy your time here. To those of you who are returning students, I hope that you had an enjoyable summer.

The KGSA is the postgraduate association here at the University of Kent. We campaign for postgraduates, arrange events and host Welcome Week. There are events on every day during Welcome Week, so please make sure that you pick up a planner from Woolf College so that you know what events will be taking place during the days and nights over that week. There will be bar crawls, city tours, game nights and much more to look forward to.

Over the course of the last academic year, we arranged events for Thanksgiving (including a free buffet), film nights, haunted bar crawls for Halloween, a charity pub quiz and even a four-day residential trip to Edinburgh (which we hope to replicate next year). In recognition of our efforts we have been named the Student Committee of the Year for 2013/14 at the Kent Union Awards. We hope to carry on being as active this coming year.

As well as activities, events and socials we are also prominent campaigners at the University, with a particular focus on increasing the availability of study and social space for postgraduate students across the Canterbury campus. There will be campaigning on this issue over the course of the year, and it would be great to have input and support from students. Moreover, there will be regular game nights over the course of the year in the Woolf College Foyer, open to all postgraduate students, so keep your eyes peeled for more information.

There are several ways to get involved with the KGSA if you are interested in helping out. There are committee elections, which take place in October; there will be further information in the Welcome Week planners. There are a large number of roles people can fill; more information on these will be made available during the postgraduate (PG) induction events in September, so please make sure you go along.

If you have any questions, or would like to get involved, please do not hesitate to get in touch; you can reach me at vc202@kent.ac.uk and you can like the KGSA page on Facebook at www.facebook.com/kentgsa

Vid Čalovski
PhD in Social Policy
KGSA President
Despite my royal purple Kent Graduate Student Association (KGSA) hoody giving the bold indication that ‘Hey, I’m in charge here,’ I slept for most of our long, overnight journey from Canterbury to Edinburgh. Thankfully, my wakeful presence was not required. After months of planning, our coach, filled with 50 postgraduates, began to make its way up the M1 (or was it the A1? Where are we?) where adventure awaited us.

Yes, there was haggis − beer battered and deep fried − and plenty of kilts flapping dangerously in the gusty, humid breeze. Mercifully, despite the lengthy risk assessment, not one person managed to break an ankle on the cobblestone streets. Win.

It truly took some convincing that the KGSA could plan and execute an event of this scale, as it was not something that had been attempted before. However, the committee was confident and although the process was frustrating at times, we pulled it off! The trip was a good mix of structure and freedom, with each day having one optional organised event. Kent postgraduates took that city by storm en masse − we went on a haunted walking tour, took in some live music on a pub crawl and, of course, there was the visit to Edinburgh Castle − which could not have been better timed as it was the Queen’s birthday and the start of the baton relay in anticipation of the Commonwealth Games.

Trip participants used their time wisely, booking Highlands tours, taking in the glorious view of Arthur’s Seat, and hitting the shops. Me? I was on the hunt for craft beer − CAMRA die-hards, I’m sorry − and I certainly was not disappointed. In fact, I still had a half-pint of Brewdog’s Punk India Pale Ale in my hand when the coach came to bring us home. Can you blame me? Like many international Kent postgraduates, my time in the UK is short, so that sometimes calls for a little indulgence.

It is for that reason that I am glad to have been elected to the KGSA committee this year, and to have had a part in organising this fantastic weekend in a truly awesome city that I might not have otherwise had the chance to see.

Laura Stocks
MSc in Business Management
KGSA Welfare Officer

KGSA organise its first postgraduate trip to Edinburgh

Increase your employability!

Researcher Development Programme

The Graduate School co-ordinates the Researcher Development Programme for postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers. The Researcher Development Programme is provided for all postgraduate research students, whether full- or part-time, including Master’s, MPhil or PhD and for postdoctoral researchers. The programme is designed to equip participants with a full range of skills, which will improve their effectiveness as researchers, and ensure that they are not only highly qualified but employable in a variety of careers by the end of their research project.

The programme features a broad range of workshops designed to hone skills such as negotiation, communication, career management, leadership, stress and time management, research methods and statistics.

For more information, please visit: www.kent.ac.uk/graduateschool/skills/pgrd.html

To participate in the RDP, researchers will need to register with the Graduate School’s online booking system, https://bloom.kent.ac.uk.

Carla Doolan
Postgraduate Development Co-ordinator, Graduate School

Global Skills Award Programme

Are you a taught Master’s student? Want to increase your employability?

If you answered yes, then why not apply to take part in the Global Skills Award (GSA) Programme, which is free of charge!

The GSA, run by the Graduate School, features a series of lectures and workshops designed to increase participants’ awareness of global issues and to improve employability. The six-month programme runs from November to April and all students registered for a taught Master’s degree are eligible to apply for a place. Once accepted for the programme, students take part in a personal skills assessment which helps to reflect on past experience and future

Continued on page 5 >>
The Canterbury top ten

Ten brilliant things to do and see in the City

**Canterbury Cathedral**

Canterbury Cathedral is the oldest cathedral in England and along with St Augustine’s Abbey and the Church of St Martin it is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Cathedral is a magnificent example of Romanesque and Gothic architecture that dates as far back as the 12th century, and it has some of the richest stained glass windows in England. Do not forget to visit the crypt and the library archives, which hold documents dating from the 8th century. Free entrance is available to full-time students on presentation of their University ID card.

**Canterbury Heritage Museum**

Located on Stour Street, Canterbury Heritage Museum is housed in a magnificent medieval building and offers visitors an opportunity to learn about the city’s history from the distant past to modern times. Collections include artefacts ranging from Anglo-Saxon to Tudor and Huguenot, through to Second World War and modern memorabilia. Opening times vary; so check the website: canterburyco.uk/museums

**The Beaney House of Art and Knowledge**

The Beaney is located on the High Street and houses a museum, café and library as well as the Tourist Information Centre. The museum displays numerous historical collections, with curiosities and artworks dating from the Anglo-Saxon and ancient Egyptian and Greek periods; it also holds events, exhibitions, talks and lectures. The Beaney is open every day of the week and entrance is free!

**Historic River Tours**

The award-winning Canterbury Historic River Tours gives passengers the chance to appreciate stunning medieval architecture including a Dominican priory, a Cromwellian iron forge and unique views of the Cathedral, all of which are only accessible from the river’s vantage point. The 40-minute boat tour also includes a running commentary on the buildings’ history. The season runs from March to October and tickets may be purchased at the King’s Bridge, on the High Street.

**The King’s Mile and the ‘wonky door’ bookshop**

Take a wander along the historic King’s Mile, which has an excellent selection of cafés and restaurants and culminates with the quirky ‘wonky door’ bookshop at the far end. This 17th-century timber house is celebrated for its skewed front door, which has apparently been distorted over the years by various chimney modifications; it is one of the most photographed buildings in the city.

**Howletts Wild Animal Park**

Howletts is set in 90 acres of parkland and is considered to be an outstanding animal park largely due to its dedication to the conservation, breeding and reintroduction into the wild of rare and endangered species. It is open virtually every day of the year and is located three miles south of Canterbury. A direct bus service runs on Saturdays and school holidays from Canterbury Bus Station.

**The Crab and Winkle Way**

The Crab and Winkle Way is an eight-mile cycle route that runs through unspoilt countryside from Canterbury to Whitstable along part of the disused railway that first connected them in 1830. The path takes one hour by bicycle and three-and-a-half hours on foot: its many points of interest include woods, parks, and unusual artworks such as the Winding Wheel Seat and the Crab and Winkle Mosaic – the route also includes a choice of four public houses! Comprehensive information, including bike hire, is available from crabandwinkle.org or tourist information points.

**The Canterbury Tales Experience**

A selection of stories from Chaucer’s The Canterbury Tales is recreated at The Canterbury Tales Experience, situated on St Margaret’s Street.

**Walking Tours**

Explore the historic precincts of the city on foot with the award-winning Canterbury Guided Tours. The tours last for 90 minutes and include all the major sights; they are also available in nine languages. You can buy a ticket at The Beaney. The Canterbury Tales visitor attraction offers comedy walking tours in the city centre, which take place on Saturdays, from Easter until the end of September. Alternatively, Canterbury Ghost Tours offer a 90-minute evening walk that combines history with mystery. Tours depart from Alberry’s Bar, St Margaret’s Street, at 8pm on Friday and Saturday evenings.

**Canterbury theatres**

The centrally placed Marlowe Theatre hosts music events, talks, comedy acts, dance and drama, plus acclaimed productions from the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company. The theatre has a selection of three bars and a restaurant, with alfresco dining available in the summer. The University’s own Gulbenkian Arts Theatre holds comedy events and dramas, along with cinema screenings and national broadcasts from the world of drama, music, opera, and ballet.

**Louise Willis**

MA in Comparative Literature
Named after the oil magnate and philanthropist, Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian, this building is the cultural hub of the University of Kent. Born in Istanbul in 1869, Gulbenkian was the inheritor of an ancient and illustrious Armenian lineage that can be traced back to the fourth century AD. His formative years were spent abroad, receiving an education from Europe’s top colleges. His promise was apparent early on and he graduated at the age of 19 with a first class degree in Engineering and Applied Sciences from King’s College, London. Following this success he returned east at his father’s behest to begin a career in the oil industry, a career that would see him become one of the world’s wealthiest men.

In an era of ever-increasing cosmopolitanism, the peregrinate years of Gulbenkian’s youth were crucial in making the man who would play the central role in the global oil business. An entrepreneurial prescience allowed him to divine, before anyone else, the inestimable potential of the Middle East’s reserves of black gold. It was, however, his rare talent for politics and business that enabled him to nurture the necessary international investments, and then ameliorate the resultant tensions throughout the 20th century’s turbulent inception. He brought together the disparate, and often difficult, nations of Russia, France, Britain and the USA, and negotiated the apportioning of Iraq’s vast oilfields to these major economies. This was perhaps his greatest achievement, to not only mesh the gears of the economies. This was perhaps his greatest achievement, to not only mesh the gears of the economies.

It was to this Foundation that the University of Kent appealed in 1966 for funds to build its theatre. By 1969, thanks to the generous donation of £35,000, the doors of The Gulbenkian were opened. Over the years it has played an integral role in uniting the studentship with the general public and providing them with a platform to both foster and enjoy the arts. Now, and in conjunction with the new and contiguous Coyle-Ferguson building, the Gulbenkian continues to offer the best in contemporary performance and visual arts.

The 340-seat theatre regularly hosts plays, concerts and conferences; and its boards have been trod by many of Britain’s best-loved comedians, including Russell Howard, Jimmy Carr, and Ross Noble. Meanwhile the adjacent cinema boasts a range of films, from the best of independent, art-house pictures, to Hollywood blockbusters. It also shows, in conjunction with the National Theatre, recordings of live plays, most recently Coriolanus (starring Tom Hiddleston), and Frankenstein (with Benedict Cumberbatch). At a modest £4.50, students will find their tickets affordable.

In addition, the café/bar provides a great place to meet and socialise. A plethora of delicious dishes are available to enjoy among the multicultural milieu, or you can just grab a coffee for your daily caffeine boost.

For more information visit the website at: www.thegulbenkian.co.uk

Daniel Stocker-Williams
MA in English and American Literature

The Gulbenkian

Increase your employability!
(cont)

development. Applicants are invited to attend a lecture series, chaired by the Dean of the Graduate School, allowing students to participate in discussion on global issues such as the economy, the environment, world politics and developments in science. A series of skills training workshops offers participants the chance to acquire the skills needed to succeed in the workplace such as team building, networking and leadership and also skills to help you get your dream job, eg CV and cover letter writing and interview skills.

This year’s programme will not disappoint, with a series of lectures delivered by leading academics, business experts and current affairs specialists. These include a fascinating talk from Professor Kevin Dutton entitled ‘The Wisdom of Psychopaths’, an enlightening insight into the ‘Disappearing Computer… computing from 1950 to 2050’ from Professor Simon Thompson and a controversial lecture by Professor Darren Griffin addressing the question ‘Are our male (genetic) bits shrinking into oblivion?’

Last year’s GSA programme (2013-14)

Last year 201 students completed the programme, which includes 19 students from our Brussels centre. The award ceremony, held on 6 June was attended by 90 students, which included reflections on the Global Skills Award by two participants: Coskun Serefoglu and Maria Mandourari.

Maria, who bravely kick-started the proceedings, said: “The GSA programme was a great opportunity to learn and develop my skills far beyond my Master’s degree. I am confident that in an increasingly competitive job market, the GSA will help me to stand out from the crowd, providing well-prepared evidence of my skills to future employers.” Coskun reflected in his presentation that, “attending the GSA programme was a priceless experience”.

We look forward to welcoming new students in October. For full details on the GSA programme please visit: www.kent.ac.uk/graduateschool/skills/programmes/gsacurrent.html or email: skills@kent.ac.uk

Carla Doolan
Postgraduate Development Co-ordinator,
Graduate School
Home|less

Where is our home?

The Kent postgraduate community organised an interdisciplinary conference to wonder about 'home'.

Home|less, a Postgraduate Interdisciplinary Conference, was a lively and successful event funded by the Graduate School as one of the winning projects of the Postgraduate Experience Award 2013-14. It brought together researchers and professionals from different backgrounds, ranging from the humanities to the social sciences and healthcare, committed to wonder about the meanings and implications of the concept of home. Taking place in Keynes College on 20-21 June, the two days of the event saw a number of fascinating and interesting papers as well as lively discussions encompassing different disciplines and approaches. In a truly international spirit, guests and speakers came from many parts of Europe, such as France, Ireland and Malta, as well as from several UK institutions. In addition, we were pleased to notice that, in terms of diversity, the majority of delegates were women.

The idea of the conference originated from a workshop about urban environment and homeless people attended in Budapest by Christina Chatzipoulouka, the architect on the organising committee. The other organisers were Christopher Chang, Luca Di Gregorio and Barbara Franchi, from Postcolonial studies, Italian studies and English literature backgrounds. Together, the team pushed the project beyond the limits of a specific discipline, to question notions related to the simple though universal concept of home: homeland, identity, homelessness, and so forth. As international students, the topic had special relevance to the organisers' own experiences: living ‘across boundaries’ between two countries, two cultures and at least two languages could ultimately be considered a metaphor of everybody's experience of displacement and search (sometimes fortunate, sometimes dramatically tragic), for one’s place in the world.

Professor Gordana Fontana Giusti, from Kent School of Architecture and Dr Marianne Amar, director of research at the Musée de l’histoire de l’immigration in Paris delivered two fascinating keynote lectures on homelessness and displacement in urban contexts, as well as stories of exile and migration across time and space. Finally, to bridge the gap between academia and our local context, we also invited representatives from local charities: St Mungo’s Broadway in London and Porchlight in Canterbury. The presentations they delivered about their activities and the people that they help every day were so touching that they left an indelible impact on us all: their presence was definitely the icing on the cake for these two intense, amazing days.

Christopher Chang
PhD Candidate, School of English
Christina Chatzipoulouka
PhD Candidate, Kent School of Architecture
Luca Di Gregorio
PhD Candidate, School of European Culture and Languages
Amie Rai
Barbara Franchi
PhD Candidate, School of English

Inspire Gather

An exploration into the human senses

Inspire Gather was a series of four evening gatherings of keynote presentations, PechaKucha talks and participatory activities. Discussions were ignited and contacts forged, all around the common interest and central idea of ‘The Senses’. The first two gatherings were at the Medway campus, an ‘Introduction to the senses’ on 14 May 2014, and the ‘8th senses’ on 21 May. Keynote speakers were Professor Fiona Macpherson of the University of Glasgow, and Dr Mark Paterson of the University of Pittsburgh respectively. The next two gatherings were in the Jarman Building at the Canterbury campus. The penultimate gathering on 28 May focused on ‘Perception’ with keynote speakers Matthew Wood of Second Floor Studios, who spoke directly about his life-changing diagnosis of cleft palate and Dr Michael Banissy of Goldsmiths College, who discussed his clinical research in synaesthesia. The final gathering on 4 June saw Dr Helen Pynor and artist Barry Bish discuss loss and the mechanical senses, with Helen’s artistic practice and Barry’s experience as an organ donor bringing the series of talks to a personally moving and creatively inspiring close.

The aim of the talks was not only to delve deeper into the rich subject matter of the human senses, but also to ensure that they were inspiring to a wider non-specialist audience. We opened up the talks to local members of the community, undergraduates and encouraged cross-disciplinary postgraduates to share their research in relation to the senses. The combination of presenters from specialists to postgraduates and the personal accounts from Matthew and Barry, offered a truly stimulating and open forum to over 40 audience members over the four weeks, four keynote speakers, two personal accounts and six postgraduate presentations. In addition, we set up sensory activities as part of each talk, ranging from sensory sampling of materials and consumable items to meditation techniques. As a new method of evaluation, each member of the audience was given a tub of Play Doh and asked to ‘shape’ their learning – we received some interesting sculptural responses, but more important, it was an informal but effective way to engage our audience with what they gained from the evening.

Thank you to the Graduate School for funding our proposal. As organisers, it offered one of those invaluable opportunities to test a format for a series of engaging talks.

Harriet Gifford
MA in Sound and Image
Angela McArthur
MA in Sound and Image
Amie Rai
MA in Sound and Image
Found in Translation

Consortium for the Humanities and Arts Southeast England (CHASE) Postgraduate Conference

Dr Patricia Novillo-Corvalán, from the Department of Comparative Literature at the University of Kent, was the keynote speaker at a one-day conference organised by English Literature students from the Universities of Kent and Sussex and funded by the Schools of English of both organisations. The conference provided a platform for postgraduates of literature and related subjects to present research and to create an academic dialogue with CHASE-affiliated institutions. The consortium includes the Universities of Kent, Sussex, Essex, East Anglia, Goldsmiths University of London, The Courtauld Institute of Art, and the Open University, and is dedicated to promoting excellent cross-disciplinary research and postgraduate research training.

The conference was brought to a close with Professor Alex Stevens’s keynote speech, entitled ‘Translation a la Pierre Menard: From Shakespeare to Bolano’. Using Walter Benjamin’s essay ‘The Task of the Translator’ (1923) as her initial point of reference, Patricia’s keynote speech, containing a presentation titled “We Fought Cancer…But Cancer’s Fighting Back” presented by Stephanie Ashenden (photo: bottom right). The PechaKucha-styled presentations meant each student had only three minutes 20 seconds to present their topic. All presentations were innovative and an exciting opportunity to engage with research areas across a wide spectrum of academic subjects.

Following the PechaKuchas, the rest of the poster viewings took place in three presenting rooms, one for each faculty. The posters were assessed by Dr Iain Mackenzie (Social Sciences), Dr Colin Johnson (Sciences) and Dr Michael Hughes (Humanities), all of whom commented on the excellent quality of the posters, making it difficult to choose just one winner from each faculty. After much deliberation, awards were given to Gail Austen-Price from the School of Archaeology and Conservation (SAC) for her poster “Seeing is bee-lying” (photo: top left), Rosemary Walters, from the School of English, for her poster “On the boarder: locating Charles Causley in 20th Century poetics” (photo: bottom left) and Natoya Jourdain from the School of Mathematics, Statistics and Actuarial Science (SMSAS) for her poster “New Analytical Methods for Camera Trap Data” (photo: top right).

The Festival concluded with an awards ceremony presented by Dr Colin Johnson (Sciences Faculty Director of Graduate Studies) where the poster and the PechaKucha winners each received a £100 Blackwells gift voucher. The evening closed with a drinks reception and the chance to reflect upon the quality of talks, presentations and interactions of the day, and enjoy the company of fellow students and academics.

Joanna Addison
PA to Dean of the Graduate School, Graduate School

Postgraduate Research Festival 2014

A look back at the day’s success

The 4th Annual Postgraduate Research Festival was held in Woolf College on Monday 23rd June and attended by postgraduate students from a variety of disciplines across all three Faculties.

The day began with an interesting talk from Professor Alex Stevens on how Twitter can be used to raise the profile of one’s research. This was followed by Dr Jim Groombridge providing practical insight into how to win research funding: both talks provided valuable information for postgraduates that is bound to reap long-term benefits in their current and future academic careers.

Those in attendance were then able to network and chat while enjoying drinks and a buffet lunch, followed by a number of poster presentations.

After lunch, attendees enjoyed a panel presentation led by Professor Bob Newport, Dr Rebekah Higgitt, Nancy Gaffield and Sian Stevenson, on interdisciplinary approaches to public engagement, including the opportunity for a brief Q&A session. This was followed by a series of 11 postgraduate PechaKuchas where students presented across a range of topics including the evolution of stars, equine influenza, assemblage in artists’ cinema, and of course the winning presentation titled “We Fought Cancer…But Cancer’s Fighting Back” presented by Stephanie Ashenden (photo: bottom right).

The PechaKuchas were held at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), the ‘Found in Translation’ postgraduate conference was the first of several events aimed at enhancing interdisciplinary research and relationships across each of the CHASE institutions. It explored the theme of ‘translation’, in both the literal sense – the translation of language – and looking at what can be discovered through the act of translation as a productive cultural force, moving beyond linguistics. The topic allowed for a wide variety of papers, but prompted the initial question: what is revealed and renewed through translation?

In answer to this question, attendees were treated to a selection of panels and thought-provoking papers throughout the course of the day. Research areas ranged from liminal identities, self-translatability, the Uncanny, medieval translations, the process of ekphrasis and adaptation, and even the ‘heavy metal afterlife’ of Herman Melville’s Moby Dick, which as you can imagine, prompted some rather interesting conversations over lunch.

The conference was a platform for postgraduates to raise the profile of one’s research. This was followed by Dr Jim Groombridge providing practical insight into how to win research funding; both talks provided valuable information for postgraduates that is bound to reap long-term benefits in their current and future academic careers.

The Festival concluded with an awards ceremony presented by Dr Colin Johnson (Sciences Faculty Director of Graduate Studies) where the poster and the PechaKucha winners each received a £100 Blackwells gift voucher. The evening closed with a drinks reception and the chance to reflect upon the quality of talks, presentations and interactions of the day, and enjoy the company of fellow students and academics.

Joanna Addison
PA to Dean of the Graduate School, Graduate School

Primary author: Joanna Addison

Special thanks goes to the event organisers from each of the participating CHASE institutions, including Frances Reading and James Robinson from the University of Kent. We look forward to another brilliant conference next year!

Hannah Huxley
MA in English and American Literature
Get Involved

Getting the best out of your University of Kent experience

Ask what you can do for your university, and what your university can do for you!

The University of Kent is a great place to study, and there are many ways to absorb the rich and diverse student life that it offers. There is a saying that goes sort of like this, “You can go through university, but you should also let university go through you.” Well at the University of Kent, as well as getting your degree, there are ample opportunities to achieve the latter. We have a variety of societies and clubs that you can get involved in. There are sports societies, social societies, religious, cultural, musical, course-based societies, and many, many more. If you can think it, there is a society for it. And if there isn’t, you can start one! Yes, all you need is a committee of at least three people and you are on your merry way to a new society of your own creation! The Freshers’ Fayre is an annual event normally held across two days at the end of September at the end of Freshers’ Week. It gives students an opportunity to explore the clubs and societies, and sign up to as many as they please. Most societies have taster sessions at the start of term to give an insight into what they do. There is also a Re-freshers’ Fayre in the second term of the academic year for another chance at getting involved.

If you are into sports, you are spoilt for choice. There is football, rugby, tennis, squash, trampolining, rowing, basketball, hockey, golf, gymnastics, cheerleading, to name but a few. We have indoor and outdoor sports, field sports, watersports, martial arts, dance and athletics. Social societies can be anything from political campaigning and volunteering in the community, to special interests like tea, pirates, and Harry Potter. You can join societies based on your culture, or learn about a new one. With the University being an international students’ hub, there is the chance to learn about a lot of different cultures. The same applies to course-based societies. You could become a part of a society for your course, or have a cheeky ‘lookie-about’ at another course you may find interesting.

Another way to thoroughly boost your University experience is to become a course representative. As a course rep, you will represent your colleagues, you will liaise between the student body and the department to improve everyone’s university experience. It will also give you an inside look as to how things are run at the University, and is a great addition to any CV. If you are a postgraduate, you can let your voice be heard by joining either the KGSA or the GradPost, or both! The KGSA is a student association that represents all postgraduate students by postgraduate students. It is a postgraduate committee run for, and by postgraduate students.

The KGSA committee work with the Graduate School and the Woolf College Master to better the welfare and education of all postgraduate students. They host a variety of academic and non-academic events throughout the year and basically ensure that everyone has support, and a great time at Kent. Elections are held in October with many roles up for grabs, so do give it a go if it sounds intriguing. To find out more, email the current president Vd Čálovskí at vc202@kent.ac.uk.

Now, an exciting opportunity is in the wings. What you have in your hands or on your computer screen, is the GradPost. The GradPost is a newsletter that, just like the KGSA, is run for postgraduate students by postgraduate students. If you are interested in writing or editing, you are very welcome to join the GradPost as a committee member, journalist, photographer, or proof-reader. We want to hear from you, yes you! Because who else knows best what we find interesting, than ourselves? We make an issue of the GradPost quarterly, which means that there is a copy for every season of the year. Some issues are themed and the articles share a similar concept, but all ideas are welcome and we try to incorporate as many as possible. To contribute or join us, get in touch with the editorial team at gradpost@kent.ac.uk.

So what are you waiting for? There is no time like the present! Go out into the great wide world (starting with the University campus), and get involved. Be seen, be heard, participate in old and new hobbies, make friends and memories, and let the University of Kent go through you.

Chioma Maureen Amadi
MSc in Developmental Psychology

The University of Kent is a great place to study, and there are many ways to absorb the rich and diverse student life that it offers. There is a saying that goes sort of like this, “You can go through university, but you should also let university go through you.” Well at the University of Kent, as well as getting your degree, there are ample opportunities to achieve the latter. We have a variety of societies and clubs that you can get involved in. There are sports societies, social societies, religious, cultural, musical, course-based societies, and many, many more. If you can think it, there is a society for it. And if there isn’t, you can start one! Yes, all you need is a committee of at least three people and you are on your merry way to a new society of your own creation! The Freshers’ Fayre is an annual event normally held across two days at the end of September at the end of Freshers’ Week. It gives students an opportunity to explore the clubs and societies, and sign up to as many as they please. Most societies have taster sessions at the start of term to give an insight into what they do. There is also a Re-freshers’ Fayre in the second term of the academic year for another chance at getting involved.

If you are into sports, you are spoilt for choice. There is football, rugby, tennis, squash, trampolining, rowing, basketball, hockey, golf, gymnastics, cheerleading, to name but a few. We have indoor and outdoor sports, field sports, watersports, martial arts, dance and athletics. Social societies can be anything from political campaigning and volunteering in the community, to special interests like tea, pirates, and Harry Potter. You can join societies based on your culture, or learn about a new one. With the University being an international students’ hub, there is the chance to learn about a lot of different cultures. The same applies to course-based societies. You could become a part of a society for your course, or have a cheeky ‘lookie-about’ at another course you may find interesting.

Another way to thoroughly boost your University experience is to become a course representative. As a course rep, you will represent your colleagues, you will liaise between the student body and the department to improve everyone’s university experience. It will also give you an inside look as to how things are run at the University, and is a great addition to any CV. If you are a postgraduate, you can let your voice be heard by joining either the KGSA or the GradPost, or both! The KGSA is a student association that represents all postgraduate students by postgraduate students. It is a postgraduate committee run for, and by postgraduate students.

The KGSA committee work with the Graduate School and the Woolf College Master to better the welfare and education of all postgraduate students. They host a variety of academic and non-academic events throughout the year and basically ensure that everyone has support, and a great time at Kent. Elections are held in October with many roles up for grabs, so do give it a go if it sounds intriguing. To find out more, email the current president Vd Čálovskí at vc202@kent.ac.uk.

Now, an exciting opportunity is in the wings. What you have in your hands or on your computer screen, is the GradPost. The GradPost is a newsletter that, just like the KGSA, is run for postgraduate students by postgraduate students. If you are interested in writing or editing, you are very welcome to join the GradPost as a committee member, journalist, photographer, or proof-reader. We want to hear from you, yes you! Because who else knows best what we find interesting, than ourselves? We make an issue of the GradPost quarterly, which means that there is a copy for every season of the year. Some issues are themed and the articles share a similar concept, but all ideas are welcome and we try to incorporate as many as possible. To contribute or join us, get in touch with the editorial team at gradpost@kent.ac.uk.

So what are you waiting for? There is no time like the present! Go out into the great wide world (starting with the University campus), and get involved. Be seen, be heard, participate in old and new hobbies, make friends and memories, and let the University of Kent go through you.

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