



Aber^rNEWS

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UNIVERSITY NEWS

Information Services under one roof

Over the summer the Hugh Owen Library will be undergoing some changes. Following feedback from staff and students, a new quiet computer room, more toilets and in fact, all the services offered by Information Services will now be located under one roof. Also in response to requests from students, some of the space released in Llandinam will be used for a new postgraduate student facility.

Rebecca Davies, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Director of Information Services explains, "We've listened to what students and staff have been telling us about how they'd like all IS services to be based in one central point on campus. This move will ensure that our customers will be able to access the IT and Library Enquiry Desks, ICT and Media Technical Services and Stunet from the library.

"To make room for all the IS staff in the library, the Hugh Owen building will undergo some structural changes. Some disruption is inevitable which is why the work is being undertaken during the quieter summer months. The resulting changes will ensure a better experience for all library users. There will be a new quiet computer room on Level F, additional toilets on Level E, better energy-efficient lighting throughout the library, and improved access to IS services and staff."

The building work will start in mid-June and will be completed by Freshers' weekend. For further details, and to keep up to date with developments as they happen, please visit the IS Facebook pages www.facebook.com/aberuni.is

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COMMUNICATIONS and PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Copy deadline for September 2011 edition is Monday 18th July.

Aberystwyth University and the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

As the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol prepares to host its first conference at Aberystwyth on the 5th of July, Dr Mari Elin Jones from the Centre for Welsh Language Services here at AU outlines the role of this new institution.

In September 2011 The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol will admit its first student members. This new national institution will play a key role in supporting, developing and supervising Welsh-Medium provision in the Higher Education Sector in Wales. It will not exist in one geographical location and will not award its own degrees, but will, rather, work in partnership with Welsh universities.

In 2009 the Welsh Assembly Government decided to accept the recommendations of a report prepared at the request of the Minister for Education to create a 'Coleg Ffederal Cymraeg' or 'Welsh Federal College', and an Executive Board was established to review the process of establishing The Coleg. The Executive Board has now completed its work, and The Coleg Cymraeg is a new and independent legal entity with its own constitution.

It is important to note that establishing The Coleg Cymraeg is the culmination of years of campaigning by friends of the Welsh language, as well as years of diligent academic activity by universities such as Aberystwyth, Bangor and Trinity St David, who are considered to be the main providers of Welsh Medium Higher Education. The Coleg Cymraeg will bring together the expertise of these three institutions, as well as other universities who have seen their Welsh medium provision increase during recent years.

What effect will establishing The Coleg have on the University's Welsh Medium provision?

- Our academic departments will continue to teach the modules and degree schemes that are part of the present Welsh-medium provision. They will have an increased opportunity to collaborate with corresponding departments in other HEI's through the National Network Panels, building on the success of the present collaborative modules.
- Many projects are funded at the University already, and departments will have the opportunity to apply for more finance from the Strategic Developments and Projects Fund in order to develop modules and materials to support students studying through the medium of Welsh.
- Students will have the opportunity to benefit from collaborative modules offered through the video network or residential modules, and all the necessary resources will be available for them on the national platform, Y Porth (www.porth.ac.uk).
- Departments who have appropriate degree schemes and can offer 80 credits through the medium of Welsh in each year, will be part of the Lead Scholarship Scheme for Undergraduates at The Coleg, and students can receive finance of £3000 over a period of three years.

- Incentive Scholarships, to the value of £1500 over a period of three years, will allow students to apply for finance to study appropriate Welsh-medium degree schemes offering 40 credits in each year.
- The Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme for postgraduates will continue, and academic posts will be created at the end of the funding period.

What about publishing academic research through the medium of Welsh?

- The University has appointed a Publications Officer, funded nationally, to be responsible for the Research and Publication Strategy of The Coleg. The work of the Publications Officer will be an extension of the Gwerddon project (www.gwerddon.org) and the aim will be to increase the number of Welsh publications using the latest e-publishing technology.

How will staff become members of the Coleg Cymraeg?

- Present members of staff who teach through the medium of Welsh, or who wish to teach through the medium of Welsh, can become members of The Coleg Cymraeg. This will not affect their membership of Aberystwyth University.
- The Coleg will fund about 20 academic posts annually for a period of 5 years. These lectureships will be located within University departments across Wales.
- Six academic posts will be funded in Aberystwyth University through the Academic Staffing Scheme in 2011/12. The lecturers appointed will receive a contract by The Coleg, through the University, that will outline their specific duties in relation to the development of Welsh-medium provision.

How will students become members of The Coleg Cymraeg?

- Present students, new students and prospective students can become members of The Coleg. This will not affect their membership of Aberystwyth University.
- Student members will have access to learning resources on Y Porth; they will have the opportunity to apply for undergraduate and postgraduate scholarships, and an opportunity to get a Language Skills Certificate.
- Information regarding work experience opportunities, where the ability to work bilingually is essential, will be available for Coleg members also.

How will the Coleg be promoted?

- The University will continue marketing its Welsh-medium provision through the present structures.
- Mantais's national campaign (www.mantais.ac.uk) will work with schools to promote a continuation into Welsh-Medium Higher Education.

We look forward to playing a prominent part in this important development in the history of Welsh-Medium Higher Education in the University and the sector in Wales.

Further information about the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol is available at www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk

Vice-Chancellor's column



Higher Education continues to experience rapid change – a recurring theme in my contributions to Aber News! The acceleration of change have been very evident over recent months: we are in a period of exceptional turbulence. We have seen serious reductions in funding from government – with the recurrent grant to Aberystwyth University for 2011/2012 showing a reduction of about 10% in the baseline compared with that for the previous year – a position which is broadly typical for the sector.

We also see the fundamental shift, from 2012 onwards, in the mechanism for the funding of Higher Education. You will read elsewhere in Aber News about the University's decision to establish the level of 'graduate contribution' for Home/EU undergraduates at £9000 per annum from 2012/13.

It is important that we explain how repayment of the fee loan is going to work: it is a percentage of earnings above a certain level, which initially will be £21,000 p.a., and we will be preparing information for departments so that staff can respond to questions raised by prospective students and their families in open days and visiting days.

The Welsh Government's policy is to allow universities to charge up to £9000 per annum for Home/EU undergraduates, but to cover the difference between current levels of fee and those determined for the future for all students ordinarily resident in Wales, wherever they study in the UK. This applies also to students from the EU outside the UK, studying in Wales.

Clearly the impact of the new funding regime is a major uncertainty for the future.

In the medium term I want to emphasise the importance to the University of a good performance in the REF when it comes.

The future of Aberystwyth University as an institution where research is important, depends critically on our performance in the REF. In an environment which is becoming sharply more competitive and in which concentration of research funding is increasing, we must ensure that we do everything within our power to further improve our performance – the next six to nine months are critical.

The University is also experiencing changes in personnel, and I want to mention two in particular. First, Brian Foster is retiring after an association with the University which spans 40 years. Having come to Aberystwyth as an undergraduate, Brian progressed through the Registry and has been a hugely valuable member of the Senior Management Team as Director of Planning and of the Academic Registry. I wish him well in retirement.

David Craddock has left CCS to become Chief Executive of High Performance Computing Wales (HPC Wales), a large project which is being run by a Special Purpose Vehicle owned by the universities in Wales and which will provide exciting opportunities for universities and business to develop the use of cutting-edge computing technology.

These two changes have led to adjustment to some reporting lines. The Research Office and CCS report directly to the PVC (Research), currently Professor Aled Jones, and the Academic Office and the Admissions and Recruitment office report to the PVC with responsibility for Learning and Teaching, Professor Martin Jones.

Tuition fees for 2012-13

Following a meeting of the University Council on Monday 9th of May Aberystwyth became the first university in Wales to announce that it would be charging £9000 per annum for tuition for the 2012/3 academic year.

The Council needed to ensure that future revenues substituted for any phased reduction in government support, were invested in capital and teaching infrastructure to maintain a competitive position, covered the expected effects of inflation, and in particular were aligned with the priorities of the Welsh Government and the Funding Council.

A summary paper setting out the relevant factors in reaching the decision is available online at

www.aber.ac.uk/en/media/Graduate-Contribution.pdf

All universities in Wales were required to submit their fee plans to HEFCW by the 31st of May. Once approved by HEFCW, a process which should be completed by the 11th of July, each university's fee plans will need to be made available online within 7 days.

Graduation 2011

This year's graduation ceremonies will take place the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th of July. The order of ceremonies is as follows:

Tuesday 12 July 2011

Ceremony 1: 11am
English and Creative Writing
History and Welsh History
European Languages

Ceremony 2: 3pm
School of Management and Business
Sport and Exercise Science

Wednesday 13 July 2011

Ceremony 3: 11am
International Politics
School of Art

Ceremony 4: 3pm
Theatre, Film and Television Studies
Education

Thursday 14 July 2011

Ceremony 5: 11am
Law and Criminology
Psychology
Information Studies

Ceremony 6: 3pm
Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences
Welsh

Friday 15 July 2011

Ceremony 7: 11am
Computer Science
Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences

Ceremony 8: 3pm
Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences
Institute of Mathematics and Physics

Further information is available online at

www.aber.ac.uk/en/graduation/

CAREERS ADVISORY SERVICE

A toolkit for supporting students

An online toolkit to support staff in their interactions with students, has been developed by a cross University team led by Julie Keenan, Reflective Learning Officer in the Careers Advisory Service and Caryl Davies, Assistant Director of Student Support.

The Supporting Students Toolkit has been developed from a Learning and Teaching Enhancement Fund project which initially focussed on evaluating the resources and skills needed in the personal tutor/tutee relationship.

“We set out to uncover good practice we believed was behind our great student satisfaction scores and to seek staff and student views about the need to put resources online in the form of a toolkit”, said Julie Keenan.

The project surveyed over 2000 students, many departmental organisers of personal tutoring and a range of personal tutors including those new to the role.

A selection of good practice resources has been included in the first phase of the Toolkit. These also inform newly developed skills based training sessions for personal tutors now available twice a year and delivered via a cross university team of trainers.



Caryl Davies, Assistant Director of Student Support, and Julie Keenan, Reflective Learning Officer in the Careers Advisory Service.

Caryl Davies said “In the course of our research it became clear that other staff play a key role in supporting students and could benefit from the resources the Toolkit offered and therefore we widened the scope of the Toolkit to accommodate these colleagues”.

The Toolkit is available online now at: www.aber.ac.uk/en/toolkit and the quest for good practice resources continues.

Contact ss-toolkit@aber.ac.uk for more information.

EUROPEAN LANGUAGES

Prix Honoré Chavée



A section of the Bayeux Tapestry the depicts the death of Harold in 1066.

The Anglo-Norman Dictionary project (AND), since 2001 directed by Professor David Trotter and based in the Department of European Languages, has been awarded the Prix Honoré Chavée by the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres in Paris.

The AND started life in 1947 when a “glossary committee” met in Oxford, to discuss the compilation of a dictionary (or at that stage, a glossary) of Anglo-Norman, the form of French in use in Britain as a result of the Norman Conquest in 1066.

At first a spoken language, later increasingly used in writing alone, Anglo-Norman was extant from 1066 until the mid-fifteenth-century, lingering on in legal language, and leaving a lasting impact on English especially in vocabulary.

The AND set out, over sixty years ago, to record this language and was thus also the beginning of an attempt to document the entirety of its usage, and the words it was made up of.

According to Professor Trotter, Anglo-Norman has long been regarded with at best wry amusement, and at worst with contempt, by a French establishment which viewed it as a semi-literate offshore dialectal oddity, but which nevertheless believed, in the words of Clemenceau, and because of the impact of French on English, that English was simply French pronounced badly.

“That the AND should have been awarded a prestigious prize by a leading French institution suggests that those days are over, and that Anglo-Norman is again regarded as what it was: part of the second-most important language of culture (after Latin) in western Europe in the Middle Ages, not only an inspiration for the development of vernacular literatures, but also an international trading and diplomatic language from Spain to Scotland, and from Italy to Ireland,” he said.



Professor David Trotter

www.anglo-norman.net

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Room to spare?

Interest free loan available for staff who take part in the Rent a Room Scheme.

Would you like to host a student in a room in your home for next academic year? The University would like to make it easy for staff who are interested in hosting a student to have the correct facilities available in their homes (study desk, wardrobe, lamps, pin boards, appropriate bed size etc.).

To assist staff members to rent a room, the University can offer an interest free loan up to £2,000 with repayments made over a one year period via direct debit. Participants may also be eligible for tax exemption up to a maximum of £4,250 a year from the Rent a Room scheme.

For further details please visit the Accommodation Office's website:

www.aber.ac.uk/en/accommodation

ABERYSTWYTH ARTS CENTRE

Win a 'Year in a Creative Unit' Competition

Returning for the third year, this exciting competition offers a year's rent free studio space from August 2011, in one of the Award winning Creative Units at Aberystwyth Arts Centre.

The winner will benefit from modern and flexible studio space in one of the sixteen Creative Units at Aberystwyth Arts Centre, which is Wales' largest arts centre and recognised as a 'national flagship for the Arts'.

Applications are invited from individuals or new businesses working in any field of the creative industries including film, TV, new media, performing arts, visual arts, applied arts and literature.

The deadline for the submission of applications is 17.00 Friday 24th June 2011.

For full details of the competition, visit:

www.aber.ac.uk/year-in-a-unit

Alternatively, contact Tony Orme, Enterprise Manager, Aberystwyth University awo@aber.ac.uk / 01970 622203.

New halls of residence

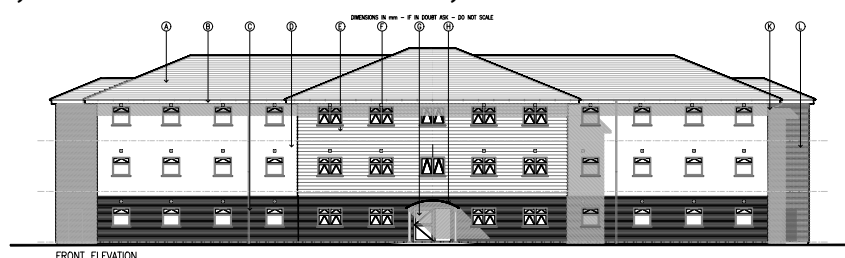
Six companies have progressed to the joint competitive dialogue stage for the development of new self-catering halls of residence on land behind Pentre Jane Morgan.

The companies are Sir Robert McAlpine Limited, Miller Construction Limited, Balfour Beatty Student Accommodation, Kier Northern Limited, City Heart and Evans Management Limited.

Subject to planning approval, building work on the new halls is expected to start in the summer of 2012, with the first students expected to take up residence in September 2013. Construction costs are expected to be in the region of £40m to £45m.

The new residences will provide accommodation for 1000 students.

In the mean-time construction is well underway on a new residential block between Trefloyne and Cwrt Mawr on the Penglais campus. The new block, known as G Block, Rosser, pictured below, will provide 60 new en-suite bedrooms on campus and will be ready for the start of the 2011/12 academic year.



ESTATES

Green design award

The new IBERS building on the Penglais campus has been awarded the BREEAM Award for the highest scoring building in the Higher Education sector, achieving an "Excellent" rating with 75.27% at the Design Stage.

BREEAM (BRE Environmental Assessment Method) is the leading and most widely used environmental assessment method for buildings.

Designed to make the most of natural sunlight and ventilation, the IBERS building will be heated by a 4000m² ground source heating system that has been installed under Pantycelyn field.



Pictured at the topping out ceremony for the new building which was held in March are (L to R), Paul Evans from construction company Willmott Dixon, Ryan Dixon from Architects Pascal and Watson, Professor Noel Lloyd, Vice-Chancellor, Professor Wayne Powell, Director of IBERS and Jamie Lannen from project managers Davis Langdon.



Welcome to this edition of AberRESEARCH. You will notice that we have now integrated with AberNEWS, which will increase the regularity of research news and prevent duplication in stories and the number of publications hitting your desk!

Preparations for REF 2014 continue with the next Research Monitoring round in June/July, and the announcement of sub-panel membership for REF2014, marks a further milestone in the countdown to the Research Excellence Framework (REF). Under REF the number of Units of Assessment (UoA) have been reduced from 67 to 36 and as usual, the expert sub-panels will have a central role in the review process for each unit; both through developing specific assessment criteria and reviewing submissions. The publication on guidance on submissions is expected in July.

Experts from the University have been appointed to 5 of the sub-panels, as detailed in the table opposite. Members were appointed to the panels by the four UK higher education funding bodies following an open nominations process, whereby subject associations and other organisations with an interest in research

conducted by UK higher education institutions were invited to nominate candidates. The sub-panel membership comprises a balance of academic subject experts and those with expertise in the use or contribution of research more widely, as well as members with an international perspective on the main panels.

Further information on the timeline for REF2014, together with details of the remit and membership of the sub-panels can be found at

www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/timetable/

For further information about research monitoring, research funding or research support please email research@aber.ac.uk

Gary Reed - Head of Research Office

Aberystwyth Members of the UoA Panels

Professor Gareth Edwards-Jones, <i>Joint Aberystwyth and Bangor Universities Waitrose Chair,</i>	- Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science
Professor Qiang Shen, <i>Head of Computer Science</i>	- Computer Science and Informatics
Professor Colin McInnes, <i>Dean of Post Graduate Studies</i>	- Politics and International Studies
Professor Aled Jones, <i>PVC Research</i>	- History
Dr Colin Cruise, <i>Research Lecturer, School of Art</i>	- Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory

HR Excellence in Research



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Aberystwyth is one of 23 UK institutions who have been recognised by the European Commission for their commitment to improving researchers' working conditions and career development. A total of 23 British institutions have now been awarded the HR Excellence in Research badge, compared with just 15 in the rest of Europe. The accolades reflect institutions' progress in implementing the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers which was launched in 2008.

The Concordat is an agreement between the funders and employers of researchers in the UK, representing a significant development in national policy to support good management of researchers and their careers.

There are 7 Concordat principles, which are included in Aberystwyth Policy Statement for the Recruitment, Management and Development of Research Staff, see www.aber.ac.uk/en/research, where Aberystwyth's Concordat implementation plan can also be found.

The University also has a Concordat task group that oversees the annual review of the Policy Statement and manages the implementation plan. Should you wish to pass any comments, or require further information, please contact the Chair of the Task Group, Gary Reed (gar@aber.ac.uk), Head of the Research Office.

This task group reports to the Research Staff Advisory Group (RSAG), which is chaired by Prof. Aled Jones, PVC for Research. This committee is currently being renewed, and we are seeking new research staff representatives from the different departments. The RSAG is the main forum where research-only staff at AU can raise issues that concern their working lives with the PVC for Research, and the system of representatives provide feedback on the current concerns of research staff and professional and career development in their individual departments. For more information please contact Ian Archer (ina@aber.ac.uk), Skills Development Officer for Postgraduate & Postdoctoral Researchers.

Excellence with Impact Centre for European Studies

IBERS is the winner of the first ever Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council's Excellence With Impact Awards.

Over 20 university departments UK wide participated in the Award which was developed to reward and esteem those university departments most active in embedding a culture that recognises and values the achievement of impact alongside excellent research.



Professor Wayne Powell, Director of IBERS, receives the Award from Minister of State for Universities and Science, David Willetts MP.

Early milk key to Olympic success?

Research at the Department of Sport and Exercise Science has showed that taking a drink of dairy colostrum (early milk) can enhance athletic performance by reducing gut disorders which are common to runners.

The research was led by Ray Playford, Professor of Medicine at Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry and the work at Aberystwyth was done by Dr Glen Davison.

The findings were published in the March issue of the *American Journal of Physiology-Gastrointestinal and Liver Physiology*.

Stonehenge bluestone mystery

A small but significant discovery that pinpoints the source of some of the bluestones at Stonehenge has been made possible thanks to a technique pioneered at the Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences.

Using a technique known as laser ablation induction coupled mass spectrometry, Dr Nick Pearce has been able to match the chemical composition of tiny grains of zircon found in bluestones at Stonehenge to those found in rocks at Pont Saeson, north Pembrokeshire.

The study was led by Dr Richard Bevin, Keeper of Geology at the National Museum of Wales and an Aberystwyth alumnus.

Healthy oats

New varieties of oats which are being developed at IBERS could help lessen the danger of heart disease.

Led by Dr Athole Marshall, the team are breeding varieties of oats with higher beta glucan content which can help trap cholesterol and stop it from entering the bloodstream.

Trials are being carried out at Aberystwyth and Scotland so that they can be tested under different weather and soil conditions.

The Centre for European Studies (CES), a cross-departmental, multi-disciplinary research-based teaching centre, has been launched with a vision is to be a world leader in the study and teaching of further European integration, and Europe's relations with the outside world.

Originally founded in 1996, the CES

became a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence in 2000 after receiving official recognition by the European Union. At the time, the Jean Monnet Centre was the only such Centre in Wales, and one of a select few in the UK. In 2010 it was decided to re-launch the Centre with a vision of 'creating leaders for Europe's future through world-class learning'.



Dr Elena Korosteleva, Director CES and Lord Robin Teverson, Chairman of the House of Lords EU Sub-Committee on Foreign Affairs and former Member of the European Parliament, who gave the keynote speech at the opening of the new centre.

Melting glaciers



Melting mountain glaciers are contributing to sea-level rise faster than at any time in the last 350 years according to a team led by Professor Neil Glasser (pictured left) from the Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences.

The team mapped changes in position of 270 of the largest outlet glaciers of the South and North Patagonian Icefields since the "Little Ice Age". They found that the rate at which the glaciers have been losing volume over the last 30 years has been ten to a hundred times faster than the 350 year long-term average.

The findings were published in *Nature Geoscience*.

Research Support Contacts

Name	Position	Email	Extension
Research Office			
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Hannah Payne	REF and Research Monitoring Officer	hep	8490
Dafydd Roberts	Faculty of Arts and Humanities - Research Support Officer	dir	8787
Joanne Walker <i>(maternity cover for Jenny Deaville)</i>	Faculty of Social Sciences - Research Support Officer	jnw	1616
Sonia Monteiro	Faculty of Science - Research Support Officer	smm14	2947
Huw Merfyn Hughes	European Funding Manager	hnh	8742
IBERS			
Steve Fish	IBERS IP Development Manager	stf	3232
Martine Spittle	IBERS Research Fund Development Officer	rjs	1562
Liz Humphries	IBERS Research and Knowledge Transfer Officer	elh20	3072



Graham Lewis

Staff Performance Review- what's in it for me?

Graham Lewis (gjl@aber.ac.uk) from the Centre for the Development of Staff and Academic Practice on why Performance Review should be a positive experience.

Staff Performance Review, and under its many other titles, is often viewed as a bit like visiting the dentist once a year; an unpleasant but necessary experience, best done quickly and forgotten. The process is usually seen, by all those involved, as largely a bureaucratic burden.

If either or both managers and employee see it in this light then it certainly is a waste of valuable time.

However, it doesn't have to be that way.

So why should you, and your manager, take it seriously? What exactly is the bottom line; what's in it for you?

Just what is Performance Review meant to achieve? Well, review performance, right? But what do we mean by performance? Put simply, it's a chance to look at the tasks and activities that you agreed to perform the previous year and then set the goals for the coming year. However, if it were just that; just 'are you worth your salt?', it would tend to focus only on the individual and would generate a defensive atmosphere and not one conducive to honesty and productive action.

Sure, Performance Review is about providing a space to discuss what is going well and what isn't going so well, but in the broader context of the team, department and university. After all, none of us, work in a vacuum.

Although the title, gives few clues to this, Performance Review is also about your needs. What do you need to do make your job easier, more effective and more interesting?

How often do you struggle with prioritising work?

How often do you wonder where your career is taking you?

How often do you feel like a leaf in the wind; not in control of what you do every day and how you do it?

These are the issues that well applied Performance Review should address. It should enable you to:

- achieve a common understanding of tasks and duties "Am I doing what I am expected to be doing and am I doing okay?"
- help you plan your work "What am I going to do next year?"
- clarify the team objectives and your role in the team. "How does my work connect to the work of my colleagues? How well do we function as a team? How can this be improved?"
- make the connection between what you and your team do with what the University does.
- find out what else you could do; "How can I learn to do the things I do better and do new things? How do I wish to develop and how can my manager help me?"



Of course, Performance Review is also there to help everybody to learn from objectives that have not been met, but not in order to apportion blame. Rather, it is meant to provide a framework for sometimes difficult conversations, so that the outcome is critically constructive and mutually informative.

This is what Performance Review, when everybody understands it and values it, is for.

The University is currently piloting a system of Performance Review for all staff. Over the past few months, seven pilot groups have been exploring how they can tailor a process to best fit both their own local needs and the organisational needs of the University. We will be reviewing the outcomes from these pilots and from 2011/12 all departments are being asked to implement their own schemes.

Performance Review will be as useful as we want it to be. If reviewers see the process as a valuable leadership tool that provides a rare opportunity for joined-up-thinking and reviewees see the process as a rare opportunity to discuss their own needs and aspirations, performance review will more than justify the time we spend on it.

Whatever your role in the University, Performance Review will do something for you and not to you. Make use of it. Don't be a leaf.

Performance reviews – a gender perspective

The true essence of performance reviews is organisational improvement through the development of its staff. In equality of opportunity terms, performance reviews provide a good opportunity for staff to showcase



Olymbia Petrou

their contribution to teams, departments and the University as a whole, by highlighting their accomplishments during the previous year as well as agreeing priorities for the year ahead.

From a gender perspective, there is evidence that performance reviews particularly assist women in the planning of their careers. At a recent 'Women in Science' conference at Bangor University, women voiced the view that reviews were essential for their career planning. A priority was subsequently set to improve participation levels of women engaging in performance reviews, particularly for contract research staff.

Vitae (www.vitae.ac.uk) who champion the personal, professional and career development of doctoral researchers and research staff in higher education institutions and research institutes highlight 'The Concordat to support the career development of researchers' (www.researchconcordat.ac.uk) which acknowledges that "Research managers should be required to participate in active performance management, including career development guidance and supervision of those who work in their teams" (Section B3). The Concordat also states that 'Having the opportunity to spend dedicated time discussing their performance and career goals can be immensely valuable for a researcher'.

The UK has one of the highest levels of part-time working in Europe, with many women with young children working part-time to combine their work and caring responsibilities. Equality monitoring at the University shows that, in comparison to males, there are less women working full time and more women working part-time. In these circumstances, performance reviews can help support and motivate women, to positively monitor performance, help women focus on their careers and also ensure they are valued in their work.

It is important to note that the Human Resources department has developed a range of policies and initiatives to support staff, and actively encourage discussions on innovative work approaches that fit into busy lives, enhance work-life balance and contribute to well-being.

Reviews can help all staff to meet personal and team needs, contribute to career aspirations and most importantly, open up two-way communication. In the challenging times Universities face today, time allocated to our own individual reviews should be valued.

Olymbia Petrou (opp@aber.ac.uk)

Cic Arall i'r Bar

The Bar Kicks Back

Aduniad alumni
Prifysgol Aberystwyth

Aberystwyth University
alumni reunion

**2il - 4ydd
Medi 2011**

**2nd - 4th
September 2011**

Exercise & Recreation
Classes

Fit*Together

Summer 2011

There is a wide range of classes for you to enjoy and we hope to inspire you to workout in a fun and friendly atmosphere. All of our staff are well-qualified and aim to motivate you to a fitter and healthier lifestyle.

**June 6th to
September 24th
2011**

Canolfan Chwaraeon
Sports Centre

Tel: 621500 / 622280
Email: sports@aber.ac.uk



Dr. Carina Fearnley

Lessons from Japan

Dr. Carina Fearnley (cjf9@aber.ac.uk), lecturer in Environmental Hazards at the Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences, considers the effectiveness of tsunami early warning systems.

The magnitude 9.0 Tohoku earthquake on March 11, 2011 is one of the most documented disasters in history with video footage, photographs, and TV documentaries providing rapid insights into the devastation following the quake. Like millions around the globe, I viewed this footage with horror and a sense of disbelief; the destruction and trauma witnessed are difficult to rationalise. Yet, the early warning system in place saved the lives of at least 50,000 to 100,000 people demonstrating that the devastation could have been far worse; as it currently stands the Japanese National Police Agency has confirmed around 15,000 deaths.

The 2004 Sumatra-Andaman tsunami in the Indian Ocean was particularly devastating killing over 230,000 people across fourteen countries, partly because there was no early warning system in place and tsunami awareness was generally very low. Despite this absence a number of people who felt the earthquake in Indonesia and the Andaman Islands moved to high ground, in response to local or traditional knowledge passed down through many generations of those rooted in the area. For these people simple knowledge of tsunamis and understanding their warning signs of an earthquake and a receding ocean proved an effective early warning system by self-evacuating to high ground demonstrating the value of simple education and knowledge.

There appears to be a recurring trend following recent earthquakes greater than magnitude 8.8 that generate tsunamis that inundate coastal communities located near to the epicentre with less than 30 minutes warning. The residents of the Sanriku coast and Sendai in Japan only had 10-30 minutes of warning time before the leading

main wave of the tsunami hit, and the earthquake lasted in the region of six minutes, leaving little time to recover and evacuate to higher ground. In 2004, the Indian Ocean tsunami struck Sumatra within 20 minutes of the earthquake killing 168,000 people, when many people were still confused and disorientated by the earthquake. The 8.8 earthquake off the coast of Chile in 2010 generated a tsunami that arrived within 30 minutes in the Valparaiso-Concepcion-Temuco coastline and is responsible for a proportion of the 521 people killed during the event. These instances pose a challenging problem; that even with a sophisticated warning system using the latest technology that can detect an earthquake in seconds and provide a tsunami warning within a couple of minutes, there is often not enough time for potentially affected communities to fully evacuate the tsunami inundation zone.

Three months on from the devastating Tohoku earthquake it has been demonstrated that in most locations the tsunami early warning system was largely effective; mortality rates in the populations in inundation zones in the worst affected areas of Miyagi and Iwate prefectures was less than 10% compared to over 30% for corresponding areas of Aceh in 2004. Areas outside the worst impacted areas e.g. northern Iwate, Aomori and Hokkaido the inundation zones were largely evacuated and casualties were very low, with only a few per town, in contrast to the 10% mortality rates as far away as Thailand and Sri Lanka in 2004, demonstrating the preparedness and effectiveness of the tsunami early warning system. It is clear that we cannot fully rely on early warnings to give enough time for everyone to evacuate (including the young, senior, ill, or disabled), however the Japanese tsunami has proved that



COMMERCIALISATION and CONSULTANCY SERVICES

the most sensible method of coping with rapid onset tsunamis is to focus on being prepared.

It is becoming increasingly possible to forecast where large scale earthquakes may occur and potentially generate a destructive tsunami. By taking preparedness actions such as good land-use planning can be highly effective, for example high schools in towns along the Sanriku coast built on higher ground had high survival rates. In areas of flat terrain where there was not time to evacuate to safety, especially when a tsunami wave is travelling at high speed, tall strong tower buildings (vertical evacuation sites) need to be built that people can get to in time, albeit a costly solution. Whilst some buildings (e.g. port facilities) and their workforces need to be located by the shore, it may be recommended that populations be located on higher grounds, where possible, including the vulnerable populations of a community.

The solution therefore is to work on a case by case basis, understanding the local geography, social and cultural contexts, and economic capabilities to prepare for and respond to rapid onset tsunamis for each and every town, city, or region. This requires significant political will, as to standardise preparedness and warning procedures is the easiest and most cost-effective approach. For rapid onset tsunamis there is no time for hesitation, everything needs to be considered because that ten minutes warning needs to be as effective as possible, otherwise, well you have seen some of the footage.

Fast Forward Award

The University has been awarded the prestigious 'Fast Forward' Award by the Intellectual Property Office.

The Award recognises and supports the innovative approach developed by the Technology Transfer team (part of Commercialisation and Consultancy Services (CCS)) here at Aber, to protect and commercialise Intellectual Property relating to software created by University researchers.

As a '2011 Fast Forward' competition winner, the University will receive £30,000 from the Intellectual Property Office to develop a model for the rapid commercialisation of software, focusing on the effective use of copyright and trade marks.

The model which will be developed will build on the University's early success in commercialising software through smart phone applications, including the Welsh learning 'Cwrs Mynediad App' developed by Professor Chris Price from the Department of Computer Science.

Intellectual Property Minister Baroness Wilcox said, "I would like to congratulate



Dr Rhian Hayward receiving the Fast Forward award.

Aberystwyth University. Through interactions with industry, charities and government, UK institutions are creating new companies, improving public services and attracting foreign investment. This is an essential driver of economic growth and prosperity."

The award was accepted by Dr Rhian Hayward, Technology Transfer Officer, who can be contacted on 01970 622385 / rih@aber.ac.uk.



mobile apps challenge 2011

Have you had an innovative idea for a mobile application for smart phones or the iPad (an 'app')? Are you working on software already or do you have an idea for an app that you would like to explore? The Technology Transfer team in Commercialisation and Consultancy Services (CCS) has launched the 'Mobile Apps Challenge 2011' for staff and students at AU.

The 'Apps Challenge' has two competition categories to enter, with prizes for the most inventive and commercially promising app/app idea.

Further information, entry forms and the Terms & Conditions can be viewed at www.aber.ac.uk/challenge.

Closing date is 15th July 2011.

Obituary

Professor John Barrett



The name John Barrett will always be synonymous with the term parasite biochemistry, especially with advances in comparative metabolism and drug detoxification mechanisms. His first of over two hundred research papers was published in the journal *Nature* in 1968 while he was based at the Molteno Institute of the University of Cambridge. He contributed to a number of book chapters in parasitology, and his

book 'The Biochemistry of Parasitic Helminths', published in 1981, remains a reference text for parasitologists worldwide, and was used to help annotate the *schistosoma* parasite genome in 2009.

Originally from Chippenham, John graduated from Cambridge in Zoology in 1965 and was awarded a PhD in 1968. It was during his research for the PhD at the Molteno Institute that his interest in the biochemistry of parasites blossomed and he laid the foundations of a distinguished research career. Apart from his obvious intellectual capacity, his hallmarks were kindness and a ready, but always gentle wit, attributes that were evident throughout his career.

The significance of his early work on metabolic pathways of parasites was quickly recognized. On leaving Cambridge he held a National Institute of Health research fellowship at the University of Massachusetts from 1968 to 1971 and was Browne Research Fellow at Queen's College, Oxford University from 1971 to 1973. He was appointed lecturer, later senior lecturer, in parasitology at Aberystwyth in 1973.

Here he joined Dr F. G. Rees, later Professor F.G.Rees F.R.S., a founder member of the British Society of Parasitology, and along with Dr M. R. L. Johnston they laid the foundations for excellence in both teaching and research in parasitology in the Department of Zoology at Aberystwyth.

These were productive times for John Barrett. He quickly established a rapport with undergraduate students and was recognised as a stimulating lecturer at the forefront of his field. He was a dedicated research supervisor and throughout his career successfully obtained research council funding to maintain an impressive team of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows who were actively encouraged to publish group findings in a wide range of international biochemical journals. Many went on to establish successful careers as leading parasitologists.

John was awarded a DSc from the University of Wales in 1982 and appointed Head of Department and Professor of Zoology at Aberystwyth in 1983, a post he held until 1988 when the Department merged with the Department of Botany & Microbiology to form the Institute of Biological Sciences. In 1991 he was elected Dean of Science and over the next three years was instrumental in steering the Faculty in its move to modularity and a two semester teaching year, a task that called on his patience and clear understanding of the needs of undergraduate training in science. Later, in 2000 Professor Barrett was appointed Pro Vice-Chancellor, a post he held until 2005.

Through his awareness and understanding of contemporary issues in higher education he was able to make a substantial contribution to the running of the University. Whether involved in student affairs or management and strategic planning, he was master of his brief and fully committed to the University. The value of his skills in management and administration were no more clearly evident than, when on the point of retirement, he was persuaded to take on the interim headship of the Department of Sport & Exercise Science during the search for a permanent head.

The responsibilities of management did not lessen his research impact and contribution to the work of learned societies. He was awarded the C. A. Wright medal by the British Society for Parasitology in 1985 for his outstanding contribution to the discipline, and the Bueding-von Brand award from the American Society of Parasitologists in 2001 for his exceptional record of achievement in the study of the biochemistry of parasitic helminths and the drugs used to treat them. He served as Council Member for both the British Society for Parasitology and the Society for Experimental Biology, and was President of the British Society for Parasitology from 2007 to 2009. He chaired the World Health Organisation's steering committee on chemotherapy for schistosomiasis from 1987 to 1992 and was until recently a member of the Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council's Animal Sciences Committee. He had an extensive network of collaborators in the UK and overseas and was made an honorary member of the Bulgarian Society for Parasitology.

Throughout his career, John was supported by his wife Penny and together they were the most genial of hosts. Although very supportive of Penny's equestrian activities he could not be persuaded to be an active participant and found his relaxation through gardening, where his skills were evident in the flower beds and a highly productive vegetable garden at his home in Llanfarian on the outskirts of Aberystwyth.

He is survived by his wife and two daughters, Sara and Kate.

Professor John Barrett, parasitologist, was born on October 21, 1943. He died on March 29, 2011, aged 67.

Dr John Fish

Race for Life 2011



Well done to members of the IGES and IBERS teams who successfully completed the 5km 'Race for Life' in Aberystwyth on 15th May.

IGES raised over £1,000 and IBERS raised over £2,000, thanks to generous donations and cake sales! All the money raised goes towards supporting the work of Cancer Research UK.

Whilst the ladies of IBERS were busy training and racing, the gentlemen of IBERS provided an excellent support team and provided an impressive and much appreciated barbeque at the finishing line.



The IGES team

Running for IGES were Rosie Stirling, Rachel Smedley, Julie Durcan, Hollie Wynne, Lynda Yorke, Nia Blackwell, Lucy Jackson, Cerys Jones and Maggie Cooper.

Running for Team IBERS were Martine Spittle, Eli Saetnan, Chantal Thomas, Gwenith Hughes, Chloe Manzanares, Sharon Huws, Jane Watts, Katie Thomas, Pip Nicholas, Hayley Watson, Lucy Hill, Susan Girdwood, Hilary Worgan, Tina Blackmore, Kirsty Dougal, Jamie-Leigh Douglas, Florence Prive, Nikki Bryan, Helen Lloyd, Sarah Spicer, Danielle Young, Kate Waddams, Liz Hart, Joan Edwards, Sarah Hawkins, Catriona McEwan, Louise Davies, Sam Jones, Jessie Newbold, Karen Munslow, Sophie Doran, Luned Roberts, Mina Davies Morel, Pauline Rees Stevens, Sofi Abebe, Teri Davis and Sarah Purdy.



Members of the IBERS team waiting for the race to begin.

2011 Tir na n-Og Book of the Year



Dr Hywel Griffiths

Congratulations to Dr Hywel Griffiths from the Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences on winning the 2011 Tir na n-Og Book of The Award.

The Award, which was announced at the National Urdd Eisteddfod was for his first novel for children, *Dirgelwch y Bont*, a historical fantasy, which follows the adventures of three friends as they travel back in time to the exciting days of Owain Glyndŵr.

Hywel has already established himself as a poet having won the Urdd Eisteddfod chair in Anglesey in 2004 and in Carmarthenshire in 2007, and the Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Crown in Cardiff in 2008. His first individual collection of poetry, *Banerog*, reached the Wales Book of the Year shortlist in 2010.

Gruff crowned Welsh Champion!

AU staff member Gruff Lewis was crowned 2011 Welsh Road Race Champion in May, less than two years after taking up the sport. Gruff, who rides for Team UK Youth in a semi-professional capacity, works as a part time recreation assistant and gym and spin instructor at the University's Sports Centre.



Summer courses at the School of Education & Lifelong Learning

Summer Art School: Gregynog Hall

August 1st - 4th



Enjoy three memorable days of tranquility and creativity. Lifelong Learning Art students enjoy the opportunity to steal a few days away learning new skills in the Arts. Why not join them at Gregynog Hall this summer? Courses on offer are: Abstracting the Landscape with Paul Webster; new module: 'Sourced from the Landscape' with Laurie Plant and Approaches to Landscape Painting with Angela Drinkwater-Lunn.

Open to all AU staff and students.

For further information call 621580 or email the summer school Manager Alison Pierce: chp@aber.ac.uk

For a leaflet see:

www.aber.ac.uk/sell/courses/lllearn/artdesign/index.htm

Wood Engraving Summer School

20th - 23rd June 2011 School of Art with Edwina Ellis

This course aims to develop competency in handling woodblocks and plastic polymer blocks for engraving; it will be taught in the School of Art, using the well equipped print workshop. Some materials are included in the course fee and tools can be borrowed for the class. It is recommended that you complete 'Introduction to Printmaking' first in order to develop basic skills in relief printing or have previous skills in printmaking. This 4 day intensive course also offers an opportunity for those living outside the area to attend by taking advantage of the many places to stay in Aberystwyth town. **Course Code CA306.**

Writing for Radio Intensive course

starting 25th June Old College with Jane Belli

Suitable for beginners with little or no previous knowledge of writing for radio - you will be looking at the specific techniques required for writing a radio play. It is designed to be flexible in its delivery, consisting of two intensive weekends. Time is allowed between sessions to allow you to produce your final radio script. **Course Code HA307**

Spanish Beginners One Week Intensive

27th June - 1st July 2011 Hugh Owen Building with Antonio Barriga Rubio

This module introduces you to contemporary Spanish, developing all four skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. A wide range of activities are undertaken, such as practical language exercises, work into and out of Spanish and vocabulary-building activities. This will be delivered by commercially produced and in-house language materials from a variety of sources. On successful completion you should have a good introductory command of Spanish, and should be able to proceed to the next level. 9am - 1pm each day. **Course Code KA335F**

French Beginners One Week Intensive

4th - 8th July Hugh Owen Building with Meirion Davies

This module introduces you to contemporary French, developing all four skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. A wide range of activities are undertaken, such as practical language exercises, work into and out of French and vocabulary-building activities. This will be delivered by commercially produced and in-house language materials from a variety of sources. On successful completion you should have a good introductory command of French, and should be able to proceed to the next level. 9am - 1pm each day. **Course Code KA334F**



Web Design (Dreamweaver) Summer School

11th - 15th July Cledwyn Building with Dave Bowen

This is very much a hands-on course starting with a basic introduction to HTML and general concepts explaining the basics of designing web pages and web sites. You will then move on to learning the essentials of Adobe Dreamweaver, progressing on to more advanced features as your skills and confidence grow, enabling you to be competent in producing web sites to your own requirements. The summer school assumes basic computer literacy, such as competence with opening, saving and printing files on a PC and an elementary understanding of and experience with using the World Wide Web and either word processing or desk top publishing. Enrolment closing date is 30th June. **Course Code CA307.**

Basic Latin For Family & Local Historians

25th - 28th July Old College with Gill Rossini

This course is an informal introduction to the Latin used in many of the records we scrutinize in Family and local history. Students will become acquainted with the basics of the language and vocabulary, and begin to read simple extracts as they build their skills. An essential tool for all historians and Medievalists. **Course Code HA309**

Enrol Now to Guarantee your Place!

Courses open to all AU staff and students.

For further information, call 621580 or email: learning@aber.ac.uk

Download enrolment form from:

www.aber.ac.uk/sell/geninfo/enrol/index.html

