



University applications drop by 50,000 amid rising fees

AMHEC members continue to meet fresh challenges this summer as recent figures released from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) show that applications have plummeted by 50,000 as growing numbers are put off by annual tuition fees of up to £9,000.

The news that applications to British universities are down 7.7% on last year's figures only adds to mounting pressure on HE managers who are already working hard to deliver flexible and efficient new systems to provide a first rate HE experience for students.

General Secretary of the University and College Union Sally Hunt said: "It should come as little surprise that applications in England are hardest-hit as a result of the government making it the most expensive country in the world in which to gain a public degree education. The number of older people being deterred from applying is particularly concerning. If we want to compete with other leading economies and produce highly-skilled workers we simply cannot afford to have a system that puts people off university."

All this comes in addition to a year that has seen significant higher education policy change for HE managers with reductions in teaching budgets, the launch of the White Paper, publication of the Research and Innovation Strategy and the introduction of a core and margin model.

Meeting Change with Change

With all this in mind, AMHEC's conference 'Meeting Change with Change' held at University of Chester in March provided an invaluable forum for AMHEC members to look at ways of tackling common key management issues.

Leading sessions included 'Higher Education 2012: Present tense, future imperfect?' by Dr John Cater, Vice-Chancellor of Edge Hill University; 'Prioritising quality in a competing agenda' by Dr Jayne Mitchell, Director of Research, Development and Partnership, QAA and 'Policy and business challenges in the new HE environment' by Andy Westwood, Chief Executive, GuildHE and Jeremy Holmes, Chief Operating Officer, UUK. A range of workshops allowed AMHEC members from a variety of disciplines to join together for wide ranging debate as well as knowledge exchange. Further details are available at www.amhec.org.uk/events

See inside for details about AMHEC's Annual Workshop 'Delivering Excellence in a New Framework' to be held on 13-14 September 2012 at Stranmillis University College, Belfast.

Smaller institutions eligible for university title

Six more AMHEC members are now eligible to apply for full university status, following the Government's decision to abolish arbitrary size limits restricting the use of the university title.

The institutions who might now consider if they wish to apply are: The Arts University College at Bournemouth, Bishop Grosseteste University College Lincoln, Leeds Trinity University College, Newman University College, St Mary's University College, Twickenham and Norwich University College of the Arts.

Under current rules, higher education institutions that confer their own degrees but have less than 4,000 students cannot call themselves a university, despite being subject to the same quality of standards as full universities.

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The new qualifying threshold will now be reduced to 1,000 full-time students and create a level playing field for smaller specialist institutions.

"The change corrects an anomaly in the system and will help reduce public confusion surrounding the nature of university colleges," said Professor Peter Lutzeier, Principal and Chief Executive of Newman University College in Birmingham. "As we move towards a more marketised system of higher education, the clarification of what constitutes

a full university is particularly important as students need to know they're comparing like with like when choosing courses."

The change has also been welcomed by AMHEC institutions who say there has been confusion amongst students and employers about what a university college actually constitutes.

"This is good news for Bishop Grosseteste University College, which has around 2,000 students, since the current system puts us at a disadvantage," said Principal Professor Muriel Robinson. "We have

150 years of history, enjoy an excellent reputation and have awarded our own degrees since 2004 but the 'University College' title has been a brake on our ability to recruit students and secure the recognition our work deserves."

The Chief Executive of GuildHE also commented: "Smaller institutions have long offered greater agility, smaller classes, stronger graduate employment and better retention rates. The opportunity to apply for the university title recognises the excellence and diversity they bring to the HE sector."

Building a greener future together

AMHEC recently submitted a feasibility report to HEFCE relating to the possible creation of a shared carbon management service. The report set out the findings from a survey and interviews with AMHEC members into the level of demand for a shared carbon management service.

The responses to the survey demonstrated that there is overwhelming demand for such a service across the AMHEC membership.

The report recommended that HEFCE funding be provided to establish a shared carbon management service which will be available to all AMHEC and GuildHE member institutions. A decision on

funding is likely to be confirmed shortly and, if successful, the service will launch in August 2012.

If you would like to know more about the proposed shared carbon management service please do not hesitate to contact Andrew Young. ayoung@aspectmanagement.co.uk

Bath Spa University in Green League top ten

Bath Spa University has been awarded a First Class Award and ranked 8th out of 145 in the People & Planet Green League 2012 – the UK's only comprehensive and independent green ranking of universities.

The People & Planet Green League assesses the environmental and ethical performance of all universities annually, awarding First Class 'degrees' to the greenest and 'fail' to those doing the least to address their environmental impacts. Bath Spa University is among 46 institutions to achieve a 'First' in 2012.

The University's ambitious Carbon Management Plan has so far achieved a

25 per cent reduction in carbon emissions from 2005 levels and is on course to deliver 50 per cent savings by 2020. The University has also significantly increased recycling and reduced waste. In the past six years waste to landfill has been reduced by nearly 300 per cent which has been helped by the introduction of a food waste initiative last year.

Bath Spa University's EcoCampus and ISO 14001 EMS accreditation helps ensure continuous improvements across a range of environmental indicators. The University is also proud to have been awarded 'Fairtrade University status' earlier this year.

Bath Spa University Environmental Officer

Ola Bankole said: "This year's Green League result is an encouragement and vindication for the sustainability path Bath Spa University has wholly embraced. It reflects the commitment right across the University - from the Vice-Chancellor to staff and students - to embed an environmental culture in every aspect of the University's operations and activities. This excellent performance will only spur us to continue to improve."

Nationally, the People & Planet Green League table reveals that the university sector has cut carbon emissions for the first time, recording a 5 per cent reduction compared to 2011 results.



Shared legal service goes live!

Following the successful shared legal services feasibility study undertaken by AMHEC, the new HE Shared Legal Service was launched on 1 May 2012. In its formative period the service will be funded by HEFCE.

The service is primarily focussed towards providing the equivalent of an in-house legal service to AMHEC and GuildHE members at a fraction of the cost of employing an in-house lawyer. In addition the service will work with purchasing consortia to achieve significant savings in the cost of legal work.

Neil Hunter has been appointed as Principal Lawyer for HE Shared Legal and he will be supported by another lawyer, Nafeesa Khan, and an administrator, Natalie Hugo.

Neil and his team are currently working with a number of AMHEC members and providing guidance notes on legal topics as well as advising on legal questions. AMHEC members also attended a Focus Group in April to assist in shaping the outputs of the service.

If you would like to know more about the HE Shared Legal please do not hesitate to contact Andrew Young at www.amhec.org.uk/links



Benchmarking in HE

The AMHEC benchmarking project has undergone a number of changes in the past year. Additional HEFCE funding has allowed the project to expand more widely across the HE sector. The project has been rebranded as 'Benchmarking in HE' and has attracted a lot of interest given the recent emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness across higher education.

The AMHEC project was signposted in the recent report produced by the Efficiency and Modernisation Task Group, set up by Universities UK and chaired by Professor Ian Diamond, as a case study in how an effective benchmarking project can function.

In addition to the rebranding of the project, the benchmarking software is in the process of being redeveloped. This redevelopment will see enhancements to the web based software which will be renamed 'BenchmarkHE'. A new reporting tool will be available in the software to provide users with an increased range of reporting formats and outputs.

A programme of benchmarking workshops is currently being confirmed and the topics will include:

- Corporate Planning
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Marketing
- Enterprises

A further development of the project is to adopt a set of value for money benchmark indicators which cover the following areas:

- Finance
- Human Resources
- Estates
- IT
- Procurement

Each of these areas will have approximately 10 key indicators of value for money. The indicators will be incorporated into the existing software to enable HEIs to produce benchmark reports assessing their performance.

Full details of the Benchmarking project and its future plans to expand the number of HEIs engaged with the project are available at www.amhec.org.uk/links

Honours for AMHEC at THELMAs

Congratulations go to the following AMHEC members who reached the shortlist for this year's *Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Awards*, also known as the THELMAs:

Outstanding Human Resources Team
University of Cumbria

ICT Initiative of the Year
Edge Hill University

Outstanding Registry Team
Canterbury Christ Church University and
Edge Hill University

Outstanding Student Services Team
University of Chester

Outstanding Departmental Administration Team
Edge Hill University

Outstanding Leadership and Management Team
University of Winchester

It's a triple success for Edge Hill University who has been shortlisted for three awards in what are considered as the Oscars of the educational world. Celebrating the talent and dedicated staff working to steer universities through a time of unprecedented change, the awards recognise the very best in the sector.

Edge Hill's Vice-Chancellor John Cater said: "To be nominated for such prestigious accolades against stiff competition from across the country is an achievement in itself and reflects the forward-thinking of these teams."

Winners are due to be announced at a glittering gala dinner at the Grosvenor House Hotel, Park Lane, London on Thursday 21 June 2012.

THE LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT AWARDS 2012 SHORTLISTED

The Arts University College A Campus



The Arts University College at Bournemouth (AUCB) is one of the leading specialist arts, design, media and performance universities in the UK. With over 125 years of experience, the AUCB strives to give its students the relevant skills and knowledge to provide the creative industries with the leading practitioners of the future.

Its continual success and growth saw the AUCB attain degree awarding powers in 2009 and extend its degree offering to include PHD/MPhil degrees from 2011. Following the Government's 11th June 2012 announcement regarding the qualifying threshold for university title the AUCB will be allowed to apply for full university title. With over 3,500 students on a growing creative campus, the AUCB

now offers a number of further, higher and postgraduate degrees, short evening courses, summer courses and Saturday arts school.

The AUCB believes that the best way to nurture and develop creative talent



s of Creativity

is through a studio-based learning environment, whatever the chosen specialist field within arts, media, design or performance. The facilities at the AUCB are second to none. It has one of the largest purpose-built specialist libraries in the South, with over 45,000 specialist books and 40,000 e-books.

The AUCB also has a contemporary Gallery that has featured both national and international artists, including Turner Prize winner and AUCB Alumnus Wolfgang Tillmans and seminal 60's photographer Philip Townsend.

The Museum of Design in Plastics (MoDiP) holds more than 8,000 (20th Century) international, historical and contemporary design examples relating directly to the AUCB's specialist areas of study. There is a dedicated film studio, editing suites, photographic studios, Mac computer suites, 3D workshops and high end digital photographic printing and darkrooms.

Collaboration is rooted deep within the AUCB's philosophy. Excellence in a chosen field often requires a high degree of cross-discipline understanding, mutual respect and teamwork. This "real world" ethos is a crucial part of the AUCB experience.

Where possible, collaborative projects are built into the curriculum and encouraged as good practice. Photographers work with



fashion and costume students; animators collaborate with modelmakers and filmmakers; and illustrators design work for acting productions and arts events.

Creative industries integration

Investing in the future of its students, the AUCB is also home to the Enterprise Pavilion (eP), a unique initiative that works at developing, attracting and retaining creative businesses in the South West. It offers a number of business support services and incubation office spaces with industry-standard equipment and facilities.

Oscar-winning visual effects house, Framestore has created a regional outpost for visual effects preparatory work within the eP. Framestore's Bournemouth studio is being staffed by recent graduates who have received training to undertake preparatory work for the wider company. The outpost acts as a support satellite for overflow work, providing tracking and paint/rotoscope work for large-scale visual effects briefs, such as feature films, in Framestore's London HQ. The studio may also be used by Framestore's additional offices in New York and Reykjavik.

Another initiative students can become involved in is Design Buddies, a project devised with the South West Design Forum and funded by Universities South West and the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship. The scheme pairs final year design students with industry mentors from local design companies. The pair then meet in flexible, informal sessions so that the student can draw on their 'buddy's' knowledge and experience of the industry.

Bournemouth skillset screen and media academy

The Bournemouth Skillset Media Academy, a partnership between the Arts University College at Bournemouth and Bournemouth University's Media School, is the largest centre of professional higher education for the film and media industries in the UK, and offers some of the world's finest



education and training in the disciplines of practical creative media.

Bournemouth's joint reputation reaches across the planet with alumni winning the very highest accolades in film and media including BAFTAs, Oscars and Emmys.

The art of marketing

The AUCB doesn't always do tradition within Marketing; with the tougher challenges facing the HE sector, the AUCB ran a competition in partnership with leading outdoor advertising company JCDecaux. The competition, 'Who Are You?', asked young artists and designers to create a piece of artwork that best describes who they are in the world today. The result saw both national and international entries shortlisted by a panel of creative industry experts, before the final 10 winners artwork was supersized on 50 billboards across the country – not advertising the AUCB, but advertising themselves.

The resulting PR coverage, alongside the 50 billboards that were given as part of this unique partnership with JCDecaux, far surpassed anything our modest advertising budget would have achieved.

The AUCB is not a campus; it's a springboard for creative talent.



STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
A College of Queen's University Belfast

Stranmillis University College was founded in 1922 to provide teacher education in Northern Ireland on a non-denominational basis. It is situated in a beautiful and historic campus made up of 46 acres of land, most of which is a designated conservation area.

The College has a long and distinguished history, spanning nearly 90 years, nurturing excellence amongst educational professionals in Northern Ireland. While initial teacher education remains its core activity,

it also offers complementary professional courses in the fields of Early Childhood Education, Health and Leisure. As a result of its passionate commitment to the pursuit of high quality scholarship and experience of professional practice, Stranmillis maintains strong links to local schools, policy-making bodies and communities, whilst partnering with teacher education institutions both locally and globally

Celebrating diversity and shared learning is at the core of the College's values.

It maintains a long-standing relationship with St Mary's University College, Belfast. Both University Colleges have been academically integrated with Queen's University Belfast, since 1998. The Colleges collaborate through initiatives such as the programme for Diversity and Mutual Understanding. Since 2011, Stranmillis, having received funding of £839k from the International Fund for Ireland, has been collaborating with St Mary's University College to deliver training to teachers working in the areas of diversity and inclusion.

Excellence in Teaching & Learning

Stranmillis University College has long been recognised for the quality of its educational,

AMHEC Workshop 2012

'Delivering Excellence in a New Framework'

13-14 September 2012
at Stranmillis University College,
Belfast

This year's AMHEC workshop will take place at Stranmillis University College in the city of Belfast. Building on past events, the workshop will provide the chance for members to reflect upon the current challenges within HE reform and explore ways to continue to drive excellence within institutions.

There will also be interactive sessions to discuss and look at related subjects with presentations on business process engineering, creating capacity, financial performance and delivering excellence through people.

There should be plenty of opportunity to discuss current issues and share practice with colleagues in the sector.

To secure your place complete a booking form which can be found on www.amhec.org.uk. Cost £225 to include one night's accommodation and meals.

Stranmillis University College is 15 minutes from Belfast City Airport, 40 minutes from Belfast International Airport and 15 minutes from the Port of Belfast.

If you need advice about travel options please contact Louise McGroarty either by email on amhec@yorks.ac.uk or phone 01904 876565.

social, sporting and cultural provision to students. The University College strives to nurture the highest professional and personal aspirations of its students. In addition, a broad-range of extracurricular activities, initiated by the student body itself, creates a unique camaraderie amongst the students which extends into all aspects of campus life.

As well as its provision of courses to undergraduate and Masters level students, Stranmillis delivers a growing portfolio of Professional Development and Lifelong Learning courses, engaging with educational professionals and the wider community. The College is committed to the vision of developing a culture of scholarship and research which informs

teaching and learning and influences policy and practice.

Community Engagement

Across all aspects of work at Stranmillis, its engagement with the world beyond the College campus makes for a dynamic, outward-looking and vibrant environment for working, teaching and learning. From working with local schools and community groups, to facilitating international exchange programmes, or presenting research findings at international and national conferences, Stranmillis takes pride in cultivating collaborative relationships with external stakeholders at all community and professional levels.

Through its Widening Participation programme, Stranmillis also works to encourage and inspire students from the widest possible range of educational, social and cultural backgrounds to consider careers in education.

International links are set to strengthen further, particularly in the United States, where collaborative partnerships have been made with the Institute for Study Abroad: Butler University in Indianapolis and the University of Virginia. Stranmillis also offers professional development programmes for teachers in Malaysia and Shanghai, China.



University of Winchester takes Street Arts to the Olympic Games

A group of talented students from the University of Winchester's BA Street Arts programme have been selected to perform at the Olympic Stadium this summer to entertain the crowds with interactive and walkabout acts for London 2012.

"This is an incredible opportunity for our students," said John Lee, Programme Leader for BA Street Arts at Winchester, one of the first courses of its kind in Europe. "We encourage them to get as much experience in public performance as possible

but performing at the Olympic Stadium is a chance of a lifetime."

The students made their debut at the Olympic Stadium in May in front of a crowd of 35,000 at Sainsbury's 2012 School Games. Organisers were so impressed the students were asked to return for the Olympic Games.

"The excellent performances by the students have now opened the doors for Street Arts at the Olympics. Each day there will be 100 performances. The University of

Winchester has paved the way."

The students were talent spotted earlier in the year by a South East Arts Officer for the 2012 Cultural Olympiad who had seen their work on *The Art of Demonstration* at Winchester's Performing Arts Studios. The University was awarded the London 2012 Inspire Mark for the project which involved interactive workshops with the internationally-acclaimed performance company Periplum.



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Christ Church University, University of
Chester,

University of Chichester, Edge Hill
University, Liverpool Hope University,
Newman University College, Norwich
University College of the Arts, University
of Cumbria, St Mary's University College,
Belfast, St Mary's University College,
Twickenham, Stranmillis University College,
Belfast, Leeds Trinity University College,
Trinity College Carmarthen, Trinity Laban
Conservatoire of Music and Dance,
University for the Creative Arts, University
of Winchester, York St John University.

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