

The student experience



Team Sussex, pictured with the racing car that they designed and built

Students feel the need for speed

A team of engineering students from Sussex designed and built a racing car, which they then raced at Silverstone against teams from over 80 universities worldwide.

Taking part in the 'Formula Student' competition, the students worked right through the summer to enable them to get a race-ready car by July 2009. The team was assisted by academics and technicians in the Department of Engineering and Design, including Head of Engineering Dr Rupert Young and Team Supervisor Dr Z Jun Peng.

Deputy Vice Chancellor Professor Paul Layzell said: 'What this team has achieved is remarkable. University of Sussex students enter Formula Student annually as part of the four-year Engineering degree but this is by far the best car we've ever had.'

The students also took part in the Sussex Plus pilot (see next page), which helped them showcase their great achievement.

2008 graduates: where are they now?

Survey results on the employment and further study of 2008 Sussex graduates show excellent results, with Sussex jumping from 15th place to 4th in the 1994 Group of research-based universities. The latest report, which covers students who completed courses between September 2007 and August 2008, shows:

- 86 per cent of Sussex undergraduate leavers were working, studying or both six months after graduating
- 72 per cent of Sussex undergraduates achieved graduate-level jobs, an increase of 4 per cent on 2007
- 6 per cent were unemployed – 1 per cent lower than the national figure
- 22 per cent of graduates (compared to 19 per cent in 2007) went on to further study
- The average undergraduate salary was £19,300 and, for those working in Sussex postcodes, £18,500

Sussex rugby team stars on TV

Former England rugby international Austin Healey was filmed putting members of the men's rugby team through their paces for a new television show.

Austin, capped more than 50 times for England, was looking to improve the team's defensive skills and passing play for ITV's *The Big Tackle*. Highlights of the week spent filming included a military-style yomp across the Sussex Downs. The team was also filmed treating Austin to a night out in Brighton. Viewers were introduced to team characters such as Josh 'Man Bear Pig' Illingworth, Dean 'Ratty' Graham, 'Toothless Tom' and 'Johnny Mac The Country Gent'.

Austin said: 'The Sussex team is a truly great bunch of lads who love their rugby and have made really close friendships through the game. In terms of their rugby ability I've met more talented, but few more committed. They were all a real pleasure to meet – even Ratty! They would all be an asset to any team.'

New schemes give students career confidence

Following a successful pilot, the Sussex Plus scheme was rolled out to all Sussex students in a 'soft launch' at the beginning of the academic year 2009/10, and take up so far has been encouraging.

The scheme aims to make students more employable, by developing their skills and helping them to document and describe them for employers in an impressive 'webfolio'.

University life is about so much more than just academic study – for example, many Sussex students volunteer in the community, are in sports teams, have part time jobs, or bring up children – and Sussex Plus recognises that these extra-curricular activities also give students the skills that employers are looking for, such as leadership and teamworking.

Postgrad Plus gives Masters students at Sussex a range of support with their career development. Careers masterclasses with leading figures from industry, politics, commerce, the media and the public sector, provide insider knowledge about what employers are looking for, and offer 21st-century career-management skills for a wide range of career paths.



Austin Healey, with the 2009 Sussex men's rugby team

Postgrad Plus also offers employability skills workshops – a series of one-day sessions focusing on the skills and attitudes sought by employers: leadership, teamwork, confidence, effective presentation, problem-solving and commercial awareness.

