



Alison Orr

Yesterday at 20:35

Industry expert and university engagement and collaboration

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To: Tilahun MEKONNEN

Date 09.09.26

Dear Tilahun,

I'm very happy to confirm, for the record and in support of your ongoing work to embed industry expertise into SHU's teaching, the details of my contribution as a guest speaker on your International Entrepreneurship module.

For around **five years, from 2018 to 2022**, you coordinated my involvement as a guest lecturer, during which I delivered a session to **your MSc students** focused specifically on **intellectual property (IP)** and its role in **internationalisation - covering the value of IP as a business asset, its identification, protection, management, and exploitation, with particular attention to the practical IP issues that arise as businesses expand into new markets**. I also delivered interactive case studies to encourage students to put their learning on IP and internationalisation into practice. I should also mention, for completeness, that I have been delivering guest lectures for Sheffield Business School since 2012, **so our collaboration under your coordination built on and extended an already-established relationship between my practice and the University**.

I want to take this opportunity to **recognise the effort you have consistently put into connecting SHU's teaching with industry practice. Coordinating guest contributions of this kind takes real initiative - identifying practitioners with relevant, current expertise, integrating their input meaningfully into the curriculum rather than as a one-off add-on, and sustaining that relationship over multiple years**.

In my experience, that ongoing commitment made these sessions genuinely valuable to students rather than a token industry slot, and I'd be glad to support your case for continuing this collaborative tradition.

Guest sessions of this kind give students a practitioner's perspective that **complements, but is distinct from, the module's academic content**. In addition to delivering academic content, we worked through real-world, case-study-based scenarios. **This helps students see how identification, protection, and exploitation of IP actually play out as a business scales internationally, and where the practical risks and decision points sit (ownership, collaboration agreements, licensing, brand protection across jurisdictions, and so on)**.

For MSc students in particular, many of whom will no doubt go on to establish or work closely with growing businesses, this exposure to how IP decisions are made commercially (not just what the law says) adds a layer of applied, current insight that enriches their existing knowledge and, I hope, better prepares them for the realities of international entrepreneurship.

Please do let me know if it would help to have this in a different format or addressed to a particular colleague/committee. I'm happy to support the case for continuing this engagement in whatever way is most useful.

With best wishes,

Alison

Dr Alison Orr

IP Consultant

e: dralisonorr@outlook.com

t: 07968 200809

[Alison Orr | LinkedIn](#)

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