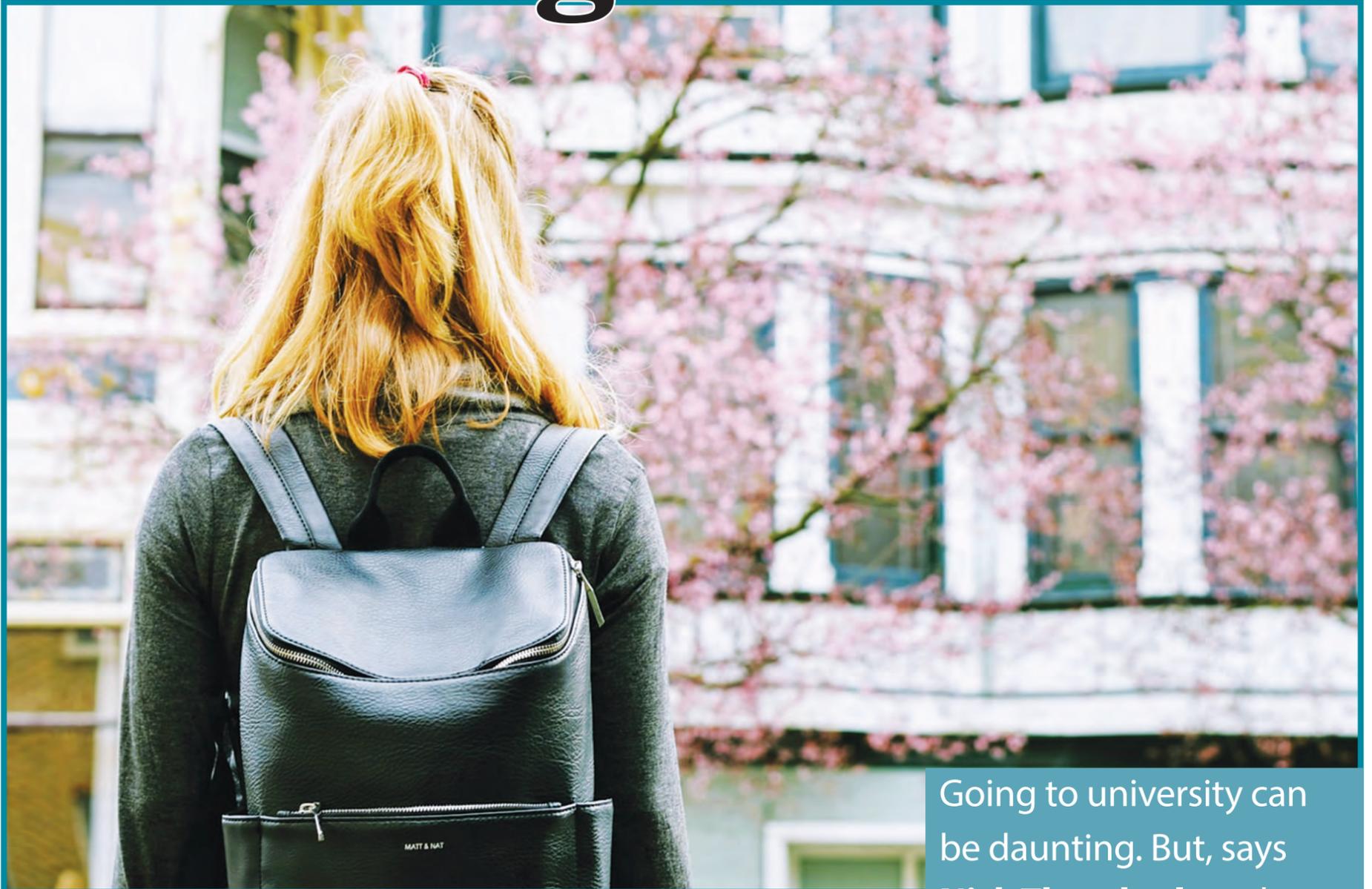


International education

Starting a new life



Going to university can be daunting. But, says **Nick Theodoulou**, the chance to start life on your own terms means the vast majority get over initial jitters and will settle into the routine despite finding it hard at first

So maybe you know the words to Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody off by heart, watch Premier League football and have seen *Peaky Blinders* – but is this enough to integrate at a British university?

The UK remains the top destination for Cypriot students, with approximately one per cent of the population studying there at any one time, and around 40,000 alumni of UK institutions in total.

Despite its small size, Cyprus ranks as the 10th most important source country for international students in the UK according to recent statistics. The Universities of Reading, Essex and Sussex traditionally have the largest numbers of Cypriot students, the British High Commission announced in 2019.

As a society which places education close to the top of our priorities, there can be a lot of pressure to get a good degree from a good university. For a lot of people though, the hardest part isn't necessarily getting into a university



but life once you get there.

"University was difficult, but the independence was very important to me," one 25-year-old who studied in Canterbury told the *Cyprus Mail*.

A close-knit family structure is seen as the cornerstone of Cypriot society. But for some young people university offers a chance to spread their wings.

"Family is important,

of course, but when your mother keeps reminding you to have a shower, telling you to do this or that, it's good to have a chance to do things on your own," he explained. "You can set your own routine, even if that means having cereal for dinner."

University is also a clean-slate on which to rewrite your story. If you got stuck with a nickname you didn't like at secondary school, or a

look or a stereotype – then university offers a chance to start over.

Opening a bank account, buying bedsheets and pots and pans while settling into your accommodation are just a few of the check-list chores to get done in the mad rush of the first week.

The whirlwind of emotions as you embark on a new life abroad is perfectly encapsulated in the storm in a teacup

of Fresher's Week. It's the first crash-course of your university experience, and one specialised in British drinking culture.

As most Cypriot teens will have been on the Protaras-Ayia Napa carousel, the Brits' enthusiasm for booze comes as no surprise. But being immersed in that culture for three to four years instead of three to four days can come as quite a shock.

Pleasure Island is a scene most people remember from the Dis-

ney classic *Pinocchio*. But since the 1940 film was first released, and what Walt Disney probably couldn't have imagined, is that in the small islands of university towns such as Brighton, Edinburgh or Kent a lot of people are getting para (paralytic) drunk – and not just the naughty boys.

So you get through Fresher's Week and then what? Well that's when your new daily life begins. Despite being

TURN TO PAGE 8

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Rise in first class degrees in UK stalling

By Alison Kershaw

MORE than one in four students at UK universities gained a first class degree last year, but the rapid increase in top honours appears to be stalling.

In total, just over 28 per cent of students in Britain graduated with a first last year, according to data published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (Hesa).

This is double the percentage who gained a first in 2008/09 (14 per cent), but only a slight increase on 2017/18, when 27.8 per cent got the highest result.

The slowdown follows pressure on universities to be transparent about degree awarding systems, and to address concerns about grade inflation.

The Office for Students (OfS) said the latest figures show that the “long-term trend” of rises in firsts has been arrested.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson warned that rises in the proportion of students awarded top results “undermines” the UK’s international reputation for higher education.

University leaders said institutions are “committed to ensuring transparency, fairness and reliability” in grade awarding.

The latest figures show that 28.4 per cent of students were awarded a first; 48.3 per cent got a 2:1, 19 per cent were handed a 2:2 and 4.3 per cent got a third or a pass.

Nicola Dandridge, OfS chief executive, said: “This data shows us that the rapid increase in the rates of students being awarded first class degrees has stalled.

“This arrests a long-term trend, with significant year-on-year increases having been seen since 2011.

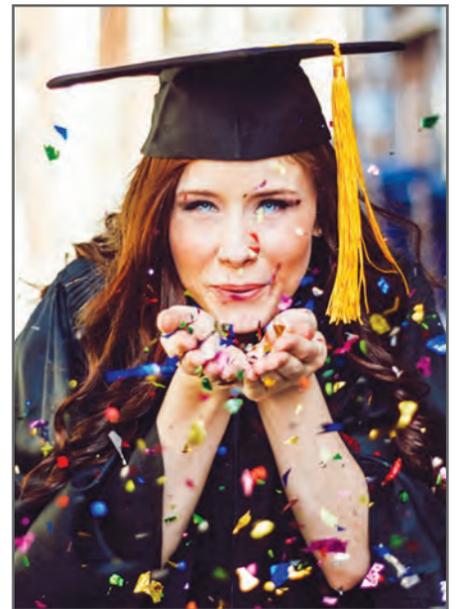
“Previous analysis from the OfS found evidence of unexplained increases in the rates of first class degrees at 94 per cent of universities.”

Dandridge said the watchdog is analysing the data, looking at the proportion of firsts that cannot be explained by factors such as university entry grades, or the make-up of a student body.

“Grade inflation risks undermining public confidence in higher education for students, graduates and employers alike.”

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said: “It is vital that students, graduates and the public are confident in the value of a university degree, but the increasing proportion of students being awarded the top grades is undermining our world-class reputation.

“The levels of firsts and upper second honour degrees remain at an all-time high. Universities are expected to use



their awarding powers responsibly and must not inflate grades for their own reputation or league table ranking.

“I know the sector are looking at this and while I recognise that change will take time, I expect action to end artificial grade inflation for good.”

A spokesman for vice-chancellors’ group Universities UK said: “UK universities are committed to ensuring transparency, fairness and reliability in the way they award degrees, as shown by their overwhelming support for collective action to ensure that students, past, present and future, get the qualifications they deserve and can take pride in their achievements.”

Nick Hillman, director of the Higher Education Policy Institute (HePi), a university think tank, said he believes a slowing down in the rate of increase may be the result of pressure on universities from individuals such as former universities minister Jo Johnson.

He said universities award their own degrees and cannot ignore outside interests. “So, they will control the number of firsts to some extent,” he said.

“There may be other reasons too, such as the removal of student number caps a few years ago meaning that more marginal students, who are less likely to get firsts, could find a place.

“The higher education sector is, in effect, going through the same cycle that A-levels went through, with lots of inflation followed by a period of reflection.

“That is probably good because too big an increase in top grades devalues qualifications, which is not in the interests of students, universities or employers.”

‘Golden triangle’ graduates ‘have highest earnings five years after degree’

GRADUATES of Oxbridge and top London universities typically have the highest earnings among UK graduates five years after gaining their degree, official figures suggest.

There is a significant earnings premium attached to attending an institution in the so-called “golden triangle”, data published by Britain’s Department for Education indicates.

And while graduates from some institutions may be earning upwards of £30,000 five years after leaving university, for others typical salaries are much lower.

In 2016/17, out of 133 universities and colleges, one in five (20 per cent – 27 institutions) five years after graduation, students had median earnings of more than £30,000 per annum.

Nearly half (47 per cent) of institutions – 62 in total – had median earnings of less than £25,000, and 10 (eight per cent)

had typical salaries of below £20,000.

Outcomes were highest at the London School of Economics and Political Science, where students could typically expect to take home £44,000 five years after graduating.

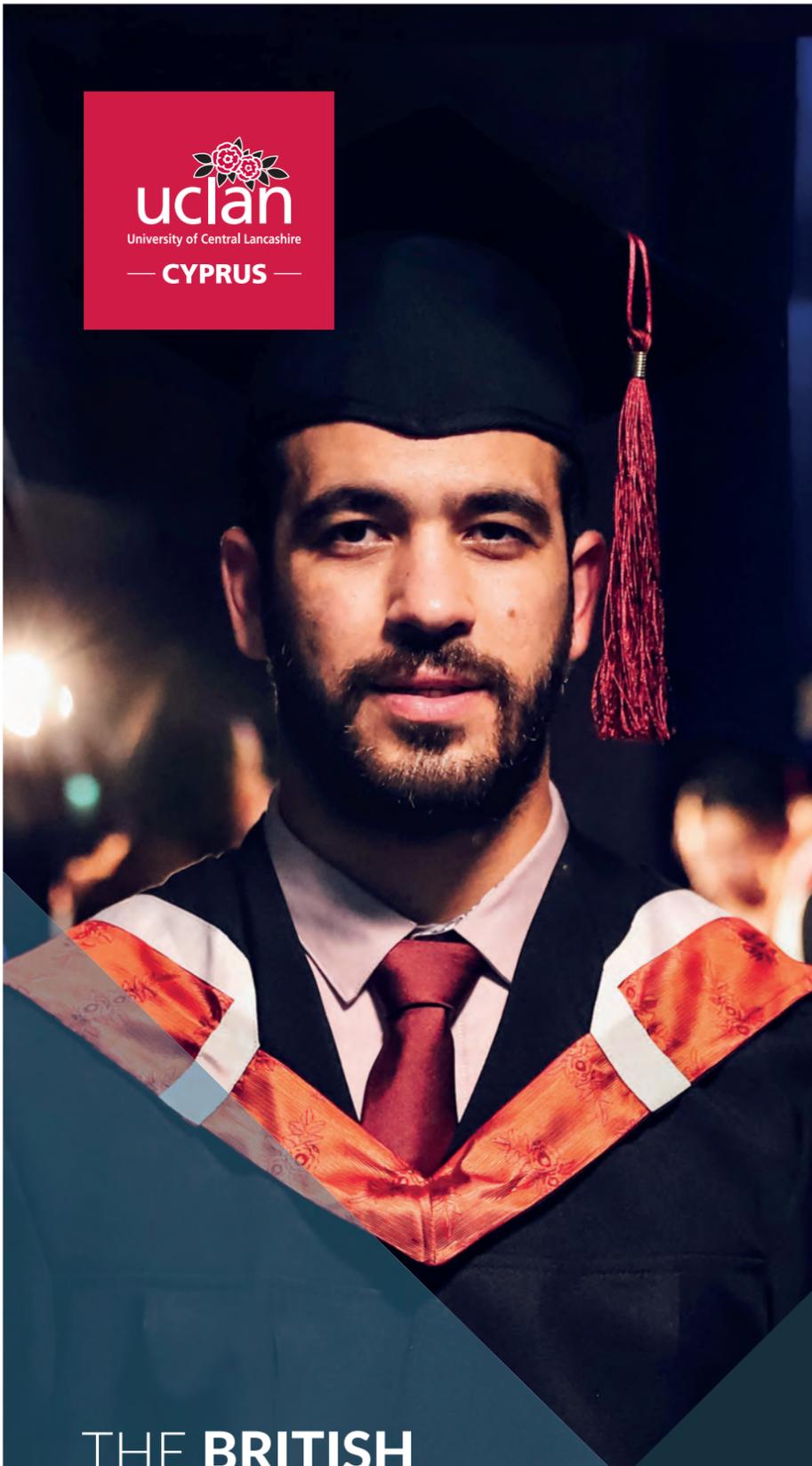
The analysis shows that, of the 10 institutions with the highest median earnings, five were in London.

Along with LSE was Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine (£43,300), St George’s Hospital Medical School (£43,000), University College London (£36,500) and King’s College London (£35,700).

Also in the top 10 were both Cambridge (£38,800) and Oxford (£37,600).

Together, Oxbridge and top London universities are often referred to as a “golden triangle” in higher education.

Also in the top 10 for graduate earnings were Bristol (£35,900), Bath (£34,800) and Strathclyde (£33,700).



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OPEN University of Cyprus (OUC) is a public university, and the country's only university devoted entirely to open and distance education and lifelong learning. It offers multi-disciplinary, career-oriented and accredited undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in both classical and cutting-edge scientific areas. OUC aims to offer knowledge and skills of high academic standards, and provide every student with an inspiring learning experience based on its flexible educational methodology, supported by the very latest technology applications and a variety of eLearning tools.

At Open University of Cyprus, there is no "one size fits all" approach to higher education. OUC's educational methodology supports people's need for continuous enhancement of their qualifications apropos of personal development and career advancement, allowing them to tailor their own educational path, irrespective of age, time, location or life circumstances.

With approximately 4,000 students, 25 programmes and about 6,600 alumni since 2006 (enrolment of its first students) Open University of Cyprus is developing into a leading

institution in promoting open and distance education. As a research institution, OUC boasts a number of research labs, which operate with national and European funding, participates in several externally-funded research projects, and is a member of renowned university networks.

Studies at OUC

Organised by its three Faculties – of **Humanities & Social Sciences**, of **Pure & Applied Sciences**, of **Economics & Management** – OUC offers a wide range of popular undergraduate and postgraduate (Masters and PhD) programmes in the following areas:

- cultural policy & development, Hellenic culture, theatre studies
- communication & new journalism
- educational sciences, adult education
- literature & linguistics
- healthcare management, policy & administration, health informatics
- business administration, economics, banking & finance, risk management
- environmental studies, energy systems
- ICTs, cognitive systems, telecommunications
- European law, police

studies.

For the 2019-2020 academic year, OUC offers four Undergraduate and 21 Masters (16 in Greek, five in English) programmes, as well as PhD positions in its faculty's scientific areas. OUC is also designing

lowers students to complete their studies without physically attending scheduled lectures. Students only need to be present at the exam centres organised in Cyprus, Greece and other countries under conditions for their final exams.

educational process in all its phases.

The synchronous collaboration (virtual classrooms, live streaming lectures), and asynchronous (forums, instant messaging) communication tools are fully utilised by OUC's

Learning Experience' at the 2019 Cyprus Education Leaders Awards. OUC won this award for a natural environment simulation application, which uses gamification and Internet of Things elements in distance learning, allowing the enhancement of students' interaction in the learning process.

Why choose OUC

For the opportunity to study at a European public university devoted to open and distance education, strongly linked with universities, research centres and university networks worldwide.

For its flexible learner-centric educational methodology, which allows students to adjust their studies to fit in with professional, family, and other commitments.

For the range of its affordable, high quality undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, which meet the needs of the business world, up-skill graduates and enable them to fulfil personal and professional aspirations.

For its user-friendly, state-of-the-art eLearning Platform supporting real-time and asynchronous tutor-student interaction, combined with the multi-format educational material.



new Masters programmes, which will be offered upon accreditation by the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance & Accreditation in Higher Education.

Distance learning methods

Distance education differs from conventional classroom-based education mainly because it al-

OUC's main educational tool is a state-of-the-art eLearning Platform (eClass) that facilitates online teaching and learning, allowing the establishment of virtual classrooms. eClass is equipped with real-time and asynchronous collaboration tools, and is a comprehensive and constantly evolving eLearning system that supports the

teaching staff, offering effective and interactive academic support and guidance. Learning experience is complemented by group tutorials/lectures, which are conducted virtually on eClass, and are recorded for offline viewing. OUC's aspiration to constantly improve students' learning experience has led to the Gold Award for 'Best





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21st century skills focus at Neapolis

NEAPOLIS University Pafos is one of the leading private universities in Cyprus, located in the most welcoming city in the world, Paphos. Established in 2010, Neapolis is a young, vibrant academic institution which combines high-quality education with graduate career readiness.

That is why the university focuses on maintaining an amazingly low student-to-faculty ratio, a proven connection to industry, real-world problem practice, and professional 21st century skills development in addition to each course's specialised skills.

Neapolis University Pafos comprises of five Schools (Economics, Administration & Computer Science; Architecture, Engineering, Land and Environmental Sciences; Health Sciences; Law; and Social Sciences, Arts, and Humanities) which offer undergraduate, postgraduate and Distance Learning studies in more than 20 Bachelor's and Master's Degrees.

The university is fuelled by Leptos Group, a foremost group of companies in real estate, property development, investment, hospitality,

tourism management, healthcare and higher education. Neapolis University aspires to become a world-class studies destination in employability, inclusiveness, and internationalisation

Student accommodation

Paphos uniquely blends the qualities of a cosmopolitan resort, beautiful countryside, historic sights, sporting activities and vibrant entertainment venues. It is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Mediterranean and the definitive place to live and study.

The university offers high standard accommodation within the Neapolis University campus and in the Paphos Gardens and Basilica Campus. The spacious, well-ventilated en-suite single and double rooms feature their own balcony overlooking the internal landscaped gardens or the seafront. The rooms are easily accessible and directly linked to the main circulation routes leading to all campus facilities

Safety & wellbeing

Cyprus is the safest country in the world for young people (WHO

2017) and has one of the best climates worldwide.

Hospitality & quality

Enjoy a quality home and a super-friendly environment; all managed by hospitality experts.

Convenience & Location

Whether at campus or at partner halls student homes are max 10 minutes away from classes.

Student Benefits

Enjoyable environment and high-standard campus accommodation

Modern premises and facilities

Student clubs

Accessible and frequent bus services connecting the town with all other cities

Bus route directly to and from Pafos International Airport

Campus near private medical clinic

Academic excellence

All university programmes are certified by the Republic of Cyprus, all EU countries as well as China, Oman, and Russia.

The programmes of Architecture and Real Estate are certified by the Professional and Technical Chamber of Cyprus (ETEK).



The Postgraduate Programme in Real Estate has secured certification by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

The ACCA acknowledged the high quality and standards of programmes and awarded exemptions to graduates from the BSc in Accounting, Banking and Finance.

Neapolis University is an active member of the United Nations Academic Impact Colloquium (UNAIC), a dynamic community of 1,120 university institutions.

The Business School of Neapolis University is now a member of the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD), the world's largest network of nearly 900 organisations, businesses and universities, and an accreditation body for evaluating the quality of schools and programmes in economics and administration studies.

The participation of the Business School of Neapolis University in Cyprus at EFMD, demonstrates the international acceptance and recognition of Neapolis and confirms the extroversion of the university community.

Neapolis has established collaborations with top-tier international universities including Middlesex University London (students receive Dual Degrees), Uni-

versity of Hull, and the National Kapodistrian University of Athens.

Research

Neapolis University Pafos aims to support and promote research activities within the Institution. NUP academics are members of international research centres and participate in conferences all over the world, while their papers are well received by the international academic community.

NUP has launched the following Research Centres: Centre for International Tourism Research, Centre of Environmental Research and Counselling Centre for Psychological Support and Evaluation.





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One in four young people not getting enough sleep

A LACK of rest leaves youngsters feeling sleepy and unable to concentrate on their schoolwork, according to the latest *Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC)* in England report.

It also indicates that increasing numbers of teenagers are experiencing periods of feeling low.

The World Health Organisation report, which is based on data from 3,398 young people in England, looks at areas

Around 17 per cent of 11-year-olds said they struggle with sleep, compared to 28 per cent of 13-year-olds and 42 per cent of 15-year-olds.

About a third (32 per cent) of girls do not get enough sleep, compared to 23 per cent of their male classmates.

The report also shows that few youngsters are physically active on a daily basis, with just one in six (15 per cent) saying they are active for at least an hour a day.



17 per cent of 11-year-olds said they struggle with sleep, compared to 28 per cent of 13-year-olds and 42 per cent of 15-year-olds

ranging from physical health to life satisfaction.

It found that 27 per cent of young people report not having enough sleep to feel awake and concentrate on their lessons, with teenagers more likely to face this issue as they get older.

But seven in 10 (70 per cent) said they take part in "vigorous" physical activity at least two to three times a week, with boys more likely to do so than girls (74 per cent compared to 63 per cent).

Examining mental wellbeing, the report

says there has been a rise in the proportion of 15-year-olds who report feeling low once a week, increasing to 50 per cent from 40 per cent in 2014.

One in four (25 per cent) of those questioned said they have self-harmed, and there has been a sharper rise in boys saying they have done so than girls.

The study does show that young people are

becoming less likely to take part in risky behaviour.

Just 3 per cent said they had smoked at least three times in the last 30 days while just 7 per cent reported drinking alcohol.

A fifth (21 per cent) of 15-year-olds said they had tried cannabis, down from 41 per cent who said the same in 2002.

Learn all about studying options in Cyprus and abroad

THE Cyprus International Education and Career Exhibition 2020 will open its doors on Friday to give the opportunity to students and others to learn about studying in Cyprus and abroad.

The Ministry of Education, the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation and the European Office of Cyprus in cooperation with the British Council Cyprus are organising the event, which runs from Friday to Sunday at the Cyprus International Fair Grounds, Hall 6.

More than 150 universities and educational institutions from Cyprus, Greece, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, France, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Czech Republic, The Netherlands and Slovakia will be there to provide information on programmes of study, career opportunities and funding opportunities. The organisers aim for the Cyprus International Education and Career Exhibition

to become the gateway through which representatives of the Higher Educational Institutions and secondary educational institutions will meet and attract Cypriot and international students and pupils living in Cyprus who wish to study either locally or abroad.

Furthermore, the exhibition offers an opportunity to providers of educational equipment and technology, books and other products and services addressed to students, such as career services, to be promoted to at least 10,000 students and youngsters.

OPENING HOURS:
Friday, February 7 08:30-13:30 and 16:00-20:00,
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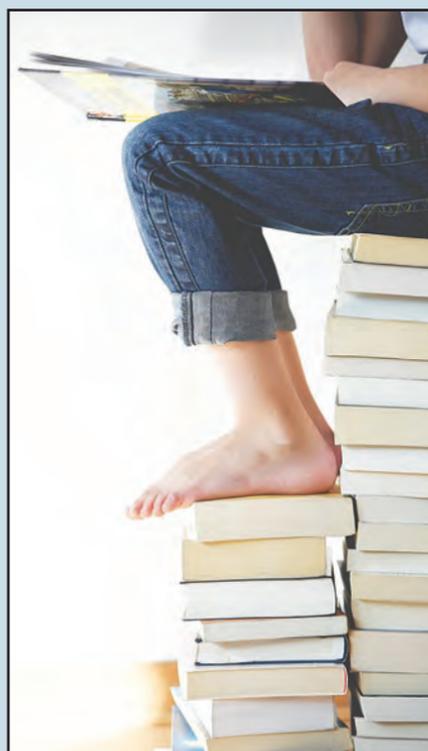


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 Oracle Academy
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 CDA College
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 National Sports Academy Sofia
 Emphasys Centre: Education, ICT Training and Research
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 Paul Valery University, Montpellier III, France
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 University of Rome Tor Vergata
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 Cyprus School of Molecular Medicine
 Cyprus Academy of Arts
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Cyprus Computer Society
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 CYPF Foundation Course Cyprus
 MedFC Medicine Preparation Studies
 Sloval Medical University Agency
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Starting a new life



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 spoiled for choice with things to do, the hours can be hard to fill if you don't have friends to experience it with.

Most people find their groove, be it at the gym, at the library or by mak-



ing friends at any of the hundreds of societies on offer. But it can be tricky finding a good group to socialise with that will see you through your university life – and perhaps even beyond.

“One thing I would say, is that the British are mostly welcoming,” said a 26-year-old who studied at Reading. “But sometimes the politeness can actually make it harder to become friends with them. You don't know what they really think or when they're just being polite. In Cyprus we mostly say what we think and then you know where you stand with someone.”

Rights of initiation, or admission to adulthood, have somewhat gone

Most people find their groove, be it at the gym, at the library or by making friends at any of the hundreds of societies on offer



by the wayside. You no longer have to bring home a deer to feed the family, but going to university is about the closest thing we have to a walkabout.

University attendance has skyrocketed, and society seemingly necessitates attendance. The cultural phenomenon of being dropped off by your parents at the airport as you shed

your skin and embark on a new life has become standard practice.

“Going to a private secondary school here in Cyprus helps you much more when you go abroad. You're a bit more used to an international culture, but I think the most important thing is you're used to being taught in English,” a 24-year-old graduate from Loughborough told

the *Cyprus Mail*.

“Imagine writing all your exams in Greek for your whole life, and suddenly you have a 2,500 word essay to write in English. It's hard to prepare for that,” he said.

Whatever the challenges students face, most people overcome them and learn important life lessons along the way. It can take some time, but you'll get there – eventually.

Education for the next generation of scientists

THE Cyprus School of Molecular Medicine (CSMM) is the postgraduate school of the Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics (CING), a leading research centre in the region. The school offers MSc and PhD programmes in Molecular Medicine, Medical Genetics, Neuroscience and Biomedical Research. The CSMM provides an unrivalled educational experience to students, who can expect to be taught and mentored by the leading biomedical scientists and neurologists in Cyprus, while also working alongside them in their respective laboratories.

The programmes are suitable for graduates with a background in medicine, biological and related sciences, genetics, neuroscience, biomedicine, chemistry and other related fields, who would like to progress to MSc or PhD level. CING has the largest and most technologically developed research infrastructure in Cyprus and the neighbouring area in the sectors of neurology, genetics, biomedical, medical and related sciences, offering the CSMM's.

Education in a real work environment

All graduates of CSMM



have hands-on work experience which is vital for a strong CV in today's competitive job market. Graduates are fully prepared for employment through their daily interaction in a professional work environment, which offers research and services alongside education as well as through the professional seminars on essential skills that are provided to them during their studies. Each academic course has been developed based upon both learning objectives and employment objectives.

MSc Programmes

The Masters programmes offered in the fields of Molecular Medicine, Medical Genetics, Neuroscience and Biomedical Research are intensive with a duration

of 12 months. During this period, students are immediately inducted into the research departments of CING.

PhD Programmes

During year 1, PhD students on the Molecular Medicine, Medical Genetics and Neuroscience programmes attend lectures based on the core topics of each programme in addition to elective courses. The aim is for PhD students to obtain the necessary theoretical knowledge prior to proceeding with their research project, which is carried out within the laboratories of CING. The duration of all PhD programmes is four years.

All programmes are taught in English and the CSMM has a vibrant student population including international students. Over the years, apart from Cypriot students, it has also welcomed students from Greece, Australia, Israel, India, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Russia, Yemen, Syria, England, Egypt and Oman.

Application Procedure

The application period of CSMM begins in January and is advertised online and via the media. To be kept informed email csmm@cing.ac.cy to be added to the mailing list.

THE CYPRUS INSTITUTE OF NEUROLOGY & GENETICS

CYPRUS SCHOOL of molecular medicine

Medical Genetics (MSc & PhD)

Molecular Medicine (MSc & PhD)

Neuroscience (MSc & PhD)

Biomedical Research (MSc)

Cyprus School of Molecular Medicine

The Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics
6 Iroon Avenue, 2371 Ayios Dhometios, Nicosia, Cyprus
P.O.Box 23462, 1683 Nicosia

www.cing.ac.cy/csmm/
csmm@cing.ac.cy
+357 22392840