

# Alumni

Magazine 2022



**Transforming the heart of our campus:**  
Alumni art adds the finishing touches

Life in lockdown and beyond

Second chance makes first class fashion career

From pets to pilots - our pioneering new courses

Meeting partners and making friends



**University of  
Central Lancashire**  
UCLan



## Hello everyone

I'm delighted to introduce this edition of our Alumni magazine – my first since returning to the University of Central Lancashire as Vice-Chancellor.

I wanted to extend my best wishes to you all, and my hope that you and your loved ones have kept safe throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic heralded a different feel to University life, and dictated changing teaching and learning environments across all our campuses and throughout all our working practices. What impressed me so much was how capably and confidently our students and staff responded to these challenges, and how resilient and flexible we can all be when under pressure and faced with uncertainty and change. It's great to see so many staff and students return to campus, and the University return to face-to-face teaching for the majority of its provision.

As you will read in this edition, the fantastic responses of our students and staff have enabled us to continue to progress as a University, even during the toughest of circumstances.

We haven't stood still, in fact quite the opposite – we have developed multiple exciting new facilities, courses and initiatives at the University, including the launch of our new Strategic Plan 2021-2028, which I believe will be of great interest to our Alumni. I hope you will join me in celebrating, supporting and engaging with these new developments, as they promise to keep taking this great institution forward, and to write new chapters in its history.

Finally, I wanted to say how valuable I consider our alumni community. Your continued association with the University is truly appreciated, and your onward journey is of great and vested interest to us. There are over 200,000 members of the University's Alumni Network, but we are always keen to hear from you as individuals; to help where we can, and to continue our connection.

With all best wishes,  
**Professor Graham Baldwin**

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## Keep in touch

As a graduate, you're always part of the UCLan community and it's important that you keep us updated with any changes to your contact details. You can update your details and contact preferences online at [uclan.ac.uk/alumni](https://uclan.ac.uk/alumni) or you can email [alumninetwork@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:alumninetwork@uclan.ac.uk)

You can also contact the UCLan Alumni Network on 01772 892344 or on Twitter [@UCLanAlumni](https://twitter.com/UCLanAlumni). If you require this magazine in another format, please contact us.

# Life in lockdown and beyond

The coronavirus pandemic has been perhaps humanity's first real-time globally shared experience. Communities pulled together in their isolation, from balcony concerts to claps and rainbows. And when science jumped into action, so did we.

Many of our final year medical students and around 300 student nurses stepped up to the frontline to help the NHS cope, some of them twice, with each of the big waves that swept the country. As Aaron Hoban, one of our nursing students who answered the call, said: "We're all in this together and we've just got to get through this."

And get through this we did. Our students and staff worked hard designing PPE for the NHS. Specialist staff members volunteered their expertise as well, including microbiologists, pharmacists, molecular biologists, emergency medicine doctors and physician associates.

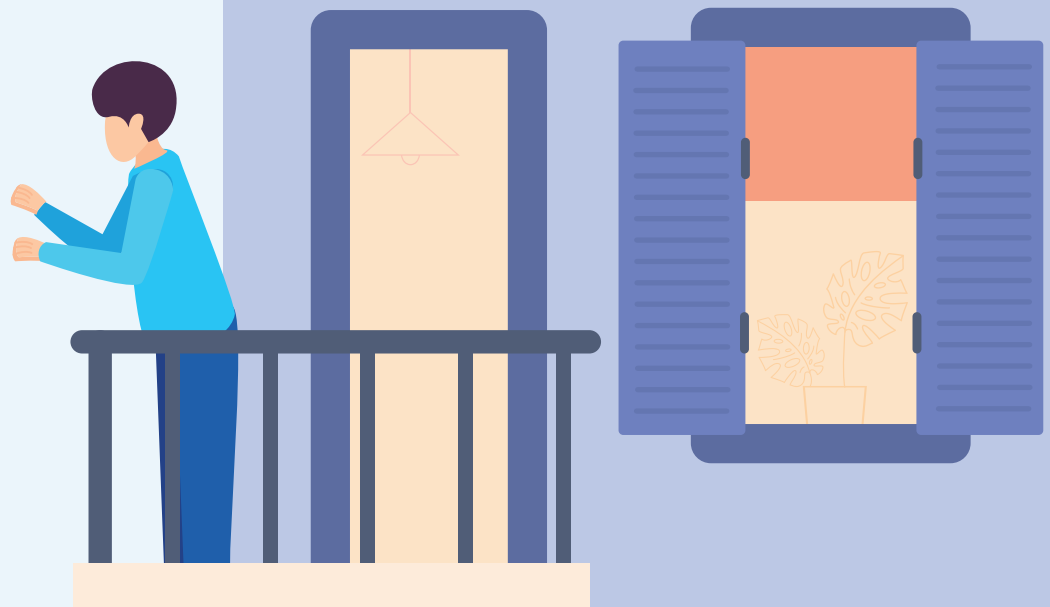
On campus, our engineering facilities were transformed into a manufacturing hub for PPE and vital machine parts for the NHS in the North West. We had an on-campus Covid testing centre and the Sir Tom Finney Sports Centre was ready to act as a recovery centre if needed. Our technical staff created hand sanitiser for use in care homes and when the backlog of dental appointments grew because of strict operational guidelines, our School of Dentistry stepped in to help with emergency out of hours patient care.

Students and staff also teamed up with community groups to help vulnerable people and families across the region. And we launched an online psychological support hub for frontline workers and their families.

We never forget why our students are here; to learn, to grow, and have every opportunity to build a great future. The pandemic meant we had to rethink our teaching and support to make sure they still could. As well as remote learning, our 'no detriment' policy meant that students' assignment grades wouldn't be lower than previous grades. And while we're back to face-to-face learning for most classes, we now have a hybrid approach for those who need it.

Our Counselling, Mental Health and Wellbeing Team were there for our students before and during the pandemic, with support, advice, or even just a friendly face, to help them cope. They're still there today, and always will be.

At what should have been a carefree, life-enriching time for our students, they faced challenges no other students had before. Yet they did us proud in their efforts for the community and the way they adapted to remote learning. After missing out on their graduation ceremonies, we were thrilled to welcome our 2020 alumni back in September 2021 to graduate in style at our brand new Student Centre. With two years' worth of graduations in two weeks, it was a busy time but for the best of reasons. Seeing the faces of those students who had triumphed through such challenging times was definitely worth the wait.





# Expert views on a post-lockdown world

But what of the future? We asked two of our experts, Richard Sharpley, Professor of Tourism, and Dr Sarita Robinson, Deputy Head for the School of Psychology and Computer Science, to tell us what they think.



**Professor Richard Sharpley**

## **Travel will bounce back, but in a different direction**

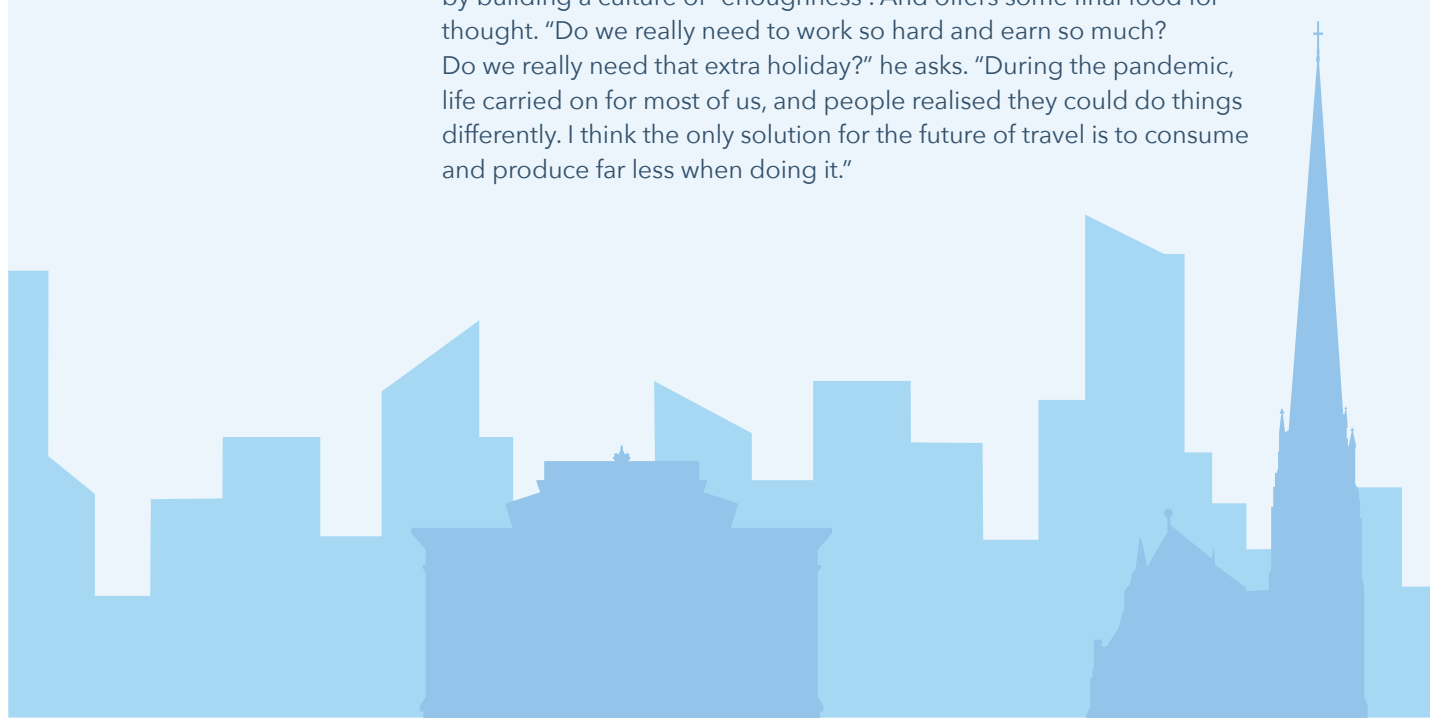
The travel industry has suffered particularly badly, especially international tourism. But Richard Sharpley, Professor of Tourism, is confident it will bounce back. "Consumption is how we define ourselves; our holidays, our possessions, where we shop," he says. "People will give up everything else before they give up their holiday, and tourism is perceived as a fundamental human need, and a right, at least in developed countries. A holiday is something you can keep forever; possessions come and go but memories stay." He also talks about "revenge spending" as something that will help revive tourism in the short term. "There's a sense of 'I've been through something really tough, and I deserve a holiday'," he says.



**Dr Sarita Robinson**

Richard feels that the industry's full recovery will take time, probably four to five years, and things will not be the same as before the pandemic; airlines will need to get leaner, with flights becoming more expensive, and fewer. But that's not entirely because of Covid. "Environmental concerns will add taxes and passenger duties to the cost of flying. It's likely to return to the luxury status of the mid-20th century, with the budget airlines becoming financially unsustainable."

He adds that any post-pandemic travel revival needs to be balanced by building a culture of "enoughness". And offers some final food for thought. "Do we really need to work so hard and earn so much? Do we really need that extra holiday?" he asks. "During the pandemic, life carried on for most of us, and people realised they could do things differently. I think the only solution for the future of travel is to consume and produce far less when doing it."



## We're now better mentally prepared for pandemic challenges

Mental health was one of the biggest stories of the pandemic. Dr Sarita Robinson, Deputy Head for the School of Psychology and Computer Science, wasn't surprised at this. "Anxiety is natural in the face of the unknown and the uncertain," she says. "It's difficult to make normal, rational decisions based on no information. Most of our routines we do on autopilot, and it creates a lot of anxiety when that is disrupted."

Specialising in the psychology of survival, Sarita was probably the best person to spend lockdown with. "We sat down early on as a family and agreed a plan for resolving conflict - avoiding escalation by retreating to our rooms to calm down, then discussing things rationally, later," she says. "It's how people cope in pressure cooker environments like polar research stations where you're cooped up together for weeks or months at a time."

She believes the pandemic has changed us all; that we consider risk differently now. "Think about the anxiety around returning to work. It involves recognising that we all have different perceptions of the risks involved and managing those risks so that everyone feels safe. It's both objective and subjective." And the hybrid working model is here to stay, although we need to "keep the good bits and ditch the bad bits" and learn to manage hybrid working in real time with the right technology.

And if there's a next time? Sarita's view is positive. "Keep optimism high," she advises. "If it happens again, we'll be ok because we've got better at it. Nothing lasts forever, and if it does, then we adapt, and it becomes normal."



## Paul Jebb

### Finding a new 'normal' in the NHS

For award-winning bachelor's and master's graduate Paul Jebb, life in lockdown was anything but quiet. "With working to respond to the challenges thrown at us by Covid-19, I also changed roles and changed Trusts, and am now the Associate Director of Nursing, Experience and Engagement at Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust," Paul says, adding that it was extra challenging at a time when we were discovering what the new 'normal' was.

"Covid-19 has brought challenges I have never faced in my career since first graduating from UCLan in 1996," he says. But being faced with new challenges and having to do things differently can inspire some creative solutions. For example, in the use of technology to make a difference to care delivery. "I think these developments are here to stay across the whole of the NHS," he told us. And as Paul is also an Honorary Senior Lecturer here at the University, future nursing graduates will get to share his first-hand experience and knowledge of these most unprecedented times.



## Second chance makes first class fashion career

There's no formula for the perfect educational journey. Some of us are ready when we leave school to choose our futures, while others need more time and life experience to figure it out.

For those that aren't quite ready, university can be a difficult and disappointing experience. Gary Aspden was one such student, starting a degree at the University of Manchester at 18 and dropping out before graduating. His story isn't unusual. At what he describes as a "colourful and wayward time" in his life, he admits he "didn't understand what the implications were" of not completing his degree. It took a few more years for Gary to figure out what he wanted, and that education might be the answer to changing the "dead end" in his life. What he needed was a second chance, and just before his 25th birthday he got one - this time with us on a BA Fashion Promotions degree.

Second time around it was very different for Gary. He was driven, "self-motivated and worked hard". He knew what he wanted and enjoyed his studies. During his year in industry, he worked seven days a week, balancing internships (including spells working with Diesel, Giorgio Armani and Donna Karan) with part-time work to pay the bills, before graduating with first-class honours. He used his time here wisely, building up a list of industry contacts, one of whom inadvertently got him started in his career with Adidas. Gary had been connecting an entertainment marketer with musicians he knew in exchange for free trainers. Although the marketer left Adidas, when her bosses realised how



instrumental Gary had been in building her contacts list, they asked if he was interested in a job. As a broke but determined graduate, of course he said yes, and spent over nine years as an employee at Adidas, where he finished up as the Global Head of Entertainment Marketing before going freelance.

Since then, he's featured twice in The Face magazine's list of the 100 most influential people in fashion. He's travelled the world, attending every major sporting tournament and music festival, meeting his heroes along the way, all in the name of fashion. He contributes to Arena Homme+ and SHOWstudio.com, delivers guest lectures on fashion marketing and occasionally judges the Creative Marketing Award at Graduate Fashion Week.

There's no doubt that Gary is at the top of his field. His work has impacted and influenced the sportswear industry over the last two decades. He's known and respected for his work with Adidas, which includes launching their global Originals range, and designing and curating the Spezial capsule collection. With his vast personal archive of vintage Adidas products, his knowledge of the brand is second-to-none. And his relationship with Adidas is still going strong; he's now in his 24th year working on the brand in various capacities.

Yet for all his success, he remains grounded, maintaining that "in truth my biggest achievements in life are outside of what I do for a living - looking after my family and friends, treating people how I like to be treated and being a dad to my teenage son."

Now, we're thrilled that he's come back to his roots to share his expertise and experience as one of our Leaders in Residence. Generously donating his time for free to support the next generation of creative minds, some of them mature students just like he was, he's come full circle, proving that second chances are worth taking.

**"A massive thanks to UCLan. I am forever grateful to the people who gave me a second chance."**

**Gary Aspden**



Spezial exhibition in Blackburn in 2019. The Adidas Spezial exhibition formed a major part of the British Textile Biennial, with 1,200 pairs of trainers exhibited, including those from Gary's personal collection, and others borrowed from collectors around the world.



## Transforming the heart of our campus

Whether you graduated a year, a decade or a lifetime ago, your campus has changed a lot in recent years, especially in Preston's Adelphi Quarter. As a member of our alumni community, you'll know that we've always supported our students, and now we've put our money where our mouth is and dedicated a new building to our students and a public square to our community.

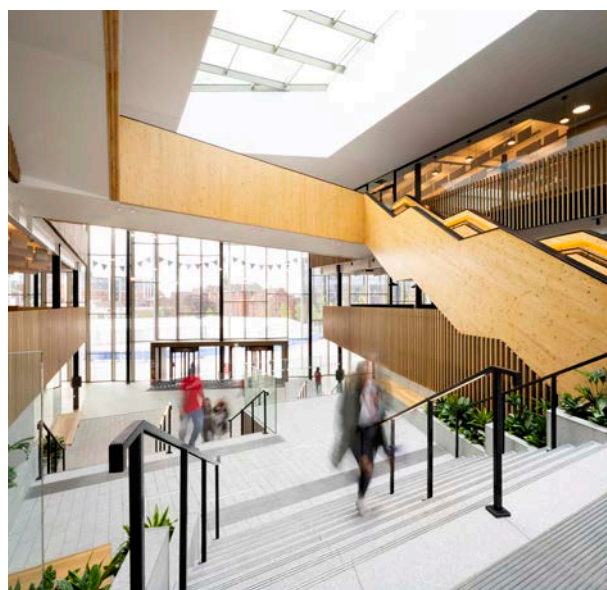
It's all part of our £200 million Masterplan project, which was unveiled in 2015 and finally completed last year. We've opened a new, state-of-the-art Engineering Innovation Centre, as well as new student social spaces in our Foster and Harrington buildings. There's now an Oasis multi-faith and spirituality centre, and even the road layout has changed, improving traffic throughout the campus and city. And finally, bringing our students and people of Preston together is our new Student Centre and University Square. Not to be outdone, even the Adelphi Pub, which has been here almost as long as we have, has had a facelift too.

A few doors down from the Adelphi, there was once a house that legend says was built in one day in 1869 by builder William Price to win a bet. Our new Student Centre and University Square took a little longer than that to build (more than 7,000 days), but then it's a bit bigger than No.43 Fylde Street was.

Everything in the Student Centre has been designed and built with student support, accessibility, and wellbeing in mind. The sweeping curves of glass fill the building with light, drawing in a sense of openness from the square outside. There are a range of spaces inside, from the beautifully dramatic atrium that forms a vibrant social hub and event space, to quieter areas for relaxation and study. It's not just an outstanding architectural centrepiece. It also houses every student advice and support service you could imagine, and more, including counselling, disability services, careers, faith and spirituality, inclusive support, fees and funding.

The Centre sits within our new University Square, a beautiful tree-lined space, welcoming students, University visitors, and the whole of Preston into the beating heart of our campus. Featuring sculptural and ceramic artwork produced by alumni, the square is one of the UK's largest new civic spaces and will





host events and festivals as well as being a place for our students and community to relax together.

We've never forgotten that we owe our history to our city's industrial heritage. That's why, at night, we pay homage to Preston's cotton industry past with a light show. Motion sensitive 'light threads' embedded into the square glow at night to guide students and visitors alike to the Student Centre and into the campus beyond.

The Student Centre is just the latest in our new and exciting developments on campus. Also flanking University Square is our Engineering Innovation Centre (EIC). Opened in 2019, the EIC consolidates our reputation and expertise in modern advanced engineering and technology. It's very much a working building, positively bulging with the brightest minds in research, teaching, business, and industry, all working together to create the next generation of engineers needed to achieve the UK's Industrial Strategy and Plan for Growth. As always, our commitment to our community stands high at the EIC. We're within a highly industrialised region,

and work with many local businesses and their staff on training, joint projects and more. And the facilities are as cutting-edge as it gets, with 18 laboratories and workshops dedicated to everything from motorsports to fluid thermodynamics. Innovation really is the EIC's middle name.

Oh, and not forgetting the fabulous view. From the floor to ceiling windows on the top floor, you're transported from one hive of activity to another, with a fabulous view of University Square, the Student Centre with its rooftop beehives making our very own honey, and a stunning vista of the Preston skyline and the Ribble Valley beyond. It's a stunning building, influenced by our industrial heritage while also reflecting our bright future as an aerospace and engineering centre of excellence.

Whether you're alumni, student or a proud Prestonian, everyone is welcome to enjoy the square and its world class architecture for years to come. Next time you're in the neighbourhood, come and visit - we'd love to hear what you think.



## Alumni art adds the finishing touches

The Student Centre and surrounding tree-lined University Square are ultra-modern, connecting our students and community for decades to come, but have links to our history woven within them too.

Alumna Bonnie Craig (MA Surface Pattern), researched the textbooks and technical manuals used in the early 1900s, when we were the Harris Institute, comparing the work and methods of students past and present. Inspired by our industrial past and technological future, she created the graphic patterns that grace the glass walls within and on the outside of the building.

Thank you, Bonnie, for your wonderful work that has made our Student Centre so beautiful.



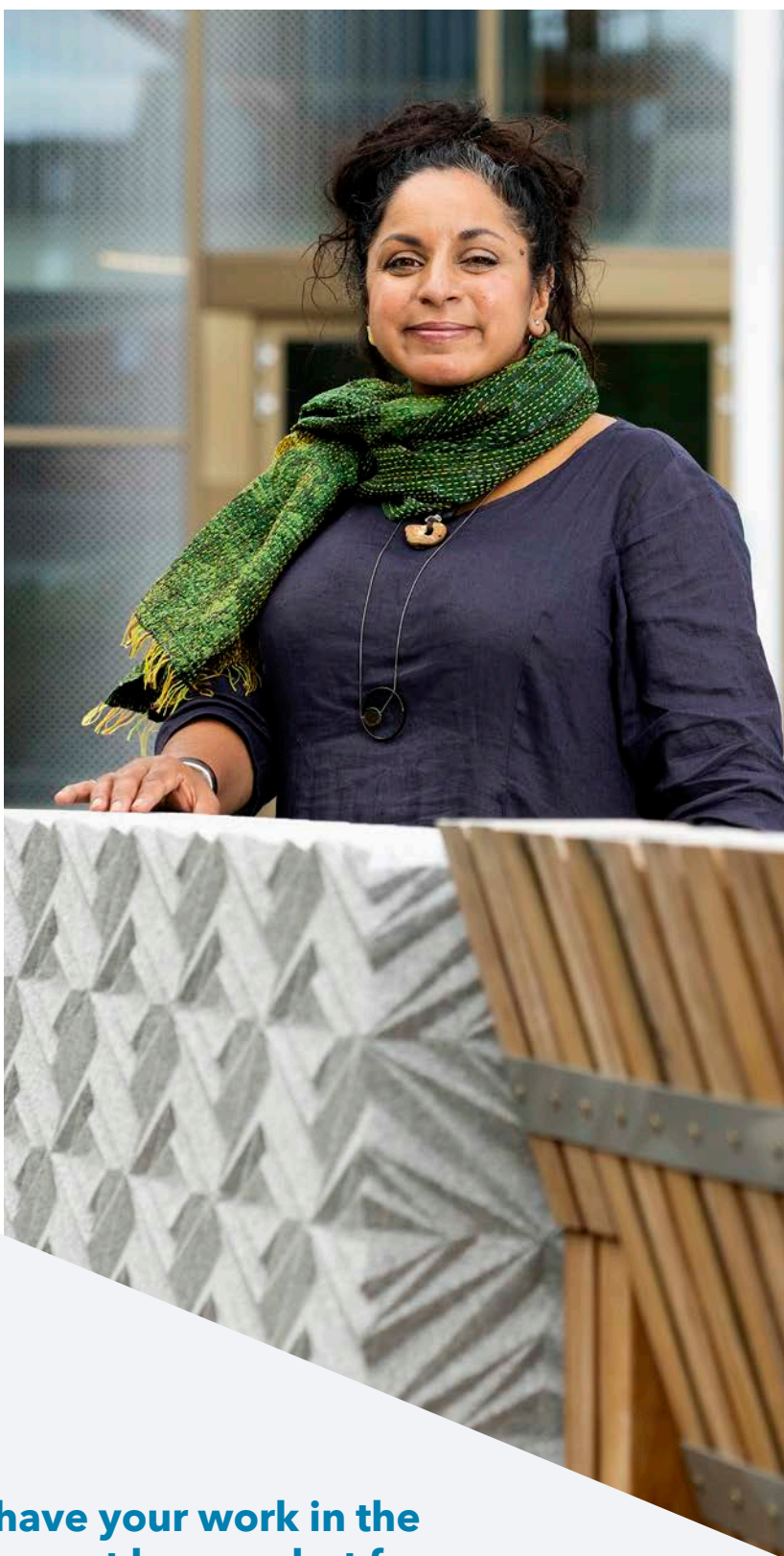
**"It was fascinating to compare the current textiles courses with the content that was delivered a hundred years ago, and to translate this research to visual ideas that could be brought into a contemporary building for students."**

Bonnie Craig



Another alumna to lend her talents to UCLan is award-winning artist Halima Cassell MBE. Studying 3D Design in the 90s and then gaining her master's degree in Design here in 2002, Halima says that after spending her "formative years" here, she has come "full circle" in creating several pieces of work for University Square.

As well as a series of decorative bookends built into the structure of the planter seats around the square, Halima has designed a sculptured wall frieze where Fylde Road meets St Peter's Gardens, marking the main entrance to the University. These geometric, recurrent patterns reflect Lancashire's weaving heritage and have been machined out of granite. Invitingly tactile, the pieces visually change throughout the day and night as the light moves from natural to artificial, and shadows shrink and expand across the granite. We're so proud that our square is a permanent exhibit for this beautiful work from such a talented artist.



**"Like any artist, to have your work in the public domain is a great honour, but for it to be included at the place where my career began is something else."**

**Halima Cassell MBE**





## Then and now

### Past perspectives meet the modern student experience

University life here has changed in many ways over the years. For one thing, since our founding in 1828 we've been almost every type of educational institution it's possible to be. From an institute to a college to a polytechnic to the proud university we are today. So, what's different? But also, what's stayed the same? We thought we'd compare.

Dr John Mohin OBE D.Univ joined Harris College, as we were known then, at 18 in 1972 to study for a diploma in Business Studies. Forty-five years later, Chloe Carr, also 18, began a degree in Business and Marketing, graduating in 2020 and following that up with an MSc Digital Marketing. Here's what they had to say about their time with us, and what happened after.

#### **A Levels and Applicant Days**

John's and Chloe's journeys into education were quite different, but both were leaving home for the first time.

John was arriving at a difficult time in his life, after losing his father during his A Levels, and had to spend much of his time helping his mum behind the bar of the family pub. His results suffered, but he had a chance to make up for this once at the Harris with the help and support of his tutors.

Chloe visited us on an Applicant Day. As many undergraduates are, she was excited at moving out of home and looking forward to living somewhere new and bigger, and nervous about the big change about to happen. But the staff she met on her applicant day were reassuring. "They were lovely," she says, "I could tell they were going to be really supportive." And unlike John, Chloe had the benefit of social media to virtually meet many of her fellow students weeks before she arrived, making friends that she still has to this day.

#### **Unusual housemates and homesickness**

John first lived in college 'digs', later renting a house with his Harris friends. There were a few unwanted friends as well. "Our landlord insisted upon storing bulk quantities of rice in the upstairs rooms and that attracted mice. So, we acquired a cat, but then the cat had kittens and it all became so involved," John says.

Chloe was “homesick until Christmas”. But the community in her halls of residence and her tutors got her through those tough first weeks. “I felt like I could speak up if I wasn’t feeling ok, and our tutors seemed to have a sixth sense for knowing if you needed some support or just a bit of a pep talk.” Luckily, accommodation has moved on somewhat from John’s time and Chloe didn’t have to put up with any unexpected wildlife in her en-suite room at Roeburn Hall.

### **The learning life**

“The Business School at Harris College was actually two Portakabins joined together, but no complaints from us - we were well looked after, treated with respect, the tuition was great, and we had access to a wonderful library that met all our needs. Looking back, I like to think that it was perhaps the forerunner of what later became Lancashire School of Business and Enterprise and so in that sense, we were early pioneers, so to speak,” says John. He also mentions his course tutor, “a kindly figure whom I knew only as Mr Hudson and he once told me about a maxim that had served him well, all of his life. He said: ‘Luck is when determination meets opportunity.’ This left a marked impression on me and in some respects, echoes the current mission statement of the University - ‘Where opportunity creates success.’” John’s determination paid off. As well as business studies, he also completed the three modules needed to graduate from the Chartered Institute of Marketing. Today, he’s a Fellow of the Institute.

Chloe’s course facilities were perhaps more sophisticated, yet she had to contend with graduating during a pandemic. “Our tutors were experts with a lot of industry experience, which made the course so interesting for me. I even got to go to Guangzhou in China in 2018, which was fantastic. I was lucky that I had almost finished my undergraduate degree when the pandemic hit in March 2020. I’d already decided to follow that with a master’s, which was going to be a remote learning course anyway, so I’d have had to adjust to learning online sooner or later. I could have gone back home to do my master’s but wanted to stay here - it never crossed my mind to leave. My friends and my life were here, and even now that I’m no longer a student, I still live with my best friend that I met in halls.”

### **And for fun?**

While John talks fondly about spending nights in the Adelphi or the Lamb and Packet to keep warm

(and escape the mice, cats and kittens), Chloe loved Tuesday karaoke at Source, the Students’ Union bar. But she cautions on the wisdom of all-nighters. “Just don’t do it,” she says with a wry smile. Like all bad ideas, “it seems like a great idea at the time, until the next day”.

### **What came next?**

When John graduated, he found his dream job. “I left Harris College on the Friday and joined Wedgwood on the following Monday morning, where I stayed for 35 years,” he says. His achievements and accolades were many, too many to recount here. Eventually he became Managing Director and such an authority on Wedgwood that he “was appointed by Her Majesty the Queen to advise on banqueting at Buckingham Palace and gifts for visiting dignitaries. It was therefore a huge honour when I was made an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire and maybe at that point, take a moment to reflect upon just how far I had travelled since studying at Harris College.”

Graduating from her master’s in 2021, Chloe’s career is only just beginning but she’s off to a great start. She’s now a UCLan employee - a Faculty Marketing Co-ordinator at our Preston Campus. We’re thrilled that she’s with us, bringing her recent student experience into our Marketing Team. “I loved studying here,” she says. “And I love being a staff member here too. I’m working in education, working on something that’s a good thing for society.”

### **Different, but the same**

John and Chloe were studying in very different worlds. In many ways their experiences couldn’t have been more different, especially in the more material aspects of life. The first Apple computer prototype was four years away when John joined Harris, while Chloe’s “coolest possession” was her MacBook. John’s graduation arrived in the post, while Chloe’s was a year late but in person at our new Student Centre, marking the completion of our campus-transforming Masterplan. But, whether Harris or the University, fundamentally, perhaps those experiences weren’t so different. Both John and Chloe talk warmly about the support and reassurance they received, the friends they made, and the opportunities they were given, and made the most of. And both, in their own ways, have come back to us - Chloe as member of our Marketing Team, and John as an ambassador for our Lancashire School of Business and Enterprise.

## From pets to pilots - our pioneering new courses

We've always been a regional centre of excellence for the arts and sciences.  
Today we're no different and we're thrilled to be offering brand new  
degrees in two exciting areas - aviation and veterinary medicine.





## The sky's the limit for our trainee pilots

When we were first established as the Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, 75 years before the Wright brothers took off on their first flight, humanity still had its feet firmly on the ground. Today, we're still all about useful knowledge. And right now, in an industry short of pilots, it's pretty useful to know how to fly. That's why, by 2024, we'll be welcoming trained pilots into our alumni community.

We're helping to create the next generation of real-life high-flyers with a pioneering new degree programme. Working with industry experts Aviation 360 and L3Harris Airline Academy, we've created one of the few UK degrees combining academic study with professional pilot training. And it's the first of a range of hands-on aviation degrees we'll be offering to help ease the national shortage of commercial airline pilots.

Our inaugural students landed in 2021 on our BSc (Hons) Aviation – Pilot course, and are already well on their way. Based at Gatwick (where else?) and Cranfield, they're learning using the latest industry technology, training on modern aircraft, and will take up airline placements in their final year. They'll graduate in 2024 with an Air Transport Licence and the skills they need to start an exciting aviation career and grow into senior roles. Plus, they'll have the reassurance that everything they've learned is in line with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) standards.

Despite the pandemic, demand for pilots has grown, and with the airline industry predicted to have fully recovered by 2023-24, it's a great time to get into aviation, whoever you are. As our Vice-Chancellor said when we launched the course: "This is another exciting development in our mission to combine academic excellence and real-world teaching, providing our students with the skills and experience industry needs...We will provide a quality educational experience while playing a key role in the industry's change agenda to provide aviation-related opportunities for those from a wide variety of backgrounds. We are particularly keen to encourage applications from women, who are significantly under-represented within pilot roles."



## A new school is joining our pack

Did you know that, until now, there were only 10 veterinary schools in the UK? With vets already on the Home Office Shortage Occupation list, and three million new pets joining UK households during the pandemic, the maths is obvious. More pets and less vets are creating a perfect storm - you could say it's almost literally been raining cats and dogs! This trend is likely to continue, with people going back to the office and taking their dogs with them, or working from home with a real-life hot water bottle purring on their laps.

That's why we're thrilled to be joining an elite list of universities, creating the UK's 11th veterinary school. It's only the second in northern England, and Lancashire's first. Based at our Preston Campus, students can study all things veterinary, from veterinary medicine to animal behaviour and training.

The new School of Veterinary Medicine is a collaborative effort - we're working with world-renowned Myerscough College and local vets to offer a range of courses and placements. Our would-be vets will use cutting-edge digital technology to study animal anatomy and get the chance to be 'hands-on' from Year 1. So, don't be surprised if you're visiting for one of our events and you spot a few furry and feathered friends around campus!

Veterinary schools are, by their rarity, prestigious places. We don't think that should mean they should be accessible only to the privileged. Cathy Jackson, executive dean of the Faculty of Clinical and Biomedical Sciences, puts it perfectly: "As with our medical and dental schools, we have demonstrated we want to break down barriers and make education accessible to all. It's no different with our veterinary school, and we want to open the doors and offer a pathway for any student, whatever their background, into this rewarding profession, while maintaining the very highest of education and professional standards."

# The great debate:

## What's the future of consumerism in a post COP26 world?

In the autumn of 2021 in Glasgow, 196 countries came together to complete the Paris Rulebook and agree a plan to mitigate climate change. With the UK holding the COP presidency in 2022, we're all going to be reminded of how we could be making a difference in the coming months and years. But is change truly possible, and how might we achieve it, together? We asked Dr Robin Carey, Professor Karl Williams, Eve Astle and slow fashion entrepreneur and UCLan alumna, Eleanor Bradley, what they think. One thing everyone agrees on is the need for governments and brands to take the lead.

"I don't remember the environment being mainstream news when I was a child, but now there's a big, open conversation about it. That gives me hope for the future," says Eleanor. "But, unless brands and governments start to make real changes, I can't see how consumers can go all in and embrace a more sustainable lifestyle."

For Karl, "The biggest challenge in achieving the pledges of COP26 is that we, the consumers, get mixed messages. Major world governments make these promises, but a lot of that gets watered down - we see the same people who are pledging to cut emissions then approving the opening of new coal mines, so the message becomes less

effective. Public perception then changes, and people start to think climate change isn't that urgent or important." But as he points out, governments come and go, although he believes there is a solution. "If you have cross-party agreement on environmental policy, then it doesn't matter who's in power because everyone's signed up to what needs to be done," he says.





Robin thinks there's a bigger, socio-economic job to do. "If we want consumer behaviour to change, we need to improve infrastructure, logistics, support and provide more money outside of London. There's been a massive rise in real term poverty - you only need to look at the numbers going to food banks - and for many it's about surviving and feeding the kids. It's not tenable, or practical, for most people to make the environmental choice."

Robin's not alone in his view. As Karl says, "Living a more environmentally friendly lifestyle is also expensive. For a family seven-seater petrol car, you could pay £15,000, or £30,000 for the same electric car. The environmentally damaging option is, for now, always cheaper."

Eve agrees that, for most people, "The ability to take a long view is often quite hard and we can't see real results that we can bring back to our own actions."

But while governments and brands get their houses in order, can we make a start on ours? "The smallest of changes we all make will bring change. It's the power of 'all' really - herd mentality can be positive," Eve says. "You only have to look at the rise in popularity of DePop [the clothing resale app], the influencers reusing products on social media, the magazines referencing older seasons' collections, to know there is movement and appetite for change."

"Day-to-day, we can all make small changes that will add up - we do have some power," Eleanor agrees. "We can be more considerate in what we buy; mending and upcycling; shopping in local economies

from local, regional and UK businesses. There are some negative perceptions about the cost of sustainable fashion. Price can be a big barrier and it's hard to shift your mindset even if you can afford it - even the richest are still attracted to cheaper prices if they're offered. But if you buy one expensive thing that you know that will last you 25 years, ultimately that saves you money if you're not replacing it every year."

"We have to move past the spectacle of wearing an item once," Eve adds. "I think the desire for 'new' needs to diminish. There is some research around the joy of anticipation, slowing down and waiting for something - savouring and saving. If everyone just pauses on one purchase, makes one different choice, takes care with their clothing, then that will bring change."

And as consumers, "We need to hold brands to account," Robin says. "They are some of the worst perpetrators of environmental and human damage, leaving areas like wastelands. I question the whole point of capitalism in a climate conscious world. We make products with built in obsolescence, and the world's biggest brands want us to continually buy more stuff made in low-wage economies. How wonderful it would be to put people here in work rather than maximising profit."

So how do people make those judgements and choices? Eve and Karl agree that it's about clear messaging. "Information needs to be relatable and local," Eve says. "The big data is shocking, but it feels out of reach for 'little old me' to make an impact on it. To make the right choices we need a clean communication on what we can do from a reliable source."

## Contributors



**Eve Astle**

Course Leader and Senior Lecturer,  
Fashion Promotion and Marketing



**Eleanor Bradley**

BA (Hons) Fashion graduate  
and owner of Wild Strings,  
a sustainable fashion company



**Dr Robin Carey**

Head of Lancashire School  
of Business and Enterprise



**Professor Karl Williams**

Professor of Resources,  
Energy and Environment

I would like to see a joint collective campaign for change that brings examples of small easy changes we can all make. This could be hosted by a consortium of brands and companies."

Karl points out the uselessness of current environmental language. "Consumers aren't clear what behaviour they need to change - what has the biggest impact in terms of effectiveness. We need to comprehend our consumption in a way that everyone understands. For instance, instead of carbon levels on a takeaway coffee cup, we could say that a coffee each day would equal, over a year, the same as driving a certain number of miles in your car. That's much easier for people to understand and then make a choice around."

For Robin, it's about how the message is delivered, as much as the message itself. "The people flying to Davos in private jets to tell us what we should be doing need to fully understand the absolute necessity of the majority of people in the world. They just don't get what it's like in a terraced house in Blackburn, surviving on Universal Credit, or even less. In this low wage or no wage culture, people can only afford what they can afford."

So, do our economic systems have as big a part to play as our consumer behaviours in our planet's future? Robin is unequivocal. "For me, COP26 was copout 26, and it'll be followed by the next copout, and the next, until we rid ourselves of predatory capitalism. We need to think more about traditional capitalism, where companies like Cadbury and Rowntree built homes, educational facilities, and churches. They were all about supporting their communities,

not extracting from them. We can learn from those early capitalists. Look after people, pay people well, make them feel valued and that they have some worth, and then they might be able to make choices that go beyond basic, immediate survival."

Eleanor thinks that "ultimately, it's about changing the system from linear to circular. Capitalism perpetuates the linear model of buy, use, dispose of, rather than repair, reuse, upcycle and recycle. Mainstream businesses need to adopt a more circular model, with careful consideration from the design stage to the end of a product's life, and how that goes back into the cycle. They could even collaborate with artisans that can repair the clothes they sell, encouraging that circle of the product." But she's positive about the future. "My hope is that, in the not-too-distant future, we've shifted to a consumer model that values quality, and reverted

to an economy that values the people who make and produce our things. This is hope, rather than prediction - it's all hope and we'll only get measurable change when governments do the right thing and hold businesses to account - but I'll do everything in my power as a business owner to help make that happen."

Eve is also hopeful that we're at the dawn of "a new consumer world managed and owned by a generation who lived through a pandemic - and possibly more than one, who will understand that our planet is precious, that nature is a huge force to be respected, and I hope a generation that will have innate responsible behaviour. Behaviour is key; my children turn the taps off when they brush their teeth because that is what we now do, that's what they will probably always do, and I hope my grandchildren too. We brought to them that one change."



# Like father, like son

## International alumnus keeps it in the family

It's not unusual for a son to follow in his father's footsteps into a family business or career.

Father and son, Makhubalo and Ntsika Ndaba, have taken this a step further, each choosing to make the 8,000-mile journey from South Africa to study with us in Preston.

Twenty-two years ago, Makhubalo Ndaba came halfway across the world to complete a scholarship-funded master's programme in employment law. From South Africa's Eastern Cape to the UK, Makhubalo braved the British winter (and summer!) to join us, making a leap into the unknown. But he soon discovered our friendly northern spirit, and flourished. As he says: "I couldn't believe the friendship that I got from my flat and my class. Everyone was so friendly," and studying here gave him a life he "never could have imagined". Graduating a year later, his knowledge, skills and confidence helped him achieve a position as Non-Executive Director and Chairman of the Human Resources and Remuneration Committee for Africa's largest asset management company.

But the Ndaba family story doesn't stop there. Two decades later, alumnus Makhubalo has proudly waved his son, Ntsika, off on the same journey. Graduating from top 10 South African boarding school, Kearsney College, Ntsika could have had his pick of universities at home, but after hearing his father's fond memories of his time here, Ntsika is excited to see where his UCLan degree will take him. He tells us: "I am very ecstatic, even though it's so far from home and I've had to leave my family and friends, it is something I need in order for my growth and success. I am very thankful for the opportunity to continue my studies overseas and I can't wait for what life has to offer."

Makhubalo adds: "My son can't wait and some of his friends are already in the UK. For me, this wouldn't have been an option, so it's amazing that he has this opportunity. I am confident UCLan will mould him."

"Coming from a country with a history of social discord and moving to somewhere filled with love and compassion makes you look at the world in a different way."

And, who knows, as Makhubalo is a father of three, one day maybe more members of the Ndaba family will make studying with us a family tradition.



**"Coming from a country with a history of social discord and moving somewhere filled with love and compassion makes you look at the world in a different way."**

**Makhubalo Ndaba**

# Meeting partners and making friends

## - who did you meet at UCLan?

Where did you meet your match? In halls, at a lecture, or down the pub? Are you one of our loved-up alumni couples, or were you best man to your best UCLan mate? Perhaps you shared a first date venue with some of our couples below, or made a best friend out of a brief encounter in the library? Whether you're celebrating your first or fiftieth anniversary of meeting, we'd love to hear your stories.



### Sue and Ian Dawson

Our University has been a truly family affair for Sue and Ian Dawson. In 1977, at just 17, Sue started her first ever job, here at Harris College Library. She stayed until 1982 but left with more than just work experience. When student Ian Dawson popped into the library to take out a book, he met Sue, and they've been together ever since. Even a prince couldn't turn her head; when the Duke of Edinburgh opened the new library building in 1979, she admits Prince Philip "was very pleasant and took interest in what I was doing. I was only 18 at the time and it's certainly a memory that has stayed with me forever." There's even a picture of Sue with the Prince at the library issue desk, but Ian was always and still is the man for her.

The Dawson family connection with the University doesn't end with just Ian and Sue. "UCLan has made a huge impact on my family," she told us. Both their sons studied here and their youngest, Robby, even worked in our Marketing Team for a while and met his partner, and fellow UCLan staff member, here. Their oldest son also met his fiancé whilst they were both students. Who knows, maybe there's more to come - perhaps one day we'll see another generation of Dawsons join us on campus, making lifelong friends and maybe even meeting their future partners.



### Ellen Powley and Meghan Bone

Ellen met best friend Meghan in their first year in 2015. "We were in our first PR and Marketing lecture group, and I remember thinking she seemed so cool, that I just needed to be her friend!" During their time here, Ellen went off to do an exchange year in Sydney, and the year after Meghan was on a placement in London, so they were apart for two years. But they kept in touch and were lucky enough to spend their final year together in Preston. Ellen says, "Even though we've been apart for long periods since meeting at UCLan, she's been by my side through my whole degree, and we have been through so much together - the parties, the heartbreaks, the assignments, but most importantly, she's been there whenever I've needed her, no matter where we were in the world. Thank you UCLan for introducing me to my Galentine!" You're welcome, Ellen.

**Alumni** Always part of UCLan



### Sarah and Ben German

Sarah Stuart was studying American Studies, and Ben German was studying Product Design, when they met in their first year here in 1995. Friends at first, they hung out together, and with mates at the pub. Sarah thought Ben was a quiet chap, while "he probably thought I had a drinking problem," she says, thinking of some of their livelier group nights out. A first date at Tiggi's Italian restaurant in Guildhall Street went well, including a cheeky free 'birthday' dessert. "It was always your birthday" when you went to Tiggi's.

Sarah's favourite memories are of the parties she and Ben hosted here, which "got people talking to people they would likely not have met. My then boyfriend, now husband, also got very drunk at the University Christmas ball in our third year in 1997." The actor Geoffrey Hughes (of Coronation Street and Keeping up Appearances fame) was there and Ben got a photo with him. Luckily for Ben, Sarah can't find it now, but they both still remember the ball as a "brilliant night."

Three years after graduating, Sarah and Ben married, and celebrate their 21st wedding anniversary this year. With some of the friends they'd made here as their guests, ushers and bridesmaids, you could almost call it a reunion as well as a wedding. A couple of those friends are also godparents to their two teenage children. And in 2009 they moved to the United States, becoming US citizens in 2020. "We're still friends with many people from our university days," Sarah told us. "Some of our best friends were made there."



### Joe Mansfield and Nathan Carters

Joe Mansfield was studying acting (2016-2019) when he met Nathan Carters, a UCLan alumni working as an animation technician on campus. Their first impressions of each other were mixed. Joe thought Nathan was 'funny and genuine' although he wasn't sure about "the strange fashion choice of his choker he wore!" Nathan says Joe was "kind of cute but also a bit weird." Weirdness and dubious fashion choices aside, they took the plunge and went on a date at Source Bar. "It was as awkward as you'd imagine a first date to be," says Joe. "I'd just finished a dance rehearsal for the UCLan competition team and so I was probably not looking my best and had no money to buy more than one drink. But we still ended up having a good time." Nathan says he was just as nervous, "but we had a laugh over each other's old Instagram photos, which was fun."

One of Joe's favourite memories is from early on in their relationship. "We decided to make a big fancy meal together," he says. "It was freezing outside so I was wearing about five layers to go and buy the stuff we needed. And we just laughed and had a good time making so much food (and maybe having a few drinks) together." For Nathan, it was "going to France with uni and getting to see industry leaders at work." Joe saw one of his favourite animation pieces, 'Zombillennium', for the first time on this trip too.

They're still in touch with their University friends. "All my old housemates and some of my old course mates are still some of my closest friends. Most weeks my old housemate, Tebay, comes over for a brew and to just talk rubbish together all night," says Joe. The same goes for Nathan, still in contact with course mates, especially close friend, Luke, although distance means they can't get together as often as they like.

Since that first date at Source, they've barely been apart. Joe has graduated, and he and Nathan live together. We'll leave the final words to Joe, who says, "If it wasn't for UCLan we would never have met, so I'm thankful for my time there!"





## Remember when...?

What memories do those two words evoke when you remember your time as a student here? Shared bathrooms and learning to cook from Grub on a Grant? The parties you can't quite remember and the friends you always will? What about the kipper ties and shirt collars so big they could take your eye out? And let's not forget the hair!

From mullets to moustaches, perms to pedal pushers, and platform soles to kitten heels, we've seen it all here over the years. And how things have changed. There was a time here when chips were made of potatoes, not silicon, and you ate cookies instead of opting out of them. When tablets healed a headache and spam came in a can, and only birds tweeted.

We've had a few incarnations ourselves. When we were Harris College, our business school was based out of a pair of PortaKabins and our first computer filled a whole room. As Preston Polytechnic, and later Lancashire Polytechnic, we expanded, building dedicated halls of residence for our students. Everyone thought things were pretty modern back then, even though up to 27 students could be sharing a bathroom and toilet (although not all at once, except perhaps during some of the liveliest parties!). Now, of course, we're a university. But whatever we were called, and whatever you were

wearing, some things never changed. Thousands of lifelong relationships, whether as friends, partners, husbands, or wives, began here, and they still do.

Even if you've lost touch with some of your course mates, the memories are still precious. So, we've set ourselves a challenge - to help as many alumni as we can rediscover those friends and relive those memories, through the launch of our Lost Alumni Campaign.

Please help us spread the word to all your Harris, Polytechnic and University friends and get them to sign up at [uclan.ac.uk/reconnect](https://uclan.ac.uk/reconnect) - they will hear all about their graduate benefits package and may even receive an invite to a very special reunion later in the year.

As an existing member of the Alumni Network, you can update your details at [uclan.ac.uk/alumni](https://uclan.ac.uk/alumni)

We've been digging through our archives to get people reconnecting. Take a look at some of the photos and if you recognise yourself, or anyone else, let us know on **Twitter** #UCLanAlumni

### Shared living, shared memories

Remember when lots of us shared a kitchen and a bathroom? OK, we probably don't need to say any more about the horrors of piled high washing up and blocked plugholes. But something else everyone had to share was a phone. Before mobile phones became more affordable in the late 90s, students called home from a shared single phone at the entrance to their hall of residence. And parents relied on the goodwill of whoever answered the phone to find their sons and daughters and get them to come and take a call. If your room was the nearest to the entry hall of your building, you probably got to know everyone's families pretty well! But it was also a great way to meet everyone in your building.



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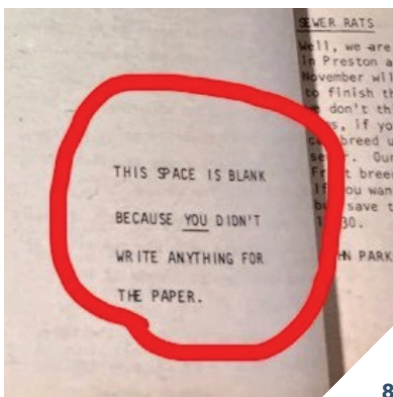
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## Captions

- 1 A lack of telephones and having to share bathrooms didn't seem to bother this bunch. Are you one of them? Could you do the same now?
- 2 Shared living in 90s Preston. Who's that in the purple trousers?
- 3 Some things never change, including mum and dad helping out on moving-in day at halls. What was in those boxes, we wonder?
- 4 Remember when men still wore ties every day, even as students? And who's that not paying attention behind the lecturer?
- 5 Original members of Race Equality Unit from 1986.  
Were you one of our diversity pioneers? Our Race Equality Unit was first established in 1986. Are you, or is someone you know, one of the original members in this photo?
- 6 Who are these happy folks on the steps in the 80s? Perhaps the Lady Diana Spencer haircuts or the Graeme Souness moustache will jog your memory.
- 7 What about this group of on-trend fashion students from the early 60s? Is one of you a glamorous grandma, or even great grandma, now?
- 8 Are you the guilty soul who forgot (or were having too much of a good time) to turn in their article for the Students' Union's Pluto magazine back in the 80s?





## Alumni news

### Alumni Achievement Awards

We're delighted to launch our very first Alumni Achievement Awards scheme, which has been established to honour and celebrate the achievements of our global University alumni community.

We are extremely proud of our graduates and want to recognise those who have achieved great things, whether that be in their profession, or through their work within the wider community. This could include charity work or a contribution to the arts or business.

The awards are open to all alumni of the University of Central Lancashire and its predecessor institutions, and we welcome nominations from staff and students. You cannot nominate yourself but you can nominate your fellow alumni so why not nominate your friends and classmates from your time at University?

You can nominate a graduate for the 2022 Alumni Achievement Awards until Friday 20 May 2022 for July Graduation, and until Friday 21 October 2022 for December Graduation.

We can't wait to see your nominations. See our website for more information: [uclan.ac.uk/alumni/achievement-awards](https://uclan.ac.uk/alumni/achievement-awards)

### Want to make a difference to a UCLan student?

Why not donate to the University and help to shape the future of some of our hardest hit students? Over a third of our students come from working class homes and amongst them are individuals experiencing extreme financial or social hardship.

The Harris Bursary Fund was established as a charitable fund through the University of Central Lancashire Foundation to provide emergency help and to prevent these students from dropping out of higher education. The help offered is limited but nevertheless provides much needed practical support and can be the catalyst in helping the students refocus and continue in achieving their goals. Often all that is required is help with essential study related items such as textbooks and computer equipment. Over the years the Fund has helped hundreds of our students.

You can also donate direct to the University Foundation, which is exactly what Ashwin Kagdadia did recently, donating £5,000 per year to help a number of high achieving but financially disadvantaged students. The Ashwin Govindji Kagdadia Scholarship Fund has recently provided the first set of recipients with their bursary payment, which has come as a huge relief to them.

Talking about his generous donation, Ashwin said: "My philosophy is to put something back into the community. There is no better spiritual satisfaction than to help those less fortunate and if my donation inspires others in the community to do likewise, then I consider it a blessing."

For more information about donating to UCLan, contact Maggie Wild on [alumninetwork@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:alumninetwork@uclan.ac.uk)



### Reunion for 1990s alumni brings back fond memories

Our European Business Administration (EBAL) class of 1993 returned to Preston recently to celebrate nearly 30 years since they graduated from UCLan.

The idea for the reunion, which was organised by Angela Botham, was born from a Facebook group that Angela had set up which initially had six members. This soon grew to 40 members over the Covid lockdown and became a regular point of fun and escapism for the friends.

Talking about the group, Angela said: "It has been great fun catching up with everyone and hearing their different stories of where they live now and what they are doing."

The reunion was a much talked about event during the pandemic, with all of the typical hesitation due to Covid. However, the group arranged to meet and the reunion went ahead with 17 attendees, some of whom virtually attended the dinner table via Zoom due to living abroad!

Angela said: "We had a quick look at the UCLan campus, which has changed so much over the years, although we could still recognise the library, the church and the Union! We headed to the Adelphi pub to meet and despite our fears that we wouldn't recognise each other after such a long time, we all did. No one had really changed. It was amazing and really like meeting family again. We all got on so well, it was both incredible and emotional and the 28 years just melted away."

The reunion went so well that Angela is looking forward to a potential 30-year reunion in June 2023 and would love for anyone who studied EBAL and graduated in 1993, and lecturers from the course, to get in touch via the '**EBAL reunited 1990-93**' Facebook group.





## #UCLanAlumni

**Your UCLan Alumni Network is here for you whenever you need us.**

Careers advice for life

Business support

Events

Sports membership

Library membership

Mentoring and volunteering

Networking

Keep in touch with us via social media, email, phone and in person if you wish.

You can update your contact details at any time via [uclan.ac.uk/alumni](https://uclan.ac.uk/alumni) or by contacting [alumninetwork@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:alumninetwork@uclan.ac.uk)