



# WINNERS

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# THE

LEADERSHIP &  
MANAGEMENT  
AWARDS 2013

In association with

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**Leadership  
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## INTRODUCTION

Hard graft, creativity and a steady nerve are among the essential qualities for those leading our higher education institutions at a time of uncertainty and rapid change.

Fortunately, all three traits are in plentiful supply, and tonight the *Times Higher Education* Leadership and Management Awards 2013 recognise some of the best examples of both individual and team excellence across the spectrum. All of them are testament to a determination to ensure that our universities and colleges continue to prosper despite the many and varied challenges they face.

Sincere congratulations from everyone at *THE* to all of our winners, and indeed to all of those who made it on to the shortlists.

**John Gill, Editor, *Times Higher Education***



# THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPONSORS







## JUDGES

**Matthew Andrews**, academic registrar, Oxford Brookes University,  
and chair, Association of University Administrators

**Chris Cobb**, chief operating officer and university secretary, University of London

**Cary Cooper**, distinguished professor of organisational psychology and health,  
and pro vice-chancellor for external relations, Lancaster University

**Liesl Elder**, director of development, University of Oxford

**Jane Embley**, director of human resources, Northumbria University,  
and vice-chair, Universities HR

**Patrick Finch**, bursar and director of estates, University of Bristol

**Geoff Hope-Terry**, past chair, UUK Strategic Procurement Group  
for Higher Education

**David McBeth**, director of research and knowledge exchange services,  
University of Strathclyde, and immediate past chair, AURIL

**Maja Maricevic**, head of higher education, British Library

**Joanna Newman**, director, UK Higher Education International Unit

**Mark Pegg**, chief executive, Leadership Foundation for Higher Education

**Hari Punchihewa**, deputy chief executive and finance director, University of Derby

**Ken Sloan**, registrar and chief operating officer, University of Warwick

**Andrew West**, director of student services, University of Sheffield





## OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT TEAM

### Newcastle University

In light of the increase in undergraduate tuition fees in 2012-13, Newcastle asked: “What will students get in return?” The “Newcastle offer” project aimed to answer that question with a set of pledges that go to the core of each undergraduate’s experience, whatever their discipline.

The five-year programme includes greater visibility for teaching leadership and excellence, curriculum enhancement projects in each discipline, a wider range of opportunities to enhance employability, embedded opportunities for e-learning, better student facilities and services, and more ways for students to have their voices heard and to feel part of the university.

The whole programme has been championed by Suzanne Cholerton, the pro vice-chancellor for learning and teaching.

It is supported by a cross-institutional team of academic leaders, student representatives and heads of professional services, and backed by a strategic investment of about £7 million.

Achievements so far include 130 members of staff nominated for the university’s first student-led teaching excellence awards; the employment of 100 students through a new temping service; an expanding career development module; and the highest ratio of course representatives to students in the Russell Group.

This award, said Mark Pegg, chief executive of the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and judging panel member, attracted “a strong field with nominations that demonstrated outstanding achievements”, but Newcastle won because the judges “were looking for evidence of powerful team performances”.

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## KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE/TRANSFER INITIATIVE OF THE YEAR

### University of Wolverhampton

Research shows that businesses are often unsure which competing sources of support to approach when seeking help. The winner of this year's award tackled this by providing a "one-stop shop" that promoted the services of the university together with those of local partners.

The University of Wolverhampton's Business Solutions Centre is a collaboration between the university, the City of Wolverhampton College, the Black Country Chamber of Commerce and Wolverhampton City Council. By sharing contacts and using a single customer relations management system, the centre has opened up partners to a much wider business community, linking academics and research to local small business organisations, supporting commercial needs, boosting skills and increasing market opportunities.

About 100 businesses now contact the centre each month and, since 2010, 500 of

the "new starts" that have been given advice have become fully fledged businesses.

The centre already reports having established overseas links worth about £5 million and partnerships with regional businesses worth more than £30 million. It continues to widen its reach, both regionally through local enterprise partnerships and councils, and internationally through the government body UK Trade & Investment.

One of the judges, David McBeth, director of research and knowledge exchange services at the University of Strathclyde and immediate past chair of the Association for University Research and Industry Links, said the shortlist had included some "very innovative and impactful initiatives" in teaching and community outreach, but the judges had leaned towards selecting this "high-performing initiative". He said the Business Solutions Centre "demonstrated a highly collaborative approach among several institutions and agencies for the clear benefit of companies and economic development".





## OUTSTANDING REGISTRY TEAM

### University of Huddersfield

In researching how to improve its handling of student complaints, the University of Huddersfield identified that a common problem concerned decisions made about extenuating circumstances affecting students' work.

Rulings were being made by panels in individual schools, so in an effort to make the process more consistent, Huddersfield set up a centralised system. This allows students to access an online form that is then submitted to a panel made up of academic staff drawn from all the university's schools.

This centralisation helps to ensure that all students receive consistent, authoritative and timely decisions, while it has also significantly cut the number of hours spent processing requests and holding panel meetings.

In addition, a school-based student conciliator system was established to allow more complaints to be dealt with informally and at a local level. Each school has a student

conciliator who has received training written specifically for Huddersfield by an external company specialising in mediation. Students with a complaint, or any other problem affecting their work, can contact a conciliator directly or be referred by the advice centre at the students' union.

The net effect of the measures has been to reduce the number of formal complaints to the university to just a handful a year at a time when the sector as a whole is experiencing an increase.

"Although [it is] early days in the adoption of the process, the use of student conciliators trained in mediation is a big step within mainstream complaints resolution," said judge Ken Sloan, registrar and chief operating officer of the University of Warwick.

He added that as well as the fall in the number of formal complaints, "there are clear benefits to students and staff of consistency and fairness across the institution".





## OUTSTANDING LIBRARY TEAM

### University of Worcester

The opening of The Hive in July 2012 was the culmination of a six-year collaboration between the University of Worcester and Worcestershire County Council to create a completely integrated academic and public library. One of the country's largest children's libraries shares an inspirational £60 million new building with council customer services, a cafe, meeting rooms, study areas and a cutting-edge combination of archives, books and digital resources now essential for learning and scholarship.

Students and local residents have equal access to the library and receive equal levels of service, while major academic monographs are shelved alongside popular non-fiction. An innovative model of circulation and stock management ensures

that students get access to essential reading material while also allowing members of the community the opportunity to consult university library books.

Although they share many values, public and academic librarians have traditionally had rather different priorities and approaches, so Worcester has had to work hard to develop a common culture – expressed most obviously in an integrated front-of-house team.

The Hive was described by judge Maja Maricevic, head of higher education at the British Library, as “the first of its kind in the UK”. She said that it “stood out as a winner, due to its uniqueness and boldness of vision, which does not only include a new library building but also pioneering work to develop a model for library services that meets the expectations and needs of both an academic audience and the general public”.





## OUTSTANDING PROCUREMENT TEAM

### University of Edinburgh

Over the 12 months to March, the University of Edinburgh's Procurement Office team delivered savings to the university of approximately £12 million. Its efforts also achieved outside recognition, gaining Investors in People standard and, for the third year running, securing the highest rating in the Scottish government's Procurement Capability Assessment (and recording a new high score in 2011-12).

Working with academic colleagues, the team has developed and expanded efficient e-procurement and lab inventory systems, cutting out unnecessary purchasing and reducing waste. In total, about 60,000 orders – with a value of £12 million – were placed using e-procurement in 2011-12. The office has also provided supply chain

management training to the Scottish Borders Council.

Social responsibility is a key aspect of Edinburgh's procurement strategy, and the procurement team director sits on the university's Sustainability and Environment Advisory Group, which aims to promote sustainability and social responsibility throughout the institution.

Geoff Hope-Terry, past chair of the Universities UK Strategic Procurement Group for Higher Education, was one of the judges. He said he was "immensely impressed" by the high standard of achievement by the team, which had emerged as "the clear winner".

"In particular, it was noted that their excellent performance has been maintained for a number of years, making them a truly outstanding team who can be held up as exemplars of best practice."





## OUTSTANDING UNIVERSITY FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE

### University of Leicester

The University of Leicester set itself an ambitious £4 million fundraising target to build and equip a new Cardiovascular Research Centre. But such was the success of its philanthropic campaign that it ended up raising more than three times that amount, including the university's largest-ever donation – £7 million from the John & Lucille van Geest Foundation.

It achieved this by closely involving the vice-chancellor, the dean of medicine and the professor of cardiology, and its campaign featured the voices of patients and their families.

The campaign was supported not only by well-known large philanthropists, it also attracted 672 new and 195 repeat donors. The Heartbeat Ball, which was attended by

about 450 guests, largely from Leicester's South Asian community, raised £100,000. A Silver Hearts Circle of 12 major donors also raised £248,846, and the campaign was featured prominently in the local press.

The campaign contributed to a 77 per cent increase in new funds raised in 2011-12, according to the annual Ross-CASE survey of philanthropic giving. This moved Leicester into the top 20 fundraisers in the UK.

"Leicester's ambition was to move their fundraising programme 'from good to great', and they certainly delivered," said the judges, who overall commended the number of strong entries in the category.

"From major donor work to broad-based community involvement, Leicester's programme represents best practice in the field and deserves recognition and praise," they added.





## OUTSTANDING ESTATES TEAM

### Nottingham Trent University

As part of its strategy to provide an inspiring learning and teaching environment for students and staff, Nottingham Trent University has carried out a major regeneration of all three of its campuses over the past five years.

An £87 million project renovated the Grade II\* listed Newton and Arkwright buildings. The £60 million Byron Development brought the University Partnerships Programme and the students' union in on the scheme to demolish a 1960s building and replace it with a 911-bed complex complete with fitness facilities, retail units, and a venue and bar that will be the largest in the East Midlands. There has also been major investment in a science super-lab, a new library and sporting amenities.

Environmental considerations have been central to the university's plans. Solar

panels have been incorporated into the Brackenhurst Equestrian Centre, while a £420,000 biomass boiler should fulfil the heating requirements for most of the campus as part of the university's programme to create carbon-neutral sites.

"The category of Outstanding Estates Team has attracted ever stronger fields, and this year's entry raised the bar again," said Patrick Finch, bursar and director of estates at the University of Bristol. "The judges had a difficult decision to make, but concluded that Nottingham Trent University has established a strong estate strategy that has clearly played a major role in helping the university to reshape its strategic plan.

"The demonstrable success achieved in implementing that strategy across the entire range of good estates practice was at the heart of our decision."





## OUTSTANDING STUDENT SERVICES TEAM

### Swansea University

This year's award went to Swansea University for its Academy of Inclusivity and Learner Support, an initiative designed to widen access to education and to provide academic and pastoral support for under-represented groups.

Based on an existing study skills programme for international students, the academy focuses on helping students successfully manage the transition into UK higher education study, whether they come from under-represented groups in the UK or from overseas.

The academy offers drop-in and enrolled classes in academic study skills, presentation and critical thinking, as well as English-language support, one-to-one appointments and 10 hours a week of embedded, subject-specific support in partnership with academic colleges.

Recognising the multiple and complex challenges students face, the academy also

works to refer students between the team and a range of other integrated student services. Feedback suggests that the scheme is working well, with the vast majority of students reporting the classes to be "very good" or "excellent".

Judge Andrew West, director of student services at the University of Sheffield, said Swansea was "a strong winner" with "excellent evidence of collaborative working across the institution and good partnership working between teams and functions".

"I was particularly pleased to see the emphasis on collaboration with academic departments, which can be challenging for student service teams but seems to me to be a key feature supporting student success," he added.

The initiative was established in 2012. Dr West said that although it was still in the relatively early stages of development, the project already had a good success story. He wished the winning team the best in their plans to develop still further.





## OUTSTANDING MARKETING/ COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

### University of Leicester

The University of Leicester's presentation of the search for the remains of Richard III is among the factors that have helped its communications team to tangibly improve the institution's reputation.

The press conference in February announcing that the remains of the Plantagenet king had been found resulted in front-page headlines across the world. It was the culmination of a media strategy for the dig that also involved partnership with a television production company and careful planning of the release of information.

Leicester has also been at the forefront of speaking up for animal research – a controversial topic that universities have often been reluctant to discuss. The communications team pursued a policy of openness about the construction of its new animal research facility and sought to highlight the benefits of animal research. The media were also given unparalleled access to the completed facility.

The communications team was also behind the launch of Leicester Exchanges. In this regular series of live online debates, leading academics from the university engage with opinion leaders.

Between 2010 and 2012, Leicester's reputation rose from 5.8 to 6.2 (on a 10-point scale) among an ABC1 population tracked by a long-term independent survey.

Cary Cooper, distinguished professor of organisational psychology and health and pro vice-chancellor for external relations at Lancaster University, was one of the judges. He said Leicester's communications team stood out for the global attention it has succeeded in grabbing for the university.

"Their campaign on the importance of animal research and their search for the remains of Richard III were unparalleled media successes, and the Leicester Exchanges also feature prominently on Google and across the world," he said.

"This was a real team effort and they are very worthy winners."





## ICT INITIATIVE OF THE YEAR

### National Union of Students

This year's award goes not to a university but to the National Union of Students, which has used its own cloud computing platform, UnionCloud, to create the NUS Digital project.

The project allows students' unions to interact more effectively with their members at a local level. Among other services, it offers membership communication management, targeted marketing, election functions and resources for student clubs and societies.

The union describes NUS Digital as "not a website, but a platform of components that unions can customise to suit their needs". The union's cloud has been built by students for students, and has been designed to work on both desktop and mobile devices.

After a successful pilot, 10 students' union websites have already made the transition to NUS Digital, and more than 90 are waiting in the wings. Forty unions are due to transfer to the platform by the end of this year.

Chris Cobb, chief operating officer and university secretary at the University of London, was one of the category's judges. He said that NUS Digital was "an example of what can be achieved through collaboration".

"The core infrastructure and suite of tools in the UnionCloud are innovative, timely and relevant as evidenced by the very strong buy-in from local students' unions. What is particularly interesting is how the NUS has harnessed the power of social networking as a core means of communication within its membership."





## OUTSTANDING FINANCE TEAM

### University of Hertfordshire

The finance team at the University of Hertfordshire has helped to dramatically improve poor recent financial performance. Having made an aggregate surplus of only £3.6 million in the five years to 2009-10, the surplus in 2011-12 was £17.7 million, the second best in the university's history. Cash balances at the year-end were more than £45 million, enabling the university to invest in the student experience.

The team developed a new finance report for use by senior stakeholders. Produced every month, it shows financial performance from departmental to group level against budget, forecast and previous year.

The finance team also played significant advisory roles in the development of two new operations: a company to deliver the installation and management of electric charging posts for cars, and a joint venture company with the University of Northampton to deliver bus services in Northampton.

To support the investment of £200 million in new academic facilities, the team developed cash forecast procedures that go beyond funding council requirements, and the team also organised and delivered training workshops for non-finance managers.

Hari Punchihewa, deputy chief executive and finance director of the University of Derby and lead judge on the award, said the university had achieved "a remarkable improvement in their annual surplus".

He added: "The enhancement in financial stability is reflected in the stronger balance sheet and the increase of cash reserves, which certainly will support the planned investments to improve facilities and student experience.

"The role played by the finance team in delivering quality financial reports with the necessary analytical work and providing guidance to make the performance in core business areas more visible has helped the decision-makers to steer the university to a stronger position in this challenging market."





## OUTSTANDING HUMAN RESOURCES TEAM

### Heriot-Watt University

Heriot-Watt University's human resources development team focused on three areas that aimed to encapsulate "global thinking, world-wide influence" through innovative schemes.

First, the team targeted improvements in the university's research capacity through two projects – Global Platform and Crucible.

Global Platform is a recruitment initiative designed to attract global research leaders; this has increased the number of high-quality researchers, grant applications, grant sizes and success rates. And Crucible – a professional and personal leadership development programme for postdoctoral and early career researchers – has enabled talented interdisciplinary academics to explore their own creative capacity and problem-solving potential in new ways. The scheme has been widely acclaimed and has been awarded funding for the next three years.

Second, the human resources development team developed a strategy and programme to improve staff engagement including development activity based around values. It

involved staff in developing the university's five-year plan and improved staff recognition through initiatives such as the Spirit of Heriot-Watt awards. The results of the team's work were evident when the university retained its *Sunday Times* Scottish University of the Year title and moved to fourth in the UK for student experience.

Third, the HRD team supported Heriot-Watt's internationalisation through its Malaysian start-up. Sharing expertise and educational excellence across the world relied heavily on the People Strategy, which the team developed. This involved recruiting senior staff, piloting the leadership excellence framework for assessment and creating on the Malaysian campus a culture suffused with Heriot-Watt's values.

Judges praised Heriot-Watt University's winning entry for exhibiting "clarity in what they are doing in human resources". Jane Embley, director of human resources at Northumbria University and a panel judge, said she "was pleased to see a range of different HR approaches that were clearly aligned to the university's strategy".





# OUTSTANDING INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY

## University of Nottingham

Since it was established 14 months ago, the University of Nottingham's Asia Business Centre has helped to attract £25 million in commercial funding for the institution through joint research programmes, training and corporate philanthropy.

The centre works with Chinese and Malaysian companies on joint research programmes that can develop new products for the market.

For example, in August last year, Nottingham signed a £3 million deal to develop aerospace research projects for ACAE, a huge Chinese firm that employs more than 400,000 people.

It is also working to secure jobs with major Asian firms for Nottingham graduates, and has been involved in organising events that tackle major world issues, such as the Global Food Security Forum in 2012.

In addition, the centre has been in contact with 55 small and medium-sized businesses in the East Midlands to help them develop commercial opportunities in Asia. To this end, in October 2012, it released a toolkit for setting up businesses in Southeast Asia.

As part of Nottingham's Asian knowledge exchange strategy, the centre has also engaged more than 170 alumni from China and Brunei.

Joanna Newman, director of the UK Higher Education International Unit and one of the judges, said all this year's shortlisted entries were "excellent examples of innovative international strategies". But she said Nottingham's entry was outstanding and had built "on its trusted international reputation and established presence in Asia to create a knowledge exchange strategy that is...creating vital links between the university and business in the UK and Asia".





## OUTSTANDING STUDENT ADMISSIONS TEAM

### University of Sheffield

With a multitude of policy changes taking effect in 2012, including the introduction of £9,000 tuition fees, university admissions offices faced their most challenging year in living memory.

The University of Sheffield's Admissions Service was ideally placed to cope with these significant changes after overhauling its systems to ensure a swift and efficient applications service.

In October 2011, Sheffield introduced a dedicated enquiry service – the Applicant Information Desk – to deal with questions from students, parents, teachers and other interested parties, either in person or by email or telephone.

It processed more than 30,000 enquiries in 2011-12, and responded to more than 20,000 emails and 8,000 telephone calls, with a target response time of 48 hours.

"Your admissions office is the best I've had to deal with – feedback is prompt and very helpful," said one applicant.

The admissions team also worked closely with the university's IT service to create a paperless, more cost-effective postgraduate admissions system, paving the way for the forthcoming service for undergraduates, UG Online.

Sheffield's Disrupted Studies Scheme, introduced last year, also drew particular praise from the judges. Run by a senior admissions officer, the scheme enabled students to inform the university about any circumstances that may have affected their academic achievement, such as bereavement, care duties, a long-standing medical condition or illness.

The lead judge in the category, Ken Sloan, registrar and chief operating officer of the University of Warwick, said the scheme should be commended for promoting efforts to widen participation and allowing students to provide more context about specific difficulties they had faced.

"The combination of initiatives in admissions meant the University of Sheffield is an excellent winner here," he said.





# OUTSTANDING DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION TEAM

## University of Hull

The judging panel noted that the shortlisted entries for this award showed considerable “strength and diversity” and that this was a testament to the role that departmental administrative staff play in the lives of higher education institutions.

Matthew Andrews, academic registrar at Oxford Brookes University, said that all the submissions were especially noteworthy for the different ways in which departmental administration was delivered across a range of institutions, with evidence of a trend towards greater cooperation between teams.

However, in the University of Hull’s winning entry, the panel found an institution that had achieved all these things and more. The university’s Scarborough campus administration team engaged positively in a challenging radical restructure to develop a significantly improved service.

Drawing on feedback, the team realised that the provision of administrative services at the campus was not sufficiently focused

on what students needed. This led to a major restructure and the development of a new, streamlined student interface.

A number of departmental and central administration teams were replaced by three cross-cutting teams: Campus Connect – a student-facing academic and professional services team; Scarborough Student Administration, which deals with all aspects of academic administration; and Corporate Support, which covers secretarial/PA support for heads of departments, human resources and finance.

The administration staff base is now more flexible, and larger functional groupings provide clearer career progression, project capacity and improved team working. Consequently, Scarborough’s administrative staffing costs have shrunk by more than 10 per cent. “Hull’s entry demonstrated a particularly exciting combination of central coordination and local delivery within a single campus and offered evidence of a positive impact,” Mr Andrews said.



# THE

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