

Course boosts students' success

BA (Hons) Learning in Families, Schools and Beyond, is aimed at para-professionals already working in extended schools, children's centres, family settings and in the community as well as people wanting to work in these settings.

It provides the opportunity to understand the growing emphasis on learning beyond schools, develop knowledge of the principles of learning in schools, communities and families and gain an understanding of child development. Students also gain knowledge and understanding of lifelong learning, inclusion, raising standards and the Every Child Matters agenda.

We are delighted to highlight the success of students, who have secured new jobs relating to their degree.

Michelle Kirton, from Billingham has recently accepted a new job with the Families Information Service in Stockton on Tees. This will involve advising families and children on services available to them. Prior to gaining this job, she had a Marketing and Admissions role at the University of Teesside.

When asked if she feels this degree has enhanced her career prospects, Michelle replies: "the degree title itself says it all! 'Learning in Families, Schools and Beyond' instantly tells a potential employer that you are learning relevant and up to date knowledge about families and schools.

In five years time, Michelle hopes to be "completing a PGCE and starting a career as a primary school teacher."

Vicky Jackson from Wallsend, chose to study BA (Hons) Learning in Families for a number of reasons. She said: "The course is accessible and taught part-time in the evenings with an element of distance learning which allows child care to be worked around it. I have continued to

work as I am a single parent therefore need the income whilst studying. Having previously had a negative experience with a distance learning degree, I felt I needed the support of peers and tutors and regular class contact to raise my confidence in my ability to study at this level."

Prior to studying for this degree, Vicky worked at Tyne Metropolitan College as a learning mentor which involved raising students' aspirations to consider Higher Education as part of the Government's Aimhigher initiative.

Since starting the degree, Vicky has just taken a new role within the college as a Trainer in Skills for Work.

Vicky says: 'The experience I have gained from working with adult learners and within the community, as well as the nature of the degree has definitely helped me secure this job'.

When asked where she thinks she will be in her career in five years time, Vicky said: 'I will have completed my PGCE and will hopefully be making a difference to children's lives by

working with parents to raise the profile of the impact of positive parenting'.

Margaret Hall, from Whitley Bay, decided to continue studying part-time after completing two Higher Education Foundation Courses at North Tyneside College which were linked to Northumbria University.

Margaret says she chose Northumbria because: "having previously worked at the University; I knew that they had high standards and high expectations for their students. Also the course was at a convenient time and place for me to study.

When asked how she feels studying for this degree has enhanced her career prospects, she said: "The degree has allowed me to compete for jobs which I would not have felt able to apply for; jobs which suggest that degree level qualifications are required. Even though I was not in possession of the degree at the time I was able to demonstrate that the qualification was being worked towards and I had the ability to take on the position.



Vicky Jackson



Margaret Hall

End of Life Master-class attracts key note speakers

'Around half a million people die in England each year, of whom almost two thirds are aged over 75. The large majority of deaths at the start of the twenty first century follow a period of chronic illness such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, chronic respiratory disease, neurological disease or dementia'.

End of Life Strategy, DoH 2008

The School of Health, Community and Education Studies will be hosting a Master-class in End of Life Care which will address the specific needs of this client group.

The Master-class is designed to enable interested practitioners from all specialities to acquire knowledge and skills for the development and application of End of Life Care.

The key note address will be hosted by Edwin Pugh Chairman of SHA North East End of Life Darzi Clinical Working Group and Ann Fox Nurse Director of the North of England cancer Network and the afternoon workshops will reflect innovative and contemporary issues in this important developing area of practice.

If you have any comments to make about this newsletter, or would like to submit editorial, please contact alice.andreasen@northumbria.ac.uk.

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SHOWCASE

HEALTH COMMUNITY EDUCATION

NEWSLETTER • JANUARY 2009 SCHOOL OF HEALTH, COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION STUDIES

Contents

Esteemed RNC Fellow appointed Acting Dean	1
Talented trio further bust pre-registration health	2
Coach Lane welcomes latest Egyptian cohort	3
Regina hopes to establish educational links	3
Cultural exchange for nursing lecturers	4
Senior lecturer takes visitors to the skies	4
Saffron secures stint as Vice President	5
Heaton grandmother goes for doctorate	5
Coach Lane welcomes new school reps	6
Paralympics trainer gets bitten by the teaching bug	6
FISHNETS pilot success secures additional funding	7
Shelina secures prestigious award	7
Course boosts students' success	8
End of life master-class attracts key speakers	8

Esteemed RNC Fellow appointed Acting Dean

Following the retirement of Professor Roy Stephens this summer, Professor Kath McCourt, FRCN, has been appointed as Acting Dean of the School.

She said: "I am delighted to have been appointed Acting Dean at such an exciting and challenging time.

"I start my post at a time when the School is in an enviably strong position within the domestic and international market place and is consistently seen as being a leader in the field of teaching and research in the caring and enabling professions.



"One of my key drivers is to encourage the further integration of research and enterprise with teaching and learning which will, in turn, continue the School's tradition of producing high calibre graduates who are in great demand by employers.

"We are well known for our commitment to Continuing inter Professional Development and continue to carve ourselves a growing niche for flexible education responsive to the needs of an ever changing market place.

"The growing success of the School is in no small part due to the hard work and sustained efforts of our academic, administrative and support staff, with whom I look forward to working closely to further shape the successful future of the School."

Professor McCourt is a Fellow of the Royal College of Nursing (FRCN). The RCN Fellowship is the highest honour that the RCN can bestow. She recently received this in recognition of her exceptional contribution to the advancement of nursing and health care.

Key dates

Date	Event
2003	Appointed as Associate Dean of the School.
August 2007	Awarded a personal professorial chair in Nurse Leadership and Workforce Development and Education.
April 2008	Became a Fellow of the Royal College of Nursing (FRCN)
September 2008	Appointed as Acting Dean of the School.

Talented trio further boost pre-registration health

As the largest School in the University we strive to appoint staff with a combination of specialist expertise in the caring and enabling professions and to that end, we are pleased to announce three new senior lecturer appointments to Pre-registration Health.

Yvonne Hindmarsh will be responsible for modules within the Common Foundation Programme (CFP) part of the pre-registration adult nursing programme.

She has substantial experience within the caring environment having worked at Queen Elizabeth Hospital Gateshead as a Practice Placement Facilitator (PPF) and prior to that at Newcastle Hospitals.

Northumbria University appealed to Yvonne after working closely with many university staff and systems and she adds that: "it allows me to pursue my love of teaching after completing the PGCAL/PGDAL course and I am really looking forward to teaching on the programme."

Paul McCoy also joins the pre-registration adult nursing team; and will be teaching on a variety of modules as well as lecturing to the St George's first year medical students.

Paul previously worked for Newcastle Primary Care Trust as a senior nurse and manager for a rapid response service. His previous nursing

roles included working as a charge nurse as well as hospital/trust working centred around the intensive care or high dependency and transplant wards. He is also a qualified teacher and taught science in a secondary school in Gateshead.

Having worked in Newcastle for many years and having had links with the University and Primary Care Trust (PCT), Paul says: "as I had always had an interest in teaching and learning, this felt like a natural progression which incorporates my knowledge, skills and interests."

Paul describes what he looks forward to most as: "the ability and opportunity to inform the future nurses in their care delivery will be a privilege."

Dr Andrew Melling is the third appointee in Programme Area One. His duties will include teaching on the undergraduate Nursing Diploma and Nursing BSc modules as well as Critical Thinking modules on the Postgraduate Nursing Diploma. In addition, he will run a research module on the ODP (Operating Department Practice) Diploma.

Andrew joins us from Renovo, a biotechnology company that is developing anti scarring pharmaceuticals. His main role was the development and validation of clinical endpoints for drug trials with a focus on patient reported outcomes. Prior to this he spent seven years working within the Professorial Unit of Surgery at the University Hospital of North Tees. He also developed a programme of research that focused on the surgical patient and the prevention of adverse outcomes following surgery, in particular surgical infection and postoperative pain which formed the basis of his Doctoral studies.

Andrew first came to Northumbria University in 1996 to complete a year-long BSc in Nursing Studies and particularly enjoyed the research modules. He strongly believes this year shaped his future and consequently always wanted to return.

When asked what he is looking forward to most about his new role, Andrew says: "teaching the health care professionals of the future and hope I can develop an understanding and enthusiasm amongst them for research."

Margaret Rowe, Associate Dean for Pre-registration Health said: "I am really pleased to welcome Yvonne, Paul and Andy to the School. They bring with them a wide range of talent, which will further compliment the dynamic staff of the School."

Coach Lane welcomes latest Egyptian cohort

On October 21st we welcomed the latest cohort of 83 Egyptian students to the School. They came here to undertake the Advanced Diploma in Professional Teaching Practice which is funded by the European Union and is a central part of Egypt's Education Enhancement Programme which aims to improve the quality of teaching and standards of education in Egypt.



On arrival here, the students went straight into an intensive induction programme which covered an introduction to support services they may need, English language training with an emphasis on cultural differences and academic English and IT training to enable them to get their e-citizen qualification.

Mohamed Alnabawi is a teacher of English who has recently arrived; here he gives us an insight into his first impressions of arriving at

Coach Lane:

"Almost everybody agrees that first impressions are very important and may last for ever. I was both excited and slightly worried when the plane landed at Newcastle Airport.

"We reached Coach Lane Campus before evening and I was terribly shocked when it welcomed us with rain and was so cold. The next morning, the weather was nice and I found

that the campus and the whole city looked beautiful. I was impressed by the green areas, the wonderful trees and the beautiful style of building.

"I have found that the people of Newcastle are friendly and helpful. The transport facilities are also fantastic, I feel safe when moving around. I am looking forward to exploring every part of this beautiful city. I think it is a wonderful experience I will never forget."

Regina hopes to establish educational links

A visiting lecturer from Dhulikhel Teaching Hospital of Kathmandu University is visiting the School to discuss the exchange programme between Northumbria University and Dhulikhel.

During her time here, Regina Singh, Nursing Education Director (Associate Professor) intends to find out the differences in the teaching and practice methodology.

When asked what she hopes to gain from here time here, Regina says: "I hope we will establish an educational link and start our student exchange program. This will help both the universities to understand the differences between the countries and societies and also how nursing is practiced in the developing countries and in the developed country. I also hope there will be better understanding of the culture which is greatly required especially in the nursing field.

Regina doesn't think there are many differences in nursing practices here to Nepal. She said: "The only thing is that you use very advanced equipment here to practice nursing like you do not use mercury thermometers here but we use mercury thermometers to measure temperature. The other thing is we have no special midwives in Nepal like you have here. The staff nurses have to conduct all the normal deliveries whereas midwives do this here."

When asked what she believes the benefits of travelling to other countries and experiencing their nursing practices are, Regina said: "Travelling in any aspect broadens the mind. Even though the profession is the same and requires the same skills and knowledge,

differences in culture, traditions and religion makes it difficult sometimes to practice what people have learned. It definitely helps to have a better understanding of these values, since nursing and health education as a whole is so integrated in society you need to be able deal with people all the time.

"Moreover due to differences in technology, one must be able to handle the same situation when equipped with sophisticated devices or when they are left with none. So, for these reasons I believe experiencing nursing practices in other countries definitely helps the individual to grow and be wise in undertaking their responsibilities."

“experiencing nursing practices in other countries definitely helps the individual to grow”



L-R Paul McCoy, Yvonne Hindmarsh and Dr Andrew Melling

Cultural exchange for nursing lecturers

Two Northumbria University nursing lecturers are jetting off to Shanghai to share their teaching styles with Chinese students.

Julie Tweedlie and Dave Armstrong, from the School, will spend a fortnight working at the Shanghai University. They will demonstrate their student-centred learning approach, where students are actively involved in their own education with teachers at the host university.

Their trip follows a two-month visit of Shanghai University lecturers Lu Dong and Xiaoquin Liao, who observed and participated in lessons at Coach Lane to pick up on the teaching techniques employed in the three-year nursing course.

Lu Dong said: "It's been a good experience for us and we have learned some new methods of Evidence Based Learning (EBS) in seminars.

"In China the majority of the lessons are lectures but we found the students here are more active in classes. When the lecturers came to Shanghai University last year our student feedback was very good. After the visit our students became more interactive and asked questions in our lectures.

"Since we began collaborating with Northumbria University in 2004 we have improved some of our teaching styles at Shanghai. We added problem-based learning, where students identify a solution for a medical problem, and we are very interested in the lecturing style."

Xiaoquin Liao said that the lecturer exchange programme has benefits in exposing participants to the best elements from the teaching traditions of both countries.



L-R David Armstrong, Lu Dong, Xiaoquin Liao and Julie Tweedlie

She said: "We want to change things at Shanghai University but at first we must think of the advantages and disadvantages of the various styles. Because of the different educational systems in China and the UK, the students are different so not every style can cross-over, but there are many benefits in combining the two and exchanging ideas."

The lecturer exchange between Northumbria University's School of Health, Community and Education Studies, and Shanghai University in China, is now in its fourth year.

Julie, a senior lecturer in pre-registration nursing, participated in the exchange last year. She said:

"It was very rewarding. That's why I'm keen to go back. We will have to tailor our style slightly

because of the large class sizes. In Shanghai there are around 60 students in each class, whereas our style of interactive teaching works best with 25 students maximum. Our style of teaching gets students to think about their own practice.

"It's very useful for the students to search for books, journals and databases on Nora – the library's search engine, to find information by themselves. We've shown Lu and Xiaoquin how students here can access the e-learning portal, which has all of the lecture notes and the course information they need. We find it a very useful support for our teaching."

David, a senior lecturer in pre-registration nursing, added: "In China the students learn two years of theory and then one year of practice. Here theory and practice are combined from the very first year until they finish the course. We also have a clinical skills lab on campus, a sort of virtual hospital, where students practice before going into a real hospital and working with real patients under supervision.

"It's a more student-centred learning experience. We encourage the students to explore issues and come up with their own solutions and answers based on evidence."

Margaret Rowe, Associate Dean of the School of Health, Community and Education Studies, said: "I'm very proud of the support that Julie and Dave have given to our visiting lecturers. And Xiaoquin and Lu Dong have been absolute ambassadors of Shanghai."

Senior lecturer takes visitors to the skies

David Armstrong, a senior lecturer in pre-registration nursing took Shanghai University lecturers Lu Dong and Xiaoquin Liao on a flying trip around the region.

During their one hour flight from Newcastle International Airport they flew above Morpeth, Alnwick and Holy Island before moving down the coast to Tynemouth and along the Tyne to Newcastle city centre.

David decided to start flying as a 50th birthday present to himself and it took a year and 50 hours of flying to gain his

private pilot's licence. He has been flying for three years and is also a Lieutenant Colonel in a Territorial Army medical regiment. He has served in Germany, Oman and Jersey and has previously been compulsory mobilised to Kuwait, then Iraq in 2003 on Operation Telic as the Officer Commanding the collective protection unit (COLPRO), a hospital contained inside rubber bubbles, allowing care to be given to the wounded in a hostile, chemical or bacterially contaminated environment.

Saffron secures stint as Vice-President

A second year student studying Child Nursing has secured the prestigious role of Vice-President for the European Association of Student Nurses.

Saffron Brown will hold the position for a year, in which time she hopes to ensure that the opinions of nursing students in Britain are represented; in particular with the progression of the Bologna process, which hopes to make academic degree standards and quality assurance standards more comparable and compatible throughout Europe.

Saffron was recently invited as the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) representative for the North, to attend the European Nursing Students Association (ENSA) AGM in Edinburgh. She spoke about what she believed she could bring to her role which included hard work, commitment and the promotion of ENSA and its beliefs.

Her role with the RNC has also allowed her to comment on the Nursing and Midwifery Council pre-registration review.

Saffron believes that her role as Vice-President will provide endless benefits to her studies. She said: "I was recently invited to Brussels by the European Commission to review a campaign called 'help: for a life without tobacco'.

"This gave me an insight into how policies are made and those who are involved in the process. Due to the research that the European Commission had done on the project, I was able to consider it with regard to my critical analysis for self directed study.

"I also believe that this experience will benefit my fellow students as I can download what I learn to them as well as contribute diverse perspectives in class discussions."

When asked her career goals for the future, Saffron says:



"I want to be a policy maker of the future and this is a step in the right direction."

Heaton grandmother goes for doctorate

Grandmother Elsie Richardson knows that you are never too old to learn. The 82-year-old has already passed a degree before gaining an MA more than 60 years after she first left the classroom.

And despite her tender years she's back in the lecture theatre again as she begins studying for her PhD here at the School of Health, Community and Education Studies.

Mrs Richardson, of Heaton, Newcastle, enrolled in the research study where she is investigating the influence of older people on policy making in the 21st Century.

The mother of three, who was widowed 25 years ago when husband Bill died, has managed to grasp the technological advances of computers and has even managed to create her own website.

Mrs Richardson was one of only two students to be awarded a bursary to continue her studies and also acts as a guest lecturer on the subject of older people in society. Passionate about the rights of older people, she admits one of the reasons behind the research is due to the lack of influence older people have when it comes to the policy making of organisations.

She added: "It's a subject which is quite close to my heart. Who knows better than us what we all want.

As a teenager she left Newcastle's Central High School for Girls but like many young women at the time couldn't continue with her education.

"I did all the normal things that most young girls did at the time, I got married and had three wonderful daughters, I don't regret any of that.

"Later I was doing a lot of volunteer work, but not a lot of brain work.

That all changed when her youngest daughter Nicola recommended a course, handed her the phone and before she knew it she had enrolled on a degree in Human Organisations.

Mrs Richardson, who is also a member of the Students' Union, added: "I knew I would get on reasonably well with young people but it was quite daunting going into a class of about 30 19-year-olds fresh from school.



"Not only did I have to start learning again, I also had to get to grips with computers. But whereas the rest of them were streets ahead with that, because of my life experience I was streets ahead of them.

"Going to university changed my whole life. I would love to achieve my PhD, I still have two years to go. They called me the Queen Mother of the university which I thought was rather nice.

As well as studying for her doctorate the pensioner sits on the board of nine committees and is the vice chairman of Newcastle's Years Ahead project.

The retired administrator added: "It's never too late to learn. I want to encourage people to go out and meet people, it's better than sitting inside the house just looking out if the window and watching rubbish on the TV."

Charlotte Clarke, Associate Dean for research says: "Elsie makes a major contribution to our community of postgraduate research students and is an excellent role model for the commitment necessary to achieve a doctoral degree. Elsie's skill in influencing policy at the highest levels is something we can all learn from. I wish her well in completing her research."

Coach Lane welcomes new school reps

School representatives have a key role dealing with a wide range of issues and providing a channel of communication between staff and students and we are delighted to welcome three news reps into the fold.

Abigail Whitehead is studying Dip HE Adult Nursing. She hopes to implement the views of staff, students and visitors to the school and be someone people recognise as a person they can go to with comments and suggestions.

Priscilla Peart is studying BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing and hopes to make a difference to the University. She believes the benefits of having a school representative system is that there is a team ready to deal with any problems. The same team are there fighting behind the scenes to make sure that the students are dealt a fair deal and are represented by people making decisions on their behalf.

Ailie Hodgson is studying MSc Occupational Therapy and believes the University needs representation from students in order to implement fair and beneficial changes. She feels this is particularly important to the School of Health, Community and Education Studies as so many students are out on placements and need as much support and representation as possible in order to develop and learn.



Priscilla Peart, Ailie Hodgson, Abigail Whitehead

Paralympic trainer gets bitten by the teaching bug

A Northumbria graduate who has trained Britain's Paralympic sailing team missed seeing his students compete at the Games to start a primary school teaching course here at Coach Lane.

Martin Boatman, who graduated with a first class Geography degree this summer, returned early from the Paralympic Games which ran in Beijing between the 6th and 17th September to begin a PGCE course.

The 24-year-old, from Washington, has been competing in amateur sailing races since a young child and was asked by a member of the Paralympic sailing team to help with training.

"My involvement came through my own sailing successes and because I knew one of the team members they asked me to get involved," Martin said.

"We trained for a week in Ireland and two

weeks on the South Coast."

Martin flew over to Beijing earlier this month with the three members of the Paralympic team – John Robertson, Steve Thomas and Hannah Stodel – where he continued their training leading up to the international event.

Martin believes his experiences in coaching will help in his future career as a primary school teacher.

"I was doing a lot of coaching with my interest in sailing and I realised that I like working with kids," he said. "While I was studying for my degree I took a geography and education module and that helped me to decide to become a primary school teacher."

Martin Boatman

FISHNETS pilot success secures additional funding

Dr Pam Dawson and a team of academics including Dr Glenda Cook, and older people researchers, Patricia Bell, Margaret Brannigan, Irene Frater and John Kenneth Ritchie, recently carried out local action research evaluation of Northumberland FISHNETS (keeping older people Fit, Involved, Safe, and Healthy through sustainable community NETworks).

This service development was one of 29 pilot sites in the Department of Health, Partnership for Older People programme (POPP). This programme aimed to develop preventative, basic services to keep older people at home for longer and prevent or delay hospital admission and the need for long term care. In keeping with this aim, the FISHNETS pilot developed a comprehensive falls prevention programme across Northumberland County including universal primary prevention and targeted interventions for those most at risk of falls.

The evaluation concluded that FISHNETS has achieved its aims, as evidenced by target-based criteria. Importantly, the general perception of the FISHNETS interventions, arising through interviews with service users, is that they contribute to falls prevention, promote

physical well-being, improving social inclusion, making homes safer and fostering independence in later life.

A unique feature of this service development was the involvement of older people in the development of the FISHNETS proposal that successfully secured £2.2million from the Department of Health for the pilot.

During the implementation of the pilot older people were central to service planning decisions and were involved in the governance of the FISHNETS pilot and service delivery.

The older person's voice has also been strong and influential in the evaluation. They were active partners throughout all stages of the evaluation, with an older person member of the FISHNETS Board engaged in the evaluation steering group and the FISHNETS research



The Northumbria FISHNETS evaluation team L-R sitting, Patricia Bell and Margaret Brannigan Standing John Kenneth Ritchie, Dr Glenda Cook, Dr Pam Dawson and Irene Frater

team taking part in data collection, data analysis and report writing. Throughout the evaluation the team shared their understandings of FISHNETS with academic researchers, leading to the development of new insights to the experiences and concerns of older people living in Northumberland.

The team will continue to work together as they have successfully secured funding to carry out an evaluation of an innovative senior peer mentoring scheme that is being developed in Northumberland. Evaluation studies such as these are contributing the move to carry out research with and by older people rather than merely treating older people as sources of data.

Shelina secures prestigious award

We are delighted to report that Shelina Visram, who is working towards her PhD in Public Health, has recently been awarded a Research Training Fellowship (RTF) by The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR).

Her research 'Exploring the issues of client engagement and health behaviour change in the NHS Health Trainers initiative: a comparative, qualitative study to inform the intervention development and evaluation' will focus on NHS Health Trainers.

Health Trainers employ a range of approaches to encourage and enable people from disadvantaged communities to make healthier lifestyle choices. However, it is not fully understood how they engage with 'hard-to-reach' clients and which approach is likely to be most successful. Her research aims to enhance understanding of the issues of client engagement in the Health Trainer intervention, by conducting a qualitative comparison of two different models of local service provision in the North East of England.

Shelina said: "I feel extremely proud to

have been awarded an NIHR Research Training Fellowship. These Fellowships are highly competitive. 12 candidates were selected this year from more than 100 applicants. This is the first time an NIHR Fellowship has been awarded to an applicant from Northumbria and I hope that it will be the first of many!"

"The NIHR-RTF award will allow me to build on the links that I have already developed around the NHS Health Trainers initiative and to consolidate my knowledge in this field."

"In five years' time, I aim to be an independent research leader and go on to develop a portfolio of high quality research that will be used to inform policy and practice. It is hoped that the findings of my research will have some impact on efforts to tackle persistent health inequalities and address major public health issues in the UK and beyond."

