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TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION AWARDS 2012

This booklet is full of examples of the best of the best: the institutions, teams and individuals who have led the way at a time when leadership has been more essential than ever. Anyone looking for evidence of the pioneering spirit, adaptability and sheer quality of our higher education sector need look no further than the winners of this year's *Times Higher Education Awards*. It is a great privilege to be able to play a part in celebrating their achievements.

John Gill, Editor, *Times Higher Education*





JUDGES

Liam Burns

President, National Union of Students

Chris Cobb

Chief operating officer and university secretary,
University of London

Patrick Finch

Bursar and director of estates, University of Bristol

David Frost

Executive chairman, National Centre for Entrepreneurship
in Education (NCEE)

Paul Hannon

Chief executive, National Centre for Entrepreneurship
in Education (NCEE)

Sir Deian Hopkin

President, National Library of Wales

Craig Mahoney

Chief executive, Higher Education Academy

Ben Marks

Managing director, YouthSight

Paul Marshall

Chief executive, Association of Business Schools

Janet Metcalfe

Chair and head, Vitae

Joanna Newman

Director, UK Higher Education International Unit

Shearer West

Head of the Humanities Division, University of Oxford

John Widdowson

Principal and chief executive, New College Durham

Ewart Wooldridge

Founding chief executive, Leadership Foundation
for Higher Education



THE LORD DEARING LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**Professor John Goddard,
Newcastle University**

Lord Dearing's landmark 1997 report on higher education called for a greater regional role for UK universities. This award goes to one of the people who has most energetically pursued that vision – Professor John Goddard OBE.

During a career spanning more than 40 years, Professor Goddard “made an immense contribution to promoting the engagement of universities with their communities and in developing the concept of a university's regional mission,” said judge Sir Deian Hopkin, president of the National Library of Wales. “An economic geographer, he founded and led for over 20 years the influential Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies at Newcastle University, where he was also deputy vice-chancellor with responsibility for the university's links with the North East.”

Professor Goddard is an authority on the civic university. He led the 2007 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development review of the role of higher education institutions in regional development, and he has acted as an adviser to Universities UK, the Higher Education Funding Council for England and the government.

Professor Goddard was instrumental in forging the Universities for the North East partnership, developing Newcastle as a Science City and establishing the campus cultural quarter, which includes the Great North Museum. He also focused research efforts on three crucial challenges: ageing, social renewal and sustainability.

Although nominally retired since 2008, Professor Goddard holds a Leverhulme emeritus fellowship to complete a book on the university and the city.

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EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION IN THE ARTS

Northumbria University

A collaboration between Northumbria University and the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art has been serving the region and beyond since 2002. Ten years on, they have launched BxNU, a scheme that is transforming higher education in contemporary visual art and creating unique learning opportunities for students worldwide.

The BxNU Institute of Contemporary Art – close to the heart of Newcastle-upon-Tyne at BALTIC 39 in Gateshead – is a cultural hub, uniting academic research and cutting-edge contemporary art practice. It is the only UK facility where an art school sits beside an international centre for contemporary art.

Enriching Northumbria's appeal as the university of choice in the field of art and design is among the partnership's key aims; another is to encourage participation in visual art from nursery to PhD level.

At BALTIC 39, the university's fine-art students enjoy an exciting, flexible art space in which they can collaborate with a thriving research community and converse with internationally renowned artists and leading academics.

BxNU also works with Newcastle City Council to support regional development by helping to create a thriving arts quarter. The success of BxNU will be celebrated at an annual summer arts festival in High Bridge, aiming to boost businesses and cultural regeneration in the area.

Shearer West, head of the University of Oxford's Humanities Division and one of the judges, said: "This is a rare international example of academics and top practitioners coming together in a visionary partnership."



OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

British School of Osteopathy

“This is the only place I come where people look at my health as a whole.” This testimonial from an HIV-positive patient for the British School of Osteopathy speaks volumes about the impact the institution is having on the lives of people in the London borough of Southwark.

Through a scheme that has offered thousands of free and subsidised treatments in one of London’s most disadvantaged areas, the staff and students are determined to bring the positive effects of osteopathy to their neighbours, with income no bar to participation.

Word of mouth has led to demand for the school’s services spreading throughout Southwark. From new clinics at Darwin Court, a residential and day complex for the elderly, to 1st Place Children’s Centre, where students can help stressed young families to banish barriers to sleep, the school is helping more and more people.

Reducing the trauma of accidents, relieving osteoarthritis in the elderly and alleviating the musculoskeletal aches and pains of the homeless is what the institution’s staff do on a daily basis.

The work is far more than a fix for back pain, it’s a general MOT in the battle to stay well. As one patient said: “You don’t get that anywhere else. No one’s got the time.”

Ewart Wooldridge, founding chief executive of the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and a judge for the awards, said of the scheme: “There is almost a familial relationship between users and staff. It offers a great example of achieving the right balance between engaging with and contributing to the local community.”

WIDENING PARTICIPATION INITIATIVE OF THE YEAR

London South Bank University

Introducing people from one of society's most marginalised groups into the City of London's corridors of power is the aim of London South Bank University's City Opportunities scheme, which hopes to transform the futures of young adults who have spent their childhood in care.

The university has designed a week-long programme to offer those leaving care the tools needed to enter higher education as well as defined pathways for the future.

Since its pilot in 2010, the scheme has flourished, backed by major City firms including PricewaterhouseCoopers, Lloyd's of London and UBS. Not only do these corporations lend their names to the project, they also allow participants to visit their offices, speak to staff and learn about careers.

The participants also get taster lectures and seminars at London South Bank, careers advice and sessions on setting goals, writing CVs, preparing for interviews and managing money. The initiative equips participants with transferable skills while also changing their perceptions of their choices.

John Widdowson, principal and chief executive of New College Durham, said the judges were impressed by "clear evidence of sustained commitment and success in developing the aspirations of children who had recently left care. It was pleasing to see the strong links that have been developed with business, placing wider participation in higher education in the context of employment and career enhancement."

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OUTSTANDING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

University of Lincoln

A highly productive collaboration between the University of Lincoln and the global electronics firm Siemens has addressed the lack of higher education engineering provision in the region. With Siemens struggling to attract the right calibre of engineering graduate, the university founded the UK's first new School of Engineering for more than 20 years.

The Engineering Hub, opened in 2011, houses both the university's School of Engineering and Siemens' Product Training Group, whose own training programmes are accredited by the university. The university's degrees are tailored to ensure that the content meets industry needs.

Among the far-reaching effects of the £37.5 million project are a twofold increase in demand for Siemens' training courses and hundreds of contacts established between the school and regional businesses.

The mutual collaboration has been praised widely. John Hayes, former minister for further education and skills, declared the venture a "perfect marriage".

The awards judges shared this outlook. Sir Deian Hopkin, president of the National Library of Wales, said it was "an excellent example" of a scheme "both to construct a major teaching and research facility and to address a skill shortage in the region. In turn, the university has won significant research contracts and hugely increased its reach to small and medium-sized businesses in the area, and this has boosted demand for the university's engineering courses."

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OUTSTANDING ICT INITIATIVE OF THE YEAR

University of Southampton

The technology behind data.gov.uk – an online resource sharing raw information from the central government – was developed with the help of researchers from the University of Southampton (among them Sir Tim Berners-Lee). Now the university is using the same technology to share its own information to help improve the life of staff, students and visitors.

Applications designed to exploit university data include the event calendar, which combines 73 different information feeds to provide a comprehensive overview of campus activities. And there is an interactive map app that shows all teaching, leisure and catering facilities and displays real-time information on buses.

The Open Data site also incorporates information from other sources, such as Unistats, to give students access to course information including National Student Survey scores; for staff, it includes details on facilities and major items of equipment available for use in research.

Staff and students are developing their own applications, and Tsinghua University in China has adapted one of the map apps to work with its own open data.

Chris Cobb, chief operating officer and university secretary at the University of London and one of the judges, said that Southampton's development of open standards was going from strength to strength. "This innovation demonstrates a practical application for their web service protocols – a real case of 'walking the talk' and leading by example. It's even more impressive that it's been adopted so widely on campus."

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RESEARCH PROJECT OF THE YEAR

Queen Mary, University of London

A professor at Queen Mary, University of London has developed a less expensive screening test for the virus that causes cervical cancer, an innovation that could save the lives of hundreds of thousands of women who do not have access to standard smear tests.

Traditional screening, which has greatly reduced the incidence of cervical cancer in developed nations, is costly and relies on good medical facilities. In developing countries, where such programmes are unaffordable, the disease still causes numerous deaths.

But Attila Lorincz, professor of molecular epidemiology at Queen Mary, created a test for the cancer-causing human papilloma virus that can be carried out at home and assessed automatically.

A randomised clinical trial in rural Mexico involved more than 20,000 women. Compared with those invited to a clinic for a smear test, there was greater uptake for the new test, and it detected more than four times as many cases of cervical cancer.

The trial, supported by the country's health ministry and the pharmaceutical firm Qiagen, also detected more than three times as many cases of a pre-cancerous condition. The test may also be useful for the 700,000 UK women who do not take up the offer of a smear test.

Shearer West, head of the University of Oxford's Humanities Division and one of the judges, said: "Professor Lorincz's work has been widely recognised for its potential to ensure early identification of cervical cancer and thereby to reduce preventable death."



OUTSTANDING SUPPORT FOR EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS

University of York

Postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers often forgo professional training because they feel unsupported by supervisors and principal investigators in taking it. The University of York's Research Leaders programme seeks to address this by targeting managers directly.

The programme, which includes modules and workshops as well as "360-degree" feedback from all participants' colleagues, familiarises line managers with the importance of career development and the support materials available in an effort to make them more supportive of early career researchers. Elements of existing leadership initiatives are brought together so that managers up to professorial level can see the need for professional development in the wider context.

Feedback suggests that the programme has improved both leadership skills and researchers' engagement with support services. Every participant reported feeling better equipped to develop the transferable and career skills of researchers. All agreed that the scheme had made them more aware of national structures such as the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.

"York has built on existing resources to create a programme for emerging research leaders that is changing the way principal investigators understand and engage with their teams in terms of leadership and management," said judge Janet Metcalfe, who is chair and head of Vitae, the body that promotes career development among research students and staff.

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BUSINESS SCHOOL OF THE YEAR

Lancaster University Management School

Lancaster University Management School was commended by the judges for its “demonstrable, consistent and considerable impact locally, regionally, nationally and internationally”. In the first year of this award category, the judges were impressed by the quality and range of schools on the shortlist, but they particularly welcomed Lancaster’s innovation and commitment to social impact.

The school has grown impressively in the past five years: income is up 51 per cent, full-time undergraduate numbers have risen 46 per cent and full-time postgraduate numbers are up 31 per cent.

The judges applauded Lancaster’s operation of The Work Foundation and its launch last year of the Big Innovation Centre, which aims to build a “world-class innovation ecosystem” in the UK. The centre, which unites firms and policymakers, earned an income of £1.3 million this year from partners, companies and research contracts.

Meanwhile, the school’s Leading Enterprise and Development (LEAD) programme, which trains owners of small and medium-sized enterprises, has been rolled out nationally. It focuses on businesses and also on the personal development of the owner or manager. Evaluation indicates that owners who have taken the programme record significant rises in profit, employment and productivity.

The school recently expanded an international master’s programme in practising management into Brazil. And its partnership with Lufthansa was “highly commended” by the European Foundation for Management Development at its Excellence in Practice awards in 2011.

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OUTSTANDING SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

University of Glamorgan

The University of Glamorgan has 23,000 students spread over four campuses. Yet personal support is instantly at hand through GlamLife, a virtual centre for students. At any time, from anywhere and using any device, Glamorgan students can log on and receive advice and information on everything from part-time jobs and dyslexia to using the library and joining a sports club.

It also allows them to book appointments – be it with a counsellor or a careers adviser – practise psychometric testing for graduate scheme applications, purchase print credits and complete module amendment forms.

Since GlamLife's launch consolidated resources into one user-friendly online system, engagement with the university's student services has risen by 91 per cent. The university has also provided this greatly improved level of support without employing more staff.

In its submission, the university said GlamLife was “an innovative alternative to the trend towards a single physical student centre” while the approach “empowers students to help themselves, freeing resources to help those most in need of one-to-one support”.

Liam Burns, president of the National Union of Students and one of the awards judges, said that the project was impressive for providing a service that encompassed “a wide range of issues, from welfare to employability”.

He added that it was notable that the student body had almost doubled its use of support services through the project and that Glamorgan had achieved this without increasing costs.

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MOST IMPROVED STUDENT EXPERIENCE

University of Chester

This category is based on results from a survey of more than 12,000 students across the country – around one in 20 of all full-time UK undergraduates.

Market research company YouthSight asked students about 21 aspects of campus life, including teaching, accommodation, sports facilities and social life.

The number of students interviewed at each institution varied but the minimum was 50, while at 90 universities more than 100 students were surveyed.

These results were compared with a survey conducted in 2010-11, and the winner is the institution showing the greatest average improvement in overall student satisfaction and the biggest increase in its ranked position.

“The University of Chester moved up 46 places in the rankings and improved its overall score by 6.1 points,” said Mia Lorenz, associate director at YouthSight. “It improved its score on every single attribute.”

She added: “Since obtaining the right to award all degrees in 2007, the University of Chester has gone from strength to strength.

“It has invested in new facilities and in workplace learning with its Centre for Work Related Studies.

“Chester also carries out its own satisfaction survey with students, using the findings to shape policy and provision.

“Clearly these efforts are paying off – it has increased its standing not only in the Student Experience Survey, but has also improved in many National Student Survey attributes since 2008.”

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INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION OF THE YEAR

University of Westminster

The strength of this year's field of shortlisted universities demonstrates the "maturity of the UK sector in its international engagement", according to the judges. Entries covered everything from capacity-building and partnership in Iraq, to new transnational opportunities in India.

But the University of Westminster was judged the winner because of the "pioneering nature" of its leadership of a consortium of six institutions in the South Caucasus region and two universities in the European Union.

Partnering with universities in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, Westminster has created an international collaborative MSc programme in medical molecular biology that uses flexible learning and virtual education to make the course possible across such a wide area.

The judges said that the project "overcame a number of obstacles across political and geographical boundaries to deliver teaching and research through e-resources" and that it is "also encouraging new collaborations across the region and with European partners".

To circumvent political tensions between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the regional centre for the collaboration was located in Tbilisi, Georgia. The EU's Tempus programme granted money to build IT facilities and research laboratories. The collaboration was commended by the EU as the best regional project in Tempus' 20-year history.

The university now has a firm presence in the South Caucasus, and research, teaching and knowledge exchange partnerships with the leading universities in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia are flourishing.

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OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

University of Nottingham

The University of Nottingham has won this award not because of one impressive project but rather because of the sustainable ethos evident in everything it does.

In the 2011 UI GreenMetric league table, Nottingham was named the most sustainable university in the world. A stroll through the institution's University Park campus demonstrates why. From the 230 bikes hired out to students last academic year to the 9,600 PCs that switch automatically to low-power mode, Nottingham's environmental philosophy filters down into every activity, backed by a £1.5 million-plus Carbon Management Plan.

This culture is embodied in the university's Strategic Plan 2010-15, which seeks to engage all parts of its community to reduce collective environmental impact. It seems to be working, with 87 per cent of waste either recycled or recovered in 2011, among other impressive statistics.

But Nottingham's commitment to sustainable development is perhaps most apparent in new campus buildings. They are all designed to meet the BRE Environmental Assessment Method "excellent" rating as a minimum, and the Gateway Building is insulated with almost 2,000 straw bales harvested from the institution's own farmland.

Patrick Finch, bursar and director of estates at the University of Bristol and one of the judges, said Nottingham had been a "trailblazer" for environmental best practice, but "there is no sense of resting on laurels". "In both the innovative approach to estate development and the determination to embed best sustainability practice across the university, Nottingham has again shown the way."

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OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Durham University

Graphene – the “miracle” substance of nanotechnology – could be used in the aerospace industry, in solar cells, and even to replace batteries in next-generation vehicles and consumer electronics. These ideas, however, depend on the creation of a large-scale, sustainable and cost-effective production process.

Durham University’s Karl Coleman found existing production methods to be costly, time-consuming and environmentally unfriendly, and so he took up the challenge of developing a clean and scalable alternative. Eschewing graphite – the finite resource on which previous methods relied – he opted to build graphene from the bottom up.

When he pitched his discovery to Durham University’s Business and Innovation Services, it immediately recognised the potential and the spin-off company Durham Graphene Science (DGS) was established in 2010.

Two years on, DGS and Dr Coleman are central to a market that is projected to be worth more than £400 million by 2020, and their contribution has been recognised throughout the industry.

Chris Cobb, chief operating officer and university secretary at the University of London and one of the judges, said the exceptional electrical, mechanical and thermal properties of graphene made it an ideal material. “But its lack of availability is beginning to hamper new developments. Durham’s approach to the production of synthetic graphene will have a major impact on manufacturing and allied industries, as well as on research disciplines. It is difficult to overstate the significance of this innovation.”

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OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Newcastle University

Since 2011, “unpacking your chair” has been one of the first tasks undertaken by new professors at Newcastle University. The task is not as mundane as it sounds, for it is the title of a development programme with important aims and meaningful results.

In 2004, recognising the many and varied roles of today’s professor, Newcastle noted that the leadership responsibilities of the role came across as ill-defined, both institutionally and individually. An induction programme was launched to establish a dialogue between new professors and senior university leaders. The success of that led, in 2011, to the launch of Unpacking Your Chair.

The workshop-based programme provides new recruits with the skills and knowledge they need to exercise their authority and to fulfil their responsibilities. They are now “much better prepared than their predecessors to exercise academic leadership”, said Charles Harvey, pro vice-chancellor and provost.

The judges shared this view. Ewart Wooldridge, founding chief executive of the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and an awards judge, said that leadership development of the professoriate was a “neglected area”. “The Newcastle initiative builds on a successful professorial induction programme, and offers workshops that empower new professors to explore different aspects of their role, seek feedback from colleagues and develop peer support networks. It provides an excellent bridge between academic leadership and institutional priorities.”

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Inspiring
Leadership
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MOST INNOVATIVE TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Mark Brandon, The Open University

Mark Brandon has worked alongside Sir David Attenborough as principal scientific adviser for the Bafta award-winning BBC television series *Frozen Planet*, written the most popular study unit ever on The Open University's OpenLearn website and given a sell-out presentation at the 2012 Cheltenham Science Festival.

Researching and teaching about the polar regions is Dr Brandon's passion, and his innovative approach to teaching has inspired students to break Open University registration records to get a place on his course.

Work on the *Frozen Planet* documentaries convinced Dr Brandon that inspirational, imaginative and accessible teaching material about polar science could reach a large audience. His undergraduate course, *The Frozen Planet*, is accompanied by a book, online teaching activities and exclusive film clips of him teaching science in the Arctic.

Dr Brandon has sparked an interest in polar geography in thousands of pupils with his talks in schools. Indeed, with visitors to the ancillary website approaching half a million and 15,000 people worldwide having read the first chapter of his book online, Dr Brandon's innovative approach has led to people across the spectrum taking up the study of the Arctic and the Antarctic.

Craig Mahoney, chief executive of the Higher Education Academy and one of the awards judges, said: "The metrics associated with student registrations, viewer interest, resource development, testimonial support, student feedback and a sustained commitment from The Open University, make Mark an outstanding choice."

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ENTREPRENEURIAL UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR

University of Huddersfield

The university's entrepreneurial outlook is advocated from the top by the vice-chancellor, Bob Cryan, who sits on the Higher Education Funding Council for England's advisory committee on enterprise and skills. Over time, he has established an infrastructure at Huddersfield to support and lead entrepreneurship, including the formal position of a pro vice-chancellor for research and enterprise. The institution's strategic aims are "to produce employable and enterprising graduates" and to "contribute to economic development". This includes building a £12 million "hub" for innovation, where global companies rub shoulders with start-ups and Huddersfield's best student and graduate businesses.

Huddersfield was helped to victory by its leadership of the £2.7 million Graduate Entrepreneurship Project, a European Regional Development Fund-supported collaboration of 10 universities across Yorkshire that won a 2011 National Enterprise Educator Award. The university also provides high-level leadership through having board members on Enterprise Educators UK and the Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

David Frost, executive chairman of the National Centre for Entrepreneurship in Education, who led the judging panel for this award, said it was clear from the entries this year that entrepreneurship had a "growing role in higher education". "Huddersfield has won this award because it uniquely brought together high-level leadership from within the university, quality support for business and a focus on employability skills," he said.

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Entrepreneurship in Education

UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR

University of Strathclyde

The judges were impressed by how the University of Strathclyde's dedication to working with industry took concrete form in the past year, giving a modern slant to its 18th-century founder's vision of "a place of useful learning".

In its "transformational year", the technological university invested £89 million in a groundbreaking Technology and Innovation Centre uniting academia and industry. It also established the UK's first Fraunhofer Institute – Europe's largest research contract organisation – creating a Fraunhofer Centre for Applied Photonics. Fraunhofer will also establish its UK headquarters at the university.

In addition, Strathclyde has doubled its research income from business and industry to £6.2 million, and it was selected as the exclusive European partner for South Korea's global research and commercialisation programme.

This all builds on the vision set out in 1796 by the institution's founder, John Anderson, who called for "a place of useful learning" – a university whose purpose would be to work for "the public, for the good of mankind and the improvement of science".

John Gill, editor of *Times Higher Education*, said: "The University of Strathclyde stood out as an institution that had an extraordinary understanding of where it was, where it wanted to be and how it was going to get there.

"Its focus on 'useful learning' and on really meaningful work with industry had come together in an impressive way in the past 12 months, and the judges were clear that it was a worthy winner of the University of the Year title."

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