Over 3,700 students graduated in 2017

Shang Siyuan and Mizuho Suzuki at their November graduation.

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Our academics carried out interdisciplinary research to improve the lives of people in communities around the world.

We were proud to welcome the Earl of Wessex to our campus in November, to formally open the £6.5 million University of Stirling INTO Building, before marking the launch of the commemorative 50th anniversary publication, Fifty: The University of Stirling in 50 Objects.

We held graduation ceremonies for nearly 3,800 students, drawn from more than 80 countries – equipping them with life-changing skills to ensure they stand out in terms of employment opportunities and as well-rounded citizens. We continued to transform our groundbreaking research activity, supported by £10 million in annual research income, to focus even more closely on tackling some of the biggest global challenges.

Our academics carried out interdisciplinary research – in thematic areas of: Living Well; Global Security and Resilience; and Cultures, Communities and Society – in order to improve the lives of people in communities around the world. Major initiatives included a £3.4 million, six-university partnership project to reduce tobacco-related harm in low and middle income countries in Asia and Africa.

From discovering a species of plant, to creating an app for people living with dementia, and revealing how climate change clues can be uncovered by examining ancient ice sheets, Stirling researchers advanced knowledge and influenced thinking locally, nationally and internationally. Our academics’ articles for news analysis website The Conversation were viewed more than 6.5 million times in total by a global audience.

The University’s outstanding learning and teaching environment continued to be recognised. In January 2017, we learned Stirling was rated 1st in Scotland for welcoming international students. In the International Student Barometer survey, the University was also named top in Scotland for campus environment; teachers, lecturers and feedback; and sports facilities. This year promises to be just as transformational for the University, as we begin exciting improvements to our campus and student experience, and further develop our research themes, in tandem with our Research Excellence Framework preparations.

I look forward to working alongside our community of students, staff and alumni, as we continue to make a positive difference in the world in 2018.

Principal’s welcome

2017 marked a very special year for the University, as we celebrated our 50th anniversary.

“Our academics carried out interdisciplinary research to improve the lives of people in communities around the world.”
“Our anniversary year offered an opportunity to reflect on the University’s significant contribution locally, nationally and internationally.”

Professor Gerry McCormac
Principal and Vice-Chancellor
Academics at Stirling carry out agenda-setting research that addresses key societal issues and has a positive impact on communities globally.

Our groundbreaking research encompasses three overarching themes: Living Well; Global Security and Resilience; and Cultures, Communities and Society. Alongside these themes, we have established 12 interdisciplinary research programmes, to drive our strategic research activity. The University is building on our strong Research Excellence Framework performance, ahead of REF2021, by harnessing research strengths in each of our five faculties.

Cigarette designs
Young people are three times less likely to try cigarettes branded with ‘Smoking kills’ than the plain product, according to a joint study by the University and Cancer Research UK. The team, led by Dr Crawford Moodie, of Stirling’s Institute for Social Marketing, in the Faculty of Health Sciences and Sport, surveyed 1,000 16-24 years olds from across the UK, to gauge their opinion on different cigarette designs.

Monkeyflower evolution
Scientists from the Faculty of Natural Sciences discovered a new type of plant growing in Shetland – with its evolution only having occurred in the last 200 years. The plant, referred to as ‘Shetland’s monkeyflower’, evolved through the doubling of the number of chromosomes, known as genome duplication or polyploidy. Researchers say the finding is significant as it shows that a major evolutionary step can occur in non-native species over a short period of time, rather than over thousands of years.

Dementia app
Stirling’s Dementia Services Development Centre, based within the Faculty of Social Sciences, announced the development of the groundbreaking new Iridis app to help improve workplaces, public buildings and homes for people living with dementia. Working in collaboration with construction experts Space Group, the team created the first app of its kind in the world to digitally assess how suitable a residence, care facility or other environment is for older people and those living with dementia.

Gambling adverts
Football fans are being ‘misled’ by complex gambling adverts on television, a Stirling Management School study found. Behavioural scientist Dr Philip Newall analysed live-odds gambling adverts displayed during two months of televised English Premier League matches and found they were biased towards complex and highly specific bets.

Royal tombs
We announced the burial site of James I of Scotland – brutally murdered 580 years ago – would be explored, in a project led by a University archaeologist. Faculty of Arts and Humanities Dean, Professor Richard Oram, and colleagues began an attempt to locate the city of Perth’s ‘Charterhouse’, a monastery of Carthusian monks commissioned by James I as a future mausoleum for his dynasty. The project included experts in archaeology, Scottish history and 3D visualisation from the University of Stirling, the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), and the School of Simulation and Visualisation at The Glasgow School of Art.
Our academics are focused on tackling some of the biggest global challenges – aiming to improve the lives of people living in communities around the world.

Exposing the risks posed by toxic fumes on aircraft

Stirling researchers have discovered that aircrews and passengers could be in danger of contracting serious health problems due to their exposure to contaminated air on aircraft.

The study, published in prestigious World Health Organisation journal Public Health Panorama, was led by Dr Susan Michaelis of the Faculty of Health Sciences and Sport. It showed a clear link between air supplies contaminated by engine oil, and other aircraft fluids, and a variety of short and long-term health problems.

Dr Michaelis, a visiting researcher with the Occupational and Environmental Health Research group, said: “This is a clear occupational and public health issue with direct flight-safety consequences.”

Enhancing access to fresh water through technology

Professor Andrew Tyler, Associate Dean for Research in the Faculty of Natural Sciences, is at the forefront of a world-leading project aiming to improve access to fresh water across the globe.

Experts hold very little data on the world’s 100 million lakes due to their geographical spread, coupled with the logistical and political difficulties of monitoring water. Therefore, protecting citizens from water scarcity, pollution and deleterious impacts, including harmful algal blooms, remains a serious challenge.

In a bid to tackle the issue, Professor Tyler and his Stirling team are leading the £2.9 million GloboLakes project, which has established the world’s first satellite-based global lake surveillance system.

The innovative approach – involving a number of universities and organisations – uses earth observation technology to measure the absorption and reflection properties of light emanating from the water to estimate constituents. This technique provides vital data on water quality, such as algal concentrations and harmful algal blooms, and mineral and organic matter.

While other scientists have developed satellite algorithms to monitor one or two lakes on a local scale, Professor Tyler’s team is the first to develop a capability to work across a range of optically complex waters globally.

New projects on the Horizon

Professor Andrew Tyler’s team has recently secured further funding through the European Union’s largest research and innovation programme, Horizon2020, for four related projects involving end users and partners across Europe:

- **EOMORES**: Working with end users across Europe to exploit the satellite water monitoring approach to report the ecological status of inland waters.
- **CoastObs**: Promoting a similar approach to EOMORES in a coastal environment.
- **MONOCLE**: Developing multiscale observation networks for observing lakes, estuaries and coastal waters to help validate and fill gaps in satellite data.
- **DANUBIUS**: Developing a pan-European infrastructure on river-sea systems.

Making the headlines

The research into contaminated air in aircraft received media attention across the world. The study generated coverage in press outlets including: BBC, The Telegraph, The Guardian, The Times, and The Independent, and on media platforms across Australia, New Zealand, India, Indonesia and Europe, USA and Canada, reaching millions of people globally.
We are proud of our global reputation for high-quality teaching. Our internationally renowned academics are consistently recognised for excellence across a range of subject areas.

**World-leading academics**
Dr Karen Watchman, Senior Lecturer in Ageing, Frailty and Dementia, scooped a top award for helping people with learning difficulties come to terms with dementia. Her project ‘Jenny’s Diary’ was crowned Self-Management Resource of the Year at the Scottish Parliament.

Lecturer Ivor Smith, Faculty of Health Sciences and Sport, was named Educator of the Year at the Nursing Times Awards 2017. Faculty Dean, Professor Jayne Donaldson, said: “Ivor is a perfect example of the passion and commitment needed to be a great teacher.”

Professor Judith Phillips, Deputy Principal (Research), was appointed as a member of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) Interdisciplinary Research Advisory Panel and Dr Tessa Parkes, Dean for Equality and Diversity, as a member of the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel.

**Global recognition**
In 2017, we were named in a global list of top universities under the age of 50, by Times Higher Education. Stirling was 46th in the Young University Rankings, which includes 200 of the world’s best universities.

Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Stirling, Professor Gerry McCormac, said: “Building on the University’s global reputation is one of our key strategic goals as we look to the future. This accolade reinforces the quality of our research and the impact it has on society, our excellence in teaching, the skills and competencies of our graduates, and our hard-earned global reputation.

“None of this would be possible without the commitment and hard work of our staff and I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to them for their valuable contribution.”

**Helping shape Scotland’s future**
The University has launched an innovative partnership with Historic Environment Scotland and Forth Valley College to help promote and develop Scotland’s £2.4 billion heritage sector. Providing a framework to develop, accredit and award qualifications for education and vocational training programmes, the partnership will look to the international market as an opportunity for Scotland’s heritage sector to lead the industry and foster new economic activity.
Queen’s Baton Relay
Stirling welcomed the Gold Coast 2018 Queen’s Baton Relay to the University. Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Gerry McCormac, was joined by staff and scholar athletes, including Stirling Olympians Duncan Scott and Ross Murdoch, to carry the baton on a tour of the campus, as part of Team Scotland’s exciting five-day programme of events and celebrations.

University opened its doors to mark milestone 50th anniversary
The University threw open its doors to the community for a day of discovery, to celebrate its milestone 50th anniversary. Principal Professor Gerry McCormac said: “It was tremendous to see so many people – alumni, retired staff, and local families – visit the University and join staff and students to mark 50 years of inspiring learning and teaching, and impactful research.”

Aquaculture experts make a splash at the 2017 Royal Highland Show
Scientists from the University’s Institute of Aquaculture made a splash at the 2017 Royal Highland Show, promoting the Scottish aquaculture industry to hundreds of school children.

In workshops hosted by The Royal Highland Educational Trust and funded by the Scottish Aquaculture Research Fund, Stirling experts dived into the world of fish farming, with more than 570 pupils across two days.

Oral history project
High-profile politicians including former First Minister, Lord Jack McConnell, and the late Labour MP Tam Dalyell, featured in a new oral history project documenting the University’s fascinating past.

Organised by the Stirling University Retired Staff Association, the project and its content is available to the public through its website: oralhistory.stir.ac.uk

University celebrated at the Scottish Parliament
MSPs congratulated the University on its 50th anniversary during a special debate at the Scottish Parliament. Reflecting on the last 50 years, Stirling MSP Bruce Crawford told Parliament: “Stirling’s University has grown to become a global player in educational excellence, and I am delighted to lead this debate to highlight the significant history and achievements of this wonderful institution.”

Stirling’s partnerships and public engagement activities encourage an exchange of ideas with communities, supporting our commitment to make a difference.

130,000 people attended 130 university events on campus in 2017
Globally connected

We’re proud of our international outlook, with 120 nationalities represented on campus, and research and teaching partnerships worldwide.

Overseas partners
Linda Bauld, Professor of Health Policy and Deputy Director of the UK Centre for Tobacco and Alcohol Studies, is leading a £3.4 million project to reduce tobacco-related harm in low and middle income countries in Asia and Africa. The project involves six UK universities, eight overseas partners in seven countries and Cancer Research UK.

Dr Tom Bradwell, Faculty of Natural Sciences, collaborated with scientists at the Universities of Tromso and Aberystwyth to gain an understanding of how ice sheet evolution could help to predict the impact of modern-day climate and sea-level change.

Developing dementia-friendly communities in Scotland and Japan is the focus of an international partnership involving the University’s Dementia Services Development Centre and Tokyo Metropolitan Geriatric Hospital and Institute of Gerontology.

Meanwhile, the Institute of Aquaculture will help tackle major challenges within the Indonesian aquaculture industry as part of a new strategic collaboration.

Education around the world
Degrees were awarded to more than 30 graduates from our accountancy, business and computing science courses, delivered in partnership with Muscat College in Oman.

New undergraduate degrees in Human Resource Management and Marketing were introduced in September 2017, with a Masters in Management to follow in January 2018.

A total of 61 students graduated from the Singapore Institute of Management Global Education, including five students who received a Master of Business Administration (Retailing), 33 who gained a BA (Hons) in Retail Marketing and 23 from the first cohort of Sports Studies and Marketing students. Olympian Dr Benedict Tan also received an honorary degree for his contribution to sport.

Eight students also graduated with a Stirling MSc in Media and Communications Management, through our partnership with the University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Vietnam.

Education around the world
Degrees were awarded to more than 30 graduates from our accountancy, business and computing science courses, delivered in partnership with Muscat College in Oman.

As part of his TESOL Masters degree, Peerapat Singlong spent time as a teacher trainee in Hungary, where he taught English to both primary school and university students.

“It was a good learning experience for me to practise what I had learned here. Studying at Stirling has helped me build my self-confidence and prepared me to be competitive in the jobs market.”

Peerapat Singlong (Thailand) MSc Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
The opening of our new University of Stirling INTO Building marks another milestone in our growth as a globally connected, outward-looking institution.

Our partnership
Our relationship with INTO University Partnerships has gone from strength to strength since it began in 2014. That partnership has already brought more than 1,000 international students to study here and immerse themselves in the Stirling experience.

Our newest student facility
In November 2017, His Royal Highness The Earl of Wessex formally opened the University of Stirling INTO Building. This cutting-edge facility deepens our partnership with INTO and provides international students with opportunities for full-time undergraduate or postgraduate study at a world-leading university.

INTO students undertake preparation courses for progression to degrees at the University of Stirling, as well as other universities. The new building boasts a state-of-the-art lecture theatre, 10 teaching rooms, a café, and capacity for up to 420 students.

Enhancing the student experience
Centre Director for INTO University of Stirling, Sandy Tippett, said: “We are proud more than 1,000 international INTO students have already enjoyed the experience of studying on such a beautiful campus. This new, bespoke, building will further enhance our partnership and the student experience. The University is renowned for innovation and excellence and this new facility embodies those values.”

Astrid Smallenbroek, Students’ Union President, said: “The most enjoyable aspect of my time at Stirling has been to meet people from all cultural backgrounds and walks of life. The diversity of the University of Stirling has allowed my time at university to be richer – bringing more experiences and opinions to the table.

“The role which INTO University of Stirling Partnerships plays in that positive atmosphere cannot be underestimated. In a relatively short period of time, this partnership has brought many students to Stirling who have helped to enrich our student community and, subsequently, enhance the positive reputation, which Stirling has, as an inclusive and rewarding place to study.”

Maame Anamua Joy Ewusie-Mensah (Ghana)
BA (Hons) Human Resource Management and Psychology
With fantastic learning opportunities, first-class facilities and a beautiful location, Stirling is regularly recognised in global higher education surveys for the quality of our teaching, student satisfaction and employability.

Improving the learning experience
We are constantly looking for ways to transform our student learning experience and enhance our learning resources provision. In response to student feedback in 2017, we launched a new Learning Management System – Canvas – to make it easier for students to navigate through module materials and access assignments. We also updated our Listen Again policy to ensure all lectures are recorded wherever possible and made available to students.

Tomorrow’s leaders
Our graduates are in demand. Mohsin Laginaf, who graduated with an MSc in Investment Analysis, is set to launch his own sports nutrition drink after success in the Sports Innovation Challenge. Through the Scotland-wide entrepreneurship competition, Mohsin won £4,000 backing, support from industry partners and space in the business incubator The Sport Hive (based at the University’s Innovation Park). He said: “The one-year incubation and mentorship are incredibly valuable as I’ll have access to resources and advice that I wouldn’t otherwise.”

Making students’ lives better
The Students’ Union is proud of the work it does to make students’ lives better and is delighted to have been rated as ‘Very Good’ in the Quality Students’ Union assessment by the National Union of Students, and to be given a four-star rating for the Healthy Body, Healthy Mind programme.

In addition, we won ‘Campaign of the Year’ for our Big Rent Campaign and – together with the University – we also won the Partnership Award for our strategy to prevent and tackle sexual violence and misconduct. We continued to collect donations from students moving out of halls, preventing 5.2 tonnes of waste going into landfill. We saw a record 1,300 nominations for 420 academic and professional staff under the Recognising and Advancing Teaching Excellence (RATE) Award scheme.

Looking forward, we will be focusing on engagement and delivering for our members, primarily through the development of our strategic plan over the next three years, with the spotlight on student wellbeing.

Astrid Smallenbroek
Students’ Union President

Masters student Anita George won the Data Lab Industrial Placement Award and now works full-time for NHS National Services Scotland.

“The employability and personal development workshops held as part of my course were instrumental in helping me build the transferrable skills required to go into the workplace as a data analyst.”

Anita George (India)
MSc Data Science for Business
A year of triumphs for Stirling golfers

Stirling’s golfers enjoyed a successful 2017, winning a number of prestigious titles around the world and cementing the University’s reputation as a leader in the sport.

The women’s team – comprising Chloé Goadby, Hazel MacGarvie, Gemma Batty, Emily Laws and Miren Fraser – made history when they triumphed at the Yale Intercollegiate Invitational at New Haven, Connecticut. The landmark victory is believed to be the first time an international team has won a National Collegiate Athletic Association Division One title, the highest level of college competition in the United States. Golf scholar Chloé also won the event’s individual title.

In further international success for Stirling, the men’s and women’s teams were crowned champions of Europe following a gripping competition in the Czech Republic. The women secured first place at the European University Sports Association Golf Championships by six shots, while the men had to battle through a dramatic sudden-death playoff against St Andrews before lifting the trophy.

Chloé took second place in the individual competition, with her teammate Sinead Sexton finishing third, while Stirling’s Jordan Sundborg finished third in the men’s event.

Stirling’s achievements continued at the 95th Scottish Student Golf Championships, winning the men’s team competition, with Gemma, Sinead and Laird Shepherd lifting individual trophies too. Chloé and Gemma represented Team GB at the World University Games, in Chinese Taipei, whilst teammate Robert Foley was selected for the Swiss student team.

One of Stirling’s newest sport scholars, Cameron Richardson, made a blistering start to his university career as he became world junior duathlon champion at the ITU Duathlon World Championships in Canada.

Chloé Goadby (Scotland)
BA (Hons) Psychology and Sports Studies

Cameron Richardson (Scotland)
BA (Hons) Finance

Swimming success

Stirling star Duncan Scott was rewarded for an outstanding year in the pool when he was crowned Male Athlete of the Year at the Team Scotland Sports Awards. The recognition came after the Sports Studies student became the first British man to swim the 100m Freestyle in under 48 seconds, and broke the Scottish record in the 200m Freestyle, at the British Swimming Championships.

In other swimming successes, Danielle Joyce won two gold and two bronze medals at the Deaflympics with Team GB, Cameron Brodie and Calum Bain were selected for the World University Games, and six athletes, along with coach Steven Tigg, were picked to represent Team Scotland at the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

Achievements

There was success for curler Bobby Lammie, who took gold at the World University Winter Games. Tennis scholars Scott Duncan, Maia Lumsden and Jonny O’Mara helped Team GB win the BNP Paribas Master’U in Lille, and the women’s tennis team won silver at the European Universities Championships in Madrid.

Scholarships awarded in:

Curling
Football
Swimming
Tennis
Triathlon
Our global network of Stirling alumni is driving innovations in a range of sectors around the world – and plays an active role in shaping the University’s future.

Honorary graduates
In 2017, we welcomed a host of influential honorary graduates to the Stirling family. Those awarded the degree of Doctor of the University or Master of Arts included leaders from the worlds of sport, psychology and the arts.

Professor Steve Peters
Outstanding contribution to psychology, health sciences and sport.

Bernard Gallacher OBE
Outstanding contribution to sport in respect of his achievements and accolades in professional golf.

Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain
In recognition of his philanthropy, creative writing and poetry, and for his activism in driving an agenda for peace.

Emeritus Professor Angela Smith
Outstanding contribution to the University in conceiving, establishing and chairing – since its foundation – the Stirling University Retired Staff Association.

Dr Benedict Tan
Outstanding contribution to sport in Singapore.

Dr James Robertson
Outstanding contribution to writing in Scotland, for his work to extend the use of the Scots language, and for his role in highlighting the importance of political activism and participation.

Dr Anthony Phillips
In recognition of his role in creating the Macrobert Arts Centre, and for his major contribution to classical music, arts administration and literary translation.

“It’s a great honour to be part of this excellent university. If there’s a secret to a successful career and life, it’s about being passionate in every aspect of a chosen path and believing in one’s self.”

Dr Bernard Gallacher OBE
We are an ambitious university and our success depends on our skilled and committed people. Our Strategic Plan sets out clear expectations and we have continued to demonstrate excellence and innovation across the institution.

The University has made excellent progress throughout our anniversary year. From the launch of our book ‘Fifty: The University of Stirling in 50 Objects’ to inspiring lectures, exhibitions, fun days and reunions, we celebrated our past, present and future.

**Progress**

We welcomed the next generation of students, attracted by our research-led teaching and outstanding location, from across the UK and internationally. Progress has been made over the past year around our growth in unregulated student numbers.

We continually strive to improve the student experience. We introduced a new learning management system, Canvas, and ran campaigns with the Students’ Union to highlight our dedicated student support services.

Our first Research Week showcased our multidisciplinary research and informed our new strategic research themes: Living Well; Global Security and Resilience; and Cultures, Communities and Society.

Our staff remain key to our success, and the launch of our People Strategy will help us improve our practices and develop our outstanding workforce. Organisational changes were successfully implemented across Directorate and Faculty professional services, to help us make best use of our resources.

**Commitment**

We outlined ambitious plans to transform our campus, which will improve our existing facilities, enhance the student experience, and further our reputation as Scotland’s University for Sporting Excellence.

Our successes are founded upon the commitment of our staff, the enthusiasm of our students and the support of our alumni, donors and stakeholders. I would like to extend my thanks to everyone involved.