

Vice-Chancellor's Video Blog

December 2016

Professor Patrick Johnston:

Winter graduation has just finished and as usual there was a great festive atmosphere on campus as our graduates celebrated with their friends and families. That kind of atmosphere doesn't happen by chance; it's all down to a great team effort from staff right across the University.

Hugh Lewsley:

I'm a Security Section Leader here. I've been here 21 years. My role is as a member of the team that's on duty today. It's a very important day for parents; it's a very important day for those who are graduating. I'm really proud to be part of this whole day. In fact, for us, it's a situation whereby parents are here to enjoy it. They have put a lot of effort and finance in to see their sons and daughters get to this particular stage and it happens in two periods of the year. So, for me, as part of a nine-man team, it's the effort they've put in and we make sure that they're safe and they enjoy the day while they're here.

Nicky Clarke MBE:

My name is Nicky Clarke. I have been the Banqueting Manager here at Queen's University for the past 25 years. As you can see here, the room is laid out for about 60 guests for the Vice-Chancellor's lunch. Over the course of the years, I have looked after some very important guests here as honorary graduates: the late George Best; Dermott Desmond; Tony McCoy; Joanna Lumley; and one of our local girls, Janet Gray blind water skier. I've been here for 25 years and it's the commitment not only me but all the staff that put in that makes it a very proud day for all of us. Whenever we see the achievement of the students whenever they leave here with their smiling faces it makes us all very proud.

Claire Baxter:

I'm Head of Eventus, Culture and Arts and our department is responsible for the delivery of all of the University's core events, the most famous of which is Graduation. So we work closely with our colleagues in DASA and we do all of the behind-the-scenes stuff. SO we organise where the staff are going to sit on the stage; we organise the dressing of the hall; the sound; the light; all of those elements of the day. Graduation is so much fun. The whole University comes together. There's a real buzz about the place. You see the gardeners working to clean the grounds; you see the porters getting the hall set up; the cleaners working really hard to get the place clean. So the whole day is fantastic. And then when the families arrive all the students are loving their day and it's just such a lovely time to be part of the University.

Michelle McCaul:

I help organise the seating for the students. So from the moment that they come into the hall I would help them sit, make sure they're in the right seats, make sure they're in the right row, until they go up onto the stage and make sure they go on the stage correctly in the right order and come off the stage in the right order. Well personally I like the Vice-Chancellor's speech. It's really nice to hear and see the expressions on all the students' faces whenever he's telling them the stories. I also like seeing all the expressions of the families whenever the students' names are being called out and just how happy and excited all the students are whenever they go up to receive their award.

Professor Patrick Johnston:

Graduation is a time when you see the University at its very best and what an amazing team effort by the University can actually achieve. We're now coming to the end of 2016 and I want to thank you for all your hard work on behalf of the University because we've had many, many successes during the last calendar year. Can I wish you all a very happy Christmas and every success for 2017.