A warm welcome awaits students
Albert Einstein reportedly had a sign on his wall which said: “Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts”. Few of us would dispute this, but count we must.

Evaluation and assessment are at the core of what we do as a university, but this is often complicated and almost always attracts controversy and argument.

We assess students all the time, through their course work and exams. This determines their degree classification and may influence their future career. We strive to be transparent and consistent in how we assess students, but there are difficulties. How do you compare different subjects and disciplines within the same university? And how does a qualification from one university compare with a similar one from another institution?

Our staff are assessed frequently by their students, and by their peers who make judgements on the quality of their teaching and research, their funding proposals and their suitability for promotion.

In research, the University is judged by research grant income, citations of our publications and for some league tables, by factors such as how many of our staff appear on US ‘highly cited’ lists, have published in the very top science journals or have won Nobel Prizes. On the latter we do have an advantage!

But the problem recognised by Einstein is that for many activities, and certainly for most that we undertake as a University – it’s not about counting or objective measures, but about judgement, opinion and perception.

Our success depends on the opinions and perceptions of our many stakeholders, including our students, alumni, funders and our own staff. ‘Reputation’ in research and teaching depend on much wider opinions, nationally and internationally. It is even more difficult to quantify our performance and achievements as a socially responsible university.

In many of these areas, we rely on surveys and focus groups to gauge the opinions and perceptions of our key stakeholders. But these subjective measures are not without their limitations. Market research experts tell us that the outcomes are highly dependent on the methodology: when the survey was conducted, how the questions were phrased and who chose to respond.

But in spite of these reservations, opinions and perceptions gathered in this way really do matter.

An excellent example is the National Student Survey Survey (NSS) which represents the opinion of many thousands of students across 300 higher education institutions. Whatever the limitations of this survey or our personal reservations about the methodology, the fact is that we, as a University, score very badly in the NSS. We do well in some areas, so this cannot be a generic ‘University’ problem, but one we must tackle in the specific areas of poor performance.

Opinions are heavily influenced by the way we present ourselves to our students and staff, and to the outside world. In a nutshell - how we market what we do. But for us, marketing is not about the hard sell and it must be about much more than simply changing a logo or creating a new strapline.

We need to be clear about what it is that we do really well and about how The University of Manchester is different to other institutions. We should not be reticent about telling the rest of the world about our successes and what makes us a great place to study, work, visit or work in partnership with. This is where we will be focusing our efforts in the coming months.

Einstein was right. It is really hard to ‘count’ much of what we do in a truly objective way. But we cannot afford to overlook the opinions of those people who really count – our students, our staff, our stakeholders, our funders and our peers. We ignore these at our peril.
‘Ask Me’ campaign makes students feel at home

Thousands of staff and students from across the University gave new students an extra warm welcome at the start of term by taking part in the ‘Ask Me’ campaign.

Around 1,500 staff wore ‘Ask Me’ badges to encourage the new intake to approach them and ask for help.

Badges were distributed across all Schools, Faculties and Directorates and participating staff were given a campus map and a special briefing guide to help them answer queries.

Senior staff at the University, including President and Vice-Chancellor Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell, supported the initiative by donning the distinctive purple badge.

The campaign was part of a range of new activity, developed and delivered by a team from the Directorate for the Student Experience.

Banners and flags adorned Oxford Road and there was a new look ‘Start of Year Fair’ outside University Place.

Add to that a Facebook page for students living at home and a new online induction, and we’re sure this will go down as one of the warmest Manchester welcomes yet.

International students arriving at Manchester Airport

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Front cover by Scott Foley:
Hundreds of volunteers supported the 'Ask Me' campaign to welcome students to Manchester. Pictured are student interns Freya Wagstaff and Katie Franklin
The Professional Support Services and Academic Services Distinguished Achievement Awards were held earlier this summer to recognise achievements from across the University.

The winners were chosen for their outstanding performances and included teams and individuals who demonstrated professionalism, teamwork, support, openness and continuous improvement.

Sadly the award for Undergraduate of the Year was made posthumously to Stuart Casley who had a rare genetic disorder called Neurofibromatosis 2 which led to almost total deafness and balance problems at the end of his second year.

He was nominated for his award for the inspirational way in which he dealt with his year abroad, especially during his time in Russia, where the ability to cope with his condition and make a success of his time there, was described by his initially rather concerned Russian teachers as admirable.

Stuart had made a successful start to his final year at Manchester when he died in November 2010. Stuart's parents collected his award.

The President and Vice-Chancellor presided, and Albert McMenemy, the former Registrar and Secretary, Professor Luke Georghiou, Vice-President for Research and Innovation, and Professor Clive Agnew, Vice-President for Teaching, Learning and Students, presented the awards.

Professional Support Services (PSS) and Academic Services Awards

Small Team Award – Faculty of Life Sciences Recruitment and Admissions Team. Helena Collins (team leader), Elizabeth Hambleton, Amanda Cangelosi, Joanne Cohen, Nichole Nevison.

PSS and Academic Services Large Team Award – School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering Workshop and Laboratory Technician Team. Norman Axon, Malcolm Bailey, Derrick Bradshaw, John Bramwell, Glyn Ireland, Vincent James, Keith Kahn, Chris Kirkham, Frank McCann, Natalie Parish, Paul Shaw, Danny Vale and Sam Walsh.

PSS and Academic Services Individual Award – Lindsay Blank, Practice Learning Unit Administrator, School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work.

PSS and Academic Services Individual Winner – Geoff Carter, Teaching and Learning Manager, Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences.

PSS and Academic Services Individual Winner – Dr Helen Baker, Graduate Policy Coordinator and eProg Project Manager, Graduate Education Team, Research Office.

Researchers of the Year 2011

School of Biomedicine – Professor Yanick Crow.
Politics, School of Social Sciences – Professor Rosaleen Duffy.
Faculty of Life Sciences – Professor Stuart Allan.
School of Chemical Engineering and Analytical Sciences – Dr Esther Ventura Medina.

Postgraduate Research Students of the Year

Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences – Tracy Briggs, School of Biomedicine.
Institute of Development Policy and Management from the School of Environment and Development – Dr Asad Ghalib.
Faculty of Life Sciences – Dr Sumaira Hasnain.
School of Chemical Engineering and Analytical Sciences – Paul Bassan.

Undergraduates of the Year 2011

School of Dentistry – Michael Hicks.
School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures – Stuart Casley, (Posthumous Award).
Faculty of Life Sciences – Andrew McLean.
Remembering 9/11
An international music event spanning two continents was held to mark the tenth anniversary of 9/11.
Two specially written works by Dr Kevin Malone, Head of Composition at the University, brought together Britain and America in an act of international solidarity to remember the victims ten years on.
The event was held at the Imperial War Museum North and Wake Forest University’s Wait Chapel in North Carolina.

Arthritis award
The Wellcome Trust has awarded a prestigious five year Career Development Fellowship to Dr Gisela Orozco, a researcher in the Arthritis Research UK Epidemiology Unit, based here at the University.
Gisela’s study into rheumatoid arthritis will look into how changes in the genetic sequence of chromosome 6q23 may increase the risk of rheumatoid arthritis.
The award totals over £650,000.

She’s worth it
Dr Vicky Coker, from the School of Earth, Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences was one of four winners of the L’Oreal-UNESCO For Women in Science awards.
The recognition is due to Dr Coker’s groundbreaking research into developing imaging to map how toxic waste has an effect on plants and the environment.

Unearthing Whitworth Park’s past
Staff, students and local people are digging deep to shed light on the history of Whitworth Park.

Archaeologist Dr Melanie Giles said: “Whitworth was one of industrial Manchester’s best loved Victorian and Edwardian parks.

“It was a colourful place, filled with elaborate flowerbeds and walkways, to promote the health and wellbeing of adults and children from all social classes around Oxford Road, Rusholme and Moss Side.

“We hope to find remains of these structures and objects that were lost or left behind during days out, picnics and play-times.”

Sara Hilton, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund North West, who gave £39,700 towards the project said: “This will give local people the chance quite literally to uncover the past history of this park that has stood at the heart of the community for more than 120 years.”
The European Commission has awarded the University its highly coveted HR Excellence in Research award recognising the implementation of the University’s action plan to adopt in full the Principles of The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.

In 2010, the Associate Vice-President for Research, Professor Matt Lambon Ralph, assumed leadership of the newly formed Research Staff Development Working Group. Professor Lambon Ralph is leading the work of the Group to successfully champion the Concordat and is helping to raise awareness across the campus.

Dr Mark Leech, Skills Development Co-ordinator in the Research Office, said: “Each Head of School has been involved in the development of the University's Concordat Implementation Plan by providing information of local practice in relation to each of the Principles of the Concordat. We are delighted that all of this excellent work is now receiving European recognition.”

Awarding excellence

Graphene: one year on from Nobel success

A year ago, Professors Andre Geim and Kostya Novoselov (above) were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for their groundbreaking experiments on graphene.

One year on, their work continues with the pair bringing out several influential papers detailing further research with the wonder material.

Graphene, the world’s thinnest material, is dominating the scientific research agenda all over the world, with research laboratories opening up specifically to investigate its vast potential.

Professors Geim and Novoselov continue to lead the way in this research publishing a paper on fluorographene – a two-dimensional version of graphene which could ultimately replace Teflon.

Huge developments in the exploitation of graphene have taken place. The pair have released papers revealing the potential for graphene to revolutionise electronics, touch-screen phones and transistors.

Their latest paper, published in *Nature Communications*, claims that graphene could allow internet connection speeds tens of times faster than they currently are.

In addition to their pioneering work, both have been inundated with media requests from around the world.

Professor Geim said: “Winning the Nobel Prize was a great honour, and this past year has been unlike any other.

“We’ve tried now to focus on what we do best which is research and to show just how versatile and exciting a material this really is.”

Entrepreneurial spirit at UMI3

This summer saw the creation of The University of Manchester I3 Limited (UMI3) following the integration of the University’s business incubation services provider (UMIC) and its agent for Intellectual Property commercialisation (UMIP).

Clive Rowland, UMI3 CEO, said: “UMI3 will seek to reinforce the entrepreneurial spirit of both divisions and improve further on its track-record through a series of IP and funding initiatives, as well as create a vibrant enterprise environment in The Innovation Centre. The Centre will aim to encourage positive interactions between external investment and business communities and our academic colleagues and their excellent research activities and ideas for development.”

Dian’s award

Professor Dian Donnai has been awarded the 2011 European Society of Human Genetics (ESHG) Education Award.

The ESHG award is in recognition of: “Professor Donnai’s longstanding contribution to the clinical genetic sciences, the education of students and clinical geneticists worldwide, and the creation of the Manchester Dysmorphology Conferences.”
Jodrell Bank will be hosting a series of events during Science Week later this month. Activities will include a spectacular journey through the solar system, experiments and the chance to launch a rocket.

Experts will be on hand to answer questions and art installation ‘Silsila’ – will also be on view.

On Thursday 27 October the Lovell Lecture will take place entitled: “A new view of the Universe from the Planck spacecraft,” delivered by Dr Clive Dickinson from the School of Physics and Astronomy.

For tickets call 01477 571 766.

There will also be a Science Spectacular on Saturday 29 October, at the Whitworth Hall and Manchester Museum. This free event will be a celebration of science for all the family – with interactive exhibitions and a science stars trail for youngsters to enjoy.

CEO and Director of the Arthritis Research UK Epidemiology Unit opened its doors to the public this summer inviting patients, carers, health professionals and fundraisers to come and find out more about its work.

Visitors could take part in lab tours and visit the Pain Station, where they could get their responses to pain measured.

Paul Gilbert, Lab Manager is pictured with visitors on the Lab Tour.

Manchester alumni win a BAFTA

Two film-makers who graduated from the University’s Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology have won Best Factual Series at the 2011 BAFTAs.

Director Gavin Searle and colleague Andrew Palmer made a three-part film series exploring life at the sharp end of one of the most extreme urban environments in the world.

‘Welcome to Lagos’ shows life in one of the roughest parts of the world’s fastest growing megacity. Since he left the University, Gavin has directed more than 35 programmes for TV. He said: “What is really great about the Granada Centre is that it brings anthropology alive. It blends the insights and approaches of the discipline together with popular media, to produce really exciting films. Just in terms of its impact on British TV, its influence cannot be underestimated.”

New role for Mike

Professor Mike Burke has been appointed as Director of Research and Technology at the Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (Nuclear AMRC).

Based at the Nuclear AMRC laboratories at The University of Manchester Dalton Nuclear Institute, Professor Burke has more than 30 years experience in materials and manufacturing process research for the power generation industry, most recently as manager of Westinghouse’s Materials Center of Excellence in Pennsylvania, USA.

In his new role, he leads collaborative, industry-focused research across the Nuclear AMRC’s facilities in Sheffield and Manchester.

Science spectacular

www.jodrellbank.net  www.manchestersciencefestival.com
www.manchestersciencespectacular.co.uk
Can stem cells mend broken hearts?

A discussion at Manchester Town Hall recently looked at the use of stem cells to potentially treat heart disease, one of the UK's biggest killers.

The audience of over 100 included teenagers, patients and academic scientists.

The debate was chaired by Dr Fiona Fox, Director of the Science Media Centre and was supported by the British Heart Foundation, Nowgen and The University of Manchester.

Investigating arthritis

Patients across the North West and beyond are set to benefit from a new national research unit based in Manchester which will investigate the treatment of arthritis and other diseases affecting the joints and muscles.

Led by Professor Deborah Symmons, the team of researchers and clinicians will pioneer new methods of assessing early response to treatment in adults and children with Musculoskeletal (MSK) disease; new ways of preventing rheumatoid arthritis and its complications; therapies for arthritis and new resources for patients to help them achieve the best response to treatment.

The Manchester NIHR Biomedical Research Unit (BRU) will be run in partnership by Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and the University. The partners already have a highly regarded Musculoskeletal (MSK) Research Group, and have successfully applied to the National Institute for Health Research for almost £5 million to set up the BRU.

Lightening the mood of a city

A unique experiment to test the mood of Manchester folk using a wheel of colour took place last month.

Almost 20,000 people from all across the city took part in the event which used the Manchester Colour Wheel – devised by University researchers Dr Helen Carruthers and Professor Peter Whorwell in the School of Translational Medicine.

The wheel measured the happiness and well-being of the city's population and the results are now being scientifically evaluated.

Professor Whorwell explained: “The Colour Wheel is a very quick and simple way of gauging someone's mood by relating it to a colour. It saves having to fill in complicated questionnaires and overcomes any communication problems. It might also be very useful in children and we are planning on looking at this as part of the experiment.”

The results will be turned into a mural, a sculpture, a ballet and a musical composition, which will be unveiled at a concert at MediaCity:UK on Friday, 9 December.

The experiment was organised by the Manchester Academic Health Science Centre (MAHSC), which the University is a partner in.
Museum allotment flourishes

Green-fingered volunteers and staff at the Manchester Museum have been busy over the summer growing organic produce on an allotment outside the front entrance.

Plants including spinach, strawberries, rhubarb and flat leaf parsley have flourished, while more exotic varieties such as blue potatoes, purple pod peas, and texel greens, a peppery mustard leaf originally from Ethiopia, have provided a distinctive flavour. Staff and visitors have donated plants, including a butternut squash plant originally from Jerusalem and a young visitor even brought an aubergine plant that he had carefully nurtured at home.

Anna Bunney, curator of public programmes, said: “The allotment has been a huge learning curve for us all – we’ve had help from seasoned gardeners but even those of us who are complete novices have been able to contribute. The idea fits with the Museum’s objectives to build on relationships with nature, make connections with our collections, and promote a sustainable world. We’ve unearthed all sorts of objects from our collections – including a 17th century watering can and dried pea plants from the banks of the River Mersey.”

Makeover for famous Vimto monument

After months of careful restoration, the famous Vimto monument has returned to its home on Granby Row at the University, the site of the factory where Vimto was first made by John Noel Nichols in 1908. Matthew Nichols, the great grandson of the founder of Vimto, was there to welcome it back.

The grapes and raspberries have been restored with the grapes changing from red to green to reflect the ingredients of Vimto, while the blackcurrants have been replaced. A new wooded barrel has been constructed to replace the bottom of the Vimto bottle and new labels have been carved and painted.

It was brought back to its former glory by Nick Lumb at Acorn Furniture in Wrexham.
Genetics ‘cloud’ cuts gene sequencing time

Gene sequencing and analysis could be dramatically speeded up, leading to patients receiving a quicker and more accurate diagnosis, thanks to research led by Eagle Genomics Ltd and the University.

Using cloud computing technology, the researchers have found they can slash the amount of time it takes to store the huge amounts of information produced when individual genes are sequenced and analysed.

At the moment this process can take up to three months, the scientists believe their new technique could mean results are produced in about a week.

What’s the prognosis?

Researchers have developed a new scoring system that can provide a better prediction of how long patients with advanced cancer are likely to survive.

The study, carried out with colleagues at St George’s, University of London, and published on the British Medical Journal’s website, will provide clinicians with extra tools to predict how long patients have to live.

“Predicting the course of a disease is important for various reasons, such as guiding treatment decisions, determining eligibility for benefits, and helping patients organise their affairs at the end of life,” according to Professor Chris Tod, of the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work.

“Predicting prognosis outcomes is notoriously difficult and often inaccurate. We have been developing a decision support tool that will improve the accuracy of these decisions and help patients and their families make choices about where the patient can best be cared for when they are dying.”

More sex please, we’re Greek

Plato lent his name to Platonic love, but a new book reveals that the ancient Greek philosopher never advocated love without sex.

Science historian Dr Jay Kennedy, has published a decoder’s manual that lays bare the secret content of Plato’s ancient works.

“Plato was long thought to favour love without sex, or ‘Platonic love’, but this new research reveals Plato was far from being a prude,” says Dr Kennedy, from the Faculty of Life Sciences.

“The decoded symbols in fact show that Plato was not an advocate of Platonic love at all; rather he urged a middle path. For him, morality meant moderation – he wanted people to avoid both promiscuity and abstinence.”

Humanising Australia’s convict past

A series of archaeological finds in Tasmania have shown how colonial guards secretly eased the brutal treatment of women prisoners in 1850s Australia.

University archaeologist Dr Eleanor Casella says the discovery of textile manufacturing paraphernalia in a Tasmanian prison nursery proves women prisoners were allowed informal contact with their babies – a contravention of official British policy for the management of imperial convicts.

Dr Casella carried out work at the Ross Female Factory, a heritage-listed prison which confined exiled British criminal women and their children.

Officially, the women were not allowed to see their babies other than for breast feeding. At the age of three, the ‘convict babies’ were transferred to the Queen’s Orphan School in Hobart Town, 70 miles away from Ross.

Dr Casella said: “These finds suggest the Ross Factory Superintendent ignored formal orders and allowed women to work in the company of their children.”
Scientists have succeeded in purifying a protein found in bacteria that could reveal new drug targets for inherited breast and ovarian cancers as well as other cancers linked to DNA repair faults.

The team, based at the University’s Paterson Institute for Cancer Research and the Manchester Interdisciplinary Biocentre, is the first to decipher the structure of a protein called PARG – which plays an important role in DNA repair and acts in the same pathway as PARP inhibitors which have been showing great promise in clinical trials for patients with breast, ovarian and prostate cancers caused by gene mutations.

They work by blocking the action of PARP – a protein that chemically tags areas of DNA damage to highlight them to the cell’s DNA repair machinery.

PARG removes these chemical tags after the DNA damage has been repaired. So the researchers believe that, similar to PARP inhibitors, drugs designed to block the action of PARG could be effective in treating cancer.

“The internal biological functions of living organisms – plays in sexual selection in birds and other animals,” said Dr Codd.

“The internet is challenging the dominance of traditional media as a campaign tool, despite the public’s renewed attachment to TV through the 2010 general election leaders’ debates.”

Internet becoming ‘mainstream’ in political campaigning

The internet is challenging the dominance of traditional media as a campaign tool, despite the public’s renewed attachment to TV through the 2010 general election leaders’ debates.

Research, funded by The Economic and Social Research Council, found that though TV is still a prized channel for voter communication, online news sources, email and social networking tools are now seen as an important way for parties to reach the public.

However, traditional face-to-face contact with prospective voters still remains the most preferred mode of contact according to the study, which included a representative survey of almost two thousand UK adults.

Professor Rachel Gibson, from the Institute of Social Change, led the study which used data from a survey of national e-campaign managers and public opinion data.

She said: “For over a decade, commentators have heralded the arrival of the internet election.

"Based on the results of this study we can’t say that has yet happened beyond attention to news online.

“But, our findings do suggest that social media is becoming key resource for parties to absorb voter interest and the task that politicians now face is the conversion of that growing interest into action and support.”
**Diamond planet**

A once-massive star that’s been transformed into a small planet made of diamond is believed to have been found in the Milky Way by University astronomers.

The researchers first detected an unusual star, called a pulsar, using the Parkes radio telescope of the Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and followed up their discovery with the Lovell radio telescope, based at Jodrell Bank Observatory and a telescope in Hawaii.

Pulsars are small spinning stars about 20 kilometres in diameter that emit a beam of radio waves. As the star spins and the radio beam sweeps repeatedly over Earth, radio telescopes detect a regular pattern of radio pulses. The modulations in the pulses told astronomers a number of things about the planet.

First, it orbits the pulsar in just two hours and ten minutes, and the distance between the two objects is 600,000 kilometres—a little less than the radius of our Sun.

Second, the companion must be small, less than 60,000 kilometres (that’s about five times the Earth’s diameter). The planet is so close to the pulsar that, if it were any bigger, it would be ripped apart by the pulsar’s gravity.

But despite its small size, the planet has slightly more mass than Jupiter and it is this density that provides a clue to its origin. The material is certain to be crystalline which means that a large part of the star may be similar to a diamond.

The team thinks that the ‘diamond planet’ is all that remains of a once-massive star, most of whose matter was siphoned off towards the pulsar.

This work was carried out alongside colleagues from Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne, Australia.

**Early detection of Alzheimer’s disease**

Scientists have discovered that measurements of brain activity could be used to predict Alzheimer’s disease in people with mild memory problems.

It’s hoped the study, which was part-funded by Alzheimer’s Research UK, will help improve clinical trials to find new treatments for the disease.

A team led by Karl Herholz, Professor of Clinical Neuroscience at the Wolfson Molecular Imaging Centre, studied 44 healthy people, 40 people with Alzheimer’s and 94 people with mild cognitive impairment (MCI).

People with MCI experience problems with their thinking and memory, but not to an extent that interferes with daily life. Many people with MCI, but not all, go on to develop Alzheimer’s, and being able to predict who will develop the disease is a key target for researchers.

It’s hoped their findings, could improve clinical trials by allowing researchers to test new treatments earlier, when they are likely to be most effective.

**A sticky role for protein molecule**

A protein molecule that ‘glues’ cells together, and therefore has a key role in cancer, is also responsible for many other important functions of cells, a new study has found.

The unexpected findings are important because they could lead to a better understanding of why some cancer cells are difficult to eradicate in patients and could lead to new cancer treatments.

“E-cadherin is a ‘glue’ that keeps cells together in the body,” said Dr Chris Ward, who led the study in the School of Dentistry.

“E-cadherin is also important during cancer progression from benign to malignant states, with loss of this molecule leading to increased movement of the cells which can lead to secondary tumours within the body.

“As well as the expected findings associated with changes in cell adhesion, we found that E-cadherin exerts an effect on a diverse range of biological functions within the cell. This unexpected result demonstrates that E-cadherin, is an important part of regulating the biology of embryonic stem cells.”

**Genetic link to intelligence**

Scientists have provided the first direct biological evidence for a genetic contribution to people’s intelligence.

Previous studies on twins and adopted people suggested that there is a substantial genetic contribution to thinking skills, but this new study is the first to find a genetic contribution by testing people’s DNA for genetic variations.

The team studied two types of intelligence in more than 3,500 people from Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Newcastle and Manchester. The paper, by Dr Neil Pendleton and colleagues, found that 40% to 50% of people’s differences in these abilities could be traced to genetic differences.

Dr Pendleton, who led the Manchester team in the Centre for Integrated Genomic Research, said: “This is the first reported research to examine the intelligence of healthy older adults and, using a comprehensive genetic survey, we were able to show a substantial genetic contribution in our ability to think.

“We can now use the findings to better understand how these genes interact with each other and the environment, which has an equally significant contribution.”

The study, in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh, was funded in Manchester by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council.
A student and a member of staff have been unveiled as winners of a prestigious social entrepreneurship award.

Dr Gill Green from the School of Community Based Medicine and Edwin Broni-Mensah, who is studying for a PhD in Applied Maths, both won HE Social Entrepreneurship Recognition Awards.

The awards highlight the exceptional achievements and positive change which universities, staff and students can make by creating a hotbed of entrepreneurial ideas and establishing social ventures.

Gill’s award was for STORM Skills Training which offers suicide prevention training packages on a not-for-profit basis for use in healthcare, social care, criminal justice and education services.

Edwin’s award was for his company GiveMeTap which is an ecological way for people to stay hydrated on the go. Restaurant, bar and cafe owners in Manchester have signed up as ‘providers’ to supply free access to clean tap water to those who carry their branded life-time aluminium bottles.

Both Gill and Edwin acknowledge the support they’ve gained from the University, particularly from Dr Sonia Nikolovski, Venture Manager at UMIP, and from Dr Martin Henery, Enterprise Academic in the Manchester Enterprise Centre.

Edwin and Gill make a difference

Student Yusuf Hamid has been named Best Mentor 2011 by Kids Count, the children and young people’s think tank, for his mentoring volunteering with ReachOut!, a local children’s mentoring charity.

Yusuf, 22, was presented with the award by MP John Leech at the House of Commons. He has spent the last three years making a difference to over 50 young people in Manchester whilst also completing a Civil Engineering Degree at the University.

His work has included helping ReachOut!’s Saturday Soccer School and leading the ReachOut! Homework Club project in Moss Side’s Chrysalis Centre.

Sarah celebrates medical first

Dr Sarah Al Youha became the first student to graduate with a combined MB ChB and PhD from the Manchester Medical School.

Speaking about her unique achievement, Sarah said: “I had a fantastic experience studying here for eight years and I think there are very few medical schools in the world that offer as many opportunities for students to pursue other academic interests.”

Professor John McLaughlin, who set up the MB PhD study option, said: “This new programme is the first in the UK outside of Cambridge and London and is hugely important to our plans to support high-flying medical students into clinical academic training.”

Sarah is currently working as a junior doctor in Kuwait.

Keeping it in the family

Hannah Spector made her graduation a family affair – she’s the fourth generation of her family to study here!

Her great-grandfather and her grandfather studied at Manchester, as well as her mother and her aunt.

Hannah said: “I’m so glad my grandfather was able to come, it was the first time he had visited Manchester for 20 years! He was captain of the University cricket team and that’s how he met my grandmother. Manchester and the University hold a lot of memories for my family.”

Hannah graduated with a 2:1 in Modern History with Economics.
The first in five generations of north-east mining stock to go to university, he carved out a career in human resource management for 20 years, before being offered high-profile general management roles with AstraZeneca.

“Like my move out of HR, moving into higher education certainly wasn’t planned,” he admits. “I’d been running AstraZeneca’s (AZ) Alderley Park site - which at the time was the second largest building site in the north-west after Manchester’s Commonwealth Games site - when I got a call from a head-hunter about the Chief Operating Officer role at Loughborough University.

“It sounded very interesting but I wasn’t looking for a move, though I was coming to the end of leading a significant change period at AZ, so part of me was open to the idea of another large, sophisticated, complex organisation. And being a product of the HE system myself, which totally changed my life-chances and those of my kids, he gradually reeled me in.

“The question for me is always ‘Is this role developmental?’, and if it is, I’m up for it. I’ve worked in research-intensive, people-oriented, highly regulated organisations all my career, so while HE is different to a private-sector business, it’s not as dissimilar as people might expect.”

Will comes to Manchester with significant experience of administrative management at Loughborough in a leading UK university (recently ranked 11th in the Sunday Times University Guide).

“Some of that experience may be relevant here in Manchester,” he says. “In the area of the student experience, Loughborough has consistently been voted the best in the UK, while at Manchester – although we have areas of excellence and things are moving in the right direction – we know we’ve got a lot to do to quickly achieve consistency.

“So there are things I can bring in terms of helping to build a sense of community, which I think is very important, although this will inevitably play out differently in a city centre-based university of this size.”

Another thing Will has brought with him from Loughborough is the job title of ‘Chief Operating Officer’, alongside those of University Registrar and Secretary. But what does his lengthy new label actually mean? “‘Chief Operating Officer’ and ‘Registrar’ are really just different terms for very similar roles, which have meaning when interacting with the business and HE sectors respectively,” he explains.

Will’s welcome

When the University’s new Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer Will Spinks moved into the higher education sector four years ago, it wasn’t the first major shift on his career path.

Both titles refer to his role within the Senior Leadership Team, where he has ultimate responsibility for all administrative functions both centrally and within the Faculties, while, as University Secretary, he also serves as a key support to members of the Board of Governors.

Having requested to work alongside the University’s outgoing Registrar and Secretary, Albert McMenemy, for two months, Will was able to get a strong feeling for the way Manchester functions, before officially taking up his post on 1 August. “It’s early days but I feel that things are going quite well so far,” he says. “I’ve managed to get around most of the Professional Support Services teams and the Students’ Union, I am now in the throes of meeting every Head of School, so I’m getting a good sense of what the challenges and opportunities are.

“I’ve been really impressed by the capabilities of the people I’ve met, the professional way the institution is run and its strong links with the city. Sometimes you go into a job and find that lots of things are broken, and I feel fortunate to have arrived at such a robust organisation where that isn’t the case. So, although I’m keen to start making a contribution quickly, I’m in no rush to start pushing organisational changes through, and colleagues shouldn’t expect to see major structural changes.”
"My emphasis is on helping different parts of the institution work more closely together, to meet some of the challenges we face in what are quite turbulent times. A university of this size and clout should be able to take opportunities and make investments in difficult times, as well as addressing areas where our performance might not be what we would wish it to be; the challenge, in leadership terms, is progressing both simultaneously.

"Within Professional Support Services (PSS) we have very good individual services but the feedback is that they don’t join up well enough, so streamlining things to offer a more seamless service is a priority. And, given the size and complexity of some of the services involved, it will be a challenge."

Will’s arrival coincides with the refreshing of the University’s agenda, goals and strategy for 2020. “My objectives on that level are to simply help the University deliver what it seeks to achieve: what happens in Professional Support Services will flow from the – rightly ambitious – targets it sets itself for 2020,” he says.

"The strategy for that should be approved in the autumn; this will give us time to develop the supporting strategies within PSS for the Board’s Planning and Accountability Conference in the spring, so the timing is perfect.”

Although no longer obvious in his accent, Will’s Geordie roots shine through in his affability, and staff should expect to see plenty of him around campus over the coming months and years. Having been used to open-plan working he’s determined to break the confines of his John Owens Building office, take part in student activities and make himself available to colleagues. “I hope people will stop me, say hello and let me know how things are going,” he says. “And if I see things I’m not comfortable with I’ll follow through on them.”

Will left Newcastle in 1976, to study management sciences at the University of Warwick’s business school and, under a year’s scholarship, in Georgetown in Washington DC. Since 1983 he’s been based in the north-west, living in Bollington near Macclesfield. “One of the real opportunities in coming to this University was to re-introduce myself to the north-west, as engagement with my local community is really important to me,” he says. “I’ve long had links with the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), development agency and other groups in the region and I’ve been able to revitalise those."

Theatre is also a big interest for Will and his wife, so he’s often to be found at the Royal Exchange and The Lowry, and is passionate about football. "I still can’t make it to many Newcastle games but, at the other end of the scale, I’ve become a regular at Macclesfield Town!"

If he thought returning to the north-west would allow him more time with his three, now-adult, children however, Will’s timing has proved to be slightly off. His 24-year-old daughter is about to fly the nest and move into Manchester city centre, while his youngest son is at university in Nottingham and his middle son has just taken up a university post in China.

When not chatting to his kids on Skype, one gets the impression that Will’s focus is firmly on the practicalities of the road ahead for The University of Manchester. “My role here is to help the University achieve its objectives for the next phase of its development,” he says determinedly.

"I don’t commit to doing anything lightly so when I do, I do it. There are lots of things I could be doing here but I’m only going to spend my time on those that make a genuine contribution, and really move the institution forward.”
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until 27 Nov

Art installation ‘Silsilsa’
A qawwal-inspired sound installation based on the epic Sufi poem, ‘Conference of the Birds’ (part of the Asia Triennial Manchester 2 Arts Festival)

Mon 24 – Fri 28 Oct

October Family Fun Rocket Week!
Science Shows (4 years+) 11.30am and 1pm

Ask an Expert 2pm

View art installation Silsilsa – a sufi-inspired cosmic journey in sound 3pm

Thu 27 Oct, 7.30pm-9pm

Lovell Lecture Series
‘A new view of the Universe from the Planck spacecraft’ with Dr Clive Dickinson. £6.50/£4.50 (suitable for 15+)

Opening times are 10am – 5pm. For more information and prices please visit our website

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North Wales visiting Llangollen and Eddisbury

Sat 15 Oct
North Wales visiting Anglesey (with full day guided tour)

Sun 16 Oct
Liverpool

Sat 22 Oct
South Lake District visiting Bowness-on-Windermere, Ambleside and Grasmere

Sun 23 Sep
York

Sat 29 Oct
North Wales visiting Conwy Castle and Penrhyn Castle

Sun 30 Oct
Alton Towers Halloween Scaresfest!

Sat 5 Nov
North Lake District visiting Keswick

Sun 6 Nov
Blackpool and the famous Blackpool illuminations

Tickets are available from the International Society office on Oxford Road and also from University House on the Salford University campus.

For more information, please visit our website

Gig Guide

MANCHESTER ACADEMY 1, 2 and 3

Fri 7 Oct  Noah and the Whale – £15
Forever The Sickest Kids – £11
Chantel McGregor – £9

Brooke Fraser – £15
Staind – £18.50

Sun 9 Oct  The Piescers – £13.50

Mon 10 Oct  Joshua Radin – £15.50
Kids In Glass Houses – £15

Tues 11 Oct  Black Veil Brides – £15
Brett Anderson – £15
Skepta + Tempa T – £9.50

Wed 12 Oct  The Feeling – £16.50
While She Sleeps – £7

Thurs 13 Oct  Pop Will Eat Itself – £16

Fri 14 Oct  Connie Lush and Blues Shouter – £10
Maverick Sabre – £10.50

Sat 15 Oct  The Joy Formidable – £11.50
Noasis (Oasis Tribute) – £10

Mon 17 Oct  Ed Sheeran – £10
City and Colour – £18.50

Tues 18 Oct  Bless The Fall – £10
Little Comet – £8.50

Wed 19 Oct  Wretch 32 – £10

Thurs 20 Oct  Leaves’ Eyes + Vision Of Atlantis – £12.50

Fri 21 Oct  The Jam (Tribute band) – £12.50
John Foxx + The Maths – £20

Sat 22 Oct  Jackie Leven – £12.50
Xzibit – £20
Evil – £10

Mon 24 Oct  Yann Tiersen – £16 Adv

Tues 25 Oct  Symphony X – £15
Wilco – £28

Wed 26 Oct  Charlie Simpson – £12.50

Thurs 27 Oct  Mona – £9 Adv
Bowling For Soup – £18.50

Fri 28 Oct  Funeral For A Friend – £16.50
Nick Howard + Ash Before Oak – £7
Mike Peters 30th Anniversary Acoustic Alarm Tour
Volbeat – £12

Sat 29 Oct  The Cat Empire – £19.50

Thurs 3 Nov  Steve Earle & The Dukes (and Duchesses) – £27.50

Tickets from
Students’ Union, Oxford Road
Piccadilly Box Office @ easy Internet Café (c/c)
Royal Court (Liverpool) 0151 709 4321 (c/c)
Students’ Union
Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL
0161 275 2930
www.manchesteracademy.net

Centre for New Writing

Our unique events bring the best-known, contemporary novelists and poets to Manchester to discuss and read from their work. Everyone is welcome, and ticket prices include a complimentary glass of wine or soft drink.

6 Oct, 6.30pm, £10/£5
Colm Tóibín in Conversation
Martin Harris Centre
17 Oct, 6.30pm, £6/£4

Online journal:

www.themanchesterreview.co.uk

What’s On

Music and Drama at Manchester

Thurs 6 Oct, 1.10pm
Soraih
Portland-based musician and ritual artist Soraih (a.k.a. Enrique Ugalde) combines traditional Tuwan throat singing and classical Indian raga chanting with rock and roll influences

Thurs 13 Oct, 1.10pm
Northern Baroque
Amanda Babington (violin and recorder), Cait Walker (oboe and recorder), Claire Babington (cello) and David Francis (harpsichord) present an exciting programme of baroque chamber works

Fri 14 Oct, 1.10pm
Contemporary Works
Join us for the first of our free Friday Lunchtime Concert series, with a selection of contemporary pieces and student commissions for small chamber ensembles.

Thurs 20 Oct, 1.10pm
TANGO 5
The virtuoso tango quintet Tango 5 (bandoneon, piano, bass, violin, electric guitar) showcases four of the finest musicians in the UK

Mon 24 Oct, 5.30pm
Laughter Workshop
Some Laughter Yoga, some positive thinking, and some science? Come and have a laugh – it’s a serious business!! (part of the Manchester Science Festival)

Thurs 27 Oct, 1.10pm
Northern Harmony
Fifteen brilliant young singers from Vermont, USA

Fri 4 Nov, 1.10pm

Classical Works
Join us for the second of our free Lunchtime Concert series, with a selection of classical works and student commissions for small chamber ensembles.

The Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama
Bridgeford Street, Manchester, M13 9PL
0161 275 8951/8950
email boxoffice@manchester.ac.uk
www.manchester.ac.uk/martinhillaiscentre
EXHIBITIONS
Dark Matters until 15 Jan 2012
Encounter phantoms in the mirror, captured spirits and playful shadows as the Whitworth’s spaces become populated by works of darkness and wonder.

Air Pressure Sat 5 Nov – Sun 15 Jan 2012
Our globalised contemporary world has been made possible and shaped fundamentally by international air travel; but at what cost to our sense of place and our wellbeing? This multi-media installation explores the clash between traditional farming life Japan and the technology and economy of international travel.

ADULT EVENTS
3rd Saturday and 3rd Wednesday of the month, 2-4pm, £5

Crafternoon Tea
Monthly social art and craft workshop. Enjoy a cuppa and try your hand at art and craft techniques.

3rd Saturday of the month, 11am – 1pm, £5

Alternative Camera Club
A series of photographic talks, discussions and critiques, co-curated with BlackLab: www.blacklab.visualesociety.com

Every Thursday, 8.30 – 9.45am, Free

Yoga
A fantastic way to start your day. Please bring your own yoga mat.

FAMILY EVENTS
Every Monday
10.30am – 11.30am or 11.30am – 12.30pm

ToddlerTastic
Adventures in Drama, Art, Music or Dance
Booking is essential: 0161 275 7450

3rd Saturday of the month, 11am – 1pm, £5

Drop-in creative workshops

FAMILY ACTIVITIES
Sat 15 Oct, 11am-4pm, Free, drop-in, all ages
Big Saturday: Ancient Egypt
Make pyramids, discover the process of mummification and mummify oranges, go on a dig.
Sun16 Oct, 12-3pm, Free, drop-in, all ages
The Manchester Weekender
Urban Harvest
After months of careful tending, the museum allotment is ready for harvest. There will be talks on gardening and sustainability and freshly dug recipes from local chefs.
Mon 24 Fri – 28 Oct, 11am-4pm. Free drop-in, all ages

Unearthed: Ancient Egypt
Different daily activities include making pyramids, mummifying oranges and going on an archaeological dig.
Fri 28 Oct, 11am-12pm, £1

Magic Carpet: Ancient Egypt
Storytelling and activity session for under 5s.
Book on 0161 275 2634 (from 21 October)

MANCHESTER SCIENCE FESTIVAL
A packed programme of events for adults and families; see www.manchestersciencefestival.com for full details.

Sat 22 Oct
Aran Tuing: Tortured Genius of the Computer Age
11.10am-1pm

Celebrating Trees 11am-4pm
The Human Body Trail 2-3.30pm
Gaia: The Cabaret 5.30-7pm

Wed 26 Oct, 2.30pm-3.30pm

Mummies in Medicine and the Imagination
Thur 27 Oct, 10am-5pm

Barometer Live: Weather and Climate Evening
Fri 28 Oct, 12-1.30pm and 3-4.30pm

Amoeba to Zebra
Sat 29 Oct

Science Spectacular 11am-3pm
Stitch a Solar System 11am-3pm
The Human Body Trail 2-3.30pm
Sun 30 Oct

Why Ginger Takes the Biscuit in Helping Save the Stag Beetle 12-2pm
Fire and Ice: What Makes Volcanoes Dangerous? 2-3pm

OTHER TALKS, TOURS AND WORKSHOPS FOR ADULTS

Wednesday 12 October, 12.30-1.15pm
Lunchtime Tours of the Archaeology Stores
Please book on museum@manchester.ac.uk, Free

Sat 22 Oct, 1-2pm, £5/£3

Manchester Literature Festival: The Devil’s Garden
Author Edward Dow and Johan Oldekoop (a UoM scientist) discuss theories of evolution, religion and anthropological research in the Amazon. Book on 0843 208 0500 or www.manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk

Every Tues and Thurs, 12-1pm, Free, 13+

Tours of the Vivarium
Monthly tours in Spanish and French. Book on ManchesterMuseum/Vivarium@gmail.com

Opening hours
Open: Tues-Sat 10am – 5pm
Sun-Mon (and Bank Holidays) 11am - 4pm

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Conference Sales Office on 64100 or email meeting@manchester.ac.uk
Dark Matters gives a chance to encounter phantoms in the mirror, captured spirits and playful shadows, as the Whitworth’s spaces become populated by works of darkness and wonder.

Dark Matters brings together the work of ten internationally acclaimed artists who engage with ideas of darkness and shadow through a range of technologies.

In an exhibition populated by half-seen spectres, visual riddles and distorted reflections, these artists explore themes of time, illusion and memory through a variety of media and machinery.

The exhibition includes a newly commissioned installation by Korean artist Ja-Young Ku, who engages with the ghostly remnants of his former actions through performance and projection.

The exhibition runs until 15 January 2012.

www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth

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News and story ideas
Internal Communications Office
tel 0161 275 2112
email uninews@manchester.ac.uk
online www.manchester.ac.uk/staffnet/news
Deadline 19 October 2011

Events Contact
Events and listings information
Philippa Adshead
tel 0161 275 2922
email uni_events@manchester.ac.uk
Deadline 19 October 2011

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