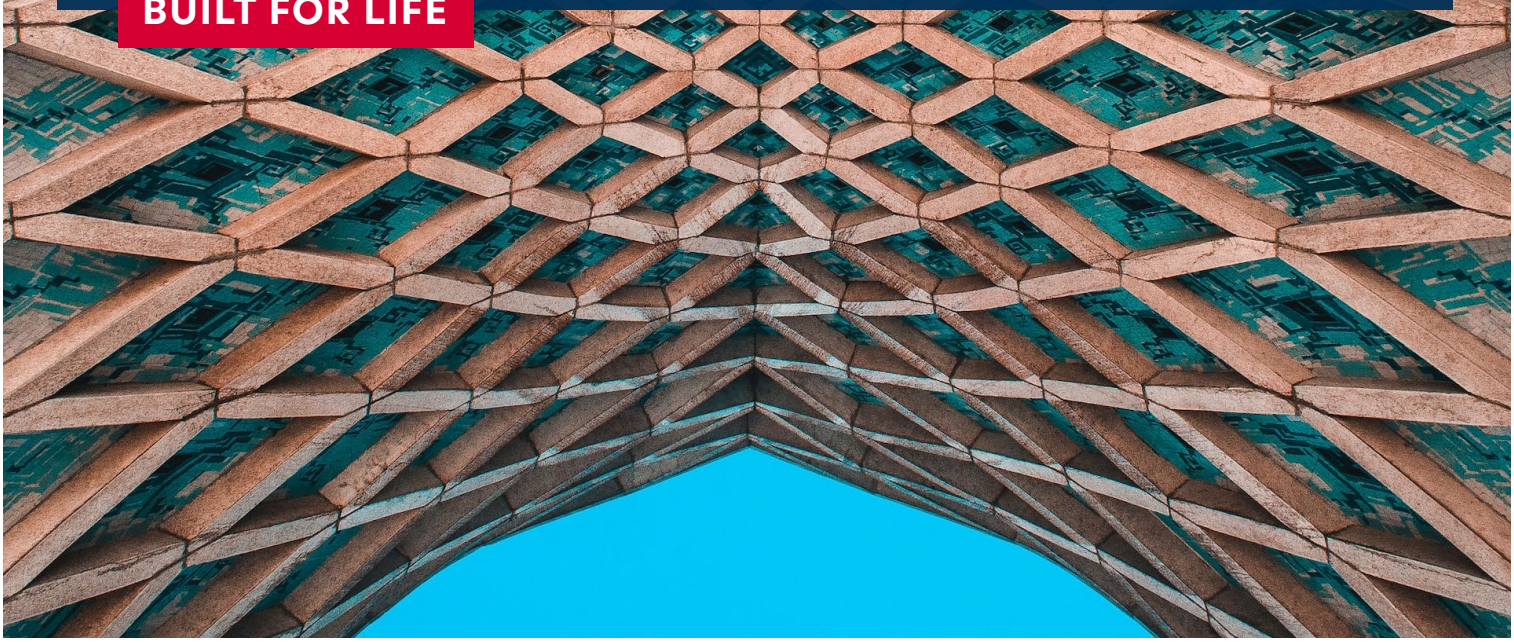
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ESTATE MANAGEMENT

Honorary Community newsletter

EDITION 7 | APRIL 2024

BUILT FOR LIFE



Welcome to the UCEM Honorary Community Spring Newsletter, which is for all those who are part of our community of loyal and supportive friends of UCEM.

This edition brings you up to speed on all things UCEM this Spring and a progress update on our ambitious plans for the future. As ever, we welcome your feedback and comments so we can continue to evolve the newsletter. Thank you for your ongoing and steadfast support to this great institution! We look forward to seeing you all again in the very near future.

Ashley
Vice Chancellor
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Jane
Deputy Vice Chancellor and University Secretary
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UCEM update

It is incredible to think we are already a quarter of the way through 2024 and rapidly heading towards summer. The pace of work and level of ambition at UCEM is, as ever, evident in all that is going on across the institution so far this year. We hope you enjoy this round up of the latest UCEM news and activities.

Strategic Ambition

We are currently drafting our **Strategic Plan** for 2025- 2030, which will mark the next delivery phase of our long-term vision to become the Centre of Excellence for Built Environment Education. Alongside this, we are well underway with research work to help inform a potential new name for UCEM for when we secure and launch our full university title during the next strategic period. Thank you to everyone who has input their views to this important process over the last year or so.

Institutional Update

Work to deliver our challenging set of **CX9 targets** for the year has continued through the early part of 2024. We have once again been participating in the National Student Survey 2024 and anticipate the results during the summer. Alongside this we have run our own Student Experience Survey which has resulted in scores of 86.7% of UCEM apprenticeship respondents and 92.5% of non-apprenticeship respondent students being satisfied with the quality of their course – results which exceed our targets for the year and are a rewarding outcome for the focus our staff continue to place on improving the student experience and student outcomes at UCEM.

Whilst we are seeing a slight downturn in the market, we still achieved our overall target number of new students for the year, the majority of which were once again apprenticeship students. We plan to launch a series of new programmes from September 2024 that will support our breadth and growth ambitions. The new programmes we have planned for September include a Level 7 Sustainability Business Specialist apprenticeship, a BSc in Architectural Design Technology, an MSc in Urban Planning and a Chartered Surveyor Degree Apprenticeship - Planning and Development Pathway.

Built Environment Apprenticeship Awards winners

In December 2023, UCEM was successful in its bid for Wave 1 support from the **OfS Degree Apprenticeship funding** competition. The OfS awarded UCEM £272K to develop and expand its degree apprenticeship provision. UCEM will be using the funding primarily to develop a new Level 6 Construction Quantity Surveyor degree apprenticeship. As the largest provider of apprenticeships for the construction and built environment occupational route, these funds will allow us to expand our provision and capacity and to target groups who are currently under-represented in the construction industry.

External Influence

Our aims to impact and influence the wider sectors we serve continue with a wide variety of initiatives underway. To highlight just a few, we successfully held our Built Environment Apprenticeship Awards in early February and the next in our INSPIRE series of events – an exceptionally well attended session on EDI in the sector – took place in late January. We collaborated with the Lifelong Education Institute (LEI) and Activate Learning on a roundtable with key stakeholders, including ministerial special advisors and staff from the Department for Education, to make the case that online education is as good as traditional models. Ashley also chaired a panel session at the LEI on Future Skills Requirements to

Highlights in this edition

UCEM's Inspire event on EDI

support lobbying for appropriate changes to higher education policy, funding and apprenticeships with a ministerial audience.

We were pleased and proud of Ruth Grindey, Director of Digital Learning and Engagement, and Cathy Higgs, Dean of the School of the Built Environment, who presented to the Council of Heads of Built Environment (CHOBE) in February. This was in celebration of CHOBE's 20th anniversary and covered UCEM's approach to Artificial Intelligence and authentic assessment. This included how generative artificial intelligence is challenging thinking and practice and how our work will contribute to the adoption of AI technologies as part of digital pedagogy within the built environment subjects. We are also delighted that Aled Williams was recently elected to the Board of the Supply Chain Sustainability School. In this position he hopes to work ever more closely to align the two organisations on our mutual sustainability ambitions.

Sustainability

Work on our sustainability goals under the **Globe Programme** has continued. The launch of our next short course Conducting a Life Cycle Assessment will teach students how to conduct, interpret and optimise an embodied whole life carbon assessment during the design phase of a construction project with step-by-step guidance on the process and how to analyse the results effectively. We have also launched our BE Sustainable newsletter which aims to educate and empower the built environment on all aspects of sustainability and work continues on the development of new sustainability degree programmes. Our work with staff on embedding a **culture of sustainability** across UCEM has also gained traction. In January the focus was on the theme of volunteering and in February this switched to sustainable shopping. As part of this, UCEM hosted a **Clothes Refresh** – a pop-up charity event in which staff could donate pre-loved clothes and accessories and then purchase items in return to sustainably refresh their own wardrobes! UCEM raised £294.50 from this event with all unsold items donated to Rags 2 Riches for further fund raising. All proceeds from the event went to UCEM's designated charity No5 and will directly fund at least 6 counselling sessions for 11-17 year olds in the Reading area.

Internal Appointment

Lynn Hill, UCEM's new Chief Operating Officer

Finally, in internal news, we were delighted to welcome to UCEM a new Chief Operating Officer in mid-February. Lynn Hill joined us from Merchant Taylors' School in Liverpool where she was Chief Operating Officer since 2017. She also worked at Liverpool John Moores University prior to this. Lynn will be heading up UCEM's Finance, HR and Estates functions, as well as the IT team at a later date and has joined the Executive leadership team reporting to Ashley Wheaton. Lynn looks forward to meeting many of you at our events later this year.

It really has been a busy and exciting start to the year!

Undergraduate programmes periodic review & re-validation and BSc Architectural Design Technology validation

Our academic teams had a very busy start to the year with the culmination of a huge programme of work to re-validate all our undergraduate programmes and validate some new programmes for delivery from later this year. The UCEM Academic Quality Unit organised a two-day event on 27 and 28 February which resulted in 6 commendations, 4 recommendations and no conditions for the revalidation of all undergraduate programmes for five years from September 2024. The brand-new BSc Architectural Design Technology BSc (Hons) was validated for 5 years from September 2024 with 2 commendations, 6 recommendations and 1 condition, and the MSc Urban Planning and Planning and Development Pathway on the Chartered Surveyor Degree Apprenticeship were validated for 5 years with 5 recommendations and 1 condition. This represents a huge milestone for the institution as we develop new and newly refreshed programmes in support of our growth agenda and the strategic aim of broadening our depth and breadth of programme offering as we evolve into the Centre of Excellence for Built Environment Education. All this is a precursor to the further work later this year which will also see us re-validate all our postgraduate programmes, revalidate our existing undergraduate apprenticeship programme and approve more new apprenticeship programmes!

The UCEM Sustainability Research Prize

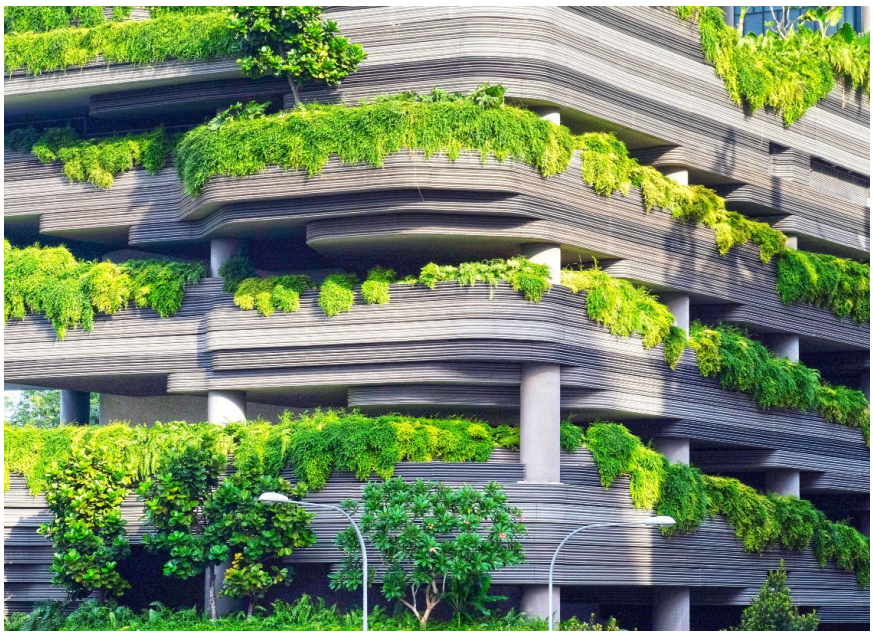
We have been simply overwhelmed by the generous response from this community to our new UCEM Sustainability Research Prize, to be presented at each Graduation Ceremony from July this year. This new prize reflects our goals to lead the way in sustainability and to share the future of the built environment for generations to come. We believe that sustainability is a fundamental practice that should be integrated into all our actions. Your generous contributions mean we can recognise at least two graduates at each ceremony with a financial prize in recognition of their final year projects that demonstrate academic excellence and impact on sustainability at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Our Just Giving page for donations will be opened shortly and will be shared with you all. We greatly appreciate any further financial support you or your organisation are able to provide.

All those supporting the Prize Fund with donations will be credited in the Graduation Programme brochure, there will be PR undertaken on the day featuring the winners of the prizes and referencing those who have sponsored, and we intend to invite some sponsors to each of the Prize Winners Receptions on Graduation Day over the coming years. The success of the prize fund to date also means we can consider more prizes or increased levels of award per prize. Thank you all so much for your generosity and support!

Meet the UCEM team

Helen Edwards

Director of Academic Quality



The UCEM Academic Quality Unit is responsible for the oversight of quality and standards of UCEM awards and the student experience. It coordinates the framework and documentation that details all the processes and procedures involved in maintaining this quality. The team is also responsible for managing relationships with validating partners, the Quality Assurance Agency, Ofsted and Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies. Helen Edwards oversees this work for UCEM and has been integral to the Re-Validation of existing programmes and the Validation of new programmes that is underway this year at UCEM.

What is your role for UCEM?

I am Director of Academic Quality here at UCEM. My primary role is to lead the Academic Quality Unit and Academic Governance Teams. I'm responsible for developing and implementing a robust and responsive framework which includes Code of Practices, regulations, policies, and terms of reference, overseeing validation of new programmes and accreditation by professional bodies, developing and implementing internal quality audits, leading on institutional enhancement planning and chairing a number of UCEM academic subcommittees. .

How long have you worked for UCEM?

Since May 2004 in a number of different roles but in my current role since January 2016.

How did you get into academia and why did you join UCEM?

Having recently finished my master's degree I was really excited by the prospect of working for a higher education institution and in a role supporting students.

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

I love that things are constantly evolving and that everyone at UCEM is so passionate about improving the quality of our programmes and in enhancing the student experience. I'm also really excited by UCEM's plans to extend its programme portfolio with new undergraduate, postgraduate and apprenticeship programmes.

What is your greatest professional achievement at UCEM so far?

I think one of my proudest moments was working on the Self-assessment document that supported UCEM's application for indefinite degree awards powers.

What do you find challenging about your work?

One of the main challenges is trying

Meet the team

to keep abreast of the amount of regulation within the higher education sector. Just finding time to read the lengthy Office for Students consultation documents is a challenge, let alone writing a meaningful response.

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

It's no longer a surprise as I've worked at UCEM for so many years, but what stands out at UCEM is the extent to which staff are willing to go out of their way to support students and the organisation to achieve its goals and aspirations.

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

The team and I have lots to keep us busy with at the moment with the validation of new programmes such as the MSc Urban Planning and BSc (Hons) Architectural Design technology and the re-validation of the undergraduate and postgraduate suites of programmes, a full review of the academic governance framework and quality audits in progress on student engagement in quality processes and interruption of studies. We have also just launched a new programme review process which needs to be fully embedded. There is work on the horizon around engaging with new professional bodies including The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and supporting UCEM in putting in place policies and regulations to support the introduction of research degrees. So lots of interesting and very exciting things to look forward to!

What three words sum up UCEM for you?

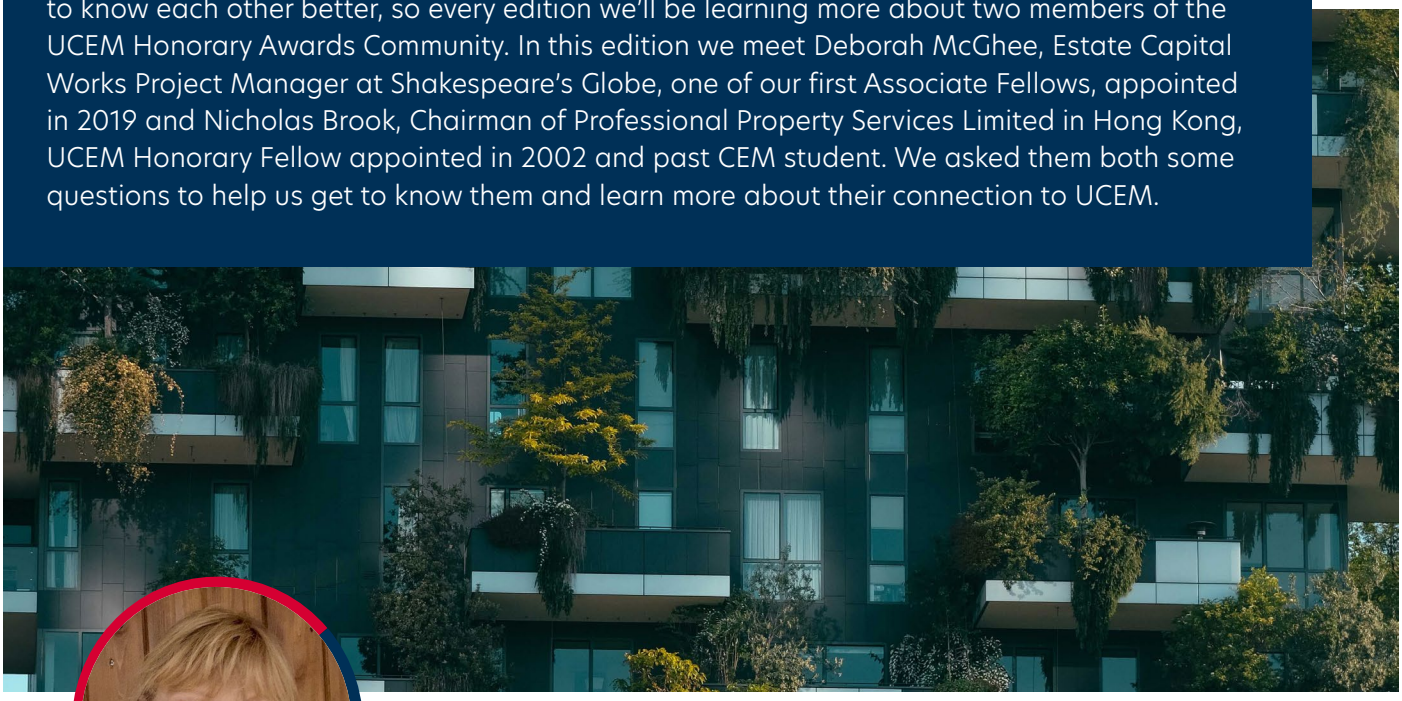
Ambitious I have enjoyed the journey that UCEM has been on as an independent higher education institution and seeing all that it has achieved; **caring** as I think UCEM cares and supports both its staff and students; **excellence** – I really think that UCEM demonstrates excellence in everything it does.

Tell us a surprising or fun fact about you!

In lockdown I know we all succumbed to some impulse purchases. I ended up buying a giant albino African Land Snail on Amazon. He is called Olaf (named after the snowman in Frozen) and is now a key part of the family. When he arrived, he was the size of a fingernail but is now larger than both of my hands put together and you wouldn't want him let loose in your greenhouse.

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 two members of the UCEM Honorary Awards Community. In this edition we meet Deborah McGhee, Estate Capital Works Project Manager at Shakespeare's Globe, one of our first Associate Fellows, appointed in 2019 and Nicholas Brook, Chairman of Professional Property Services Limited in Hong Kong, UCEM Honorary Fellow appointed in 2002 and past CEM student. We asked them both some questions to help us get to know them and learn more about their connection to UCEM.



Deborah McGhee

How are you connected to UCEM?

I first enrolled with the College of Estate Management in 2009 to undertake the Diploma in Surveying Practice, whilst working full time as an Estate Manager. On completion, in 2012, I then decided to enroll on the MSC Conservation of the Historic Environment, completed in 2016 with Distinction. I am very proud that I was awarded best dissertation for the course and the winner of the 'Student Academic Excellence' UCEM Annual Award 2016. In 2019 I was awarded an Associate Fellowship of the now University College of Estate Management.

What are you doing now?

I am now the Estates and Capital Projects Manager at Shakespeare's Globe, which is very fitting as I did have a previous career in the performing arts, and the dissertation for my masters was based upon a historic theatre, the Canterbury Hall, the first music hall, just up the road from Shakespeare's Globe! My role at the Globe has developed over the last 5 years. I am now developing the 10 years estates strategy, major capital works program, and concentrating on digitizing the asset management strategy incorporating it into a BIM system, with a view that one day the modelling will be used creatively.

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

Although continuous professional development will always remain my key aim to keeping on top of the latest technologies, legislation and methodologies, my biggest challenge was studying for my master's degree, whilst working full time, but I got there in the end, and it has all paid off.

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

As I have had the benefit of two careers, I will say, firstly working in the West End in various musicals, and secondly , definitely receiving the Student Academic Excellence Annual Award. What an honor. When things get a little tricky, I look at my owl for inspiration.

What is your best memory of UCEM?

I have many great memories whilst studying and with the friends and teachers that I have met through

The Honorary Awards Community

Deborah receiving her Academic Excellence award from Ashley in 2016 at the Property Award luncheon.

UCEM, but my favourite and most poignant memory will be the day I rocked up at the open evening at a venue in Kings Cross to see what the then College of Estate Management (CEM) was all about. I met Phil Leverton and asked if there was a chance I could study to be a building surveyor. I was 40 years of age! I was told it's never too late and I am glad that Phil was my mentor through to completing my MSc.

What three words sum up UCEM for you?

Inspiring, Pioneering, and just Brilliant

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

Digital animator, because now I am into BIM!

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

Mikhail Baryshnikov, a male ballet dancer. I still love ballet and its my go to de-stress tool, and boy could he jump!

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

A corner garden house. I now have my first garden and becoming very green fingered along the way!

Nicholas Brooke

How are you connected to UCEM?

I attended the College of Estate Management then located in St. Albans Grove in Kensington from 1960-63 where I studied for the B.Sc. (Estate Management) – Rural Option and just obtained a degree, having spent too much time either in the adjacent Builders Arms, playing rugby or defending Oswald – the College mascot against intruders from other Colleges. You might ask what pigs, sheep and cattle have to do with the urban fabric of Hong Kong where I am now based, particularly as I then went onto Wye College in Kent to study Farm Business Administration but more anon. Another major connection with the College is that I met my wife there, then Margaret Toms, who was an Olympic Swimmer and who is also a Chartered Surveyor – at a time when very few girls enrolled at the College.

I have always had a fond affection for the College, now UCEM, and am very supportive of its role as the key provider of the necessary education and training skills required by those involved in the property sector. I proudly became an Honorary Fellow in 2002.

What are you doing now?

I am currently the Chairman of the Professional Property Services Group (PPS) in Hong Kong, a company which my wife and I set up some 30 years ago now and which has gone through a number of changes over the years, including partnerships with Hiller Parker and CBRE, but which remains very much part of the Brooke family. Initially we provided advisory services just within Hong Kong but grew to respond to our clients regional and indeed international demands; so that we now provide strategic property related advice to Government, institutions, corporations and families across the Asia Pacific region.

Hong Kong is and has been for a long time our home, and therefore besides PPS, I have become heavily involved with community related initiatives including spending time on the HK Town Planning Board and the HK Housing Authority and more latterly as the Chairman of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Park and of the Harbourfront Commission for which I was awarded the Gold Bauhinia Star by the Hong Kong Chief Executive in 2018.

How did I chose Hong Kong as my ultimate destination? Having trained as an agricultural surveyor, I joined Cluttons to manage farms and estates for the Crown and

The Honorary Awards Community

Church Commissioners. A chance meeting with the son of the Ruler of Dubai when I was in London led to an invitation to Cluttons to establish an office in Dubai. Having sourced the opportunity, I was keen to see Cluttons take up the challenge and volunteered to move to the Gulf. Cluttons was the first professional firm in the Gulf and demands for property related advice led to further offices being established in Bahrain and Abu Dhabi. In total, I spent some 8 years in all working there, before being approached by Swire Properties to move to Hong Kong in 1979 to help with the planning and delivery of a major water-front community consisting 61 towers and housing over 50,000 people. That kept me busy until 1988 when I left to set up PPS.

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

It is difficult over a professional career spanning some 60 years to identify the biggest challenge I have faced and so perhaps therefore I could be allowed several.

Firstly, the decision to move to the Gulf and essentially to move from an established professional environment to a pioneering role and to change my spots, but one of my maxims is "seizing the opportunity".

Secondly, the marketing of 5,000 units in some 9 towers in Jakarta, this being the first high rise of its type in the city. When having created enough hype and attention, we sold all the units in 3 days. No credit cards in those days so the prime function of each partner was to count the cash with a 20-foot container heading for the Bank every two hours!

Thirdly, giving professional evidence in Court, which I am often asked to do, where the outcome is highly dependent on my opinion of value and the quality of the arguments put forward. In Hong Kong, the future rateable value of development sites was very much determined on evidence that I gave in Court and similarly a claim linked to falling tiles and the recladding of a building in Singapore was recently awarded in full based on my evidence.

Fourthly, my involvement with the development of the Hong Kong Science & Technology Park where in 2000 the then Hong Kong Chief Executive decided to create the necessary hard and soft infrastructure to provide a platform for innovation and technology in Hong Kong. I was entrusted with the task and as Chairman of the Park led the development of all three phases which is now the home to over 500 companies and over 15,000 scientists and engineers.

Fifthly and finally, participating in challenging the Hong Kong Government with respect to further reclamation in Victoria Harbour and securing a legally enforceable moratorium against further reclamation. Then in turn persuading the Government of the importance of the waterfront and advising on the establishment of the Harbourfront Commission, of which I became the Chair, and which now monitors what happens with some 73 kilometres of Harbourfront.

What is your greatest professional achievement so far?

I have been very fortunate in the opportunities which have arisen during my career, but I think I would rank being elected as the President of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors in 2003 as my greatest professional satisfaction. I was the first overseas surveyor to be appointed to the role and from my perspective it recognized and reflected the international reach and potential influence of the profession.

The Honorary Awards Community

What is your best memory of UCEM?

The College in the early 1960s, comprised less than 400 staff and students and was a community in itself although we were studying a variety of degree and professional courses. The camaraderie was very special such that friendships and associations last through to today.

What three words sum up UCEM for you?

Personality is the word that comes to mind in that every student had his own personality whether from an affluent property and fast car background, to sons/daughters of fathers in the profession, to a great number that appeared to have landed at the College by accident. Personality notwithstanding all blended well.

John Clayton, one of rural lecturers whose sense of dress and humour ensured a full house wherever he was on parade, who was also well known for his contribution to the media, including the Estates Gazette.

Oswald the Owl who in a strange way was a frequent focus of attention and a source of pride to the student community who would battle with allcomers to defend the College mascot. Rescuing him was a major challenge, particularly with the likes of Imperial College, and many came home without their trousers by way of penalty.

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

I have an interest in and love of nature and if I were to have another job for one day, I would like to be in charge of Kew Gardens. The range of specimens and varieties are wonderfully displayed.

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

David Attenborough would be top of the list. I watch all his films and series, time and time again and am over awed by his passion and commitment, not only to protect and save endangered species, but also more latterly his very clear messages with respect to climate change.

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

I think if I won the lottery, I would allocate the majority to a number of the charities that I support whose focus is those less well-off either physically or financially than myself. Living and working in Asia, the gap between those that have and those that do not, is all too evident.

UCEM Online

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

Don't forget the Honorary Community webpage is now live.

Built Environment Apprenticeship Awards 2024

UCEM held its Built Environment Apprenticeship Awards event on 8 February 2024 during National Apprenticeship Week. The event was a chance to champion and recognise the impact of apprenticeships on the built environment and it recognised some very worthy winners. Find out more **on the website.**

UCEM INSPIRE event on EDI

On 31 January UCEM hosted another event in its INSPIRE series Joined up leadership for an inclusive built environment. This event brought together leading industry experts to discuss and agree collaborative efforts in fostering a more inclusive built environment sector. The event was supported by the Construction Leadership Council, Construction Inclusion Coalition, the Construction Industry Council and Building people and attracted more than 80 attendees who are keen to bring a 'one-voice' approach towards EDI in the sector. Find out more **on the website.**

Research grants

UCEM is proud to have received to externally funded research grants from the British Council to continue its exploration of gender equality. For more information see our **on the website.**

For other news articles from UCEM see **www.ucem.ac.uk/whats-happening/news/**

For other interesting and thought provoking articles on built environment themes, such a smart buildings and biophilic architecture, see our content corner at Articles - University College of Estate Management (**ucem.ac.uk**)

Forthcoming occasions and events

Honorary Awards Community luncheon 2024

Thursday 2 May 2024

Ironmongers Hall in London – invitations were issued in January – if you have yet to register, please email specialevents@ucem.ac.uk!

Save the date

Property Award 2024

Thursday 10 October 2024

Institute of Directors in Central London

Formal invitations will follow in late Spring 2024

Graduation July 2024

Friday 5 July 2024

Town Hall Reading

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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.