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Undergraduate Ambassadors Scheme

Newsletter April 2004

National Director

Sharon Herkes has been appointed as the new National Director of UAS. She will formally take over from Ravi Kapur at the beginning of May, but she has already joined the team and is currently meeting with various university departments and partner organisations. Sharon has substantial experience in outreach programmes, university administration and project management and will bring with her an array of expertise that will carry the scheme forward into its next phase of expansion. There will be an opportunity to meet and put questions to Sharon at the UAS Annual Conference on 22nd April.

Funding Changes

In 2003/4, UAS has been funded as part of the Teacher Training Agency's Student Associates Scheme. From September 2004, UAS will no longer be part of the Student Associates Scheme, but will continue to be funded by the TTA under a separate funding stream. This is seen as a very positive development for UAS, as it ensures greater flexibility in how departments make use of the support funds provided. Details of this new arrangement and the amount of funding that will be available are currently under review. There will be an opportunity to discuss these developments in detail at the Annual Conference on 22nd April. If you would like to receive further information about these developments, please contact ravi@uas.ac.uk.

General Progress

More departments around the country continue to sign-up and express interest in the scheme in an ever-broadening range of disciplines. We now have roughly

30 departments committed to taking part from September 2004 in subject areas ranging from Chemistry to Physiology, Electrical Engineering to Human Sciences, and we expect many more departments to sign-up before the end of this session.

The scheme has recently received attention from both the education press and mainstream media, and continues to enjoy the support of an increasing number of subject organisations, learned bodies and educational networks. The Secretary of State for Education and the Minister for Science have also both recently renewed their personal endorsement of UAS, and the scheme was also mentioned favourably in the recently published report on Mathematics Education by Professor Adrian Smith.

Over 90 undergraduate students are currently participating in UAS placements around the country, and feedback from all departments has again been very positive so far, with undergraduates taking part in an increasing range of activities and special projects.

If you are a new department ready to sign-up to UAS, please do inform us of your commitment to joining the scheme as soon as possible so that your department can be included in funding allocations and all future developments. New versions of the 'sign-up' letter will be distributed in coming weeks once the new funding arrangements have been finalised. In the meantime however, your expression of interest or commitment will be very gladly received.

More information about the scheme can be found at www.uas.ac.uk.