

Honorary Community newsletter

BUILT FOR LIFE



Welcome to UCEM's quarterly update to our Honorary Awards Community - UCEM's Honorary and Associate Fellows, Honorary Degree recipients and Property Award winners - our community of steadfast and supportive friends of UCEM. This edition brings you up to speed on all things UCEM this Summer, a progress update on the year to date and a special tribute to former CEM Principal Peter Huntsman. It was fantastic to see so many of you again in person at our Community Luncheon in June - we hope you enjoyed it!

As ever, we welcome your feedback and comments so we can continue to evolve the newsletter. Thank you for your ongoing and loyal support to this great institution. We very much look forward to seeing many of you again at the next opportunity - the Property Awards in London in October. Until then we wish you an enjoyable summer.



Ashley
Principal

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Jane
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UCEM update

It continues, as ever, to have been a very busy period for us at UCEM. As we approach our year end on 31 July, we have been reflecting on the year gone by and some of the key milestones we have reached in our journey to become the **Centre of Excellence for Built Environment Education** and the **world's most sustainable university**. We have exceeded our new student recruitment and retained student number targets for the year meaning we now have over 4,000 students studying on programme. We are now already busy working towards our autumn targets and our fantastic Business Development Team are securing many new apprentices to study with us. More impressive still though, is our ever-improving ability to retain students with us on programme. Following an intensive programme of work lasting some eighteen months by our academic and digital learning teams, we have successfully enhanced all our programmes and modules. We have also enhanced and optimized many student processes which are gaining traction in terms of student success rates. Alongside this, the Virtual Learning Environment our students use for their studies has been substantially upgraded. We are an institution wholly committed to supporting our students to succeed and to have an exceptional student experience with us - this work will now evolve towards revalidation of all our Undergraduate and Postgraduate programmes during 2024.

We have been working hard to produce our **Access and Participation Plan (APP) 2024-2028** for submission to the Office for Students in July. UCEM is participating in the Wave 1 cohort of plans to be determined by the OfS this summer. The plan includes a focus on local outreach for under-16-year-olds, an increased focus on student success, details of our mental health provision for students and a focus on collaboration with industry partners, charities and other organisations to deliver activities. The APP is just one element of UCEM's commitment to diversity and **widening participation** in the industries that we serve. We are also supporting students through the cost-of-living crisis with ongoing Hardship Funding.



Our **Sustainability Strategy** (GLOBE) was launched earlier this year and we are reaching the end of stage one of our delivery plan. Our focus this year was the launch of the MSc Innovations in Sustainable Built Environments which represents a critical and substantial step in our institutional ambitions to lead the way in creating a sustainable built environment. Our institution-wide approach has seen us achieve a successful stage one ISO 14001:2015 external audit for the UCEM Horizons office building and operations with zero non-conformities. The next step will be a two-day on-site audit in August which will include a building inspection and interviews with senior management. As part of stage one this year we asked all UCEM staff to undertake Energy and Carbon training and this is also nearing completion. We have also launched four **new sustainability CPD modules** on our **Online Academy**.

Highlights in this edition



Online Academy: sustainability CPD modules

AWARDED

Our first Knowledge Transfer Partnership

We were delighted to be awarded our first **Knowledge Transfer Partnership** in June, which is a big step forward in UCEM's research ambitions. The funding is for a collaborative project with The Prince's Foundation and is worth over £150K. The project will be funded by Innovate UK and will allow UCEM to work collaboratively in shared goals towards developing sustainability. We hope it will be the first of many such partnerships.

In late April, UCEM participated in its first ever **Go Green Week**. Our Student Officers for Sustainability were integral to the success of this week which showcased information, activities and events as part of our sustainability student initiatives. Some of our alumni shared their experiences of sustainability at UCEM and in their workplaces, there was a sustainability escape room webinar and a meat-free recipe exchange to encourage staff and students to adapt to having at least one plant-based day per week to name just a few of the initiatives. We also participated in the **Reading Climate Festival** events with 14 members of our staff delivering sustainability-themed school workshops over two days in late June. We joined forces with the CIOB for a webinar titled Meeting the Sustainability Skills Challenge the aim of which was to demonstrate UCEM's thought leadership in sustainability and Craig Bennett, Chief Executive Officer at The Wildlife Trusts and UCEM Honorary Degree holder, hosted an interactive All Staff webinar about sustainability in July.

Our aim remains to become the **world's most sustainable university** through positively educating

staff and students to adopt a more sustainable future as they work to shape the world around us.

In other institutional news, Ashley Wheaton will be heading to **Hong Kong** in late July for the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic. He will be meeting with staff in our UCEM Asia Ltd office and reconnecting with our key partners and Honorary Fellows in the region. Our **Board of Trustees** met in early July and received an informative and engaging presentation from Michael Salmon, News Editor at Wonkhe, about the policy context in higher education and the potential challenges ahead, including the implications of a change in government in the coming years. The Board was delighted to spend time with staff over afternoon tea at the close of the meeting. We sadly said goodbye to one of our Student Trustees, Joe Orrell, at this meeting and will be working to replace him on the Board through the autumn. We have started recruiting for the next UCEM Board Apprentices who will replace Rebekah Powley and Laura Bell McMillan who have been with us for the last two years but will sadly stand down in November.

Finally, our staff continue to develop and enjoy a wide variety of initiatives that make UCEM such a vibrant community and enjoyable place to work. We held our annual summer BBQ at our Shinfield Grange site on one of the hottest days of the year so far in mid-June. We enjoyed fabulous food and beverages, music by That's Ecotainment, outdoor games on the lawn and of course a visit from an ice cream van.



Louise Comley (right), Senior Business Development Executive, and her friend Sara on their way to Windsor Castle for the Coronation Concert

UCEM was also the very lucky recipient of some tickets for the Coronation Concert in May courtesy of our association with His Majesty The King as our Patron. Four ecstatic members of staff won tickets through a staff ballot to enjoy acts including Lionel Ritchie, Take That and Katy Perry. We are also continuing our support of our new nominated charity partner No 5 Counselling who provide life changing confidential 1:1 counselling for young people.

Honorary Community Luncheon

9 June 2023

We were thrilled to see so many of you (especially after the late date change due to train strikes) at the annual Honorary Community luncheon held at Ironmongers Hall in London on 9 June 2023. It was marvelous to see such a vibrant mix of old and new members connecting with each other over fabulous food, drink and summer sunshine. Congratulations again to Ella Campbell, Phoebe Farrell and Lucy Gaitskell who were presented with their Associate Fellowship certificates and welcomed formally into our community. We hope you enjoyed it as much as us and look forward to seeing you all at the next occasion.



Honorary and Associate Fellow Nominations

The annual nominations window for 2023 for Honorary or Associate Fellows is open from 11 July to **Friday 18 August 2023**. You are invited to nominate anyone who meets the criteria using the information and form available **on the website**. Please send your completed forms to **nominations@ucem.ac.uk**. Nominations received will be considered by the UCEM Nominations and Governance Committee in September 2023.



Meet the UCEM team



Hannah Al-Katib

Director of Strategy and Planning

UCEM has ambitious goals to evolve into the Centre of Excellence for Built Environment Education and the World's most sustainable university. Strategic planning and undertaking of significant projects are a core element of delivering against these goals and leading this work for UCEM is Hannah Al-Katib, Director of Strategy and Planning.

What is your role for UCEM?

I am the Director of Strategy and Planning. My role is to support UCEM to achieve its strategic objectives through delivery of projects, annual planning, management of risks to the institution and monitoring of UCEM's performance against its strategic plan.

How long have you worked for UCEM?

I've been at UCEM for four years, and the time has flown by!

How did you come to be in this role and/or why did you join UCEM?

My background is project management. I previously worked in international development delivering projects in Africa and Asia, and also delivered projects in transport research. I joined UCEM because I was interested in delivering organisational change and my role has evolved from managing UCEM's Transform project to establishing the Strategy & Planning Office. As UCEM has grown our need for greater planning and management of change has increased, and the Strategy & Planning Office seeks to enable that.

What is your favourite part of your job and what motivates you every day?

The thing I like about my job the most is that it's focused on continually making things better and driving us forward. I love problem solving and I'm motivated when I can see the progress that we've made and ways in which we can be even more effective.

What is your greatest professional achievement at UCEM so far?

I'm really proud to have established the Strategy & Planning team - we didn't have that kind of function at UCEM, and as the institution has grown over the past few years, the need for strong planning and coordination of change has become ever more important. Building up my team has been really enjoyable.

What do you find challenging about your work?

The nature of our work in a lot of cases is outside of the day-to-day of UCEM - much of what my team does is bringing in change and new capability. It can be challenging to do that when staff are rightly focused on ensuring that the day-to-day is running smoothly - we have to strike a balance in demand on their time to engage with new projects.

What's one thing that has surprised you about working for UCEM?

I think UCEM is one of the best organisations I've encountered in terms of the care it has for its staff - you always hope when you join an organisation that they will be good to work for, and I had a good impression when I interviewed. But the level to which UCEM actively thinks about how it can constantly do more to engage its staff both surprised and impressed me.

What's next for you / your team at UCEM?

Our big focus this year has been Globe, our programme of work to deliver UCEM's sustainability ambitions. That will continue to be key for us, and I'll be focusing in the coming months on developing the new five-year strategic plan, 2025-2030.

What three words sum up UCEM for you?

Dedication, Support, Education.

UCEM Online

Catch up on these key stories and events if you missed them

Don't forget the [Honorary Community webpage](#) is now live.

INSPIRE



UCEM held its inaugural INSPIRE event in May 2023 – a series of occasional themed sessions that will convene influential stakeholders to consider the various challenges facing the built environment sector (so that it can together Influence for Skills, Productivity, Industry, Research and Education). The event was focused on identifying ways to enhance professional and technical apprenticeships and supported by the Construction Industry Council and the Construction Leadership Council. The outcome report was launched at the second INSPIRE event focused on the importance of leadership in achieving a more sustainable built environment on 13 July with some 130 delegates in attendance. [Read full article.](#)



Building Perspectives

UCEM is continuing its free live webinar series Building Perspectives to grow influence and impact across industry and education. The third installment, held by Professor Noble Francis, took place on 27 April and focused on the construction industry and ensuring a sustainable future despite the cost-of-living crisis. The fourth installment took place in June focused on how to protect small businesses from climate change as part of the Reading Climate Festival, [visit the webpage for more information.](#)



New MSc programme

MSc Innovation in Sustainable Built Environments UCEM's new MSc programme is open for new entrants for the first cohort in September 2023. The **programme** has featured in numerous articles across industry press: Build in Digital and International Construction. [Please visit the website for more information.](#)



Graduation ceremony

UCEM's June Graduation ceremony was attended by over 200 graduates and 600 guests and featured honorary speakers Dan Labbad of The Crown Estate and Caroline Gumble of the CIOB. We also awarded an Honorary Fellowship to Professor Gary Yeung, The Peter Goodacre Award to Peter Maxwell and The Chapman Adkin Prize to Adam Stride. We were also delighted to welcome to Reading a cohort of students from Hong Kong to enjoy the special day. [View photos.](#)

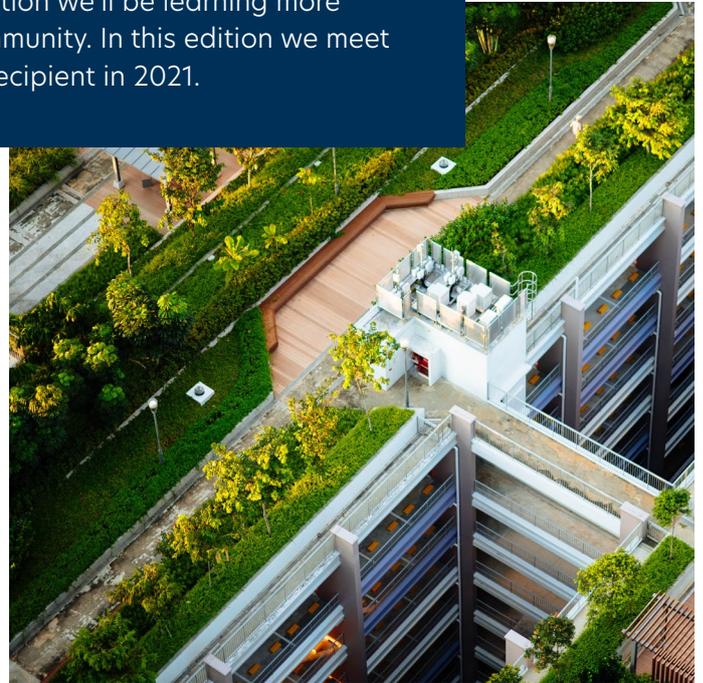
The Honorary Awards Community

It is important to UCEM to grow the community of Honorary Award recipients and help you get to know each other better, so every edition we'll be learning more about members of the UCEM Honorary Awards Community. In this edition we meet Professor Sadie Morgan OBE, Honorary Doctorate recipient in 2021.



Professor Sadie Morgan

OBE



How were you connected to UCEM?

I am honoured to have received an honorary Doctorate from UCEM.

What are you doing now?

I have about 6 jobs! I founded an Architectural practice dRMM when I left university which has grown to 50 with offices in London and Berlin. I also advise central government on housing and infrastructure on a number of commissions/ boards. Four years ago, I set up the Quality of Life Foundation to help ensure health and wellbeing is central to our built environment.

What's the biggest challenge you faced in your career?

Becoming a mother and juggling work and home life.

What is your greatest professional achievement so far?

Winning the Stirling prize for Hastings Pier has to be high up in achievements, but accepting my OBE from the HRH Princess Royal was a highlight.

What is your best memory of UCEM?

The energy and passion of the students and staff.

What three words sum up UCEM for you?

Rigour, professionalism and fun.

If you could have done any other job for just one day what would it have been?

A nurse. My sister has been a nurse all

of her life - I have a huge amount of respect for our NHS and would love to fully appreciate the highs and lows of what she experiences every day.

If you could meet anyone in the world, dead or alive who would it be and why?

Joan of Arc - she was young, brave and an inspiration to women to this day.

What is the first thing you would buy if you won the lottery?

A forest.

A Special Tribute: Peter Huntsman

CEM Principal 1981-1992, Honorary Fellow from 1992



Peter also spearheaded the development of UCEM's teaching activities in Hong Kong, our research activities, our in-house and CPD training provision for employers, and the growth in international students. During his time as Principal, Peter had the honour of meeting with CEM's Royal Patrons HM Queen Elizabeth II (and her husband HRH The Duke of Edinburgh) and HRH the Prince of Wales (now HM King Charles III). His role also enabled him to meet many government ministers of the time including Michael Heseltine, Kenneth Clarke, Edwina Currie and John Redwood.

Peter was a Member of the Chartered Surveyors Livery Company, Freeman of the City of London, author of a chapter in Walmsley's Rural Estate Management and received the Property Man of the Year award in 1992.

Peter was known for nurturing talent, offering opportunity and recognising achievement. Values we still hold dear at UCEM today. Ashley and Jane were honoured to represent UCEM at his funeral in West Sussex on 7 June. Peter will be a very much missed member of our community.

We learnt the sad news of Peter Huntsman's passing in April 2023.

Peter's connections with UCEM began in early September 1958 on the steps to St Albans Grove, Kensington, as a new Student of the then CEM, and would go on to span a 60-year period. He was a keen sportsman during his studies, alongside being an active member of the College Debating Team, reaching London finals in both disciplines. Peter received his degree in June 1961 and entered a career with The Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food where he spent some twenty very happy years, starting out as Assistant Land Commissioner and going on to become Head of Land Economics and Valuation. During the 1960s, he began tutoring for CEM and was also an examiner in various subjects for rural students.

As Principal of UCEM from 1981 to 1992, his leadership for twelve years significantly contributed to the development of the then College and steered the institution through some challenging financial times. Amongst his many achievements, he launched eight pre-qualification and post-qualification courses, including the Diploma in Surveying in 1986, which at its peak had over 6,000 students. The course became the precursor to our current undergraduate degrees and was fully accredited by the RICS.



Peter Huntsman's portrait hanging in UCEM's Horizons office building in Reading - all Principal's of UCEM have their portrait painted as they step down from the role.

Forthcoming occasions and events



UCEM Graduation Dec 2023

Saturday 2 December 2023

Town Hall Reading



Property Award 2023

Thursday 12 October 2023

Institute of Directors in Central London

Invitations have been issued – if you have not registered, please email specialevents@ucem.ac.uk to do so before September 2023.

If you have any suggestions for the UCEM Honorary Community newsletter, or would like to contribute please email Lyndsay Hughes at l.hughes@ucem.ac.uk.

