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First of all, a big welcome to all new and returning students. We hope you have had a relaxing summer break (maybe some of you were even lucky enough to catch some rays) and are now ready to embark on another great year at the University! Here at The GradPost, we have been busy putting together this autumn edition and we sincerely hope you will enjoy reading our articles.

This edition is all about the University: where our campuses and centres are located, how to find help should you need it, how to stay safe and how to make the most of a new academic year. To start with, our students’ union team are presenting their services to you. You will learn how they function, which organisations they run and how to make yourself heard through them. At the University of Kent, your well-being is of great importance. Valerie van Leeuwen explains to you how Campus Security aims to keep you safe with the introduction of a new app that allows students to get help easier and faster at night-time.

Following the turbulent events in the wake of the EU Referendum, we at The GradPost feel it is our duty to inform you that the University of Kent is an open-minded, multicultural environment, which recognises the importance of maintaining its European and international connections. In light of this, we have a couple of interesting articles, which evoke the University’s commitment in offering you the best opportunities for your experience as a student and Sophie William’s article will, hopefully, lessen any concerns you may have about Brexit.

The University of Kent is a wonderful place to study. It is bursting with creativity. Just how important creativity is and how it is generated will be analysed by our recurring Positive Psychology Insights series, written by Vanessa Dias. In addition to this, we have two articles which show you how much potential our students and researchers have. Malika Sardeshpande’s article on the conservation of sea turtles shows that research literally knows no boundaries. Similarly, with Angelina Lesniewski’s article on Alexandra Kollontai, you will get an insight into Russian literature and the revolutionary – or creative – ideologies of a woman ahead of her time.

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The Editors
Mylène Branco
PhD Comparative Literature
Lucy Farndale
MA International Social Policy

Editorial

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News and updates

Your students’ union

What we do for you

Whether you are a returning postgraduate student, are about to start your Master’s, or are embarking on a PhD: welcome to Kent! And welcome to your students’ union, Kent Union.

Kent Union provides several services, such as the Advice Centre and Jobshop. We also run the campus nightclub The Venue, Essentials supermarket, Park Wood’s own pub Woody’s, the Library Café, and a wide variety of sports clubs, societies and volunteer groups. All these facilities aim to ensure you get the most out of your university experience. Kent Union also provides ways for you to be involved in shaping our university through the student representative system, college committees as well as directly through us. Kent Union makes sure we express your views wherever they need to be heard.

Kent Union officers are a team of students who have been elected to work full-time for a year, with the collective responsibility of leading the Union. As a team, we have four priorities for the year ahead: to build strong and active communities among the student body, to achieve success in forming a co-curricular education that recognises both academic and non-academic development, to promote good mental well-being, and to provide support.

You are automatically a member of Kent Union and we are here to respond to your needs and to support you in carrying out any changes you want to see. You can shape our work directly through our online Change It platform* or by getting in touch with us individually, or as a group (union-sabbs@kent.ac.uk).

Good luck in the year ahead and we look forward to hearing from you!

Rory Murray, Union President
Dave Cocozza, Vice-President (Education)
Clara Lee, Vice-President (Welfare)
Elliott Shell, Vice-President (Sports)
Ruth Wilkinson, Vice-President (Activities)

*For more information about Kent Union’s Change It platform, see our winter 2015 edition of The GradPost. All earlier editions available www.kent.ac.uk/graduateschool/news/gradpost.html Alternatively you can visit www.kentunion.co.uk/changetit

Campus Security

Keeping you safe on campus

The University of Kent prides itself on being one of the safest places to study. To increase security for students and to keep us all safe, a dedicated team of staff are on duty 24/7, 365 days a year. Campus Security patrols the campus on foot, on bicycle and in clearly marked vehicles. Furthermore, the University offers CCTV cameras, a night-time Walking Taxi Service, a night bus and personal key card entry to almost all accommodation.

In April, the University started using a mobile phone app called SafeZone to increase your safety on campus. The app is downloadable for Android, Apple and Windows phones and is easy to use. All you have to do is create an account and select a safe zone, which includes the Canterbury and Medway campuses, the Historic Dockyard in Chatham and Liberty Quays in Gillingham. The main screen will show three main features: a green button that will get you in touch with first aid, a blue button for enquiries and a big red button for emergencies.

The first aid and emergency buttons will lead security or first aid officers to the location of the call. The blue enquiries button will connect you to the University switchboard during the day and Campus Security at night. The app is still being developed and it is expected that by September 2016, the University will be able to send special notifications to its staff and students in the event of an on-campus incident.

Campus Security is here to help you feel and stay safe. If you find yourself in need of help, do not hesitate to get in touch with them via the contact information below or using the SafeZone app.

Control room: +44 (0)1227 823300
Supervisor: +44 (0)1227 823060
Emergencies: +44 (0)1227 823333
Email: security@kent.ac.uk
www.kent.ac.uk/estates/services/ campus_security.html

Valerie van Leeuwen
MA International Security and the Politics of Terror
Welcome to Kent

The UK’s European university
A University with an international focus

Only a stone’s throw away from continental Europe, the University of Kent undoubtedly has one of the UK’s most attractive campuses. Situated in the south-east of England, Canterbury is not only extremely close to London, it is also within reach of many major connection points between England and the continent. These include the London airports and the Channel ports, as well as the Ashford and Ebbsfleet Eurostar Terminals.

It does not come as a surprise then that the University, which was founded in 1965, was destined to spread its wings. As one of the UK’s leading universities (ranked 17th* in the UK for research intensity in the Research Excellence Framework 2014), the University of Kent prides itself on the fact that 97% of its research is judged to be of international quality. With 31 academic schools and centres across three faculties – Humanities, Sciences and Social Sciences – the University of Kent accommodates a large community of intellectually driven academics and students. Indeed, the University of Kent encourages the expansion of knowledge. In addition to the Canterbury and Medway campuses, in 1998, a postgraduate centre for programmes focusing on international studies opened in Brussels. Brussels School of International Studies (BSIS) offers prospective students the chance to experience political science, sociology, law, history and economics first-hand, from a site with major political impact. In addition to BSIS, the University has three more European centres located in Paris, Athens; Rome, as well as a UK centre in Tonbridge.

The University of Kent represents a philosophy which promotes the increasing mobility that comes with studying. In this respect, the fairly recent introduction of the Heritage Management MA in Athens in 2011 invites students to actively explore archaeology by equally exposing them to theory and practice, but most importantly by encouraging them to interact with the physicality of history. Similarly, the MA programmes in Ancient History and Roman History and Archaeology, with the first term based in Canterbury and the second one in Rome, are designed to equip students with the best of both locations. In Canterbury, students are trained in research skills and, in Rome, they are faced with the rich history of the city’s architectural beauties and able to study the city’s past in the present.

Dedicated to further cultural knowledge, the University of Kent’s Paris School of Arts and Culture reflects the city’s love for creativity and culture. Known for its ever-growing, ever-developing artistic circles, the University of Kent’s Paris centre is located in Montparnasse where artists and writers like Pablo Picasso, Ernest Hemingway, Marc Chagall and many more gathered.

Due to the geographical location of its UK-based campuses, Kent is able to offer its students the possibility to easily travel and visit other European universities as well. Students benefit from the University’s excellent collaborations with the École Normale Supérieure, Paris, Ghent University in Belgium, and the universities of Bologna and Copenhagen, to name only a few. Knowledge knows no boundaries. The University of Kent’s academic activities reach beyond this credo by giving students access to original source material and active participation in the creation and conservation of knowledge.

Mylène Branco
PhD in Comparative Literature

The GradPost

Who are we?

The GradPost is a student-led quarterly publication and our team works closely with the Graduate School in order to bring you articles of interest.

The tagline says it all: we are ‘a newsletter created by postgraduates, for postgraduates’. Even though the publication is in its seventh year, we still need your help to make it more than it is right now: more topical, more interesting and more relevant to the postgraduate community here at the University of Kent.

Our team is based on the University of Kent’s Canterbury campus. However, we want to continue to invite writers from all seven of our University of Kent locations to contribute to the publication. The diversity and scope this offers to The GradPost and its readers is invaluable.

So please, if you have a desire to contribute, ideas to share, or stories to tell, do get in touch! We are looking for sub/section editors, columnists, journalists, proofreaders, photographers; anyone with anything from a simple article idea to aspirations for a section they would like to run.

While details of our first meeting of the term are yet to be confirmed, more information will shortly be arriving in your University inbox, so keep your eyes peeled. And if the questions really can’t wait, do not hesitate to contact us in the meantime via lf294@kent.ac.uk.

We are really looking forward to hearing from you!

The GradPost team.

Lucy Farnsdale
MA International Social Policy

*of 122 universities, not including specialist institutions.
Ranking taken from the Times Higher Education, January 2015
Looking to the future

A new academic year, a fresh new start

One year in

I remember it as if it was yesterday— I was carrying my one and only suitcase, walking up the hill from the city centre to the University of Kent Canterbury’s campus, in the rain. I knew there were direct buses from the city to the campus, but I was so excited about all my life changes (living abroad, speaking another language 24/7, being away from my family and friends) that I wanted to walk and feel every inch of the path so I could have positive memories to recall later!

One year has passed since then, and now many of you are probably in the same situation I was last September; arriving at the University of Kent to pursue your postgraduate studies and feeling really excited about it! The first thing I have to say to you is WELCOME! The second is that you’ve chosen the best place to study, grow and develop, and I am sure you will have a fantastic time here at Kent.

If you are beginning a new year of your PhD course, don’t forget to check out the Graduate School’s Researcher Development Programme. It has workshops to help you improve your academic skills, enable you to go beyond barriers, such as a fear of public speaking or journal publication, as well as learn about alternative funding opportunities. In addition, you get to meet many other PhD students, across various disciplines, with whom you can connect, cooperate and share your journey, all of which are very important for your success.

A new academic year always creates the sense of a fresh new start and for many can be motivation to get back on track. Whether you are just starting at the University, or returning for another year, embrace that feeling! Focus on working towards your academic achievements, while also having fun and enjoying the new connections you are bound to make. Get the most out of your programme and excellent teachers, make the time to meet our lovely academic staff and administrators. It is very important that you become acquainted with all the student services, which are there to help you achieve success!

This will make you feel not only supported, but prepared throughout the academic year.

Embrace the opportunity to find out what is happening at your university and around campus. Participate whenever you can, so you can have fun and build new friendships – joining societies is a great way of doing this. Having a good support network, with people to talk to and share your graduate experiences is also crucial to help keep you motivated and on the right path. The Graduate School and the Kent Graduate Student Association organise several social events to welcome you and make you feel at home – they are designed with you in mind!

Pursuing a Master’s or a PhD is not always a piece of cake, but you will find that at the University of Kent there are always silver linings which will make your experience as a graduate student better and more successful. After one year here, I can say I am very proud to be a researcher at the University of Kent and I am sure you will be too! Just give your best every day and we will be here to back you up.

Vanessa Dias
PhD in Psychology

Post EU Referendum

A word on the Brexit vote

The University of Kent is proud to be the UK’s European university. Following the result of the recent EU Referendum, Kent remains committed to its European outlook and continues to value all of its students from across the world.

Around 11% of Kent students are from the EU, and 37% of teaching and research staff come from outside the UK. Moreover, as was explored in a previous article, Kent is the only UK university to have specialist postgraduate centres in four European capital cities. Whether you are British, European, or from anywhere else in the world, the University of Kent welcomes you.

The process of leaving the European Union is expected to take a long time, meaning that any proposals or changes which will affect students are unlikely to be felt for a number of years. In fact, for all current students, any existing financial arrangements and the right to remain in the UK are assured until the completion of their degree. There will also be no immediate change to the tuition fees paid by current EU students. Both these statements have been confirmed by Universities UK and Jo Johnson, the Minister of State for Universities and Science.

In addition, the Student Loans Company has announced that current EU students, and those planning to begin this autumn, will not see any changes to their loan and grant arrangements as a result of the UK’s vote to leave the EU.

In terms of studying abroad, Universities UK maintains that students from UK universities currently studying overseas on Erasmus+ placements, and those considering applying to participate in Erasmus+ next year (2016/17), will not be affected by the referendum result. Similarly, for those interested in research funding, Jo Johnson has also said that there will be no immediate change to the UK university sector’s ability to participate in EU research and innovation programmes such as Horizon 2020. This has also been confirmed by the EU commissioner for research and innovation.

The University of Kent continues to be outward facing and international. It is in contact with the relevant government agencies, so it can support students through this period of transition.

If you want to follow the latest updates, or if you have any other queries you would like answered, The GradPost recommends the following websites:

- Universities UK ‘Brexit FAQs’: www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/facts-and-stats/Pages/brexit-faq.aspx
- University of Kent’s ‘Post-EU Referendum’ page: www.kent.ac.uk/post-euref/index.html

Sophie Williams
MA in English and American Literature
Community-based conservation

Documenting a coastal community that consumes and conserves its sea turtles

Sea turtles originated in the Late Jurassic period about 150 million years ago and, today, seven species of turtles exist in the world's oceans. They spend most of their lives in the ocean, with the females coming ashore only to lay eggs. Olive ridley sea turtles (Lepidochelys olivacea) are known for their mass nesting, during which females emerge synchronously in large numbers to lay eggs in close vicinity to one another. This phenomenon is also called an arribada, known to occur at ten beaches around the world, in Mexico, Central America and India. The size of an arribada ranges between a thousand and hundreds of thousands of individuals on the same beach, each laying around a hundred eggs. The beach is so crowded with turtles that they often unintentionally destroy previously laid eggs. When hatchlings emerge from nests (45 days later), predators like crabs, raptors, canines and felines feast on them. As a result of this crowding and predation, only between two and 10% of the eggs laid in an arribada produce hatchlings that return to the ocean.

Based on this observation, an Olive Ridley Egg Harvesting Project (EHP) has been set up at Ostional, Costa Rica, the second largest arribada beach in the world. Ostional is the only place on Earth where it is legal to extract, consume and trade these eggs. The EHP has been running for almost thirty years now and has helped the community at Ostional. It is an unusual success story, where people have conserved a natural resource by consuming it.

I was working at Rushikulya in India (the third largest site), when I came across the case of Ostional. When the time came for me to decide my dissertation topics, I mentioned a case study at Ostional in my list of potential topics. ‘How far-fetched,’ I thought, but it never hurt to try! I proposed to track the evolution, economic and environmental contribution of the EHP. Little did I imagine that I would get the opportunity to make it come true! The faculty at my school, eminent researchers and people at Ostional were very encouraging as I planned the field trip.

Only on arriving did it sink in that I was in Costa Rica, biologists’ paradise – iguanas and vultures everywhere! My first morning was magical as an arribada had just occurred and we collected eggs at sunrise under a rainbow by the Pacific Ocean. Over the next four weeks, I surveyed every accessible household with a questionnaire, and interviewed some key informants about the functioning, status and future of the EHP. I also participated in some monitoring activities. The work was very thorough, complete with sound explanations of sea turtle biology. The people were very friendly and forthcoming, giving me an invaluable dataset. Costa Rica is an immensely popular wildlife ‘voluntourism’ destination.

Howler monkeys, butterflies, lizards, 12 species of largely endemic birds (including the delightful hummingbird) and of course the turtles were an added bonus to my fieldwork! On my last day in the field, I had a lovely surprise – another arribada! I couldn’t believe my luck, and was overwhelmed with gratitude and awe. Costa Rica now felt like home and also gave me some great experiences and evidence to help strengthen conservation. Now back in England, I am writing up my findings and am very excited about presenting them. The friends I made in Costa Rica sent me pictures of major events, such as the egg festival and the hatchling emergence. My trip has reinforced my faith in dreams coming true and kindled my passion for work and zest for life. I would like to offer sincere thanks to my school for their sponsorship and support, and to the wonderful people at Ostional who made this project possible.

For more information about sea turtles, wildlife and other thoughts, check out my blog: http://iammallika.blogspot.co.uk

Mallika Sardeshpande
MSc Conservation and Rural Development

Mallika Sardeshpande is a MSc Conservation and Rural Development student, studying at the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology, which is part of the School of Anthropology and Conservation at the University of Kent in Canterbury.
Women in the fiction of Alexandra Kollontai

Political writer, strike organiser, revolutionary, stateswoman, feminist: Alexandra Kollontai was a polarising figure in Imperial and Soviet Russia. She was faithful not to any one revolutionary ideology but to her own conception of a workers’ movement – one which incorporated feminism into its foundation. It is perhaps unsurprising that her works of fiction are overshadowed by her other achievements. Published in the 1920s (and branded obscene for their frank analysis of love, sex, marriage and abortion), Kollontai’s novellas and short stories were written for working women. They feature bright heroines – all good communists whose ambition and conviction are at variance with the role of wife or lover. In the end, they consider the traditional family a detriment and instead seek total independence or the construction of communal family, both of which reflect Kollontai’s personal conflict between love and work.

Revolution is a catalyst for passion in these stories, bringing men and women together on equal terms, but equality is impossible to maintain once the dust settles. In Vasilisa Malygina, A Great Love, and Sisters, revolution creates self-possessed, idealistic women. It has the opposite effect on Kollontai’s men: they become corrupted by whatever power the movement affords them. The souring of communism is embodied in their pursuit of bourgeois pastimes – alcohol, gambling, women – which drives a wedge between them and their staunchly Bolshevik (read: morally superior) wives. Heavy-handed though it can be, these relationships are metaphors for Kollontai’s disappointment in the Bolshevik revolution, an upheaval incapable of reaching its potential because its origins were betrayed.

Despite their radical roots, romances in Kollontai’s fiction suffer from patriarchal inequality, illustrating her belief that political revolution alone will not solve social ills. The complaint of not being loved because its origins were betrayed. The complaint of not being loved

The longing to be understood by a man down to the deepest, most secret recesses of one’s soul, to be recognized by him as a striving human being, repeatedly decided matters. And repeatedly disappointment ensued all too swiftly, since the friend saw in me only the feminine element which he tried to mold into a willing sounding board to his own ego. So repeatedly the moment inevitably arrived in which I had to shake off the chains of community with an aching heart but with a sovereign, uninfluenced will. (Kollontai, 22)

This ego appears in Vasilisa, Sisters and Thirty-Two Pages. The men suggest their partners abandon work for domesticity, remaining ignorant and indifferent to the importance women attach to their labour, whether in factories, the Party, or academia. For Kollontai, the problems of mismatched ideology and failure to recognise women’s intellectual capacity share a common root: passion without equality is not real love.

Motherhood and sisterhood are interwoven in these narratives. Feeling obligated to protect childlike lovers leaves women weakened and trapped by tenderness. With other women, however, tenderness begets friendship and strength, as does forgiveness. In Vasilisa and Sisters, the protagonists eventually sympathise with their husband’s mistresses, identifying them as sisters rather than competition. Maternal bonds have even greater power. Zhenya’s confession that her mother is dearer to her than Lenin is the climax of Three Generations, a story demonstrating the merits of maternal love as much as it explores sexual relations. The eponymous Vasilisa is overjoyed by her pregnancy; she envisions opening a crèche, adopting Kollontai’s philosophy of communal childrearing and its liberating possibilities for working women. Children become, in these texts, as valid a contribution to society as labour.

Meaningful work is always the underlying solution for Kollontai’s frustrated women. Vasilisa returns to work feeling freed from a cage; Natasha in A Great Love likens her affair to incarceration. Only when their sense of obligation is removed can they fulfil their potential. Kollontai never minces words about the significance of independent endeavours for women:

‘[L]ove is not the most important thing in a woman’s life…it is work, a woman’s own creative work, that gives meaning to her life and makes it worth living’ (Porter, 44).

No story stresses this more than Thirty-Two Pages, in which a young woman’s desire for love and fear of loneliness is surpassed by her ambition to contribute to science and the new Russia.

The moral, then, is not warning against love, but rather against the wrong type of love. Without camaraderie, it is destructive and wasteful. True equality allows women to reach their full potential; the challenge for Kollontai and her heroines is discovering what that potential truly is, especially when it diverges from convention. Their decision is always a struggle, but they are stronger for it. Vasilisa refers to her arc as a ‘personal revolution’, and this is what Kollontai advocates above all: the courage to walk away from that which limits and embrace that which liberates – in whatever forms they take.

Angelina Lesniewski
PhD in Creative Writing

Angelina Lesniewski is currently studying for her PhD in Creative Writing at the School of English, University of Kent, Canterbury.
How to manifest creativity in academia

Many subjects within the Psychological Sciences do not yet consensually agree on the nature of human creativity: is it something we are born with or is it something that is developed throughout our lives? The debate remains open and you probably have your own opinion on it too, but in general psychologists argue that some of us are more naturally creative than others. However, creativity is a skill that can be developed, even by those who are not so naturally creative.

How can knowing this be important and useful to you? Well, besides our daily lives, in which we constantly face problems and issues that require some kind of resolution, creativity also plays an important role in academia. From adapting new methods of study to the creation of new theoretical frameworks, we need to be creative in order to contribute to the expansion of academic knowledge.

So how can you enhance your creativity?

The process of creativity has been commonly accepted as having four phases: first, you open your mind to new ideas and stimuli; secondly, you accommodate all the information in your mind, conscious and unconscious; then you have what is called a ‘eureka’ moment – the stage in which a solution or conclusion pops up in your mind. Finally, you translate your idea or solution into action.

In the first stage, we engage in what is called the ‘preparation’ phase. This is a moment where we look for information that is somehow related to our work or the task at hand. To be open-minded is very important at this stage because we might miss something that could be important for our final outcome. Therefore, we need to stay receptive and consider multiple points of view, perspectives and sources of information. This requires of us to use imagination and go beyond, not only our mental limitations, which keep us attached to old ways of thinking and perceiving reality, but also social judgments such as ‘that makes no sense’ or ‘you are not going anywhere with that’. It is also important that you allow yourself to be an explorer and gather as much information as you can.

The second stage is the ‘incubation’ phase. Here, you process all the information that you gathered, either consciously or unconsciously. Often it is our subconscious which is responsible for our ‘eureka’ moments, because it allows ideas and thoughts to be combined in new and innovative ways that do not always make sense to our conscious mind. This is why we sometimes say that we are going to ‘sleep on’ something, hoping that an answer will have appeared by the time we wake up. Often it does, because when we are sleeping, our mind is free to make all of the weirdest associations you can imagine.

The third stage is the ‘enlightenment’ phase or the ‘eureka’ moment. In this phase, you get your idea or solution ‘out of the blue’. This is the most well-known face of creativity, the one in which ‘new’ solutions come into reality. However, the creative process is not finished unless you put your idea or thought into action, so everyone can understand and benefit from what you came up with. This is known as the ‘translation’ phase or what we might call ‘getting things done’. An idea or solution might be brilliant, but in order to actually contribute to society and generate positive experiences, it has to be put into practice.

Therefore, the next time you need to write an essay or work on one of your thesis’ chapters, remember how the creativity process works. Allow yourself time to gather as much information as possible and then set your mind free. Often, we are blocked in our academic work because we do not give our minds permission to rest and ‘sleep on’ things. Eventually something great will pop up in your mind and, when you finally get your brilliant idea, remember that getting things done is just as important as coming up with that idea in the first place!

Vanessa Dias
PhD in Psychology

The Global Skills Award Programme

Increasing employability and enhancing global awareness

Are you a taught Master’s student and looking for ways to enhance your global awareness and improve your employability in a competitive job market? Would you like to attend interesting lectures on a variety of topics other than your degree? Are you unsure about your CV, negotiation skills, or do you need help to prepare yourself for life after graduation? If you answered yes to any of these questions then the Global Skills Award (GSA) Programme is just what you need.

Besides your degree, it can be very valuable to learn more about global issues, other fields of study and to develop your personal employability skills. The GSA Programme also provides you with the opportunity to meet other Master’s students from different departments. The programme runs for six months, from November to April, and all taught Master’s students can apply for free! After being accepted to the programme, you have to complete a personal assessment to reflect on your past experiences and future development.

In order to successfully complete the GSA, you have to attend eight lectures and six workshops. However, with the wide variety of interesting lectures and seminars, it is likely that you will attend more. The lectures on each particular subject are given by professionals and experts in their fields. This past year, some of the most noteworthy talks have been ‘The Wisdom of Psychopaths’, ‘Royal Diseases: Medical Mysteries of Queen Victoria’s Haemophilia and King George III’s Madness’ and ‘Countering the Silence of Indefinite Detention: Walking with Refugee Tales’, which added greatly to the debate on the refugee crisis. The GSA also provides you with the opportunity to give a presentation on your country and culture during one of the two ‘Exploring Global Cultures’ lectures. Since the University of Kent hosts students from all over the world, these presentations have proven to be particularly successful.

Apart from lectures, there are also a wide variety of workshops which you can attend. These are more focused on aspects of employability and will help you greatly to develop your career skills.

Workshop topics include networking, teamwork, leadership and negotiation skills. Other workshops provide you with the opportunity to get feedback on your CV and cover letter skills. There is even an opportunity to take part in a Mock Assessment Centre and learn what to expect from assessment centres and the techniques for enhancing your chances.

Are you convinced yet? For more information, you can send an email to skills@kent.ac.uk or visit www.kent.ac.uk/graduateschool/skills/programmes/gsa.html

Valerie van Leeuwen
MA International Security and the Politics of Terror
Eastern ARC opportunities

Parisian possibilities

The thought of studying abroad can be daunting. Negotiating the hurdles of communicating in a foreign language, making sense of sometimes baffling cultural differences and a vague but dogged fear of the unfamiliar may all persuade you that life in another European city isn’t worth serious consideration. But I would urge you to think again. Sharing some of these misgivings during the first term of my MA in Modern History at Canterbury, in January 2015, I made the move to the University of Kent’s Paris School of Arts and Culture (www.kent.ac.uk/paris). The next four months were more rewarding and enjoyable than I could have imagined. The experience did two things. One, it dissolved the idea – within days, as far as I remember – that living and studying abroad would be impossibly difficult. It’s not. Once you’ve arrived, your perspective adjusts and any remaining hurdles appear a lot smaller. Second, it gave me the confidence to extend my academic study and take advantage of other opportunities I would never have envisaged.

This was not entirely coincidental. Much of my subject interest – the work of spies and resistance in France during the Second World War – was rooted in Paris, so my familiarity with street names and addresses from secret agents’ reports spurred me to stay on through the summer term, while giving guided tours across the city on life during the Nazi occupation (a job I’ve come to love, and continue to do). This work, along with my MA dissertation on French fake spies, led me to make Paris the subject of a PhD proposal. With the award of an Eastern ARC Digital Humanities Studentship earlier this year, I have begun work on Paris Underground, a spatial history of Paris from 1940 to 1944. By incorporating archival material with digital mapping techniques, I want to better understand how the Nazi occupation changed the city and how that in turn shaped the growth of resistance in its various forms. After a term in Canterbury, I returned to Paris in May to start my research.

Though I am still in the early stages of my research, the time I am spending in Paris is invaluable, as a student, a researcher, a writer (I am working on my second biography, of a Paris spy) and an honorary Parisian. The University of Kent’s Paris MA and the subsequent support of Eastern ARC has enabled me to develop an academic career, open up new avenues for my research and break new ground by introducing a digital aspect to my chosen field. Without the chance to study in France, those opportunities would not have emerged.

Nigel Perrin
PhD Student, School of History
Eastern ARC Digital Humanities Studentship
The Graduate School

Who are we?

The Graduate School aims to ensure that your academic and social interests are appropriately provided for within the University wherever you are based.

Professor Diane Houston (Dean of the Graduate School) and her team work in partnership with academic schools, faculties, central service departments and the Students’ Union to enhance the quality of the postgraduate student experience across all campuses and European centres to create a vibrant postgraduate community.

The Graduate School also supports a wide range of activities, enabling postgraduates to promote their research interests and studies as well as opportunities to meet and socialise. In addition to the initiatives highlighted below, please keep an eye on the Graduate School’s events calendar (www.kent.ac.uk/graduateschool/news/calendar.html) for further information. The Graduate School is located on the third floor of the Cornwallis East building on the Canterbury campus, with offices for its staff and a postgraduate training room. There is also an adjacent networking space, which postgraduates can use for socialising and study.

Where to find us

The Graduate School is located on the 3rd floor of the Cornwallis East building (Canterbury campus).

Contact us:
T: 01227 824089
E: graduateschool@kent.ac.uk
www.kent.ac.uk/graduateschool

The Graduate School team

Professor Diane Houston
Dean of the Graduate School

Joanna Addison
PA to the Dean and Graduate School Assistant

Ros Beeching
Graduate School Co-ordinator

Dr Jo Collins
Postgraduate Development Advisor

Carla Doolan
Postgraduate Development Co-ordinator

Sian Epps
Graduate School Assistant

Deborah Molloy
Graduate School Assistant

Suzie Morris
Graduate School Administration Manager

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, including: Information Management, Research Methods and Analysis, Ethics, Communication, Engagement, Careers, Writing and more!

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

To participate in the Researcher Development Programme, researchers will need to register using the Graduate School’s online booking system: https://bloom.kent.ac.uk
Graduate School news

2017 Postgraduate Festival

One of the highlights of the postgraduate year at Kent is our annual Postgraduate Festival. Held in the summer term, this is a wonderful opportunity to highlight your research to your peers in a supportive environment with an element of friendly competition. We have academic panels, poster competitions, keynote speakers and a 3-Minute Thesis (3MT®) competition. It’s a great way to network with colleagues from other faculties, learn about the exciting and important research which is taking place across the University and win prizes. Look out for invitations to take part after the Winter Vacation.

Postgraduate Experience Awards

Have you ever made art from your DNA? Or talked about Homelessness? Or challenged your critical thinking?

These were all excellent projects which the Graduate School has funded as part of our Postgraduate Experience Awards. If you have an idea for an interdisciplinary event which will enhance your Postgraduate colleagues’ experience at Kent, you can apply for up to £1,500 to make it happen.

Application forms can be downloaded from the Graduate School website at www.kent.ac.uk/graduateschool

The deadline for application is Friday 25 November 2016.

Come along to ‘Shut Up and Write’!

Want to write but feeling unmotivated, or have writer’s block? The idea behind ‘Shut Up and Write’ is that you bring your notes and writing implements (whether pen and paper or laptop), and write in focused, concentrated bursts with short breaks for chats and refreshments. It’s a great way to get writing! Even if you edit your words ‘into oblivion’ later (to quote Hannah Perrin, 2014), it’s a great way to be inspired and to feel gratified by the achievement of getting words on paper.

Location: Graduate School Training Room, Cornwallis East third floor (Canterbury campus)

Autumn term dates: 13 October, 10 November, 8 December

Time: 14.30-16.30

Our rules: Mobile phones and Wi-fi/internet access must be switched off. Silence during writing.

Come along, get your ideas down on paper and feel fabulous! You can contact skills@kent.ac.uk with any further queries.

‘Shut up and Write’ is run by second-year PhD student Lina Lesniewski.

New International Families Network

The International Families Network will serve as a platform to support international students who have families and spouses joining them in the UK during the course of their postgraduate study at Kent.

Recognising the complexities involved in moving to a new country while balancing study commitments and raising a family, the Graduate School together with International Development have created a network to enhance the international student experience for student parents.

Each academic term, we will be holding an informal lunchtime gathering to provide an opportunity for members of the group (students, partners and children) to meet together on campus.

Email Jo Addison at graduateschool@kent.ac.uk if you would like to join the Network mailing list and receive notifications of upcoming events.
Postgraduate facilities

Graduate School Training Room
Room 321, Cornwallis East (third floor)

Our Training Room is where the majority of postgraduate training, including the Global Skills Award and Researcher Development Programme workshops, will take place. The room may be available for students to use for studying during vacation periods; however, please contact skills@kent.ac.uk to confirm availability.

Woolf foyer and common room
Woolf College

The Woolf common room has a flat screen television, vending machines and printing facilities, and is available to postgraduates from 8am to midnight, seven days per week. In addition, Woolf Foyer is often available between 18.00-23.00 for postgraduate social activities organised by the KGSA.

Staff-Student Social Space
Room 329, Cornwallis East (third floor)

Open from 08.00-18.00, this communal space is a relaxed area where postgraduates can study, socialise and meet to work together. With a large open terrace, there is also outside space to enjoy.

Postgraduate research space
Oaks Study Hub

A dedicated room for postgraduate research students to work together across disciplines. The room is open 24/7 and only postgraduate research students can access it using their KentOne card. Although the room does lock, we recommend you don’t leave belongings unattended.

Research Café

If you’re new on campus and wondering where to begin with your research, or if you’re just interested in what research is going on around you, come along to the Postgraduate Research Café.

This is an informal event, which allows postgraduate students from a variety of disciplines to come together to discuss their research over a cup of coffee. Each café features one or two talks from postgraduate researchers, with a chance for questions, debate and networking. If you would like to present your work, please do contact the Graduate School at graduateschool@kent.ac.uk

Upcoming Cafés:
• Thursday 20 October, 14.00-16.00
• Thursday 17 November, 14.00-16.00
• Thursday 15 December, 14.00-16.00

Location: Staff-Student Social Space (Cornwallis East, third floor) Canterbury campus.

Come along and be inspired!

Introduction to University Teaching

Training sessions for new PGR teaching assistants

The Graduate School will be running three sessions of ‘Introduction to University Teaching’ during week 1 and week 2 this year, facilitated by Jennifer Leigh from the Academic Practice Team. Each of the sessions will include a generic introduction to University teaching, followed by faculty-specific training. Please note that all sessions run from 10.00-15.00 and will include refreshments on arrival and a catered lunch at 13.00. Students requiring this training will be contacted directly.

Autumn term sessions:
• Monday 19 September 2016
• Monday 26 September 2016
• Friday 30 September 2016

Location: Graduate School Training Room (Cornwallis East, third floor) Canterbury campus.
Got spare time or need a break? The GradPost team recommends these events...

**Only in England:** Photographs by Tony Ray-Jones and Martin Parr
9 Jul – 25 Sep 2016
The Beaney House of Art and Knowledge, Canterbury
A major exhibition of work by British photographers Tony Ray-Jones and Martin Parr.

**Media, Art and Design**
9-24 Sep 2016
Sidney Cooper Gallery, Canterbury
Paintings, sculptures and installations: Lynne Morinan and Matt Osborne exhibit their works.

**National Youth Jazz Orchestra**
13 Sep 2016, 19.30
The Gulbenkian, University of Kent, Canterbury
Swing along to Britain’s longest-running ensemble for young people, the National Youth Jazz Orchestra.

**Forage Walk**
14 Sep 2016, 18.00
The Whitstable Shop, Whitstable
For all those with a love for nature and wandering. Join Jo Barker on a foraging walk in Whitstable and learn more about wild foods.

**Lone Star Comedy Night at Kent County Cricket Club**
17 Sep 2016, 19.30-22.30
The Spitfire Ground, St Lawrence, Canterbury
Laughter is the best medicine. If you enjoy stand-up, this is the event for you!

**Kent Smugglers Stories – Exhibition**
18 Sep – 13 Nov 2016
The Seaside Museum, Herne Bay
Get away from Canterbury and dive into history.

**Global Hangout**
20 Sep 2016, 12.00-13.30
21 Sep 2016, 12.15-13.45
Eliot Dining Hall, University of Kent, Canterbury
The perfect occasion for international students to make friends during their first week at University. Free food provided. Who can say no to this?

**Welcome Talk**
20 Sep 2016, 11.00-12.00
21 Sep 2016, 11.15-12.15
Woolf College Lecture Theatre 1 and Gulbenkian Cinema, University of Kent, Canterbury
International students will get key information during this one-hour talk.

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**Romeo and Juliet**
20-24 Sep 2016, 19.30
The Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury
Northern Ballet’s Romeo and Juliet. A dance adaptation of the world’s most famous love story. Heartbreak guaranteed!

**Canterbury Food and Drink Festival**
23-25 Sep 2016
Dane John Gardens, Canterbury
Food is always a good idea. With over 100 traders, this is more than just a celebration of street food. Canterbury’s annual festival is a celebration of Canterbury itself!

**Trip to Leeds Castle**
25 Sep 2016, 10.45
Meet at Rutherford College Car Park, University of Kent, Canterbury
Visit a great castle for free! Book in advance and bring your e-ticket along with you.

**The Boy with Tape on his Face is TAPE FACE**
2 Oct 2016, 19.30
The Gulbenkian, Canterbury
If you have not yet seen him on television, come see him live!

**International Student Experience Fair**
18 Oct 2016, 13.00-15.00
Darwin Conference Suite, University of Kent, Canterbury
International Student Experience Fair is not to be missed, especially for anyone who feels they need help with their studies or who would like to improve their learning.

**Sunset Safari Guided Canoe Tour at Canoe Wild**
26 Oct 2016, 16.30-19.30
Canterbury
Feeling adventurous? Why not try canoeing on the River Stour and enjoy the sunset? For more information, go to: www.canoewild.co.uk/#/winter-guided-trips/c1ak2