

# QMYOU

MAGAZINE

FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS OF  
QUEEN MARGARET UNIVERSITY  
Issue 86 | March 2019



**Educating the next generation of  
primary & home economics teachers**

**Meet the star of the  
new CBeebies drama**

**Entrepreneur develops convenience  
food solutions for IBS sufferers**



Queen Margaret University  
EDINBURGH





## Principal's Welcome

Welcome to the latest issue of **QMYou**. Firstly, I will take this opportunity to share with you the news of my plans to retire at the end of this academic year. By that time, I will have served as Principal of Queen Margaret University (QMU) for ten years. It has been my absolute pleasure to lead the development of QMU during that time, to have worked with such dedicated and passionate staff, and to have met so many talented and inspiring students and graduates, both at our campus in Scotland and overseas at our partner institutions in India, Singapore, Nepal, Egypt and Greece.

Since its first inception back in 1875, QMU has remained steadfast in its commitment to promoting social justice, improving quality of life and enhancing the student experience. It was QMU's values that attracted me to the Principal's post in the first instance, and our work in creating a university without borders, which provides outstanding learning and development opportunities for students to reach their potential, no matter their background, is something of which I am particularly proud.

The articles in this issue of the magazine provide an insight into the important work that QMU continues to do in responding to the changing needs of society. One of our most substantial areas of development over the last year is our move into the delivery of teacher education. From September 2019, QMU will educate the next generation of primary teachers in Scotland. In a return to its roots, the University will also be educating home economics teachers who will fill vital posts in Scottish secondary schools. You can read more about our fresh approach to primary and home economics teaching on pages 6 and 7.

In our strive to respond to student needs and ensure students get the most out of their university experience, QMU has prioritised the development of a programme to support students with their mental health and wellbeing. More than 25% of QMU staff are now trained in Scotland's Mental Health First Aid. You can read more about our work in this important area on page 8.

Recently, we were one of the first Scottish universities to launch a British Sign Language (BSL) Action Plan. Our plan not only aligns with our exciting developments in BSL teaching, but supports the Scottish Government in its ambition for Scotland to be the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit.

We always enjoy sharing news of our student and graduate successes. Over the last year, we have been particularly impressed with Lauren Leisk, founder of Fodilicious, who has had tremendous success on the entrepreneurial awards circuit across the UK. Read our feature on pages 20 and 21 to find out how Lauren is plugging a gap in the market for healthy convenience meals for people with digestive disorders.

As always, I encourage you to stay connected with QMU. Indeed, you might feel able to contribute to the University's work and its students, for example, through mentoring, offering internships, donating to the Student Development Fund, leaving a legacy in your will or just spreading the word about our work and our successes. I thank you for your support of QMU, and I hope that you will continue to engage with and promote the University in the years to come.

Professor Petra Wend, PhD, FRSA, FRSE  
Principal and Vice Chancellor  
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh

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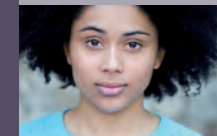
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# NEWS IN BRIEF

**97.1%** of our **undergraduate leavers** are in **employment** or go on to further training within **six months** after graduation

## In the top three in Scotland for graduate employment

**Q**MU'S EFFORTS IN developing graduates who are work ready and whose skills are highly sought after by employers have paid off yet again.

The latest statistics on graduate employment from the Higher Education Statistics Agency show that QMU is in the top three higher education institutions in Scotland for its employment of undergraduate leavers. A massive 97.1% of our undergraduate leavers are in employment or further study six months after graduation. (HESA). □

## QMU's mentoring initiative wins Education Project of the Year 2018

**A** MENTORING PROJECT, which matches students with professionals in their chosen field, has been selected as a winner at the Scottish Mentoring Awards. QMU's Employer Mentoring and Enterprise Programme, which has paired 350 students with mentors over the last five years, was co-winner of the Education Project of the Year 2018.

This is the second time that the University's initiative has been recognised at the awards, which are run by the Scottish Mentoring Network.

Launched in 2013, QMU's mentoring and enterprise project has gone from strength to strength. Each year, the employability team has broadened the range of professionals involved in the project. Students from various courses are now matched with experienced professionals from the hospitality and tourism, business, public relations, film and media, healthcare, as well as third sector organisations. The mentors help get students work ready, by strengthening their CVs, helping them find work placements and shadowing, and offering important industry insights and networking.

Juan Garcia, Employability & Development Adviser, said: "We are committed to providing outstanding career development opportunities for students, and ensuring their skills are suitable for industry. Guidance from an industry mentor can be a real game changer for a student – they can open doors, provide invaluable industry information and set people up on the right path.

"Importantly, we can see our students growing in confidence as they know they've got someone in their corner, providing direction during their final years at university. Combining the skills and knowledge from their degrees with the support from a

mentor means they can hit the ground running when they enter the workforce."

Juan concluded: "We look forward to continue building our partnerships with key industry partners, such as the NHS, the Scottish Government and local authorities, so we can equip students to reach their potential." □



## Like food? Join our consumer taste panels

**I**f you love food and enjoy talking about it, then why not join QMU's consumer taste panels?

Over the last few months, our Scottish Centre for Food Development and Innovation (SCFDI) has run hundreds of taste panel sessions for a range of national food companies. People from all over Edinburgh and the Lothians have taken part in the panel sessions which involve taste testing a wide variety of foods including bakery, meats, ready meals, cakes snacks and drinks.

Catriona Liddle, from the SCFDI, explained: "Some of the taste panels are very quick and simple and are completed in around 15 – 20 minutes, while some sessions are more involved and can last over an hour.

"Consumer panel members will have the chance to taste a wide range of products from basic food brands to premium products. People really enjoy attending the sessions and welcome the opportunity to share their opinions on the range of foods they taste."

No previous experience is necessary to take part in the sessions, but all participants should be over 18 and should not have any dietary restrictions.

Tasters can choose to apply for as many sessions as they wish, but there is no obligation to attend every session that is being promoted. Each week our list of consumer panelists will receive an email with notification of upcoming sessions to choose from. Most sessions are held in the morning or afternoon on weekdays, with some sessions taking place in the evening.

If you would like information, or to sign up as a consumer panel taster, please email E: [consumerpanels@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:consumerpanels@qmu.ac.uk). □

## Ministerial visit shines light on mental health and entrepreneurship support

**R**ICHARD LOCHHEAD MSP, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science, recently visited QMU to find out how staff are dealing with the significantly increased demand for student mental health support. Whilst touring the University and meeting staff, QMU Principal Professor Wend took the opportunity to showcase the University's impressive work in promoting British Sign Language (BSL) education and culture, and its success in supporting entrepreneurship amongst its students and graduates.

At QMU's Business Innovation Zone, which houses Scotland's first on-campus Business Gateway, the minister was introduced to students and graduates who had established their own businesses. The University is now supporting 36 student and graduate start-up companies and is fostering a culture of entrepreneurship. This development signals QMU's commitment to innovation-led, inclusive economic growth and alignment with the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy and Scotland CAN DO framework.

The minister talked with several of the young Business Innovation Zone tenants, including Ross Brydon who discussed his new business Echo Park Studios and his dynamic new drum tuition app. The minister was enthusiastic about the idea of the app, as he has had some experience of drumming in the past. As you can see from the picture below, both the minister and Ross enjoyed meeting each other and sharing their drumming and entrepreneurship stories.

You can read more about QMU's work in supporting student entrepreneurship, as well as our developing work in mental health support and BSL, further on in the magazine. □



## Children's health in the spotlight at national food conference

**C**HILDREN AND FAMILY health issues will be the main focus of a national food conference to be staged by QMU and Children in Scotland in March 2019.

The conference, which will take place at QMU's campus, will focus on the latest research, creative approaches and current projects aimed at improving food experiences, and the health and wellbeing of children and their families.

It is particularly timely that this event will take place in the same year QMU launches a brand new postgraduate course in Home Economics. The one-year PGDE Secondary (Home Economics) will equip teachers to tackle contemporary issues facing young people, including food poverty, obesity, and the impact of poor diet on health and wellbeing.

Professor Brigid Daniel, Dean of Arts, Social Sciences and Management at QMU, said: "We're delighted to be working in partnership with Children in Scotland to host 'Biting back: transforming food experiences for Scotland's children' in the spring of 2019.

"QMU has long been associated with food, nutrition and social equality dating back to 1875, and issues surrounding nourishment, health and social justice continue to be a key focus of our teaching and research today. This event will bring together experts from across the country to shed light on how we can tackle serious issues such as food inequality and the impact of poor health and nutrition on child development.

"We look forward to sharing knowledge and experiences with different professionals and agencies which aspire to help Scotland's young people develop as healthy global citizens."

The conference, which takes place on Wednesday 20 March, will hear from practitioners and policy-makers in health, education and community planning as well as from well-known food experts – including Chancellor of QMU and judge on 'The Great British Bake Off', Prue Leith, and Joe Fitzpatrick MSP, Minister for Public Health, Sport and Wellbeing. □



# Primary and Secondary Teacher Education courses to be offered by QMU

**IN AN EXCITING COLLABORATION with the Scottish Government, QMU announced in 2018 that it is to offer new teacher education courses in primary and secondary teaching. The move will help produce the next generation of teachers who will contribute significantly to the development of young people in Scotland's primary and secondary schools.**

The courses will be based within the University's Division of Psychology, Sociology and Education, and in keeping with the Division's approach, will benefit from a strong social sciences focus and embedded real-world application.

A total of 120 places are available for people who want to study the four-year undergraduate primary teaching degree which will start in September 2019. This course will qualify people to work as primary teachers in schools across Scotland. In line with the University's focus on social justice, the course will be well suited to students with a strong social conscience who are passionate about equality of opportunity and developing young people. It will also suit those who have aspirations to lead in the teaching profession.

QMU also has 20 places for people on the new BA (Hons) Education Studies which differs slightly from the primary education degree. Scotland's newest education studies degree is an innovative, broad-based social sciences programme with an emphasis on wider aspects of education. It will prepare people to work in educational settings such as community-based adult learning and humanitarian projects, but not to teach in primary schools. Students on this course will be able to carry out work placements, working in challenging and rewarding roles in, for example, refugee education, rehabilitation and older people's learning.

Dr Olivia Sagan, Head of Division of Psychology, Sociology and Education, is leading the development of QMU's new teacher education courses. She said: "We want to support a new generation of teachers who are socially aware. As

reflective, informed practitioners they will challenge their own thinking and that of others and help improve learning and teaching for Scotland's young people. With their social sciences focus, our new teacher education courses will suit candidates who want to engage with issues such as inequality, child welfare, lifespan psychology and wellbeing, and who aspire to make a difference to the world around them."

“Our new teacher education courses will suit candidates who want to engage with issues such as inequality, child welfare, lifespan psychology and wellbeing, and who aspire to make a difference to the world around them.”

In a return to its roots, the University will also offer a one-year postgraduate diploma in home economics. The PGDE (Secondary) Home Economics takes a fresh, new approach to home economics, and will develop teachers who can fill vital posts in secondary schools. Importantly, it aims to build resilience in young people by positively influencing their knowledge and skills relating to food, nutrition, health and wellbeing.

The University has a history of education dating back to its inception in 1875. It was established at a time characterised by social and economic divisions, inequalities and widespread poverty. The institution responded by creating new education and career opportunities for women, and improving the diets of the urban poor. Initially women were trained in domestic science and the University became synonymous with the study of home economics. However, QMU's portfolio

of courses widened over the years and demand for home economics declined, with the last intake to the BA Home Economics taking place in 1986. However, the institution continued to focus on food subjects with courses such as dietetics, nutrition and biological health sciences, and more recently when it launched its Scottish Centre for Food Development and Innovation (SCFDI). Today, it remains true to its roots with a commitment to social justice as one of its core values. These values are reflected in the curriculum of both new courses.

With its strong focus on food and its history of teacher education, QMU is well placed to respond to the renewed demand for home economics teachers in secondary schools. Sally Cameron, a home economics teacher at St Margaret's Academy in Livingston, is helping QMU shape the new home economics postgraduate course. She said: "The tide has changed and Scotland is now crying out for home economics teachers. The job prospects are fantastic!"

Sally continued: "In Scotland we are acutely aware of the issues surrounding diet, health, nutrition and food poverty, and teaching home economics offers us a real opportunity to make the connections between eating well and attainment. With the new Professional Graduate Diploma in Secondary Teaching (Home Economics) we want to attract people who are passionate about helping improve young people's knowledge of food, nutrition, conservation, consumerism and wellbeing technologies, and who can help them develop vital skills that will equip them well as they move into adulthood."

She added: "Being a home economics teacher is a really rewarding and diverse job. The new course, which is about far more than just food and cooking, sheds a whole new light on the profession and its importance to Scotland's young people." □



Number of student places on QMU's primary teaching and home economics courses in 2019.

**BA (Hons) Education Studies (Primary)** - 120 places [www.qmu.ac.uk/ITE](http://www.qmu.ac.uk/ITE)

**BA (Hons) Education Studies** - 20 places – [www.qmu.ac.uk/ITE](http://www.qmu.ac.uk/ITE)

**PGDE Secondary (Home Economics)** - 20 places [www.qmu.ac.uk/HE](http://www.qmu.ac.uk/HE)



# On a mission – QMU’s new approach to supporting mental wellbeing

**IN RECENT YEARS, there has been a marked increase in the number of students who are struggling with mental health issues during their student journey. For some people, poor mental health may even prevent individuals from progressing to university level education, with many therefore unable to fulfill their academic and career potential. Although advances have been made in developing more effective mental health support strategies, universities across the UK acknowledge that more needs to be done to tackle the problem of stigma, individually tailored support and student drop out.**

Competing priorities and budget constraints are very real issues for all universities, and it is evident that the increase in mental health issues far outstrips the growth in resources available to tackle the problem. The challenge, therefore, is to work smarter.

Over the past few years, QMU has advanced its work in this important area by developing a proactive approach, rather than a reactive one. In short, it has created efficiencies by working together across a whole range of departments. By working with HR, Accommodation, Security, Student Retention, Student Services and Students’ Union teams, QMU’s ambition is to aim higher in its support of individuals to allow them to progress successfully to graduation.

Dr Iliyan Stefanov, QMU’s Head of Student Services, is passionate about mental health support and has redesigned QMU’s existing resources to create a more effective support initiative. The University is already seeing the positive results of this change.

Dr Stefanov explained: “Our model is simple. We developed a mental health and wellbeing policy, refocused our services so they were mainly proactive, and created an enhanced safety network that invests in wellbeing.

“We worked in partnership with the Students’ Union on the development of the policy, and we focused on the key principles of promotion, prevention and support. However, we were mindful of the fact that students are responsible for their own mental wellbeing but that we all have a duty to help and support them to achieve good mental health.”

The University invested in additional resources to support this important work, introducing a new Wellbeing Service and expanding the existing Residence-Life team that supports students living in university accommodation. Dr Stefanov said: “Simply having more services is not enough. In addition, we increased cooperation between services and ensured the student was placed firmly at the centre of our support system.”

QMU’s new ‘Stay on Course’ system has transformed the way support services relate to one another. Dr Stefanov said: “Stay on Course allows us to identify students in need of support early by tracking their academic attendance and proactively offering support. So, for example, our system can flag if a student is skipping classes. We can follow up with the student, identify the problem and offer the right kind of support service to get the student back on track. Effectively, it allows early detection of problems and provides the right set of services to the individual. It makes students feel looked after and is far more effective than relying on students to self-refer and having people on a waiting list for appointments.”

Simplicity, access to support and response times are key to success. QMU therefore created a new drop-in system which allows students to be quickly assessed, irrespective of what the issue is and when it presents itself.

“Investment in training was crucial,” said Dr Stefanov. “Thanks to the importance that our Human Resources department has placed on mental wellbeing, more than 25% of all QMU staff have been trained in Scottish Mental Health First Aid.”

Heather Edie, QMU’s Development and Alumni Relations, said: “Thanks to generous support from the Big Lottery Fund’s Young Start programme, over 100 students have also received mental health training. The funds are helping us provide a programme of peer support, which is equipping students with the skills and the confidence to support each other. Ultimately, this will strengthen the emotional wellbeing of our whole student population.”

More training for students is planned throughout 2019, as well as a programme of activities focusing on topics such as mindfulness, eating disorders and healthy body, healthy mind. The project is being delivered by the Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Group, a collaboration between the University and QMU’s Students’ Union.

Ellen Pusey, a postgraduate student in Speech and Language Therapy, completed the training course. She said: “We often focus on physical health and not on our mental health – sometimes nothing is done until people are at crisis point. I wanted to have the skills to be able to help people and to recognise signs if I thought I saw them.”

Dr Stefanov concluded: “We accept that there is always more to be done but we are pleased that our proactive approach is already demonstrating that prevention is always better than cure.” □

“More than 25% of all QMU staff have been trained in Scottish Mental Health First Aid.”



## Launching QMU’s British Sign Language Action Plan

**Q MU’S BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE (BSL) Action Plan demonstrates the University’s commitment to creating a BSL-friendly culture that supports students and staff, and builds on the institution’s existing expertise. Frankie McLean, a BSL user, recently joined QMU as a lecturer to help develop new levels of awareness of BSL at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels across the University community.**

One exciting development of the plan is to embed BSL as an additional language in the new Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme commencing in September 2019. The aim is that graduates from the BA (Hons) Education Studies (Primary) will be able to use their BSL skills and the ability to share this language in their work as primary school teachers.

QMU has also responded to the growing demand for courses from BSL interpreters that will allow them to become more specialised in their professional areas such as healthcare, justice, education, and the arts. The University has developed the UK’s first fully online MSc programme to upskill registered BSL/English interpreters, allowing interpreters from all over the country to access specialist postgraduate education.

Ultimately, all these initiatives are designed to benefit BSL users and deaf people, through enhancing the awareness, skills and attitudes of the professionals who will work with them in the future.

Dr Iliyan Stefanov, Head of Student Services at QMU explained: “We have worked tirelessly across a broad section of staff and departments to develop a robust BSL action plan. We are delighted to launch our first action plan and to be amongst the first of the public bodies to take action to meet the goals set out by the Scottish Government’s BSL National Plan, published last year.

“With world renowned research in speech and hearing sciences and an international reputation across the health sciences professions, QMU is well placed to embed awareness of BSL into a broad range of professional training. This is supplemented by our focus on interpreters through the MSc BSL/English Interpreting (post registration). Having strengthened our draft plan following our consultation phase, we will now embed the plan into our inclusive learning and teaching strategies. We look forward to seeing the impact of our plan on the students and staff and to contributing to Scotland’s aspirations to support BSL users.” □

You can read more about QMU’s BSL Action Plan and watch our Welcome to QMU video in BSL on the QMU website at [www.qmu.ac.uk](http://www.qmu.ac.uk)

Find out about our new MSc/ PgDip BSL/ English Interpreting (Post-Registration) at [www.qmu.ac.uk/bsl](http://www.qmu.ac.uk/bsl)





# Interview with Danielle Jam – star of new CBeebies drama



Photo by Robert Pereira Hind

“I found out I had the part moments after handing in my last piece of coursework!”

QMU Acting for Stage and Screen student, Danielle Jam, had just handed in her final piece of course work last year when she received a phone call telling her she’d won a starring role in a brand new CBeebies drama.

Having graduated in the summer of 2018, this was Danielle’s first on-screen role out of university. She would be in excellent company, playing the character of Daisy on the show, Molly and Mack, with fellow QMU alumni actors James Mackenzie and Katrina Bryan also playing key roles.

We chatted with Danielle about being bitten by the acting bug as a child, her experience of working on a television series, and her hopes and dreams for future acting opportunities.

**Congratulations on your starring role in Molly and Mack on CBeebies! Can you tell me a little about how you came to hear about the role and what the audition process was like?**

I was sent an audition for the part through my agent, which includes a brief (description of the show, character and lines for an audition scene). Then I went in for the audition at the BBC in Glasgow in front of the director and casting director. We read the scene a few times in front of the camera and had a little chat.

Then I went away and heard I had got the part a week later, just moments after I had handed in my final piece of written work online for uni! It was a great surprise.

**Acting is something you’re obviously very passionate about. When did your interest in the performing arts begin?**

When I was about ten, my friend was playing one of the ugly sisters in our local drama group and I went to see him perform. Then I joined the group and never looked back. In secondary school I did all the school shows. We had a great drama department and wonderful teachers who really nurtured our passion. I also joined another am-dram group, Aberdeen Youth Music Theatre. So my experience has mostly been musical theatre. I didn’t do a straight play or any screen work until college.

**Why did you choose to study at QMU and what attracted you to the course?**

What stood out to me was the focus on making students industry-ready. I think it can be a daunting idea of stepping out into the world when you’ve been in education all your life so I wanted to be as prepared as possible.

**What did you learn, or which particular aspect of the course was the most interesting?**

The screen element of the course was brilliant, going from having no experience on-screen to learning all the ‘ins’ and ‘outs’ of filming to then create your own mini short film in fourth year was an exciting journey. I also loved the Interpreting Text module because we got really stuck into heightened text, which was all new for me.

**What was it like working on a television set?**

Very exciting! There are a million people all around you making things happen. There’s a great team mentality that everyone has their own piece to fit into the puzzle to make the show what it is. When the final product arrives and it’s just the actors that everyone sees, it’s very easy to forget how many people have been behind the camera working tirelessly, long after the actors have left the work room. There can be long hours, but just like any job the people you are with make all the difference.

**Where did production of Molly and Mack take place, and how long were you involved in the production?**

We filmed in various locations round Scotland, but the show is set under the Firth of Forth bridge in the fictitious ‘Bridgetown’. We filmed over seven weeks.

**Are there any special stories you can share with us from the set?**

The scenes with the animals were always eventful. For episode 4 – ‘No Pets Allowed’ - we had two puppies to play the part of ‘Little Mo’, in case one got restless during a take. Now and again they were allowed to roam around on the floor and everyone would just stop what they were doing to play with them. They were so cute and distracting. So those scenes took ages!

**You are starring alongside fellow QMU graduates, James Mackenzie and Katrina Bryan, both of whom have gone on to star in shows like ‘River City’, ‘Nina and the Neurons’, and even a rather infamous Irn Bru television advertisement (naming the baby, anyone?!). What’s it like appearing on-screen alongside fellow members of the QMU family?**

It’s lovely to look up to and learn from James and Katrina who have gone on to achieve great things. I grew up watching James in CBBC’s ‘Raven’ so I was really excited to be working with him. Katrina is such a warm, kind person and we just all got along well. It’s nice to see that even though years have passed since they were students together, they still remain good friends. It just shows how strong the bonds you make at uni are.

**What would be your dream role? Or where would you like to see your career take you?**

My dream role would be anything at the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC). I’d love to reprise Rosalind one day, professionally. Also musical theatre, since that’s what I started off doing growing up. I’d love to be in ‘Hamilton’ or ‘Heathers’.

It will be my first full year outside of education so it’s important to look at that optimistically, especially in this unpredictable industry when you never know what the future holds. But I’m really grateful for all the opportunities I’ve had since graduating and am ready to embrace whatever is around the corner. □

## James Mackenzie, BA (Hons) Acting

James graduated from Queen Margaret University College in 2002 from the BA (Hons) Acting programme. He has worked for many theatre companies including the National Theatre of Scotland, Dundee Rep, The Tron, The Royal Lyceum Theatre, Stellar Quines, Oran Mor, Random Accomplice and has performed throughout the country in a wide range of productions from Macbeth to Sunshine On Leith the Musical.

His TV credits include ‘River City’ (series regular Gary Trenton), ‘Danni’s House’, ‘Still Game’, ‘Rebus’, and ‘Taggart’. He is perhaps best known for playing the lead in the double BAFTA award winning CBBC series ‘Raven’, which ran from 2002-2010. □

## Katrina Bryan, BA Acting

Katrina graduated from Queen Margaret University College in 2001 from the BA Acting programme.

She has starred in a host of well-known Scottish productions, including ‘Taggart’, ‘Nina and the Neurons’, ‘Rab C Nesbitt’, ‘See You, See Me’ and ‘Sea of Souls’.

She also appeared in an Irn-Bru advert where she names her newborn baby Fanny, much to the shock of the baby’s father. □



Danielle Jam in 'It Wisnae Me'. Photo by Leslie Black



Danielle Jam as Daisy in 'Molly and Mack', CBeebies.



Andrew John Tait, Danielle Jam and Ali Watt in 'It Wisnae Me', A Play, Pie and a Pint at Oran Mor. Photo by Jamie Sim



Chiara Sparkes and Danielle 'Jam in The Snow Queen' at Dundee Rep. Photo by Tommy Ga-Ken Wan



# The Professional Doctorate

“The course has reignited a passion and belief in learning.”

**T**HE ABILITY TO CHALLENGE assumptions. Reflect on practice. Influence sector theory and policy. These are powerful attributes which are commonly found in leading professionals working in a diverse range of challenging roles and industries. They are also the main reasons why a person would choose to undertake a Professional Doctorate.

QMU has run a Professional Doctorate programme for 14

years and in 2018 added a Professional Doctorate in Cultural Leadership aimed at those working in the cultural and creative industries. We spoke to three new students who have recently embarked on their own 'Prof Doc' journey to find out more about why they took the leap back into study, the value their research will have for their professional career path, and how to balance academia with work/life commitments.



**“I HAD ORIGINALLY thought about working towards a PhD, but the Prof Doc programme seemed to align better to my professional practice,” said Fraser Anderson, an arts management professional from Glasgow. “I had always hoped that my academic**

**and professional work could become quite closely connected, and this seemed a great programme through which to try and achieve this.”**

Fraser studied arts management in London and then worked in a range of management positions for organisations including Universal Music Group, the Donmar Warehouse theatre and the London Symphony Orchestra. After working for the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, he became Chief Executive of the internationally-renowned chamber ensemble Scottish Ensemble. Although he left that position in 2018, he is still actively involved and works two days a week as a consultant.

“The job of CEO in a very busy touring arts organisation is a demanding one, and

I became very good at spinning numerous plates,” he said. “At times, I grew a little frustrated at not having enough time to explore new ideas, structures or approaches that might develop the business, which is why, in part, I wanted to take some time out and embark on my Prof Doc.

“And I have found that even over this relatively short period, my ability to analyse complex information in a critical way has improved quite markedly. The course has also reignited a passion for and a belief in learning.” □



**F**OR DUNDEE'S BRYAN Beattie, founder of a cultural consultancy firm who now lives in the Highlands, the choice to take on a Professional Doctorate was two-fold. “Personally, I wanted to challenge myself and put myself in a position where I was out of my comfort zone,” he said.

“It's been a long time since I was involved directly in academic life and you forget there's a whole different way of looking at and discussing things - and a different language, too.

“Professionally, I felt I had some unfinished business. I was involved with Scottish Government about 12 years ago developing an outline approach to a national system of cultural rights and entitlements. For various reasons that didn't materialise, but I feel there's still something around this area that Scotland could lead the way on, so my doctorate is focussed on cultural rights.”

Bryan is not the only member of his family currently in higher education, however. His eldest child is in her first year of study at university in Edinburgh, so as he says: “I need to keep working to pay the bills!”

Juggling work commitments, academia and his home life is something he's still adjusting to. “I think it will take some time

for me to find the right balance,” he said.

“I don't have regular working hours or commitments - running my own company means that you're always bidding for new work as well as undertaking the work you have, and you're never sure how much you'll have on the go at any one time.”

The value of the course, however, has underpinned why this was the right decision for him. “In the day-to-day grind of work it's easy to forget how valuable real-life experience can be, and when you combine that with the skills and robustness of academic research it could create an opportunity to contribute something to your area of work that is possibly much deeper and more lasting than you could otherwise do,” Bryan said. □



**J**ANET ROBERTSON, an arts and education professional who splits her time between Cambridge and Kirkcaldy, describes her decision to undertake a Professional Doctorate as being “a kind of madness, or a serendipitous happening - I'm not quite sure which!”

Janet's passion for the arts - in particular, youth arts - is clearly demonstrated through recent roles, including that of Writer and Creative Producer of Kirkcaldy's Bringing the Light Winter Festival 2018,

Creative Strategist for the 2018 Aberdeen Youth Arts Strategy and Manager of Fife Youth Arts (FYA).

“Repeated curiosities around areas of my practice surfaced in different contexts and over several years, which eventually crystalized into questions,” she said.

“Those questions persisted and when I found myself personally and professionally able to address them, the opportunity to take the time and space to do so arrived in the form of the QMU Prof Doc in Cultural Leadership. I jumped in.”

An additional pull to the course came in the form of a member of QMU's academic

staff and the University as a whole. “Dr David Stevenson - his expertise and approach aren't to be found anywhere else, and the opportunity to work remotely with great support, and in a community striving collectively, were all factors.”

Perhaps Janet says it best when asked what she would say to anyone considering a Professional Doctorate at QMU: “I would offer the same advice I've offered to people expecting a baby for the first time. Whatever you think it might be, it probably isn't, but...it's an amazing adventure that will change you forever.” □



## New courses respond to changes in industry demand

QMU continuously reviews its courses to ensure that they reflect changing demands from industry, as well as the changing needs of society.



**T**HE UNIVERSITY WORKS closely with industry experts to ensure that both undergraduate and postgraduate courses equip graduates with the skills they need to compete in the market place. We also conduct market research to see how we can upskill graduates who want to better service their employers or who wish to stand head and shoulders above the rest in the crowded employment market.

Following a major portfolio review over the last year, QMU now has a number of new media, PR and business postgraduate courses. Here's an overview, but check out our website for more detail.

### MSc Digital Campaigning and Content Creation

This course will equip professionals working in film, PR, communications and campaigning, or those in promotional or activist roles with third sector organisations, with both written and visual digital skills essential to successful campaign management. It will help fill the skills gap for all-round creative graduates who can blend written, oral and sound communication with engaging visuals as part of their daily work.

### MSc Media Management

The first qualification of its kind available in Edinburgh, this new master's degree aims to equip graduates with the business skills required to pursue a management career in the media and creative industries. It focuses on developing an understanding of media and creative businesses and the global environment in which they operate.

### MSc Finance

This course is a perfect fit for graduates from a wide range of disciplines who may have little or no business experience and want to begin a career in finance or business. It offers an in-depth knowledge and understanding of how corporations manage their finances, as well as how global capital markets work.

### MSc International Marketing

The course responds to the growing importance of marketing and allied business functions. It will produce graduates who have a strong understanding of the international marketing role and the key factors that influence the environment in which they function.

Find out more about QMU's postgraduate study opportunities at: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/postgraduate-study/>

### 10% discount on QMU postgraduate courses

If you are a QMU student or graduate who is considering moving to a postgraduate course at QMU, you may be eligible for a 10% discount off the course fees. Find out more on page 31. □



# Graduate Apprenticeships - A new way to work, learn and earn

**E**MPLOYEES FROM A DIVERSE range of organisations have been delighted to be part of QMU's first Graduate Apprenticeship programme which is allowing people to learn while they earn.

Eighteen employees from retail, construction, engineering, recruitment, childcare and third sector organisations were the first to embark on QMU's new BA (Hons) Business Management (Graduate Apprenticeship) course. The four-year programme, run by the Queen Margaret Business School, offers an alternative to full-time university study and provides benefits for employees and employers in Scotland.

Students on the course can study for a degree while continuing with their employment. For students, it's a practical, integrated way to launch a new career or develop expertise with their current employer. Employers benefit from having highly skilled, more motivated and ambitious business managers of the future, and students are able to apply their learning to current working situations or new projects.

This style of learning can be well suited to a range of employers who may find it useful as a way of developing and retaining staff. It can ensure that employees challenge their own thinking and that of their organisation, as well as having the opportunity to learn from academics and other students on the course.

Dr Andrew Bratton, Programme Leader for QMU's Graduate Apprenticeships, explained: "Studying through our Graduate Apprenticeship in Business Management will boost students' professional development and employability. They will study the same core modules as full-time business management students, covering core management areas such as marketing, business law, research methods and strategy. There will also be work-based learning modules throughout the degree, allowing them to complete projects designed to support their employer's business goals and objectives."

"It really is a win-win situation for both employers and employees with organisations gaining engaged, motivated staff and employees working towards a degree qualification without the financial strains associated with a traditional university route."

Projekt 42, a community gym and social enterprise aiming to tackle poor mental health in Edinburgh, was keen to invest in the education and progression of its staff and has two team members on the Graduate Apprenticeship programme. Founder Sara Hawkins wanted to encourage staff to learn new skills and gain the confidence to take on new roles within the charity. Full-time studio managers, Daisy Tulloch, and Matthew Whale, now graduate apprenticeship students, initially joined the organisation as volunteers before taking on paid roles in 2018.

Commenting on the new workplace apprenticeship programme, Sara said: "Through our work with QMU we are now in the unique position of being able to offer Projekt 42 staff the opportunity to complete a fully funded degree, while still taking home their normal salary."

Dr Bratton concluded: "I'm pleased to work with Projekt 42 graduate apprentices, and all of the other apprentices on our programme, to help them grow and develop into effective organisational leaders." □

**"It really is a win-win situation for both employers and employees with organisations gaining engaged, motivated staff and employees working towards a degree qualification without the financial strains associated with a traditional university route."**



## QMU hosts second Albert Roux Dinner



**Q**MU'S 1875 FOOD COURT was the setting for a truly unique dining experience in November with over 100 diners treated to a menu prepared by talented chefs from some of Scotland's leading hotels. The gastronomic extravaganza was the final run through of the Scottish Culinary Team's menu for the 2018 Culinary World Cup. The dinner was attended by Albert Roux OBE KFO, who is a patron of Scottish Chefs and an honorary graduate of QMU.

QMU has a history of food dating back to its foundations as the Edinburgh School of Cookery in 1875 so it was truly fitting to host this World Cup Dining Experience at the University. Food and drink continues to be at the forefront of education at QMU with wide-ranging expertise in food related subjects, including undergraduate degrees in nutrition and food science and dietetics, as well as the UK's first master's in Gastronomy. Later this year, QMU will also be able to boast a brand new postgraduate degree in home economics teaching.

The dinner also provided an opportunity for QMU's budding restaurateurs and hospitality professionals to gain valuable work experience. Management students in hospitality and events contributed their time for free in order to support the chefs in their world cup endeavour.

At the World Cup a few weeks later, the Scottish team pitched their culinary skills against some of the world's heavyweight culinary nations, winning a silver medal for their menu, which showcased some of the best produce Scotland has to offer.

Kevin MacGillivray, Scottish Culinary Team Director, "We are really grateful to Queen Margaret University for helping the team to perfect its menu. Over the last 18 months we have seen an amazing collaboration of individuals and companies who are supporting the Scottish Culinary Team in its World Cup aspirations, all of which has ultimately paid off with the presentation of a silver medal. The team shows us that there is great commitment and culinary talent in Scotland both now and in the future."

Dr Richard Butt, Deputy Principal of QMU, said: "Having hosted the Albert Roux dinner several years ago, the Queen Margaret Business School was delighted to welcome back to campus one of the world's most renowned chefs and see him inspire the country's emerging talent, as well as our students in hospitality, tourism and events."

"This event not only offered QMU's BA (Hons) International Hospitality and Tourism Management students the opportunity to gain some practical experience at a prestigious event, it helped to develop East Lothian's reputation as a food and drink county whilst strengthening Scotland's culinary standing on the international stage."

Diana Prosser, BA (Hons) International Hospitality and Tourism student, worked at the dinner. She said: "This event was an absolute treasure. It was a wonderful experience to be part of a team that combined high-class service with beautifully prepared food. We were proud of what we achieved. Brushing shoulders with some society's elite chefs, including Albert Roux, was an experience I will cherish for many years. This event brought reality and practical experience, as well as a bit of fame, to our degree experience." □



Students from the BA (Hons) International Hospitality and Tourism Management and BA (Hons) Events Management worked in service at the event and spent time with the world renowned chef, Albert Roux.





Dr Sara Wood demonstrates EPG to rugby legend Jason White.

## Rugby legend opens Wooden Spoon Speech Clinic at QMU

**F**ORMER SCOTLAND and British and Irish Lions star Jason White officially opened a pioneering new speech centre for children and young people at QMU. In an intimate ceremony, Jason launched the new Wooden Spoon Speech Clinic, which will use ground-breaking technology to change the lives of those with speech communication difficulties.

Wooden Spoon is the children's charity of rugby in the UK and Ireland, and raises money to improve the lives of disadvantaged young people. Thanks to a significant amount of money donated by the Scottish arm of the charity, QMU's speech and language therapists can now offer specialist electropalatography (EPG) treatment to young people from up and down the country.

### What is electropalatography (EPG)?

Electropalatography is a technique developed by speech experts at QMU which records where and when the tongue makes contact with the roof of the mouth during speech. It can be a particularly useful means of helping some children with intractable speech disorders because it provides visual feedback to the child, which is not ordinarily available, and does not rely on verbal instruction alone.

The client is fitted with an artificial palate, which is used in the pioneering EPG therapy. It takes the form of a custom made dental palate, containing 62 electrodes that detect tongue contact on the roof of the mouth when the client speaks. The tongue-to-palate contact patterns can be recorded, analysed and compared to typical speech patterns to help the speech and language therapist identify, more accurately, errors in the client's speech. During a session, the therapist also wears a customised palate to demonstrate the correct patterns to the client. The client can clearly see the images that the tongue makes on the computer screen and tries to copy these patterns. Both the client and the therapist are able to see what the tongue is doing and therefore work towards achieving accurate productions.

QMU's Deputy Principal, Richard Butt, said: "We are very grateful to Wooden Spoon for helping us invest in palates and the other technology that is needed for EPG. We know that improvement in speech communication can have a significant impact on people's lives. As their speech becomes more easily understood, confidence can increase, they can integrate more in social and learning environments and their attainment can improve. In the longer term, our speech technology can have the ability to improve life chances for people who have had speech communication difficulties."

Jason White added: "We are particularly proud to support the launch of the Wooden Spoon Speech Clinic, which has evolved from QMU's internationally recognised research in speech and language sciences." □

**“It was the first time in my life that anyone had been able to explain, and show me, the cause of many of my speech problems.”**



## Boy's life transformed by pioneering speech technology

**F**RASER ALLAN is a determined young man with a zest for life and a drive to succeed. But due to significant problems with speech communication and dyslexia, Fraser's experience of learning during childhood, and in his teenage years, was a challenging one.

Other young people in a similar situation to Fraser may have been left behind. However, thanks to pioneering speech therapy developed by QMU, and a supportive school, Fraser's life has been transformed. Now aged 21, Fraser is successfully navigating his way through a four-year sport and management degree at Abertay University, attributing much of this success to the self-belief he developed following Electropalatography (EPG) speech therapy at QMU.

During his primary schooling, Fraser really struggled with significant speech difficulties and also spent many years attending Edinburgh Sick Kids for help with dyslexia. As he progressed to secondary school, his challenges with communication and learning became more profound and his confidence plummeted.

Fraser struggled to make his speech understood, especially when meeting new people. He had difficulty pronouncing specific sounds. Although treatments provided by the NHS helped improved his speech, language and reading, progress was limited. He still struggled with the pronunciation of certain words, particularly those involving the sounds 'k', 'g' and 'r'.

However, things started looking up when, at the age of fourteen, Fraser met Dr Sara Wood, a clinical phonetics researcher and speech and language therapist at QMU. Dr Wood introduced Fraser to pioneering EPG technology and very quickly Fraser began to see where he had been going wrong and how he could correct his speech.

However, as part of the therapy, Fraser had to wear a customised EPG dental palate. He wasn't comfortable with the feeling of the palate in his mouth, but as a rugby player he was used to using a gum shield. Articulate Instruments, a spin out company at QMU, which developed the speech dental palate, created a

new bespoke gum shield-style palate. It was the perfect solution.

Fraser explained: "It was the first time in my life that anyone had been able to explain, and show me, the cause of many of my speech problems. When I used EPG, I could see on the computer screen what shape my tongue was actually making on the roof of my mouth when I tried to create certain sounds. I could now see clearly that my tongue was not touching the top of my mouth to create the 'k' and 'g' sound. Sara also wore a customised palate in her mouth, and she was able to demonstrate what shape my tongue should be making. I could see on the screen where my shape was different from hers. So, we worked together to train my tongue to hit the right position on the roof of my mouth. There was no better feeling in the world than when we did it correctly for the first time. I made the right sounds - then did it again, and again. I just felt so good."

Dr Wood worked with Fraser on a weekly basis for about eight months. During that time, Fraser made great progress. But to ensure that Fraser continued to derive the most benefit from EPG, Sara taught one of the senior pupils at Fraser's secondary school in Edinburgh to work with him on a daily basis.

Dr Wood explained: "The senior pupil was interested in training to become a teacher. She was keen to work with Fraser and help him practice each day. Using a portable EPG training unit she monitored Fraser's progress outside of the clinic. I taught her a little about EPG, showed her the patterns we were trying to achieve and gave her exercises to work through with Fraser. In turn, she ensured that Fraser kept up his speech therapy with short daily sessions during the week."

"After eight months of EPG therapy – via the school pupil and more intensive sessions at the University – Fraser was able to correct the speech difficulties that were having an impact on his communication."

Fraser recalls that period in his life, particularly when he was studying for his Higher exams. He said: "Sara and my school, Trinity Academy, worked together beautifully and I am grateful to them both. Even though I have made great progress, it is still more challenging for me, than my peers, to study and pass exams. However, whereas in the past it was impossible and I felt consigned to the bin, I now know that if I really apply myself I can experience positive results in my homework and exams."

Recently, Fraser and his dad were driving past QMU and they started chatting about the good progress that Fraser was making at university. Fraser said: "I suddenly realised that my life had really been transformed by the people working in the building that we had just passed. I wanted to stop the car, go in and say thank you!"

Fraser concluded: "I am very conscious of my continuous progression and I now feel far more confident about my ability to learn and do well. I can honestly say that my experience of using EPG has been truly life changing." □



# Older people and alcohol misuse – why we need to ask more questions

**RESEARCH CARRIED OUT by QMU has shown that health professionals are reluctant to ask older people about their pattern of drinking alcohol for fear of offending them.**

Health professionals are wary about asking older people about their drinking habits in case it creates a difficult conversation and so important lifestyle questions related to drinking alcohol are often avoided.

The University study was carried out with 17 occupational therapists based in acute hospitals across Scotland. The aim was to understand older people's use of alcohol in occupying their time and its impact on healthfulness.

Dr Fiona Maclean is a Senior Lecturer in Occupational Therapy and part of the Centre for Person-centred Practice Research at QMU. Dr Maclean, who led the research project, explained: "With an ageing population and changing lifestyles, we need to further our understanding of the relationship older people (aged 65 and over) can have with alcohol.

"Changing life transitions in older age such as retirement, bereavement, social isolation and loneliness can result in older people developing a problematic relationship with alcohol. As part of the research, occupational therapists gave examples, such as bereavement and changing health status, as reasons why older people might increase their alcohol intake."

The research found that unless flagged as 'drinking to excess' on medical notes, therapists would not address drinking alcohol with older people for fear of offending, a lack of knowledge of what to do next and a tendency to view the conversation as potentially opening a can of worms.

Dr Maclean found that changes in an older person's lifestyle, such as retirement and loneliness, often did not prompt occupational therapists to ask their patients' questions about their pattern and nature of drinking alcohol. She confirmed: "In older age, healthfulness is considered important as it can indicate the extent to which older people remain socially engaged with others. When social connections diminish in older age, drinking alcohol can develop into an unhealthy occupation."

Dr Maclean concluded: "Our research highlights the need for occupational therapists to become more aware of the role alcohol can play in the lives of older people. We need to create ways in which therapists feel confident in asking questions of older people about their occupation of drinking alcohol. By addressing these issues we will be better equipped to help people make healthy transitions into older age."

The Centre for Person-centred Practice Research at QMU is grateful to the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland which provided the funding for this project. □

**“Health professionals are wary about asking older people about their drinking habits in case it creates a difficult conversation.”**



## £2.5 million to help empower people affected by dementia

**A WORLD RENOWNED NURSING leader has helped secure a ground-breaking investment which will support people with dementia and carers to become experts, leaders and influencers in Scotland.**

Professor Brendan McCormack, QMU's Head of Division of Nursing, who has a global reputation for his work in person-centred practice and older people, has been a driving force in securing the £2.5 million investment from the Life Changes Trust. The funding will be used to create a School of Leadership in Dementia and a National Forum for Dementia Policy and Practice.

Professor McCormack has worked in collaboration with leaders from the Life Changes Trust, Age Scotland and the University of Edinburgh to bring this exciting development to fruition. The creation of the National Forum will bring together people with experience and expertise in dementia, locally and nationally, with the aim of evidencing what will create better lives for people with dementia and those who support them.

The Forum will work with people with lived experience and other key influencers to shape policy and practice in ways that are meaningful to people's everyday lives. The Life Changes Trust School of Leadership will use creative and shared learning methods to work with communities to empower local leaders to be at the forefront of change and development. This is so that Scotland can become an exemplar of how, in all aspects of life, people with dementia can find meaning, be fully supported and involved and ultimately, flourish as individuals.

Professor McCormack, who has a reputation as a dynamic nurse leader, has worked tirelessly throughout his career to ensure practitioners and policy makers put users of services at the centre of decision-making. His influence is far reaching with health systems

across the globe keen to learn and adopt his philosophies. He is proud to be part of this progressive collaboration and delighted that the programme will bring together people with a particular interest and experience in dementia to develop their expertise so that they can be integral to leading positive change at all levels of society.

He said: "Being a part of this ground-breaking development to work with people living with dementia and their carers strengthens the opportunity for all people in all communities to reach their full potential. Our work focuses on helping all people to flourish and the Life Changes Trust School of Leadership and Policy and Practice Forum will equip people living with dementia to shape their lives and communities in ways that really matter to them. Having those with lived experience leading and shaping future policy and practice is essential if we are to change their experience for the better."

"Both projects will build on and advance existing good practice and grow the potential of new, future leaders to make a real difference to people's lives."

Anna Buchanan, Interim CEO of the Life Changes Trust, said, "The School of Leadership and the Forum will, in due course, change the landscape of the dementia world in Scotland. They will create a strong network of people with shared values and purpose, supporting them to make a major contribution to transforming the lives of people with dementia and unpaid carers."

"Both projects are vehicles that will support and encourage people with dementia and their carers to flourish and develop, gaining leadership skills and confidence to have their voices heard in a way that will have real impact. They will ensure the needs of people with dementia, their families and unpaid carers are met and their lives fundamentally transformed for the better." □



# £45k fellowship helps business graduate develop convenience meals for IBS sufferers

**A young entrepreneur who is creating food solutions for people suffering from IBS has gained an incredible £45,000 cash injection for her business thanks to a prestigious Royal Society of Edinburgh Fellowship.**

Lauren Leisk, a young business graduate from QMU, is one of only 20 entrepreneurs selected as an RSE Unlocking Ambition Enterprise Fellow. The initiative supports high potential entrepreneurs to start up their businesses in Scotland, and will assist Lauren with bespoke advice, grant funding and business development support to take her specialist food company, Fodilicious, to the next level.

Having discovered a gap in the market for fresh, healthy convenience foods suitable for people coping with various digestive disorders, 24-year-old Lauren has been sweeping the boards in several national entrepreneurial competitions over the summer. However, the Royal Society of Edinburgh's Unlocking Ambition initiative, backed by Scotland's First Minister, is perhaps one of the most significant awards for the young entrepreneur.

Although Lauren had experienced some IBS issues in her teens, by the age of 20 she could no longer ignore them. As a business student at QMU, juggling study and work, she had an increasingly busy lifestyle. Often eating on the go, her symptoms of discomfort, pain and bloating intensified and despite her best efforts, she struggled to find readily available food products suitable for her condition, as most were full of additives and preservatives.

However, Lauren decided to turn a negative into a positive. She used her personal experience and her business skills to set up Fodilicious - plugging the gap for tasty, nutritional foods and freshly prepared meals for people with IBS.

Lauren explained: "After years of struggling with IBS, I discovered the low FODMAP diet which eliminates all trigger foods that can set off IBS symptoms. Despite the word 'diet', a low FODMAP approach is not focused on weight loss – instead it limits foods high in a group of sugars called FODMAPs that have been shown to aggravate the gut, and therefore eases symptoms associated with IBS such as bloating, pain and gas."

She continued: "I decided to prepare recipes substituting normal ingredients for low FODMAP alternatives, and the results were fantastic!"

In September 2017, Lauren created Fodilicious, an innovative and UK exclusive food manufacturing business providing convenient, healthy meal options following the low FODMAP diet, (IBS-friendly). The Fodilicious products are also gluten-free and dairy-free, and cover a range of special dietary requirements, effectively positioning Fodilicious in the fast growing 'free from' food market.

Lauren, whose business is based in Livingston, said: "I've been working with experts at QMU on a new snack product, which will be launching soon, and I am a tenant of the University's Business Innovation Zone (BIZ). The BIZ offers QMU graduate entrepreneurs access to free space and business support via Business Gateway, as well as networking and funding opportunities. This is an important university service which provides useful facilities and guidance to new graduates during the early stages of their business development."

Miriam Smith, QMU's Business Development Manager, said: "QMU has been delighted to see Lauren making such an impact in Scotland's entrepreneurial ecosystem and winning several thousand pounds to support her future business development. Her success with the RSE means that she will now benefit from a 12-month cutting-edge company start-up programme."

This is the first time that QMU has been awarded an enterprise fellowship which, in addition to supporting the graduate, provides financial assistance to the University to continue hosting Lauren within its Business Innovation Zone.

However, this is not the only major competition in which Lauren has had success. Recently, she received a £10,000 award from Scottish Edge competition, which supports entrepreneurs and start-ups. She also held her own against some of the country's most ambitious entrepreneurs from the UK's top universities, taking the runner-up position in the finals of the highly prestigious Santander Universities Entrepreneurship Awards. In addition, Lauren was one of the first entrepreneurs to be supported through the Merchant Company of Edinburgh's Enterprise Fund, with an award of £3,500.

Miriam Smith concluded: "Lauren is an impressive young woman who has identified an important gap in the specialist food market for people with digestive disorders who want to eat well and maintain good health. We are so proud of what Lauren has achieved in such a short time since graduating. She is an excellent alumni ambassador for QMU. Her vision to service a growing market with a suitable diet for their health requirements fits well with QMU's mission of developing graduates who have the skills and ability to improve the quality of people's lives."

Lauren concluded: "2018 has been one of the most exciting and demanding years of my life. I am so grateful that QMU has supported me through these quite gruelling competitions. It has been good to share some of the journey and the successes. I have certainly felt that staff at QMU really care about me and are truly invested in helping their entrepreneurial graduates succeed."

"I'm really passionate about Fodilicious and am delighted to have the investment from the competitions, and the business support from the RSE, Scottish Edge, Santander and QMU's Business Development Manager, to assist me in taking Fodilicious to the next level." □



## Plant-based container offers sustainable alternative to plastic water bottle



**J**AKE ELLIOTT HOOK GRADUATED from QMU with BSc Psychology and Sociology in 2018. Along with his co-director, Amee Ritchie (a graduate of Edinburgh College), he founded the company YAIA, and have established S'Wheat, an ethical and sustainable brand that produces eco-friendly water bottles.

Jake and Amee spotted a gap in the market for a bottle that was free from the use of plastic, which damages the environment and impacts negatively on health. Their bottle is made from sustainable plant-based material that has comparable properties to plastic without the negative effects on the environment and personal health.

Jake and Amee were finalists in the Scottish Institute for Enterprise Fresh Ideas competition and have recently secured funding and a mentor from the Merchant Company of Edinburgh.

YAIA was also a semi-finalist in the Converge Challenge KickStart programme, sponsored by RBS, which is aimed at early-stage projects and offers individually tailored advice to support the first steps of the entrepreneurial journey.

Miriam Smith, Business Development Manager at QMU, has supported the young business since its inception through the University's Business Innovation Zone (BIZ). She said: "It was an absolute pleasure working with Jake and Amee. They're wonderful advocates for QMU and the BIZ, and with their talents and strong business prowess, I know they'll go far in this industry." □

The Business Innovation Zone (BIZ) provides free start up advice (through the services of our on campus Business Gateway) and business support to staff, students and graduates of the University who have an idea and may be interested in starting a company.

Our offering includes:

- one-to-one appointments with a business advisor, through the Business Gateway;
- workshops, bootcamps and entrepreneurial competitions;
- desk space;
- QMU business address;
- meeting facilities within the BIZ space;
- access to ad-hoc rehearsal space and editing facilities; and
- profile for your company on our website.



# Dovecot Reception: Celebrating student awards and scholarships

**F**RIENDS AND GRADUATES of QMU joined staff and students for a reception at Dovecot Studios in Edinburgh in October. The event celebrated the success of over 40 students and graduates who received scholarships and awards in 2017-18.

The evening was an opportunity to celebrate the scholarships, awards and student projects made possible through the support of generous donors.

Funding comes from individual donors and organisations including Santander Universities, Alzheimer Scotland and Apex Hotels, as well as from individuals who have donated to the University's Vice-Chancellor's Fund and Student Development Fund.

Together, this support does so much to provide students with opportunities that build their confidence, broaden their horizons and extend their academic attainment. Funding also prevents financial constraints from limiting students' potential. Ultimately, it enables students to make the most of their time at QMU and to make a difference with the skills they are taught.

QMU's Principal, Professor Petra Wend, said: "The University is grateful for the continued support of organisations, individuals and QMU graduates, which greatly enhances the experience of those students who receive funding. Awards and scholarships like this enrich students' academic experience, build their confidence, broaden their horizons and allow them make a real contribution to their field or to serving society's needs.

She continued: "This is the fifth consecutive year that we have hosted a reception at Dovecot Studios and it's a real pleasure to take our partnership from strength to strength and to see QMU graduates remaining at the forefront of the Dovecot's event management activity."



Student Jessica Hao received her award from Norman Springford of Apex Hotels

Guests heard just how much of a difference this type of funding makes from Ellie Higgins. Ellie recently graduated with a first class honours in Drama and Performance from QMU. She received Santander Mobility funding to attend the DC Living Lab held in Antwerp, which gives creative students the opportunity to work hands-on in an international team. They have the chance to work on a concrete business or societal related challenge, and to be inspired by world renowned innovation and creativity experts.

Ellie was also the first recipient of the Robert Kemp Memorial Award, which provides funding for a final year student in the creative industries to take their work to a festival or event. Ellie and her theatre company, Clocked on Theatre, took their production of 'All Out Of Time' to the Edinburgh Fringe.

Ellie addressed the audience of 100 guests, stating: "As a new graduate, a huge hurdle in progressing independent work is managing to find funding. It was fantastic to have a helping hand in making the transition from university to professional theatre. The experience

allowed me to use all the skills I had gained through my degree and apply them in real life, which went so much better than any of us could have imagined. We can't wait to continue our work. We had such an amazing experience performing what we love, and also received a five star review from Edinburgh Culture Review."

She continued: "The opportunities I've had as a QMU student are really incredible. I could not be more grateful to have received funding to take part in them. Funding is so important for students to allow us to learn and grow, and to understand more about the world and our careers. Both of these experiences I've had this year wouldn't have been possible without the Robert Kemp Memorial Award and Santander funding. I'd like to thank them both so much, I could not have wished for a better start to my life after university."

If you would like to help support students like Ellie then please go to our online giving page <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/alumni-and-friends/opportunities-to-give/our-funds/> or contact Heather Edie on E: [hedie@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:hedie@qmu.ac.uk) ☐



Dovecot Tapestry Studio is a world-renowned producer of hand-woven tapestry and gun tufted rugs. We continue a century-long heritage of making and collaboration with leading international contemporary artists to produce extraordinary and works of art.

The balcony features these collaborations for sale to the public.

All prices are inclusive of VAT.

# Dovecot Tapestry Studio





Samantha Hamilton,  
Group HR Manager,  
Dakota Hotels

## Support from Dakota Hotels helps students stand out in the hospitality industry

**H**OSPITALITY AND TOURISM EDUCATION has been part of QMU for over 140 years. Building upon more than a century of experience within the University and its predecessor institutions, the current QMU lecturers consider themselves the custodians of the expertise passed down from the founders of the former Edinburgh School of Cookery. The University's courses today are underpinned by some of the simple philosophies that were at the heart of the institution's teaching over a century ago.

At the heart of the BSc (Hons) International Hospitality & Tourism Management (IHTM) is practical experience that includes a 20 week placement at the 5 star Waldorf Astoria in year one, as well as a 20 week paid internship in year two or three when students often travel overseas to embed themselves in the industry. With 90% of graduates in employment or further training after six months,\* many of who are making names for themselves in highly-respected hospitality and tourism businesses in the UK and across the world, it is without doubt this practical experience makes QMU graduates stand out in the crowd.

A new partnership with Dakota Hotels will further enhance this practical experience. A generous gift from the leading boutique hotel group, which is soon to open a new hotel in Manchester, will enable students to take part in activities that will enhance their learning and their understanding of the industry. These could include walking tours of Edinburgh's Old Town, distillery tours, wine tastings and tourism attraction field trips.

Further support from The Kitchin Group enables the students to experience a fine dining lunch. It is impossible to imagine talented graduates securing management positions in prestigious establishments without having experienced their food and service for themselves.

Programme Leader, Marc Robertson, said: "These partnerships make an important contribution to QMU's links with industry and help to strengthen our already robust employability strategy. The Dakota Student Experience Fund will be used to provide a number of relevant industry experiences that will enhance the learning of students enrolled on the IHTM degree. We are incredibly grateful for the ongoing partnership with Dakota and I look forward to seeing how it directly benefits our students."

The hotel group, founded by QMU honorary graduate, Ken McCulloch, has been working with QMU for a number of years. The boutique hotels in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Leeds have benefitted from QMU interns who have gone on to gain graduate employment with the Group. Group HR Manager, Samantha Hamilton, a double QMU graduate herself, has seen first-hand the quality of a QMU education and has been instrumental in further developing the partnership between the University and Dakota Hotels.

Samantha said: "Hospitality is so often seen as a career people fall into or work in as a means to an end. It shouldn't be; there are so many career paths an ambitious and hardworking individual could succeed in. QMU and Dakota both share this sentiment and it is natural that we would work together to support new talent coming into this global industry." □ (\*source: Unistats 2018)

## Attracted by the practical and international course opportunities

**C**ALUM STEWART CHOSE the BA International Hospitality and Tourism Management course because of its international perspective. He also welcomed the wonderful opportunity it gave him to gain hands-on experience at a prestigious cookery school and five star city centre hotel.

Calum particularly loved the practical aspect of the course, gaining much from his placement at the Galvin Brasserie De Luxe in the Waldorf Astoria. He said: "The Brasserie's Michelin-starred chefs Chris and Jeff Galvin showed me how to achieve a classic, flawless and first class experience from start to finish, and gave me a diverse perspective of management styles."

Throughout much of his time at QMU, Calum worked for Dakota Hotels, both in Edinburgh and Leeds. It was such a positive experience that he jumped at the opportunity to progress his career on the Dakota Hotels' management scheme.

Discussing the QMU degree, Calum said: "There is a huge misconception that degrees are not 'needed' in this industry, but this course has helped me build a solid foundation of knowledge and values which will allow me to excel in my future roles within the industry. It has also made me more aware of the wide range of business aspects and culture that I knew little about prior to the course."

He concluded: "The skills learned on the course can take you anywhere, and the international perspective of QMU's hospitality and tourism course, means that the world really is your oyster if you do wish to work overseas."

Read more about Calum's experience and watch his interview at: [www.qmu.ac.uk/calum-stewart](http://www.qmu.ac.uk/calum-stewart) □



## “It’s incredible that I’ve been able to experience a completely different lifestyle and culture through my degree.”



**W**HEN MICHAEL TRUFFELLI was weighing up his higher education options having not achieved the kind of results he'd hoped for, he couldn't have imagined that in just a few years he'd be learning Mandarin and serving as the Asian Ambassador for one of Scotland's most prestigious hotels.

Michael – a fourth year BA (Hons) International Hospitality and Tourism Management student at QMU – is open about the fact that this area of study was not what he'd originally planned on pursuing.

"I came to QMU in 2016 through UCAS clearing," he explained. "I had initially wanted to study International Business at another university but uncertainty in my final year of school meant that I didn't achieve what I needed to do that."

"However, QMU and the International Hospitality and Tourism Management (IHTM) course turned out to be a blessing in disguise. What started off as an interest in the industrial placement offered and the chance to learn more about the hospitality and tourism industries, ended up evolving to what I now believe will give me exceptional prospects upon graduation."

The industrial placement, in Michael's case, took him to Beijing, China, and opened up a whole new world of opportunity.

"I have to admit, I didn't enjoy my first week in China. I didn't understand anyone, and they didn't understand me. Then I thought to myself, 'Get a grip! This is an opportunity of a lifetime - learn the language'."

Immersing himself in the culture, and taking every opportunity to practice what few phrases he had picked up, Michael returned to Scotland with a new passion for the language. On top of a busy year of study and work, Michael now takes two Mandarin classes each week, made possible by the financial support of the Lord Forte Foundation Scholarship.

Established by QMU and The Lord Forte Foundation, these special scholarships are monetary awards of £2,500, offered annually to six third and fourth year BA (Hons) Events Management and BA (Hons) International Hospitality and Tourism Management students. When applying, students must demonstrate that they intend to work within the hospitality industry following graduation and that the scholarship would make a significant impact on their personal development and academic progression.

Despite all of the commitments and hard graft required during his final year of study, Michael would discover that his experiences in China were to work to his advantage.

"While working as a receptionist at the Radisson Blu, I was presented with the exciting opportunity to step into the new role of Asian Ambassador with The Balmoral, a Rocco Forte Hotel."

With such a desirable skill set, Michael was handpicked for this special role by the Balmoral after they learned of his skills in Mandarin through his scholarship application. Michael jumped at the opportunity to begin working in the capacity of the hotel's Asian market, drawing on his skills from the QMU course, experience of working in the hospitality industry, and insights gained from his placement in Beijing. Michael now juggles working for the final year of his degree with two shifts a week in The Balmoral front office and one shift within its marketing team.

He explained: "Overall, I'm trying to enhance the experience of our Asian market. Within marketing, I'm working towards Chinese New Year, trying to breakdown the social media influencers to differentiate what mediums they use, how messages are translated, the kind of posts they make and networking channels they use, etc."

And looking to the future, Michael is confident his studies and newly-acquired language skills [he hopes to be fluent by 2020!] will stand him in good stead in this competitive industry.

"In China, I noticed there was a lack of westerners who could speak Chinese, in particular those who held management positions," he said. "At meetings, much of what was being discussed had to be translated both ways, which is a huge drain on time and resources. Having someone who could speak both English and Chinese would be a big advantage and selling point."

Reflecting on his time at QMU – which isn't over just yet! – Michael is incredibly grateful for the opportunities the University and the Lord Forte Scholarship have provided him. "It is incredible that I have been able to travel and experience a completely different lifestyle and culture through my University degree."

"I will always be grateful for this opportunity which I am sure will help shape my future career in the global hospitality and tourism industry." □



# Edinburgh's Kitchen Group announces **first University Excellence Award winners**

**EDINBURGH'S KITCHIN GROUP** announced its first two **University Excellence Award winners**, as part of a new annual scholarship to help boost career prospects for students at QMU.

MSc Gastronomy students, Noah Erhun from the USA, and Sanna Dahllöf from Sweden, received financial support to carry out independent research into sustainable food and the use of social media in the food industry.

The University's MSc Gastronomy is the only course of its kind in the UK that takes a multidisciplinary look at food to examine its importance to culture, communication, systems and science and exposes its complexity. The MSc Gastronomy course has fired the imagination of the country's policy makers and legislators, as well as chefs, and those from a variety of food and drink related businesses. The course is currently recruiting with fees-paid places available to eligible applicants.

Over the next three years, Kitchen Group's Annual Award for Excellence will also offer QMU's international hospitality, tourism, and events management students the chance to apply for the scholarship to help support their studies. The partnership will also offer QMU's budding restaurateurs and hospitality professionals the opportunity to gain valuable work experience and potential employment within Kitchen Group. Included within this prestigious company are Michelin star restaurant, The Kitchen (led by internationally acclaimed Scottish chef Tom Kitchen), award-winning Castle Terrace Restaurant (one of Edinburgh's most elegant dining destinations) and gastropub, The Scran & Scallie, which was recently awarded a prestigious Michelin Bib Gourmand.



Gastronomy students Sanna Dahllöf and Noah Erhun at The Kitchen

Dr Majella Sweeney, Head of the Queen Margaret Business School: "We're extremely grateful to Kitchen Group for its investment and wish Noah and Sanna every success as they become the first QMU students to benefit from Kitchen Group's Annual Award for Excellence.

"Our exciting partnership builds on QMU's 140 years of experience in delivering hospitality and tourism education. QMU's current hospitality and gastronomy lecturers consider themselves the custodians of the expertise passed down from the founders of the former Edinburgh School of Cookery. The University's courses today are underpinned by some of the simple philosophies that were at the heart of the institution's teaching over a century ago, whilst addressing current and future trends in both the food and drink industry and the way food is thought about."

Ron Kitchen, Chairman of Kitchen Group, said: "As a business, we're passionate about fostering talent and supporting young people who are interested in a career in the industry.

"The Excellence Award will not only offer students financial and practical support with their studies, but will give them an unparalleled insight into the world of a busy, successful and diverse hospitality business, and the opportunity of hands on work-experience within Kitchen Group." □



Tom Kitchen, internationally acclaimed chef

## Festival producer creates opportunities in China for Cultural Management student

**A QMU POSTGRADUATE STUDENT** has won a competitive scholarship that will allow her to travel to China to work alongside one of the country's leading arts producers.

Camilla Crosta, a MA Arts, Festival & Cultural Management student, will also receive a monetary award of £1,000 as part of the Dr Chris Wang China Fringe Award for Cultural Events.

Dr Chris Wang, who is based in Shanghai, is responsible for bringing some of the highest quality Chinese productions to Scotland each summer. The Chinese Art and Cultural Festival is now a prominent feature within Edinburgh's Fringe Festival. Dr Wang, who is an advocate of equality and democracy in China, also produces the World Clown Festival in China. The event has become the largest gathering of clowns in the world!

QMU and Dr Wang intend to create more exciting opportunities for Cultural Management students in the future. The University is working with Dr Wang to develop a partnership between QMU and Donghua University in Shanghai. It is hoped that the initiative will open up opportunities for students at QMU to study part of their course in China, as well as facilitating Chinese Cultural Management students to continue their postgraduate education in Scotland.

Camilla, who is the third recipient of this annual award, will use the scholarship money to fund her dissertation research. She explained: "The donation will allow me to travel to Hamburg, a city with a unique and experimental approach to culture, community engagement and public space. In particular, the city of Hamburg is currently developing a pioneering culture-led regeneration project along the waterfront spaces in the neighbourhood of HafenCity. The goal is to develop a high standard of artistic and cultural programmes in collaboration with local communities and cultural institutions."

The scholarship will also fund a return flight and accommodation in China where Camilla will have the opportunity to work alongside Dr Wang. Camilla, talked excitedly about the prospect of her trip to China. She said: "Travelling to China to work alongside Dr Wang will contribute positively to my career and my personal development. This will be the first time for me to work outside Europe and I will be able to gain knowledge of a unique and vibrant environment and to create possible future contacts and collaborations that I wouldn't be able to initiate otherwise. It is an opportunity to engage with a new place, its cultural identity and take an active part in projects that wouldn't happen elsewhere. This will be rewarding both from a professional and personal point of view. Working internationally will raise my profile and allow me to develop as a stronger candidate for future employment opportunities."

Dr David Stevenson, Head of Media, Communication and Performing Arts, said: "Dr Wang is passionate about events and cultural management and has provided this funding to nurture talented young people who wish to contribute to the cultural and creative industries. The monetary award, as well as the flights and work experience in China, is invaluable in supporting student development on the MA Arts, Festival & Cultural Management programme. Without his generosity, Camilla, as well as the two previous recipients of the scholarship, would have been unable to develop their research." □

**A wealth of opportunities are available at QMU for people in arts, festival and cultural sectors to develop their skills and experience.**

If you want to develop your experience in the growing arts and cultural industries, find out more about the MA Arts, Festival and Cultural Management at [www.qmu.ac.uk/afcm](http://www.qmu.ac.uk/afcm)



# University partnership reaches £1 million milestone

**A** PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN QMU and Santander Universities UK has gone from strength to strength after reaching a £1 million milestone to support students, graduates, staff and the wider community.

The latest funding boost from Santander is now helping QMU deliver a variety of new support initiatives, including widening access scholarships, student mobility, community engagement and outreach and entrepreneurship.

The new three-year commitment also means that Santander will support a number of QMU's outreach and community engagement projects involving, for the first time, local primary and secondary schools. Staff and children at Musselburgh Burgh Primary School were pleased to host a fun celebration that marked the beginning of this new QMU and Santander agreement.

QMU is committed to widening participation amongst students who have previously been inhibited from entering higher education for social, economic or cultural reasons. The Outreach and Community Engagement (OCE) team seeks to support students to join QMU from groups who may not traditionally access higher education. This includes those that are: first generation to go to higher education; from low progression schools; reside in communities in the lowest 20-40% of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (MD20/40); articulating students from Scotland's colleges, or those who are care leavers

or students with caring responsibilities.

Over the last ten years, the Santander partnership with QMU has already provided support for over 400 staff, students, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and charities. Students have received Santander scholarships; QMU staff and students have benefitted from research and mobility funding; students, graduates and local SMEs have participated in the Santander Universities SME Internship Programme and local charities have derived benefits from the Community Awards.

Funding over the last decade has also been used to increase the University's international reach, develop links with the local community, encourage outstanding research and teaching, and enhance employability for QMU students and graduates.

In recognition of the huge commitment from Santander over the last ten years, QMU has created a permanent dedication to the partnership by naming one of its lecture theatres 'The Santander Lecture Theatre'.

Professor Petra Wend, QMU Principal, said: "This renewed commitment from Santander is already making a huge difference to our students, staff and local community every single day, and I'm so privileged to have witnessed the transformational effects that this support has had on the University, the community and the student experience." □

## Trip of a lifetime made possible by Santander

An opportunity to study in Venice, made possible by Santander Universities funding, not only presented Liz Deeming with the trip of a lifetime, it helped improve her confidence and raise her aspirations.

Liz, a mature student on QMU's BSc Public Sociology, initially came to the University through the 'Mad People's History and Identity' project. The project aims to widen participation in higher education for people who have had lived experience of mental health issues.

During her degree, Liz was one of ten students who had the opportunity to learn about health inequalities and social care in Italy from world-class sociology and psychology academics at Ca Foscari University of Venice. The study group also embarked on cultural tours across the city and were given an insight into the historic treatment of Venetian mental health patients during a trip to the infamous San Servolo Insane Asylum Museum.

Liz said: "This was the first time I had travelled outside the UK in over 20 years and the experienced helped me focus on my studies at QMU, as well as how I look at the world. As a result of the trip, I now want to go on to postgraduate study in public sociology at QMU and ultimately become a lecturer in public sociology, specialising in veterans of the armed and emergency services." □

# Graduate donation allows more students to benefit from overseas exchanges

**Q** MU STUDENTS LOOKING to take part in an overseas exchange opportunity can now benefit from a substantial donation from a former student. Lisa Persdotter Simonyi, who is now based in the US, completed her BA (Hons) Corporate Communications in 2002 at what was then Queen Margaret University College. During her time at the Corstorphine campus, Lisa took part in an overseas exchange to Ithaca College in New York, an experience she believes shaped her career and her future.

QMU students can take part in an international exchange during year three of certain degree courses, and the University has a number of exchange agreements with universities in Europe, Canada, USA, Hong Kong, Australia and New Zealand.

Maddalena Galloni undertook an exchange to the University of Massachusetts Amherst whilst studying for her BA (Hons) Business Management. Discussing the opportunity, she said: "Having the chance to study abroad is a unique experience. Anyone who is lucky enough to be offered such an opportunity should take it. Not only do you get the chance to study at exclusive institutions, the experiences you gain will truly open your mind, boost your confidence and pave the way to further opportunities."

Universities UK International (UUKI), the representative body for all UK universities which acts in their collective interests globally, conducts research annually into the benefits of student mobility. Its 2018 report\* looked at the profiles, destinations and outcomes of students who studied, worked or volunteered abroad as part of their undergraduate degree. (\*Gone International: Expanding Opportunities Report on the 2015-16 graduating cohort, March 2018).

Every year its findings confirm a positive connection between outward mobility and improved academic and employment outcomes. Graduates who were mobile during their degree were: less likely to be unemployed; more likely to have earned a first class or upper second class degree; and more likely to be in a graduate level job earning 6% more than their non-mobile peers.

Lisa announced the \$150,000 gift following a trip back to her alma mater where she conducted the first in a series of talks by 'Excellent Women'. The series takes its name from the book written by Dr Tom Begg on the history of the institution that would become Queen Margaret University. The book recognises the outstanding work of Louisa Stevenson and Christian Guthrie Wright, founders of Edinburgh School of Cookery.

The Lisa Persdotter Simonyi Fund will ensure that all students have the opportunity to have the experience Lisa had to travel abroad, gain intellectual knowledge and cultural understanding, regardless of their financial situation. The first cohort of students in receipt of funding will embark on their travels in autumn 2019.

Lisa Simonyi said: "The opportunity that QMU provided me with - an exchange programme as a part of my degree - had an immense impact on me. It changed the trajectory of my academic aspiration and raised both my vision and ambition for what I wanted to accomplish in life. It was in equal parts thrilling and testing - a life altering experience I wish for more people to experience."

Dr Richard Butt, Deputy Principal at QMU, explained: "We know that student mobility has a direct impact on employability, and we therefore want to ensure that exchange prospects are available to all students who wish to benefit from them."

"We are incredibly grateful to Lisa for this generous donation which will provide students with an equal chance to pursue exciting exchange opportunities that will enrich their student experience and career prospects." □

Find out how exchanges are helping broaden our students' horizons.

Read our exchange blogs at:  
<https://qmuexchanges.wordpress.com>



Lisa Simonyi





# GRADUATES' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

By **Elaine Acaster**, Graduates' Association President

Queen Margaret University Graduates' Association, founded in 1914, promotes friendship among graduates and salaried members of staff of the University and its precursor institutions. We welcome members to all our events, and hope to attract new members during 2019. Despite the power of social media, our members also enjoy meeting in person and joining in activities through our annual programme of events.

## GDPR communication reminder

Some existing members still need to respond to the GDPR emails sent out by the QMUGA asking members to opt in to receive communications. If you haven't received emails from us since May 2018, please contact our membership secretary Sylvia Northcott on E: [sylvia@thenorthcotts.net](mailto:sylvia@thenorthcotts.net) to re-establish connection with your Association. Sylvia would also be pleased to receive enquiries from potential members. The cost of life membership is £35, if taken out in the year of your graduation. Members joining in the years following their graduation year will pay £45.

## Other news

During the last few months we enjoyed a wine tasting event at Majestic Wines and a Christmas lunch at the Edinburgh New Town Cookery School. The lunch, which was planned, prepared and served by QMU's BA (Hons) International Hospitality and Tourism Management students was a delightful way to end the year.

## Volunteer members needed

We encourage Graduates' Association members to share their news, ideas for events and their locations, as well as expressions of interest to help with the smooth running of the Association and our holiday home Madras Lodge. We rely entirely on member volunteers to provide leadership for the Association. Key QMUGA committee roles will soon become available, and we seek expressions of interest from members who have senior leadership experience and time to take the organisation forward. Business and digital media skills would also be especially welcome. If you are able to assist, please do make contact with me by 5 April on E: [elaineacaster@gmail.com](mailto:elaineacaster@gmail.com) so we can discuss ideas and opportunities.

Elaine Acaster  
President, Queen Margaret Graduates' Association

## Q.M.U.G.A.

### CONTACTS

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#### Treasurer

Anne Scagell  
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T: 01259 214668

Gullane beach near  
Madras Lodge

### Madras Lodge, Gullane

Madras Lodge is a house owned by the Graduate Association situated in Gullane, East Lothian. Any Graduate Association member can rent this wonderful facility for holidays or short-breaks

### Madras Lodge volunteers – urgent request for help

We currently have an urgent need to strengthen the pool of volunteers on the Committee which manages Madras Lodge. Without sufficient volunteers by the time of the AGM in June, there is a risk of being unable to offer bookings for 2020 and having to consider the overall future of Madras Lodge. Madras Lodge has been a great asset for the Graduates' Association and has been enjoyed by many members and their families over the years. Please help in any way you can so that future generations can continue to enjoy Madras Lodge.

If you can help in any way please contact Liz Logie-Maclver on email E: [mlchair@qmuga.org.uk](mailto:mlchair@qmuga.org.uk) by 5th April 2019. Some roles can be done remotely from Edinburgh/Gullane.

### 2019 Bookings – limited availability

The accommodation is split into two. Members can rent the House (sleeping five) and/or the Loft (sleeping four). Members are welcome to stay at Madras Lodge with their friends and family, perhaps for a relaxing weekend break or even a two week stay. Costs are very reasonable for this attractive and popular part of Scotland. Rentals range from £100 for a two-night break in low- season in the Loft, to £420 for a week's rental of the House in the height of summer. Bookings are open now and there is still availability for dates in 2019, particularly during the spring, autumn and winter periods.

### Madras Lodge contacts:

W: <https://sites.google.com/site/madraslodge/home>

E: [mlbook@qmuga.org.uk](mailto:mlbook@qmuga.org.uk)

### Follow Madras Lodge on:

Facebook: @madraslodge

Twitter: @madraslodge

## Benefit from the Alumni Referral Scheme

### Are you a current QMU student or graduate?

### Did you know that you can get a fee for referring a student who goes on to study at postgraduate level at QMU?

If you know anyone who'd like to study a postgraduate course, then refer them to the QMU admissions team and you could receive £150.

It's a win-win situation. You receive a fee and they get to study a great course that should improve their career opportunities.

Conditions apply but find out more by looking at the 'Benefits and Services to Alumni' section on the QMU website [www.qmu.ac.uk](http://www.qmu.ac.uk) □



## Graduate 10% discount scheme

### Are you considering moving on to postgraduate study?

QMU offers a 10% discount on published postgraduate tuition fees for alumni who have graduated with an undergraduate degree from QMU. This discount is available for students who register for a full or part-time postgraduate degree and who hold a verified QMU undergraduate or postgraduate award.

This discount applies to home, EU and overseas students, and applies to the self-funding element of the postgraduate tuition fee only. It does not apply to any part of the tuition fee which is covered by a scholarship, funding body, your employer, a company, or any another source of funding.

To find out more about this discount scheme contact E: [Admissions@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:Admissions@qmu.ac.uk) □

### Future events:

#### EVENT: Informal coffee get-together

**DATE:** second Tuesday of the month from January to April 2019

**TIME:** 11am

**LOCATION:** The Principal Edinburgh on George Street (formerly George Hotel), 19–21 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2PB

**DETAILS:** We are piloting this new social format on Tuesdays. Dates so far include the 12 March and 9 April.

**BOOKING:** Booking not required. Please come along and join us.

#### EVENT: Dinner at Edinburgh New Town Cookery School

**DATE:** Tuesday 26 March

**TIME:** 6.30pm

**LOCATION:** Edinburgh New Town Cookery School (ENTCS), 7 Queen's Street, Edinburgh, EH2 1JE

**DETAILS:** This is a dining experience that should be enjoyable for QMU graduates whilst also supporting the learning experience of BA (Hons) International Hospitality and Tourism Management students as they develop their practical cooking and service skills at the ENTCS. The theme for the event is 'Flavours of Spring in Scotland'.

**COST:** £25 exclusive of wine

**BOOKING:** Booking and payment by Friday 15 March 2019 to Anne Scagell, 11 Titania, Alloa, Clackmannanshire, FK10 2UJ.

T: 01259 214668, E: [annescagell49@gmail.com](mailto:annescagell49@gmail.com); electronic transfer QMUGA, sort code 80-02-77 account 00707066; ref Family Name / Event.

#### EVENT: Queen Margaret University Graduates' Association, AGM

**DATE:** Friday 7 June - Coffee 11am, AGM 11.30am followed by a sandwich lunch.

**LOCATION:** Gillespie MacAndrew LLP, 5 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh EH3 8EJ

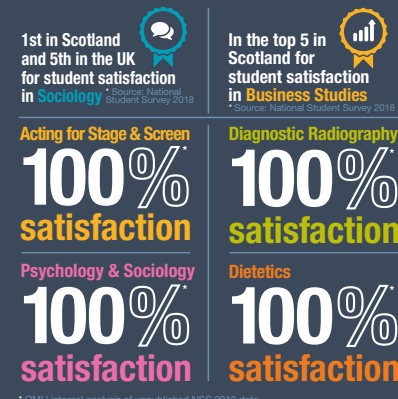
**BOOKING:** Please confirm attendance for all/any of the following elements of the event: coffee (hosted by Gillespie MacAndrew); AGM; and optional sandwich lunch (cost £8).

Booking and payment to Anne Scagell, Treasurer, by Friday 24 May (contact details as above).



At Queen Margaret University,  
our vision is to be a university of ideas and influence.

## National Student Survey 2018



Ranked **3rd in Scotland and 4th in the UK** for Nursing in the Guardian University League Table 2019

## Top Scottish 'post '92' university in the Complete University Guide 2019

(post '92' refers to institutions granted university title since 1992)

## Age of students



## Undergraduate leavers in employment or further study

**97.1%**



**94.6%**

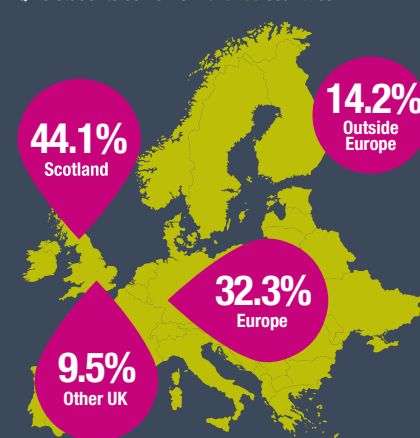


**3rd** in Scotland for employment of undergraduate leavers

\* Source: HESA 2018

## Student distribution by origin (2017 – 2018)

QMU students come from **over 90** countries



**35+** graduate start-ups created through our Business Innovation Zone



**1st** Scottish university to host a **Business Gateway** on campus

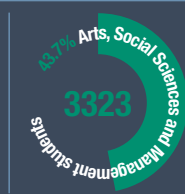
## Student numbers (2017 – 2018: including overseas collaborations)



**7601** Total number of students



**2462** QMU students are studying for a QMU degree through our overseas collaborations



## QMU staff (as of December 2018)

**258** Academic

**224** Professional Services

Female **65%**

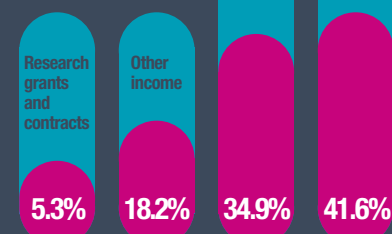
Male **35%**

## Income

**£37,034**



## Sources of income (2017-2018)



## Research excellence

**92%** of our research in **Speech and Language** is classed as internationally excellent or world leading



**77%+** of our research publications in **Media and Communications** are classed as internationally excellent or world leading



**50%+** of our research profile in **Global Health and Development** is classed as internationally excellent or world leading



**40%+** of our research publications in **Allied Health** are classed as internationally excellent or world leading



**6** research centres and **3** knowledge exchange centres

## Flagships

**Health and rehabilitation**

**Creativity and culture**

**Sustainable business**

# DATES for your diary



**EVENT: Conference - 'Biting back: Transforming food experiences for Scotland's children'**

**DATE: Wednesday 20 March 2019**

**DETAILS:** Children and family health issues will be the main focus of this national food conference to be staged by QMU and Children in Scotland. It will look at the latest research, creative approaches and current projects aimed at improving food experiences, and the health and wellbeing of children and their families. Prue Leith CBE, QMU's Chancellor, will be one of the speakers at the conference.

**LOCATION:** Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh

**FURTHER INFO:** visit the events section of the QMU website: [www.qmu.ac.uk](http://www.qmu.ac.uk)



**EVENT: Ride the Night (external cycle event)**

**DATE: Saturday 29 June 2019**

**DETAILS:** Thousands of Ride the Night Edinburgh challengers will unite to cycle 100km through Edinburgh at night to support three women's cancer charities, Breast Cancer Care, Ovarian Cancer Action and Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust. The event starts in the grounds of QMU with motivational speeches, music and warm-ups. Then thousands of women will ride a circular route around Edinburgh's historic landmarks to cross the finishing line back at QMU. The University is pleased to have a team taking part in this event.

**FURTHER INFO:** [www.dream-challenges.com](http://www.dream-challenges.com)

**EVENTS: QMU Undergraduate Open Days**

**DATES: Saturday 21 September and Saturday 12 October 2019**

**DETAILS:** Prospective students can find out about courses, talk to academic and support staff, attend course and general information talks, see the facilities and go on a campus tour.

**TIMES:** 11am – 4pm

**FURTHER INFO:** [www.qmu.ac.uk/open-days-and-meeting-us/](http://www.qmu.ac.uk/open-days-and-meeting-us/)

**EVENTS: Postgraduate Open Evening**

**DATES: Wednesday 20 November 2019**

**DETAILS:** Prospective students can find out about courses, talk to academic and support staff, get advice on funding and the application process, see the facilities and go on a campus tour.

**FURTHER INFO:** [www.qmu.ac.uk/open-days-and-meeting-us/](http://www.qmu.ac.uk/open-days-and-meeting-us/)



## ALUMNI EVENTS

**EVENT: Edinburgh Alumni Networking Event**

**DATE: April 2019**

**VENUE: TBC**

**DETAILS:** Join fellow graduates of QMU for an evening of networking and wine tasting where we will celebrate our entrepreneurial alumni. QMU's MSc Gastronomy graduate, Nikki Welch, will be on hand with her winetubemap.

**FURTHER INFO:** Places are limited so please contact E: [alumni@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@qmu.ac.uk)

**EVENT: Reunion**

**ALUMNI GROUP: Atholl Crescent 1963-1967**

**DATE: Saturday 22 June 2019**

**DETAILS:** Did you start at Atholl Crescent in 1963 and finish in 1967? Your classmates are having a reunion at QMU on Saturday 22 June. If you are interested in coming along, please contact us on E: [tinahammond22@hotmail.com](mailto:tinahammond22@hotmail.com)

**EVENT: Reunion Weekend**

**ALUMNI GROUP: Physiotherapy Class of 1999**

**DATES: Saturday 10 & Sunday 11 August 2019**

**DETAILS:** Celebrating 20 years since graduation, the physiotherapy class of 1999 is holding a reunion weekend. E: [lornasinclair@yahoo.com](mailto:lornasinclair@yahoo.com) for further details.

**EVENT: Reunion**

**ALUMNI GROUP: Atholl Crescent 1965-1968 or 1969**

**DATE: Wednesday 11 September 2019**

**DETAILS:** Did you start at Atholl Crescent in 1965 and finish in either 1968 or 1969? Your classmates are having a reunion at QMU on Wednesday 11 September. If you are interested in coming along, please email E: [fionadavies@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:fionadavies@blueyonder.co.uk)

**EVENT: Reunion**

**ALUMNI GROUP: Home Economics Class of 1979**

**DATES: 26th October 2019**

**DETAILS:** Celebrating 40 years since graduation, the Home Economics class of 1979 is holding a reunion. Contact E: [alumni@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@qmu.ac.uk) or E: [a\\_drummond@btopenworld.com](mailto:a_drummond@btopenworld.com) for further details.

For information about alumni events and reviews contact E: [alumni@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@qmu.ac.uk)