

Feeling a bit festive

Carolynne put on her best dress and treats you to some cheap Christmas cheer

Students call Vice Chancellor out

Heather Mann

AROUND 200 STUDENTS protested for three hours on Friday Week Six outside a meeting attended by Vice Chancellor, Professor Paul Wellings, in Lancaster House Hotel. During the protest, one student was arrested.

Students were protesting against cuts in the university such as the closure of the Student Learning Development Centre and the Nurse Unit, along with increased parking and printing costs and soaring rent. Many were also angry at the closure of college bars at weekends and reduced portering. This comes at the same time as the government plans to raise tuition fees to between £6000 and £9000 from the present cap of £3290.

Protesters were frustrated with Vice Chancellor Wellings, who announced the cuts within the university and recently publicised his support for the rise in tuition fees.

Third year student Oliver Trumble said: "It's not just about fees, the Vice Chancellor is making cuts where he shouldn't be. They have enough money to plough into new developments but are scrapping vital services such as the Nurses Unit." He said that he felt that Wellings was "out of touch with his customers. If the Vice Chancellor was running a business in the real world, he couldn't allow that". He added that he feared the education cuts would mean "nobody will come to Lancaster University in the future".

On Monday Week Five, Wellings wrote an article for The Guardian calling for constructive debate over tuition fees as opposed to protests. Wellings' article argued that "new fees will improve the education sector". He commented that "we [the 1994 Group] were pleased that the government has



Protestors gather outside Lancaster House Hotel to voice their opinions to the Vice Chancellor. Photo by Elliot Westacott

proposed raising the graduate contribution cap to £9000".

Yet many felt Wellings was hindering open debate over the cuts and ignoring the student voice. First Year Music student Andy Han said: "The Vice Chancellor doesn't want to talk to people. There is no dialogue between him and students".

Several student's protests were directed at the Politics Department, who have dramatically reduced the amount of classes available to Part II students. Pendle Student Ben Holden said he was protesting against the department as only eight courses out of 26 are running this year. Politics student Lauren Ronsdale commented, "I feel like I am being ripped off".

Other students complained about the quality of university education in general. Third Year student Rebecca Pocklington said: "I am paying £3290 for four hours of lectures a week, and they are wanting to put it up to £9000." Other's complained about the problems that have been occurring with LUVLE.

The protest was organised in parts by the Students' Union and in parts by the group, Lancaster University Against Cuts. LUSU President Robbie Pickles said: "Lancaster students came out on Friday to show the University management, and the Vice Chancellor in particular, why they are furious about the current policies of the University which have hit students particularly hard".

Pickles added: "Following the publication in the Guardian of a comment piece by the Vice Chancellor in which he appears to denounce protest in favour of constructive debate, students have rightly begun to ask exactly when and where this debate has/will

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University agrees radical shake-up of assessment rules

Zoe Haynes

THE BIGGEST CHANGE to assessment regulations at Lancaster was passed last week, at the University's senior academic meeting.

A meeting of University Senate that took place on Wednesday November 24 agreed on the changes to be made for the academic year starting 2011/2012. The proposal put forward

is designed to encourage a new grading system to render a first class honours more achievable, and to simplify assessment procedures for both staff and students.

The Students' Union and some departments had been in support of lowering the pass mark for the major subject in the first year from 45%. Robin Hughes, LUSU Vice President (Academic), said this was for "various

robust pedagogical reasons". Many other departments were unsure as to the benefits and impacts this would have and therefore the final decision of Senate was that this decision would be postponed. The pass mark will remain as it currently is, with the new grading system introduced translating the pass mark into a grade D, or a lower second, required to pass the first year.

A current first will include the

grades A+, A and A-, with percentages of approximately 73-100%; a current upper second, or 2:1, will become B+, B or B-, percentages of around 62-69%. A lower second (2:2) will become the equivalent to C grades, percentages 52-62% and a third to the D grade, 40-48%. Anything below this, as already in place, is a fail.

A student's assignment will be placed within the middle grade (A, B or

C) of an honours class, e.g. first, second, third, and assessors will move the mark up or down from there depending on quality of writing. This is similar the A Level marks system that current first years are already familiar with.

Senate also agreed that if a deadline is missed, the result for that work will be reduced by one grade if it is handed in within three working days. This is

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NEWS

Rent to increase by £300 next year

Keith Morrisson

RENT COSTS FOR all accommodation on campus are set to rise by 6.9% in the coming academic year.

Last year the rise in rent was only 1.5%, which was deemed as too small of an increase, which is why a large amendment is needed. It is then likely that increases next year will be lower.

The increase in rent consists of a rise of 6.7% of rent costs with an addition of 0.2% for damages. However, in terms of damages anything less than £10 will be scrapped and the student will not have this docked from their deposit as a sign of good will.

The cheapest accommodation on campus at the moment is a standard room in Bowland College, at a cost of £68.95 per week. With the proposed increase, for the next academic year it will cost £73.71 per week, an extra £190.30 to pay on this year. At the other end of the spectrum, the most expensive non-catered single rooms are the superior en-suite across most colleges, coming to £105.35 per week. With the increases they will cost £112.62 per week, meaning an extra £290.77 per year.

Reaction from students has been

mixed. Heather Bennett, a second year Fine Art student from County College has issues with the increase in rent. "That's outrageous. I was on campus last year and that was expensive enough but if it goes up even more I'll be forced to live off campus again. I wanted to go back on campus as I have a big workload but I'll have to rethink it now."

However, Robert Maidstone, a third year Mathematics student from Furness College is currently on campus and will be looking for somewhere to live next year. "I'm not really bothered

6.7%
the average amount rent is set to increase for next year

about the increase. My rent isn't particularly high in the first place so it will only increase by around £5 anyway. Increases in rent are inevitable and I'll still be on campus next year."

Head of Colleges and Student Life Hilary Simmons had more information on the increase in rent. "We provide very good quality accommodation and our rent levels are very competi-



Campus accommodation is set to become more expensive. Photo by Elliot Westacott

tive when compared to other universities with a similar offering. By clearly advertising our product and pricing earlier in the academic year, we will enable students to make an informed decision regarding their options for the next academic year and arrange their accommodation accordingly."

Lancaster University Students' Union President, Robbie Pickles said: "The hike in rent next year will hit students hard at a time when they are already facing increased living costs through VAT rises. Whilst we appreciate that the University kept the rent

increase low last year, we do not believe the consequence for keeping rent low one year is to drastically increase it the next. A more balanced approach would ultimately be kinder on students and their wallets."

Rent levels are approved by the Finance Committee every year following a discussion with interested parties, including LUSU. Changes in rent are based on a standard formula linked to the Retail Price Index. Rent policy is identical for University owned accommodation and UPP accommodation.

IN THIS ISSUE

Carolynne

The Carolynne team pull out all the stops to help you pull out all the stops without going bankrupt this Christmas. And for those of you not in the festive mood, there's always the crossword.

www.scan.lusu.co.uk/carolynne

Comment

Jonathan Kennedy: Too many activities at university are sold on the merit that they will look good on your CV, but actually Jonathan just wants to do them because he enjoys them. Is that so much of a crime?

www.scan.lusu.co.uk/comment

Sport

Lancaster square off against the University of Cumbria for a battle of bragging rights in basketball. Closer to home we round up the George Wyatt so far.

www.scan.lusu.co.uk/comment

What SCAN says

There is more at stake if tuition fees increase than just a bigger hole in the wallets of students. It will alter the way people see their role society.

www.scan.lusu.co.uk/editorial

Editor

Lizzie Houghton
scan@lancaster.ac.uk
01524 592613

Assistant Editor

Collette McColgan
scan.assistanteditor@lusu.co.uk

News Editors

Chris Housden
Charlotte Urban
scan.news@lusu.co.uk
Meet: Mon 1pm - Furness Bar

Investigations Editor

Samantha Newsham
scan.investigations@lusu.co.uk

Comment Editor

Emily Robertson
scan.comment@lusu.co.uk
Meet: Mon 5:30pm - County Bar

Sports Editors

Nick O'Malley
Jack Smith
scan.sports@lusu.co.uk
Meet: Tues 6pm - Furness Bar

Carolynne Editor

Hannah Fearon
scan.carolynne@lusu.co.uk

Features Editors

Louise Day
Kristina Beanland
scan.features@lusu.co.uk
Meet: Monday 12pm - Furness Bar

Lifestyle Editor

Lauren Hirst
scan.lifestyle@lusu.co.uk
Meet: Mon 2pm - Furness Bar

Culture Editor

Alex Harris
scan.culture@lusu.co.uk
Meet: Fri 3pm - County Bar

Website Editor

Khairil Zahfri
scan.website@lusu.co.uk
Meet: Mon 4pm - Learning Zone Pod 9

Head of Photography

Elliot Westacott
scan.photography@lusu.co.uk
Meet: TBA - please email

Marketing & advertising

Louise Mason
l.mason@lancaster.ac.uk

WANT TO WRITE?

If you want to write for SCAN the best way to get involved is to go along to a section meeting. All of the section meetings are listed above so you can see where and when to go. If you can't make a meeting email the section editor and ask to be added to their mailing list. Membership of SCAN is £3, but you can join Bailrigg FM and LUTube.tv at no extra cost.

VOLTAGE Christmas Apprentice 2010



Week 9
Friday 1-3pm
@ Christmas Festival in Fylde Quad

support your local community

All's quiet on campus as local students turn out for national day of action

Erin O'Reilly

ON WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 24 the United Kingdom saw thousands of students taking part in sit-ins, walk-outs, and marches in response to the impending increase in tuition fees.

The Facebook group, named National Walkout And Day Of Protest Against Tuition Fees, consisted of 26,536 members in attendance and prompted all members to walk out of their academic classes at 11am to take part in the non-violent protests. It was not just university students, however, that took part in the demonstrations, but sixth form and high school students as well.

At Lancaster University, a public lecture and discussion was held in the Faraday Building. Documentary producer David Malone came to give a talk on his new book *The Debt Generation*, which was described on the Facebook event page as being a “compelling account of the economic crisis as it happened and a devastating critique of the financial system and of our political leaders who bowed down to it”. The Students' Union sent 2000 signed letters to the Liberal Democrat's head office timed to arrive on Wednesday, expressing students' anger at their intention to break their election pledge to vote against a rise in fees.

Although no major protests happened on campus it seems that the University was prepared for it. An email was sent by a member of University staff to people who had appointments with staff in their offices on the day, stating that there was going to be an increase in security outside University House.

However, a protest did take place in Lancaster town centre, consisting primarily of local high school students. Heather Mann, a student at Lancaster University, described the scene as “energetic” with around 300 people taking part from 11am. Morecambe High student Jack Gannon explained how over a hundred students at their school alone signed out of school and walked to Lancaster, taking the protest round Penny Street and to Dalton



Students took to the streets in Bristol to protest against the rise in fees and funding cuts. Photo courtesy of Bristol Indymedia

Square.

“I was there to show my anger at removing EMA [Education Maintenance Allowance] payments,” Gannon said. “My EMA helps pay for stuff I need for school so now it's going to be harder to pay for things as I'm going to have to find part-time work. Also I was showing support for my friends, I don't personally aim to go to University but most do so they were protesting against the rise in uni fee's”.

Joshua Brandwood, a student at Lancaster and Morecambe College, described the day as being brilliant. “We all gathered at Dalton Square to

express our feelings via sing-alongs, literally singing, not just chanting.” Stu-

“I was there to show my anger at removing EMA payments. My EMA helps pay for stuff I need for school”

dents ran onto the town hall steps to chant but were then “made to go back into Dalton Square” by the police.

“There was no trouble as far as I'm concerned, the police did a very

good job at organising the protestors into Dalton Square,” Brandwood said. When asked why he was protesting in particular, he responded that he thought nine thousand pounds for fees was “obscene” and “working class people can't afford it.”

While the day's protests took place, politician Nick Clegg, who abandoned his party's pledge to oppose any increases in tuition fees, was challenged by Jeremy Vine on BBC Radio 2. Clegg said: “I believe we genuinely are, successfully, now putting forward something which will over the coming years make for a fairer university system.”

He went on to say “all graduates will pay out less per month than they do at the moment, but crucially you pay nothing as a student, this is the crucial point, you only pay back once you earn enough money to do so”, Vine's response to this was: “You still have the debt though, that's the point.”

Live feeds were set up on the Guardian and the BBC websites documenting the day's events, along with the official National Campaign Against Fees & Cuts website, anticuts.com. Students were reported to have occupied numerous educational facilities, including lecture theatres at Cardiff and Warwick Universities.

Students at Birmingham University staged a sit-in, issuing a statement on Indymedia.org.uk which read: “Despite some difficulty from security guards preventing many of our students getting in more than 30 Birmingham students are currently in occupation of the Aston Webb building the site of the prime ministerial debates”. The statement went on to say that they “have embarked on this occupation because we believe the Government's cuts to be economically unnecessary, unfair and ideologically motivated. We stand in solidarity with unions and seek to be active members in a broader anti-cuts coalition”.

At least 4,000 people were reported to have marched in Manchester, eventually gathering together round the town hall. Liverpool, Bristol, Durham, Sheffield, and Leeds were just some of the other locations involved in the protests, all with considerable turnouts.

In London, the protests were described as antagonistic. A Metropolitan police statement was issued on the Guardian's website at 3:47pm saying that three people had been arrested “for violent disorder and theft during the march” with two police officers sustaining injuries, including a broken arm. The London Ambulance Service had also confirmed at that time that eight people had been injured. By 5:50pm the Met had confirmed 15 arrests, and later on, other speculations of police on horseback charging into the crowds of activists were also published.

Students still unaware of Nurse Unit closure

Khairil Zhafri

DESPITE THE DECISION to close the on campus Nurse Unit have been in the public domain since the start of this term many students are still shocked by the news, feeling they have been left in the dark by the University.

“That's crazy. I can't believe they shut it down,” said Adam Humphreys, a second year student who had not heard about the closure before. “I think it's important that they don't [shut down the service] because my experience was that I had to go with a friend for a late night emergency and without it a nurse unit being there, it is impos-

sible [to get help].”

When asked what he thought about the University's decision to close down the nurse unit another student, Pratik Parekh said: “It's wrong.” He added, “What if someone is in need [of immediate help]? What if I have fever and I just want some regular medicine? I don't want to go all the way to town for that.”

Both Humphreys and Parekh were among thousands of students who live on campus were not aware of the Nurse Unit's imminent closure.

“I think it is safe to say that this whole process has been fairly secretive with LUSU and the Nurse Unit [staff]

being told one thing and the University going off and doing another,” said LUSU Vice President (Equality, Welfare and Diversity), Pete Macmillan.

The closure of nurse unit was raised at the beginning of the term. The University Management Advisory Group which is chaired by Vice Chancellor Professor Paul Wellings, made its recommendation in early October. Cost saving and the availability of external healthcare provisions were cited as among the reasons for such recommendation. It was also recommended that the University reallocate more resources for students' mental health support.

The decision was in essence final-

ised by University Council at its meeting four days later which saw a senior member walk out in protest at the Chair's refusal to open discussion on the matter. According to an insider source, another council member offered to provide background information on the Nurse Unit closure but was ruled out by the Chair, Pro-Chancellor Bryan Gray.

The said academic member, Professor Peter Diggle from the School of Health and Medicine subsequently resigned from the Council.

After this resignation Professor Diggle said: “I believe that Lancaster University's students should have

available to them, on campus a single NHS-operated facility that can meet all of their healthcare needs, as an integral component of the University's overall student experience offering.” He added, “I also believe that this issue is one of a number that are of sufficient strategic importance to warrant open discussion at Council before decision-are made.”

Macmillan commended Professor Diggle and agreed with him saying: “At a time when the Vice Chancellor is saying Lancaster should be aiming to be more competitive, it makes no sense at all to get rid of yet one more [crucial student] service.”

Students call for more flexible assessments for different learners

Jen Day
Jonnie Critchley

THE CURRENT SYSTEM of education bases itself around the traditional essay-exam format. Arguably this system is not fully accessible to all students, particularly those who struggle with conventional methods of teaching and assessment. Evidence suggests that the incorporation of alternative methods, including the increased use of information technology, creates greater inclusion for students of all learning styles.

During the academic year 2008/09, 4.5% of undergraduates nationally, suffered with a form of learning difference. Among the most common are dyslexia, dyspraxia and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). At Lancaster 2% of undergraduates were affected by learning differences in 2009/10.

Sufferers can be affected in a range of ways. It is widely known that dyslexia sufferers struggle with spelling and reading, but lesser-known problem areas include co-ordination, memory, understanding and organisation.

Dyspraxia primarily causes problems with co-ordination and movement; sufferers are often regarded by others as clumsy. The condition also affects time-management and organisational abilities, as well as impairing perception skills, making it difficult to take in information.

Students with ADD can struggle to focus for longer periods, and can have problems with short-term memory.

All of these conditions are related; students affected by them can be placed on a spectrum of learning differences, ranging from very mild dyslexia sufferers to those diagnosed as autistic. Affected students often struggle to reap the benefits of university education, finding that methods of teaching and assessment are not flexible enough.

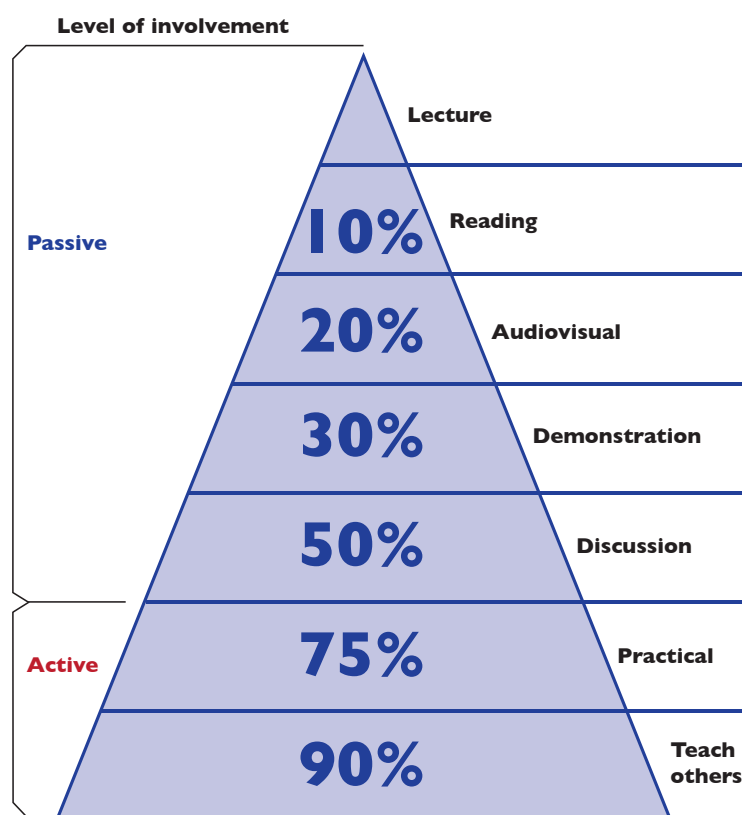
The Disabilities Service, in Student Based Services, offers support for students affected by learning differences. This incorporates the Assessment Centre, which carries out individual assessments determining the need for and level of support given to students. The Disabilities Service website makes it clear that the intention of this is "to provide equal access to the curriculum".

"Lancaster University, like other education providers, seeks to make reasonable adjustment to allow students with different learning needs to meet the learning outcomes of their course," said Director of Student Based Services Tom Finnigan.

THE LEARNING PYRAMID

The Learning Pyramid is based on the principle that people learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process. Towards the bottom of the Pyramid, the more you learn and the more you retain.

Adapted from Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching, Edgar Dale



These adjustments include the provision of computer equipment, help with note-taking, tailored exam arrangements and one-to-one tuition. Alternative arrangements in exams are a key issue, as many students struggle

me because I don't understand [it]," explained one dyslexic student. Dyslexic students are commonly given extra time in exams to account for this.

The Disabilities Service also pro-

"I think it's down to the individual teachers, and there is a general understanding amongst a lot of departments that they actually have to be far more accessible"

with the pressure of the situation and do not produce their best work.

"Under exam conditions half the time I know my stuff well and have revised it well [but] I just might not be able to decode the question as quickly as others, or a word might [throw]

vides advice on accessing financial support. Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) is available to help fund equipment such as software as well as extra tuition from outside the University. For 2010-11, the general DSA available is £1,724 per year for full-time



LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: THE LIBRARY

The Library is an invaluable resource, yet for too many students coming to terms with the classification system is a daunting task.

"One of the issues students can have is working out the classmark system, which can be challenging to everybody initially," said Senior Library Assistant Fiona Rhodes.

The Library has several measures in place to support students. Courses at the beginning of the

academic year offer instruction on using the catalogue and classmark system and highlight the services on offer to students with learning differences.

One of these is the Remote Access system, which allows registered dyslexic students to request and collect items from the enquiries desk. This system is available online through the library catalogue and in addition allows students an extended loan period for popular loan books,

students.

Despite the measures provided by Student Based Services it is felt by some members of the University that it is the responsibility of individual departments to make learning accessible.

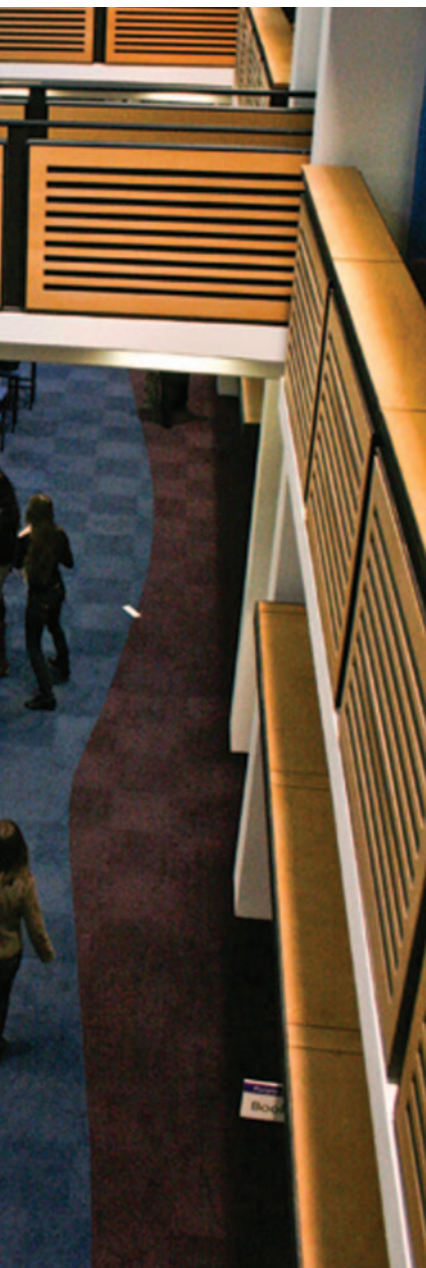
"I am all for a wide array of assessment techniques and methods but [...] it is not something that can be easily centrally promoted because there won't necessarily be consistency between departments about what alternative forms of assessment they can offer so [...] it is therefore left up to the departments to investigate these alternative methods," said LUSU Vice President (Academic Affairs) Robin Hughes.

Faculty Student Learning Advisors, along with specialist support tutors, are able to take the time to go through work with students, helping them to formulate their ideas and go through

more generic issues such as spelling and grammar, which tutors do not have the time to do.

"I need to have someone to help me structure my ideas," said one student. The role of the support tutor, she explained, is to help her in "organising my ideas and then getting everything down. Then he starts to clarify things, starts to tighten things up. I wouldn't get that with one of my lecturers."

Aside from support in existing methods of assessment, considering alternative methods of teaching and assessment is an important issue. These include the use of audio-visual material for teaching and research purposes, the inclusion of images in coursework, and the presentation of material for assessment in website format. The argument is that these methods help students to better struc-



which can be loaned for eleven days rather than a week.

Students with non-standard requirements, says Rhodes, are encouraged to contact the library either in person or via the webpage in order to take full advantage of its resources. "It's not as intimidating as you think," she said, adding that often the most effective help is offered by staff on the enquiries desk, who are willing to help students locate items.



Most students learn best through interactive teaching. Photo by Ben Robins.

CASE STUDIES

ENGL 307

Film and Literature, a course designed by senior lecturer Kamilla Elliot, presents students with alternative modes of assessment and learning in comparison to more traditional courses. One of the major components of this course is a creative project which accounts for 30% of the overall marks. Originally designed to show students that adapting text faithfully is not as easy as it may appear, the project "took on a life of its own: student creativity far exceeded my expectations and I began to see that creative

engagements with texts and films opened up avenues for interpretation and criticism that were not available with an essay structure," said Elliot. By incorporating a multiple choice exam and a take home essay in the summer term Elliot believes that the close reading that would be "impossible" in an exam setting can be achieved as well as ensuring that the students "engage with the course materials in a variety of ways". Film clips included as part of the lectures are designed to provide variation.

STUDENT

"[Half way through] my first year of university [...] it was picked up on that I was dyslexic," the student told SCAN. "However, it took ages to get diagnosed properly, meaning there was a delay in support."

Now in her third year, she is generally happy with the support she receives, but is still struggling to access the extra tuition she needs despite repeatedly trying to contact the relevant parties.

She also feels frustration at a lack of understanding of her condition, particularly on the

part of fellow students. Slow processing speeds mean she is often unable to complete all of her weekly readings, which disadvantages her when it comes to working in a group. Also, she says, "sometimes people in the group get frustrated at my grammar, spelling or writing as sometimes it just doesn't make sense as I miss out words." "Many people don't understand what dyslexia is," she continued. "People need to be aware that it affects people differently and there are many forms of it."

ture their thoughts and arguments, and are thus to be encouraged.

Andrew Okey, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Quality Officer said: "I always try to encourage academic staff proposing new or revised modules to consider ways of assessing students beyond the standard exam-essay pattern."

Okey understands that for some modules the traditional methods of

4.5%

of undergraduates have a form of learning difference (2008/09)

assessment are the most effective for meeting the course objectives. However, with the advancement of technol-

ogy he thinks that it is "very important" to incorporate e-based learning, with regards to LUVLE and e-teaching in lectures and seminars, as well as encouraging "an open-minded approach to developing and implementing [alternative] assessment styles."

However, the production of alternative formats is not always down to individual departments. Some sources have questioned if this is because tutors do not know how to mark them.

"I think it's down to the individual teachers, and there is a general understanding amongst a lot of departments that they actually have to be far more accessible and far more creative in [the] way that they get people to work. I think the main problem is that many of them don't know how to approach that," said a source. "There seems to be a disparity between what the students

know [about] accessing information technology and what tutors know."

There is a degree of flexibility within the University, particularly with regards to postgraduates, who are given the opportunity to produce their doctoral thesis by using Ethesis. This produces an electronic thesis or dissertation, allowing students to create "a much more interesting and interactive piece of work that people engage with more," said Hughes.

"A lot of research has shown that in departments that use Ethesis it is suddenly a lot easier to disseminate work afterwards which for postgraduates, especially postgraduate research students, is extremely important," Hughes continued. "This doesn't just create a better piece of work and a more engaging piece of work, but that piece of work [is able] to be accessed

"There seems to be a disparity between what the students know [about] accessing information technology and what tutors know."

worldwide."

Nonetheless, the use of technology is not particularly widespread. Other existing technological methods include voice and video capture which allow the tutor to talk about the work as they are marking it and which are seen as more interesting ways of receiving feedback.

Some support tutors also suggest watching video clips relevant to the set reading before entering lectures. Critics feel that these techniques allow students to engage with their subject far more than traditional methods. "Students can gain the understanding without all the heavy reading, so you can do specific reading rather than heavy reading. [If] you can watch the stuff online about the general understanding of the subject, it saves time," said one tutor.

Most students, however, are unaware of alternative assessment and learning methods. Variation between courses and departments means it is often difficult to promote them centrally through LUSU and Student Based Services, leaving course convenors and tutors in a better position to do so.

Vaginas return to Lancaster

Georgie Morris

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES, a play based on the original Vagina Interviews by Eve Ensler will once again be performed at Lancaster.

The venue and date are yet to be confirmed, although it is likely to be on a February weekend close to Valentine's Day. Casting is in its early stages and students are being encouraged to audition for roles in the play. Auditions held on Thursday and Saturday of Week Seven.

The Vagina Monologues are a series of scenes which deal with issues raised by women's sexuality. The mixture of light-hearted and intense topics are dealt with using sensitivity and support, one of the reasons why the play has become so popular. Pete Macmillan, LUSU Vice President (Equality, Welfare and Diversity) commented that at Lancaster the play has become a massive success over the years for its touching yet serious nature. He believes that the play is close to people's hearts as it supports the global movement V-Day, an anti-violence organisation that focuses on eliminating the abuse that some women across the world have to face.

Pendle disappointed as bar refurb is put back again

Abbas Akbar
Jonnie Critchley

THE PLANNED REFURBISHMENT of Pendle College Bar has been delayed again, to the dismay of Pendle students. Work which was originally scheduled to take place over summer will now not begin until the new year, delayed once already this term.

The delays have been the result of hesitation surrounding the design of the project. Director of Facilities Mark Swindlehurst explained that "the Principal of Pendle College, Roger Gould, requested that the project was put on hold so that he could review the design before final commitment was made. The pause meant that the original timescale could not be met and we have rescheduled the contractors to start work on the bar at the beginning of January 2011".

Gould explained the reasons behind this. Following recent concern about the cash-flows of college bars, "I wanted to be certain that after an expensive [refurbishment] changing Pendle Bar into an entertainments venue, it was at least less likely to be loss-making than it currently is, by not only attracting lots of students but also increasing the likelihood of them buying a drink".

In Gould's opinion Pendle's proximity



to LUSU Central Stores hinders its competitiveness in terms of alcohol sales. Consequently, he proposed a change to an "all-day and evening coffee bar". Sales of coffee and food would cover the bar's costs and maintain student employment, as well as allowing "a range of other uses in the social space".

According to Gould: "It took under a week for me to take this idea to Pendle JCR [Executive], who discussed the idea and rejected it, as they preferred the current bar plan [of an entertainments venue]". Gould then confirmed

the project as originally planned with Facilities, who scheduled it to begin in the New Year. However, this explanation does not match with Pendle JCR's take on the matter; they feel that a lack of communication has added to the anger amongst students about the issue.

JCR President Andy Barnett said: "I was excited about enjoying a new bar for a year, then that became two terms and now it is only for a term." The JCR also feel they should have been informed that work was going to be delayed, as they had socials planned in other halls

and many off campus socials. Now they feel they have to change plans to accommodate for the period the bar will actually be closed.

Originally Communications Officer for Facilities, Louisa Duff said the design for the layout was changed and this was agreed with the college. However JCR President Andy believes students were happy about the original designs and is frustrated with the lack of communication between them and facilities as they are only kept informed by the bar licensee and the college principal.

LUSU President Robbie Pickles has also said that there had been no communication with Students' Union about the plans' postponement. "There were no conversations with the Students' Union, I only heard about the delay to the planned refurbishments from Andy. It is fair to say that this project has been put back twice now."

Pendle second-year student Luka Vujicic feels that "the delay of the much-needed refurbishment is very disappointing". He also comments on the disruptive effect of the building work taking place across campus currently. "The campus this term hasn't been very welcoming to freshers", he says. "Now with refurbishment to start mid-term things look [set] to get even more inconvenient and noisy."

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Vice Chancellor: I didn't say don't march

- VC says message of his article has been mistrune
- There can be a place for protest

Collette McColgan
Lizzie Houghton

VICE CHANCELLOR OF the University, Professor Paul Wellings, has recently come under fire from his students over a comment article he wrote for The Guardian. Speaking to SCAN, he explained that his reasons for writing the article mostly stemmed from his concerns that “the momentum around what was likely to be a 50,000 person protest, might have actually not been the right set of messages for the set of things then that were still at play in Lord Browne”.

He went on: “I was just concerned that we would drown [the issues] out and then not get it back on the table quickly enough in the context of what a vote in the House of Commons might be, or the details that would then go into the White Paper presumably between February and July next year.”

The article, which was published the same week as the national demonstration orchestrated by the National Union of Students and the University and Colleges Union, seemed to suggest that Wellings was against this type of action.

Wellings, however, wished to clarify his position on this: “I didn't like what the sub-editor put as the headline, because I didn't say ‘Don't march’, and I think there's a legitimate role for people who want to protest – you shouldn't misunderstand me, because that simply wasn't in the article.”

The question was raised over whether his fears had been realised in the violent action at Millbank. “50,000 people went and had a peaceful day, less than 500 people had something else. It's slightly distorting because



Students protesting in Week Six against the Vice Chancellor's (below) perceived lack of consultation. Top photo by Chris Osborn

inevitably it's a home run for the press [...] you don't have to talk about the substantive issue, you can just talk

“Students are not purchasing a degree, they're purchasing a right to be in an environment to learn”

about broken windows and fire extinguishers or Socialist Worker Party.”

Wellings also spoke about the place for protests on campus. “The debate for the protest [at University Council on Friday Week Six] has turned into a mash up of all sorts of ideas [...] but that, I think, just makes for a confused set of messages and clearly then not every student is on board with every

element of the issue,” he said. “I'm already getting correspondence on that from students,” he continued, “You can see instantly that if you build, not just a complex message, but a mash-up message, you can deter people as much as you can bring them together on a single issue, I think.”

He also spoke of their effectiveness: “Does it make a difference? I mean, presumably it makes a difference to the protestors because they think their message got over, but in the long term, in terms of engaging with the government policy, I don't think that it's got very much traction, actually.”

When asked if the sentiments expressed in the comment article were a reflection on the relationship between the University and the Students' Union at Lancaster, Wellings commented: “I



think, sort of, fundamentally different, because ultimately, the University won't determine the cap on fees and it

won't write the White Paper, and so we live at the operational end of it, as a student body and as a university.”

“On the bars we've had reviews that have been conducted that students have been involved in. One of the interesting things for me is that if there was a review three years ago [...] student body politics turns over every year. I'm not sure that you'd want to rehearse each and every debate each and every time.

He developed his views on student turnover: “With annual change, consistency is actually not the watchword very often because of some of the representation.” He continued, “I don't think the strategic intent ever would be to take out the student voice, certainly not while I'm Vice Chancellor anyway.”

Still on the topic of the bars, he said: “Whether you like it or not, I formed the view that said every college should have a bar [...] If the choice came down to nine bars open six nights a week versus seven bars on campus, which to colleges are going to vote to see their bars close full time? Because that's the alternative – it's not nine bars running seven nights a week and all not being used.”

Summing up his views on the Browne Review, he pointed out that “students are not purchasing a degree, they're purchasing a right to be in an environment to learn”.

He continued: “The layering of that inevitably just [asks] how do we produce something not only for this generation of students, but things for a subsequent generation?”

In support of the original review from Lord Browne, Wellings was keen to explain his position, with regards to the Higher Education cuts, and the need for fees. “Clearly if there were just cuts and no fees we would go back quite a long way,” he said, later adding “[Lord Browne] clearly had crafted a model where in the uncapped bit of the fees, had more and more penalties for universities the higher the fees they charged so there was a disincentive to moving towards infinity [...] it solved the price and the volume problem.”

Lancaster students organise against cuts

Tzeitl Holding

A GROUP OF Lancaster students and lectures have organised themselves under the banner to Lancaster University Against Cuts, to voice their opinions over the financial issues affecting them and future generations of students.

Simon Mair, creator of the Facebook group Lancaster University Against Cuts (LUAC) said the group's creation was a necessity. “At the anti-cuts demonstration in town [on October 20] I met lots of people that were just as angry as me at the unjust, unfair and completely unnecessary cuts, but we had nowhere to discuss our thoughts or to plan any actions. I set the group up as a response to that. The Facebook group is a place to dis-

cuss the cuts and co-ordinate actions”. LUAC describes itself as “an autonomous group of students welcoming support from people with any, or no, political background or affiliation”.

One of the first actions taken by the group was to create an open letter to LUSU President Robbie Pickles, requesting that the Students' Union actively engages with the local Lancaster and Morecambe Against Cuts campaign. The letter also asks LUSU “to commit to truly leading the fight against cuts to higher education and generally” through the publication of upcoming demonstrations taking place in and around Lancaster.

Pickles said: “The fundamental issue is that students are paying through the nose and are not, to their minds, receiving value for money. All

students have the right to petition their President if they feel the Union is not responding to their needs. However, none of these students had been to see me. I hope that in future people feel they can just ask me”.

However, the idea of peaceful protest is already in doubt following controversial events that took place on November 19 during a protest organised between LUAC and LUSU outside Lancaster University Council. In a press statement issued by LUAC, the protest initially had “a party atmosphere” but this quickly soured when a group of the attending students crossed the police tape. The statement read that “one was singled out and forced to the ground by a violent minority of the police present. We believe that the force used was excessive with a

number of eye witnesses seeing the police strike the student over the head with handcuffs, drawing blood. He was then arrested and held in custody for five hours”. The statement encourages further student activity despite the violent turn of events, inviting Lancaster's Vice Chancellor, Professor Paul Wellings for a constructive debate in the near future and “calls on students to contact him requesting this”.

Beau Bulman, the protestor who was arrested suggested the police action following students crossing the tape was “overreacting to a peaceful demonstration, perhaps panicking due to the news from Millbank”. Bulman added: “The police are also facing cuts, so things must be pretty stressful for them at the moment too. This government is seemingly intent on destroying

the welfare state in favour of privatising everything in sight”.

Bulman also said that the LUAC is not “dominated by any particular political agenda beyond the stated aims. We seek to educate and debate around the cuts, and to organise against them and those who are attempting to implement them. The Vice Chancellor is playing scissors every-time; and we'd rather play rock than paper”.

Mair added: “The University is operating a profit before services policy, which has come at the expense of valuable student services.

“LUSU have been good at supporting students. However, their hands are tied by their proximity to University management. Lancaster students have to fight for their services; not just expect LUSU to save them.”

elections

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Welfare woes as Chlamydia testing authorities exchange blows

Luka Vujicic
Chris Housden

LANCASTER STUDENTS' SEXUAL welfare is at the centre of a row which has pitted the local Primary Care Trust against the campus GP practice.

LUSU Vice President (Equality, Welfare and Diversity) Pete Macmillan has been forced to act as peacemaker between the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the on campus GP practice.

The PCT, a local health care trust responsible for secondary care, had previously been responsible for Chlamydia testing on campus. Until Freshers' Week last year a team from the PCT were regularly on campus to offer testing for Chlamydia. However, concerns were raised over the manner in which the team approached students and after Freshers' Week they were subsequently banned from campus.

Macmillan explained that "due to a number of student complaints about them doing the hard sell and basically forcing the test on students, LUSU and the University decided, for the protection of our students, to ban them from campus, and quite rightly so, because a lot of students were getting quite disturbed by it".

Macmillan gave a summary of how things stood between the University, LUSU and the two health bodies. "We were all [the parties involved] of the opinion that Chlamydia screening still had to happen on campus. The GP practice decided to plug that gap."

The problem lay in the pushiness of the PCT team. The GP practice, which had always maintained a soft approach to offering testing, was beginning to receive misdirected frustration from the PCT's forcefulness. "Whenever anybody came in for an appointment they would offer them the test, it'd be a simple yes or no, and if they didn't want to do it they didn't have to do it. It was just very much face to face interaction," Macmillan described.

The number of complaints were something that couldn't be ignored. Macmillan explained: "There were complaints to the Students' Union, to the University, to the GP practice (because the GP practice was still doing some Chlamydia screening when the PCT came on and they were asking people when they were making an



The GP practice has been providing Chlamydia testing on campus. Concerns have been raised about the PCT's hard sell tactics. Photo by Elliot Westacott.

appointment 'do you want a free Chlamydia screening test?' and that person would be like 'I've just been hassled in

"A lot of students were getting quite disturbed by it"

my college to take it, and now you're hassling me, what's going on?").

"The decision was taken that everybody needs to sit down, a well rounded approach needs to be taken."

Macmillan wasn't entirely clear who was responsible for the poor conduct last year and whether they were returning. "Last year after Freshers' Week was when the PCT team were kicked off. But they're from a different PCT from this PCT that wants to come on now, though I'm not entirely sure about that." The Primary Care Trust for any given region doesn't change, as it is a local healthcare body; the change would have been between two teams of healthcare staff within the same PCT.

Macmillan said that he had doubts, initially, about reopening discussions with the PCT. "It didn't sit well with

me because they'd not gone through the University, but it was one of those things where I informed them to go through the University but they said no, we have to sit down and have a proper discussion with all parties involved which I completely agree with."

He did, however, emphasise that during the discussions over summer it had been made clear that "they were under no illusion that if the same things happened again they would be off campus permanently and we just wouldn't let them back on."

A meeting between all the parties involved is set to take place soon. "It'll be mid-December time. That's between the University, LUSU, the PCT and the GP practice, which are all the interested parties."

The GP is, however, now unwilling to provide the service if the PCT are allowed to begin providing the service once again. "Their opinion now is 'if you bring the PCT on then they're going to Chlamydia screen then what's the point in us doing it?'" Macmillan said.

The GP was apparently favoured by Macmillan as a welfare body. "It's one

of those things where the PCT has to meet targets whereas the GP practice doesn't", he said, adding "from my perspective it'd be that they're [the PCT] target driven rather than student welfare driven".

Macmillan said he didn't want to comment on whether there had been a decrease in requests at the GP practice since the PCT's actions. He said: "I wouldn't know, it'd be something for the GP practice. I mean, having spoken to the GP practice I'd imagine that with them there hasn't been that much of a difference, because they're still going about what they were doing before."

Macmillan did comment on the difference between the two bodies. "The GP practice, they're very much of the opinion that the student has to come first, as it were. Whatever the student wants to do. The student, from my eyes, wouldn't want to be harassed on the Spine, saying 'you need to wee in this little pot'," he said.

He also alluded to the effectiveness of the different authorities' test ranges, saying that the GP will perform a wide ranging test "whereas with the PCT they focus purely on Chlamydia".

Students call Vice Chancellor out

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

happen."

During the protest there was an incident and one student was arrested. After crossing the police line with a group of approximately 10 students, Beau Bulman was restrained by the police. Bulman claims he was struck on the head, drawing blood. A female student also claims to have been struck in the face. Bulman was arrested by the police, and then cautioned for resisting arrest.

Bulman said: "I crossed the line as the Vice Chancellor seems to ignore students, including their protests. He went in the back door of the hotel instead of addressing the protest, even though he claims he wants constructive debate". Bulman intends to file a complaint against the police.

A police spokesman said that, "during an unplanned student protest on Friday November 19, a small minority of students broke through a police cordon and a 24-year-old man was arrested to prevent breach of the peace. The man resisted arrest and fellow students got involved trying to assist him which resulted in police using minimum but proportionate force to resolve the situation. The man was later given a police caution."

The protest remained peaceful, but some were angered at the level of police force. Third Year Philosophy student, Dan Ray commented: "The police used an excessive amount of force. They want to avoid another Milbank Tower situation, and now they see all students as violent".

Robbie Pickles, LUSU President said: "For the majority of students this was a fun and peaceful opportunity to let the University know what they are tired of not being listened to."

The protest follows Week Five's demonstration in London against cuts in education, which was attended by 52,000 protesters including 250 Lancaster students. The protest was largely overshadowed by violent incidents that occurred at 30 Milbank, the home of the offices of the Conservative party.

Lancaster blocked after phishing attacks

Emma Hughes

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY'S EMAIL system has been the victim of phishing attacks that have disrupted the work of staff and students alike. Emails have been sent to various users asking for their username and password under the guise of Lancaster's own Information Systems Services (ISS). They were actually from external attackers who then accessed the email accounts and sent out large amounts of spam mail. The messages may look credible, but Lancaster is keen to point out that a real email from ISS would never ask

for a username or password over an email.

As a result of the outgoing spam, emails from Lancaster have been blocked by Windows Live Hotmail accounts and other organisations using Microsoft email programs, such as Manchester University. In addition, outgoing emails are being delayed by the Google or AOL email systems. The problems faced have affected the general day-to-day running of the University and work life of its staff, as well as inconveniencing students. "As part of my coursework I have been in contact with Lancaster City Council, but due to

the attacks I can't email them anymore and my work is suffering", said Jenny Rogers, a third year student.

Alongside this, personal data is threatened as the intruders have access to emails and the private information they contain. They also have the power to delete incoming emails to prevent the user becoming aware they have been hijacked.

This is just the latest in a list of internet service issues that Lancaster has had to contend with. Earlier this term LUVLE went down and students could not access their timetables or information.

Assessments changed from 2011/12

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

instead of the current practice rather than the current 10% reduction for such delay.

Any assessment, including all essays, presentations and other forms of assignment, will be converted into one grade, rather than allowing a culmination of multiple pieces of work. This is graded against a 100% outcome, which would mean one late deadline could impact on the overall grade at the end of the course. To compensate for a bigger penalty there is increasing opportunity for reassessment or examination re-sits whichever year of study a student is in, including the final

year.

All Part I reassessments, however, can only be raised to a maximum grade of a C-, or a lower second, in a major subject and a D-, or a third, in minor subjects. Assessment procedures will be available to students in course handbooks and online, meaning that students will hopefully find information easier to understand. Hughes backs up the decisions from Wednesday's Senate by saying "students should see it as a positive change; encouraging greater use of a full spectrum of marks, clearing up rules and regulations and providing greater opportunity for re-sits, including third year re-sits".

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Christmas comes to campus in Week Nine



The ice rink at last year's Winter Fest

Emma Ashby

WEEK NINE WILL see the Bonington Step and Fylde courtyard transformed into a Christmas Festival for everyone to enjoy.

Christmas Festival, an evolved version from last year when a similar festival was run under the name WinterFest, will take place on the Thursday and Friday.

Last year's WinterFest celebration proved a great success, with dozens of societies

performing, an ice-skating rink and market stalls selling mulled wine and warm food.

This year aims to be bigger than the last. Again a Christmas market will be here, with stalls selling homemade Christmas cards, gifts, themed cakes, bratwurst, mulled wine and much more. The market will be running on Thursday December, 9 from 12-8pm, extending it's stay on the Friday by an hour to close at 9pm. There will also be an area next to the market where various societies will be show-

casing what they do best but in Christmas form. The performances look set to include everything from carol singing and music to dance troupes.

Father Christmas himself will be making an appearance in Santa's Grotto alongside some real reindeer, which will be sure to bring an authentic Christmas feel to campus. A traditional fairground featuring a Ferris wheel and a helter-skelter will also be visiting Christmas Festival, and the rides will be free of charge.

Student sets up Study Aboard Society

A LANCASTER STUDENT has set up a Study Abroad Society which aims to unite students who are planning on or have already studied abroad.

The society is hoping to gain official society status on Friday, Week Eight. President, Tim McKenzie said: "The aim of the society is to establish a base for students planning to study abroad. There are worries that there are no current systems in place and many students have questions which can most effectively be answered by students

who have already studied abroad".

McKenzie who studied in Iowa in the US for the second year of his Economics degree says that he has generated a good network of around 40 students so far and hopes to organise a social as soon as definitive status as a society is established.

If you wish to join the Study Abroad Society, you can join the facebook group at: <http://tinyurl.com/2g83fov> or contact Tim McKenzie at t.mckenzie@lancaster.ac.uk.

University Challenge auditions a success

Charlotte Urban
News Editor


THE AUDITIONS FOR the BBC's renowned television programme University Challenge took place on Thursday of Week Seven. Around 50 students auditioned for their position on the panel of students hoping to represent Lancaster University.

The hopefuls who were auditioned by Robin Hughes, the Students' Union's Vice President (Academic), were asked a number of

questions which had appeared on previous shows. Hughes said: "I asked them what their area of expertise was and the final candidates were selected according to the number of questions they answered correctly and the speed in which they answered them".

If Lancaster makes it through to the television programme, which it has been unable to do for a number of years, the programme will be broadcasted in 2011. Those selected for the programme have not yet been announced.

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scan:COMMENT

My family aren't like the ones in ads. Come Christmas they're asleep

Christmas adverts in November are bad enough but what is this make believe happy family they're also selling?

Emily
Robertson
Comment Editor



Sligh bells ring, hear them ringing? Well, actually, no as it is mid-November and Christmas is next month. But anyone would think it was next week the way a commercial breaks are reading: Christmas themed advertisement after Christmas themed advertisement, a constant bombardment of festive cheer.

Yes, I admit that they do make me happy, warm and fuzzy inside etc, etc. And yes, I admit the John Lewis advert brought me to tears one emotional afternoon. But it's November, a whole month until Christmas. I know that companies want to make as much money as possible out of this holiday season but something isn't quite right with all of this very persuasive advertising.

First of all what these adverts are doing goes pretty much against the meaning of Christmas itself. They're a sign that we have got it all wrong. Christmas isn't about a constant stream of consumerism, but that's what it is being transformed into.

Secondly, on principle I won't do anything remotely Christmas until the first day of December, and I don't appreciate being coerced into being Christmassy a single day before.

But, with regret, I have to say I think the adverts are winning. I'm feeling Christmassy. I can resist thinking about what I can buy everyone and what I can cook on Christmas Day, and generally getting very excited about Christmas. And it's still only November.

I will spend the next month thinking about Christmas, planning for Christmas, going to Christmas parties and even having fake Christmas dinners with my university friends. After months of preparation and partying, being hyped up and excited by every advert, by the time it gets to Christmas Day it's all going to feel like a great big let down.

Real life isn't like the adverts. My family don't look or act anything like the ones on the television. They are not unbelievably happy, come Christmas Day they are mostly asleep and snoring louder than is ever acceptable or having a heated debate verging on World War Three. I'll realise that



Christmas adverts are unrecognisable to the rest of us

after only two weeks of being back that I cannot live with them any more and they are all highly irritating in their own special little ways.

My little sisters aren't eagerly wait-

"The big companies are not just selling us our Christmas dinner. They are selling us the ideal Christmas, an ideal family life, one that doesn't really exists."

ing up for a glimpse of Father Christmas or running downstairs greedily at 5am to see if he has been, in fact, we they are ready lazy and not bothered at all, sleeping in until midday, nothing like the advert.

My Christmas dinner is just an ordinary Christmas dinner, not at M&S Christmas dinner. Everything will be overcooked, burnt and soggy and nothing will every look as tasty as the food on the adverts no matter how hard Mum tries. The

Christmas pudding is not moist and warm but crumbly and soaked in far too much brandy to be edible. And your Marks and Spencer's succulent turkey does not even come into the equation. I'm vegetarian, it kind of takes the shine off a Christmas dinner.

The presents I get are not the beautiful dress I saw in the Topshop window display and I got nothing I said I liked off the television. In fact will probably get nothing I wanted at all and will get something highly practical from my parents. Last year it was books "for my studies". Thanks that's all I needed Christmas Day, a reminder I have hundreds of essays to write and books to read.

I love buying pressies for everyone, but coming to university I seem to have landed myself in a lot of debt so this is no longer possible. This makes adverts with 100 and one gifts that would be perfect for my family, my boyfriend, my friends, all the more painful to watch knowing that I can't buy them the perfect gift and they will more than likely end up with a wonderful handmade creation.

The big companies out there are not just selling us our Christmas dinner, the present that will ultimately be forgotten soon after Boxing Day and all the trimmings that come with the festive period, they are selling us the ideal Christmas, an ideal family life, one that doesn't really exists. Leading us only to feel disappointed and down heartened come December 25.

It's not that I'm opposed to this shoving of Christmas in our faces. I'm no Mr. Scrooge. I love Christmas, but my own version where my family is dysfunctional, and the Christmas dinner is burnt and frankly vile. I don't want to get taunted with all these wonderful gifts when my pitiful student loan (and my love of going out) mean that I can't get anyone anything special or even half decent and if past years are anything to go by I want be receiving any either.

So, yes, November is too early to sell the Christmas dream to us, but if it's going to be done can't we at least have a realistic one, family arguments and all.

Is the University spending our money wisely?

Alex Littleboy

It's a familiar story – modules are being dropped at the last minute, funding is being cut from departments, and we're being asked to pay an extra £6000 per year in tuition fees in exchange for no discernible improvement in teaching. Yet, with the announcement that the University has acquired a government think-tank for an undisclosed fee, can it really be said that the University has our interests at heart? Are they really spending our money wisely?

Last year, I was one of the first-year student representatives for the Department of European Languages and Cultures. We were asked to give our opinions on a document that had been laid out in an attempt to give a reasonable variety of modules, in spite of the staff shortage in the department. This I could understand, the University was at least trying to make sure there was a variety of modules on offer, even if they weren't entirely focused on each student's language or subject of choice. Even though cuts were being made they were trying to make the cuts fair. But in response to the purchase of the Work Foundation, I feel betrayed – the money that went towards this could have gone towards giving a greater standard and variety of education to students.

The argument has been made that there is a relation between the Management school and the Work Foundation. But is it really logical to take money that could be spent on education and instead spend it on an institution that we are unlikely to see the benefits of ourselves? Is this relation ever really going to transfer to concrete benefits for students at Lancaster, or is our money going towards something that is merely a commercial venture for the University which is becoming increasingly profit orientated?

The Vice Chancellor has made his position clear, that fees need to be raised in order for students to receive a reasonable level of education. I find it hypocritical that the university champions fees as a means of maintaining academic standards, yet has money to spend on failing thinktanks instead of supporting their students' education. How can they claim that we need to pay more for our degrees, when the money we are spending right now isn't even supporting our own education?

I will never quite understand the motives behind the acquisition of the Work Foundation, and the University is unwilling to disclose how much it has paid for it and any of the exact details of the purchase. All I can really understand is that our education and learning is taking second place to the University's business mentality and learning will suffer as a consequence.

COMMENT

Is it too much to say 'let's go blow up zombies' without worrying about putting it on my CV?

Jonathan Kennedy



Joining societies should be a matter of fun and interest, not just for sake of CVs

When I came to university, I had several goals in mind: first and foremost, to get a degree, but also to branch out into hitherto unexplored territory. I had at my fingertips an entire world I had never come across before: a chance to read new books and explore them on a level I had never had access to, and develop my own writing abilities. But of course university isn't all about academia and essays: it's deeper than that. For the first time we are taking faltering steps, if not into the real world then at least a convincing copy of it. For me it is an opportunity to really roll up our sleeves and get a grip on life.

University was a chance to try new things that, for whatever reason, you couldn't do before. One society I've joined is the Role Playing Society. Since it requires experience and, perhaps more crucially a number of people to play with, it was always something out of my grasp. But because university is such a rich tapestry of people, these activities are not only available but commonplace: a breath of fresh air from the narrow-mindedness of secondary school classmates.

The problem with leaping into university is that the chance to pursue new activities seems forever badgered by a common gremlin: whether or not it looks good on a CV. Whenever something is advertised, be it joining a society, volunteering or studying abroad, its worth on a CV is always emphasised. As if that's the most important thing.



Gaining valuable XP points?

When I joined various societies, it wasn't because I was trying to improve leadership skills or any other office friendly quality. I joined them because I wanted to try tabletop role playing, or find out about anime, or chat about video games with people face-to-face instead of wandering across the battlefields of forum flame wars. Similarly, I went to find out about studying abroad because America is a country that has always fascinated me. Yet while in discussion with a tutor on the

matter, its worth on a CV inevitably cropped up. Can't personal interest, or the desire to do something new for its own worth be enough of a reason for doing something? In a way, the whole CV issue has put me off volunteering: now it just seems to be too much of a career building exercise rather than an expression of goodwill. I won't be going into primary school because I like working with children anymore, now it's just a step to becoming more well-rounded, whatever that means.

Of course, I'm not saying we shouldn't be doing things towards our future careers. It's important that we take a grasp of futures sooner rather than later. But frankly, I want to be able to distinguish between having fun and doing work. For instance, writing material for the Spotlight is mainly work: while it will most likely be an enjoyable experience, the main motivation is getting your work out to a wider audience and practising writing at the same time. Similarly, I'm playing Call of Cthulhu not because it's a bullet-point to add to a piece of paper: I'm playing them to meet new people and have a good time. Is it too much to say: "Let's do this to further our career, and after that let's go blow up zombies", without worrying about the future career implications?

If our frivolous antics do help us become more charismatic or whatever, then that's a welcome side effect. But I came to university hoping to become a person, not just an employee. University is not a machine, where students enter one end and come out as workers at the other, or at least not entirely. It is a time to decide who we want to be, and what we decide to do with our lives is not necessarily done with our activities being turned into employability exercises in mind. Let us say to ourselves: "I am going into this for fun". Let us also say: "I am writing this and contacting these people to improve my chances of getting a job", while keeping the two activities separate. Let us come to university, not just to work, but to live as well.

Overseas students clearly have the independence to thrive

Helen Wishart

By sheltering international students we don't give them chance to experience our culture

With almost 2000 international students, Lancaster University boasts a diverse and cosmopolitan student population. Approximately 16% of its overall student body trek their way over to the dreary north of England from over 100 different countries to learn at Lancaster, and it's something we have to be thankful for. Students thrive in a multicultural community because the sharing of different ideas and backgrounds enhances our own culture whilst allowing us to learn about others.

Or at least that's the idea. Unfortunately, however, the fact that our international community is so large in size has arguably in some ways compromised the very basis on which we enjoy its existence. A great proportion of our overseas students enjoy being thoroughly immersed in Lancaster life. They speak our language with far more eruditely than those who are much closer to home, and are among our closest friends. However, there is an extent to which, for many, the type of community Lancaster provides makes it perfectly possible to create a home from home within the confines of campus life.

International students are fre-

quently placed in student halls with at least one other student from their home country in their flat. This was my experience of campus living and it is one which has been shared by the majority of those I know. I understand the rationale behind this room placement. I know for certain that if I were to travel to China to attend university, for example, I would be greatly comforted in being so far from home if I had a friend from Britain to keep me company in the place in which I was trying to make a new home for myself. However such a set up does frequently dictate that such friendships tend to occur at the expense of potentially close relationships with the other members of the flat.

I lived with two international students last year, who had moved here from China, and we got on very easily. Unfortunately, however, the relationship between us never came to much. And nor did it between many other groups in flats in my college. The system set up by the residence officers frequently meant that whilst we lived harmoniously amongst each other, the Chinese girls I knew all socialised amongst themselves, and we socialised amongst ourselves, and whilst we remained polite we never became



close.

For many students this is how they feel happiest whilst learning and living in Lancaster, and it is something which we must respect. But for others it has become a source of frustration. Since moving off campus to a house in town this year I have another international student as a housemate, who moved in after another friend dropped out. Whilst it was much easier for him to find a flat on campus where he would have been in the com-

pany of other international students, he decided to search for a house like ours, because living on campus made him feel sheltered from learning about our culture and living as a British student would.

He expressed further frustration about the way in which the teaching at Lancaster has been altered because the majority of students on his particular course were international: "In my first seminar I walked in and the tutor greeted us with 'Ni Hao' instead of 'Hello'." This was not what he travelled 5000 miles to hear.

Obviously it is important to make our international students feel comfortable during their time at Lancaster. However, there is an extent to which it can be argued that our system of room allocation and approach to teaching over shelters students who, having travelled so far, clearly have the independence to thrive within our own culture and amongst our British ways whilst staying true to their roots and continuing to enjoy traditions from home. As ever the key remains with balance. It is highly important to keep international students coming to Lancaster, and make their time here worthwhile and enjoyable enough that others will follow in years to come.

Using the Bible as a justification for homophobia is a losing battle

Alex Harris



If you're using the good book for your views on gay people, here are a few other Bible stories

Homosexuality is a sin, according to a few otherwise decent and honest Christians. The justification for their hostility lies solely in the Bible, which unambiguously refers to homosexuality as immoral in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, as well as Romans 1:26-27. I've always wondered about this justification, because if going to a Church of England school taught me one thing, it's that there is lots of very weird stuff that the Bible asks you to do that Christian homophobes conveniently ignore. Yet these are shoved aside and it is the few verses on the gays that people seem to focus on.

It's true that people will use religion to justify all sorts of beliefs and there are plenty of wannabe Timothy McVeighs out there to confirm that, but the almost obsessive condemnation of homosexuality permeates to the point where it is a mainstream view. Where in the 21st century, Pope Benedict XVI can describe gay marriage as (along with abortion) one of the "most insidious and dangerous challenges that today confront the common good".

This always puzzled me, because the Bible verses they use to back up these claims are relatively small in number. There are only three unequivocal mentions of homosexuality and a few other verses that the real hardliners have tried to twist to be about gay people, in a kind of squint really hard and you'll see it move. It's funny though, because the Bible is full of plenty of strange proclamations and recommendations that go ignored by just about everyone and are certainly not put into any kind of practise by



modern Christians.

Leviticus is a great start for the insanity advocated in the good book. Aside from being the bulk of the Bible's condemnation of homosexuality, a lot of it is a manual for making burnt sacrifices of animal carcasses. The first nine chapters are devoted to what the book describes as a most holy ritual of killing an animal, smearing yourself with its blood and then dancing around its burning body. It's recommended that you use a male lamb without blemish, but if you don't have one handy, Leviticus tells you that two pigeons will do instead (12:8). Just make sure to wring off their heads before you start.

But Leviticus is also on hand to offer its opinion on sexual morality. Homosexuals are clearly referenced as being immoral, but Leviticus' recommendation for punishment is death

(20:13). On top of this, similar punishments are to be handed out to both parties in adultery (20:10). Furthermore, if a man sleeps with his daughter-in-law, then both must be killed (20:12) and if you have a threesome with your wife and your mother-in-law, then all three of you should be burned to death (20:14). Well, there goes my Saturday night! Finally, the death sentence is to be handed out to: witches and fortune tellers (20:27), men who swear (24:16) and priest's daughters who 'play the whore' (they should be burned to death)(21:9).

More crazy than Leviticus is the book of Deuteronomy, which recommends that you kill prophets (13:1-5), people of other faiths (13:6-10), rebellious children (21:18-21), adulterers (22:22) and rape victims (22:23-24). Deuteronomy also considers women that wear men's clothes 'abomina-

tions unto the Lord' (22:5). Furthermore, there are specific guidelines for budding rapists, specifically wartime rapists, who must take their victims home, shave their heads and wait for a month before having their way with their victims (21:11). Peacetime rapists, on the other hand, should pay the victim's father fifty shekels beforehand.

If you thought that this sort of stuff was just confined to the Old Testament and none of it is applicable because of that whole Jesus thing, think again. Jesus starts out in Matthew 5:17 by explaining that every single law in the Old Testament is still applicable and his teachings have no impact on their relevance. He then reiterates that yes, disobedient children should be put to death (15:4-7). Jesus also implies heavily that disabled people are made that way as a punishment for their sins (John 5:14).

Okay, okay, so nobody seriously believes these things, they were written a long time ago, must be understood in context, etc. But if it's true that Christians should re-evaluate the Bible based on historical context, why is it that the relatively few verses on homosexuality (the majority of which are sandwiched in between absurd and now immoral proclamations) are somehow off-limits and accorded special treatment by some mainstream Christians? If we can get to a point of moral understanding whereby we can say that stoning people to death is perhaps not the best way to go about things, can't we also say the same for the vilification and discrimination of people of a non-heterosexual orientation?

University life is random but worth living

Will McDonagh

The cliché is true, these are the best years of our lives. We need to make sure we don't waste them

Best time of your life. We've all been told that by an older, slightly cynical person looking back over their time at university with both jealousy and a longing to return to those former glorious days. And this is exactly what these are. These are going to be the best days of our lives (pardon the cliché) because I've seen the real world, and I'll tell you something. It ain't so pretty. This is why I can't understand why so many students don't take this opportunity and embrace these university years, because honestly, nothing will compare to this later on in life. And if we don't realise that, we'll be those cynical adults in the future who look back with nothing but regret for not making the most of this journey.

What did you do yesterday? I woke up at 1pm, lounged around for a few hours, reluctantly had a shower, had a slice of bread for my tea. Standard, typical student. But then I came onto campus, got changed into my swim-

ming gear, put on all the necessary safety equipment, and got in a kayak. Yes this is random. I spent an hour and a half paddling along the Sports Centre pool, capsizing occasionally, learning new tricks, and training via our imaginations that me and my fellow kayakers were all heading towards a dangerous waterfall, with only seven minutes to get everyone to safety. Yes this too is random. But this is what I mean.

Several times a week I get up at the crack of dawn, albeit reluctantly at times when I think I could still be in bed before my lecture, and I make the arduous trek to campus to do something random. Something different and quite unique. Something I would not have the opportunity to do had I not come to university, nor even considered doing. When in the future am I going to get the chance to do something like this?

I spent my gap year working full time. Yes I got invaluable experience. Yes I saved a hell of a lot of

money. And yes it prepared me for university, when I would have found the initial transition even more difficult. But what it mainly did for me was that it made me appreciate that I'm 20-years-old. I was working with people paying mortgages, planning weddings, having families, stressing constantly about mounting bills and working endlessly even for hours after the office was closed. And their routine did not vary for the 365 days I worked there. Nothing changed. Literally nothing. And I could not wait to leave and start my university journey.

So I think, how many of us will end up doing something like that. A laborious, consistent routine job day in day out, month after month, year on year? Not me, you'll be thinking. Maybe not you. But what are you doing about it? For many nothing is being done. And I can't understand this.

Many people I speak to simply reiterate how they cannot wait to start working after university. We've all

had the odd job, but trust me, working in the real world is a different lifestyle. No more banter filled nights in the Sugarhouse, no more days lounging around without a care in the world, no more Facebook stalking for hours on end.

If we're not making the most of now, these years here, we will all regret it. University has no routine, it is inherently random, and that's what is so precious about this time of life. This is where you mould the future (cliché, yes, sorry again), because when you leave here, it is what you have made of this journey that will dictate what happens after. But most importantly this time should be enjoyed. When are you ever going to live like this again? I'm writing for a newspaper for crying out loud, when will I get chance to do that again? University isn't just about the education, it's a way of life. So live it, and don't waste it. I'm almost half way through my time here, and I'm not going to waste a second of it.

It's not just the students who are revolting

The permanent background music to any news concerning students at the moment is the rise in tuition fees. It's swept over everything from grading systems to Christmas dinners. There's a general feeling of sympathy for those who will come after our £3290 generation and the amount they'll have to pay.

The Liberal Democrats have been very good at playing up this sympathy, portraying themselves as victims of circumstance. In a coalition their hands are tied, they don't have the mandate to phase out tuition fees and, actually, having now discovered the state of the country's finances, that's probably not such a good idea after all. The point which Nick Clegg and co. seem to be forgetting is that their mandate wasn't solely based on their manifesto. It was based on the pledges they signed, which was simply to vote against a rise in fees.

The mandate for that still stands. Every student who voted a Lib Dem in off the back of seeing them standing, pledge in hand vowing to vote against a rise in fees has a right to feel cheated. It makes you question the validity of the democratic system that the will of the people - and ideals of a party - can be overridden so quickly. It is little wonder students are taking to the street. Democracy has failed to help them achieve their end, so why should they wait five years for the next ballot box to come along before voicing their anger? Voting evidently makes no difference, so maybe a bit of civil unrest will.

Outside the sympathy felt by one set of students towards the next, the debate on tuition fees is starting to become lost in clichés. The old favourite of why should tax payers pay for students to doss around for three years is rearing its ugly head again. This argument leads down a slippery slope. To begin with at what point does education no longer become a right but a privilege? And following that train of thought, what other privileges have we naïvely been classing as rights. Health care perhaps? Why should tax payers pay for someone to have heart surgery if they've never gone for a jog in their life? That's another argument that's raising its ugly head again, but consider this point: the tax payers of tomorrow will be the ones who have had to pay between £6000-£9000 a year for a university education. If tax payers didn't help them out when they needed it, why should they as the tax payers of the future do the same? The State didn't contribute towards their education so why should they help the State contribute towards someone else's surgery, hunt for a house or child care?

The tuition fee vote is likely to shape a lot more than just the price of a degree: if fees increase we can expect a radical shift in people's attitudes towards what they will and will not pay for, and the Lib Dems would do well to realise a lot more is at stake than just broken promises.

Letters to the Editor

Send your letters to scan@lancaster.ac.uk with you name and college (even if you want your letter printed anonymously). SCAN reserves the right to edit your letters for publication.



Paying for disrespect

Being a third year I'm quite used to seminars by now. But what I've never really understood is the attitudes from tutors towards their students. Students are regularly singled out, shouted out and given detentions for not being adequately prepared for a seminar. This sort of behaviour is acceptable in high school, where education is free and compulsory. But when you are a paying student, it makes you wonder why we accept this sadistic excuse for customer service (since the University is at the end of the day a business). It's easy to forget in seminars that you are an paying adult, when treated like a naughty schoolchild.

Chris P.

Grizedale College

Open letter to SU Pres

We would like to congratulate LUSU on getting behind the NUS/UCU demo in London. However, we also note that the recent demonstration in town was not publicised by LUSU. With this in mind we would like LUSU to commit to truly

leading the fight against cuts to higher education and generally. We believe the best way to do this is through protests and direct action in town and on campus.

We would like LUSU to immediately publicly explain their planned campaign against the cuts and to hold a public meeting, as is planned at the University of Cumbria.

Alex Davis, Robert Kennett, Abi Kilbride, Simon Mair, Amanda Minter, Beau Nafyde, Maisie Smith Will Taylor, Nicole Wareing

Dim witted students

Despite the burgeoning academic reputation of Lancaster University, it never ceases to amaze me how breathtakingly dim witted some of its students are and this years crop of Freshers is no exception. I use the bus to and from the University frequently and recently I overheard a conversation with the word "like" used 16 times in one sentence and an interesting interpretation of how to decipher a 24-hour timetable in which sadly, neither of them arrived at the correct answer. I would have

thought also that they could work out how to queue for buses in an orderly manner which was bad enough when the tunnel was open, but now it is shut for construction purposes, it is a shambles exacerbated by the inability of students obviously unable to understand the basics of forming an orderly line.

Finally let me pass on a tip to all students wishing to travel to the University, this is a clue as to how to determine whether a particular bus is going to the university or not. The destination board will say University.

A member of the travelling public

Corrections

- The IC Netball league table in the last issue of SCAN was based on last year's results. This has now been.

SCAN's policy is to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please contact the Editor with the date, page or weblink.



Thursday & Friday wk 9
from 12-9pm



‘He just loves football, he lives and breathes it’

Steve Feekins and Jack Smith met Morecambe manager Sammy McIlroy to discuss their new ground, the team’s fortunes, and his glittering career;

MORECAMBE FC ARE currently just two points off the relegation spots in League Two. After their move to the new Globe Arena and an extended settling in period, the side are trying to turn things around. “There have been some teething issues obviously, we didn’t get there until we played in the League Cup against Coventry so we didn’t have any preparation at all in the stadium and I think that set us back a little bit” McIlroy said. “I’ve been here for five years and it’s been a fantastic five years at Christie Park. A lot of teams didn’t relish going there, it had its own atmosphere and we had a really great run there over the years. It is progress though, Christie Park’s gone now, we’ve had great memories of the place but we’ve got to make Globe the same now.

McIlroy went on to explain why the stadium move could have affected the players mentally. “[The players] were a little bit taken aback when we first went there, it was like going to an away stadium. The more we play there, the more they’re getting the hang of it, they like the surroundings and the newness of it. It’s taken a little bit of time, but we’re getting there.”

Morecambe are currently two points away from relegation, with just four wins so far this season. However, the league is currently very close, as McIlroy explained. “The league is so tight, we’re six points off of relegation but we’re also something like five or six points off a play-off place, so it’s frighteningly tight. We’ve just got

to be consistent, we’ve got to try and win games and go on a run that we’re capable of and move up that league, I’m sure it’ll come.”

Despite the 2-0 win against Coventry in the first match at the Globe Arena, Morecambe are out of all the cup competitions before Christmas. “Obviously everyone loves a cup run, whether it’s the League Cup or FA Cup because of the publicity and also the money it can bring into the club, but unfortunately we’re out. We’ve just got to concentrate on the league, which is our main competition. We’ve got no distraction about who we’re playing in the cup, we’ve just got to concentrate on the league and take it from there.”

Does McIlroy see his club pushing for the play-offs, like they did last season? “I know we can but we’ve got to be consistent, we’ve got to go on a run and if we can do that I’m sure we can get there. We had a great run last year to get into the play-offs and we’re capable of doing that again, but there are just one or two little things, like consistency.”

McIlroy of course had a distinguished career as a player before embarking on his managerial career; he was technically one of the last of the Busby Babes at Manchester United, earned 88 caps for Northern Ireland, and captained his country at a World Cup. Aged just seventeen, some members of the press had dubbed him ‘the new George Best’ before the Manchester Derby.



Steve Feekins with Sammy McIlroy

“I didn’t know until 11 in the morning that I was playing in that game,” he said. “I was obviously nervous but the players around me; Bobby Charlton, George Best, Brian Kidd, Willie Morgan, they all calmed me down so there was no problem. They just told me to go out and play and everything went well on the day. It was a fantastic game, probably one of the best derbies for years, six goals in it, and it was a great experience for me.”

While at United, McIlroy played under several managers in a fairly long period of transition for the club, experiencing both relegation and promotion. “Getting relegated from the First Division into the Second Division, that was a big blow for the club. But

we bounced back, Tommy Docherty turned it all around and we had three fantastic years under him. The relegation was a massive blow though.”

Having played for the club, McIlroy is well placed to comment on how United might do this season. He said: “They’ll be there or thereabouts with the squad that Sir Alex Ferguson has got. They’re the team to beat, them and Chelsea. I think whoever finishes above either one of them will do it.”

Ferguson has mentioned retirement in the press over the past couple of days, saying that he is “too old to retire”. The debate is naturally opening up over who might replace him when the time does come to step aside. “It’s going to be a very, very hard job

for whoever takes over from Sir Alex Ferguson with his record,” McIlroy said. “Everyone wondered who would take over from Sir Matt Busby, a lot of people tried it and didn’t succeed, but whoever’s going to take over from Sir Alex needs a bit of luck. Who knows, he’s coming up to 69 now. He just loves football, he lives and breathes it. If his health’s right I’m sure he’ll keep going.”

McIlroy was lucky enough during his playing career to captain his country at the World Cup, in 1986. “It was fantastic in the World Cup, from 1980 to 1986 we had a fantastic run with great team spirit which got us to two World Cups and we won a British Championship as well. They were a great set of boys and we had great times. The two World Cups, in Spain and Mexico, were fantastic.”

“It was the highlight of my career to manage my country, even though it was in troubled circumstances rebuilding the side. The first two years were fantastic. The last year was obviously very difficult with a lot of my players retiring, but it was a great experience for me and I look back on it with happy memories.”

With the greatest respect for Morecambe, would McIlroy ever go back and manage the Northern Ireland national team if he was asked? “Yeah, there’s no doubt about that. I’m more prepared now for anything like that. If there was one thing I’d love to do again, it would be to manage my country.”

Regional Football

With one third of the season gone, Lancashire teams occupy league positions ranging from play offs to bottom of the pile

Matthew Todd

Fleetwood Town is arguably the best placed of all the regional sides. The Blue Square Premier new boys have made an impressive start to the campaign and currently occupy the division’s final play off position. Although form has slipped somewhat in recent games, Fleetwood are still a difficult team to beat. This resilience served the side well last weekend with a battling 1-1 draw away at Bath City, a Nick Rogan strike rescuing a point for the Cod Army. Manager Mickey Mellon has also strengthened his side further with the loan signing of the experienced Jon Worthington.

Another side who harbour realistic play-off ambitions are Lancaster City. A 4-2 away victory over Mossley was the Dolly Blue’s eighth consecutive league win and propelled them into 7th place in the evo-stick league. Max Rothwell was the hero; the young midfielder netted a brace and was named man of the match. Lancaster’s league form may well be aided by their exit from the League Cup on Tuesday night, after a disappointing 1-0 to Radcliffe Borough. With the squad comprising just 17 players, the extra midweek breaks may give Lancaster an advantage over their league rivals.

It seems that teams entering new divisions are doing rather well thus far; Blackpool are another case in point.



Preston battled it out against Hull. Photo courtesy of Who Ate All the Pies

The Tangerines sit 14th in the Premier League and have a four point buffer above the relegation zone. This is largely thanks to a vital 2-1 victory over Wolves last weekend at Bloomfield Road - a stunning 25 yard drive from Luke Varney was added to by Marlon Harewood to secure the win. Varney has impressed pundits since his loan switch from Derby County, indeed Ian Holloway has hinted that he will look to secure the strikers long-term future

when the transfer window opens. Blackpool will look to pick up points regularly, but face a tough task with a trip to in-form Bolton at the weekend.

Morecambe are also placed the correct side of the relegation zone. The Shrimpers occupy 21st in League 2 after an inconsistent start to the season. Despite their lowly league position, Sammy McIlroy’s side have shown their ability to grind out results and have earned some unlikely points along the

way. Saturday’s away point at Cheltenham was a fine example of this battling spirit; an equaliser from the prolific Phil Jevons securing the draw.

Unfortunately there are two local teams that are currently in the relegation places. Wigan remain in trouble and were not helped by having to face Manchester United at Old Trafford last weekend. Despite matching United for much of the encounter, the Latics pressed the self destruct button as captain Antolin Alcaraz and striker Hugo Rodallega were sent off. Roberto Martinez’s remaining nine players were unable to make any headway and succumbed to a 2-0 defeat. While the Old Trafford loss was disappointing, Wigan will be aware that games against sides such as West Ham will make or break their season. With the Latics travelling to Upton Park this weekend, a positive result is crucial.

Preston are the team with most ground to make up; North End sit last in the Championship and are now six points from safety. Like Wigan they faced a strong opponent last weekend, in this case away at QPR. Like their Lancashire neighbours they returned empty handed, after a 3-1 defeat. Darren Ferguson is now under considerable pressure to turn around the fortunes of his ailing team, and the visit of Millwall on Saturday will provide an opportunity to record a much needed win.

It is time the University started taking us seriously

Marc Handley
LUSU Vice President (Sports)

Over the last few weeks, it has become apparent that the University is once again going back on one of the many promises it has made to students. Wednesday afternoons are beginning to become an issue again, as here at the Students' Union we are learning of more and more students finding it difficult to attend matches even at home - which normally start around 2pm for most sports - let alone away, where teams usually leave at around midday depending on the destination. This is quite frankly ridiculous. For an institution that is likely to see a hike in tuition fees in the near future due to our wonderfully mysterious Vice Chancellor who is still ignoring the wants and needs of his students, they certainly know how to stir up hatred against themselves.

BUCS, along with Roses, is the most important competition for our University teams and yet due to many seminars, lectures, and practicals being scheduled for later and later into Wednesdays, our teams and being tripped at the first hurdle by people who only a few months ago in May were massively behind our teams.

Roses 2010 saw unprecedented support from the University in many different ways, and of course we will be grateful for that, but they cannot pick and choose when they wish to help the clubs and when they wish to totally ignore their wishes. It certainly looks to me in my position that sport is only important every other year here - and that is a disgrace. I would absolutely love to be proved wrong, but with departments carrying out the careless actions that I am seeing, I cannot envisage this happening anytime soon without action against them being sought.

Don't get me wrong, this is not now just a BUCS issue. Our college teams are being hit with this problem too, and not just the football league that takes place on Wednesdays.

Due to the resurfacing of the netball courts, which has finally started 10 days after the date I was promised, the college netball league is also being played on Wednesdays too, so even more students are being affected than first thought. I would appreciate it if anyone who has this problem could come and see either myself or the LUSU Vice President (Academic)

Robin Hughes so that we can build a bigger picture of those affected by this issue. It is about time the University as a whole started taking us seriously. You are not helping your students, Lancaster - you're crippling them.

George Wyatt: The story so far

Bowland making headway

Bowland dominate in all six leagues as they push for successive George Wyatt wins, writes **Robert Wiggans**

SINCE WEEK ONE, the college teams have been battling it out in the inter-college pool and darts league. Six weeks have passed and neither pool nor darts have been without drama and shock.

MEN'S A POOL

With regards to the A team league, Lonsdale seem the strongest prospects for the Men's A league, having a team which is predominately third years and strong throughout, proving this by winning all their games so far. The biggest victory being against Grizedale, beating them 9-0. The following week Grizedale reversed their fortunes with a 9-0 victory themselves against Pendle.

Graduate College cannot be discounted following their league victory last year and - still managing to retain some of their strongest players - their only loss so far coming against Lonsdale 5-4. Bowland currently sit at the top of the league but both Graduate and Lonsdale have a game in hand, with Fylde close by.

MEN'S B POOL

Fylde seem to have the edge in the Men's B league, closely followed by Bowland who have a game in hand and are equal on points with Pendle. This league seems a battle between this trio, unless Lonsdale can close the gap with some big wins. Fylde recently lost their unbeaten run against Cartmel with a 5-4 defeat; consistency will have to be maintained for them to remain at the top.



WOMEN'S POOL

Bowland lead the way with in the women's pool league with Cartmel and Lonsdale close behind, both having a game in hand against the leaders. Furness cannot be discounted; they are not far behind and a decent victory would see them close in. Cartmel recently proved their strength with a perfect 9-0 victory over Graduate who sit at the bottom of the table.

MEN'S DARTS

This men's league has traditionally always been a hard fought and close battle between all the colleges, but Bowland have always remained consistent and can never be disregarded. However, Graduate seem to be the main contenders this year, and have put together a string of early wins and are yet to suffer defeat. Pendle and

Cartmel sit close by, but they will need to remain consistent and beat leaders Graduate to knock them off the top. Pendle sit with Cartmel under leaders Bowland in the league, and have proved they are not a team to be discounted with an 8-1 victory over Grizedale. This was followed by a 5-4 victory against Lonsdale.

WOMEN'S DARTS

The women's league seems a battle between Pendle and Bowland, who both lead the way by quite a margin. Bowland, however, have played a game less and there is very little between them. Bowland showed their dominance with a resounding 6-1 victory over Grizedale. Lonsdale demonstrated their inconsistency with a 5-2 defeat to league leaders Pendle, following a 5-2 win against Grizedale.

DOMINOES

Fylde are the team to beat in the dominoes league having yet to suffer a defeat; they currently sit just below Bowland having played a game less. Pendle are close by, but Fylde seem to have had the right tactics so far, most recently defeating Cartmel 3-0 following two 2-1 victories in all other games. Bowland seem the only current challengers who last week won against Grizedale 3-0, with their only defeat coming from Fylde.

Bowland look in prime position to add to their many George Wyatt wins, based on their current positions in every league.

However, with only a quarter of matches played and with all leagues having at least three main challengers, there is a lot that could change and it will be a while before any celebrations are heard.

Lancaster trounce Cumbria

CONTINUED FROM BACK PAGE

range accuracy to kill off their opponents. At 71-33, it was clear that the margin between the two teams had considerably widened. Credit must be given to Lancaster for not resting on their laurels and extending their advantage through efficiency and good teamwork.

In the final period, Cumbria showed glimpses of their individual talent and spirited determination in spite of the score line. A storming run and basket from their forward and some neat interplay brought it back to 71-39. This comeback was short-lived once Hadjitheodosiou's ability to single-handedly influence a game came to the forefront. His bursting runs, ability to evade challenges and finish in style capped a superb individual display. Ormond

with two points again and a couple of free throws from Francotte rounded off a measurably controlled and professional performance from Lancaster, who won the game 89-41.

Captain Hadjitheodosiou commented that: "It was a hard game, but the good effort of the players made it a simple task. Everyone gave 100%". On the hot subject of the referee's decisions, he said: "It was the first time I have seen this many unnecessary fouls given in a game. It's a semi-contact sport, so he should've let the game flow". He finished by promising the fans that "we'll do the best we can in every match this season" and that he hoped they can go all the way in the cup this season. With a performance like this, who could bet against them?



Lancaster loses out to Liverpool in men's hockey

Liverpool's slick passing and high tempo play was too much for Lancaster

Hockey

Lancaster 30
LJMU 29

Rob Lucas

LANCASTER MEN'S FIRST TEAM played host to the University of Liverpool Men's first team in a game of hockey that had the potential to be a very interesting spectacle. After an immensely successful promotion achieving season last year Lancaster now find themselves residing in the Northern Conference 2A, where they face the University of Liverpool who also are new to the league, albeit through relegation.

The final hockey game of the day was to be played in typically awful Lancaster weather, with freezing winds and driving rain that threatened to pose difficulties for both keepers. However the main concern for either team prior to the start was the inadequacy of the pitch lighting. With the wind causing the ball to swerve and dip both on the ground as well as in the air, being able to clearly see was of paramount importance to the players. Regardless, the game was to get underway slightly later than predicted at 16:20.

Liverpool started with the hit off and immediately began to ask questions of the Lancaster defence with their high tempo passing game. The main threat posed by Lancaster in the early stages was through the counter attack, with the occasionally well placed long ball looking to exploit the high backline of the Liverpool defence. However it was not until the ninth minute that the first clear chance was

created. A period of intense pressure saw Lancaster being held deeper and deeper in the final third of the pitch, eventually leading to an opportunity for Liverpool, that would have surely resulted in a goal had it not been for a quality save from Lancaster keeper Josh Latham.

Liverpool continued to dominate the game, until they finally broke the deadlock in the 21st minute. The goal coming from a penalty corner for a foot violation. Liverpool picked up after the restart where they had left off and it wasn't long before they were testing keeper Latham again. Despite his best efforts there was little the Lancaster keeper could do to prevent Liverpool's second. A well worked move from a free hit resulting in the ball being smashed home from close range.

You would be forgiven for thinking that at two nil down Lancaster would retreat into their shells. However an attacking move directly from the centre saw Lancaster winning a free hit midway into the Liverpool half. It was quickly taken and before the Liverpool defence knew where they were, the ball was being squared across the face of their goal for Sam Crich to hit home a fine goal for the home side.

Liverpool began the second half looking strong, but an excellent defensive work rate by Lancaster saw the visitors being able to do little with the ball in the early exchanges. Getting a draw out of the game would have been a good result for Lancaster, and they came close to getting an equalizer five minutes in to the second period. A solid period of attack from the home side worked an opportunity that was goal bound, had it not been for a well timed block. Liverpool began to dominate possession with their silky pass-



Former Captain Mike Pugh in action last year.

ing, but on the whole the game was evenly matched. Just as the game was looking to quieten down Liverpool snatched their third. A fast paced attack that resulted in an easy finish for the visitors.

Lancaster immediately looked to respond from the restart with a surging move towards the Liverpool goal, but the attack broke down and they found themselves once again on the back foot. The fourth goal for the visiting side came from a quickly taken corner, which gave Lancaster no time to regroup defensively.

At this point the game was beginning to look stretched. Lancaster were really pushing, trying to get something more out of the game. However it was

this forward desire that left them vulnerable to the Liverpool counter that resulted in the fifth goal, and ultimately put the game to bed. The move broke down the left flank and a sharp pass across the goal made for an easy finish. There was just about time for Lancaster to get one last touch of the ball before the full time whistle blew.

An unflattering score line for the home team, who had played well against a very good side and in unfavourable conditions. After the game Lancaster captain Tom Gordon said: "We didn't expect an easy game, they're a strong side. It wasn't our greatest performance admittedly and we let them pass the ball around far too easily."

Grad trumps determined Cartmel

Darts

Graduate 6
Cartmel 3

Phillip Flenley & Matthew Todd

WITH BOTH TEAMS in a good vein of form, this Monday night encounter was always likely to provide some fierce competition. With the home advantage, the Cartmelians aimed to snatch a surprise win against the one of the league favourites.

This contest got off a frenetic start with Mark Lucas of Cartmel and Gavin Reid of Graduate scoring heavily. Reid took the first leg with some assured finishing, however, Lucas was not to be denied as hit a double top finish under huge pressure to take this game to a deciding leg. Despite being pegged back, Reid showed great composure and checked out on double 18 to draw first blood for Graduate.

Matthew Todd was pitted against the up and coming darts man of Cartmel, Dan Williams in the second game. After a shaky start Todd recovered his composure to sneak through 2-1.

With a 2-0 lead established Graduate went for the jugular, naming Richard Floyd. Cartmel named Ben Smith, who continued his run of playing extremely strong opponents each week. Yet the game was not a foregone conclusion with Smith holding his ground and hitting plentiful twenty's of varying worth. Floyd held his nerve as always and extinguished any hopes of a Smith victory with superb finishing.

Cartmel were on the ropes and threw on Philip Flenley. However, Flenley was not able to ease Cartmel's suffering against former County college darts captain, Pete Watt. With Watt throwing well and Flenley under par and only scoring well in flourishes, he was fortunate to grab a leg. Watt showed flashes of his best form to put Graduate into a commanding position.

In an act of desperation Cartmel co-captain Mike Walton threw in his lot with a great display to win 2-0 against a decent rival in George Lincoln. Assured finishing made sure a first game could be claimed for Cartmel.

A second Graduate player seeing his return to the familiar surroundings of Cartmel college was Michael Phelan. But against second year Matt Dawson he was unable to show the consistency that had brought him a good record so far. With Dawson keeping in touching distance he pounced on Phelan's poor finishing and took the game 2-0. After snatching two games in a row Cartmel were on a roll and Graduate seemed to be cracking under the pressure.

However in game seven, Dave Johnson of Graduate matched the performance of his team-mates in the first four games of the night. Walter Taylor tried his best to fight back and two double tops gave him a chance to notch a 100+ checkout, but the challenger stood up strong to win 2-0 and guarantee Graduate the victory overall.

Sport Distort: Matthew Linnett cast a satirical eye on the latest sport headlines

England worry how their balls will cope Down Under

Before every Ashes series there is no end to the speculation and debate that surrounds the players' balls, and this year is no different. Many have questioned how the England bowlers' balls will cope in the humid Australian conditions.

"I have to say, I prefer the balls I play with at home," said England's baby-faced bowler Stuart Broad, "They get much warmer over here in Oz and that can affect how they hang in the air. David [Saker] said it's important that I don't allow my balls to drop too quickly, but at the end of the day I'm knocking my balls towards a bloke 22 yards away from me. Whether he

really gives them a whack or gently cushions them back towards me, they're still round and red." Saker has been making full use of his pointer this week to analyse diagrams of Broad's balls.

In order to decipher why Broad was lacking confidence ahead of the series, Sport Distort turned to a man who has displayed some of the greatest balls in English Cricket - Sir Ian Botham. Beefy explained that: "The Aussies' balls are much firmer than your typical English balls. I reckon England are really going to have to focus hard on their balls if they want to retain the Ashes; but in the end, with a bit of spit and elbow grease,

I don't think the side will have any problem swinging them in and out."

However, it would appear that it's not just the bowlers that are getting in on the balls debate. England wicket keeper Matt Prior reportedly told the press this week: "Jimmy Anderson has tossed a few in my direction and the balls feel fine in my hands," although he did add that "not all the players wear leather gloves when handling them."

England openers Andrew Strauss and Alistair Cook had a lot to say on how the Aussies balls might affect them when they get out into the middle. Strauss said: "The Australian bowlers are some of the world's

greatest when it comes to moving their balls after release. They have a lot more verve than usual, which won't help when you have someone like Mitchell Johnson trying to bounce them up onto your chin," before Cook added: "If I can just get some wood on Ben Hilfenhaus' balls I'd be a happy man."

It will definitely be interesting to see how the bowlers cope with their balls, but what is guaranteed is that over the next few weeks there will be some magnificent balls on show. Let's just hope that the debate doesn't prompt any unnecessary and frankly obvious innuendo based jokes on the subject.

Lancaster victorious in action-packed derby



Photo by Elliot Westacott

Home side breeze through to the next round with stomping victory over Cumbria

Basketball

Lancaster	89
Cumbria	41

Neil Robertson

THERE WAS A huge turnout for what was expected to be a fiercely contested game between local rivals Lancaster and the University of Cumbria. The antipant spectators were not disappointed as Lancaster came out on top in the derby and progressed through to the next round of the Men's Northern Conference Cup.

Lancaster opened the scoring in a fashion in-fitting with the pattern of the game. Team captain Charalambos Hadjitheodosiou won a foul and impressively scored three free throws to get the home side off and running. This was followed by a superb three pointer from Chris Hodkin and Lancaster were off to a flying start. The opening period was undoubtedly competitive, with the officials showing their intent of taking

a firm approach on the game by calling seven fouls in just over two minutes.

Hadjitheodosiou showed yet more of his clinical finishing, scoring a three pointer and dispatching another free throw to put Lancaster 12-0 up. The officials continued to keep a tight grip on the game, awarding somewhat disputable fouls against Lancaster; however Cumbria's wasteful finishing from free throw situations kept Lancaster in the ascendancy. Point guard Constantinos Christofi was the architect of the home side's attacking play, setting up chances for centre James Ormond and scoring himself.

Cumbria showed their resilience by reducing the deficit to 18-11, but Lancaster responded to this by demonstrating their long-range shooting ability in exquisite style with yet another three pointer scored by point guard Leon Francotte. Cumbria again clawed their way back into the match; Lancaster re-established their superiority with a quality finish from James Dunne to put the team 23-15 up.

The match came to the boil in the

second period, both on and off the court. Lancaster's attacking ambition showed no boundaries as they stormed further ahead with a series of three pointers, from Craig Cefferty and Dimitris Karakasis. Hadjitheodosiou was central to Lancaster's prowess, linking up fantastically well with Chris Hodkin; he and the home side were in complete control.

The referee kept a tight hold on the game, repeatedly penalising both teams for even the most minimal contact. However, there was no doubting the physicality of this fiercely fought derby, illustrated when Karakasis- a standout attacking player in this period- scored a three pointer and won the foul after being clattered into by the Cumbria guard. He dusted himself down and scored the free throw to put Lancaster in a respectable lead of 42-20.

The contest never ceased to be without controversy

The contest never ceased to be without controversy, Leon Francotte and several other Lancaster players showing disagreement at fouls given against them. This disillusionment with the officials reached the point where the home manager was out on the court remonstrating with them at the interval.

With the score at 50-28 to Lancaster going into the third period, it was a case of how many as far as the eventual result was concerned. An amazing overhead shot by Max Jaconvella got them off and running, before Chris Hodkin chipped in with a couple to send Lancaster into an unassailable lead. The Lancaster players' frustrations with the officials had become almost a comical topic, centre Karl Viilver collapsing to the floor in disbelief after a decision was given against him, resulting in quiet hysterics from manager and players alike.

Francotte, Karakasis and Hodkin kept up the frenzy of three pointers from Lancaster as they used their long-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

IC Football League A

Team	W	L	D	Pts
County	3	1	2	11
Bowland	2	1	0	6
Pendle	1	1	1	4
Cartmel	1	0	1	4
Furness	1	2	1	4
Lonsdale	1	1	0	3
Fylde	0	1	1	1
Grizedale	0	2	0	0

IC Netball A

Team	W	L	D	Pts
Fylde	1	0	0	3
Cartmel	1	0	0	3
Furness	1	0	0	3
Lonsdale	0	0	0	0
Pendle	0	0	0	0
County	0	1	0	0
Bowland	0	1	0	0
Grizedale	0	1	0	0

Carter Shield Fixtures

Sponsored by IBM

Week	Sport
2	Taster session
3	Taster session
4	-
5	Dodgeball
6	Volleyball
7	Lacrosse
8	Women's Football
9	Finals Day

All fixtures take place Sunday, 12.45pm in the Sports Centre Main Hall

George Wyatt Fixtures

Day	Sport
Mon	Men's Darts & Dominos
Tue	Women's Darts
Wed	Women's Pool
Thurs	Men's Pool A & B

Carolynne

Week Eight, Michaelmas Term

The Christmas (wrapping paper*) edition

* Cheaper than the real stuff

emails from
@australia

Carolynne’s International Correspondent, **Penny How**, gives us a taste of life as a Lancaster student Down Under

THE SURFER’S LIFESTYLE has been painted as the most idyllic life in Australia – camping on beaches, early morning starts, riding waves, living off the land, and generally chilling out. However since I have started to surf, I have found that it requires intuition, and has its learning curves and complexities. Especially in light of the recent death of Andy Irons, one of the world’s greatest surfers, I find myself arguing that although the lifestyle may appear heavenly, it is far from transparent or simple.

The three-time world surfing champion Andy Irons was found dead last week following an accidental overdose. Controversy still surrounds his death as it is unknown whether he accidentally overdosed on Methadone (widely used in Australia to treat heroin addiction), or Zolpidem (which he was subscribed to combat a fever that he was fighting at the time). Like any person, he admitted that he had been “batting with his demons” over his surfing career. This contradicts the relaxed, carefree stereotype that is commonly associated with the life of a surfer.

As well as battling with the demons onshore, there are also those that are fought with in the water. The sea is a hazardous maze of rip currents, plunging waves, deep waters and sea life. One of the most publicised stories is that of Bethany Hamilton, an American pro surfer who survived a shark attack at the age of 13, but left her with only one arm. She continues to surf and claims that she has never regretted taking up the sport. Likewise, just last week a friend of mine sliced his head open on the fin of his board off the coast of Wollongong (New South Wales) after bailing on a powerful wave. It didn’t deter him from surfing and he is already eager to get back out onto the water once his staples have been removed. He says that such injuries help in appreciating the complexity of the marine environment – respect and awareness is key to one’s survival.

I myself have already experienced that this appreciation of the sea is essential. Having only been surfing for three months, I have found that it involves much preparation and examination. This involves early morning starts checking weather and wave conditions, and scouting out the appropriate beaches. Although this is time consuming and frustrating at times, it is worth it when you finally get onto the water.

This ritual becomes a daily schedule, which is probably why surfing is perceived as much more than a sport because it can take entire days, even weeks, to search for the best waves.

Thus, the surfer’s lifestyle is eclipsed by the stereotypes that surround it. These swamp its image with laziness, ignorance and other associated attributes. Instead surfing should be recognised as a sport that requires a high amount of patience, knowledge and determination.

The idea that the lifestyle of a surfer is transparent and simple can be confidently rejected from looking at the lives of pro surfers such as Andy Irons and Bethany Hamilton.

Doing Christmas

Rachael Gartland

Well it’s that time of year again and if you’re worried that weeks of present buying and getting merry are going to leave you a little strapped for cash this festive season then fear not - there are a number of ways in which you can have a jolly nice Christmas without using up half your student loan in the process.

The act of present giving sees its roots in the traditional Christmas story with the bringing of gifts to Jesus from the wise men. However, if, unlike the wise men, you do not possess a handy stash of gold or frankincense you may want to look at ways to economise while you shop. Why not arrange to do a Secret Santa with your flat, or organise a Bran Tub, this way everyone gets a present but you cut down considerably on the cost? Also Secret Santa is a great way of finding out just how much you’ve learnt about the people you’ve been living with for the past 10 weeks – you may be surprised at the result.

For the more creative amongst you, why not try doing homemade gifts this year – these are often a hit with the older family members. Try your hand at making some Christmas decorations for the family or creating some fancy homemade jewellery. If you aren’t a complete mess in the kitchen then baking some Christmas cookies or other treats is a great way of adding a personal touch to your gifts.

If the homemade approach doesn’t appeal then there are plenty of places in town to go Christmas shopping, many of which offer a handy student discount either with a Purple card or an NUS/NUS Extra card. New quirky gift shop Unbox offers a 10% discount with an NUS or Purple card, and savings are even to be had online this season with Amazon.co.uk offering a 5% discount with an NUS Extra card. Also keep an eye out for the market stalls at the campus Christmas Festival

Dom Stroud guides you through the steps needed to cook a traditional, budget-loving Christmas dinner for your friends and flatmates.



on December 9-10, as these are sure to be filled with potential Christmas gifts. Many of the stalls will be offering items which are homemade which makes presents seem a bit more thoughtful but means a lot less pressure on your part.

In the end, as Christmas often brings with it a feeling of generosity and tidings of good cheer, this year don’t let money problems get you down. Just remember, it’s the thought that counts.

Hohoho! It’s almost Christmas and if you’re anything like me then that means it’s almost time to stuff yourself stupid with the tastiest food that only appears once Santa has blessed us with his presence. Unfortunately, you probably won’t be able to invite all of your university mates round to yours on Christmas morning, and it would be nice to share a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings. Well, I’m here to help you with that.

Firstly, you simply need to plan a time and date. Be wary of end-of-term coursework deadlines, and think logically about how many people you can fit into your kitchen. It’s not worth worrying about money as, believe it or not, a Christmas dinner shop will only set you back £30, and between eight people, that’s a measly £3.75 each.

When the day comes, you’ll need to write down everything that you need to cook, working backwards from the time you want to serve. Your kitchen should be clutter free, and your cooking tools should have been washed.

The meat
If you’ve bought a proper turkey, make sure

Useful Information

Late night shopping
Extended shopping hours are on Sundays and Thursday. Most shops will open late each night till 8pm (9pm Thursday) during Christmas week itself.

Free parking
On Sundays and late nights after 6pm on all City Council and Market Gate car parks.

it’s thoroughly and completely defrosted. A medium bird should be left out for a full day before cooking. To prep, remove its giblets, wash out blood, and pat dry with kitchen towel (yes, it is supposed to stink).

Pre-heat your oven to 180C fan/190C/375F/Gas Mark 5. For a bird over 4kg, you’ll need to cook it for 20 minutes per kilogram plus another 90 (for under 4kg it’s the same, only plus 70).

Plonk Mr Turkey upside-down into your roasting tray, liberally slather it with butter, and cover with tin foil. This will ensure the meat is moist. Remove this foil for the last hour of cooking so as to give it a typical browned colour. When it’s done, pierce the thickest part with a sharp knife, and collect the juices that run out with a spoon. Ensure the juices are clear and not pink; if it’s cooked and clear, let it stand on the side for 15 minutes before serving; if it’s pink then pop it back in the oven.

If you go with a turkey joint (this is recommended), you won’t need to worry about any of that. Just follow the instructions on the box.

The vegetables

s on a shoestring



To save on pots you can pair up vegetables during cooking. Put the likes of carrots, babycorn, and peas together in one, and broccoli and cauliflower in a second. Potatoes, parsnips, and sprouts need to be done separately. Ensure you salt the water well when you boil your veg.

For some delicious roasties, par-boil your potatoes for five to 10 minutes. Heat plenty of oil in a roasting tray. Once par-boiled, drain and spread them into the tray, sprinkle leaves of rosemary across the top, and season well with salt. This'll give them a tasty pizzazz that your friends won't be expecting. Roast them at 200C for 40-60 minutes, turning halfway through and checking regularly. The weight of the potatoes will cause the cooking time to annoyingly vary. They're done when they're nicely browned and golden.

For some roasted parsnips, you'll need to peel them, chop the top and bottom ends off, and then slice them lengthways through the middle, and then again into quarters. Remove the core by careful slicing. Par-boil them simply by bringing them to the boil for a minute or so (otherwise they'll fall apart) before draining. Chuck them into a heated

roasting tray with plenty of oil as well, and cook at 200C for 20-25 minutes.

It's not like it is in the picture I recommend leaving mostly everything in what you cooked it in when serving up. That way, everyone can come to the kitchen counters and get what they want without you asking, it saving unnecessary hassle with plates, and it keeps the food warm too.

If you think this is all well above your head, then you're wrong. You can do this. The most important thing is to give yourself enough time and be confident. Believe it or not, it's more uncleanliness than lack of culinary skills that gives people food poisoning, and unless you cook the turkey for hours and hours more than it should be, it won't be burnt. Should you muck something up, there'll be plenty of other things on the menu that will be fine. If you needmore information, scan.lusu.co.uk has the full, in-depth version of this guide.

Relax with this. As long as you've planned the time, you'll be able to don your Santa hat, listen to Basshunter's Jingle Bass on repeat, and wow everyone with your superb Christmas dinner skills.

Bon appetite, Lancaster.

What to buy

- **Inspired To Cook Turkey Breast Joint 500g x 2, £8.98**
- **(Optional, Linda McCartney Vegetarian Roast 454g, £2.99)**
- **Cranberry Sauce 205g, 68p**
- **Bacon and Sausage Wraps 210g, £2.50**
- **Carrots (loose) x 8, 85p**
- **Babycorn 175g, £1.50**
- **Birds Eye Garden Peas 480g, £1.22**
- **Cauliflower, Single, 76p**
- **Broccoli (loose), 88p**
- **Maris Piper Potatoes 2.5kg, £1.95**
- **Fresh Rosemary 20g, 79p**
- **Parsnips (loose) x 4, 86p**
- **Brussels Sprouts x 8, 60p**
- **Paxo Sage and Onion Stuffing 170g, 85p**
- **Bisto Rich Gravy Granules 170g, 95p**
- **Cornflour 500g, 81p**
- **Double Chocolate Gateau 350g x 2, £2**
- **Double Cream 300ml, 95p**

All prices taken from Sainsbury's

Holidays are coming

Bex Hamilton

WELL, PETER KAY is back in a job; I guess it must be nearly Christmas. In the old days, Christmas was a special day to commemorate the birth of Jesus. Nowadays, it seems to commemorate who is lucky enough to win the X Factor.

Whilst the thought of Wagner in a Santa hat makes my stomach churn, it is images such as these (albeit traumatising) that make Christmas what it is. First on the hit list: the Marks and Spencer's advert. Now, doesn't it give you that festive cheer? This year's advert is almost a parody of Strictly Come Dancing- in that it is full of vaguely familiar faces that can't dance for shit. It is so disturbingly cosy that whilst urging you to purchase whatever it is Twiggy is twirling about in; it also makes you want to poke yourself in the eye with a pinecone. Of course, this is not the most annoying advert of the festive season. Four words: Here come the girls.

Another tradition of Christmas is the music. Whilst the ongoing torrent of All I Want for Christmas playing in every club on every night of the week can get extremely tedious, there is joy to be found in being able to play Shakin' Stevens and Wizzard at top volume without impending guilt. Of course, Westlife are likely to have a new single out that resembles every generic ballad they've ever made, so make sure you purchase that. Has anyone ever noticed that they only appear from November to January? They're definitely no East-17.

Oh, and of course! The eating. There is a reason that turkey sandwiches aren't a popular food choice post-January. Why is that Mum feels she needs to make enough food for a small army? It's all well and good stocking the cupboards, that is until the food guilt and New Year's resolutions coincide. You'll be starving on the detox diet when January 3 comes around and no-one wants to see you on your hands and knees, cramming enough cranberry sauce and Babybels in your mouth to make even Michelle McManus wince.

Preparation running up to Christmas is paramount. I personally would advise practising your grateful face when receiving shit gifts and making some notes on what you're going to say to the relatives you detest. Drinking a glass of sherry a night is mandatory, as it is the only season in which you will not be branded an alcoholic. Also bear in mind that it's also the only time in the year when it is acceptable for you and the rugby team to dress as elves on a night out to the Carleton.

Truth is, it isn't Christmas until the Coca-Cola advert comes on, and considering that the iconic lorry has been gracing our screens for the last three weeks, I'd better get writing to Santa. I have been a good girl all year. Almost.





Exploiting the dream?

After university, graduates can expect a fierce battle for their dream jobs and are increasingly turning to unpaid work experience and internships to embellish their CVs. But are employers taking advantage of student's ambitions to succeed, asks **Lauren Hirst**?

Once upon a time, a degree was viewed as the crème de la crème of employability success and a fast track to a dream job. Nowadays, many graduates are scrambling around trying to figure out what they can do to create some sort of future for themselves, whilst at the same time coping with blows to their confidence, financial security and independence.

Graduate unemployment is at an all time low with an estimated one in six graduates currently unemployed. Many graduates are furthering their education in a desperate attempt to achieve a more competitive edge. However, with the government's plans to hike up tuition fees; the opportunity to achieve a Masters qualification is looking bleak to say the least for students who do not have Daddy's credit card in their back pocket.

Therefore, with the hope of boosting their CV, many students and graduates are turning to work experience as the answer to their employability woes.

Work experience can be a double edged sword. On the one hand, it is viewed as a sparkling added extra to your degree that will make you stand out in a sea of students and crucially, therefore, secure that dream job; the X Factor for the job hunter. But thousands of ambitious students and graduates each year organise work experience with the view to boosting their job prospects only to find their time is spent keeping a seat warm for a real professional to walk through the doors or mastering the art of tea making. So at what point does work experience become a waste of time and, possibly in some cases, exploitation?

Working hard with no monetary reward is an unappealing prospect at the best of times, so when interns are not reimbursed for expenses such as travel; it is easy to understand why many students and graduates feel exploited. The empty pay packets at the end of a work experience stint also means that the less well off graduates, despite having equal qualifications, will struggle to compete with graduates from more affluent families as

they simply cannot afford to work for free.

While much of the above may be true, one cannot refute the fact that internships and work experience are essentially a good opportunity to network within industries. Nine out of 10 recruiters say they consider work experience a crucially important part of a CV. Work experience should give students and graduates invaluable experience which can propel them on their journey towards professional success and by enabling them to gain a vital perspective into the world of work.

David Evans, Careers Advisor from the Centre for Enterprise, Employability and Careers said: "These days, in terms of graduate recruitment, it is all about so you've got a degree but what else have you got? In terms of extra added value that will ensure that your CV will stand out, then work experience is one of the things employers always say that they want. It is an ideal opportunity to provide evidence of the skills and personal qualities employers are always searching for."

Although, it does not seem unreasonable to expect candidates to display a high level

of commitment to the job they yearn for; the employer should not take advantage of this fact. The need for work experience guidelines is not just about preventing exploitation; it is also about making sure that industries are open to everyone with the talent and determination to work within them. It should not be the case that only the wealthy can afford to take on unpaid work but an opportunity for everyone to gain invaluable work experience.

Work experience guidelines:

- **1:** Individuals on placements are not used to perform roles that are inconsistent with mutually agreed learning objectives and/or would otherwise be undertaken by paid staff or crew, whether permanently employed, casual or freelance.
- **2:** Unpaid work placements should normally be for no longer than four weeks.
- **3:** Make sure you have a clear and accurate description in writing explaining what the work experience entails.
- **4:** Student and graduates must be covered

The tea makers' tales

Lucy Miller
Bowland College
National newspaper

I'M CURRENTLY ON a placement with a daily newspaper (naming no names). It is my fourth placement, and, since I have built up a thick portfolio, I probably would have been forgiven for thinking they might give me a smidgeon of responsibility. It is Thursday afternoon. I'm still waiting.

Logically, considering that this is probably going on all over the country, it's hardly fair. This newspaper has me for free, performing menial tasks that they have temps doing too. On Tuesday, I spent seven hours typing up 3000 GCSE results.

I appreciate that times are hard and that the paper couldn't afford to hire more temps, but I have a portfolio on the desk that they have blatantly ignored.

Let's compare this to last week, which I spent at a weekly local. This paper gave me four by-lines, put me in charge of their yearly pull-out, and let me interview Maximo Park, Apprentice runner-up Claire Young, author Joanne Harris, and Alan Bennett. Two editors studied my portfolio, and they sent me to Yorkshire Sculpture Park to cover an exhibition. The editor gave me advice on the NCTJ, thanked me for my time, and offered me a placement on his other newspaper.

Achievements for today: written up seven news in briefs at 60 words each. Re-checked my two email accounts, blog, and Facebook. Chased up last week's interviews. Waited. Wrote this article. My biggest responsibility so far this week has been 350 words on lighting firm workers who are doing the Great North Run in Spandex.

It is the same for anyone who is trying to make it in newspapers. It isn't fair, but I'm grinning and bearing it, hoping that it will stand me in good stead post graduation.

Frustrating is the word, although I can think of some stronger ones.

Matthew Vince
Bowland College
Macmillan Cancer Support

OVER THE SUMMER break, CEEC offered me the chance to organise a paid internship in whatever I wanted to do after university. This allowed me to find my first steps in what I hope to do after I get a degree; charity fundraising. After looking high and low across York, I found Macmillan Cancer Support and was accepted to spend four weeks as a Fund-raising Manager.

Coming into work on the first day as the Intern (or "Coffee Bean" by one particularly motherly old lady) made me pretty nervous, but knowing that such an opportunity was rare I got stuck right in. The other Macmillan Fund-raising Managers were happy to oblige and were fantastic with supporting me in doing as much as I could; daily and weekly plans, one-to-one meetings and truly treating me as one of the team.

By the end of the fourth week I'd learnt and grown more professionally than any other work I've had in my life. I had called hundreds of companies persuading them to promote the World's Biggest Coffee Morning, Macmillan's Flagship Event, through leafleting and hosting their own events, posterred and posted thousands of promo-materials and collected thousands in donations, been on the radio, dressed as a Coffee Mug for a photo shoot throughout York and had become addicted to the Macmillan staple dress down, cake morning, leave early Fridays. However, by far the most poignant experience was speaking directly to those with or who had been directly affected by cancer (a staggering one in three people in the UK). Hearing some of the most uplifting, harrowing and emotional stories from people affected by the illness was truly inspiring to say the least.

I cannot stress enough what an amazing opportunity CEEC had given me. An internship process for charities is fraught with issues that has previously prevented me from doing more than collecting donations. Money is the largest issue for an internship, as most charities are exempt from paying interns. So the funding from CEEC gave me an incredible opportunity as a paid internship with Macmillan Cancer Support and an experience that will last with me forever.

Robert Mclean
Pendle College
UNITE

THROUGH THE UNITE union, I received a wide array of work experience opportunities which have ranged from IT to marketing. I decided to apply for a Marketing and PR assistant post with a small company called Ecodynamics, based in Cheshire, who wanted help launching a new and innovative product.

As soon as I was accepted, I started work immediately and soon found the role to be both exciting and challenging. The new product I was set to work on was a mattress which combined tempur material with a slow release lavender fragrance to aid restless sleep. As I was working for a small company, I had the benefit of regular and direct contact with the owner which allowed me to learn from his breadth of business related experience. The first task I worked on was looking at the businesses strategy for launching the product and giving my advice on what I felt would be the most effective method. I then moved onto refining the promotional materials used, focusing especially on the website, which consequently lead the owner and I to design a new website to improve the image of the company. Once this had been completed, I worked on, and am still working on, promoting the product to businesses nationwide ranging from health spa's to boutique hotels.

The work experience I have done through UNITE has given me a much needed taste of what lies ahead for me at the end of my degree. I have reaffirmed my passion and drive for business whilst also learning many valuable lessons from my employer, who became in essence a business mentor for me. Perhaps most importantly, I was able to easily merge my studies and my work placement, my employer was very flexible and allowed me to fluctuate my hours according to my needs. In conclusion, with the corporate world becoming increasingly more competitive, this will help you stand out, whilst at the same time teaching you valuable and relevant lessons, building contacts and fortunately for me, I paid for my work too.

Alexandra Warlow, County College
Hello! magazine

AT THE START of this summer I was lucky enough to be given the opportunity for work experience in London. That alone would be good enough for me, never mind the fact that the placement I was lucky enough to secure happened to be at the Hello! magazine.

It is still unfortunately very much a case of who you know rather than what you know when getting a foot in the door at the larger establishments, probably more significantly so in the world of journalism and the media. So I pestered my uncle, chief sub editor at the magazine, for any experience I could get my hands on. There are so many reasons why getting your act together and securing some summer work experience is beneficial, for me it was completely out of character, being far more likely to spend the summer waking up at midday and just generally being lazy.

Arriving in such a big city was overwhelming at first, having only ever experienced it in a Lyceum Theatre to see The Lion King with

school kind of way. In fact for someone used to 35mph speed limits and small country lanes in my Channel Island home, the underground at rush hour was almost enough to make me faint onto the Northern Line, which wouldn't have been a great start. But, alive and well, I made it to the offices on the South Bank and entered into a different world where people said things like "oh look there's Eammon Holmes".

Of course, I wasn't offered a glamorous assignment at a film premier on my first day, but instead I had to get to grips with the inner workings of the magazine. It struck me immediately, as I sifted through back copies, noting whenever celebrities appeared and why (Cheryl Cole at this point had literally been in every copy for months), how different the attitude to the idea of celebrity was at the magazine, despite my preconceptions.

There was no circle of shame element to the publication. One of the highlights for me was simply sitting in on an editors meeting, watch-

ing as I found out how photographs are chosen to fit in with the style of the piece and discussing which stories worked and would sell according to upcoming events which is all a carefully thought out process.

Another of my days was spent doing a small amount of writing for one of the editions. The writing style had to fit a certain mould, the more puns the better and always complimentary of the celebrities, in case they were ever needed for a future story. So my true thoughts on Ozzy Osbourne's trip to Venice were that I did not care about Ozzy Osbourne's trip to Venice, were left unknown to the public.

Another highlight for me was going along on a photo shoot in which I could see behind the scenes of just how the journalists on the job manage to make a four page spread out of the life and times of an ex Hollyoaks star, no mean feat. The team at Hello! are very serious about the work that they do and all honesty I was so grateful to be given a taste of journalism.



by the employer's or client's insurance, including Employer's Liability and Public Liability.

- **5:** Hours of attendance are limited to 40 hours a week.

For more information about work experience opportunities then visit CEEC which can be located on Alexander Square or you can call them directly on 01524 592480.

Facts

- **45% of students surveyed received a graduate job offer after completing work experience.**
- **60% of students surveyed claimed that they were given real work.**
- **75% of students believe their commercial awareness significantly increased as a result of their placement.**
- **However...Only 40% of students felt challenged enough during their placement.**

(Statistics from TARGETjobs)

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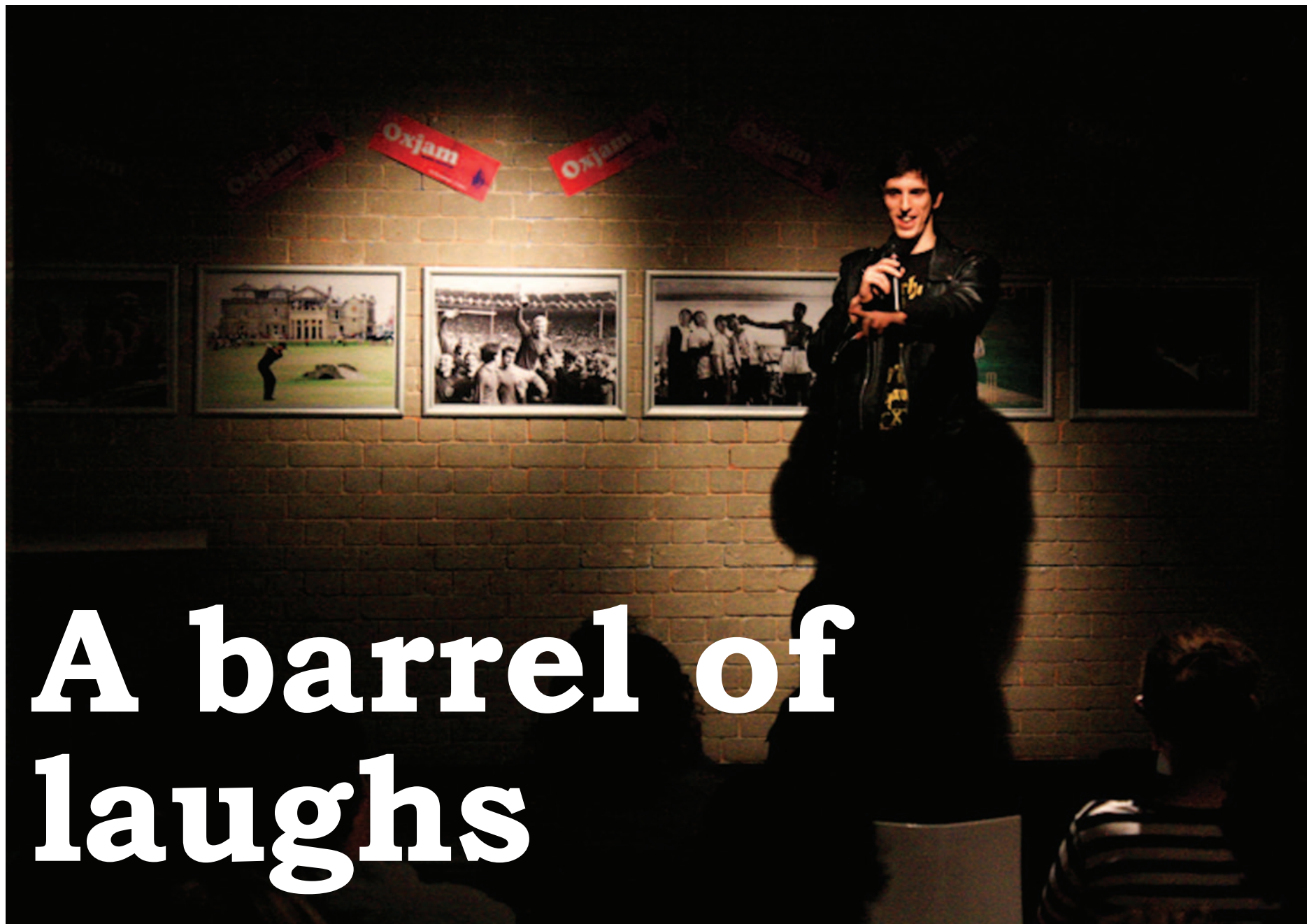


Photo by Elizabeth Young

A barrel of laughs

Lancaster University's Comedy Institute for Amateurs offers an impressive array of talent and a great night out as **Alex Harris** finds out

Did you hear the one about the comedy society on campus? Probably not, because the Lancaster University Comedy Institute for Amateurs (LUCIFA, geddit?) has only recently sprung up on Lancaster University's campus, emerging last academic year. It has steadily increased in size, acquiring a total of over 50 members now. But it's easy to think that a society on campus dedicated to comedy is nothing more than a bunch of people sitting around making wisecracks and watching George Carlin DVDs. LUCIFA is much more than that, offering comedy workshops which deal with wide-ranging performance advice, such as dealing with hecklers, as well as less stage-oriented tips, such as script-writing and comedy theatre workshops.

For such a young society, it's impressive how much LUCIFA actually has going on. Amongst its projects so far are *Rigged*, a six-part radio series of sketches lasting half an hour per episode on Bailrigg FM, as well as *Talk of the Devil*, a Sunday slot also on BailriggFM consisting of comic features interspersed with music,

as well as a whole litany of private projects between members.

Perhaps the most well known event that LUCIFA put on recently, however, was the LUCIFA Laughs event in Fylde Bar a fortnight ago. Walking in, I was expecting a fairly low-key affair. Nobody expects a society's first showcase to be anything particularly special, so I was struck by how funny and well received the evening actually was. LUCIFA President Ben Winterton does a fantastic job of presenting the individual acts, offering an impressive array of his own material in between each of the acts. The acts themselves show off a great range of comedy, including observational humor, garden path one liners and self deprecation.

If this is, as I expect, a taste of what's to come later on in the year then it can't be reiterated enough that LUCIFA is definitely a society to keep an eye on. Though not all of the jokes were absolute corkers, there was enough good material delivered by confident and obviously experienced performers to make the society a welcome addition to Lancaster's campus. It's been said that Lancaster University lacks

in homegrown talent, so it's very encouraging to know that not only is that talent around, but that there are a growing number of societies, one of which is LUCIFA, that are fostering that talent.

Looking over some of the other content on offer, in particular some of the sketches for the radio show *Rigged* it's impressive how professionally done the whole affair is. The sketches range from the surreal (one has a man looking to purchase some sweets, cranberry juice and a castration) to the observational. The quality of the show really is great, and that may sound condescending, but having been at Lancaster long enough to have heard all the criticisms that it is lacking in on campus talent put to rest by a society in relative infancy is refreshing and comforting.

The main staple of LUCIFA's interaction with ordinary students is the weekly meetings, which take place above Pendle Bar at 6pm and along with the aforementioned workshops, feature games in the same vein as *Whose Line Is It Anyway*, where random scenarios shouted out by the members are performed by the members

(Treasurer Jak Marshall's example given is teleporting orgasm man. Picture that how you like). There is no insistence that people perform, and it's fine for someone to come along and simply see what the society has to offer.

It's been an oft made criticism of Lancaster University's cultural life that there is little going on in the ways of entertainment put on by students, which has to some extent been addressed. There is more live music and efforts to put it on than there has been in previous years and student run theatre productions are increasing in number, but for a long time those of us who really enjoy live comedy have been left wanting. It's great, therefore, that there is now an active and efficiently run society on campus that is offering top quality comedy of all varieties, as well as advice on making comedy, to Lancaster University students. Though output has for the moment scarce (though not really when you consider the society's age), LUCIFA is a society which is definitely showing promise, innovation and genuine talent. And that, if you'll allow an obvious pun, is no laughing matter.



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Look Ma, no paper!

With posters on every pillar, **Kristina Beanland** discovers one student's quest for digitalisation

So you're late for your lecture, walking (make that jogging) up the spine, checking your watch every 30 seconds to determine how embarrassing it's going to be walking into your lecture late looking like you've been dragged through a bush backwards. The last thing you want is any distractions, any annoying things to get in your way and hold you up even more.

The last thing, the very last thing you want is a piece of garishly coloured paper shoved into your face advertising the next bar/student night/theatre event going on around campus.

We've all done it, you see a promoter (most likely dressed in something big, bright and furry) and the avoid like the plague reflex kicks in. You will pretty much do anything not to have to take the leaflet they so desperately want to get rid of. All of a sudden you realise you need to look for something in your bag, check your watch, or, the classic, pretend to be on the phone.

Now, imagine a world where you could still get all the information that these people are advertising, which to be fair, is usually worth reading, without having the endless bits of paper that end up as a mulch in the bottom of your bag about a week later. Well now, you can.

I introduce to you Lancaster Leaflets, a blog designed by Lancaster student Peter Burkimsher to make it easy to find out exactly what's going on around Lancaster, minus all the paper. In the words of Peter himself: "Rather than being harassed by people with flyers for events, discounts, and much more, you can now find it all in one place."

Lancaster Leaflets (found at lancaster-leaflets.wordpress.com) has photos of every flyer and poster around campus, sorted into tags and uploaded all into one place. Peter got the idea whilst at church. "I was listening to notices in church, and was told to pick up various leaflets from the table at the back. During prayer I imagined a virtual notice table online, freely accessible. Suddenly Lancaster Leaflets was born." Divine inspiration? Maybe, maybe not, but the blog is now highly successful and new posters and flyers are uploaded daily.

Peter is keen to get more contributors to get as much information on possible on the site. If you see any posters or information send him some info to the Lancaster Leaflets' facebook page (tinyurl.com/36f58bj) or add Lancaster Leaflets as a friend and invite him to as many events as possible.

This site is a great way for students to keep up date with what's going on, as Peter says: "It's the voice of Lancaster students, in all their diversity."



Photo from Lancaster Leaflets

Around the world in 80 sleighs

Claire Hazel

EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE IN the world has their own view on what makes Christmas. In my opinion a perfect Christmas is spent with the family, from a very early hour of the morning, with a large Christmas dinner. My Dad may make us watch Top of the Pops every year and my dog may decide that the wrapping paper is far tastier than its present but to me this is the perfect Christmas. Festivities in Britain vary greatly but if you begin to move further afield you will begin to see just how different celebrations can be.

Despite being our closest neighbours, Christmas traditions across Europe can vary greatly from that of Britain. In Central Europe Christmas Eve can mean a day of fasting with a big Christmas Dinner in the evening. After dinner is the time for the opening of gifts, which are said to be brought by Christkind (little Jesus).

In Eastern Europe and Slavic countries presents are delivered by Djed Mraz (Grandfather frost). Legend says that Djed Mraz rides upon a reindeer drawn sleigh and only delivers presents to children who are asleep.

In Italy the traditions vary between regions:

in the south there is great emphasis on the religious meaning of Christmas and it is most common to attend a midnight mass on Christmas Eve. In the north of Italy the festivities are less religious and it is likely that a family will celebrate Christmas on the 25th with lunch together. In many European countries, particularly Scandinavian countries, it is the norm to celebrate Christmas on December 24.

In South Africa, Christmas is a summer holiday so instead of snow there are many varieties of flowers which decorate the streets. Carolers traditionally walk the streets and people attend church to celebrate the birth of Jesus, gifts are can also be taken as an offering. Like in Britain it is traditional for children to hang their stockings on Christmas Eve in a hope Father Christmas will bring them gifts. Boxing Day is also seen as a day of rest and is most commonly celebrated relaxing in the sun.

Christmas in South America is a highly religious holiday which focuses upon the scene of the manger in the nativity. It is common to see large decorative scenes designed to depict the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem; some may be more elaborate featuring wise men on camels or electric trains in some cases. Christmas in Brazil is celebrated much like Christmas in North America and Northern Europe with a traditional Christmas meal usually based upon

chicken and rice, but a variety of other ingredients can be added. Chile on the other hands celebrate a more religious based holiday, the nation's Catholics observe nine days of prayer and fasting prior to Christmas day. The family meal is often eaten very late on Christmas Eve, after Midnight Mass.

In China, December 25 is not a legal holiday; however in former western powers such as Hong Kong there is a Christian heritage and Christmas Day is a public holiday. There is a very small percentage of Christians in China and they chose to observe Christmas privately and celebrate in a Western way.

In India as a former British colony and a religiously diverse country, Christmas is still a public holiday. Christmas coincides with Makar Sankranti, a festival of harvest in India, which is celebrated throughout the country with prayers to the sun God and the flying of kites.

Christmas is not a national holiday in Japan, it is widely celebrated with the exchanging of gifts and a variety of parties on and around Christmas Day.



Blue blooded sound

Jon Henthorn

BLUE BLOOD

Foal
Transgressive Records
November 8 2010

I HAVE TO be honest here, but when Foals released their second LP Total Life Forever earlier this year, I was disappointed. In hindsight, it was almost certainly because I listened to it the night before an exam; but things seemed to be missing. Where were Yannis Philippakis' attention-grabbing, yelping vocals? Where were the insanely infectious hooks that littered songs like Cassius and The French Open? Most importantly, why weren't Foals being Foals? It was cause for alarm. The critics had almost unanimously described it as "measured and matured", but at the time that assessment seemed synonymous with "mundane and insufferably boring".

Having revisited that album before reviewing the new single, Blue Blood, I'm extremely happy to say that I was totally wrong. Hooray! In that perpetual pre-exam stupor I ignored all the subtleties that make this album (and Blue Blood, in particular) great, probably because I didn't really expect that Foals had the word subtle in their vocabulary. Antidotes, their début, was quite content to cut open your cerebral cortex with

its scalpel sharp precision guitars and insert itself into your memory on the first listen. Everything was immediate. Total Life Forever is a completely different beast, one that works its way into your skull over time, proving itself to be more and more intricate on repeat listens. It is anything but immediate.

Blue Blood encapsulates all of these qualities perfectly. It pulses into life with a delicate, chiming guitar that is the beating heart of the first half of the song; Yannis' gentle, ethereal vocals (seriously, gentle. Honestly, I'm not kidding) flow incredibly naturally around the guitar's subdued rhythms. The gentle drums and bass serve to add to the tension, although it's a different kind of tension from the one that surged through the veins of Antidotes. Gone is the constant, jittery nervousness – the feeling that every song had far too much Red Bull – that was previously their hallmark. It's been replaced with a kind of anticipation instead; the nervousness is still there but it's of the optimistic, heart-fluttering sort, as opposed to the heart-palpitations/heart-attack of Antidotes.

The listener's patience is duly rewarded as the beautiful intro spirals upwards into something that is more recognisably Foals. The guitars burst out of their pulses into understated dance-punk flourishes. Yannis' vocal retains its delicate falsetto, but re-captures some of its previous urgency. The rhythm section does an amazing job of propelling the song onwards in a heady



Foal game

mix of intricate drumming and fuzz-soaked bass. They've managed to do a fantastic job of retaining the best parts of their début and synthesising it with their new-found love for all things delicate, and it sounds absolutely wonderful. Somehow, paradoxically, they've managed to round their corners without losing any of their edge.

Blue Blood continues to build. And build. And build quite a bit more. It's an absolute master-class in tension as seemingly endless layers of beautifully subtle guitars chime in and out, complementing the increasingly intense vocals perfectly. Yet despite everything that's going on (I'd recommend listening to it at least a couple of times just so you can

get a sense of how impressive it is) it's never overbearing. This is the maturity that people talked about back on Total Life Forever's release. It continues to build until it has reached into its climactic, euphoric zenith – a delightful cacophony of swirling noise – and then falls gracefully back to how it started, all chiming guitars and breathy vocals. It manages to surround the listener in more ideas than most albums can come up with, and after a few listens it'll be as much as an ohrrum as anything from Antidotes. It strikes of a band that's grown up, matured (and definitely not become boring), and is almost certainly one of the best things Foals have ever done.

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You shall go to the ball

Your fashion Fairy Godmother **Hugh Metcalf** makes your festive wish come true by finding you that perfect gold dress.

It's that time of year again. The nights have drawn in, the Coca-Cola advert has become a daily occurrence and there seems to be a little magic in the air. The countdown to Christmas has truly begun, even for the sane amongst us who don't start shopping for gifts in July.

But there is an even more important date on the horizon for fashion followers; the date of your college Christmas ball. It comes just once a year; the opportunity to be disappointed in what looked like a promising three-course meal, destroy the interior of a respectable hotel and, most importantly, to put on the gladdest of your rags.

If you don't know where to begin finding your perfect ball dress, let Fashion Forecast be your Fairy Godmother and have a look at this season's trend for party-wear.

Christmas is a time of excess, so allow your festive frock to be loud. When you walk into the ballroom, you don't want to fade into the background

against a multitude of re-used prom dresses. If you've got the confidence, you can command the attention of the room with this molten hot trend. Forget frankincense and myrrh, the only gift worth giving this Christmas is gold.

Maybe it's the inherent festiveness or maybe it's the chance to look like a present that's in need of unwrapping that makes this colour so appetising for the Christmas ball, but whatever it is, the look is fierce and standout.

The gold dress can be styled differently depending on your own personality. Sequins are instantly glamorous and perfectly festive for this special time of year. Detailing will elevate the sequins to a different level, adding a touch of sophistication, which is perhaps lacking in many sequined styles. The cut out neckline and detailing around the waist of this River Island dress adds an element of elegance to a short style and prevents it from becoming too Katie Pricesque.

If your style is more vintage than glamour puss, there are options open to you outside of sequins. Gold doesn't have to be only used in blocks. Trimming, frills and piping detail all give the same Christmas effect to a dress and

aren't as overpowering as block sequins.

This gold flapper dress from Dorothy Perkins is perfect for old-style Hollywood glam, while still retaining a vintage edge. Team it with some pearls and funky feathered headwear and the dress, though more subtle than the sequins, will scream for everyone to look in your direction.

Styling

- **Coats are for goats:** Though it's easier said than done in this arctic north, the gold dress is all about the impact on entrance. Keep your diva image alive by not layering with coats or cardigans.
- **Shoe-shine:** This trend works perfectly with a pair of black heels, but why compromise on your one chance to shine. Let them see your metallic, sparkly, jewel-encrusted, hypnotic feet.
- **Hat Hair:** Hair-wear is acceptable if not encouraged at a formal event. Something small and pretty can set an outfit off, but keep your make-up plain if you decide on a hat.
- **Essential wear:** A napkin, gravy stains are not a good dress detail.



Top: Available from River Island, £59.99
Bottom: Available from Dorothy Perkins, £100



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SAGITTARIUS
NOV 22 - DEC 21

A mystical golden phoenix will come to you in a series of vivid, memorable dreams! Each dream phoenix is different; it your task to work out his intentions. He could be out to manipulate, or he could offer style advice!

CAPRICORN DEC 22 - JAN 20

When that loan came in it felt like you'd found the pot at the end of the rainbow... Well it's all run dry now so you're pretty screwed. Be extra nice to rich friends! Also I hear the Christian Union give away a lot of food.

AQUARIUS JAN 21 - FEB 17

Sampling a creamy shot at a bar in town will spark an addiction for Baileys. Chocolatey, creamy, oh so smooth, you'll want it any time of day. Slip it in your coffee, sneak it into lectures, shot it on the go, sip it in the library.

PISCES FEB 18 - MAR 20

A pregnancy scare this week will put things into perspective, Pisces! Work isn't really that stressful compared to the social stigma and responsibility of having a child. Life's not easy, regardless of which paths you choose. Now back to work.

ARIES MAR 21 - APR 19

In an impatient rush to catch the lingering 2A bus, you will be struck down by a civilian motorcar! Only lightly bruised but completely mortified, quickly hobble away into the glittery depths of New Look before anyone sees.

TAURUS APR 20 - MAY 21

Feeling those mid-term pangs, you will decide to return home for a weekend of comfort and free food. Resist such urges! Your parents' interrogating questions and incessant

worrying will remind you why you left in the first place.

GEMINI MAY 22 - JUNE 20

Reading week will throw your entire routine and rigid learning schedule completely awry, casting you down a slippery slope of BBC iplayer, irregular meals yet an insatiable appetite for Haribo. What happened, Gemini? You used to be cool.

CANCER JUNE 21 - JULY 22

There's a magical place you will find yourself living in over the next week, where all the books for that essay dwell... And it's called Toys R Us, Toys R Us, Toys R Us! Lol jk, it's called Short Loan.

LEO JULY 23 - AUG 22

Essay related stress will push you beyond reason! Threatening to jump from one of the platforms over the library to a computery death, you need to chill! It's not like essays are the reason we're here or anything... oh crap - jump.

VIRGO AUG 23 - SEPT 22

You know the invisible worm that flies in the night? Yeah it's gonna get you and lay its eggs in your belly. Then when they hatch you will feel queasy and poo them out. They will wait until night and then fly away.

LIBRA SEPT 23 - OCT 22

At this time of term it is tempting to go awol in the communal kitchen with the glitter and fake snow, etc. Venus warns you, libra, decorate before advent and you will come down with an incurable case of tinselitus.

SCORPIO OCT 23 - NOV 21

You will hurt your flatmates' feelings this week by choosing to live next year with friends from your society rather than them. Explain gently, you couldn't see it working in the long-term, you've found someone new. You can still be friends.

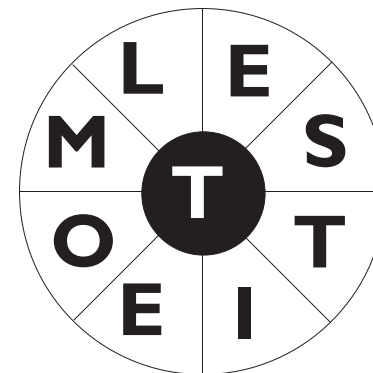
THE QUIZ - Christmas

1. In Charles Dickens' novel A Christmas Carol, who was Scrooge's dead business partner?
2. In the song The Twelve Days of Christmas, the singer's true love sent to them nine what?
3. What colour are the berries of the mistletoe plant?
4. In the 1946 film It's a Wonderful Life, what is the name of George Bailey's guardian angel?
5. Who wrote How the Grinch Stole Christmas?

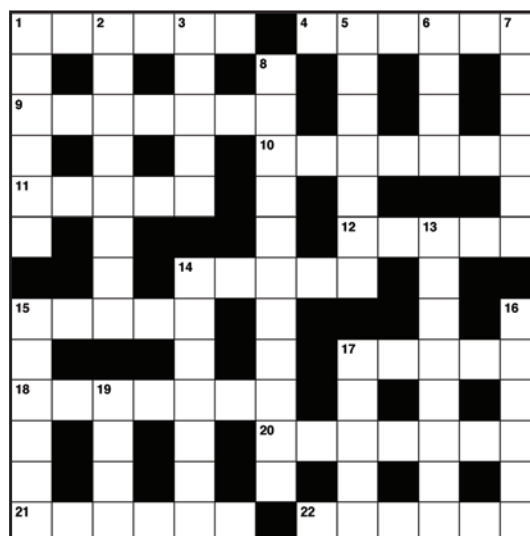
Answers below

The Wheel

Using the given letter no more than once, make as many words as possible of four or more letters, always including the central letter. Capitalised words, plurals, conjugated verbs, adverbs ending in LY, comparatives and superlatives are disallowed.



The Crossword



Across

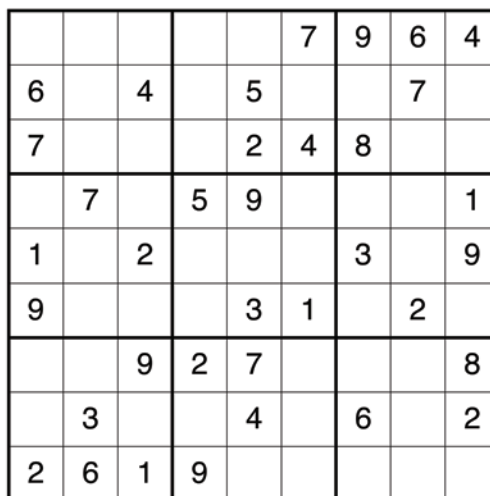
- 1 - Support; help (6)
- 4 - Drenches or submerges (6)
- 9 - Great courage (7)
- 10 - Reduce in length (7)
- 11 - Visual perception (5)
- 12 - Fertile spot in desert (5)
- 14 - Acoustic measuring device (5)
- 15 - Unsuitable (5)
- 17 - South American animal (5)
- 18 - Italian racing car (7)
- 20 - Triumph (7)
- 21 - Act between parties (6)
- 22 - River in England and Wales (6)

Down

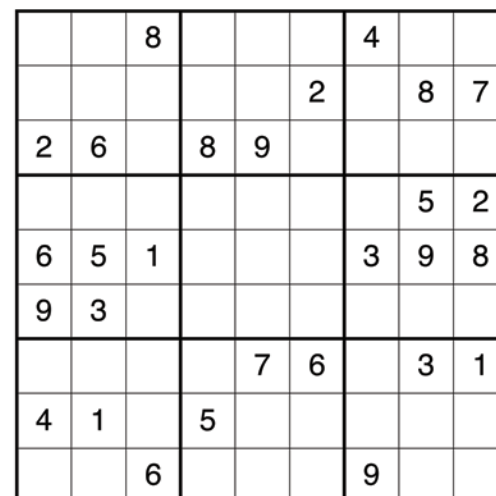
- 1 - Struck by overwhelming shock (6)
- 2 - Disregard (5,3)
- 3 - Fast moving (5)
- 5 - Combatant (7)
- 6 - Female Servant (4)
- 7 - Worry about (6)
- 8 - Fanciful (11)
- 13 - Maple tree (8)
- 14 - Large dark low cloud (7)
- 15 - Unfold (6)
- 16 - Heavy subatomic particle (6)
- 17 - Cruel (anag) (5)
- 19 - Ostrich like bird (4)

The Su Doku

Fill the grid of that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.



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Answers: 1) Jacob Marley, 2) Ladies dancing 3) White, 4) Clarence (Oddbody), 5) Dr Seuss

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