



Queen's University Belfast Social Charter Newsletter

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Welcome to this edition of the Queen's University Belfast Social Charter Newsletter. In this volume: The role of Queen's University in Northern Ireland's economic recovery; COVID-19 research continues; Master's programme in nursing and midwifery launched; home tutoring resource produced; ARK report released; pine marten research; and Queen's academic and graduates receive Fulbright Awards

LEVELLING UP - QUEEN'S ROLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Professor Emma Flynn, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise at Queen's examines the University's role in Northern Ireland's economic recovery.

Professor Flynn reflects on the critical role Universities can play in 'levelling-up', addressing regional inequalities, as they have demonstrated a long-running growth effect on their local economies.

Queen's makes a significant contribution to Northern Ireland and the UK economy, contributing £1.9 billion, with every £1m invested in research generating an additional £3.9 million to the UK economy (London Economics 2018). Queen's is also central to driving regional economic development as a key partner in the delivery of Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD), which is predicted to generate up to 20,000 jobs over the next 15 to 20 years.

"We have a strong track record of turning R&D into economic impact with Queen's having been named the UK's #1 University for Entrepreneurial Impact"

Professor Emma Flynn, PVC Research and Enterprise, Queen's University Belfast

Research with Impact:

Queen's and Belfast Trust partner for innovative research into COVID-19 DNA

Belfast-based researchers are playing their part in groundbreaking research on the DNA make-up of the Covid-19 virus.

The work involving Queen's University and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust is part of the Covid-19 Genomics UK (COG-UK) consortium. The consortium has been created to deliver large-scale and rapid whole-genome virus sequencing – helping to track the spread and behaviour of Covid-19. This research will improve global understanding of the virus and help inform public health responses to it.

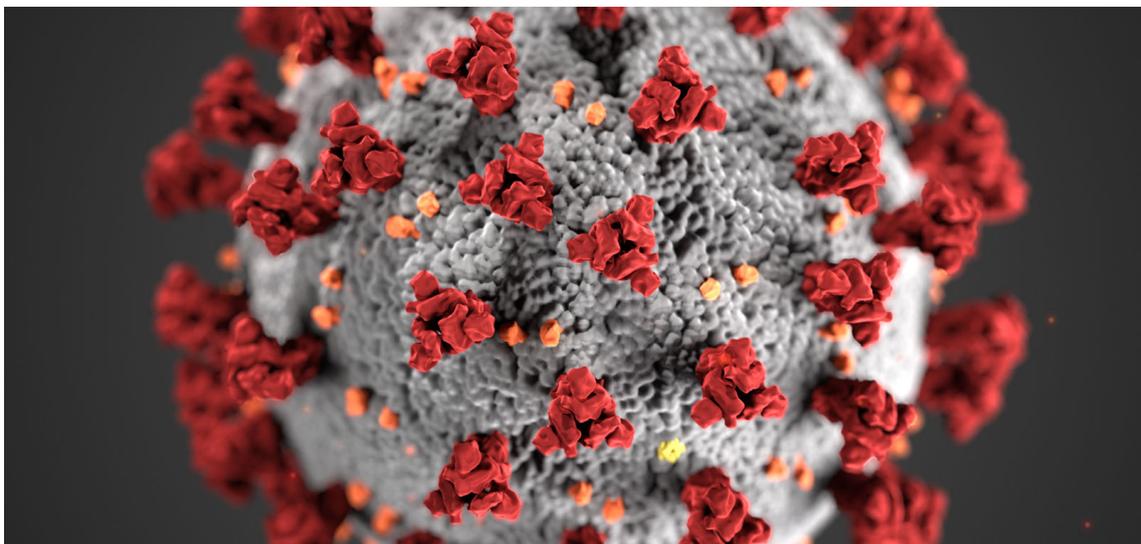
"This has been a great opportunity for Queen's to team up with the Belfast Trust in bringing rapid DNA sequencing technology to the forefront of efforts to track and understand the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The data generated by COG-UK is already informing the management of Covid-19."

Dr David Simpson, Senior Lecturer at The Wellcome-Wolfson Institute for Experimental Medicine,
Queen's University

Researchers identify the impact of bacterial co-infections and antimicrobial resistance in COVID-19

In their paper, published in EMBO Molecular Medicine, leading microbiologists Professor José Bengoechea and Dr Connor Bamford from the Wellcome-Wolfson Institute for Experimental Medicine at Queen's, highlight the dramatic impact of co-infections in COVID-19 patients and urge caution over a new wave of antimicrobial resistance.

In their paper, the researchers discuss how COVID-19 patients are at risk of developing severe bacterial infections and suggest potentially fatal bacterial respiratory infections may arise subsequently or co-incidentally from hospital stays and therapies given to treat patients with COVID-19.



Education with Social Purpose:

New programme launched aimed at graduates from other fields who want to pursue a career in nursing

The School of Nursing and Midwifery at Queen's University has launched an innovative graduate entry Master's programme in professional nursing aimed at existing graduates from other disciplines who want to move into a career in nursing.

This intensive practical and theoretical two year Master of Science (MSc) Professional Nursing programme will provide each student with a registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), in either adult or children's nursing, as well as a Master's level qualification, helping graduates to quickly build a career path in their chosen field of nursing.

The application closing date is **4 pm on Thursday 16 July 2020**, although late applications will be considered on a case by case basis.



Breaking Boundaries to Produce New Knowledge:

Queen's Professor to lead new European cancer network against COVID-19

The European Cancer Organisation, the largest multiprofessional cancer organisation in Europe, has announced the establishment of a Special Network on the impact of COVID-19 on cancer.

This initiative will be co-led by Professor Mark Lawler, Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Professor of Digital Health at Queen's University Belfast and Dr Mirjam Crul, Vice-President of the European Society of Oncology Pharmacy.

"COVID-19 does not respect national borders, so it is important that collectively as Europeans we address the universal challenge of COVID-19 and develop sustainable solutions that protect and benefit the European cancer patient. This Special Network represents a significant opportunity to stop Cancer becoming the Forgotten C in the battle against COVID-19."

Professor Mark Lawler, Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Professor of Digital Health, Queen's University

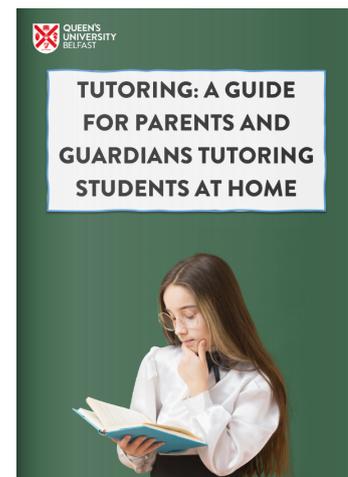


Equality and Excellence:

Centre for Educational Development launch resource to support tutoring at home

The Centre for Educational Development at Queen's University has given its support to parents and guardians facing the challenge of home schooling, by producing a new resource 'Tutoring: A Guide for Parents and Guardians Tutoring Students at Home'.

The resource has been adapted from previous manuals, originally funded by a grant from the *Economic & Social Research Council*, and for many will prove invaluable at this time.



Civic Culture and Intercultural Dialogue:

ARK report finds unionist and nationalist identities in NI became stronger in the run-up to Brexit

A research study on political attitudes and identities in Northern Ireland has been released today by ARK – a joint initiative between Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University. It was co-authored by Dr Katy Hayward and Ben Rosher from the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work at Queen's University Belfast.

The report entitled 'Political attitudes at a time of flux' used data from the 2019 Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) Survey.

Some of the key findings include:

- The majority of NILT respondents (from all communities) support the devolved institutions
- There is strong support for the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement as the basis for governing Northern Ireland, although most would like to see some change to it
- 39 per cent of NILT respondents identify as 'Neither' Unionist nor Nationalist, which is the lowest figure for 15 years. Nevertheless, it is still the most preferred of the three categories of political identity
- There has been an increase in the proportion of respondents identifying as Unionist compared to 2018, when there had been an unusual shift in the proportion of Protestants identifying as 'Neither'
- 2019 saw a greater proportion of Catholic respondents identifying as Nationalist (59 per cent) than has been the case since 2003
- The proportion of Nationalists describing themselves as 'very strongly' Nationalist in 2019 is higher than it has been since 1998
- Nationalists are strikingly more expectant and more in favour of Irish unity as a consequence of Brexit. In contrast, the majority of Unionists see Brexit as making no difference to their views regarding the prospect of Irish unification.

Sustainability:

Recovering pine marten benefits red squirrels, but the grey squirrel still persists in urban areas

Research led by Queen's has found that whilst red squirrels are responding positively to the increased presence of the pine marten in Ireland and Britain, its ability to control grey squirrel is limited by lack of forest and presence of urban refugia.

The research, carried out in partnership with National Museums Northern Ireland, predicts that grey squirrels will still persist in parkland areas of towns and cities as pine martens were shown to be forest specialists and displayed strong avoidance of human settlement and disturbance in and around urban areas.



Recognising and Rewarding Contributions from Staff and Students: Queen's academic and graduates receive Fulbright Awards to research and teach in the US

At a time when international education programmes face huge challenges, the enduring Fulbright Programme will support 36 remarkable academics, professionals and students to go to the USA and collaborate with their US counterparts.

The resilient Fulbright programme has served to strengthen international relations throughout turbulent times for over seventy years. Founded in 1946, it has enabled academic and cultural exchanges between more than 2,500 Irish and American citizens since 1957.

Among the Queen's University award winners were Senior Law Lecturer Dr Cheryl Lawther and Queen's graduates Caolán Ó Coisneacháin and Brian Ó Doibhlin.