



## Buzz Bitesize: October 2013

Welcome to Buzz Bitesize. Circulated monthly, Buzz Bitesize provides the latest news, views, events and opportunities from across campus. Why not take a look at the Buzz Facebook and Twitter accounts for the latest campus news and opportunities throughout the month.

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## We are University of the Year

As you will have seen in the recent Vice-Chancellor's [message](#) to all staff The University of Birmingham has been named *The Times* and *Sunday Times* University of the Year 2013–14. This is a great achievement for the whole University community and something that we can all share in celebrating and promoting both within and outside our university. We have produced a range of [tools and templates](#) that you can download to celebrate that we are University of the Year 2013–14.



## Vice-Chancellor's Open Forum

**Date:** 24 October

**Time:** 12.30pm–1.30pm

**Venue:** Elgar Concert Hall, Bramall Music Building

Join the Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Eastwood, for his first staff address of the new academic year. Further details will be circulated shortly to all staff.



## BUAFTA nominations open

BUAFTAs (Birmingham University Awards For Tremendous Achievement) are organised every year to celebrate the achievements of professional services staff who have contributed significantly to the success of our University. You can nominate any administrative, technical, academic related, support staff or team for an award. Nominations can be made on the [BUAFTA intranet site](#) until midday on Monday 28 October. All participants will be entered into a prize draw to win an iPad so don't miss out and vote for your colleagues now. You can also support Acorns Children's Hospice Trust by taking part in BUAFTA raffle.



## Environment Day 2013

**Date:** 8 October

**Time:** 11.00am–3.00pm

**Venue:** Great Hall, Aston Webb Building

Our third annual environment day is a great chance to learn more about the University's environmental research, and opportunities for staff and students to get involved in campus wide projects. Admission is free, and there will be free Fairtrade coffee and prize draws for attendees. Further details are on the [intranet](#)

## News

### Question Time comes to Birmingham

Question Time is to be filmed in the Bramall Music Building this week for the edition to be aired on 3 October. In order to set the production in a typical Question Time style, the entire hall will be configured in reverse. The traditional seating area will be covered with a leveled stage where the panel will sit to take questions. The audience will then sit on the choir risers to face the esteemed panel.

### New MOOCs for Birmingham

The University has unveiled the first of its new MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) designed to offer a taste of higher education to learners from across the UK and the world. Birmingham is initially launching '[Improving Your Image: Dental Photography in Practice](#)', beginning in December 2013, followed by a number of other MOOCs launching throughout 2014. Delivered in partnership with Futurelearn, the UK's first MOOCs provider established by the Open University, and our very own world-class academics, MOOCs will enable learners worldwide to sample the high-quality academic content available here at

## New outlets open at University Centre

There are several new facilities for staff and students at University Centre. The new gift shop, Unique, provides all the services of 'Off The Wall' plus a range of University branded merchandise. The [John Smiths Student Store](#) on the lower level of University Centre sells course textbooks, second hand books and a range of electronic devices. Following a complete refurbishment of the space previously occupied by Avanti, [Go Central](#) offers an exciting mix of food from Go Italia, Go Britannia, and Go Asia.

## Sir David Omand to head new drones commission

Sir David Omand, the UK's former Security and Intelligence Co-ordinator, is to chair the University of Birmingham's latest policy commission. The commission, entitled 'The Security Impact of Drones: challenges and opportunities for the UK' was launched at fringe events at the Labour and Conservative Party conferences. Further details are on the [University website](#).

## Birmingham Business Club launches

The Birmingham Business Club will be a gateway for business, in particular local SMEs, to the University. Businesses from across the region recently visited Birmingham Research Park for an opportunity to network, and learn how they can access the University's knowledge and expertise. Businesses who become members of the Club will benefit from regular networking events, funding announcements, access to state-of-the art equipment, and free hot desks and meeting rooms in the park's business incubator, BizzInn. Further details are on the [University website](#).

## Prostate cancer trials fully funded with alumni donations

Alumni and friends of the University have come together to fund [prostate cancer trials](#) at Birmingham. Led by Richard Viney (MBChB Medicine 1995), Senior Lecturer at the University and Consultant Surgeon at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the trial will combine immunotherapy and HIFU (High Intensity Frequency Ultrasound) in patients who have exhausted all other treatment options. If successful, there is potential to test in earlier stages of prostate cancer.

## Public Engagement module

October sees the launch of a new online introduction to public engagement module developed by the University Graduate School in collaboration with colleagues across the University. The Canvas course will guide postgraduate researchers through the planning and delivery of public engagement activity and features a range of videos, and interactive exercises. For further information contact [Dr Catherine Mills](#). To contribute a public engagement profile contact [Sara Kinahan](#) or visit the [intranet](#).

## Modern Records Store

The University's Modern Records Store (MRS) is located on the Edgbaston campus, and provides temporary accommodation for paper-based records that need to be retained for a limited time. The MRS is open to all internal users. Further details are on the [intranet](#).

## Enterprising Birmingham Fund (EBF)

EBF was launched in September 2012 to provide a source of funding for enterprise activities. Working to gain proof of commercial viability for innovations the scheme helps to bridge the gap towards securing external investment. During the first year of the fund, over £200k was awarded to ten different projects across the University. If you are interested in applying to EBF please contact [Catherine Mansell](#). Further details are on the [intranet](#).

## Emergency planning

Genuine emergencies are thankfully a rare occurrence. Most incidents are resolved fairly quickly, however it is important that we have plans in place in the unlikely event of an emergency. The University has an Emergency Plan and a senior team that will convene in the event of a serious emergency in order that correct actions are taken. It is very important however that Colleges and Corporate Service departments also have their own Local Contingency Plans in place in order to ensure resilience and recovery for their own specific areas. Confirming these plans will be a focus over the coming months, and though driven and coordinated by the Head of Emergency Planning, will require engagement and input from managers across all areas.

## Views

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### Have Your Say 2013

**4 November–1 December 2013**

Share your views on working here and help shape the future of your university in the third all-staff opinion survey. Have Your Say launches in November, and can be completed during work time and in complete confidence. Further details are available in your October edition of Buzz magazine, on the [intranet](#), and via local survey champions.

### Institute of Advanced Studies – Saving Humans blog

In this new [blog](#) Birmingham academics will reflect on and discuss topics as varied as global access to reproductive rights, conflict and co-operation, climate change, cancer research, and the Nobel Peace Prize. The cross-cutting goals of Saving Humans will enable IAS to bring together a diverse and multidisciplinary community under a coherent and intellectually exciting programme. If you'd like to contribute please contact [Sue Gilligan](#).

### New look for Old Joe

Old Joe, the University's new-look alumni magazine is out now. Featuring news, memories and more from Birmingham and our community of graduates, the re-launched magazine was renamed after the iconic clock tower by an alumni vote. Read [Old Joe online](#).

### Plan B – Innovation Competition

Do you know an innovative student with a great idea? If so, students could win up to £1,000 to take their idea forward. Idea Creation/Development sessions are being held throughout November to assist with applications. Further information is on the [intranet](#).

## Events

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### National Arthritis Week

A number of activities are taking place across campus to mark National Arthritis Week (7–

13 October). A 'Raising Awareness of Rheumatoid Arthritis' stand will be in the Atrium of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and scientists and clinicians are cycling a continuous 100 mile relay to raise funds for Arthritis Research UK.

## The New Dark Age: The Decline of Global Systems

**Date:** 7 October

**Time:** 4.30pm

**Venue:** Room 420, Muirhead Tower

The Institute for Conflict, Cooperation and Security (ICCS) is launching a new Seminar Series with a talk from Professor Phil Williams, Director of the Ridgeway Centre for International Security University of Pittsburgh. Drawing on complexity theory and the notion of wicked problems, this lecture suggests that the world is heading towards a new dark age. Further details are on the [University website](#).

## Will we ever get a fair tax system?

**Date:** 9 October

**Time:** 4.30pm

**Venue:** G15, Muirhead Tower

Professor Andy Lymer's Inaugural Lecture will seek to paint a picture of how tax systems are designed to try to deal with competing and often conflicting needs of different taxpayers. This includes both taxation of individuals, and company taxation. Further details are on the [University website](#).

## Connected Communities

**Date:** 16 October

**Time:** 12.30–3.00pm

**Venue:** European Research Institute (ERI)

Professor Keri Facer, Leadership Fellow for the cross–Research Council Connected Communities programme, will discuss the changing nature of communities in their historical and cultural contexts, and the role of communities in enhancing our quality of life. The event is free but [registration](#) is required. Further details are on the [Arts & Humanities Research Council website](#).

## David Edgar on 'Arthur and George'

**Date:** 17 October

**Time:** 5.30pm

**Venue:** Barber Institute

Celebrated playwright Professor David Edgar will talk on his stage adaptation of Arthur and George, a novel that centres on the extraordinary case of George Edalji. An alumnus of the University, his wrongful conviction for crimes he did not commit caused a public outcry and ultimately the creation of the Court of Appeal. Part of the University's programme of [Black History Month events](#). Please email [Special Collections](#) to book your free place.

## Cycling Roadshow

**Date:** 23 October

**Time:** 10am–3pm

**Venue:** Staff House Square

Activities for the autumn roadshow include free bike maintenance and advice, sale of discounted d-locks, lights and second-hand bikes, and free West Midlands Police bike tagging. Further information is on the [intranet](#).

## Is China too big to fail?

**Date:** 23 October

**Time:** 4.30pm

**Venue:** G15, Muirhead Tower

In his Inaugural Lecture Professor Rob Elliott will discuss how China's rapid economic growth in the last twenty years has lifted millions out of poverty and given China a seat at the top table of world economies. However, such growth has come at a cost with a number of commentators arguing that the current growth path is unsustainable. Further details are on the [University website](#).

## Creative Minds at Birmingham

**Date:** 24 October

**Venue:** Elgar Concert Hall, Bramall Music Building

The School of English, Drama, and American and Canadian Studies, launches its Writers and Artists Distinguished Speaker Series, with award-winning poet Jamie McKendrick. He will read and discuss his work, and there will also be a question and answer session, and book-signing. Tickets for staff and students are free of charge, further details are on the [University website](#).

## Military mental health: Myths and Realities

**Date:** 30 October

**Time:** 5.00pm

**Venue:** Leonard Deacon Lecture Theatre, Medical School

Professor Sir Simon Wessely, Vice Dean of the Institute of Psychiatry at Kings College London, will look at what we know about the mental health consequences of the Iraq war, and the impact of war on the mental health of UK servicemen and women. For further information contact [Yvonne Dawson](#).

## Product Development Seminar

**Date:** 30 October

**Time:** 12–2pm (Lunch provided)

**Venue:** Institute of R&D, Birmingham Research Park

Product design is an integral part of the wider process of developing new products. This seminar will cover the process of product development; usability; regulatory issues and risk management as well as prototyping. Further details are on the [BizzInn website](#).

## BEAR Necessities

**Date:** 13 November

**Time:** 1.00–5.00pm

**Venue:** Learning Centre

This new course is aimed at helping research staff and students to get the most out of BEAR and High Performance Computing. It covers the BlueBEAR (Linux HPC) and new Windows HPC service, as well as giving an overview of other BEAR services. Further details are on the [intranet](#).

## Study Abroad Fair

**Date:** 13 November

**Time:** 12.00–3.00pm

**Venue:** Great Hall, Aston Webb Building

An excellent opportunity for students to speak to exchange students, our own students recently returned from their year abroad, and staff from partner institutions. Colleagues from the Study Abroad and Mobility team and the Careers Network will also be in attendance to provide expert guidance and advice. Students can learn from people with first-hand experience of studying and living in a great variety of countries and cultures across the world.

## Toy steam and Traditional Hobbies Day

**Date:** 16 November

**Time:** 10.30am–4.00pm

**Venue:** Winterbourne House & Garden

Winterbourne goes back to its Edwardian roots with demonstrations and exhibitions of toy steam, replicating the grandeur of British steam. There will be plenty of activities running throughout the day, including fun with Meccano, Magic Lantern shows, and a Letter Press workshop. University staff and students receive free admission, for more information visit the [Winterbourne website](#).

## Opportunities

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### Funding available to support research into superdiversity

The Institute for Research into Superdiversity (IRiS) is offering funding to support researchers from across the University to undertake research, produce a publication or prepare a research proposal in the field of superdiversity. Up to £1,000 is available; contact [Ann Bolstridge](#), IRiS Administrator, for an application form. Closing date for first round of applications is 30 October; further details are on the [University website](#).

### Education Enhancement funding

Applications are open to fund project ideas under the theme of education enhancement. For staff led projects between £2,500 and £30,000 is available per project; application deadline is 27 October. Proposals are encouraged for topics in Technology Enhanced Learning. Further information is on the [intranet](#). CLAD advisers will also be offering an advice sessions for staff and students between 11am–1pm on 8 October, requests for time slots should be emailed to [CLAD](#).

### Distribution of Wealth in the UK

The University is running a Policy Commission on the Distribution of Wealth in the UK,

chaired by The Right Reverend David Urquhart, Bishop of Birmingham. The Commission will launch its final report on 22 October during a panel discussion in Westminster. Panellists include Professor Sir John Hills, and Professor Karen Rowlingson, lead academic from the University. The report discusses the nature of wealth and why it matters, considers whether or not wealth inequality is a problem, and proposes appropriate policy responses to wealth inequality. If you would like to attend the event contact [Rebecca Lewis](#), Stakeholder Relations and Events Manager (0121 414 6680).

## Discounted children's camps for half term

Kings Camps, part of the Kings Foundation Charity, an Ofsted registered day camp provider, are offering all University staff great discounts on their October half term camps; to be held at the Blue Coat School, from 29–31 October. Using discount code BHN001 University staff will receive a 10 per cent discount on standard fees. Book by calling Sophie on 0114 263 2160 or visit the [Kings Camps website](#).

## Participants needed

**Vaccination response study:** Volunteers must be in good health, aged 18–70, have not received any vaccinations in the last three months, and have never received, but be willing to receive, vaccination against Hepatitis B. The study involves ten visits, travel expenses plus £100 will be paid. Contact Peter Taylor (0121 371 3170) or [Dr Benjamin Fisher](#) (0121 371 3201) to volunteer.

**Diabetes study:** Volunteers must be over 18, and not have diabetes or a serious medical condition. The study involves attending a morning hospital visit and taking a nutritional breakfast milkshake. Blood tests will be taken and the visit will last approximately three hours. Transport costs will be reimbursed. Call 0121 371 4690 or [email](#) to volunteer.

**Stop Smoking study:** Would you like to give up smoking? A research group at the University is testing new ways to quit. For information call 0121 415 8019 or [email](#).

## Contact Buzz Bitesize

**Next edition:** 7 November

**Copy deadline:** 31 October

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