

QM YOU

MAGAZINE

FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS OF
QUEEN MARGARET UNIVERSITY
Issue 91 | APRIL 2024



Sally Gray -
from BBC to MBE

Spotlight
on sport

Palm fat alternative is a food
industry game changer



Queen Margaret
University
EDINBURGH



Principal's Welcome

We are delighted to share with you a range of exciting news and initiatives from QMU, and to shine a spotlight on the excellent work of our researchers and academics, as well as our inspirational students and graduates.

Following the pandemic, most of us became increasingly aware of the importance of nature to our health and wellbeing, and the need to create opportunities and spaces to allow people to learn about the natural world so we can utilise and preserve it for future generations. Over the past few years, we have put increasing emphasis on outdoor learning within our teacher education courses. This year, we have launched the Outdoor Learning Hub and Discovery Trail on campus which is encouraging students, staff and the wider QMU community to connect with each other in an attractive natural environment. It's a unique and interesting facility, which you can read more about on page 5 and on the QMU website.

In this edition, we are looking at the impact that QMU has had on the world of sport. In our special sports feature, you can read about the career of female trailblazer, Dame Louise Martin, Former President of the Commonwealth Games Federation, who has led a fascinating life working at the top level of sports administration. I hope you will also enjoy reading about the great sports clubs and teams that help to create exciting social and competitive experiences for students, as well as taking a nostalgic look back at some of the great photos of our sporting students and events from the past. We also give you an insight into the work of our Lydia Osteoporosis Project and their recent conference, which called for osteoporosis to be made a public health priority, and promoted the necessity of physical activity in maintaining good bone health.

QMU is very proud of the relevance of its research work. Recently, our research to create a replacement for the use of palm fat in the bakery industry made headline news across the globe. Interest in our novel replacement product, PALM-ALT, was intense, with broadcasters, news agencies, food companies and investors all keen to know more about how our healthy replacement ingredient could provide solutions for the food industry whilst reducing deforestation of the world's rainforests. Read more about PALM-ALT on pages 8 & 9.

The magazine also looks at our use of ultrasound technology in healthcare. On page 10, you can find out how our research is being used to assess and improve swallowing function among stroke patients and people with progressive illnesses such as Parkinson's disease and motor neurone disease (MND).

We also introduce you to new teaching techniques which are helping better prepare our health students to navigate challenging situations in the workplace. Our use of virtual reality (VR) is providing paramedic science students with a truly immersive learning experience. Find out what our students think about their step into the virtual classroom on pages 6 & 7.

I hope you enjoy reading the stories about our research, and community and teaching initiatives, and take inspiration from the great work of our students and graduates. It has been fun delving into our archives around sports, and as we approach our 150th anniversary in 2025, we look forward to sharing more stories from our past in the next edition of QMYOU.

If you are a graduate, please stay connected with us through our alumni team E: alumni@qmu.ac.uk. If you are a member of the public or are new to QMU and want to connect, please don't hesitate to talk to our Development team or email development@qmu.ac.uk about ways to get involved and support the University's work.

With best wishes

Sir Paul Grice, FRSE, FAcSS

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CONTACT:

Development and Alumni Team

E: alumni@qmu.ac.uk

W: www.qmu.ac.uk/alumni-and-friends

Marketing and Communications Team

E: marketing@qmu.ac.uk

www.qmu.ac.uk

Queen Margaret University,
Edinburgh, EH21 6UU.

T: 0131 474 0000

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Photo of Sally Gray

DESIGN:

Marketing & Communications Team

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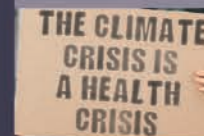
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Proud to be one of the UK's most wildlife-friendly universities



Credit: Malcolm Durney

A NEW STUDY, conducted by wildlife care experts Ark Wildlife, has ranked QMU as a 'gold tier' university in the UK for wildlife protection.

Biodiversity has always been an important aspect of QMU's work since moving to the new campus in 2007. We have our own Climate Action Plan, are part of the Universities and Colleges Climate Commitment for Scotland, and we've even won a Hedgehog Friendly Campus Award! We are delighted that our work in this area is being recognised with these awards and we continue to encourage biodiversity, create a safe haven for wildlife and support community access to green spaces through the recent development of our Outdoor Learning Hub and an ongoing focus on outdoor learning. □

Success at the BAFTAs



BAFTA award winner Lewis Gribben

WE LOVE IT when our graduates are recognised for their talents, so we were over the moon when Lewis Gribben, acting graduate, was awarded Best Actor TV for his role as Danny in 'Somewhere Boy' at the BAFTA Scotland Awards.

Brian Kaczynski, QMU graduate, was also part of the team which won BAFTA's Best Television Scripted for the heart wrenching drama 'Mayflies' starring QMU's Ashley Jenson and actors Tony Curran and Martin Compston. □

Providing accommodation to hundreds at the Festival Fringe 2024



Credit: Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society

THANKS TO A NEW partnership with the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, QMU will be providing hundreds of performers with accommodation at this year's Festival Fringe.

In alignment with the Fringe Society's focus on helping artists maintain their mental health during this busy period, the new 'festival village' at QMU will give artists an opportunity to escape the bustle of the festival, while still being only a stone's throw away from the city centre.

Sarah Whigham, Head of Commercial Services at QMU, said: "As specialists in creative arts and cultural management, we are delighted to support the Fringe by providing much needed affordable accommodation. Aside from attractive modern rooms in shared flats, Fringe participants staying on campus, will have access to free outdoor yoga classes, rehearsal spaces, a café, wifi and printing facilities, parking and storage."

Shona McCarthy, Chief Executive of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, said: "We are very excited about the prospect of a festival village at QMU's campus – not just for the accommodation it offers, but for the opportunity it presents artists to find their Fringe community, to meet and connect with each other." □

£150k for QMU students following renewal of historic partnership



Santander University staff and QMU staff, students and alumni celebrate another three years of support

AN EXTENDED THREE-YEAR agreement with Santander Universities is resulting in £150,000 worth of further support for QMU.

Each year since 2007, Santander has donated funds accumulating to more than £1.5 million to QMU to help with student success and progression. The three-year renewal will ensure funding until the end of 2027 - marking a two decade-strong relationship between the University and global bank.

The partnership aims to provide support for students who are most likely to face challenges when attending higher education. Lauren Murphy, a former Film and Media student who graduated from QMU in 2022, received enterprise funding from Santander to help set up her own business, Blue Skull Media.

Lauren explained: "I have been able to achieve my goals – which I previously felt were out of my reach – thanks to the support I received from QMU and the extra stability that was invested in me by Santander Universities.

"Following the funding, I was able to hone my skills in graphic design and content creation, and apply these to the creative sectors of the media. I now run my very own business as a freelance graphic designer! I've achieved the unthinkable."

Sir Paul Grice, QMU Principal, said: "The continuation of Santander Universities' support will allow more students, no matter their background, to take advantage of unparalleled opportunities to advance their skills and knowledge, and improve their confidence, so they can reach their potential and build brighter futures." □

Outdoor Learning Hub and Discovery Trail opens

AN OUTDOOR LEARNING Hub and Discovery Trail, recently created in the campus grounds, has been constructed to support student, staff and community learning.

Overlooking the QMU pond, The Howff, which makes up part of the Hub, is a hand-crafted wooden shelter with a wildflower roof and skylight dome. This attractive facility can be used as a gathering place for students, staff and the local community, and is available to book for learning and teaching purposes. This bespoke wooden structure, which was hand-crafted by East Lothian maker, Tree-ditions, is designed to be accessible for all, a shelter from the worst weather and connected to the environment.

The next time you visit the QMU campus, we encourage you to watch the wildlife and enjoy the views over the pond from The Howff. You can also follow The Discovery Trail – a route around the campus, following waymarkers, which provides an accessible trail through our woods, terraces, meadow, pond, hedgerows and Wee Forest.

The Outdoor Learning Hub has been created with support of Architecture & Design Scotland and NatureScot as a resource for the University, the local community and the wider teaching profession.



◀ To find out more about the Hub and Trail, scan the QR code. □

Image: The Howff - a hand-crafted wooden shelter with a wildflower roof and skylight dome located next to the QMU pond.

Virtual reality transforms learning for paramedic students

‘Exhilarating’ and ‘surprising’ were some of the comments used by students to describe their recent experience of new learning initiatives in paramedic science.

THANKS TO THE use of virtual reality (VR) technology, students on the BSc Paramedic Science course at QMU are benefitting from a totally immersive experience in the classroom, and they are loving every minute of their new virtual world.

Trialling the new VR packages for the first time, student Bronte Haywood said: “It was slightly disorienting because it was so real. I got so invested in the scenario that when someone spoke to me outside the VR headset, I got a fright.”

Using VR technology under the skillful direction of her lecturer, 2nd year student Lisa Fernie said: “I was totally amazed at how immersive and realistic the experience felt. It was so exciting, as I’d never used VR technology before.”

Leading the development of the new VR packages, QMU lecturer, Alex Williams, is delighted that the various scenarios that he has created, are proving to be massive hit with the students.

By simply popping on a VR headset, students are immediately transported from a bland classroom into a bedroom of a modern flat where a young woman, sitting in the edge of a bed, is clearly suffering from labour complications. Observing, asking questions, using virtual equipment and decision making all become part of the very realistic VR experience. The student can immediately feel the stress of the situation – but they can learn to ask the right questions, undertake the correct assessments, and challenge their decision making. No-one is going to die if they make a mistake, and Alex, as the experienced professional, is



Lecturer Alex Williams supports paramedic student Euan through the VR scenario

there to guide them through the various VR scenarios, so they are better equipped for the real thing.

As part of a range of packages, students have the chance to experience different situations - from a pregnant woman with pre-eclampsia to a female with maternal sepsis, and from a baby with shoulder dystortia dystocia (stuck in birth canal) to a woman with postpartum hemorrhaging. It's all possible with VR!

Student Euan Baillie said: “There is no doubt that VR has a significant positive impact on the learning experience at QMU - providing a very unique way to practice and apply skills in a realistic environment that you can't necessarily practice whilst on placement or in normal classroom settings. It allows us to repeatedly practice skills until the mental processing required for performing these tasks is reduced to a minimum. This frees up our mental capacity to focus on making

relevant decisions in real-life emergency situations.”

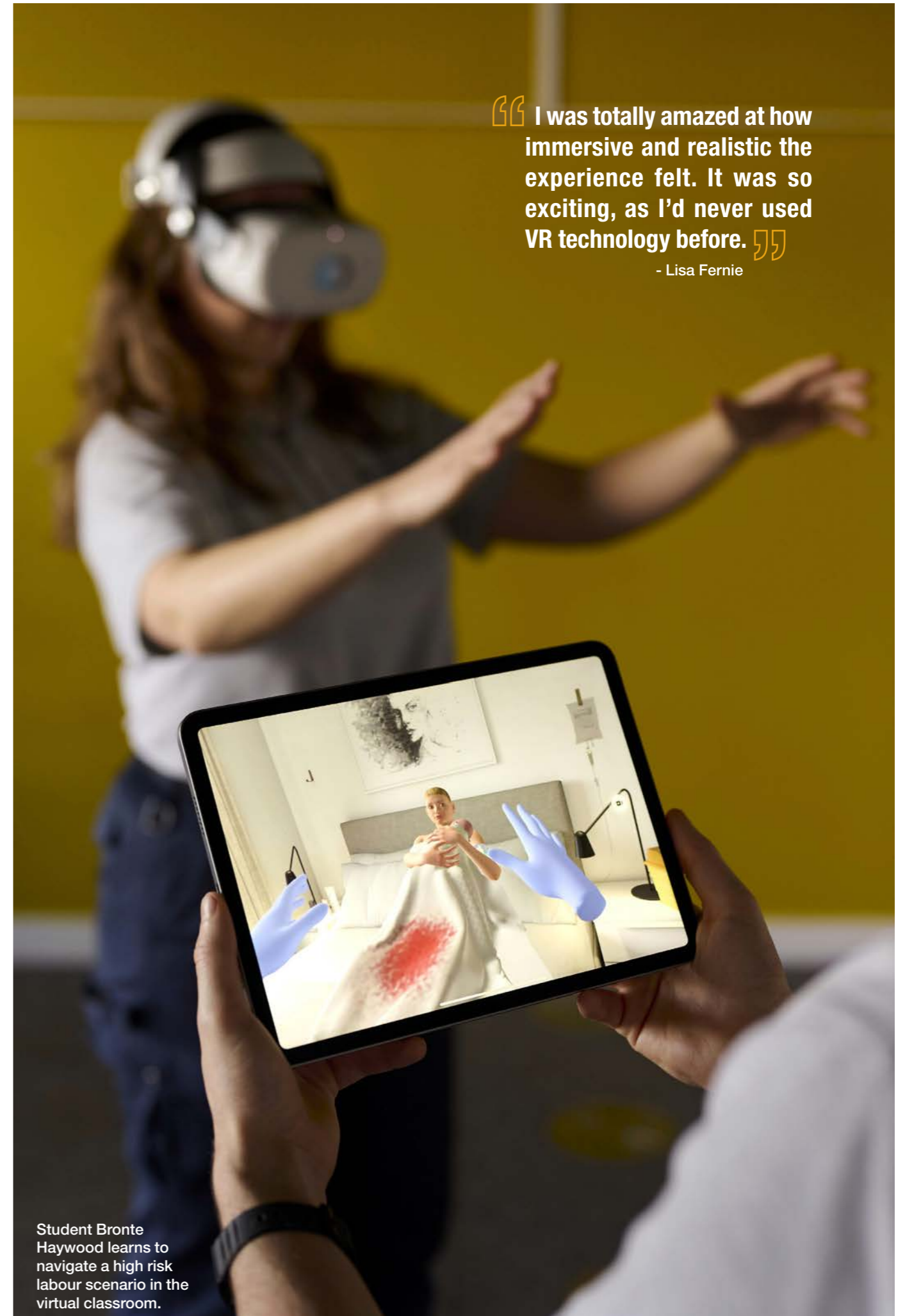
Bronte concluded: “It was so clever and exciting to see the future of paramedic practice learning advancing to help us to become better, more confident practitioners that can give the best care to patients. The possibilities for VR in paramedic science seem endless for current undergraduate students, as well as for the professional development of qualified paramedics in the field.”

Find out more about how VR is helping paramedic students develop their decision-making skills by scanning the QR code below. □



“ I was totally amazed at how immersive and realistic the experience felt. It was so exciting, as I’d never used VR technology before. ”

- Lisa Fernie



Student Bronte Haywood learns to navigate a high risk labour scenario in the virtual classroom.

New palm oil replacement sparks global interest in food industry game changer

“ We set out to develop a new ingredient that would provide winning solutions for the bakery industry. We used our expertise in food applications to assist the industry to develop baked goods that are both healthier and better for the environment than palm shortening... ”

PALM-ALT research team - Dr Julien Lonchamp and Catriona Liddle

What can only be described as an explosion of interest from across the globe reverberated around QMU when we announced that our researchers have developed a product that can replace palm shortening in bakery products. The novel new ingredient known as PALM-ALT is both healthier for the consumer and more environmentally friendly.

AN INTENSE RUSH of enquiries from news agencies, commercial organisations and venture capitalists across Canada, Australia, New Zealand, France, India and elsewhere demonstrated an unprecedented level of interest in QMU's groundbreaking food research project. Thirst for more details about QMU's PALM-ALT meant that our food experts were handling media interviews and commercial responses from dawn until dusk for several weeks. The level of interest shows how much research like this is needed by the global community to ensure a sustainable future for all.

Indeed, as palm shortening is ubiquitous in commercial bakery products, we expected that our PALM-ALT product would be met with great excitement across the food industry. Due to palm oil's extensive application across a range of industries, there was global interest from small specialist food manufacturers and large-scale food producers, as well as retailers, investors and media outlets, to name but a few.

But with QMU's research focus on the application of PALM-ALT in bakery products, why is our new novel ingredient looking like a game changer for the food industry? To understand that we must first look at palm oil.

What is palm shortening?

Palm shortening is a major functional fat ingredient used widely across the food industry in products such as cakes, biscuits, pastries, confectionery, ready meals and sauces. Due to its composition, high yield and low production costs, the food industry has become increasingly dependent on palm, resulting in its over-cultivation. Its high saturated fat content, which allows it to remain solid at room temperature, has proven very functional to the industrial bakery sector.

What makes PALM-ALT a winner?

Working successfully as a replacement for palm-based fat in baked goods, the newly developed ingredient, which has significantly less saturated fat, allows goods, such as cakes and biscuits, to maintain their texture, flavour and colour.

If used in the food industry to replace palm shortening, PALM-ALT has the potential to significantly lower greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the impact of food miles and deforestation of global rainforests associated with palm production. The use of PALM-ALT in the food industry could reduce its reliance on the over-cultivation of palm.

What QMU's research confirms

With a semi solid consistency, PALM-ALT is palm and coconut free, 100% plant-based, healthier due to having less total and saturated fat, and more sustainable. It's not only better for the environment, it's also a wholesome, clean label, allergen-free product with no added flavourings, sugar, sweeteners, preservatives or colourings. The QMU team has successfully trialed the PALM-ALT with biscuits, shortbread, oatcakes, cookies, cake and bread.

Who's behind the research?

Dr Julien Lonchamp, Reader in Food Science, and Catriona Liddle, Head of the Scottish Centre for Food Development and Innovation (SCFDI) at Queen Margaret University.

Motivation for the project

The industry has found it difficult to identify another fat which delivers the cost benefits and physical characteristics (bland taste, food shelf-

life and ambient storage) that palm offers, and which is not linked with health concerns. Currently there is no palm fat replacement that is sustainable, healthy and cost-effective.

Dr Julien Lonchamp said: "We set out to develop a new ingredient that would provide winning solutions for the bakery industry. We used our expertise in food applications to assist the industry to develop baked goods that are both healthier and better for the environment than palm shortening and other current available alternatives."

What's next for the PALM-ALT research project?

The research team has patented the product and secured funds from Scottish Enterprise High Growth Spin Out Programme - Opportunity Qualification to assess whether company creation will be a viable next step in this project journey. The team is currently seeking a partner to manufacture PALM-ALT.

Signing off

Catriona Liddle confirmed: "It is very satisfying to have developed a product which delivers on so many different levels for the food industry, satisfies the growing consumer market for tasty healthy foods, can support local economies, and is kinder to the environment with none of the deforestation issues currently associated with palm cultivation. □"



THE FACTS - PALM-ALT

- is healthier than palm oil – with 25% less fat and 88% less saturated fat;
- free from all 14 top food allergens;
- has no added sugar, sweeteners, flavourings or colourings;
- is 100% plant based, clean-label, and coconut free;
- all the materials in PALM-ALT can be sourced from within the EU and UK;
- includes a by-product from the linseed industry, fibre and rapeseed oil, which can be produced locally and has the potential to be produced at global scale;
- has the potential to significantly lower greenhouse gas emissions when compared with palm oil by reducing the impact of food miles; and
- can contribute to reducing deforestation of rainforests associated with palm cultivation.

Find out more about PALM-ALT by scanning the QR code or emailing PalmaAlt@qmu.ac.uk



Ultrasound innovation: Revolutionising swallowing care for neurological patients

Q MU'S PIONEERING ULTRASOUND technology could offer new hope for neurological patients, according to new research.

Swallowing is a vital bodily function we often take for granted. However, for people with neurological disorders stemming from stroke, Parkinson's disease, or motor neurone disease (MND), this seemingly simple act can become a real challenge. Dr Joan Ma, Speech and Language Therapist and Senior Lecturer at QMU, is at the forefront of groundbreaking research using ultrasound technology to assess swallowing function.

Over the past eight years, Dr Ma has dedicated her efforts to investigating the intricate mechanics of swallowing, building on QMU's pioneering work in ultrasound research and speech production. Explaining the genesis of her research, Dr Ma says, "We explored the application of ultrasound techniques developed at QMU for speech analysis to delve into the intricacies of swallowing function among stroke patients and people with progressive neurological diseases such as Parkinson's and MND."

While ultrasound itself is not a new technology, Dr Ma's innovative approach involves attaching ultrasound emitters under the patient's chin, where bone and muscle structures reflect light differently. This technique provides a detailed view of the tongue and bone movements within the vocal tract during swallowing, offering valuable insights into swallowing function. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) allows researchers to obtain the results of the analysis far quicker than is possible with traditional data analysis methods.

Dr Ma emphasises the importance of airway protection during swallowing to prevent choking and infections caused by food

inadvertently entering the lungs. By closely observing the movement of neck bone structures, her team can gauge how effectively the airway is safeguarded during the swallowing process. They also analyse tongue movement, timing, and coordination to evaluate overall swallowing function.

Currently, two conventional methods for swallowing assessment involve radiation-intensive swallow X-rays and invasive endoscopy procedures. Dr Ma's ultrasound technique complements rather than replaces these tools, offering a portable alternative that can be taken into the community or a patient's home, reducing the need for hospital visits and especially beneficial in remote areas.

The versatility of ultrasound extends beyond assessment to potential applications in screening, monitoring, and therapy. Dr Ma sees ultrasound assisting patients in re-learning how to swallow by providing a visual representation of muscle activity. This becomes particularly relevant for stroke patients who can employ different techniques, such as physically closing their voice box, visualised through ultrasound for improved therapy outcomes.

The potential impact of Dr Ma's research extends beyond diagnosis to early detection and effective treatment. Recognising the common occurrence of swallowing problems in progressive conditions, she notes: "If we can pick up changes earlier on, we can arrange for patients to see their speech and language therapist sooner and have conversations about what they can do about their swallowing." □



Donors make all the difference!

We are incredibly thankful to the Cunningham Trust, which is funding a PhD studentship to support the development of this innovative swallow research project.

Dr Joan Ma uses ultrasound technology to investigate the mechanics of swallowing

Transforming services to improve end-of- life care at home

THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORY, QMU has adapted its work to respond to the changing needs of society. Often that involves looking at how services can be reshaped to better serve people's needs, or extended to help a greater number of people.

That's exactly what the team at St Columba's Hospice Care is aiming to do through the St Columba's Hospice at Home project.

With increasing demand for good quality hospice services, St Columba's Hospice Care in Edinburgh has looked at ways it can extend its excellent hospice care provision into people's homes to provide responsive and relationship-based end-of-life care.

Having partnered with the Hospice for over a decade now, QMU has provided research support for this important service development. The research highlights an evidence-based model of care, and interventions at home, which improve the quality of patient care for more people as they near the end of their lives.

Professor Erna Haraldsdottir, Deputy Head, Division of Nursing and Paramedic Science at QMU, has played a leading research role in this Hospice at Home collaboration. She explained: "QMU's research highlighted how the traditional 'package of care', offered by the current social care system, is often disjointed and unable to provide the full person-centred care that enables the emotional safety that at-home patients require."

She continued: "We now have evidence that highlights the need for reorienting how services for end-of-life care are being organised and offered within the community, and we would like to see this inform policy and practice."

The partners are currently in talks with health boards, as well as key policy makers in palliative care within the Scottish Government, about the development of this important service provision.

Building on the research findings, QMU is now keen to design and deliver a pilot project within one health board to further evidence this new model, and support the reorientation of care for people who wish to be looked after or who wish to die at home.

Jackie Stone, CEO of St Columba's Hospice Care said: "As our local population gets older, and the Hospice extends its reach, our Hospice at Home service will be a crucial part of the care and support we provide our communities across Edinburgh and East Lothian.

"The research support we have received from QMU has been invaluable in demonstrating the immediate benefits of the service to our patients, and the long-term potential for other health boards considering adopting this care model."

QMU Principal, Sir Paul Grice, said: "This is a great example of the strength of partnership working, as well as the importance of research in shaping future care provision and influencing policy development.

"Together, both institutions are using their combined skills and knowledge to provide compassion, emotional support and appropriate care to people who wish to die in the familiar surroundings of their own home. This important work will help ensure that more people are able to benefit from the specialist care that is synonymous with St Columba's at such an important time in the life cycle." □

Fascinating fact

St Columba's Hospice Care is the first University Hospice in the East of Scotland. The status as University Hospice formally acknowledges the quality of research and teaching carried out at the Hospice and reinforces St Columba's position at the forefront of palliative care.

Student research helps create more inclusive learning

We love hearing about students who use their research skills to make a difference to the lives of others, and it's very gratifying when their efforts are recognised. Here's two stories about our award-winning initial teacher education students who used their QMU dissertations to improve learning experiences for young people.

Challenging homophobic attitudes in the classroom

LAUREN THOMSON, WHO was one of the first students to graduate with BA (Hons) Education Studies (Primary), won a bursary from the General Teaching Council for Scotland for her dissertation which looked at how teachers can challenge homophobic attitudes in the classroom. The awards team described her dissertation as a 'powerful contribution to what it means to become a teacher in Scotland'.

As someone who identifies as part of the LGBTQ+ community, Lauren's motivation for her research was a mix of professional and personal interest. She said: "QMU's Initial Teacher Education degree has great inclusion and social justice links, so I was encouraged to pick something I could have a relationship with, and that I cared about."

Lauren was thrilled to win the George D Gray CBE MA Award and is passionate about helping primary schools do more to discuss and represent diversity.

Lauren, who is carrying out her probationary teaching year at a primary school in Haddington, won high praise from the General Teaching Council, her local council and her school. East Lothian Council's Head of Education, Nicola McDowell, said: "Lauren's work will help to influence and shape professional understanding around how we can challenge homophobia and create inclusive and supportive environments for our children and young people." □



Lauren Thomson
(Graduation 2023)

Joseph shines a light on learning challenges for people with autism

JOSEPH MCPHERSON, ONE of the first students to graduate from QMU with a BA (Hons) Education Studies, had a unique education journey. During his second year at QMU, he discovered he had autism, which helped him understand some of the challenges he experienced at school, college and university.

But with a strong drive to succeed and to help others with similar learning challenges, twenty-six-year-old Joseph threw himself into his university work. During his final year, Joseph focused his dissertation on his experience of navigating higher education as someone on the autistic spectrum. He said: "I felt strongly about doing a piece of work which looked at how learning environments can be inherently disabling for people with diverse sensory needs. I wanted to illuminate the impact that local and broader higher education policy has on people's educational experiences and outcomes, particularly those with additional support needs."

As someone with lived experience of autism, who has navigated further and higher education, Joseph hopes that his experience – encapsulated within his dissertation – will serve as a learning opportunity for QMU and practitioners to make changes to both practice and space to ensure they are inclusive.

With one of the highest dissertation marks awarded at QMU, Joseph was subsequently presented with the Atholl Crescent Award from the QMU Association. Since graduating with a first-class honour's degree, he has worked in various support services roles with Edinburgh College and looks forward to further developing his career in student support and education policy development. □



Joseph McPherson
(Graduation 2023)



Queen Margaret
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SPOTLIGHT ON SPORT



Changing lives through sport

When you think of universities which are synonymous with sport, you probably wouldn't conjure up an image of QMU. However, you may be surprised to learn that many of our researchers, students and graduates are making a big impact on the world of sport through their careers, research and teaching projects, community engagement initiatives, as well as through QMU's student clubs and societies.

QMU is carrying out research into **Frame Running** so it can be classified as an Olympic sport which will allow more athletes with mobility issues to compete in Frame Running in the Paralympics in Paris in 2024 – Find out more on page 18 and 19.



Frame Running race in progress

Did you know?

QMU offers the only accredited **Sports Rehabilitation degree in Scotland**. The new BSc (Hons) Sports Rehabilitation is delivered in partnership with Edinburgh College or City of Glasgow College and provides the training needed to become a graduate sports rehabilitator.

A QMU physiotherapy lecturer has been running a **walking football club** which encourages older men from the local community to stay active by playing a gentle sport with younger male students from QMU.

Fifteen sports clubs are currently running at QMU, ranging from cheerleading to volleyball, and from badminton to hockey. Clubs are entirely student-led, and if a club doesn't exist, the Students' Union will support students to set up a new club of their choice.

Eight-hundred and sixty-eight students are members of a sports club or society at QMU (sports has 539 members).

Last year, our **women's basketball team** made history for its QMU team by making it into the finals of the Scottish Conference Cup.

QMU students compete at a national level in a variety of sporting events, from **sailing competitions, and climbing nationals to powerlifting championships**. Students who wish to compete in individual sporting events can apply to the Students' Union's Individual Athletes and Representative Sport Fund for funding.

Both our men's and women's **Gaelic football teams** have gone undefeated over the last season.

Many of our sports teams compete in **British University and College Sport (BUCS)**. They travel the length and breadth of the country representing QMU and competing against other university teams in a league.

Our **Lydia Osteoporosis Project** aims to radically improve knowledge and understanding of osteoporosis amongst healthcare professionals and the general public. The main message that came out of the project's recent osteoporosis awareness conference at QMU was 'keep moving'. Find out about our osteoporosis research, and activity which supports good bone health, on pages 24 and 25.



The **QMU Sapphires Cheerleading team** will host its 10th annual showcase on campus this year. Teams from all over the country will go head-to-head in front of a panel of professional judges. Last year, the Sapphires took second place in their division.

SPOTLIGHT ON SPORT

The inside track on Dame Louise Martin



Dame Louise Martin carries the torch in the Queen's Baton Relay, 2014

“I've dedicated my career to people, and many have dedicated their careers to me”

From budding young athlete to the first female President of the Commonwealth Games Federation, QM alumna Dame Louise Martin, has been a trailblazer for women in sports administration. She gives us a fascinating insight into her leadership role, sharing some of her memories of working with sports representatives across the Commonwealth.

Role

Put simply, as President of the Commonwealth Games Federation until 2023, my role was to lead the organisation with a key focus of bringing the Commonwealth family together. Yes, sport may be the driver behind this, but bringing the Commonwealth countries together is our main aim.

How I got here

I've always loved sport. I was fortunate enough to represent Scotland in swimming, reaching the finals in what was then the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Perth, Australia.

Combining my love of sport and food nutrition, I decided to focus on my studies for a while and applied to the Edinburgh College of Domestic Science (now QMU). From there, I went on to lecture at the college, and taught home economics in various schools across Edinburgh.

After having a family, I devoted most of my career to sports administration. I was the first woman to chair Scotland's Commonwealth Games Council, taking up post in 1999. I was then the first woman to join the Executive Board of the Commonwealth Games Federation, serving as Secretary from 1999 to 2015, and the first female to be elected President of the Federation in 2015. I was in the role for two four-year terms

(the maximum time a President can serve for), with November 2023 marking the official end of my role.

A typical day

No such thing! I often say that no two days are the same, but there are plenty similarities! Most of my days would be spent speaking with my colleagues across the Commonwealth. I would be working across so many different time zones which could make things interesting to say the least, but advancing technology has made things much easier in recent years.

I always say that we need to work with people, not have them work with us. It's a subtle difference but getting up at 4am to meet with colleagues in New Zealand makes a massive difference than having them get up at 4am to meet with us.

Day-to-day, I could wake up in London, be on an early morning call to India, followed by a meeting with the Commonwealth Games Vice Patron, Prince Edward, while ending the day on an overnight flight to Singapore – it's such a wonderful and varied job!

To do this role, you've got to like people - it's all about them. I've dedicated my career to people, and people have dedicated their careers to me.

My last few months as President

The 2023 General Assembly in Singapore was one of my final contributions as President before stepping down. The General Assembly is when all nations come together to sign off all reports, vote for representatives, and work together to ensure all nations have a voice.

This includes key committees such as the Executive Board and the Sports Committee. In my role as President, I had to sign off every report from every Commonwealth nation. As you can imagine, this involves a lot of reading – but it's all worth it.

During this five-day long event, there are plenty of opportunities for delegates to ask questions and it is my job to try and manage this, ensuring I stay as fair as possible. One thing I've



Dame Louise Martin with Prince Edward, now Duke of Edinburgh, and Queen Elizabeth II.

focused on throughout my time in the role is to know each delegate's name. This makes an enormous difference to how you build relationships with individuals and, of course, each Commonwealth nation.

On top of this, each evening there is always an event or activity related to the host nation. During my time as President, I have had so many opportunities to take part in cultural activities for almost all Commonwealth nations – how lucky am I?!

The moment I'll always remember

I had the opportunity to take part in the Queen's Baton Relay in advance of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games. As part of this, there was a ceremonial passing of the baton

outside the House of Dlamini, the royal house in Eswatini, South Africa. This ceremony had always taken place outside of the palace due to restrictions on men entering the building. However, this time, as the ceremony was taking place, the royal family noticed that I was a female. Suddenly, we were welcomed into the palace! This was a groundbreaking moment for Commonwealth Games, but more importantly, a groundbreaking moment for the Commonwealth family.

What advice would I give to QMU students today?

Stay true to yourself, believe in where you want to go, and most importantly, never say “If only I...” or “I wish I had...” □

“I was the first woman to chair Scotland's Commonwealth Games Council, taking up post in 1999. I was then the first woman to join the Executive Board of the Commonwealth Games Federation, serving as Secretary from 1999 to 2015, and the first female to be elected President of the Federation in 2015”

Dame Louise Martin was awarded an honorary degree from QMU in 2023



This feature is part of a series of articles about QMU Alumni making an impact on sports administration. Read more by scanning the QR code:



SPOTLIGHT
ON SPORT

Double world Frame Running champion Gavin Drysdale (2nd from R) and frame runner Elaine Boyd (3rd from L) are joined by Glasgow Warriors Managing Director, Al Kellock (3rd from R) and several members of the Glasgow Warriors squad.



“Frame Running has completely changed my life and now many more children with limited mobility will be given the chance to participate in sport and discover the joy of Frame Running like I did.”

Scotland's first Frame Running hub changing lives one stride at a time

“Frame Running is not just a sport; it's a game changer for people with mobility challenges.”

Scotland's first-ever Frame Running hub is now officially open for action at Scotstoun Stadium. More children and adults with limited mobility are now tearing up the track with specially designed running frames – all thanks to this groundbreaking facility funded by Wooden Spoon, the children's charity of rugby.

THE GRAND OPENING was a star-studded affair, with double world champion frame runner Gavin Drysdale, just 22 years old, leading the charge. He was joined by Glasgow Warriors players and the rugby club's boss, Al Kellock – a former Scotland player and all-around legend.

Frame Running is not just a sport; it's a game changer for people with mobility challenges. Formerly known as RaceRunning, it lets athletes experience the joy of free movement using purpose-built 'trikes' that support their bodies. No pedals, just pure foot power, with athletes steering with their hands or arms.

Teamwork makes the dream work

The hub is a result of a remarkable collaboration between QMU, Neil's Wheel Charity, Frame Running Scotland, ACE Frame Running, Scottish Athletics, and Scottish Disability Sport. It provides running frames and all the gear available for start-up clubs to hire for free, for up to two years. That's enough time to build a squad, raise funds, and maybe even collect some trophies. Plus, it's like a 'swap shop' for frame sizes – a win-win for everyone involved.

Research at QMU is providing the scientific evidence needed for Frame Running to be a part of future Paralympics. When the hub opened, there were ten active clubs across Scotland, and since then a new athletics club for Frame Running has opened in Annan, and another in Corstorphine. It's great to know the University is still having a positive impact on the part of Edinburgh we used to call home. Two more new clubs are due to follow soon.

Gavin Drysdale is a bit of a hero in athletics and his journey has come full circle. At just five years old, he got a leg up from Wooden Spoon's support of Bobath Scotland (now Cerebral Palsy Scotland) and became the first person in Scotland to

rock a running frame at six years old. Now, he's a gold-winning sensation, defending his title at the Para Athletics World Championships.

Gavin's excited about the hub, saying, "Frame Running has completely changed my life and now many more children with limited mobility will be given the chance to participate in sport and discover the joy of Frame Running like I did."

Professor Marietta van der Linden is behind the research at QMU. She's exploring how Frame Running impacts individuals with conditions like cerebral palsy and multiple sclerosis. According to her, it goes beyond being just a sport; it's a transformative force for individuals with limited mobility.

Al Kellock, the Wooden Spoon hero and Managing Director of Glasgow Warriors, summed it up best: "The launch of Scotland's first Frame Running hub is a testament to the unifying power of sports." □

SPOTLIGHT ON SPORT



Cricket Team 1962



Lacrosse 1st XII 1933/34



Volleyball Team 2023



Men's Gaelic Football Team 2023



Netball Team 1962/63



Table Tennis Team 1964/65



Netball Team 2022



Dance Team 2023

A jog down memory lane – QMU sports teams through the years



My sporting life – 60 second catch up with Megan Richardson



Success as an athlete, a degree in podiatry and a two-year stint as QMU's Student Vice President led Megan Richardson to a dream career in sport. She used her health degree and the transferable skills developed at QMU to direct her career into sports management. After five wonderful years with Scottish Student Sport, she feels she's exactly where she should be – in a role helping people achieve happy, healthy lifestyles through sport.

Megan talks to us about her memories of QMU, job satisfaction and goals for 2024.

What brought you to QMU?

As a successful Scottish badminton champion, I was regularly treated by a podiatrist, and I found the profession fascinating. I always wanted to work in sport and health, so choosing the BSc (Hons) Podiatry allowed me to combine my interests in both. I loved QMU the minute I set foot on campus - I was meant to study there!

Best memory of your time as Students' Union Vice President

Hosting the Sports & Societies Grand Ball two years in a row to celebrate the amazing achievements of students who make up the teams and societies. I also made friends for life!

Did your role as Vice President of QMUSU help your career?

Yes, I had loads of incredible opportunities! Working in a fast-paced office environment, managing budgets, chairing committees, sitting on University Court & Senate, liaising with partners and sponsors - not to mention the wide range of students, staff and volunteers I worked with on a day-to-day basis. The list was endless, and I gained so much confidence!

Most rewarding sporting achievement since leaving QMU?

Mentoring a group of athletes and coaches as part of the Team Scotland Achieve Programme at Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022 - what an incredible experience!

Best part of being Sport & Physical Activity Skills Hub Manager with CIMSPA?

My current role with the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) combines my passion for group exercise/ personal training, performance sport and my previous experience in student sport. I'm the first to do this role in Scotland and I get to work with the most amazing staff team. I've enjoyed every day with CIMSPA and am delighted to make a positive contribution to Scotland's sporting sector.

What motivates you?

Supporting people - through my main job as Hub Manager and my part-time role as a personal trainer - to become the happiest and healthiest version of themselves. This energises me to be the best version of myself.

What's next?

Right now, I'm exactly where I'm meant to be, and I'm excited to keep progressing on this journey. This year, my personal goal is to climb 30 Munros to align with the year I celebrate my 30th birthday. I'll also complete my first half marathon. I used to hate running, but now I love it! ☐

Cheers to our donors!

THANKS TO GENEROUS donations from alumni, friends and staff, our students have the opportunity to make the most of their time at QMU and develop their potential in a much wider sense.

Sport enriches our students' lives. Aside from the physical health benefits, it allows our students to make new friendships and build vital skills to help them on their career journeys.

This is one reason why we are grateful to everyone who supports the Vice-Chancellor's & Student Development Fund. In recent years, the Fund has helped students involved in basketball, dance, football, Gaelic football, netball and sailing.

Another club that has benefitted from the Vice-Chancellor's & Student Development Fund over the years is the Sapphires, QMU's official cheerleading team. Sapphires President and Occupational Therapy student, Charné Thorp, tells us more about the squad.

"Our 39 member squad is open to all skill levels. We have a competition team and Level 1, 2 and 3 stunt teams. The teams take part in many competitions including Legacy Cheer and Dance, Scot Cheer and Future Cheer.

"The competition team is different from the stunt teams, as their routines are longer and feature dance, jumps, tumblers, as well as stunts.

"Our recreational team allows members to learn and develop cheerleading skills in a fun, relaxed environment. It's great for those trying cheerleading for the first time or building skills. Some members will try out for the competition and stunt teams after training with the recreational team. It's lovely to see that progression.

"An exciting new edition to the squad is our pom duo."

Cheerleading is an enjoyable way to stay fit and healthy but the sport helps students in a much broader sense. It builds life skills such as communication, perseverance and teamwork. Committee members also get the chance to develop their budgeting, leadership, planning and organisational skills - important skills they need for their future careers.

With kit, training costs, competition fees, and then travelling to and from competitions, cheerleading is expensive.

Charné explained. "Our uniform alone costs £125, and then there are shoes, bows, and other expenses to ensure we look our best on competition day.

"We're competing all over the country too, so travel and accommodation costs are high.

"We're very grateful to everyone who supports the Vice-Chancellor's & Student Development Fund. Without it, some of us wouldn't be able to do a sport we love."

With the end of the competition year nearing, the squad is now turning its attention to its annual showcase in April, which is in its tenth year.

Charné concluded: "The competition is our largest fundraiser with the funds raised supporting next year's squad.

"It's a great way to celebrate the end of the year. It helps our squad grow its friendships with cheerleading squads from other universities, as well as raising the profile of cheerleading to the wider QMU community." ☐



Charné Thorp (2nd from the left)

SPOTLIGHT ON SPORT

Keep moving for good bone health

Bone fractures during pregnancy, weightlifting, healthy eating and demonstrations of Scottish step dancing, were just some of the topics presented at QMU's recent conference on osteoporosis.

LEADING HEALTH SPECIALISTS joined community members and people living with the condition to share research and experiences of osteoporosis. The event, not only focused on bone health and prevention of falls, it was a call for osteoporosis to be viewed as a public health priority.

Osteoporosis is a common bone disease that weakens bones, making them fragile and more likely to break. Developing slowly over several years, it's often only diagnosed when a fall or sudden impact causes a bone to fracture. Affecting over 3 million people in the UK (250,000 in Scotland) and accounting for around 527,000 fractures per year in the UK, QMU's Lydia Osteoporosis Project is passionate about raising awareness to help halt the rising numbers of people affected by the condition.

Following discussions with conference delegates, it was clear how poorly recognised osteoporosis is. For many people living with the condition, it is a hidden disease with many people's lives adversely affected through pain, and the length of time it often takes for the condition to be diagnosed. This is driving the Lydia Osteoporosis team to continue its work raising awareness of the condition amongst health professionals and the general public. The Lydia Project team is also keen to highlight that it's possible to live well with the condition.

'Keep moving!' was the main message of the conference. With this being Dawn Skelton, Professor of Aging and Health and Glasgow Caledonian University's mantra - as well as the need for an active, healthy lifestyle - delegates were invited to try a range of fun activities.

Dr Karen Matthews, who leads the Lydia Osteoporosis Project at QMU, explained: "This is a preventable condition and, for those living with osteoporosis, it could be managed better with improved awareness and simple lifestyle changes. We provided a range of interactive sessions for people to try, such as Scottish step dancing supported by fabulous Scottish fiddle music; weightlifting; balance classes; and nutritious cooking workshops.

"So, aside from the serious topics such as pregnancy associated osteoporosis, hip fractures and falls, provided by our highly respected professional speakers, there was a fun side to the event that helped educate delegates about easy ways to achieve good bone health."

Dr Matthews concluded: "Our conference, held on World Osteoporosis Day, was a great way to strengthen our public health response to the prevention of osteoporosis across population groups in Scotland and beyond.

"We will continue building networks across academia, health, and the community in the year ahead, whilst also continuing our research in the area. Currently, we are looking at incontinence as a potential barrier to bone healthy exercise. We hope to release findings on this research during 2024." □

QMU is grateful to our anonymous donor who fully funds the work of the Lydia Osteoporosis Project.



Conference participants enjoy weight bearing exercise in the form of a Scottish step dancing class



Student nurse experiences the restrictive harness which simulates the impact of osteoporosis

SHOCKING FACTS

Pregnancy associated osteoporosis

At the age of 28, Karen Whitehead's spine collapsed during labour. She had no idea she had osteoporosis until she was in childbirth. Karen, who is now a patient advocate, attended the conference at QMU to raise awareness of pregnancy associated osteoporosis and its impact on her earlier and later life. She and Kathryn Berg shared some statistics about recent research into osteoporosis in pregnancy. Based on women living with the condition, the research found that:

- 73% women had a fracture during pregnancy;**
- 90% fractured their spine;**
- 51% women suffered height loss; and**
- 27% women suffered hip pain.**

EAT NUTRITIOUS FOOD

Having a healthy, nutritious diet is important to help build strong bones and reduce risk of fractures. Sue O'Neill Berest, from the Cyrenians, made some tasty dishes for our conference delegates in well attended cook-off sessions.



TOP FIVE TIPS

Conference contributors stated the best way to support good bone health is:

- Exercise** – keep moving!
- Focus on nutrition** – eat a balanced diet
- Get your daily dose of Vitamin D**
- Drink responsibly** – keeping alcohol to a minimum
- Avoid smoking**

Lydia Osteoporosis team at QMU (L-R): Becca Freeden, Dr Karen Matthews, and Laura Fregonese.



Scan the QR code to get some of our favourite bone healthy recipes



Marking 30 years of **global health leadership**

As conflict and environmental catastrophes escalate in different parts of the globe, there has never been a more important time for global health specialists to work together to share their expertise, create solutions, identify ways to support and unite communities, and build resilience.

RECENTLY, QUEEN MARGARET University marked the 30th anniversary of its Institute for Global Health and Development (IGHD) – a multidisciplinary centre celebrated for its postgraduate education and world-leading research on global health and development.

Over the last three decades, QMU's global health experts have borne witness to numerous crises, conflicts and exceptional events in low- and middle-income countries. Their expertise has supported governments; international aid agencies; NGOs; and global institutions, such as the World Health Organisation (WHO), to create solutions to tackle some of the world's most pressing problems. Their work has ranged from improving women's sexual and reproductive health in sub-Saharan Africa; building resilience in health systems in low and fragile settings such as Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Cambodia; assessing the impact of conflict on young Syrian refugees; creating safe spaces for children in areas of conflict; and the psychosocial wellbeing, protection and integration of migrant, refugee and other vulnerable populations here in Scotland.

Marking this important moment in QMU's history with several anniversary events allowed the institution to celebrate the global impact of IGHD, whilst also showcasing its impressive capabilities so it can continue growing its sphere of influence and working collaboratively in its pursuit of a better and fairer world for all.

Professor Daniel Reidpath, Director of QMU's Institute for Global Health and Development, explained: "The Institute for Global Health and Development has been unwavering in its commitment to develop and share knowledge that provides support and value to those working to improve health and wellbeing for all, particularly for those enduring war, natural disaster, disease and environmental catastrophe."

"By marking this important milestone, we recognised our growth and achievements over the last thirty years. The platform of our anniversary events also provided a timely opportunity to strengthen and extend our collaboration with governments and international agencies so our knowledge and capabilities can support global health and development for those being left or pushed further behind."

Sir Paul Grice, QMU's Principal, said: "War in Ukraine and the escalation of events in the Middle East shine a light on the relevance of the expertise that has developed over the 30 years since the Institute for Global Health and Development was established at QMU. Now, more than ever, international leaders need to draw on our knowledge to help ease suffering and build capacity to deal with conflict and tragedy linked to world events."

“The Institute for Global Health and Development has been unwavering in its commitment to develop and share knowledge that provides support and value to those working to improve health and wellbeing for all, particularly for those enduring war, natural disaster, disease and environmental catastrophe.”



How do we fairly distribute the harms that humanity faces from global heating?

In a commentary published in The Lancet, QMU's researchers discuss one of the great dilemmas facing our world – how can we fairly share the inevitable harms from global heating across the world, and what capacity do we have across our global systems to protect the most vulnerable? How will we ensure that those who have been left behind are not pushed further behind, whereby creating further division between population groups and countries?

The paper comes directly out of QMU's research with refugees and into health systems in fragile settings. Read the full article 'Equity in decline: illustrating fairness in a worse-off world' in The Lancet.



Fascinating fact – The Lancet is one of the world's highest-impact academic journals.

Find out more about IGHD's research and postgraduate courses by scanning the QR code.



A new route to board membership for **QMU alumni**

GIVE

Pamela Woodburn, Chair of QMU's University Court



IF YOU ARE a graduate of QMU, think you might have something to offer the University's governing body, but currently lack the board experience and confidence you need to join it, look out for the launch of our new GIVE programme.

Launching soon, GIVE will offer alumni without board experience formal training and mentoring, along with the opportunity to witness the work of our governing body (the University Court) in action. It is designed to provide a pathway into full membership of the Court.

Pamela Woodburn, the Chair of our Court explains: "As a University committed to inclusiveness, we want our governing body to reflect the rich diversity of the groups we serve, and to hear the voices of people of all ages, backgrounds and circumstances. The GIVE programme will strengthen our ability to do that, along with providing a meaningful way for alumni to help shape QMU."

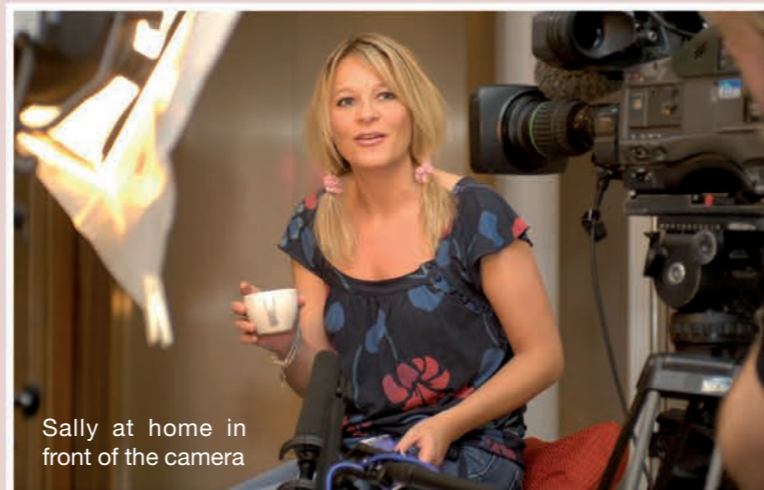
Membership of any board can provide you with a powerful route to having your voice heard, and to giving back to society. And GIVE will not only provide a pathway to membership of QMU's Court, it will also help participants prepare for board membership more generally, enabling our diverse alumni community to contribute across civic society. If you are interested of learning more when our GIVE scheme opens, email alumni@qmu.ac.uk. □

“We want our governing body to reflect the rich diversity of the groups we serve, and to hear the voices of people of all ages, backgrounds and circumstances.”



From BBC to MBE: Sally Gray shares her journey from QMU student to prime time TV presenter

Communication and Media Studies, Class of 1989



Sally at home in front of the camera

What is your dream job? It's the age-old question that can stump many grown adults, yet one that sparks big dreams for many young people. When 16-year-old Sally was asked this exact question in the 1980's during a careers' meeting at her school, her eyes lit up!

"I want to be a Hollywood film star," Sally fired back without hesitation. She smiles as she recounts the moment she realised being in front of the camera, with a microphone in hand, was the career for her.

When offered a place in one of Queen Margaret's new Communication and Media Studies courses, Sally was delighted. "I just loved my time at QMU - I got to study what I loved!" Sally recalled.

"I've so many amazing memories of sitting in one of the screening rooms on campus, watching montage sequences. I quickly realised just how important this experience would be."

Discussing her final year at QMU, Sally explained: "I was writing my dissertation on children's television and how discerning the young viewer is. My case study was focused on Blue Peter. As part of my research, I called the BBC, asked to speak to the Blue Peter team, and a week or so later, I was in their offices!

"This lit the fire in me even more to work in TV and helped me focus my efforts and land my first proper job as a BBC secretary. It was so exciting! I was able to work with some of the biggest hitters in the world at that time. TV broadcaster, David Dimbleby, was on the first programme I worked on. I even played a part in bringing the TV politics programme 'Question Time' to Scotland for the first time."

Sally had been a secretary for about 18 months before finding out about a new BBC Scotland children's education programme 'Go45', which was in need of a presenter. Sally was delighted when she landed the role.

"Go45 was a real rule breaking fresh take on old school style education programmes," said Sally. "I was able to co-host alongside radio broadcaster, Grant Stott, and the show attracted an average audience of 4.5-5 million per episode. Little did I know that this was just the beginning."

Sally went on to have an impressive television career, with presenting jobs on GMTV, BBC's 'Real Rooms', Channel 4's 'Movie Watch', CBBC's 'Record Breakers', '50/50', 'The Really Useful Show', 'The World's Strongest Man' and lots more. "One week I was interviewing Take That in London, and the next, it was Arnold Schwarzenegger and Danny DeVito in Los Angeles," said Sally.

In more recent years, she founded her own dynamic media training business, which has seen her support some of the world's biggest stars and leading brands.

"I get to work with amazing people, such as Olympic champion, Denise Lewis, and Strictly Come Dancing stars such as Katya Jones and Luba Mushtuk," she said. "I've also had the pleasure to train some incredible academics and captains of industry from organisations like Citi Bank, Coca-Cola and Pfizer. My job is to help those who have an important message to tell."

Sally is also a strong advocate of charity work and dedicates much of her time to volunteering. Her efforts to improve the lives of others was recognised in 2003 when she was awarded an MBE for Services to Young People. During her visit to the Palace, The King - Prince Charles, as he was at the time - remarked: "Might I say, you do an excellent curtsy."

After such an illustrious career, what advice would Sally give to current students who want to create a name for themselves in the media industry? "Make yourself indestructible...and make good cups of tea!" ☐



Sally proudly sporting her MBE award

"One week I was interviewing Take That in London, and the next, it was Arnold Schwarzenegger and Danny DeVito in Los Angeles"



ALUMNI EVENTS

OVER THE PAST year, the Development & Alumni Team, and colleagues from our International Office, have enjoyed meeting many QMU graduates at events, reunions and small catch-ups.

It was lovely to see alumni come together, and support the Class of 2023, at last year's creative showcases held at the Traverse Theatre and Cameo Picture House in Edinburgh.

After a four-year hiatus, we were pleased to be back in London, and look forward to seeing everyone again this May.

We are very excited to have held our first ever alumni meet-up in Dublin, and are looking forward to visiting again soon.

UPCOMING ALUMNI EVENTS

Acting and Performance Showcase: Edinburgh, Tuesday 23 April (7.30pm-9.30pm)

Come along and watch our third and final-year BA (Hons) Acting and Performance students in their showcase at the Traverse Theatre.

A small number of complimentary tickets are available, so we encourage you to reserve your ticket early.
E: alumni@qmu.ac.uk

Edinburgh Alumni meet-up: Thursday 6 June (6.30pm-8.30pm)

Meet up with other alumni at our city centre event.
E: alumni@qmu.ac.uk for more details.

London Alumni catch-up: Thursday 23 May (6.30pm-8.30pm)

Join us for a catch-up over drinks in Daly's Wine Bar on The Strand, London.

E: alumni@qmu.ac.uk to book your space.



CLASS REUNIONS

OUR ALUMNI OFTEN say that the friendships they made during their studies were the best part of their time at QMU. This is why we love to hear when graduates have met up, or our alumni team gets the opportunity to help organise a reunion.

Last September, we were delighted to host a special reunion on campus for former 'Atholl Crescent' students, marking 60 years of when they started their studies at the Edinburgh School of Domestic Science in 1963. The group of 16, who had travelled from across the UK, had great fun reconnecting with classmates and sharing memories.



They watched old film footage of Atholl Crescent premises, and explored other items from our archive collection, including their end-of year report cards!



Margaret Seabrook reunited with Jess Clarke

Another 'Atholl Crescent' lifelong friendship was celebrated when Margaret Seabrook (nee Long) and Jessie Clarke (nee Lockton) recently reunited. The former home economics students first met when they joined Edinburgh College of Domestic Science in 1943.

REUNIONS: Call for Classmates

Diploma in Dietetics (and Catering), student intake 1974

Fiona Bayne (nee Ramsay) is looking to contact graduates of the Diploma in Dietetics (and Catering), who started the course in 1974. Fiona would like to gather everyone together for a 50th reunion on Friday 4 October in Edinburgh.

E: fifibayne@aol.com for more details.

Professional Qualification of the Hotel, Catering and Institutional Management Association, Class of 1985

Carole Paterson, Lesley Williams (nee Stephen) and Liz MacIver (nee Logie) are organising a 40th reunion. They would love to hear from fellow students who joined the one-year course in 1984 and graduated with them in 1985.

To reconnect with the group, E: carole.paterson@icloud.com, lesleyjw9@gmail.com and lizlogiemaciver@hotmail.com

Diploma in Podiatric Medicine, Class of 1991

Emma Hendry (nee Mackenzie) is planning a reunion on Saturday 1 June to mark 33 years since graduating from the Podiatric Medicine course in 1991. If you are a graduate and would like to join the celebrations, E: elhendry70@live.co.uk

QMU Association update

by Lindesay Irvine, President

What a change! – do you know who we are?

Excitingly, we (the QMU Graduates' Association) have changed our name to the QMU Association. At our AGM in June last year, the change was approved by members, and now reflects the broader reach the Association now has – which includes current and previous members of staff, and those people who have previously gained an award from QMU.

We are a social and supportive association offering friendship and mentoring. Life membership costs £50. Find out more on our website www.qmugraduateassociation.com

One major benefit of being an Association member is the use of Madras Lodge, a property in the beautiful seaside village of Gullane, East Lothian, which is available to rent for short breaks or longer stays.

Madras Lodge, Gullane

Recently, upgrading work commenced at the Lodge with new heating installed and refreshed décor in some areas. This is an on-going project, and our plans for 2024 include a major roof overhaul and continuing with updating décor.

The House is more accessible than The Loft, with a small single bedroom downstairs and a wet room.

The Loft sleeps up to five people, if using the sofa bed. Take a look at the Madras Lodge webpages to see the changes. <https://sites.google.com/site/madraslodge/home>



Events

A delicious spring dinner was cooked and served by hospitality and tourism students at the Edinburgh New Town Cookery School (ENCTS). The evening's theme was Sherlock Holmes, and the students did a marvelous job with the theming with keyrings, bottle covers and clues to be solved.

A lovely Christmas lunch was held in December at the Royal Scots Club, Edinburgh. It was so popular, we had a waiting list for places!



We welcome new members. Our membership form can be found on our QMU Association website www.qmugraduateassociation.com

We are always pleased to have new volunteers to assist on the committee or in other roles. If you would like to get involved, contact us at: E: qmugradass@outlook.com

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SUPPORTING STUDENTS FACING FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

The cost-of-living crisis is having a crippling impact on an increasing number of QMU students.

The Student Financial Support Fund is a direct response to the financial pressures on students at QMU. The Fund provides a lifeline for those who need it most. It's a safety net that catches students as costs rise and budgets fail.

Think of what your gift could unlock:

- **£50** can help bridge the gap of the rising costs of monthly household bills (gas, electricity, broadband etc).
- **£75** provides a monthly train pass for travel to and from university or to essential practical placements.
- **£110** provides groceries for a month.

Every amount, big or small, will fund essential support.

We are asking you today if you will help QMU students with the continuing impacts of the cost-of-living crisis, by supporting our Student Financial Support Fund.

EASE **QMU** STUDENT WORRIES

To make a donation visit:
qmu.ac.uk/student-financial-support

