University Graduate College



Newsletter

Dec 2012 - Feb 2013

Welcome from the Deputy Dean

What is the link between the poet and literary critic Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the one way street? No idea?

And if I throw 21 Albemarle Street into

the mix, does that help? I can tell you that the link is Public Engagement, our theme for this issue.

The Royal Institution in Albemarle Street was one of the early pioneers in 'diffusing the knowledge', and resident scientist Humphrey Davy not only ignited his experiments but

could also ignite audiences with his fiery brand of delivery. Amazingly, the first one way street in the UK, Albemarle Street, was created to ensure better flow of traffic in London after a series of lectures by Coleridge at the Royal Institution attracted such large audiences that it caused a gridlock of horse drawn carriages in the capital. Hence Albemarle Street, the home of the Royal Institution, was made a one-way street.

It is ironic to reflect that Public Engagement, a dialogue with our community or society and a two way flow of information, should result in the creation of a one-way system. Of course the term Public Engagement is relatively new, but it is easier on the tongue than some of its predecessors such as 'participatory democracy'.

Today Research Councils and Charities commit many millions to supporting Public Engagement activities in Universities, and the **Concordat** outlines the expected agenda of research funders in this area. The Royal Society and others offer Awards in support of this activity.



Cardiff recently hosted the Beacon for Wales, one of six collaborative centres for public engagement across the UK, now followed by the Catalyst centres. The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement in Bristol continues to help universities engage with the public. Most Universities have Public or Community Engagement Units or Centres; in Cardiff we have the Community Engagement Team, and many Schools have dedicated Innovation and Engagement staff. It is recognised that it is critical and a responsibility of any healthy Higher Education Institution to have this connection with society, to have an embedded Public Engagement strategy.

So what exactly is Public Engagement? It is about sharing information, telling our public who we are, and what we do; a live conversation between us and members of society. Of course there is no one single way of engaging with the public, but as an example one could follow the nine principles set out by the **Policy Ethics and Life Sciences** team (PEALS) at Newcastle University.

Reluctantly we have to concede that there may still be perceived barriers to outreach activities, at least in some areas such as the sciences. A Royal Society Report has concluded that the need to spend time on research may prevent scientists from becoming more engaged, and that time away from research can be seen as a real downside. Those who engage may also even be stigmatised. 20% of scientists agreed that colleagues who do engage are less well thought of by other scientists. For this reason, Institutions have to make clear that any efforts by staff in this area are valued and recognised.

Luckily, however, many of us like to talk about what we do, to share ideas and to welcome any debate it creates. There are many great examples of engagement activity in Cardiff—some of which can be found throughout this newsletter - and importantly our postgraduate research students do it eagerly, and do it well. This we would like to celebrate in an event to be held in April 2013. We look forward to bringing you more information on this event soon.

- Professor Ken Wann.

Deputy Dean of the University Graduate College



HEA Accreditation Pilot

Postgraduate research students (PGRs) are involved in teaching in many Schools at the University, with their work ranging from running tutorials and seminars to overseeing lab demonstrations. The University Graduate College piloted a scheme in Spring 2012, which assisted PGRs with teaching experience to achieve Associate Fellow Status recognition from the Higher Education Academy (HEA). We believe that achieving this external award may give PGRs an advantage when applying for academic teaching posts upon completion of their studies. PGRs who participated in the scheme attended an accreditation workshop that provided an overview of the application process; they were also given access to written resources and received mentoring from a member of academic staff. A total of 30 PGRs completed the scheme. We are pleased to report that 24 have been successful thus far. Although we are still in the process of evaluating the pilot, this success rate indicates that the project is likely to continue.

Two PhD students tell us about their experiences with the HEA Pilot...



"After teaching numerous tutorials and courses throughout my PhD, I really felt like I wanted something to show for the efforts I had put in and all the varied experiences I had gained. In particular, as I am looking to progress in a career in academia, I

wanted something that would be formally recognised on my CV and in applications for jobs. I therefore jumped at the chance to take part in the HEA accreditation pilot scheme; the fact that this would be supported by the University Graduate College meant the opportunity was too good to miss.

Throughout the process I felt completely supported. Completing the application form and the submission process was much easier to achieve than if I had tried to do it alone. The accreditation workshop helped me understand how to put into context the experience I had and how to understand how my teaching style had developed and adapted to different environments, which was something I had not considered previously. Having an academic mentor in my department who I was familiar with, and whom had recently completed the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and University Learning process, meant they were on hand when I needed to gain feedback on my application.

I would definitely encourage others looking for recognition for their teaching experience to apply for HEA accreditation through the individual route. It is certainly worth having something on your CV acknowledging the teaching skills that you will have gained. Since completing the accreditation I have recently seen it specifically indicated on academic job application forms, which is something I had not noticed before. Taking the route laid out via the University Graduate College meant that there was support at each step of the process, and it made the whole experience pretty stress free!"

- Penny Holborn, School of Mathematics



"During your studies you will get the opportunity to teach, and this will require that you have some basic training in the practice.

This training is useful preparation, but it was through the HEA accreditation that I realised that

practice requires more than putting into place ways of teaching small groups or giving a lecture. There is also a need to reflect on the experience: what worked, what didn't work, what should be replicated, what can be improved.

Working for HEA accreditation provides both an opportunity for this reflective thinking and a framework to guide you through the process in writing a 1400 word application that focuses on your teaching experiences.

Whilst uncertain about the HEA accreditation to begin with, I found that the process itself was relatively straightforward and useful. When applying for jobs in the HE sector post-PhD, teaching will form part of the interview process.

I recently interviewed for a lectureship post and was asked a number of questions by the interview panel about my teaching experience, pedagogical approach and my ability to build on best practice. Completing the HEA accreditation had already given me the opportunity to consider these issues, and more, which contributed to my success in securing an academic post at the end of my research."

- Lee Gregory, School of Social Sciences



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Keep up to date with the latest news
@CardiffUGC

From the UGC Office

At this time of year I often think about my viva, especially now that I am working with PhD students once again. It was a cold and wet November day and the culmination of four years of hard work. It is my proudest achievement, and I will never forget that feeling of satisfaction as I left.

I have very fond memories of my PhD studies here at Cardiff. I had a supportive and encouraging supervisor and was surrounded by a great bunch of fellow students. It was before the University Graduate College existed, but we were regulars in the Graduate Centre. I realised that I loved to share my research with the public and began seeking these opportunities. I started working parttime at Techniquest, where I refreshed and rebranded BIOSI's National Science Week event: 'Learn about Life'.

I stayed on at Techniquest for a few years and studied for an MSc in Science Communication part-time at the University
of the West of
England. But I
always
wanted to
come back to
Cardiff
University and
work closely
with
researchers.



Since 2005 I've been doing just this, moving from job to job as external funding has required. I've worked on lots of different public engagement projects for different audiences, and had a lot of fun along the way. If I had to name a couple of highlights, these would be getting **Science Cafes** up and running across Wales and coordinating **Researchers in Residence**.

Over the last ten years, Public Engagement has become embedded within research, and it is here to stay. One of the great things about it is that, in addition to adding that extra dimension to research, it can also be a stepping stone to opportunities

outside of academia. The transferable skills and experience you gain from working with a new audience and planning an activity are very valuable both within academia or beyond.

Now working for the University Graduate College, I want to ensure that you have access to training and development opportunities to help you engage the public with your research – whatever the discipline. There are many different forms that public engagement can take, so if public or school talks aren't your thing, don't be put off.

For this year's Programme I have worked with the University's Community Engagement Team, and have aimed to develop a set of workshops that demonstrate the range of public engagement routes available - from high profile talks like FameLab, to writing, and partnership working with other organisations (see page 5). If you think something is missing, let us know and we will try to put it right.

- **Dr Rachel Dodds,** University Graduate College Officer

Dates for Your Diary

We are pleased to present a selection of upcoming events and other important dates for your diary. Please note that advance bookings must be made for all events. For the full schedule, please visit: www.cardiff.ac.uk/ugcp

DECEMBER

- **10** Storytelling for Engagement
- 11 Prezi: Breaking Out of the Straightjacket of Linear Presentations

JANUARY

9 - What Next? Career Planning for PhD Students

- 10 Developing an Academic Career in the Humanities/Social Sciences
- 18 Effective Researcher: Effective Progress - The Second Year
 - Deadline for PGR Initiative Funding Applications
- 22 Starting Out: Induction Event for New Researchers

- 23 & 24 Effective Researcher
- 25 Effective Researcher: The End is in Sight

FEBRUARY

13 - Seven Secrets of Highly Successful Researchers

Workshops for Part-Time & Distance Students

As a part-time or distant

student it is often difficult to attend individual workshops, due to the time and expense involved in travelling to Cardiff. We have therefore put together a week long suite of workshops that part-time/distance students identified as being particularly useful. Now in its third year, feedback has been very positive with regard to this scheduling, and students have commented that

being able to attend a number of sessions in one day made travel feasible. It also enables students to network with those in a similar position to themselves, which helps reduce the feelings of isolation that can sometimes afflict students working away from the campus. University



Graduate College staff will also arrange evening networking and social events where there is sufficient demand.

We acknowledge that the issues and skills for new PhD students differ to those further through the process, so this year we are also piloting two new workshops to replace the 'Part-time PhD All in One Day' session. The first of the new workshops, 'The Part-Time PhD: The Early Years', addresses issues such as getting started on the research project, managing time and the project,

handling information and literature and building a productive supervisory relationship. 'The Part-Time PhD: The Later Years' focuses on refreshing motivation, the nuts and bolts of thesis writing and preparing for the viva. Bookings for workshops need to be made individually. Please refer to the **website** for full listings.

Have you checked out Cardiff

Connections yet? Connections is an online tool available to all staff and research postgrads. Connections is social software for the working environment and getting work done! It isn't about introducing yet another piece of technology or trying to force the way in which we do things. It's about offering the opportunity to communicate and work openly, collaboratively and more efficiently. So it's about facilitating conversations and the sharing of ideas, whether that is on a research project or just bringing likeminded people together.

In addition to supporting collaboration generally, Connections provides an environment which can benefit you as a researcher in quite specific ways.

Networking across the University and finding out what others are doing

Updating your "status" and following the updates of others with similar interests will before long yield clear benefits of discovering things you would otherwise have missed.

Safe environment to practice blogging

A number of colleagues find it challenging to write a blog and maintain it. Researchers can develop their skills and confidence by blogging first to their team and then to the whole university before posting externally on the public internet.

Making Research Connections

Getting Started

- 1. Log on via http://connections.cf.ac.uk
- 2. Browse the 'Getting Started' section on the homepage
- 3. View the 5 scenario videos on the 'Getting Started' 'Discover' tab
- 4. Go to your profile and provide information about yourself using the "Edit My Profile" button
- 5. Browse the Public Communities area and join any communities of relevance or interest
- Go to the Blogs section and start a blog on your work and/or interests

Promoting yourself and your research to University colleagues - Many researchers underestimate the importance of promoting their work internally within the University, but for postgrads this can be very valuable.

The University Gradate College supports face-to-face networking and we are excited by the possibilities of Connections in facilitating on-going relationships and networks, as well as the opportunity to discover those oyu may never meet face-to-face. For that reason, we will be facilitating use of Connections for all PGR-led initiatives and student-led conferences in the New Year.

Engagement Workshops

This year's programme

features a number of brand new public engagement workshops offered in partnership with the Community Engagement Team, alongside some ever popular sessions. We aim to offer training and opportunities across the breadth of public engagement to give you confidence and experience whichever route you choose. If you have any suggestions for additional workshops please email ugc@cardiff.ac.uk.

Storytelling for Engagement*

10 December

Develop storytelling skills and find out about practical applications for public engagement.

Curating an Exhibition

16 January (and follow up session) Practical experience of researching and staging an exhibition in Special Collections and Archives.

Evaluating Public Engagement: An Introduction*

13 February

Introductory principles of evaluating public engagement with practical resources for you to use.

Academics and TV Documentary Making

27 February Find out about the principles and processes of making TV documentaries and their use to communicate research.

Evaluating Public Engagement: Developing Your Skills*

4 March

A more reflective follow up to the introductory workshop.

I Love Science: A Guide to Engaging the Public with your Science

6 March

A lecture exploring public engagement Engagement through Writing* and funding opportunities to help get you started.

Podcasting: Practice and Applications*

13 & 20 March

Find out what you need and how to create and use podcasts for

engagement.

Impact and Research Communication Skills

19 March

Learn how to communicate the significance of your research to nonspecialists.

Research in Context*

17 April

Reflect on the social and ethical implications of your research and consider relevant engagement opportunities.

Managing Media Relations

17 April

Practical advice on how to work with the press media.

Spring tbc

Learn how to communicate your research via a range of digital and print media with tips from experts.

* workshops delivered with the Community Engagement Team

How can we use public engagement to help build a career? In answering this question, it is

perhaps helpful to consider what public engagement means, why we do it and who 'the public' actually is.



The National Centre for the Coordination of Public

Engagement (NCCPE) defines 'public engagement' as 'the myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit.'

The NCCPE distinguishes three different purposes of public engagement: informing, consulting and collaborating.

- Informing can include giving presentations, working with the media and writing for non-specialists.
- Consulting involves listening to and reflecting on insights and feedback gained from the public.

Careers Corner

 Collaboration is about working with communities to make things happen.

for public engagement In order to develop meaningful engagement, the NCCPE suggests it is helpful to replace the term 'public' with 'publics', and to target engagement at particular audiences or communities. These may be located within the public sector, business, civil society or the 'general public'.

> Thinking about public engagement in these simple terms during one's PhD can be hugely beneficial for subsequent career building. Identifying the communities that are likely to be interested in your work, and finding ways to engage with them will a) help you to develop the valuable skills of informing, consulting and collaboration that are applicable to any work context, and b) help you to develop valuable professional links, both of which will be highly relevant when it comes to the next step of finding a job.

To find out more about public engagement and the NCCPE's top ten tips for getting started with it, see:

www.publicengagement.ac.uk/how/guides/easy-ways-get-started

Engaging With Presentations

"The human brain starts working the moment you are born and never stops until you stand

moment you are born and never stops until you stand up to speak in public." – Anonymous

If you have a presentation to do, how much time would you spend on preparation? The majority (53%) spend less than two hours. How many times do you rehearse before giving your presentation? One in three people do not rehearse at all. Finally, have you received any form of training to improve your ability to present? Generally only one in ten presenters have been trained.

I would like to offer some tips that have helped me to give more engaging and effective presentations.

And Tell 'em How Long It Will Take

Perhaps the most familiar maxim in presenting is "Tell 'em what you're going to tell 'em, tell 'em, and tell 'em what you told 'em." To the first part I would add: Tell 'em how long the session will last. It gives your audience the security that there is light at the end of the tunnel whilst they are still standing at the entrance. It also

demonstrates you are aware of the value of your audience's time and intend to use it productively. I estimate that to read the rest of this article will take you three minutes.



Know your audience

I encourage you to put yourself in the position of the Journalist. Which is to ask: why should I care? What am I saying that will make my audience care? Presentations should be an experience for those listening, rather than what is often referred to in the presentation world as a 'data dump'. When presenting the findings of your research this may be your biggest obstacle, but it can be overcome. Think about what you can achieve in your presentation that you cannot achieve as readily on paper and go from there. The purpose of your presentation is to create a response, and in order to do this you must engage with your audience.

What do you want them to learn?

Your desire is to change their current understanding from A to B. You want them to be moved in their knowledge base, understanding, and appreciation of what you are communicating to them. The following questions may prove helpful: What do they know already that I can build on? By the end of the presentation, what do I want my audience to have learned? How do I want my audience to feel when they go away?

Rehearse, rehearse, and rehearse!

Preparation is key. The difference between a good and great presentation is usually determined by how much someone has prepared. What made Steve Jobs an effective communicator was not innovation or new technology, but his extensive preparation regardless of the topic. The preparation and practice that went into a product launch or public presentation was evident, and each presentation became an event in itself.

Presentations as Stories

To tell a story is to take people on a journey with you. Ever watched a movie and had someone comment constantly over the top of it, pointing out the obvious? Annoying, isn't it? Presentations can too often make you feel like this. The trick is to give the audience 2+2, and allow them to think about how you get to 4. This tip comes from Andrew Stanton – the writer of Wall-E, Toy Story, and other Pixar classics. He also suggests that it may be helpful to start at the end. People will care more if they feel like they know where it is going.

Tools of the trade

Seldom will you give or be given a presentation without a visual aid present. Current models are the ever popular PowerPoint. Also available are other linear methods like Flickr Slideshow, KeyNote, and SlideRocket. However, at present

the in vogue choice is Prezi: a non-linear presentation software package that is breaking the straightjacket of linear slide-by-slide presentations. Now, I don't want to discuss which is the best tool to use, only to say that PowerPoint is not the only option.

Prezi allows your audience to be taken on a journey and see where the information you are communicating to them fits into the 'bigger picture'. With the inclination to use less text, more imagery, it forces you to stop just reading off the screen. Remember the audience is there to listen to what you have to say with the aid of visuals if required. You are not there to narrate over the top of a visual aid.

I would conclude in saying that a good presentation requires three ingredients: Interaction, Clarity, and Enthusiasm. Interact with the audience - give them an experience to remember. Be well prepared and clear in your intent on what you want to say, and what you want your audience to learn. Finally, be enthusiastic about what you are telling them. Even if it is how potassium channels are affected by certain synthetic chemicals you are trialling...

- Chris Lawrence, Graduate Centre Operations and Events Manager

Seven Secrets

February sees the welcome return of Dr Hugh Kearns to the University Graduate College Programme with his popular presentation 'The Seven Secrets of Highly Successful Researchers'.

Hugh, from Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia, will be visiting Cardiff for the fourth time, as part of a tour which takes him all over Europe and the States, including Oxford and Harvard. His research into such topics as self-management, positive psychology, work-life balance, learning and creativity has enabled him to hone this entertaining, amusing and incredibly useful three hour session.

Gales of nervous laughter show just how close Hugh comes to hitting the spot when he recounts a typical day in the life of a researcher. Research at

the Staff Development and Training Unit at Flinders University has shown that researchers who know and make use of the 'seven secrets' get through

their doctorate more quickly and, just as importantly, are happier.

The presentation runs twice on Wednesday 13 February - once in the morning for supervisors, and again in the afternoon for research students. Described by one PhD student as 'The and all disciplines'. most useful three hours of my PhD to date', feedback last year was 100% positive from both groups, including such comments from supervisors as 'Helps you to think through the implications of being a supervisor, how to get the best out of your students, reflect on what could go



wrong with supervision, and consider ways to prevent those mistakes', and 'Enjoyable, practical, and also surprisingly useful for improving one's own research'. Students said

'Brilliant, really put the whole PhD into perspective! Made you think about how you work and how you can improve', and 'Very amusing and made you feel as though you are not alone! Advice was applicable to anyone at any stage of their research

Supervisors wishing to reserve a free place should email ugc@cardiff.ac.uk and students should book via the usual University Graduate College booking system at:

www.cardiff.ac.uk/ugcp

We are delighted to announce that postgraduates based at the Heath Park Campus now have a Graduate Centre at their home campus.

The Graduate Centre was officially opened on 26 October 2012. Based in the UHW Main Building, second floor, it provides study, meeting and informal social facilities for taught and research postgraduates.

The Centre consists of two interconnected rooms. The study/meeting side has one networked computer. Laptop users can access the

University network via wifi. In addition, this side of the space will be used for meeting and workshops. There is also a sink with hot water boiler for making hot drinks. The social side has sofas, chairs and coffee tables, as well as a DVD/Blu-ray player and a Wii console.

Speaking at the launch, Professor Ken Wann, Deputy Dean of the University Graduate College, said: "The postgraduate student community on the Heath Campus contributes immensely to the vitality and the research activity of the Institution and it is nice to see that

Heath Park Graduate Centre

recognised in the provision of dedicated space".



Terri Delahunty, Head of the Graduate Centre, added: "Space is at a premium on the Heath Park Campus, so we are particularly pleased that premises has been identified for this purpose. It demonstrates the commitment that Cardiff has to its postgraduate students."

Charlotte Emanuel, a PhD student in dentistry, spoke on behalf of the postgraduates, saying: "I would like to express

the gratitude of the students for the provision of this fantastic environment. This facility will allow postgraduates from all discipline to meet and discuss work with others over a coffee; these collaborations are priceless....it will also provide solace and peace and quiet."

Please visit the Graduate Centre website for more information.

Famelab: Nurturing Science's New Voices

FameLab is a bit like Britain's Got Talent for science. One competitor, one stage, three minutes and whatever props they can carry. The challenge is to engage a public audience with a scientific topic, to be entertaining and charismatic, and ultimately to win the judges over.

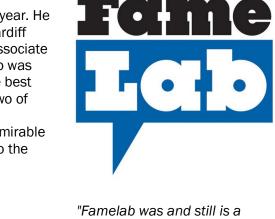
The competition began in 2005, as a partnership between the Cheltenham Science Festival and NESTA. The winner was Dr Mark Lewney, a Cardiff University graduate. Now with the support of the British Council, the competition is running in 27 countries across the world and an international final round was introduced in 2010.

This is a competition with a winner and prizes, but it is also much more than that. It is an opportunity to develop skills, gain confidence and establish yourself within a network of likeminded people and high profile communicators.

Last year's Cardiff heat was notable for the very high calibre of entrants, but also for the sense of community that developed through the day. On a national level, FameLab cultivates its alumni and continues to mentor entrants after the competition.

Cardiff's 2011 heat winner was Sam Durley, a PhD student from the

School of Biosciences, who automatically qualified for the national final in March of this year. He was joined by Simone Cuff, Cardiff PhD graduate and research associate in the School of Medicine, who was chosen as a wildcard from the best runners-up. This meant that two of the ten finalists were Cardiff University researchers - an admirable performance and testament to the talent of our researchers.





Sam has continued to work with FameLab and has been training researchers to take part in this year's competition. He tells us:

"Famelab was and still is a fantastic way for me to develop my skills as an effective communicator to any audience. It has given me the ability to stand back and appreciate the wider, long term implications for any scientific research and then be able to communicate and discuss this importance. Now as a trainer I hope to encourage new PhD students to communicate in new and interesting ways and not just do the same old thing because 'that's what everyone else does'"

The Cardiff heats for this year's competition have passed but you can still enter. There are heats running elsewhere in the UK into 2013 and/or you can upload a video entry (see the **Famelab** website for details – deadline **31 December 2012**).



A Christmas Gift from the UGC

We would like to wish all students and staff a restful and merry Christmas.

We are pleased to be giving away some great **2GB Wafer USB cards**. These handy USB cards are small and slim enough to fit in your wallet or purse, and come pre-loaded with the University Graduate College Programme. Pop into the Graduate Centre or 60 Park Place receptions during normal office hours and pick one up while they last!