

Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College

Report for the Student Committee of Governors

April 2009

Students have been involved in a wide range of activities since the last report in October. Some activities have been arranged by subject areas, others have been organised by students themselves. Individual and group achievements have been celebrated, and community links have been developed.

Student Association

- Students and staff went back to school for the college's annual St. Trinian's Day where they put on their old school uniforms, participated in a fashion catwalk and other games and enjoyed the contents of a tuck shop! £585 was raised for the Children's Foundation which is supporting the Great North Children's Hospital that is due to open in Newcastle in 2010. The money will be used to purchase stimulating, funky furniture for the hospital and to provide visits from the Clown Doctors and other performers who will brighten up the children's stay with music, play and story-telling. During St. Trinian's Day, there was a great atmosphere in College and everyone gave generously and entered into the spirit of the event. It was also a good way to end the first half of the Autumn Term.



- The Student Association has raised vast sums of money for a range of other charities. Recent fun fundraisers have included volunteers braving body waxing for Children in Need, which raised £120. Sixty eight roses were sold and delivered to students on Valentine's Day and, together with profits from a sweet stall, £98.88 was raised for the 'Kiss It Better' charity which helps children with cancer. On Red Nose Day, the college became a riot of colour when staff and students "did something funny for money" and joined in a Fancy Dress day. A packed Common Room witnessed a catwalk competition where there were prizes for: Craziest Hair, Funniest Hat, Wacky Tacky Tie, Most Colourful and Best in Show. There was also a cake stall at Break and a total of £361 was raised for Comic Relief. Other bake sales have also been held for various charities, including one to aid the victims in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

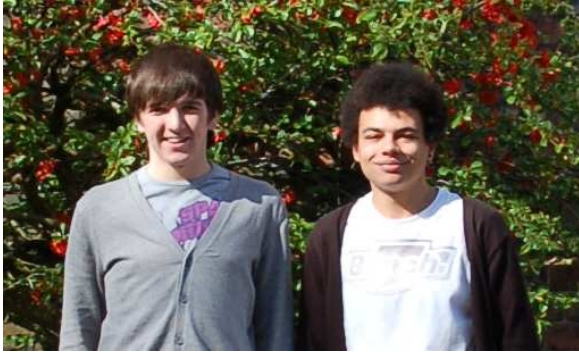
- The annual Battle of the Bands final was held in the Main Hall and, after two entertaining and highly competitive heats at the Forum, four student bands made it through to the final – New Horizons, As Skies Fall, Counter Intelligence and Rise from the Ashes. This year’s competition was a particularly



poignant event as it was held in memory of Liam Harker, a student of QE who died of cancer earlier in the year. Liam’s mother and sister attended the final and presented a trophy dedicated to Liam and a prize of £200 to the winning band - Rise from the Ashes. The Hornosexuals, the winners of last year’s event, made a very welcome guest appearance to round off the competition.

- To mark Remembrance Day, the Student Association teamed up with the college’s Creative Writing group to put together an exhibition of artefacts, information and literature connected with past and current conflicts. Poppies were sold in the run up to the day and there was a two minute silence at 11.00 on the day itself.
- As part of the Christmas celebrations, the Student Association organised a very popular team quiz in the Common Room with a prize for the winning team being decided by a nail-biting “bonus” question after two teams drew after all the scheduled rounds. Twenty five teams participated. QE was also privileged to be visited by Santa who delivered ninety candy canes to surprised students in their lessons. These activities raised £60 for the ‘Make a Wish Foundation’.
- Various local and community groups have set up stalls and discussed issues with students in the Common Room, often with the assistance of members of the Student Association Executive. As such, greater awareness has been raised of: Re-view; Darlington’s Youth Service; Gay Advice Darlington; Arriva Services; Go Green Week; Sexual Health Drop-in services; World AIDS Day etc
- Members of the Student Association Executive have continued to gather and relay the views of students by hosting regular meetings of the SA; discussing relevant issues with members of staff from Scholarest and Darlington Arts Centre and by participating in various college committees and working parties.
- Justin Ramsden and Jessica Grundy, President and Vice-President of the Student Association for 2008-09, attended the “Leading Learners Conference” in London where they heard speeches and participated in workshops designed to influence the development of national policy and strategy in relation to the Learner Voice in Further Education.

- A lively election campaign arose from the 5 candidates wishing to become the next Student Association President. Eye-catching posters were displayed around college, surgeries were set up in the Common Room, prospective voters were surveyed and all the candidates made short videos about themselves which were shown to the rest of the students via the college's VLE. The campaigns culminated with speeches in the Common Room where the candidates set out their manifestoes and with a Question and Answer session where they had to think quickly and provide responses to some quirky questions. A record number of over 1400 students voted, and Thoryn



Haylett was elected President with Dale Bihari voted as Vice-President. Both are honoured to have been elected and are looking forward to the challenges of the roles. Their first job will be to select the members of the Student Association Executive from the students who have expressed an interest in holding the various positions.

Business & Leisure

- 87 Business Studies and Economic students took part in the government sponsored Make Your Mark Enterprise Challenge, the UK's largest one day enterprise challenge for secondary schools and colleges. This exciting and challenging initiative focused on creating an innovative and entrepreneurial idea inspired by the Olympic & Paralympics Values. Each group produced and presented to a panel of judges a business plan that incorporated these values. The winning team who named themselves 'Look 4 Sport' consisted of James Lockhart, Jonathan Dunn, Hugh Goeghegan, Carl Hodges, Raymond Lee and Ashley Wood and their idea was to develop an internet site to encourage healthy eating and sporting activities for school children. The College's work and contribution to enterprise have recently been recognised by One North East with an award of £10,000 for encouraging and promoting enterprise and entrepreneurial skills amongst 16-19 years old.
- Neil McCourt a Director of Tesco's visited College and gave a one hour talk to all Business and Economic students on the Strategic Developments and Direction of Tesco.
- 60 AS Business students spent the day revising for their first unit exam with the Chief Examiner for AQA Business Studies.
- 40 AS Business and Applied Business Students spent half a day at Teesside University undertaking Marketing Activities.
- In Sunderland, 15 A2 Business Studies students took part in the 'Cloud 9 Entrepreneurial Conference'. The one day event saw students involved in sessions with successful entrepreneurs.

- 30 Year 2 Applied Business students spent half a day in an Accountancy Department as part of a Financial Interactive Session. The visit helped the students with their final unit of study which involves them individually producing a Business Plan.
- To help with their coursework unit, 14 GCSE Business Students visited the ASDA Store in Darlington. The visit included a talk with the manager of the store.
- Second year Leisure Studies students organised a 'Pirates' fancy dress games night and a 'bag pack' at a local supermarket to raise funds for Cancer Research. Cancer Research was the chosen charity as last year Liam Harker, one of their fellow students, lost his battle against cancer. As well as being a charity fundraiser, the Pirate evening was a component of the students' A Level syllabus which stipulates that they have to stage an event. The students had to carry out a feasibility study on the various ideas for an event, choose the event, decide on pricing, produce tickets, plan the room layout, carry out risk assessments, make a decision on lighting and security, promote the event to other groups, choose the menu, theme the room, run a lottery, organise games on the night and tidy up afterwards. After the evening, they had to evaluate the role they and others played and to consider any improvements that could be made. The students were able to donate a total of £705 to Cancer Research.



- Leisure Studies students made a visit to Castlegate Quay, an artificial white water facility in Middlesbrough. The students were there to study how customer service was delivered within the facility and to evaluate the effectiveness of this. Following a talk and a tour of the facility, wet suits and life jackets were issued along with the necessary safety talk. Few, if any, of the students had experienced Bellboating before, and certainly not in the tropical waters of the Tees in March. The visit to the water's ports provided case study material for their external exam. A subsequent visit to Hollywood Bowl provided the students with the opportunity to compare and contrast the voluntary and private sector leisure industry. Following a talk on customer service in the private sector, the students became very competitive in a bowling competition.
- A Race Night and Quiz Evening was held by Leisure Studies' students to raise funds for an educational visit and to meet the requirements of one of their A Level units of study. The evening was a huge success and was superbly supported by students' friends and families. After the event, the students organised a three day visit to YMCA lakeside, Lake District. The Leisure students took on responsibility for every aspect of the trip, and had to work together to ensure the event was

successful and enjoyed by all. Whilst in the Lakes, students completed challenges such as: a High Ropes' course, Gorge Scrambling, raft building and kayaking. The water temperature made some of the activities, particularly the gorge scrambling, very challenging but they really persevered and benefited enormously from the whole experience.

- The GCSE Leisure and Tourism students made a visit to the seaside in order to visit the Blue Reef Aquarium at Tynemouth. The students toured the facility, had a talk by the manager and looked at a range of strange sea creatures. The visit was carried out to collect information towards a unit on human resources and recruitment. To provide contrast, the students then went on to Wet and Wild; a water park in North Shields. The students battled with the flumes including calamity canyon and they got a huge amount from the visit. Not only did they see tourist attractions operating first hand, they also gained an insight into all of the possible career opportunities in the area.
- As part of the Travel and Tourism double award the A2 Level students are required to organize, run and evaluate an event. This year's group decided to plan a city break to Paris, including a day visit to Euro Disney. The students took on responsibility for every aspect of the trip, from the marketing and fundraising, to selecting and booking the accommodation and transport. To raise money for the visit, the students held a Round the World theme night. The evening consisted of a buffet, raffle, quiz, best limbo dancer competition and fancy dress. The planning and organisation of the whole event were meticulous and led to a fun-packed night enjoyed by students, staff and guests. On arrival in Paris in March, the students took on the role of the overseas tour representative. Whilst in Paris they undertook all of the day to day operations of a city break, from guiding their group around the underground metro system to organizing the evening meal in a traditional French restaurant, although no one was brave enough to try the snails on offer. The group visited several of the major attractions including the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame and the Louvre.

Creative Arts

- 40 Art students involved in a study visit to Venice found the experience one they will remember forever! Following major flooding of the streets during high tide, students and staff had to brave the knee high water in wellies and plastic waders! The group stayed in a converted 16th Century monastery in a less commercial area of Venice around the Piazzale Roma. This gave insight into the real working life of Venice and provided students with the opportunity to explore and record their experiences through drawing and photography. As well as visiting art galleries such as the Accademia and the Guggenheim, the group explored the historic sights of St Mark's Square, the Basilica and the Doges Palace. A day trip to the islands on the lagoon to see traditional glass



blowing on Murano and the quaint brightly coloured houses and traditional lace making on Burano was extremely enjoyable. All in all, Venice was an inspiration for the students' art work.

- Following the popular Art in the Yards project launched last year in Clark's and Buckton's Yards which saw five large scale pieces of artwork by QE students go on display, the Council's Town Centre Management Team has once again worked with the college's Art and Design Department to select work by six new students to be viewed in the yards. The aim of the project is to brighten up



some of Darlington's yards and to encourage people to explore these historic parts of the town centre. Ten students applied to have their work featured in this year's scheme, and the successful applicants are: William Morton, Angus Morton, Katherine Alderson, James Robson, Amanda Harrison and Christopher Carne. The students' artwork is due to be completed and installed in Buckton's and Clark's Yards in the Spring.

- A mixed group of 40 A Level Textiles students and some specialist Textiles Art Foundation students made the annual pilgrimage to Harrogate to view the huge array of textile and fashion stands and special exhibitions. This is a major show for students, designers and enthusiastic hobbyists. It is a colourful spectacle of innovative work from top contemporary textile designers, exciting new directions from art students and a fantastic resource for an abundance of seductive textile materials. The students were inspired and returned back to College with different products to incorporate into their own work.
- To commemorate the Holocaust Memorial Day (27th January), the international day of remembrance for the victims of the Holocaust and other genocides, students on the BTEC Diploma in Foundation Studies in Art & Design produced an exhibition of works entitled "Stand Up to Hatred" following their investigations of the issues raised by the topic. Their individual pieces reflected on the Holocaust and promoted a democratic society that respects and celebrates diversity. The students' work included fine art, graphics, photography, textiles and fashion outcomes and was open to the public in the Glass Corridor Gallery at the Arts Centre.
- In the Autumn Term, Art Foundation students made two separate visits to London to visit special exhibitions in major galleries and museums to inform their Critical & Contextual Studies in Art. The first visit was to Tate Modern to study the Turner Prize and the Francis Bacon Painting Exhibition. They enjoyed taking the Damien Hurst Tate Boat along the River Thames to Tate Modern. Here they had the opportunity to see a special exhibition of Mark Rothko abstract paintings and to explore the seductive installations by Brazilian sculptor Clideo Meireles. Their second visit to London

was to the new Saatchi Gallery to research the intriguing exhibition of contemporary art from China, containing much politically issue-based painting and sculpture. They also spent time in the Victoria and Albert Museum, seeing the Fashion v Sport and Cold War Design Exhibitions. A highlight for them was discovering in 'The Magnificence of the Tsars' exhibition of fabulous embroidered court dress that the film actress, Nicole Kidman was also a visitor to it. One student braved getting her autograph.

- Tutors from Teesside's Graphic Design Degree Course spent a day in College working with all 31 Art Foundation students. The brief was to create an 'Altered Book', transforming an old book with innovative imagery and devices and by responding to a selection of given themes. The students continued to develop ideas which enhanced their coursework and, after a two-week period, the Teesside Tutors returned to assess their work and were delighted with the original and personal outcomes. As a follow-up the Graphic Design specialists were invited to spend a half-day at Teesside University to see the facilities and to work with current students, including some Undergraduates who were ex – QE students. They also participated in an interactive session doing group work on Communication and the Media, with a Teesside Lecturer in Design History. Fine Art students were also invited on another day to participate in a Drawing Project with staff from the Fine Art Degree Course.

- A record number of students – 18 in total – vied for the annual Leschinski Music Competition and the coveted prizes. Since 1985 the prizes have been donated by Mr. W M Wolf in memory of Olga Leschinski, his piano teacher in Berlin who died in a Nazi concentration camp. The competition included a wide variety of pieces and instruments and the standard was so high that the judges found it hard to pronounce an overall winner. They therefore awarded joint first prize to three students - Kate Millington, Hayley McKay and Joe Donlan. Kate sang 'Wishing You Were Somehow Here Again' from "The Phantom of the Opera", Hayley sang songs from "My Fair Lady" and flautist Joe played 'Waltz' from "Suite Antique". It was the first time in the history of the competition that there had not been an overall winner.



- The Christmas Concert was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended this popular annual event. The audience were treated to a variety of musical numbers from the choir, orchestra, big band and various small groups and solo performers. It was a successful sell-out concert, with the audience happy to join in with the singing of well-known carols. Mince pies and wine were also enjoyed in anticipation of Christmas festivities.
- There were two sell-out concerts staged this year which gave two hundred people the opportunity to enjoy some fabulous music. The Big Band comprises thirty extremely talented musicians who perform music to a very high standard, with many doing spontaneous improvised solos. The

programme was very varied with musical numbers which had something to appeal to everyone. The event also saw the debut of the Beatelles, an all girl band, who played some well known and loved Beatle songs with much energy and humour. The audiences, as is now the tradition, also enjoyed cheese and wine which superbly complemented the excellent playing.

English, Media & Drama

- A2 Media Studies students attended two lectures in college by members of the Teesside University media department. Mike Kirkup delivered a session on Contemporary British Cinema, looking at its origins, current state and issues for filmmakers in Britain while, in a session on news, his colleague Paul Bailey introduced the students to issues of media ownership, the targeting of audiences, and how news values affect editorial choices. Both lectures were of great benefit to the students as they prepare for their summer exam, as well as being a further purposeful link with Higher Education.
- Emma Parson, freelance documentary maker for the BBC, spoke to students considering applying to study TV production at university or who are interested in a moving image based career. She informed them about the realities of working freelance in the television industry.
- Rehearsals throughout the autumn term culminated in two evening performances of "Oh What a Lovely War" just before Christmas. With a cast of sixteen and the invaluable contribution of students from the Art and Music departments as well as students providing technical expertise, the performances were entertaining and thought provoking.
- During the Spring term, Drama and Theatre Studies students from both years travelled to Newcastle to see the National Theatre's touring production of "An Inspector Calls".
- In March, 220 English Language students enjoyed a morning of lectures in the Arts Centre's theatre. They heard Professor David Crystal, a world renowned expert on all aspects of Language deliver two highly entertaining talks. His first was entitled "The Fight for English" where he persuasively argued that changes in language are natural, exciting and unstoppable. He also spoke about an area of language study called Pragmatics; the way we convey meanings far beyond those contained in the words we choose. With his engaging mix of anecdotes, humour and fascinating facts he held the audience spellbound. Between David Crystal's talks, another eminent linguist Alison Ross



explored how close attention to our speech tics and habits add considerably to our ability to convey our feelings to our listeners. Her attention to the tiny details of language use contrasted well with David Crystal's wide ranging approach to his subjects. The morning was warmly received by the student audience who clapped and cheered the speakers and many of whom asked the obliging Professor

Crystal for autographs and advice on their Language projects. It isn't often that you come across a celebrity Linguist, but David Crystal fits the bill and the students are huge fans, all eager for him to come back next year.

Enrichment

- Promoting equality and celebrating diversity was the focus of a high profile event organised by students and staff. Attended by a wide range of organisations from the local community, the 'Breaking Down Barriers' event was officially opened by the Mayor of Darlington, Councillor Ian Haszeldine. It was a market stall event where students could talk to representatives from



organisations as diverse as Gay Advice, First Stop, Give Racism the Red Card, Disability Action Darlington, Evolution, Darlington Democratic Services and members of local religious groups. The event was a marvellous opportunity for students to work together and to understand issues about diversity and the need to break down barriers.

- A group of 12 students participated in a "Global Agendas Conference" at the University of Hull. Over 150 students, from 13 colleges of the norVIC federation of sixth form colleges, spent a day representing member countries of the United Nations General Assembly. Throughout the day, delegates debated a diverse range of challenging world issues including environmental sustainability, human rights and the recent global financial crisis. Members of staff from departments across the university's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences worked with the students by acting as facilitators in the discussion groups. The students had to propose resolutions which were debated and voted upon by all delegates. The event provoked some fascinating debates and the students participated fully and represented the college in an extremely professional manner.
- 8 students travelled to Dublin to participate in the Model United Nations conference, hosted by St Andrews College. This is a truly international conference with over 650 students attending from all over Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the USA. QE students were given the task of representing Costa Rica and, before the conference, they worked hard on researching the country and its position on the issues they were going to debate. In Dublin, they produced excellent resolutions on diverse issues within their committees: combating the international trade in narcotics; guaranteeing free and fair elections in Less Economically Developed Countries; preventing an increase of international tobacco consumption; the role of illegal drug trafficking in the financing of terrorist organisations; the effects of globalisation on the human rights of indigenous people and the question of land degradation. One of the students was a member of the Press team for the Conference newspaper, "The Delegate" and she was assigned to conduct interviews and write reports about the activities in the committees. She impressed the organisers so much that some of

her suggestions on how to improve this role will be put into practice next year. The conference was opened by the president of Amnesty International in Ireland and was closed by the Chair of the Irish Law Society. The students found the whole experience extremely enjoyable and productive.

- The Amnesty International/People and Planet group has continued to meet weekly on a lunchtime to discuss and debate issues concerning world poverty, the environment and human rights. In addition, members of the group have highlighted issues of climate change and Fair Trade through their involvement in whole college activities such as "Go Green Week" and the Breaking Down Barriers event. The group hopes to continue to meet and to organise activities in the summer term and in the next academic year.
- The Creative Writing group has continued to meet. At one of their meetings, the professional poet Anne C Clarke spoke to the students about her own work and poetry in general.
- Abi English from Teesside University delivered sessions for Transition students to develop their confidence, motivation and awareness of Higher Education opportunities.

Humanities

- Thirty-six AS Level Politics students travelled down to London to meet MP Alan Milburn, tour Parliament and see the sights of the capital. The students had a one hour question and answer session with Darlington's MP in the Jubilee Committee Room. They then had a half hour 'flight' on the London Eye before taking in the sights of London: walking up Parliament Street, past Downing Street and Horse Guards Parade into Trafalgar Square. An hour in the National Gallery finished off the day.



- Over 100 Politics and Citizenship students attended another session of Councillors' Question Time in the Main Hall. Councillors representing the three main parties were questioned for over an hour on a wide range of local and national subjects, and the students demonstrated excellent understanding and research of current political issues.
- 15 A2 Modern History students visited Beamish Museum in October. The visit included a tour of the museum's collections and a talk on poverty in 1825 and 1913.

- Two Modern History students, Daniel Pearson & Lois Jermyn, visited Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland on October 28th, repeating a similar trip that had been organised last year. The students also attended two seminars in Newcastle before and after the visit to Poland and talked about their experiences at a History Club in January. They also gave a 15 minute presentation in the Arts Centre as part of Darlington Borough Council's Holocaust Memorial day on 27th January.



- In November, 36 AS Archaeology students visited DIG in York to see the Hungate archaeological site and the Jorvik museum.
- Over 20 teams took part in the History Christmas Quiz this year. The teams of 4 contested challenging but fun picture, music and historical knowledge rounds with prizes being awarded to the winning three teams.
- There have been a number of History Clubs this year. Sam Woods gave the October lecture on North Yorkshire's forgotten Admiral Craddock and there have also been talks on Medieval castles and on the history and archaeology of Istanbul. In March, Rob Lee gave a presentation entitled "Fear of Witches: the seventeenth century witchcraze in England".
- 41 Tudor History and Archaeology students visited London from 23rd - 25th March. They explored Hampton Court, the Tower of London, Lullingstone Roman Villa and Hever Castle.
- At the beginning of April, 42 History students visited Eden Camp, a Second World War museum in Yorkshire.
- An ex- QE student who is currently in the third year of his Psychology degree at Manchester University visited the college to speak to first year students about what it is like to study the subject at Higher Education.

Modern Foreign Languages

- The Youthbridge Calendar 2009 competition attracted entries from all over the country and 2 of the 13 winning entries were submitted by students from QE. Youthbridge is a charitable initiative of the British-German Association which aims to make German learning in English schools and colleges interesting and fun. QE has Youthbridge status. Students had to write at least 200 words in German about special features which can make a house environmentally friendly and send a drawing or painting of the house with their essay. The environment is an A Level German topic so this activity

fitted nicely into the curriculum. Caroline Baker and Katie Lamb (both A2 German) each won £95 for their entries and their work is featured in the Youthbridge 2009 Calendar.

- Two A2 German students participated in the British Council's Anglo-German Fellowship Programme. Sarah Harrison visited Otto-Pankok Schule from 20 October to 31 October and Gary Lodge visited the school from 27 October to 7 November. Both students attended lessons, stayed with a family and carried out a research project. Sarah and Gary thoroughly enjoyed their visits and benefited in many ways from their experiences.
- 12 students and 2 staff visited the college from Otto-Pankok Schule, Mülheim. They worked with AS, A2 and OCN German students during their lessons. All students involved enjoyed the contact with native speakers and gained a great deal from the experience. This visit will be repeated in Autumn 2009. Prior to the visit all AS and A2 German students were in email contact with the visitors and some of the communication has continued following the visit.
- 17 AS/A2/OCN German students visited the German Christmas Market and 18 Hummersknott Year 11 German students were also invited. This proved to be a very enjoyable trip and an extremely successful collaboration between QE and Hummersknott.
- AS German students attended a German Film Day at Tyneside Cinema in Newcastle. Using Wortmann's 2003 film "Das Wunder von Bern" (*The Miracle of Bern*) as a focus, students explained themes including family and relationships and looked at the interests of young people in popular culture. The film was also used as a basis for speaking and listening exercises, including discussion and role-play, providing lots of opportunities to practise German. The event was led by Dr Tobias Hochscherf from Northumbria University.



Thirty four French students enjoyed a 5 day stay in Lille living with French families, sharing their everyday lives, eating French food, socialising and making conversation. As result, their spoken French has improved tremendously. As well as spending time in Lille, the students visited the beautiful cities of Bruges and Arras, famous for their stylish Flemish architecture and vibrant Christmas markets. They also had a thought provoking day touring the Somme battlefields and visiting the poignant Vimy Ridge memorial. Lighter relief came in the shape of tours around a local distillery and a chocolate museum - local products that the area is famous for. It was a very successful trip.

- 28 Language students participated in a 'Linguacast Day' hosted by Newcastle University. This is one of a number of events offered by 'Routes into Languages,' a project whose remit it is to raise and maintain the profile of Modern Foreign Languages and to encourage students to pursue their language studies into HE. Students worked with speakers of their target language (French, German or Spanish) to write and produce their own storyboards. This all took place in the University's Open Access Centre and they later made use of the latest on-line resources and SANAKO language labs to add sound to their creations, all in the target language with the assistance of Newcastle University staff and students. This was followed by a 1 hour taster session in a new language - either Chinese or Turkish. Later in the day there was an opportunity for the QE students, both AS and A2 from across the 3 languages, to participate in a Question and Answer session with the Newcastle University 'Student ambassadors.' Student feedback from the day was very positive indeed.

Science

- A group of 7 staff from the Environment Agency worked with students studying AS Level Applied Science. Working with professionals gave the students a 'feel' for Science in the real world and extended their knowledge and understanding. 25 students were involved in the interactive sessions and the staff from the Environment Agency came from a range of backgrounds including human resources, flood defence, IT Data support, external relations and ,of course, Science.
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- In October, 120 AS Physics students attended the Institute of Physics annual Schools and Colleges lecture at Hartlepool College, where Dr Mark Lewney gave a very entertaining lecture entitled 'Rock in 11 Dimensions: Where Physics and Guitars Collide'. He explained some of the modern developments in Physics through the medium of rock music and with the aid of an electric guitar.
 - 100 AS/A2 Physics students attended the Christmas Lecture at Durham University where Dr Gordon Love spoke about "Light: skies, eyes and spies".
 - In April, 40 A2 Physicists went to Durham University for a one day Masterclass in Particle Physics. This was a joint venture between Durham University and the Institute of Physics, and the day was a mixture of talks and PC-based practical sessions. The practical sessions allowed students to make their own measurements of particle tracks, using a software package designed for Colleges, and to try their hand at identifying what is happening in particle collisions recently recorded at CERN, the European Laboratory for Particle Physics in Geneva.

- 22 A2 Geology students went on a residential trip to Arran at the beginning of November. The weather was reasonable and students gained much from first hand experience of observation and data collection.
- In February, 22 Geology students visited the opencast coal mining site at Shotton near Cramlington. Liz Shaw and a member of the planning team gave presentations about this very important site in the UK from the perspective of the geological implications, and also the impact on the environment and how the management of the site has to meet the planning authority stipulations. The students found the trip round a working site interesting and informative, as workings like this are often screened from view.
- 89 AS Geography students visited the Middlesbrough area to enhance their study of urban environments. Students were exposed to the contrasts of deprivation and affluence within the city suburbs, by observing a variety of residential areas.

Sport

- As part of the trial process for selecting England representative teams in football, rugby, netball and hockey, a number of students participated in the British Colleges' North- East trials. The North-East region is one of the largest of the 7 regions encompassing Northumberland, Durham, Teesside and Yorkshire and competition to get through to the next round of trials was intense. 18 QE students were selected for further trials with a chance of winning places in national squads. In football, 6 QE boys and 3 QE girls made it into the North-East squad to play in a full-day regional competition involving all 7 regional teams in Birmingham. They were: Hugh Osborne, Carl Hodges, Dan Lerner, Andy Kelly, Jonny Blewitt, Andrew Beamson, Katie McTague, Sammy-Jo Wymer and Rachel McKnight. In rugby, Michael Whinn, Josh Richardson, Nick Baldwin and David Barker were selected to represent the North-East in upcoming games against other regions. In netball, Rachel Bird, Becca Eldrington, Heather Scott, Rachel Dauber and Katie Slade were selected - 5 QE girls out of a regional squad of 12, reflecting the College's strength in this sport. In addition, Sophie Watchman will attend a combined North-East / East Midlands trial for hockey.



- After the final national trials in Birmingham, Rachel Dauber was selected to play for the British Colleges' Sport national netball team. Rachel, who plays Goal Attack, attended the squad's first training weekend camp at the end of February and will feature in a series of international fixtures during the year.

- Rachel McKnight has been selected as part of the England Colleges' football squad. Rachel, a centre-forward, had to undergo a rigorous trial process including a series of regional and national trials, with the final 2 day selection being held at Lilleshall National Sports Centre. Rachel impressed the management team enough to be named as one of 22 players and will now take part in a series of training camps and international fixtures, including games against Wales, Northern Ireland and England FA under 17's.
- Following rigorous trials, four students have been selected to play for the England Colleges' rugby teams. Lauren Morgan, Katherine Hobson, Amber Hyde and Nick Baldwin have already played their first international fixtures of the season and are looking forward to further matches against Wales,



Scotland and Ireland. Katherine and Lauren are no strangers to putting on England shirts. Playing centre, this is the third year that Katherine has represented her country and was honoured to be named Captain in a recent match against Wales, whilst Lauren is experiencing her second England season in the number 8 position. However, Amber and Nick are new to the England squad and are proud to wear the number 10 shirt.

- The rugby squad this year was the largest the college has ever had. There has been a comprehensive fixture list with matches almost every Wednesday afternoon and players have been of mixed ability and experience. The college managed its best ever run in the Daily Mail Plate competition and also reached the County Cup semi- final. The Tens' team were beaten finalists in the British Colleges' North East event at Hartlepool.
- Three students - Rachel Bird, Becca Eldrington and Rachel Dauber - are sampling the exciting new Netball Superleague with Team Northumbria. The Superleague is a national league involving 10 top teams as well as the best English and world players and it is really taking off in popularity now that there is coverage of live games and highlights on Sky Sports. Over the summer, Rachel Bird, Becca Eldrington and Rachel Dauber attended trials for Team Northumbria's youth squad and all three were selected. The youth team play matches against the other Superleague youth teams prior to the Superleague matches, meaning they play at the same venue and in front of the crowd in the build up to the main game. In addition, Rachel Bird who is captain of the youth team has also been selected to be part of the full Superleague squad. Although she doesn't expect to play any games this season, she trains with the senior team every week and has recently played for Team Northumbria's partner club, Oaksway Seniors in the National Premier League – essentially the second best league in the country. Playing at this level, she has been up against many Superleague players and England internationals. She has impressed so much that she has played the last 2 full games and was named player of the match in Oaksway's last game against Academy from London.

- A number of students competed extremely well as representatives of Durham County in the English Schools' Northern Region Cross Country Championships at Maiden Castle, Durham. Chris Gaffney was outstanding, coming first in the boys' competition and he qualified for the national finals. Tom West came in fourth and James Askew also ran a strong race. Both Tom and James qualified for a 'run off' in Cumbria to see if they could clock up times which could qualify them to join Chris in the finals and, in that race, both were indeed successful in reaching the national finals.

Miscellaneous

- In January, the achievements of some QE students were celebrated at Darlington's Civic Theatre which played host to the Vibe Awards. Zoe White, Hannah Russell, Kim Pavey, Lorna Ellis and Amber Stewart won awards in the "Against All Odds" category for their determination to overcome specific barriers in their lives. The college's OCN Mentoring class won the "Contribution to the Community" award for volunteering to be involved in a range of activities.
- The Best of Darlington Awards ceremony was held on Friday, February 13 at Darlington College. It's an annual event which is an opportunity for people of the town to nominate individuals and groups that are 'talented, selfless and motivated and who do their best for their own personal aspirations and for the communities in which they live and work.' A record number of people from QE were nominated for awards and won through to the final shortlist, having their achievements acknowledged at the ceremony. PE teacher, Mark Scott was shortlisted for his Contribution to Sport, for his inspirational approach to coaching and teaching and for his development of football in the town and at College. In the Arts category, the A2 Dance students were nominated for their talent and commitment to their studies and Hayley McKay's exceptional musical talent was also recognised. Indeed, Hayley gave a stunning performance, entertaining the guests at the ceremony with a number of her own compositions. Lorna Ellis and Maral Noruzi were finalists for the Student of the Year Award. Lorna, who was born visually impaired, was nominated for her determination to overcome difficulties and fulfil her potential; Maral, whose first language is not English, had her excellent work and commitment noted. Catherine Hodgson and Brioni Aston were contenders in the Academic Achievement category. Both have achieved excellent examination results and Brioni has a place at Cambridge University to read Law in the Autumn. Brioni was the winner of this category.
- Laura Povall, an adult student on the college's HEFC Access course, was shortlisted for a CoLaS award in the "Personal Achiever" section due to maintaining her studies whilst coping with many other demands in her life. Due to being shortlisted, Laura enjoyed the glittering awards night at the Sage, Gateshead.



- Eight students have been offered places to study at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Their offers are conditional upon attaining top grades in this summer's A Level examinations. In the autumn, Laura Oakes has a place at Oxford to read Human Sciences whilst the other seven have been offered places at Cambridge. The successful Cambridge applicants are: Daniel Thompson - Chemical Engineering; Brioni Aston and Beth Histed – Law; Martha Henriques, Joe Donlan, Matthew Jones and Jonathan Hughes - Natural Sciences. Competition for Oxbridge places is intense and those offered places have to excel academically and at interview.
- Students have experienced various events to give them a taste of studying at Oxford or Cambridge universities. A visit to the Oxbridge Roadshow at St. James's Park, Newcastle was arranged whilst those interested in studying English, History, French, Spanish, Philosophy, Politics, Law and Classical Civilisation attended the Oxford Humanities Open Day which involved an overnight stay at one of Oxford's colleges. In March, an interesting and informative Oxbridge evening was held at college when prospective students and their parents benefited from hearing from current Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates, including ex-QE students, and from members of staff from both universities.
- To assist with their applications to university, over 150 first year students attended a presentation on Teesside University's Passport scheme which is designed to help students applying to any Higher Education institution. Students interested in applying to study at Newcastle University attended a talk by a member of the university staff on its Partners scheme.
- Students due to begin university in September attended a series of talks by Chris Turner, Student Support Officer, about financial matters and assistance available to them before and during their time in Higher Education.
- Students participated in Age Concern Week in October by becoming involved in a scheme entitled "One Thousand Good Turns" where they were asked to carry out one "good turn" for an older person who they know. Participating students were awarded a certificate from Age Concern.
- The Christmas Service at Holy Trinity Church was a chance for the wider college community to celebrate together as it was open to students, staff, parents and governors. The service consisted of readings from students and staff, and the College Choir performed carols. Mince pies and mulled wine were enjoyed after the service.
- LGBT History Month was marked in February to emphasise the college's commitment to valuing all members of its community. Postcards were displayed in tutor rooms, messages put on computer screens and displays put up in the Common Room and Atrium. Students also received the opportunity to speak with members from Gay Advice Darlington who held a stall in the Common Room.

- Seventeen year old Lois Jermyn from Northallerton is busy fundraising to finance her Gap Year with Project Trust, working in a children's home in Swaziland. Project Trust is a charity which each year sends around 200 volunteers to work in 26 countries. Lois hopes to go on to study Law at the University of East Anglia but, before then, she will spend a year working in a girls' home in the village of Bulembu in North West Swaziland; one of the smallest countries in Africa where around 70% of the population live in poverty and which has the world's highest rate of HIV/AIDS. The home is run by Anglican nuns and Lois will be helping the children with their homework, entertaining the girls who aren't yet at school and doing household chores and gardening.



- For their Gap Years, Beth Histed and Fiona Fawcett are going to Nepal to teach English to children living in remote communities. They will head off to the foothills of the Himalayas early next year after completing their A Levels before going to university - Beth to study Law at Cambridge and Fiona to read Law at Northumbria. Beth and Fiona both live in the Wensleydale and have been friends since childhood. They are also busy fundraising to finance their voluntary work.
- Sophie Elliot and Martha Henriques are planning to teach English to underprivileged children in Bangkok for ten weeks in the summer through the volunteering company Original Volunteers before they return to go to university. To raise funds, they intend to complete a sponsored climb of England's highest mountain, Scafell Pike.
- Sammii Weller is waiting for a call from Buckingham Palace as she is to be presented with the Sovereign's Award for her work with St John Ambulance. She is an acting Cadet Leader, training 10-16 year olds and regularly attends public events to provide First Aid for the public. She is also



very much involved in community service and, working with the Youth Service, she has raised funds for a number of charities. Sammii is no stranger to awards. In 2007 she was Darlington's Young Citizen of the Year and has already won the Grand Prior Award from St John's. The Sovereign's Award is very hard to win. There are only 10 given each year and indeed only four have been awarded this year. It is the first time anyone in the Durham region has won a Sovereign's Award.

Laurence Job

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