

Staff & Student News

Welcome to our final newsletter of this academic year – it's just flown by! This hasn't stopped us from sharing plenty of activity with you though, as you will see over the following pages. We have some wonderful photos of our visit to Old Trafford (the home of Manchester United Football Club) as well as from our Awards Ceremonies for our June and August Finishers. To add to that, **ONCAMPUS** English teacher, Ian Simandl, also shares his experiences of featuring as a judge on Beijing's 'Star Outlook English Talent Show' in July (the next Simon Cowell? He's started demanded tea and coffee to be brought to him each morning...). Finally, our Course Leaders share their fantastic termly Coventry University Engagement activities with us, featuring some great feedback from students and the August Art & Design students showcase their amazing Final Major Projects. Until next academic year, we hope you enjoy this term's Staff and Student News! Have a great summer 😊

Awards Ceremonies for June & August Finishers: June 15th and August 19th

On 15th June and 19th August, staff and students came to the annual '**ONCAMPUS** Awards Ceremony', held at Square One in Coventry University's student venues, The Hub and Charles Ward Building, respectively. We were also honoured to be joined briefly by **ONCAMPUS'S** new CEO, Michael Ioakimides, who visited the Centre in June. Numerous awards were given, to recognise student achievement. These consisted of celebrating excellent attendance, outstanding commitment to studies, sustained effort and overcoming hardship, student representatives, attendance to the CERN facility in Geneva and, finally, awards for inspirational members of staff. Once the awards had been distributed, students enjoyed a buffet and chatted to staff about the year ahead. Many congratulations to all winners and those who attended to support their friends – here are some photos of the event:





“Lights! Camera! Action!” “灯光摄像机行动起来吧!”



Words: Ian Simandl, English Department

In July, one of our English teachers, Ian Simandl, was invited to participate as a judge in the ‘Star Outlook English Talent Show’ in Beijing. The show attracts millions of viewers, with students showcasing their English skills in a variety of dramatic contexts. Intrigued? Read on to find out more about Ian’s experiences as the next Simon Cowell...

“Lights! Camera! Action!”

‘I heard these words on the stage of China’s 17th ‘Star Outlook’ English Talent Competition in Beijing, a contest viewed every year on CCTV by millions of people. The contest has gained momentum as a mix between an academic competition and drama. Every year students come on board to show off their English skills in dramatic contexts related to a topic they previously knew very little about.

I had been invited to take part, along with international school representatives from University College London (UCL), Yale University, Birmingham University and Pennsylvania University, to judge the English language abilities of 10 high school finalists and 10 university finalists. Over the course of the next few days, we planned to become the Simon Cowells of the Chinese media!



After several meetings and interviews, all international representatives (judges) finally made it on stage to wave to the cheering audience, meet the contestants and face the dazzling studio lights. One by one the finalists underwent three gruelling rounds based on a theme they had been given just 24 hours to research. Themes were purposely selected by the reps to be totally inconsistent with the students’ majors or experience to ensure the final was extra tough.

Before even catching a glimpse of the judges, contestants had to get through the ‘Describe and React’ rounds. In the Describe round, competitors were faced with the challenge of eliciting specialist and sometimes obscure words (all linked to their research topic) from a ‘guessing partner’. Partners were native English speakers with regular spots on CCTV and experience of teaching in English training centres across China. All words were on screen for only the contestant and audience

to see. To make things a bit harder going, contestants were given just 90 seconds to obtain at least seven correct answers from their guessing partners. Only four of the university contestants got through!

Next up, stage doors opened and a set with actors were revealed to the contestant. Contestants found themselves launched into a drama without any preparation at all. The only thing they could anticipate beforehand was that the situation would be related to their research topic. Their task was to act and react to whatever circumstances were put before them. For

example, one dance student (given the topic of military affairs) was hurled straight into a battlefield to undertake arms training from a fellow officer. Unfortunately, all went tragically wrong and the commanding officer was accidentally hit. The contestant reacted by quickly switching from soldier to nurse and offering CPR. The dead soldier conveniently arose from the dead!

After graduating from acting and reacting, each competitor was finally confronted with the grim-faced international representative panel. Before any judgements could be cast, contestants were to be put through their paces in the dreaded 'stress interview'. The reps made it their business to rapidly fire questions at the contestants within the space of three minutes. Questions fired urged students to reflect on their weaknesses in the contest (e.g. "I expected to be dazzled by your eloquence, but you seemed unconfident today. If you could do this all over again, what would you do differently?"); to show how they could meet the grand expectations of their dream schools (e.g. "A majority of students who apply to us have shown the capacity to inspire others, give me an example of how you have done this?") consider their personal values in context ("If you see a homeless person in the street, what do you do?"), and tackle the totally unexpected (e.g. "Which came first? The chicken or the egg?").

Based on their performance throughout all three rounds, reps were prompted to vote by the MC (the well-known Ji Xiao Jun) with the words "It's decision time". Tense ticking music played and when judges decided a contestant was fit for their school, they clamped down their glass voting



hammers. When such a thing happened, the words 'We want you' lit up the respective judges' podiums. Sometimes contestants were favoured by more than one judge, so the contestant felt the pressure to make a decision between schools. Once the contestant had made their choice, the judge signed a reference letter on *Star Outlook Final* headed paper. Contestants now knew their English language abilities would get immense media attention, thus radically enhancing their career prospects.



Above: Ian, congratulating a winner!



At the very end of the competition, all contestants lined up and judges decided the overall winner of the contest for each age group. This year we selected a contestant who had overcome depression and difficult life circumstances to achieve his goals. It was our hope as judges that this media limelight for such a brave contestant might help enhance awareness of depression throughout China and beyond.

It was a truly amazing experience to spend a week in the world of TV, especially in East Asia. I will certainly miss the makeup, the thrilling music as I walked on stage and of course all of the attention. I even had a personal assistant who would bring me fresh coffee, order me fast food and carry my things. Sigh. Ok, ok, reality check, it was a true learning curve and gave me some nice strategies I could bring back to the classroom –role play, describe and guess activities and even ‘stress interviews’ (with speaking test questions); I’m sure my ONCAMPUS students will love them and I look forward to sharing my experiences with them’.



Business News

IY1 Business Students’ Poster Exhibition

The students in their poster exhibition discussed how organisations have a variety of purposes that depend on why they were established. Some operate for profit, whilst others do not. The students explain that every organisation has a range of stakeholders whose interests need to be satisfied, but stakeholders have competing interests that may be hard to reconcile

January start students IY1 in their poster exhibition where they demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of how Businesses operate in an environment that is shaped by the government, competitors, consumers, suppliers and international factors (right)

June start MQP 1 Term Business & Engineering students poses for a picture with their course leaders Ravjeet Kour and Godfried Asante (left)



It was noted by tutors how

these students have been very good in bonding together.

The group cohesion among one term MQP students has been terrific this term. They conducted research over a range of topics: Taxation in Kazakhstan; Oil Industries in Sierra Leone; Genetically Modified Food; Johan Cryuff in Total Football; Human Rights Violations in Nigeria, to name a few.

The students excelled in their research reports and also their presentations. The students have also developed

understanding of methods and methodology used in research and the study skills necessary to select relevant sources of information to analyse data and implement research. Students have conducted secondary, quantitative and qualitative research on a topic and have critically evaluated the contribution of alternative research processes to the end project.

One of the students, Umar, said, *"I have now become a reflective researcher who is able to reflect and refine my research skills. Prior to my MQP programme I didn't have the IT skills needed to implement a research project but I can now confidently say that my research and study skills have improved tremendously"*.

The students are now familiar with all stages of the research process and have evidenced their development of research skills over the module in the form of research portfolios and project reports.



Art, Design & Media News

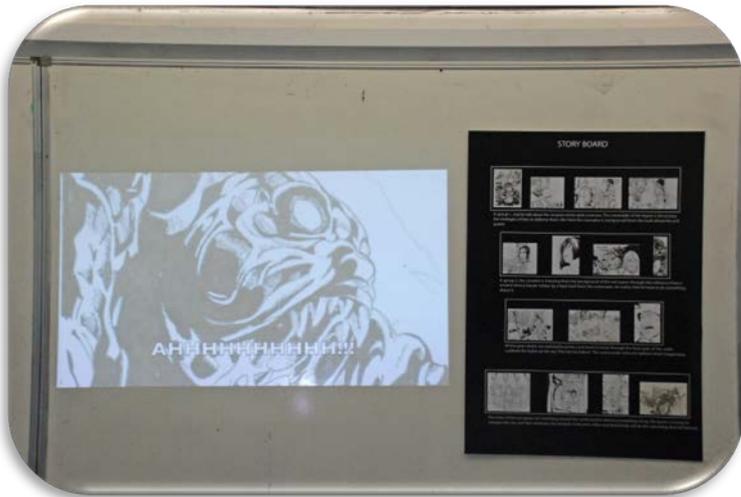
August Finishers: End of Year Show

After completing our first term of Extended Art and Design Foundation we are pleased to showcase the work of the hard working students who split their studies between English and Art and Design. Designed to give students the background knowledge and skills to prepare them for IFP Art and Design, the course focuses on key visual recording skills while also experimenting with a range of 3D materials and processes. The students also learn an introduction to historical and contextual research to provide further understanding of both Art and Design history and a background to their chosen future pathway.





The students this term had a range of future pathways including Automotive Design, Graphics/Illustration and Fashion and Jewellery Design. Their progression this term was evident in their final presentations which showed not only a growing confidence in both their understanding and English skills but also in the quality of the final models. Inspired by a key figure in their specialism and fashioned out of found objects, the final pieces submitted clearly displayed a great development in both skills and knowledge. We are looking forward to welcoming the students back to UFP Art and Design in the coming terms.



Engineering News

Dr. Ravjeet Kour made Fellow of The Higher Education Academy

Congratulations to our Course Leader of Engineering & Science, Dr. Ravjeet Kour, who recently achieved the status of Fellow of The Higher Education Academy. This is awarded in recognition of attainment against the UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Learning Support in HE. Well done Ravjeet!

Congratulations



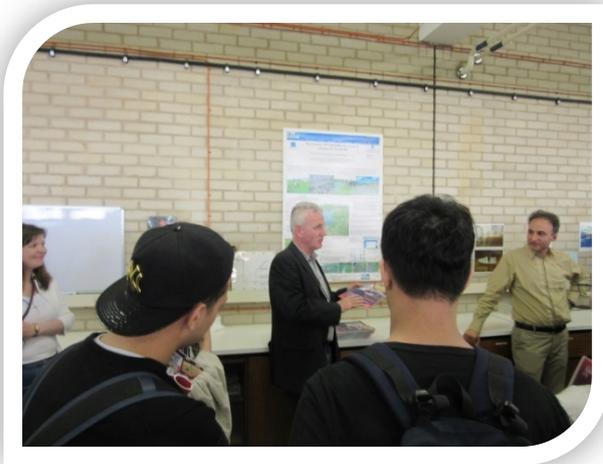
University Engagement & Activities

Engineering Experience Day at Coventry University - IFP

Engineering students (January and April cohort) attended an Experience Day during this term, hosted by the Engineering & Computing Faculty at Coventry University. The day was designed to give students a chance to meet academic and professional staff, get to understand their approach to teaching and learning and to get detailed information about the courses, work placements and links to industry. Students also had a close look at the teaching and learning facilities within each Faculty.

Students' feedback was very positive, with some commenting that the event was **'really important, it has increased my knowledge and given me a clue on what I'm going to be dealing with when I start my university course and that Seminar and the Q & A session with the Head of Mechanical Engineering made me more confident about the pathway degree and my choice of ONCAMPUS Coventry and Coventry University as the place of study.** This was particularly important for students in terms of gaining a more specific understanding of what they would be doing over the next few years. The activities proved to be very successful, with one student noting that **'The presentation of practical work was wonderful and enriching as an experience. I enjoyed the Gear Ratio activity and my highlight of the day was seeing the 3D printers in the engineering lab'** and that he was looking forward to studying at Coventry University.





Staff were said to be very approachable and helpful, with another student adding that they liked ***‘how the teachers interact and their way of communication and I had a lovely discussion with one of the lecturers about the subject and what will be covered’***.

The ONCAMPUS Engineering team who attended also had a great time, and were happy that students thoroughly enjoyed and benefited from their experience.

Engineering Experience Day at Coventry University – MQP

A half day Experience Day was organised in conjunction with the Engineering faculty for the MQP Engineering students. The students had the opportunity to speak to academic staff, explore funding options, find out where a postgraduate degree could take their career, discover new facilities and take a tour of the campus. The students commented that they found the sessions ***“very useful”*** in terms of being given an overview of postgraduate study and its learning outcomes.

Feedback was excellent, with one student making the following comments:

“The interactive session with Mr Gary O’Neill went very well. He gave each of us a brochure which provided details on our respective courses. He talked about how the Masters programmes are conducted. He explained that the modules are taught per block (one week 9am - 5pm) and there will be course work, exams and a few presentations. He encouraged us to attend all classes if possible and to be present at the induction week as we will get an opportunity to meet and interact with our course directors and lecturers. He also assured us that we would have all the support we need from the faculty staff. He explained the dissertation weightings to us, and expects our research to be taken very seriously. He concluded by saying that whilst he appreciates the courses are intense due to limited time; we should also consider the unlimited opportunities we will have after successful completion. Thank you for holding the session. It was a very good opportunity to meet with tutors, and know more detail about my course. Some of the recommendations were to join guest lectures in the university, as it was explained that this will be a good opportunity to gain an insight into our Masters course.”



Alumni Engagement: Ahmad Charif

One of our former MQP Engineering students, Ahmad Charif, was invited to deliver a talk to current MQP students and gave them tips on how to be successful at university.

Ahmad is currently studying for his Masters degree in Project Management at Coventry University. He shared his experiences at ONCAMPUS along with the challenges and expectations which lie ahead at Masters' level. He talked through how the research project module enabled him to undertake a sustained, in-depth research exploration and thereby improved his ability to use research and enquiry skills to collate, analyse and interpret relevant literature/information.

He also highlighted that this module helped him to produce a comprehensive and analytical report taking into account appropriate research skills which are helping him immensely in his Masters programme in his research based coursework particularly.

Ahmad also highlighted that the English skills he had acquired at ONCAMPUS gave him a distinct advantage in helped him to perform better in different courseworks. He advised the students to take the library induction seriously as he has been using skills such as 'Locate' which he had been shown at ONCAMPUS. He added that in order to cope with these challenges, the students needed to use the techniques they have learnt in Study Skills to organise their studies.

His ONCAMPUS research work on 'Piezoelectric Roads: Energy Harvesting Method Using Piezoelectric Technology' is published in the Innovative Energy & Research Journal. The link to the article can be found in <http://www.omicsonline.com/open-access/piezoelectric-roads-energy-harvesting-method-using-piezoelectrictechnology-ier-1000132.php?aid=73891>



Further Engagement Activities – Health & Life Sciences

Health & Life Sciences students were given an opportunity to attend a series of preparatory sessions organised in conjunction with Coventry University's Course Leader for Physiotherapy, Annette Dix.

The students benefited from these sessions, and some great feedback was given, with one student commenting that ***'after attending the physio session with Miss Annette, I started to feel much more comfortable with the upcoming interview. This session gave me a right direction of what to prepare and expect in the coming interview and clear my misunderstanding of physiotherapy'***.

Another student noted how ***'the introductions of the physio course also increase my passion of studying for physiotherapy. Miss Annette gave me more confidence for the interview by telling me what the process of the interview is and what type of student examiners are looking for. I feel thankful for taking part in the physio session and I learnt a lot from itThank you very much'***.



And finally, some goodbyes to 1T MQP Students...



Good Luck



ONCAMPUS and Culturae Mundi Trip to Old Trafford – Home of Manchester United, June 2016



Due to the success of last year's event, ONCAMPUS once again teamed up with our friends at Coventry University's Culturae Mundi to run a trip to the home of Manchester United, Old Trafford. For a small cost, students were transported to Old Trafford by coach and attended a behind the scenes tour, where they were shown around the *Theatre of Dreams*. This included the various spectator stands, media room, VIP areas (invite only!), players' tunnel and of course, the changing rooms – an ONCAMPUS favourite! At the end of the tour, ONCAMPUS and Coventry University students were given a certificate and went on to ensure that the gift shop was given plenty of attention. There was also the opportunity to look around the Old Trafford Museum, detailing the fascinating yet tragic history of the club, with reference to the Munich air disaster in 1958. It was a long but exciting day, and all students were a credit to both

ONCAMPUS and Coventry University. Special thanks go to Culturae Mundi's 2015-16 Operations Officer, Fabiola Tanku, who is an ONCAMPUS alumni herself (class of April 2013)! It was great to catch up with Fabiola and see her doing so well at the University.

Despite the success of the trip, our Head of Learning and Teaching, Jill Connolly, has put forward an impassioned plea to visit Anfield, '**home of the world's greatest football team**' next year. Do we have any Liverpool supporters out there (other than Jill)....?





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