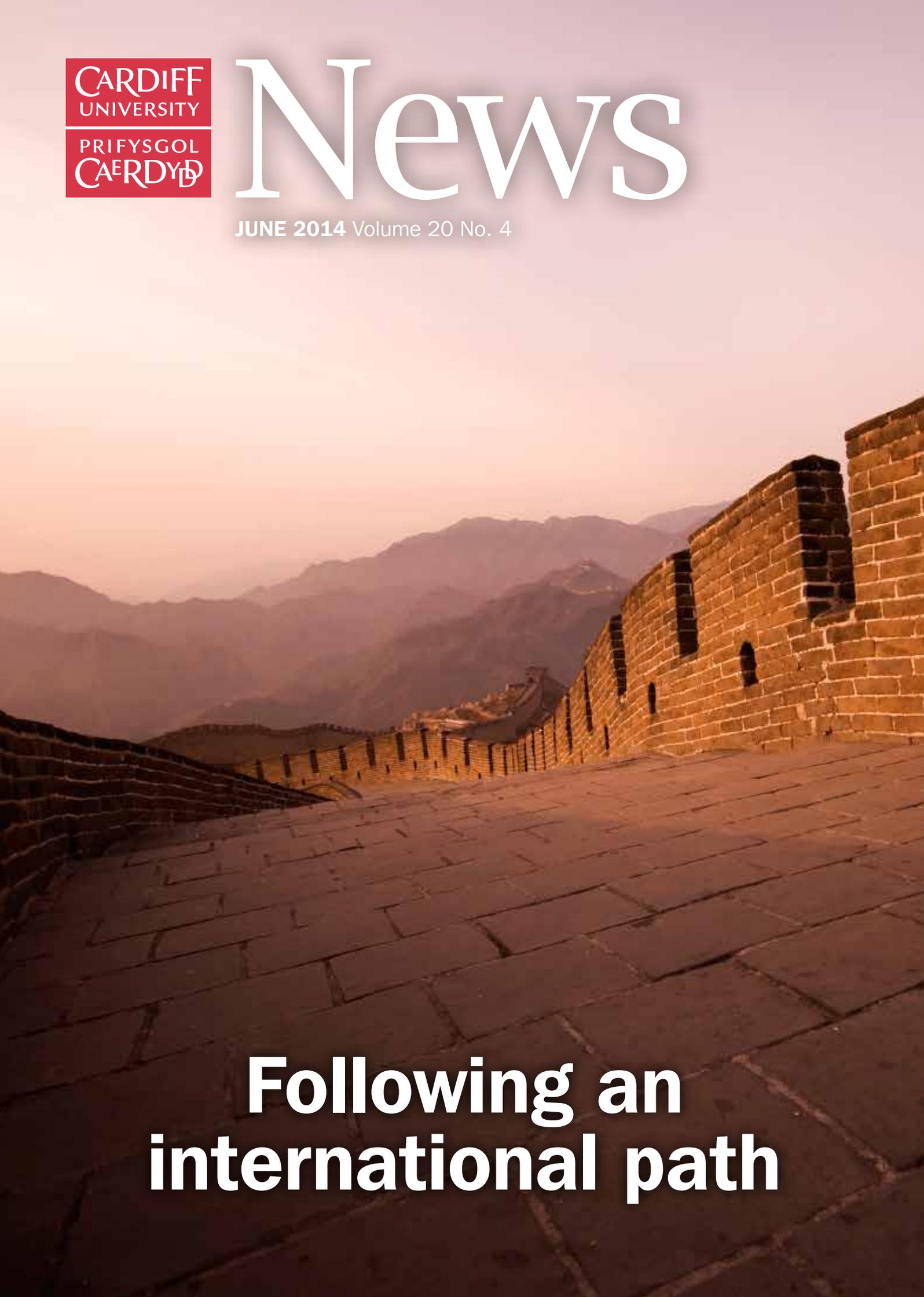


CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

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News

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**Following an
international path**

Introduction

A university based in Wales, for Wales: that's what we are, that's what we are proud to say we are. But our commitment to Wales does not, and should not stop at Offa's Dyke, far from it...



"...we must do more to ensure our students take advantage of an international experience and help them succeed in an increasingly global environment."

Professor Hywel Thomas

“We are proud of our unique place in Wales but equally proud to look beyond our borders and aspire to be a global University.

We attract a geographically diverse range of staff and students. We collaborate with institutions, governments and businesses worldwide.

We conduct research, proven to have global significance and impact.

We host international conferences and have academics who win major international prizes. We support communities across the globe, using and sharing our knowledge.

Our international reputation as a high quality research intensive

university has developed greatly over the last decade, as has our global reach and reputation for teaching.

But, if our objective is to be consistently among the top 100 universities in the world we must strive to do much more.

We must do more to ensure our students take advantage of an international experience and help them succeed in an increasingly global environment.

More fundamentally, we need to maximise the impact of our research for society throughout the world. That's why this edition of *Cardiff News* is dedicated to our International agenda.

In this edition, you'll hear from our International Deans and gain an exclusive insight into their work.

You'll meet the University's new Office Managers in China and India – who, since setting up offices there, have been helping build our reputation in these countries.

You'll also learn about new and existing measures we have in place to help our students – whether it's our new Global Opportunity Centre (GOC) providing a one-stop-shop for advice on opportunities to study, work and volunteer abroad or; working closely with colleagues in our Students' Union to offer advice and support to our international students coming to Cardiff for the first time or; our new *Languages for All* programme providing our

students with the opportunity to gain free language skills during their studies.

Finally, you'll also hear from our students on how an international experience has helped shape their personal and academic development.

This is an extremely exciting time to be the University's Pro Vice-Chancellor for International, a role I am privileged to hold.

I hope you enjoy the edition. ”

Professor Hywel Thomas
Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and International

Open for international business

As part of the University's commitment to be a global university, promote our research and share best practice, the University has established offices in China and India. Here, we introduce the two Office Managers whose job it is to promote Cardiff University.



Krintina Qiu,
China Country Manager

City University, London graduate and former Asia Pacific Operations Manager for the UK Northern Consortium University (NCUK), Krintina Qiu is the University's first Country Manager for China.

Experienced in understanding and building relationships between UK and Chinese universities, Krintina hopes her experience will help her build Cardiff's reputation in her home country.

“As the former Asia Specific Operations Manager for NCUK – a Northern Consortium of the Universities of Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield and others – it was my role to help Chinese students proceed into undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the UK,” insists Krintina, who is also known by her Chinese name, Yanqiong.

“I worked with the NCUK since 2006 with much of my work setting up programmes, student recruitment, university administration and other key tasks,” she adds.

Her experience of being in charge of an office operation which includes finance and day-to-day operations will, she believes, put her in a good position to build Cardiff University's reputation in China.

“Cardiff is a beautiful daffodil, ready to bloom internationally.

“I like Cardiff's innovation in research which will bring benefit into society and will become a driving force behind technology and finance progress in China. It also matches China's international wider international strategy,” she added.

In terms of the key challenges she faces, she realises they are big but well worth the effort.

Krintina adds: “Not everyone likes change; therefore trying to influence people will be difficult. However, by developing partnerships, promoting exchanges and mutual learning among each other, we have a real opportunity to take this beautiful daffodil and help it bloom in China for the benefit of both countries.”



Somnath Nandy,
India Office Manager

Setting up an India Office based in New Delhi for Manchester Metropolitan University to build profile, recruit students and build collaborations is all good experience for Somnath Nandy as he takes up his role as the University's Office Manager based in India.

Somnath brings with him a wealth of experience working in education consultancy as well as working for more than 10 years as Marketing Manager for the British Council.

For Somnath the appeal of working for a UK Russell Group University, ranked highly in the UK, was one of the main attractions and convinced him to apply for the post.

“Cardiff is a leading University in Wales and has invested in many socially useful and innovative research in the UK and globally,” according to Somnath.

“It is already an international university, but in order to achieve its ambitious target of being among the top 100 universities in the world it is important that it seeks more international collaborations with academic and industry partners overseas to enhance its reputation,” he added.

On taking the role, he's also very clear about some of the challenges he faces. “The key aspect of my job, I believe, is to facilitate dialogue between Cardiff University and Indian institutions for developing partnerships as well as playing a public relations role and liaising with key stakeholders.

“Cardiff's reputation in India is limited to Business and Law and you must take into account the wider policy agenda that has created a situation where the UK is no longer perceived as an exciting study destination.”

This is why, over the next three years, he hopes to be able to report substantial progress. Somnath adds: “There's a great deal of work to be done.

“We want to stabilise student recruitment numbers by 2015 and then strive to achieve a year on year growth as well as develop a sustainable network of academic and industry partners in India and strengthen our alumni network in India.”

The Deans' View

The title of 'International Dean' may conjure up an image of an international jet setter but the day-to-day reality is very different. With it comes a heavy and demanding workload. Here, we catch-up with the University's three International Deans and gain a unique insight into their work...



Dr Dianne Watkins

Dr Dianne Watkins is an International Dean with a University-wide remit for Transnational Education. She has been a forerunner in driving the transnational education agenda across the University as an active member of the Collaborative Provision Committee. Dianne has a clinical background as a nurse, midwife and specialist public health nurse; her research interests lie in evaluating the impact of education on practice and she is leading modernisation of Community Nursing Education on behalf of the Welsh Government.

“Taking on the challenge of International Dean for the College of Biomedical and Life Sciences has proved to be an interesting, stimulating and highly motivating move. Student mobility and international recruitment are at the

top of the agenda, as is transnational education.

Sharing links across the College and 'piggybacking' on existing partners has been my strategy, and a thriving College of Biomedical and Life Sciences Student Mobility Group has brought together staff from across Schools to share good practice and successful links.

In addition to this the College International Steering Group is setting the direction for the College International strategy.

So what have been the highlights of the last year?

Many visits to Oman to further develop collaborative provision have proved profitable, with the latest contract for £4M agreed with the School of Healthcare Studies, to establish a third degree programme for nurses. This is now the largest

and most successful transnational educational programme delivered overseas by Cardiff University.

The VC and I are due to visit Oman in January 2015 to build on this success and discuss opportunities for further collaboration across the University. I have also just developed a University Strategy for Transnational Education.

Two visits to China have resulted in a collaboration with Capitol Medical University Beijing for student exchange and module transfer with the School of Biosciences.

Joint undergraduate and postgraduate degrees are being investigated, research links are already established with the School of Medicine through a Joint Research Centre, and potential links with the School of Pharmacy are being considered.

The offer of student mobility placements in the best Chinese medicine university in Shanghai are now available to healthcare students from Cardiff, secured as part of the visits.

A typical day working as an International Dean is usually spent meeting a range of people such as academics, clinicians, and students to discuss the potential for collaboration with an overseas institution.

The types of collaborations vary from philanthropic work with countries such as Liberia; working to establish a new Healthcare University in India, or developing opportunities for student mobility across the world.

The list is endless and checking out the status of the proposal is my first job, to make sure that links formed

would not damage the reputation of Cardiff University.

Endless emails are received from Universities abroad wishing to establish partnerships and Skype calls to check out understanding regarding various opportunities comprise part of the role.

Some result in Cardiff hosting visits from potential collaborators, such as a delegation from Hong Kong, a pending visit of a Vice-Chancellor from an Indian University, a Skype call planned to Monash University, and a collaborative bid for Horizon 2020 monies to develop a joint Masters programme with the University of Malta.

The greatest challenge is choosing 'who' to follow up contacts with, ensuring time is not wasted pursuing those we are unlikely to partner with.

Success can be difficult to measure in the short term, as the majority of collaborations take time to establish, and some may never come to fruition.

However there are surely not many jobs where one can combine a love of cultural experience and travel, a passion for new developments and academic skills and experience into one role.

The work is not glamorous; international travel is exhausting, results in working unsociable hours and the quality of hotel beds, pillows and food is variable. Nevertheless, the rewards are immense and I feel privileged to work and learn from other countries. International work enhances our academic profile and reputation as an international University and this in turn helps develop our students for the world of work. ”

Professor Kenneth Hamilton

Professor Kenneth Hamilton has been described as “an outstanding virtuoso – one of the finest players of his generation” by *Moscow's Kommersant Daily*. A graduate of the University of Glasgow and of Balliol College, Oxford, his doctoral dissertation at Balliol was a critical study of the opera fantasias and transcriptions of Franz Liszt. He joined the University in 2012 as Professor of Music.

“Colleagues do occasionally ask me what exactly an “International Dean” is, and how a mere musician ended up being one.

It's true that I did rather unsuspectingly drift into international work in my previous post at Birmingham University.

The Birmingham International Office had noticed that I tended to travel rather extensively as a concert pianist, which made me a satisfyingly cheap university representative: “If you're in Korea anyway, why not negotiate a collaborative agreement while you're there?” ran the argument. Why not indeed?

I subsequently arrived in Cardiff around a year and a half ago, just at the point when the university was becoming more internationally engaged. By then I had a fair amount of international experience under my belt.

Thus, the post of International Dean beckoned.

As for the role itself: we are mostly, I think, facilitators, whether of international research collaborations, student recruitment, mobility or transnational teaching. We are also vitally concerned with joining up the dots among all four in order to help push Cardiff back into the top 100 global Universities in the QS Rankings.

We support Schools in their international initiatives, liaise between the Colleges and the International Office, and report both to our College PVCs and to the PVC International.

In addition to our College responsibilities, we each have general university-wide remits.

My own is student international mobility. In that area, I work with Rose Matthews and her team in the new Global Opportunity Centre (GOC) to hit our 17 per cent target.

It's worth remembering, however, that targets aren't an end in themselves. International experience is nowadays of crucial importance to many students' career success.

As a world-class university, we should be aiming to produce culturally sophisticated graduates with a truly global outlook—ideally 100 per cent rather than 17 per cent.

The first stage in the “mobility project” was to map current activity.



Professor Walter Gear

Professor Walter Gear is the Head of the School of Physics and Astronomy and Dean for

International and Engagement. He graduated from Queen Mary and joined the Royal Observatory Edinburgh in 1986, where he led the construction of the SCUBA camera for the James Clerk Maxwell Telescope in Hawaii. He moved to University College London Mullard Space Science Laboratory and in 1999 moved to take up a new chair in Astronomical Instrumentation at Cardiff University – growing it to the largest group in the School with over 40 members.

“The International Dean role is an interesting and exciting one, although it did take me a while to figure just what exactly I was



We therefore devised a mobility survey for Schools, collated and analysed the ensuing information, and on that basis worked out the details of an International Mobility Bursary Scheme that was approved by University Executive Board.

We're also developing new exchange links with Universities worldwide—with, for example, the University of Hong Kong, the University of Rhode Island, and several others.

Within the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences we are, among other things, taking steps to consolidate and expand international recruitment activity, strengthening research and teaching links with Xiamen and Beijing Normal Universities in China, and initiating collaborations with institutions in Singapore.

Now, there isn't any doubt that one downside of these activities is the frequent flying.

Despite the daily torrent of overly detailed emails, there is, ultimately, no substitute for getting out there and actively building institutional relationships face to face. I really wish I could say that the travel is of the James Bond sitting-by-the-pool-while sipping-your-third-Martini type, but alas it's more of the emerging-jet-lagged-from-a-plane-while-facing-a-string-of-formal-meetings type.

They don't make films about this sort of international work – not successful films at any rate—but the upside is the fascination of exactly the sort of international experience that we want our students also to have.

And the QS rankings will, I'm sure, eventually reflect this too. ”

helping the college meet or exceed the targets in *The Way Forward* for international student numbers and raising the University profile into the world top-100.

The DOI forum has been a great way of sharing best practice. For example, the School of Earth and Ocean science has a 50 per cent outward mobility rate amongst its undergraduate students, whereas most of the other Schools are much lower, and the School of Engineering has a relatively high student population, whereas some Schools are hovering in the low single figure percentage. →

At college level, I have persuaded the College Board that we need a coordinated international student recruitment office, based heavily on the successful Engineering model, and this is now being put in place.

I also liaise closely with the two other College Deans, Professor Bob Lark and Professor Roger Whitaker, particularly on European and other International funding opportunities.

University-wide I have been given the remit for International research. The first thing I did in this role was to try to find out how many international research links academics across the University actually had, and recognising that the data held centrally was incomplete initiated a survey which was sent out to all academic staff in the University.

With a roughly 75 per cent response rate for staff on teaching and research contracts the data revealed a far more impressive picture of collaboration with the best Universities around the world than I think anyone realised or even hoped for!

One specific outcome has been that KU Leuven has been identified as a possible European University with which Cardiff has the broadest and deepest research links in place, and is a prime candidate for a strategic partnership agreement, if they are willing. Professor Hywel Thomas, Richard Cotton and I are visiting Leuven at their invitation to discuss this possibility further.

Another initiative I have led is the proposal of an international collaboration fund to encourage the

development of even stronger links with the world's best universities. This has been approved by UEB and is in the process of being set up; we are expecting an announcement shortly of an opportunity to bid for funds.

People always ask whether being an International Dean means I spend all my time travelling, to which my response is always: "no more than I have always done anyway for my research".

In fact, I spend far more time meeting and greeting visiting parties in Cardiff from around the world who want to see how we do things and talk to us about partnerships. One major trip though was as part of a large delegation of 14 academics, headed by the VC, who visited Xiamen in China in March.

Xiamen City is partnered with Cardiff, and the University is in the Chinese equivalent of the Russell Group, so is an ideal partner in China. The visit was very successful and is being followed up now.

On that trip I also visited several Universities in Beijing and had the pleasure of meeting a couple of Cardiff medical students on an elective there, as well as having dinner with a billionaire, which was an interesting experience.

Overall, my year and a bit in this role has been a rapid and stimulating learning curve as well as exciting in developing and seeing through new initiatives.

Hopefully this will contribute to Cardiff's upward trajectory in the international league tables. ”

European study leads to key ambassador role



The experience of working and studying abroad was enough to encourage one Cardiff student to become an ambassador. French and Spanish student Charlotte Walmsley tells her story ...

“ I studied abroad in both a French university, l'Université de Nantes, and a Spanish university, la Universidad de Extremadura. Studying abroad was hugely enriching both in terms of improving my linguistic abilities and developing general life skills.

In both countries I organised accommodation with native French and Spanish speakers, which allowed me to fully immerse myself in cultures different to my own. I also organised employment in

Spain, teaching English to students and people working in Cáceres who wanted to boost their level of English, in order to adapt to a more international workplace.

I benefitted from the Erasmus programme in a multitude of ways, both personally and professionally. Learning to express myself proficiently in a variety of different contexts in French and Spanish has boosted my confidence and given me a greater degree of fluency.

This will later benefit me when I enter into an increasingly competitive jobs market and also offers me the opportunity to work in a variety of different roles in European institutions, both in the UK and abroad.

Furthermore, I feel that my world view has been enriched by my experience of living abroad and has given me a valuable insight into the different culture and lifestyles of our European cousins. Living in France and Spain and meeting people

from different countries has given me a palpable sense of European consciousness and identity and has cultivated my interest in European politics and contemporary issues. In addition, I feel more confident, adaptable and generally better equipped to deal with challenges and problems when they arise after navigating life in two different countries with different education systems.

I decided to become an Erasmus ambassador for the British Council after having spent my best year of university as an Erasmus student abroad. Upon arriving home, I was eager to talk about my experiences and encourage others to take on the challenge.

Since becoming an Erasmus ambassador, I have been involved in talks with the National Assembly for Wales about widening access for the programme, helped at Open Days and given talks to students about my time abroad. ”

patient satisfaction, quality of assessment and the effectiveness of interventions,” she adds.

Dwynwen is quick to encourage other students to take advantage of such opportunities.

“Overall, it was a very rewarding experience and I believe that more students should attend Erasmus projects and represent both our country and British universities. In this way, I believe we can be a model for the United Kingdom and make both our country and universities better known in different parts of the world.

“I learned a lot more about myself in that one semester than throughout the remaining two and-a-half years of the course because of the unique space in which I learned, experienced, and spent exploring another culture.

“I feel that the experience as a whole has served as a catalyst for increased personal and professional maturity,” she added.

Would you like the chance to meet President Obama?



Would you like the chance to meet President Obama, cycle across the Golden Gate Bridge and visit one of the Seven Wonders of the World?

Well, that's what one Cardiff student experienced during her year studying abroad.

Chloe Howard is part of a growing band of Cardiff students taking a year abroad to experience a different style of learning and gain vital life experiences.

“I fancied a change in scenery and was interested in America's criminal justice system,” said Chloe, who spent a year out of her studies in criminology in the School of Social Sciences.

“I wanted a new challenge; I met some new people and gained much more confidence and a greater understanding of other cultures as Miami is very multicultural.”

Of one of only four students from the School to take a year out, Chloe's year included visiting large parts of America and Mexico.

The trip included a visit to Cancun for Spring Break, visited Chicken Itza (one of the World Heritage sites), island hopping in the Bahamas, driving down the Pacific Coast Highway in California, going to Washington DC and visiting the White house as well as actually meeting President Obama who visited her school during the elections.

Breaking down language barriers

Being thrown in at the deep end, needing to pick-up a new language and the technical difficulties of complex legal terms was the biggest challenge faced by one Cardiff student as part of her studies abroad – but, on reflection was certainly worth the effort.



Gemma Williams, who graduates this year with a degree in Law and German, spent a year living in Passau, Bavaria, a small town in the South East of Germany as part of the Erasmus programme.

The Erasmus scheme offers students the opportunity to study or work in a European country, provided that the placement is recognised as part of the student's degree programme by the home institution.

“Although Passau is a small town, it was only a two hour train journey from Munich and you could quite literally walk to Austria in ten minutes as it was just across the river. It was also a great location for exploring some surrounding countries, including the Czech Republic, Italy, Austria and Hungary,” according to Gemma.

“Perhaps most importantly though, was that the University is renowned in Germany for its law programme as well as having a great reputation with the Erasmus scheme. To fit in with Cardiff University requirements, I basically had to sit the first year of the German law degree.

“At first this was quite a challenge as the lectures were in German and, although I had a good grounding in conversational German, legal German is something different altogether!

“Secondly, while the lectures were two hours long, being thrown in at the deep end was beneficial as my language skills picked up dramatically. I also made a whole load of new friends, both other Erasmus students and domestic German students.

“Although it was great meeting people from other countries, my language skills predictably benefitted the most when I was socialising and studying with native German students.”

Despite the steep learning curve, the benefits, according to Gemma, were huge and far outweighed the difficulties.

“Coming away from Erasmus, I am now fairly fluent in German, as most people expect to be after living in a country for a year. However Erasmus gives you so much more than that.

“Personally, I have become a lot more self-confident and I'm trying out new things that I would have never done before. I'm also much more organised. Erasmus gives you a much wider appreciation for other cultures and traditions, giving a

total international perspective, and experiencing all of that really makes Erasmus more than just a study abroad for a year.

“Although I was interested in languages before my year abroad, I'm now totally passionate about them, so much so that I've done several open days and target days trying to get both children and peers involved in learning a new language.

“Today, with such a focus on the European Union and international integration, it has never been more important to have language skills as you can pretty much work for anyone, anywhere, she adds.”

Further information on the University's Erasmus programme and the opportunities are available at: www.cardiff.ac.uk/for/prospective/international/erasmus

Studying abroad: “A catalyst for increased personal and professional maturity”



The chance to spend 14-weeks in Sweden proved to be a “catalyst for increased personal and professional maturity” according to Dwynwen Evans.

Third-year Occupational Therapy student Dwynwen spent a placement at Linkoping University in Sweden gaining experience of delivering occupational therapy in a different country.

“It was a valuable opportunity to witness the clinical practice and theoretical implication of occupational therapy within a

different country, where the health system is slightly more privatised in comparison with the United Kingdom,” according to Dwynwen.

During her stay, she packed-in three separate placements. They included five weeks theoretical approach – as opposed to clinical practice – which included a course on ‘Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Rehabilitation’, followed by a two week stint on a student-run orthopaedic ward. This type of placement and way of teaching and learning is unique to Linkoping.

“I would say that the main highlight was gaining awareness of cultural differences and improving my communication skills.

“This allowed me to fully appreciate the importance and impact communication can have on both

Mothers of Africa return to Zambia

Cardiff University supported charity Mothers of Africa, led by Professor Judith Hall, has returned from its latest trip to Zambia's Chongwe District.

The charity, established to help local communities in sub-Saharan Africa address the United Nations Millennium Development Goals through education, has been working in Zambia's Chongwe District for the last three years.

The Go Zambia project is centered on the Chongwe District Hospital and the nearby rural village of Shiyala. The project has a community-to-community base, with the core activities in Chongwe supported by activities in Cardiff, such as school engagements and art exhibitions. The latest visit saw a multi-disciplinary team providing hands-on teaching in the hospital and further community developments at the Shiyala village solar classroom, which the charity has helped develop with substantial support from the University's School of Engineering.

More images from this and previous trips can be found at: www.flickr.com/gozambia



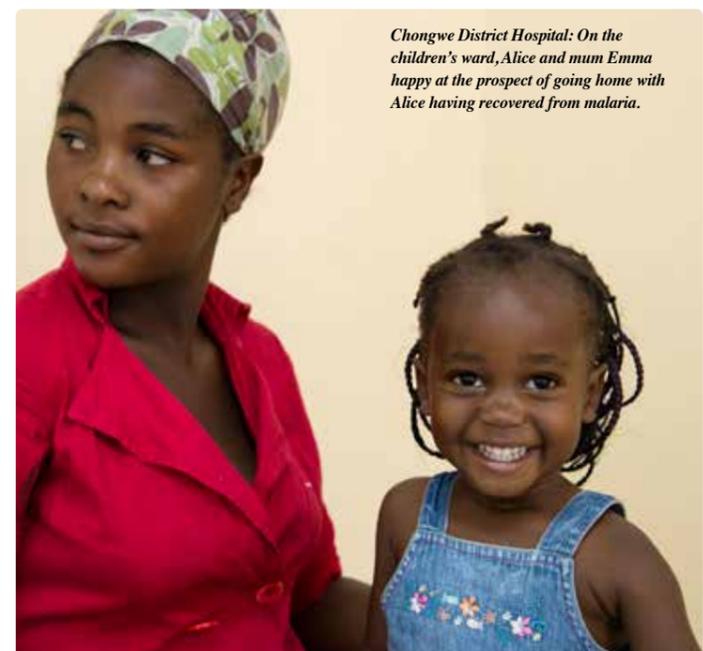
Checking the vital signs as the patient is anaesthetized.



Engineering student Gwilym Jones helps village teacher Alex reimagine the Mothers of Africa computers.



Mothers of Africa's Sue Hunt works with one of the village women on the new sewing machines.



Chongwe District Hospital: On the children's ward, Alice and mum Emma happy at the prospect of going home with Alice having recovered from malaria.

European library link-up

It's not just students who can benefit from time spent working abroad. Staff can too...

Since 2009, members of the University's Library Service have been building links with colleagues from libraries across Europe through its Erasmus Staff Development Programme.

The programme of international training events has been developed by Cardiff University Libraries as part of the European Union's Erasmus scheme, which encourages staff and

student mobility for work and study among universities across Europe. The events enable librarians from across Europe to learn from each other.

Janet Peters, Director of University Libraries, said: "I'm delighted with the success of our Erasmus Staff Development Programme. We have grown considerably from the six visitors at our inaugural event in

2009, to this year's 24 – a figure double that of the last programme in 2012."

This year's programme featured a range of library-related topics, including approaches to social media; the University's Special Collections and Archives (SCOLAR); information literacy; and Open Access publishing.

"I'm delighted with the success of our Erasmus Staff Development Programme."

Find out more about the Erasmus Staff Development Programme at: www.cardiff.ac.uk/insrv/outreach/erasmus/

Future world leaders welcomed

Future world leaders have been welcomed to the University as part of a prestigious global scholarship programme designed to foster close relationships with future decision-makers.

Some 50 Chevening scholars – including two Cardiff students – visited the University as part of a programme of events to widen their knowledge of the UK.

Chevening is the UK government's global scholarship programme and a key part of the UK's diplomacy effort to bring young professionals who have already displayed outstanding leadership talents to study in the UK.

"The Chevening programme is one of the most prestigious international schemes, awarding scholarships to help the world's emerging leaders study in the UK," according to Vice-Chancellor, Professor Colin Riordan.

"With Cardiff University's renewed commitment to the internationalisation agenda, I am delighted that not only are we able to support the programme but we can play our part in helping to create lasting positive relationships with the world's future leaders, influencers and decision makers," he added.

"The Chevening programme is one of the most prestigious international schemes, awarding scholarships to help the world's emerging leaders study in the UK," Vice-Chancellor, Professor Colin Riordan.



Welcomed by the University's Vice-Chancellor Professor Colin Riordan and Pro Vice-Chancellor for International & Engagement, Professor Hywel Thomas, the scholars also received a presentation on the Welsh language by the Head of the School of Welsh, Professor Sioned Davies, visited the home of the Welsh Assembly and were briefed

on Welsh politics by Professor Roger Scully from the University's Wales Governance Centre.

Funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) the scholarships allow students to pursue a one-year Master's degree in any subject and at any of the UK's leading universities.

Chevening Scholarships operate in some 118 countries worldwide. Scholars are personally selected by British Embassies and High Commissions throughout the world. There are some 42,000 Chevening Alumni, forming one of the most influential and highly regarded global networks.

Drawing on a life with HIV

5M people in South Africa live with HIV/AIDS – around 460,000 are children.

Coping with a life threatening condition is difficult at any age, but one Cardiff academic is using the unusual medium of the comic book to help South African teenagers come to terms with their condition by putting pen to paper.

Dr Lisa El Refaie, Cardiff University's School of English, Communication and Philosophy, has worked alongside South African health education charity Whizzkids United (WKU) to produce their own comic strips highlighting their feelings and experiences of living with HIV.

Award winning British comic artist Stephen Marchant was then enlisted to turn some of the entries into a full-colour comic book.

Dr El Refaie said: "I suggested WKU might run workshops on how to draw comics, as a way to encourage the teenagers to explore and express their own experiences and feelings, and create educational messages relevant to other young people in their community.

"The results were remarkable, with the teenagers telling some extremely moving stories for the first time."

Since 2010, healthcare education charity Whizzkids United has been successful in using football training as a metaphor for educating South African teenagers about the risks of HIV/AIDS with 35,000 graduates of the programme so far.

The targeted young people live in areas where up to 60 per cent of adults are infected with the disease. WKU was keen to find other ways of reaching teenagers, and of ensuring that those taking part in their football programmes found their way to the WKU Health Academy where they can be tested for HIV and receive counselling and information.

The comic book workshop has been extremely successful in getting the teens to open up and express their feelings while receiving support and education.



Strengthening links with China

A high level University delegation headed East to renew and enhance the University's international profile.

The Cardiff visit followed a UK Government delegation to China where the Vice-Chancellor accompanied David Willetts, Minister for Universities and Science, on the delegation led by George Osborne, Chancellor of the Exchequer, which linked with a delegation led by Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, at various points during the visit.

The Vice-Chancellor undertook a series of high profile engagements which further strengthened the links that Cardiff University has with China. The schedule included

visits to Peking, Capital Medical (CMU) Xiamen and Hong Kong Universities.

There was also an opportunity for the University to celebrate the achievements of Cardiff alumni and meet Hong Kong based Welsh business leaders as well as awarding an Honorary Fellowship to Professor Yang Wei, President of the National Science Foundation of China.

"Cardiff University already enjoys long standing research collaborations with China. This visit was an opportunity to celebrate, build and renew these links," according to Vice-Chancellor Professor Riordan, who led the delegation.

During the week-long visit the Vice-Chancellor was awarded an Honorary Professorship by Peking University and made an International Adviser by CMU at a presentation ceremony held in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

Both awards are the most prestigious available from each institution and reflect Cardiff's developing relations with these top universities in China.

Professor Riordan added: "What pleased me most was the enthusiasm which greeted us throughout our entire visit. Our alumni are spread

across a huge range of businesses in China and there are many opportunities for our students to spend time here as well.

"The new prospects that an economy like China offers the University in helping create new research collaborations are exciting both with other universities and with private companies.

"This visit helps to build further our international profile and to put Cardiff and Wales firmly on the world map."

"Cardiff University already enjoys long standing research collaborations with China. This visit was an opportunity to celebrate, build and renew these links"

Putting genetics on a world stage

A passion for Cytogenetics and Advanced Cell and Immunobiology are not the subjects of choice you'd expect for your average Miss World contestant. But, for one Cardiff student as she heads-off to compete for the coveted world crown she hopes her passion for genetics will lead to career developing disease-beating drugs.

It was at a rehabilitation centre in Bridgend that Alice, a second-year University Microbiology student, first felt moved to improve the quality of somebody's life.

Speaking of the week she spent volunteering to hand out doses of methadone to opiate addicts, she was struck by the appearance of the patients.

"We kept a picture of all of our drop-in patients on a computer database, but most of the time the people who came in looked nothing like their photograph," she said.

"They looked 20 – sometimes even 30 – years older than their age. Years of drug addiction had simply ruined their appearance, yet many of them just couldn't quit.

"A week there was more than I could bear. I thought there has to be a better way for treating them than simply substituting their addiction."

She spent the following year doing work experience in the Pathology Department of the Royal Glamorgan, shadowing a Consultant. While there she was given the opportunity to work in the biochemistry department, where she studied the microscopic anatomy of cells and disease-carrying microbes.

She continued: "My days at the hospital instilled in me a desire to learn more about genetic disorders. Genes, when seen at a molecular level, are minute. But their influence on a person's propensity to addiction, their health and life expectancy can be huge.

"I found that very little can be done once neurodegenerative diseases such as Huntington's and Alzheimer's take their grip. Alzheimer's is an extremely common disease for which a cure is yet to be found – it runs in my family. I recently lost my grandfather to the disease."

Stem cell therapy, she points out, is currently being researched for its application in the treatment of Alzheimer's.

"Studies into stem cells are beginning to show huge potential in managing the effects of Alzheimer's. My ambition would be to explore this potential through research to ultimately improve the quality of life for sufferers.

"Studying molecular biology at Cardiff's School of Biosciences will enable me to do this – I hope to go on to do a PhD after graduation and possibly even work

for a pharmaceutical company to develop disease-beating drug interventions.

"I'm not entirely sure what I want to do yet but my studies are giving me plenty of options."

She counts Genetic Manipulation, Non-Bacterial Pathogens, Cytogenetics and Advanced Cell and Immunobiology among her favourite modules.

"The School of Biosciences offers some fantastic opportunities that not only assist your degree but help prepare you for your chosen career.

"The best advice I could give to a student planning on studying a science related subject is to choose a degree you have a passion for, as a lot of work and outside reading is required thus a strong interest in your chosen degree is needed. And dream big!"

Given that Alice is currently balancing exam revision with a part-time job and a modelling career, few could accuse her dreams of being small.

Having been crowned as Miss Wales, she is now preparing to fly the Welsh flag in this year's Miss World competition.

"I hope to go on to do a PhD after graduation and possibly even work for a pharmaceutical company to develop disease-beating drug interventions."

"The School of Biosciences offers some fantastic opportunities that not only assist your degree but help prepare you for your chosen career."



Alice Ford

Meet the Team: Cardiff University Students' Union, Advice and Representation Centre (ARC)

Ensuring Cardiff's 5,000 strong international student community get access to free, impartial and confidential advice on a range of issues from housing to employment is the job of Cardiff University's Students' Union Advice and Representation Centre (ARC) team.



Image (left to right): Zandra Pitt, Advice Centre Manager; Emily Harding, Student Adviser; Jane Harding; Rachel Nanton; Helen Dent, Vice-President for Welfare.

Working alongside other student support services, the ARC offers a helping hand to all students – including international students, who often arrive in the country for the first time needing advice on a variety of issues from academic issues to the complexities of a UK housing contract.

Seeing some 2,000 students annually over the University's two campuses, the ARC team offers regular drop-in sessions during weekdays and outside term time by phone and e-mail.

"The ARC provides advice and information, advocacy and representation through a free,

confidential, independent service to members of Cardiff University's Students' Union," according to Zandra Pitt, who manages the ARC alongside a team of professional advisers.

"What we offer our students is information and general advice on a range of issues such as academic, consumer, employment, housing and welfare matters," she adds.

However, it's the ARC's independence of the University that is such a crucial element, according to Zandra.

As well as offering general advice the ARC is also on hand to offer

academic advice and representation, if and when things go wrong.

"Another crucial part of our work is providing information and advice, representation and advocacy on a range of academic issues," adds Zandra.

"Whether that's academic appeals, complaints, disciplinary issues and more, then we can help support students at often extremely difficult times during their studies.

"Crucially we also work closely with the elected Sabbatical Officers - so if there appear to be wider issues that require their support and attention we can work closely with them.

"We constantly monitor policy and practice issues that may affect students and will work to influence decisions and service improvements and change," she adds.

Based in Cardiff Students' Union on Park Place the ARC also signpost students to other organisations that may be able to help such as specialist legal help, support services, health services and Council services.

Further information on the services available can be found at: www.cardiffstudents.com/advice.

Cardiff People Richard Cotton

Ditto Facebook.

I joined Cardiff in January 2013, after 14 years working in the UK and overseas for the British Council..

I moved here from Abu Dhabi, where I was the British Council's Director in the United Arab Emirates. Prior to that, I had worked in China focussing on the UK's Arts and Education links with China and Hong Kong. I have also worked in Thailand for a number of years, developing bilateral Science and Education links there and in Cambodia.

In between overseas postings, I worked in London as Head of the CEO and Chair's Office, focussing on the development of the British Council's relationships with Government Departments and Ministerial Offices.

My role as Director of the International Office at Cardiff involves working with both partners overseas and colleagues here to ensure that our Internationalisation Strategy is being implemented and we are maintaining and enhancing our global position.

This involves developing agreements to increase the flow of students in and out of Cardiff and exploring new ideas for partnerships in research and teaching overseas.



Dead or alive - who would be your three ideal dinners guests and why?

Zhou Enlai – China's Premier during the Cultural Revolution, to find out how he emerged relatively unscathed during such a turbulent era.

Lord Kinnock – I used to work with Neil at the British Council and he is a great raconteur. Plus it would be fascinating to see him at the same table as a communist leader.

Henry Kissinger – from one extreme to the other.

Describe yourself in three words

International, loyal, often intolerant.

In Desert Island Discs style, if you were cast away alone on a desert island which three songs would you take with you?

Unfinished Symphony - Massive Attack,
I Am The Resurrection - The Stone Roses,
You Make It Easy - Air

What can I say? I'm stuck in the '90s!

Who and what inspires you most?

Watching my daughter grow up.

What makes you smile?

Living in Cardiff; after 3 years stuck in the desert even the weather makes me smile here.

Tweet or not to Tweet?

Not to tweet. I'm under no illusions that the world needs to know what I had for breakfast.

What makes you get out of bed in the morning?

Coming to work at Cardiff University, obviously!

If you could banish one thing into room 101, what would it be?

Too many to mention – as an intolerant Yorkshire man I'd need a warehouse 101.

Who has been the biggest influence on you during your time at the University?

The Vice-Chancellor. It's been great to have such a high commitment on international work, with a clear idea of what the University can achieve on the international stage.

If you were Vice-Chancellor for the day what would you do?

Take the day off and spend my pay rise on something fun.

China study sparks interest in global opportunities



A three week stint studying Mandarin and business, plus a series of cultural visits, helped spark a new interest in global opportunities according to Cardiff student, Benjamin Govier Roach.

Benjamin, who is currently in his third year studying mechanical engineering, spent last summer at Zhejiang University in China. Organised via the StudyChina scheme, he took up the challenge to take himself out of his comfort zone and embrace new ways of thinking.

"The whole process of taking on a new challenge really feeds my thirst for problem solving and understanding new ways of thinking," according to Benjamin.

"I have made loads of friends and industrial/academic links through the scheme too. I also got the opportunity to travel before and after the program started, allowing me to discover a much wider view of Asia and also spur my interest even further in Chinese culture," he added.

Since returning, Benjamin says he has become much more interested in global opportunities and his focus has

shifted towards career opportunities offering international mobility, something that fits especially well with his degree discipline.

So much so, he is all set to return to China.

Ben added: "I am now currently in the process of organising a return trip this summer, this time to work with an engineering/green tech company in Shenzhen, South China through the CRCC Asia internship schemes. Both trips are supported by Cardiff University."

One-stop-shop for global study

Students looking for opportunities to study, work and volunteer abroad can access all the information and support they need through the University's new Global Opportunity Centre (GOC).

The dedicated Centre offers advice and information for all current and prospective Cardiff students looking for opportunities to study abroad as part of their studies.

It also acts as the main point-of-contact for incoming study abroad, exchange and Erasmus students.

As well as practical advice and support, the GOC is also responsible for administering the University's mobility programmes – including study, work and volunteering and monitoring incoming and outgoing students – as well as distributing grants and bursaries.



The Global Opportunity Centre (GOC) was officially opened by former MEP and Member of the House of Lords, Baroness Eluned and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Colin Riordan.



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Views expressed in 'Cardiff News' do not necessarily reflect those of the University. Items of interest relating to the University and its staff are welcome and should be sent to: Communications and International Relations Division.

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Languages for All

From September all students enrolled on a degree course can learn a language or improve their existing skills, for free.

The *Languages for All* programme offers a range of flexible courses in languages and cultural awareness allowing students to learn in a way that suits them, in their own time.

Students can study accredited courses in French, Italian, German, Spanish, Chinese Mandarin and Japanese, which are designed to fit around their studies.

Dr Catherine Chabert, Acting Director of *Languages for All*, said: "This is an extremely important step forward for Cardiff University, which

has been a well-known examination centre for international language qualifications for more than a decade.

"The *Languages for All* programme will no doubt provide a platform for students to become part of a unique international environment at the University as well as gaining invaluable skills for life."

Languages for All will continue to develop and expand the number of languages and courses available to students over the next few years.

More information on *Languages for All* is available at: www.cardiff.ac.uk/languagesforall/.

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