



UNIVERSITY OF
WEST LONDON

The *Career* University

Ras Al Khaimah Campus

UWL
Newsletter

Wire

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The Editorial Message

Dear Readers,

As we begin the second semester of the academic year, February brings with it a renewed sense of purpose and opportunity. After a short break following the conclusion of the first semester in January, the campus is once again alive with energy as students and faculty return, ready to embrace new academic goals and meaningful engagements.

We are also delighted to welcome Ms. Mubeen Ghulam Safdar and Ms. Kehkasha Yousaf to the Editorial Team. Their insights and creativity will be invaluable in shaping The Wire and we look forward to their contributions to the issues ahead.

At the same time, we extend our sincere gratitude to Ms. Nada Noor as she steps down from the Editorial Board. We thank her for her dedication and valuable contributions, which have played an important role in the growth and success of The Wire.

The Wire continues to serve as a platform to capture the pulse of our college, celebrating achievements, sharing student voices and featuring insightful contributions from faculty and guests.

We look forward to the months ahead and the opportunities they bring for learning and growth.

Warm Regards,
The Editorial Board

UWL in the QS Europe Rankings 2026

The University of West London has been ranked in the QS World University Rankings: Europe 2026, marking an important step forward in the University's ambition to achieve a future QS World University Ranking and further international recognition for its strong domestic performance.

As a new entrant to the QS Europe Rankings, UWL has been placed in the 551–560 band overall, meaning UWL sits in the top 60 % of universities in Europe in its first appearance. In the Northern Europe sub-regional ranking, UWL is placed 159th.

UWL has also been recognised for key measures of global engagement and research impact, ranking in the:

- Top 50 % in Europe for citations per paper.
- Top 25 % in Europe for internationalisation, including student and faculty diversity.

Professor Peter John CBE, Vice-Chancellor and President, said:

"This recognition is a really positive milestone for UWL and reflects our growing international profile. Being ranked in the QS Europe Rankings for the first time is an important step forward as we continue to build our reputation and broaden opportunities for our students and staff."





AI Agents or Human Agency: Navigating the "Execution Gap"

The TL; DR: As AI lowers the technical barriers to creation, the most valuable skill is no longer "knowing how" to build, but having the agency to finish.

The Paradox of the "Finished" Project: In the last few months, I achieved something that would have been physically impossible five years ago. Using AI-assisted development tools, I built five or more production-ready applications (I can't even remember) and authored three complete books. Each project took only a few days.

Technically, they are complete. Theoretically, they are ready to be monetized or published. Yet, they sit in a digital drawer.

This experience revealed a hard truth: AI has automated the "heavy lifting" of execution, but it has not and cannot automate human agency. I found myself caught in a cycle of "High-Speed Starting," jumping from one AI-generated prototype to the next without the sustained intention required to bring any of them to the finish line.

For the young folks navigating this transformation, my

experience is a warning. The "skill gap" is closing, but the "will gap" is widening.

The Democratization of "Doing": Historically, innovation required three high-cost ingredients: substantial capital, specialized skills, and institutional permission. If you wanted to build a software tool, you needed a team of engineers. Today, those gatekeepers are gone. A single student with a laptop and a Large Language Model (LLM) can perform the work that previously required an entire department.

However, when the cost of execution drops to zero, the value of the tool itself diminishes. What becomes scarce is not the ability to perform a task, but the initiative to sustain focus in a world of automated distractions.

The Risk of "Agency Atrophy": There is a subtle risk in our current relationship with technology: the gradual erosion of personal responsibility. As systems become more capable of autonomous decision-making, it is tempting to become what I call Middlemen for Machines: passive operators who accept algorithmic recommendations without critical examination.

In an academic setting, this manifests as a reactive posture. We ask, "Which AI tool should I learn?" rather than "What problem do I feel compelled to solve?" Like a muscle that withers from disuse, our ability to make independent judgements weakens when we defer every choice to a prompt. This is Agency Atrophy.

From Knowledge to Deep Judgement

For centuries, education centered on the transmission of knowledge. In an era where information synthesis is automated, our focus must shift to Deep Judgement. Judgement requires contextual understanding, ethical reasoning, and value-based decision-making. It involves asking not just Can this be done? but should this be done? These are questions that resist automation because they are fundamentally human. Agency is the foundation upon which sound judgement is built. Without it, knowledge remains inert; with it, knowledge becomes an instrument of purposeful action.

The Agency Playbook: 5 Practices for the Modern Scholar

1. **Build Before You Feel Ready:** Perfectionism is often mistaken for rigor. In reality, it frequently delays learning. Developing a simple first version, a "minimum viable product", allows ideas to be tested, challenged, and refined. Action generates insights that passive contemplation cannot.
2. **Solve Local Friction:** Agency is best developed through engagement with real problems. Look for inefficiencies or frustrations in your immediate environment—your living spaces, friends, or extended neighbourhoods. Addressing small, tangible issues often builds more competence and confidence than imagining large, abstract ones.
3. **Learn in Public:** Documenting your learning process through writing, discussion, or presentations forces clarity of thought. Explaining an idea to others exposes gaps in reasoning and deepens understanding. Over time, this also builds intellectual credibility that no automated system can replicate.
4. **Practice Radical Ownership:** As AI tools become more capable, responsibility becomes more important, not less. If you choose to use a system, you must also own its outcomes. Deflecting errors onto tools weakens judgement; taking responsibility strengthens it.



5. **The Metacognitive Loop:** Regular reflection is a discipline. Once a week, ask: Where did I act intentionally? Where did I simply react? Developing this awareness is essential in a world increasingly shaped by algorithmic suggestions.

The Choice to Act

The defining question of 2026 is not "What can machines do?" but "What will humans choose to do with them?"

AI will continue to evolve, but it cannot answer the questions that matter most: What problems deserve our attention? What kind of future are we building? These require a human agency. The choice to act remains yours.



Mr. Luqman Kondeth

Director, New York University
AI Governance & Cybersecurity
Strategist

Updates from the Student Council

Over the past few months, the Student Council has played an active role in supporting university initiatives and strengthening student engagement across the campus. One of the key highlights during this period was the successful conduct of the Global Day Programme, which brought together students from different departments and encouraged collaboration, cultural exchange and a sense of community.

Building on this, the Council is currently involved in the planning and coordination of upcoming initiatives such as the University Job Fair and Invictus, while continuing to support a range of academic, cultural and student-led activities across the university. These efforts reflect the Council's ongoing focus on creating meaningful opportunities that encourage participation and positively contribute to campus life.

A central priority for the Student Council has been engaging with students and taking their feedback into account during planning and decision-making. Regular inputs from the student body have helped ensure that initiatives remain inclusive, relevant and aligned with student needs.

Looking ahead, the Council is also working towards the introduction of student clubs within the university, with the aim of providing structured platforms for students to explore interests and engage more actively beyond the classroom.

The Student Council
UWL RAK

Winter Vibe@ Work

Cozy vibes, warm smiles and great conversations; Winter Vibe@Work was all about unwinding and celebrating the season together.



Graduation Day - Class of 2025

Caps off to our graduates! A proud, emotional, and unforgettable evening as we celebrated achievements and new beginnings at the Graduation Ceremony held at JW Marriott Marquis, Dubai.





Global Day Celebration

A world of cultures under one roof! Celebrating diversity, the UWL way at the RAKEZ Auditorium.





UWL Sports Day

Game faces on, team spirit high! UWL Sports Day at Al Madam Stadium.





The Emperor's Last Lesson: Leadership, Mortality and the Journey from Power to Purpose



Abstract

The legend of Alexander the Great's final commands, entrusting his physicians to carry his coffin, scattering treasures along his funeral path, and letting his hands hang outside the coffin, offers a timeless meditation on power, impermanence, and the meaning of leadership. This essay reinterprets the myth through the lens of contemporary management and leadership theories, from transformational and authentic leadership to adaptive and transpersonal models. It argues that the true measure of leadership lies not in conquest, but in consciousness; not in domination, but in legacy.

Introduction: The Final Frontier of Leadership

In 323 BC, Alexander the Great, history's most celebrated conqueror, lay dying in Babylon at the age of thirty-two. The man who had never lost a battle, who had carved an empire from Greece to India, faced a truth even he could not defeat: time.

Surrounded by his generals and physicians, he is said to

have given three final instructions:

1. Let my physicians carry my coffin.
2. Scatter gold and jewels along the road to my grave.
3. Let my hands hang outside the coffin.

Whether these words belong to history or legend, their symbolic power transcends centuries. They speak to a deeper understanding of leadership, one that recognizes its limits, its illusions, and its ultimate purpose.

Modern management discourse, from Peter Drucker's (2001) pragmatism to Robert Greenleaf's (1977) servant leadership, reminds us that leadership is not about power over others, but responsibility towards them. Alexander's final message, when read through today's lens, becomes not a reflection on death but on transcendence- the passage from authority to awareness, from success to significance.

1. The Physician's Burden: Accepting the Illusion of Control

"Let my physicians carry my coffin," said Alexander, "so the world may know that even the best healers cannot save the dying."

In leadership, the illusion of control often masquerades as competence. The modern executive, like the ancient emperor, seeks mastery over markets, metrics, and men. Yet leadership today, shaped by Heifetz's (1994) theory of adaptive leadership, recognizes that not all problems are technical; many are adaptive, demanding humility and learning rather than command.

The physician, like the leader, can diagnose but not dictate outcomes. This realization transforms leadership from a display of certainty to an act of presence. As Edgar Schein (2013) notes in his work on humble inquiry, effective leadership begins with curiosity, not authority.

Alexander's first command thus embodies a shift from heroic leadership to learning leadership—from domination to dialogue. The awareness that even the best "healers" cannot prevent the inevitable fosters emotional intelligence, psychological safety, and shared vulnerability within organizations (Goleman, 1998).

2. The Road of Gold: From Accumulation to Stewardship

"Scatter my treasures on the road," Alexander commanded, "that all may see how little wealth means at the end."

In today's context, this act mirrors a profound rethinking of value and success. Leaders once measured their worth in acquisitions and profit margins; now, the

paradigm is shifting toward sustainability, well-being, and stakeholder capitalism (Porter and Kramer, 2011). The age of shareholder primacy is yielding to an era of purpose-driven leadership, where the measure of success lies in impact rather than accumulation. The "road of gold" becomes a metaphor for how wealth, unless distributed, remains lifeless.

Indian philosophy teaches detachment from possession: "That man attains peace who, abandoning all desires, moves about without longing, without the sense of mine and without egoism." This wisdom aligns with ethical leadership theory (Brown and Treviño, 2006), which sees wealth and power as moral instruments, not personal trophies.

Leaders who scatter their "gold"—who invest their privilege into collective good—embody what Fry and Kriger (2009) call spiritual leadership: integrating material success with transcendental purpose.

3. The Empty Hands: Transcending the Ego of Power

"Let my hands hang outside my coffin," Alexander said, "so all may see that I leave the world empty-handed."

In those open hands lies the final truth of leadership. The hands that once held the sword of conquest now reveal the nakedness of existence. For leaders, this is a profound symbol of ego transcendence—the realization that no matter how high one rises, all titles are temporary.

Modern leadership thought increasingly acknowledges this shift. Authentic leadership (Avolio and Gardner, 2005) emphasizes self-awareness, relational transparency, and internalized moral perspective. Similarly, transpersonal leadership (Crossan et al., 2008) extends beyond ego, integrating spiritual and





emotional intelligence to create enduring influence.

In the world of corporate transitions and generational succession, Alexander's open hands remind leaders to let go—of control, of credit, of fear. To lead is to empower others to lead. To leave one's hands open is not to lose, but to release.

4. From Conquest to Consciousness: Rethinking Leadership Legacy

If the 20th century was the age of the commander, the 21st is the age of the conscious leader. The former ruled by certainty; the latter leads through reflection.

Alexander's death scene becomes a mirror in which modern leaders can see themselves. The questions it poses remain relevant:

- What will your "physicians" carry when you are gone: systems or values?
- What treasures will you scatter: profits or possibilities?
- What will your hands reveal: control or contribution?

Leadership today demands meaning-making, not mere management. It is less about empire-building and more about ecosystem nurturing, a vision echoed in the principles of transformational leadership (Bass, 1999), which calls for the elevation of followers into co-creators of purpose.

As Viktor Frankl (1946) wrote, "Success, like happiness, cannot be pursued; it must ensue." So too, leadership cannot be chased; it must emerge from authenticity and service.

Conclusion: The Final March of the Modern Leader

When we imagine Alexander's funeral procession, the road glinting with gold, the physicians solemn, the hands empty, we are not witnessing the death of a conqueror, but the birth of a philosophy.

Leadership, stripped of its armour, becomes a moral and spiritual practice. It is the art of reconciling ambition with awareness, of translating power into compassion, of turning conquest into consciousness.

Every organization, every leader, every enterprise stands on this same threshold between control and surrender, success and significance. The choice is not between greatness and humility, but between fleeting triumph and timeless purpose.

For the truest leaders know:

You can win every war, but you cannot conquer time.
You can hold the world, but not forever.
And when your hands finally open, what remains is not
what you owned, but what you awakened.

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Dr. Vipin Vijayan Nair SFHEA.
Faculty
Department of Business &
Management





Behind The Scenes

1. Can you tell us a little about your role at the university and how long you have been here?

I joined the university on February 15th, 2024 and I currently work as a Sports Coordinator. My role allows me to support students through a wide range of sporting activities, wellbeing programs and campus events. In addition to coordinating sports, I also serve as a coach, which gives me the opportunity to work even more closely with students on their development, confidence and performance.

One of the most rewarding parts of my job is the strong connection I have built with students. I work with them daily, whether I am coaching, organising activities or encouraging participation and these relationships are at the heart of what I do. Being so involved in their journey helps me understand their needs and create inclusive, engaging and motivating sporting environments.

My time here has already been incredibly fulfilling and I am proud to contribute to a positive, active and supportive university community.

2. How has your role evolved over the years?

My role has evolved quite a lot since I first joined the university. I began by focusing mainly on coordinating

sports activities and supporting the operational side of the department. As I became more familiar with the students and the programs, I naturally stepped into a more active coaching role. This shift has allowed me to work much more closely with students, supporting their development, confidence and overall well-being.

Over time, I have also taken on greater responsibility in planning events, leading training sessions and shaping the direction of our sports initiatives. Building strong relationships with students has been a key part of this growth - their trust and engagement have helped me understand their needs and create more inclusive, motivating and enjoyable sporting experiences. My role has become more dynamic, hands-on, and student-centred, which has made the journey incredibly fulfilling.

3. What is the most rewarding part of your job?

The most rewarding part of my job is seeing the positive impact sport has on students. Supporting them through coaching, encouraging their participation and watching their confidence grow brings me genuine fulfilment. I enjoy being part of their journey, helping them discover their strengths, and creating an environment where

they feel motivated, included and supported. Knowing that my work contributes to their well-being and overall university experience makes the role truly meaningful.

4. How do you think the university has changed during your tenure?

During my time at the university, I have seen a noticeable increase in student engagement and the variety of activities offered across campus. There has been a stronger focus on creating inclusive, student-centred experiences through events, workshops and initiatives that bring different groups together. I have also observed more collaboration between departments, which has helped us deliver activities that support students academically, socially and personally. These changes have made the campus feel more vibrant, connected and responsive to student needs.

5. Do you have a favourite memory or moment from your time here?

It is difficult to choose a single favourite memory because every occasion has been meaningful in its own way. Whether it's sports events, university activities, graduation ceremonies, or simply spending time with students, each moment has added something special to my experience.

6. What do you enjoy doing apart from your professional tasks?

Outside of work, I enjoy staying active through cricket - I play with my team and also coach students who share the same passion. I love travelling with my friends whenever I get the chance, as it allows me to explore new places and unwind. I also really enjoy driving, whether it's long trips or short rides, as it helps me relax and gives me a sense of freedom.

7. If you could accomplish one more thing here, what would it be?

If I could accomplish one more thing here, it would be to guide and shape students to reach the level I once dreamed of. I was selected for a State team in India, but unfortunately, I could not pursue cricket professionally. Playing in an international tournament was my biggest dream and even though I could not achieve it myself, I want to help my students reach that stage. Supporting them, training them and watching them grow into strong players would be the greatest achievement I could hope for.

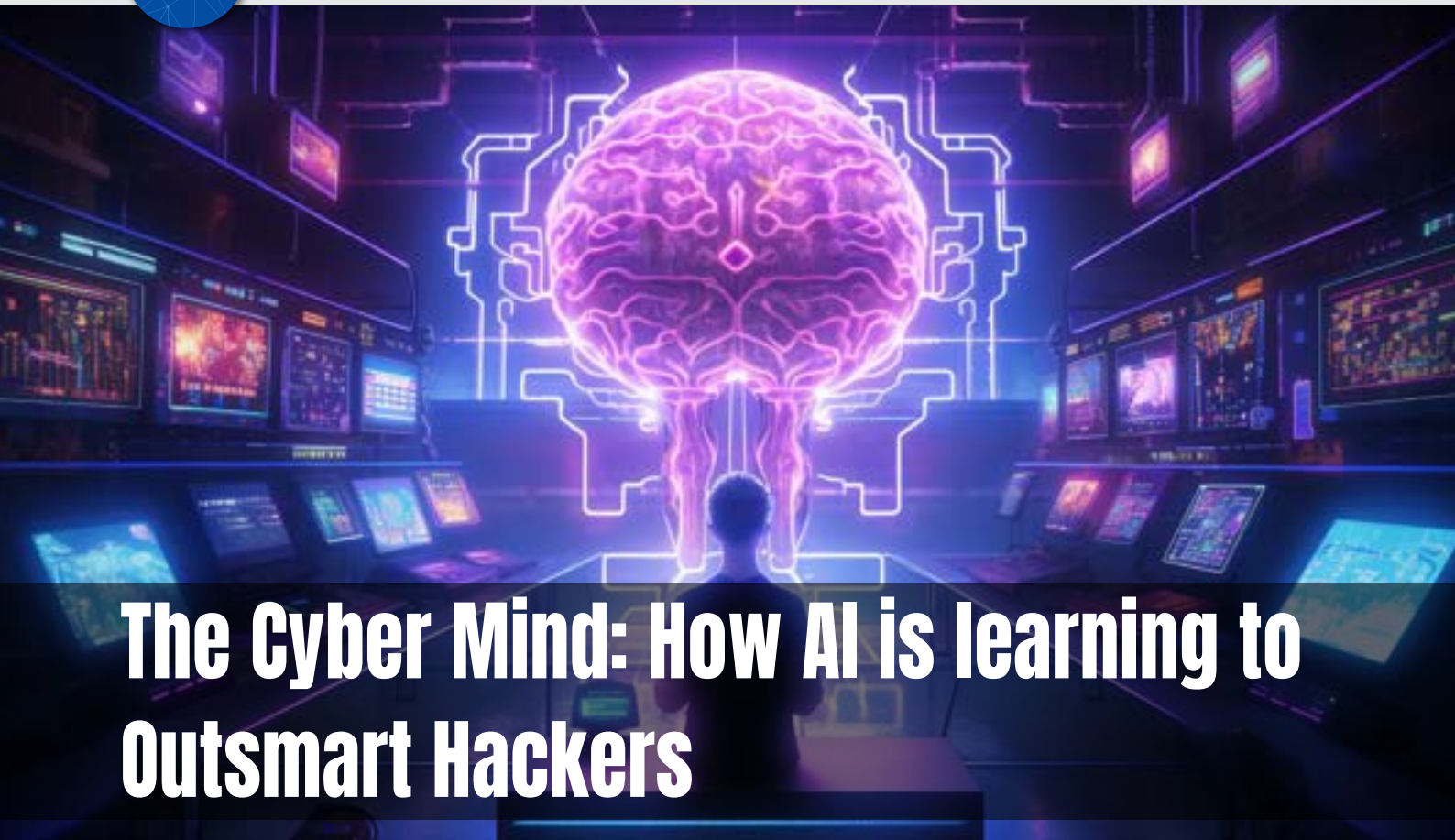


8. If you could describe your time here in one word, what would it be?

Meaningful- every moment has added value to my journey and strengthened my passion for what I do.



Devika Beena
Sports Coordinator
UWL RAK



The Cyber Mind: How AI is learning to Outsmart Hackers

Introduction: The Dawn of Intelligent Cyber Defense

In a time when digital connectivity shapes nearly every part of modern life, cybersecurity has become a top global concern. As technology develops, so do the strategies of those who aim to misuse it. Hackers have become more skilled, using automation and complex algorithms to breach systems that once seemed secure. In response, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a powerful force, acting not just as a tool but as a smart protector that can learn, predict, and respond to cyber threats in real time.

The Shift from Traditional to Intelligent Security Systems

Traditional cybersecurity methods, such as firewalls and signature-based detection, have been essential defenses for decades. However, these systems depend heavily on prior knowledge of threats and struggle against new or evolving forms of attack.

AI, on the other hand, represents a paradigm shift. Through machine learning and neural networks, AI systems analyse vast amounts of data, identify

abnormal patterns, and recognize subtle signs of intrusion that would otherwise go unnoticed. This ability to self-learn allows AI to adapt continuously, transforming every new threat into an opportunity for growth and improvement.

The Dual Edge of Artificial Intelligence

While AI has strengthened digital defense, it has also opened new doors for cybercriminals. The same intelligence that protects systems is now being used to attack them. Hackers use AI to craft deep fakes, launch automated attacks, and design smarter malware. This has created a new battlefield — AI versus AI — where digital minds compete for dominance. In this evolving cyber race, the side that learns faster and adapts smarter will define the future of security.

Human-AI Collaboration: The Ethical Core of Cybersecurity

Despite its impressive capabilities, AI still lacks human judgement and ethical understanding. It can detect threats in seconds, but it cannot decide what is right or responsible. That's where human expertise becomes vital. Cybersecurity professionals provide moral

guidance, context, and accountability — the things no machine can replicate.

Together, humans and AI create a balanced defense: AI handles speed and analysis, while humans ensure decisions align with ethics, privacy, and real-world impact. This partnership builds not just stronger protection, but a smarter and more trustworthy cyber future.

The Future Landscape of Cyber Protection

The Cybersecurity of the coming decade will most likely be proactively intelligent, rather than reactively defensive. AI systems would most likely predict possible vulnerabilities, execute simulated attacks, and strengthen networks before breaches occur. In addition, explainable AI (XAI) aims to render AI decision-making traceable and trustworthy, a significant step toward global digital stability.

As nations, organizations, and individuals become increasingly reliant on interdependent systems, the intersection of Cybersecurity and AI will not only safeguard information but also ensure digital integrity and public trust as well.

Conclusion: Intelligence as the New Armor

The digital world is evolving into an arena where intelligence itself is the most powerful weapon. Hackers may continue to innovate, but so will AI — learning faster, adapting deeper, and defending smarter. The rise of the “cyber mind” marks a defining moment in technological history, reminding us that the future of security lies not merely in stronger systems, but in smarter thinking.

In this race between creation and corruption, it is the partnership between human

values and artificial intelligence that will ultimately determine who truly outsmarts whom.



Shameera Kamaludeen

Level 4

BSc (Hons) Computer Science



CAMPUS CHRONICLES

Welcome back to the campus chronicles: a collection of our voices and experiences!

WE INVITED STUDENTS TO SHARE THEIR INSIGHTS ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

Q. What is one quote that changed your perspective

1. "WE CAN'T ALWAYS CHANGE OUR CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT WE CAN ALWAYS SHIFT OUR PERSPECTIVE"
A quote that helps me see the bright side of any situation

-Shaza Fathima,
L4, BSc (Hons) Computer Science

2. "DO IT OR DON'T. TIME WILL PASS ANYWAY"

This quote is so simple but it has fundamentally brought about a change within my mindset, deeply rooting the fact that time waits for no one.

-Wafa Maryam Ahmed,
L4, BSc (Hons) Computer Science

TRANQUILITY IN FOCUS

Featuring ethereal photographs that capture the very essence of peace and calm highlighting the way we perceive serenity around us



Xavitra Arliz Pereira,
L4, BSc (Hons) Computer Science



Nawal Fatima,
L4, BSc (Hons) Computer Science



UP NEXT



Question for you:

If your previous semester had a soundtrack, what song would it be?

Photography theme

The Golden Hour: Show us how you capture the magic

Send your Answers/Photographs to
editors@uwl.ac.ae before 10th March,
2026

-DESIGN AND COMPILATION BY MOHAMMED IFAD & SANA RAHEEM

Staff Trip to Rafisah Dam

Nature, laughter, and a well-earned break with memories worth keeping.



Ethical Hacking Workshop: Penetration Testing Fundamentals

Led by Mr. Ihtisham PK, SOC Analyst and Senior Cyber Security Researcher at Red Team Cyber Security Labs, RedTeam Hacker Academy, the workshop offered students practical insights into penetration testing. The session provided hands-on exposure to real-world cybersecurity tools and techniques for identifying, analyzing, and mitigating digital vulnerabilities.



FACULTY FOCUS

Celebrating Academic Excellence

We are proud to congratulate Dr. Mohamed Ashad (Department of Business and Management) and Dr. Shaheen (Department of Computing and Engineering) on being awarded Senior Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (SFHEA) and Ms. Mubeena on achieving Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA). Their achievements highlight not only their individual dedication and impact but also our institution's continued pursuit of academic quality and professional growth. We applaud their accomplishment and look forward to their continued commitment to excellence in teaching, learning and student development.



Dr. Mohamed Ashad
Department of
Business and Management



Dr. Shaheen
Department of
Computing and Engineering



Ms. Mubeena
Department of
Business and Management

Congratulations to Mr. Rajan T. from the Department of Computing and Engineering, whose research paper titled "A Context-Aware Multi-Modal Generative Adversarial Network for Real-Time Anomaly Detection in Video Surveillance" has been published in the internationally recognised journal Future Generation Computer Systems (Springer).

The study presents an advanced AI-driven approach to real-time video surveillance, using a context-aware multi-modal GAN model to improve the detection of unusual or suspicious events. This work contributes to the growing field of intelligent security systems and demonstrates the practical application of deep learning in enhancing public safety and automated monitoring. The paper reflects the high-quality research and innovation being carried out by our faculty.



Mr. Rajan
Lecturer
Department of Computing & Engineering

Industrial Visit to Royalford International FZE, Dubai

Students undertook an industrial visit to Royalford International FZE, Western International Group Warehouse, Dubai, gaining valuable insights into real-world supply chain operations, warehouse management, and industry best practices through firsthand observation and interaction.



Course Enhancement Activities

From Practice to Progress: Navigating a Career in Human Resources

Ms. Jenny Mathai (CIPD), Head of HR at RAK International Airport, engaged students with practical perspectives on building a successful HR career, drawing meaningful connections between academic concepts and professional practice.



Business Quiz: Boardroom Blitz

A fast-paced business quiz that challenged students on their knowledge and decision-making skills.



Trash to Treasure Start-Up Challenge

Turning waste into wow! Students showcased creativity and sustainability through innovative business ideas.



Spot It, Solve It, Sell It: Identifying Market Needs

Mr. Shahul Gasnikhan, Curious Marketer and Author, engaged students in an insightful session on recognizing market gaps and transforming observations into impactful, market-driven solutions.



Guest Talk: Strategy in Business

Mr. Jenson George, Founder & Managing Director of Accurate FZE, delivered an engaging session on business strategy, emphasizing big-picture thinking and how effective strategic planning drives sustainable organizational success.



Competition: UAE - The Future Global Business Hub

Students showcased future-focused perspectives and presented insights on why the UAE continues to stand at the forefront of global business growth and innovation.



Pathways to Entrepreneurship in the UAE

Ms. Mariana Velickovic from UAQ Free Zone shared insights into the UAE's entrepreneurial ecosystem, highlighting key opportunities, resources, and support frameworks that help transform innovative ideas into successful ventures.



Sustainability as a Corporate Imperative

Ms. Raya Makkawi, 3M Dubai, shed light on why sustainability is no longer optional but essential for modern businesses.



Industry Expert Session: A Day in the Life of an HR Manager

Mr. Abhishek Joshi, HR Manager at the iconic brand Dabur India International, interacted live with MBA students, sharing practical insights.





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