

# University of Hertfordshire

## THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The University of Hertfordshire is committed to a truly different student experience. The University perceives this as a journey, exploring and developing entrepreneurial activity in all areas of its work and is committed to students benefitting from an enterprising culture.

Leadership is driven from the top by a Vice-Chancellor with the vision and determination to create an entrepreneurial institution and a Pro-vice-Chancellor for Enterprise whose remit includes student employability and student facing activity as well as commercial income generation. This has allowed us to be proactive in creating supportive reward and recognition policies for both staff and students to flourish.

We are of course a business in our own right and successfully manage profitable businesses. UNO Buses is one of the largest independent bus operators in the UK and the profits are reinvested back into our university to further enhance the student experience.

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



The University of Hertfordshire has developed a distinctive identity as an entrepreneurial, business-facing institution. From the outset this was a model that intrinsically worked for vocational and business focused schools and departments that had established long standing relationships with industry in their own subject areas. For the History, Philosophy and English Literature Departments, this business-facing identity was a cultural and practical challenge.

The commitment to the new mission throughout the institution, enabled the University's Humanities department to respond positively. They have discovered new ways of teaching and research and forged an alternative outlook which we define as social and cultural entrepreneurialism: proactive engagement to enhance the quality of social existence, and to enrich understandings of ourselves, our communities, histories and cultures.

A current project that illustrates social and cultural entrepreneurialism is the de Havilland Airfield Reminiscence Project: once a centre of the British aviation industry, the airfield is now a mix

The entrepreneurial environment is further encouraged by a wide range of activities that initially focus on creating awareness and curiosity of entrepreneurial behaviour. Our entrepreneurial society is the largest society in the university.

Our vibrant and profitable Graduate Consulting Unit provides valuable paid experience for our graduates to undertake small scale consultancy at a commercially attractive price. The unit is popular with SMEs and third-sector organisations, who have come to value and benefit the fresh thinking and creativity of our recent graduates.

We believe it is vital for entrepreneurial universities like ours to be at the heart of economic growth in their areas. We provide highly specialised bio and chemical R&D labs and in partnership with our RDA we invested over £10m to create BioPark – one of the UK's largest bioscience incubation facilities.

of housing, university campus, open space and business park. It's the landscape that staff and students see every day out of their seminar and office windows. The University secured funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to capture, communicate and celebrate this history through collaborations with residents, students and former workers.

Students are central to social and cultural entrepreneurialism. They are active agents who participate in staff research and other outward-facing projects allied to the curriculum. Through our collaborations, students develop independent ideas and networks; they acquire skills and experiences that enrich their own lives and therefore contribute to wider communities. The University has placed value on these activities, by introducing formal academic credit for a programme of work placements in heritage, demonstrating to future employers that students from the University's School of Humanities have acquired practical, work-based, transferable skills.

Throughout every faculty, school and department, entrepreneurship and enterprise is enhancing the University of Hertfordshire's teaching and research, offering our students a distinctive set of experiences and enabling them to acquire and demonstrate initiative and independence.

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## INNOVATIVE AND ENTREPRENEURIAL FACULTY

Staff are supported and encouraged to be entrepreneurial in all parts of their work. We launched a major initiative to incorporate commercial activity, consultancy and knowledge transfer as mainstream activity in our work load allowance process. We celebrate excellence in Entrepreneurship Education through our Teaching Awards. We are currently number one in the Eastern Region for Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and our work with SMEs is often transformative.

We actively encourage staff to start their own businesses with a range of support and investment activities at each development phase, starting with seed corn funding for proof of concept, grants and advice for planning for business, through to an investment fund for spin-out opportunity.

FIT Science is a framework for personal and organisational development to facilitate life and work skills developed by the Head of the School of Psychology. From this the FIT Corporation was founded as a commercial enterprise. In 2009 the University recognised the opportunity to give all students access to FIT and this is now embedded in a range of programmes across the institution.

## ENTREPRENEURIAL IMPACT

Entrepreneurial and commercial activity has a major impact on our core areas of business: how we teach our students; how we conduct our research; how we engage with enterprise and the community. It is also a key feature of our financial portfolio. Only 25% of our turnover comes from core HEFCE funding with the majority coming from our commercial companies.

Through our partner Exemplas and our commercial company UH Ventures we are one of the largest providers of government funded support to business in the UK. We annually engage with over 250,000 SMEs, and support the creation of 10,000 new businesses. We are working with the Innovation Council to explore using enterprise and self-employment as a means to help people displaced from the workforce become economically active. We are developing with pan-European partners a unique international standard for accrediting SME support organizations and have developed a unique co-investment approach to funding SMEs.

Our students are achieving national recognition with four UoH graduates invited to the House of Lords to celebrate the launch of the 'Future Leaders 2010/2011' that showcases 100 of the 'Most



Our Entrepreneur in Residence has a particular interest in encouraging development of entrepreneurial education through action learning and has developed an innovative software product that integrates real-life cases in to a game format to create a unique learning experience. This game is now being rolled out across the University for the benefit of our students whilst we also take it forward as a commercial venture.

Outstanding Black students' in the UK. A graduate from our Business School was selected as one of the 'top ten'.

In 2009 we launched a Social Enterprise Unit. This unit works with organizations in the Third Sector and has provided consultancy, research and business support to over 45 Third Sector organizations. Students use entrepreneurial skills whilst also contributing to society by working with the charity sector. Students are often invited to the charity's own development away days and continue to work with the charity once they finish their studies.

This impact encompassing a social enterprise perspective and benefitting our student experience encapsulates our philosophy of 'social and cultural entrepreneurialism' and a truly different student experience.

