

# Aberystwyth builds on experience to grow management school

**The School of Management and Business (SMB) at Aberystwyth University is in an exciting process of growth and development**

Long known for its strength in accounting and economics research and education, SMB has grown considerably in the past two years, the beneficiary of Aberystwyth University's plan to establish a significant presence in the management studies area.

Staff members have a wealth of corporate experience at firms such as Accenture, IBM and Reuters, and have vast international experience, having worked and studied in Canada, Japan, Ghana and Russia, among other countries.

They also have a range of educational backgrounds, including computer science, economics, engineering and international relations. The result is an academic team that brings a variety of experience and perspectives to management education and practice.

"One thing that the economic crisis has taught us is the need for management education to be more international and more informed by broader social and economic issues," said Nick Perdakis, director of SMB.

## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – WORKING WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The School has long established relationships with the Aberystwyth business community and is seeking links with Powys-based firms in Welshpool and Newtown.

Distance is not an issue, as the SMB works with two important networks. The Aber-Bangor Skills Centre works with academic departments and local businesses to match the training needs of businesses with university expertise to provide CPD courses.

The School is the Mid-Wales partner in the Leadership and Management in Wales (LMW) programme, an EU-funded initiative aimed at identifying and developing leadership best practice within the Wales business community.

## INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND LOCAL ENTERPRISE AT THE SMB

Excellent research is the basis for excellent teaching, and the SMB has generated top quality research for academic, policymaking and business audiences in recent years. Like the rest of Aberystwyth University, the School enjoys very high student satisfaction scores.

One of the School's most important current research programmes is the joint work with Waterford Institute of Technology in Ireland. Funded by a major EU grant, Self-Learning Networks in Ireland and Wales (SLNIW) tries to understand how entrepreneurs in sparsely populated regions succeed through the use of support networks.

The SLNIW programme has hosted a series of successful conferences and workshops and produced important research for government.

The School of Management and Business has recently established the Research Centre in International Business and Public Policy (CIBaPP), under the directorship of Professor Steven McGuire.

The Centre's research will be important to Wales SMEs looking to expand abroad.

## COURSE CHANGES AT ABERYSTWYTH

The School's portfolio of postgraduate degrees is being transformed.

In October 2011, the School will introduce a new MSc (Econ)

**International Business and Public Policy.** This programme is designed for people interested in the governance of the international economy.

The School is also launching an MSc (Econ) in Banking and Regulation. This MSc addresses a fundamentally important topic and equips students with the skills needed to work in the rapidly evolving financial environment.

In 2012 the School, building on its outstanding reputation for research on local regional development and small business management, will launch a degree in regional enterprise.

"The international economy is now much more complicated and the degree of government intervention is much greater than in recent decades," said Prof McGuire.

"So a key element of the Centre's research is to understand how the international political environment affects firms, and what firms can do to navigate their way successfully."

A recently completed project, funded by the Foreign Office, looked at the opportunities presented by the European Union – India free trade negotiations. Prof McGuire is also working with the thinktank, Chatham House, on a project that examines the future of manufacturing in Europe in the face of challenges from Asia.

This new development complements the work of the well-established Research Centre in Local and Regional Enterprise (CLaRE), led by Prof Dennis Thomas.

Set up in 2004, the multi-disciplinary work of CLaRE builds on a tradition of studying the economy of Wales and rural areas in particular.

Since its inception the Centre has been involved in several high profile EU-funded research projects involving international cooperation with various European academic partners. Within Wales the Centre's researchers have been involved in funded studies of strategic planning in Mid Wales, sustainable development in Pembrokeshire, and an investigation of the effects of the Severn Bridge tolls on small businesses.

Other studies and publications include work on the Welsh water utility sector, stakeholder relationships in a heritage railway company, organic foodstuffs, self-employment patterns and rural development policy.

The international dimension to CLaRE's activities, reflecting its multi-disciplinary nature, includes research on regional house price volatility in the UK and USA, informal credit institutions in Uzbekistan, and indigenous accounting systems and subalternity in Sri Lanka.



Students attend a lecture at the School of Management and Business