

UNIC Academic News

University of Northampton International College

Issue 2 | May 2017



Welcome from the College Director/Principal

Welcome to the second edition of the University of Northampton International College (UNIC)

Academic Newsletter. The college continues to grow at a rapid rate, we welcomed our second intake of 54 students in January 2017 against a target of 36 and at the time of writing we currently have 95 students studying with us from 32 different countries.

Our next enrolment of students begins at the end of May, where we are expecting another 14 students to join us, predominantly on our Pre-Master's programme. For students who have been studying with us since September 2016 and our Pre-Master's from January 2017, this semester is drawing to a close and they are working hard to achieve the grades they need to progress onto their undergraduate or postgraduate studies with the University in September 2017. I look forward to being able to share further information on our progression rates in our next edition.

Since the last edition we have welcomed a number of new staff to the team in a range of roles, the two most pertinent to the academic provision that we offer are Denise Clarke as our new Academic Services Officer and May Flett as our new Director of Academic & Student Services (DASS).

Finally, I would like to thank all the University academic staff who attended one of our information sessions that we held in our hub this semester. I hope you found these useful in better understanding what we do at UNIC and it was great to meet many of you in person and discuss ways in which we can strengthen the partnership and the provision we offer. Please do get in touch should you have been unable to attend these sessions but would like to find out more about UNIC.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes,
Craig McIlwain

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UNIC Science lecturer awarded PhD

Rebecca Rickaby, current Foundation Science lecturer at UNIC and former student of the University of Northampton was awarded her Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in molecular genetics this semester.

The service, at the Royal and Derngate, was a celebration of four years of hard work and dedication to her own research.

Rebecca commented: "I was excited but also nervous to finally be graduating after four years. At times I'd laughed, other times I'd cried. It was hard work but definitely all worth it in the end. I am so proud to be able to say I am now a doctor in my field."

UNIC students taught by Rebecca were impressed with her achievement and were keen to find out as much as they could from her about how they too might be able to study towards a PhD.

Craig McIlwain, College Director/Principal, said: "Rebecca has been a real asset to the teaching team at UNIC, her knowledge and enthusiasm for her subjects are infectious for the students and now that she has achieved her PhD she is a real role

model for not only our students, but also some of our other teaching staff."

For more information about Rebecca's story and the advice she would give to students about studying for a PhD please go to the UNIC Tumblr page: www.unicstudents.tumblr.com.

"Studying my Business Foundation at UNIC has really helped me to develop skills that I know will benefit me when I start my degree at the University. The course is very informative, and being at UNIC has helped me to make many friends from all over the world."

Nikita Silantev, Russia
Foundation to International Business

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Law students visit Magistrates' Court

Foundation law students spent a morning at the Northampton Magistrates' Court this semester as part of their studies for the module 'Contract Law and Tort'.

As part of the visit students sat in on a number of live trials including motoring offences, assault and robbery which allowed them to apply the theoretical content they have been studying to practical examples. A couple of the trials made use of video

technology to communicate with people being held in custody which our students found very engaging.

Sofia Pineda, Foundation Law student at UNIC said: "I really enjoyed my time visiting the courts, it has really inspired me for my other assignments and coursework."

Sharjia Ahmed, Law Lecturer at UNIC added: "As a teacher live experiences are always of great value to the students. I wanted my class to see for themselves how some of these cases are dealt with and form their own opinions. I will definitely be arranging another visit!"



Student Recognition Awards

Students and staff gathered together to celebrate the second 'Student Recognition Awards'.

The ceremony, held each semester at UNIC, is a celebration of all the hard work and dedication of the students. Each lecturer nominates an individual from each module to win the prestigious award for their contribution during the semester.

Once again the awards were received by a diverse range of students across Foundation, First Year and Pre-Master's programmes.

Louise Young, Manager of Student Services, said: "The students were buzzing after the awards and it was fantastic to see so many of them being recognised and congratulated by their peers. One of the best things about working at UNIC is being able to organise and be part of events like this. A huge well done to all the students who received an award."



Engineering students gear up for the future

Students studying Foundation Engineering were given the fantastic opportunity to visit a leading automotive manufacturer and factory to further their understanding.

Unipart, based in Coventry, is a tier 1 automotive supplier working for clients at a number of prestige vehicle makers.

The students spent a full afternoon at the warehouse touring the facilities and learning more about research and development and the innovative technologies they use to deliver their products.

Falah Shaikh, Engineering student at UNIC, said: "I loved my time at Unipart. The staff were really informative and friendly and it has made me think lots about where I want to work when I finish my degree and the industries we can go in to."



UNDER PRESSURE! Science students get back in the labs

Students have been finding out their blood type as part of their studies this month.

The Foundation Science and Healthcare students, who will progress onto a number of University programmes including Human Bioscience in September 2017, have been using the labs in preparation for their university studies.

Dr. Rebecca Rickaby, UNIC Lecturer, said: "Many of them will use the labs regularly as part of their degree studies

and so familiarising them now is only going to improve their success in their future studies."

On this occasion the group were looking at the cardiovascular system and how to analyse and determine blood type.

Mohammed Ballout, Foundation Science student at UNIC commented: "I loved being in the labs. At first I was nervous because the teacher said we would have to prick our finger as part of the experiment but in the end that made it even more rewarding and fun."

Pre-Master's students get down to business

At UNIC all students study a module called Interactive Learning Skills and Communication (ILSC) in addition to the academic modules on their programmes.

This core module is fundamental to the UNIC provision as it continues to develop the students English skills alongside essential study skills that are beneficial to their chosen university degrees and future careers.

Pre-Master's students on this module had to give an individual presentation to the rest of their class to develop their speaking and communication skills.

Jo Kukuczka, ILSC Lecturer at UNIC and Pre-Sessional English teacher at UoN, said: "I was so impressed by the standard of the presentations and the confidence in which they delivered them. Giving a presentation to a room of people is never an easy task yet they rose to the challenge and each and every one of them should feel very proud."

Lecturer profile – Hossein Katatian



What do you teach?
Business Studies and Marketing Strategies

How would you describe your teaching style?
I try to use my personal business experiences as much as possible to help students understand that the subject they are studying will directly affect their future. I use a range of teaching methods such as; classroom lecture and seminars, group discussion, review of weekly case studies supported by a blended learning approach.

Where have you worked / studied previously?
I earned my PhD in Strategic Management and Leadership from City of London College. My areas of research include marketing strategies, foreign direct investment, change management, and strategic management. My PhD research is on the impact of foreign direct investment in economic performance of the UK. My teaching experience includes business studies and its functions in relation to the different type of businesses.

Your tip for university success:
Be confident but don't assume you know it all. There is so much to learn and gain by being a student.





“Best community and environment to study” UNIC internal survey challenges barriers to international study

A recent article published in *The Times Higher Education* revealed 52 per cent of students who considered studying abroad felt fears over safety and security to be a major barrier to them choosing international study.

The survey of 5,255 13 to 18-year-olds from 27 countries also revealed other roadblocks to be fear of isolation, homesickness and discrimination.

Following these unsettling statistics we composed a survey and asked current UNIC students to comment on these barriers. Just over 95% of the respondents said they felt safe and secure as a student living in Northampton.

The UNIC survey also revealed that as well as feeling safe in Northampton, 95% also extended that to the college itself.

One student who took the survey commented: “UNIC has built an international community that makes it an easier transition into the UK and an easy going and smooth transition into university life.”

Another student commented: “The environment in and around UNIC is fantastic for me, especially coming for the first time to a new country. It sure has helped me develop as a person and as a student.”

To read the full article please go to www.unicstudents.tumblr.com.

Progression rates and exam data

Since official opening
in September 2016:

- 97.5% retention
- 97% progression rate (Pre-Master’s only at this stage)
- 100% student examination attendance
- 91% of Foundation Modules had 92% or higher pass rate

Pick up a copy of **UNIC and You**

Students across a range of different UNIC pathways joined together this semester to create the first ever edition of the UNIC student magazine, ‘UNIC and You.’

Every aspect of ‘UNIC and You’ from the photography, design and articles were created by the students with guidance from UNIC’s Marketing Coordinator, Fiona Watson.

Fiona Watson commented: “It has been a pleasure to help coordinate this project and I am so proud of the students. It looks so professional and is a true reflection of all the hard work and effort that went into creating it.

“We are keen for this to be the first of many editions to give our students an opportunity to engage with a fun project which allows them to continue to improve their written English as well as develop employability skills.”

