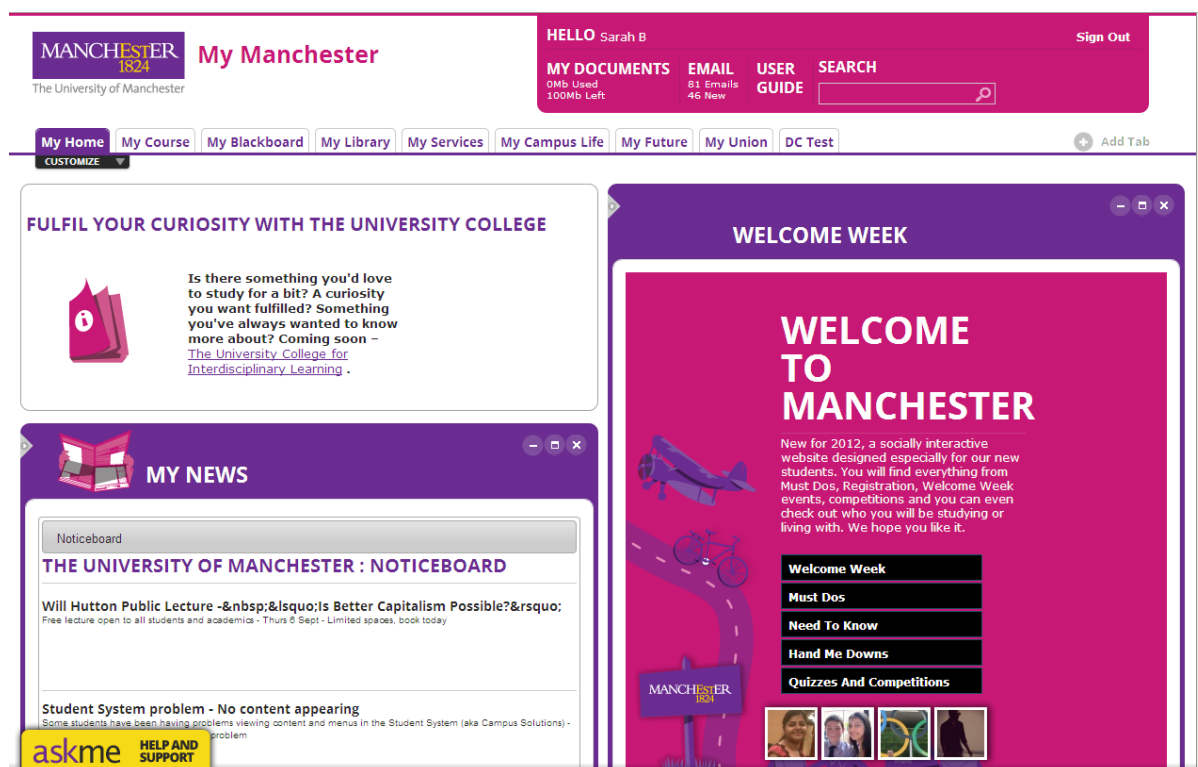# My Manchester Student Portal (September 2012)

Frequently Asked Questions

What is My Manchester?

The My Manchester student portal is the single gateway for current students to access key tools, services and information to support and enhance their student experience.

Why has it been developed?

My Manchester has been developed in direct response to student feedback on using the University's online systems and difficulties in finding what they need quickly and easily, from one central location.

It aims to enhance the student experience by improving access to the wealth of excellent information, tools and services available from different areas of the University, and also to facilitate better communication with our students.

Following the launch of My Manchester in September 2011, developed with help and assistance from students and the Students' Union, in-depth evaluation was carried out to establish what students thought about it.

The results revealed that students thought My Manchester was an improvement over the previous proliferation of different environments and applauded the concept of putting everything together in one place. However, they felt the presentation, organisation and navigation could be better, and this has been the focus of development for the start of the 2012/2013 academic year. They also suggested a number of additional services and tools, some of which have been incorporated.

What has happened to the old Student Portal, StudentNet pages, Blackboard and Crucial Guide Live pages?

- Students trying to log into the **Student Portal** at http://www.manchester.ac.uk/portal will be redirected automatically to My Manchester – many features of the old Student Portal have been rolled into My Manchester.

PLEASE NOTE: Staff should no longer refer to 'Portal' or 'Student Portal' in written material or verbally, as it will create confusion. 'My Manchester' or 'the My Manchester student portal' should be used instead.

- The main **StudentNet** page has been replaced by a 'Guest View' of My Manchester (http://my.manchester.ac.uk/guest), which allows open access to selected features including;

  - The Crucial Guide Live
  - Ask Me Help and Support resource (containing an A-Z index of student support information and an Ask A Question tool)
  - Student News and Announcements feeds (the latter is often referred to as Message of the Day, which is its old name).

If a student types the old StudentNet URL (www.manchester.ac.uk/studentnet), it now redirects to the My Manchester Guest View.

- At the current time, deep links within the 'old' **StudentNet** URL (eg those with a www.studentnet.manchester.ac.uk prefix address) will continue to work – and this includes direct links to the Crucial Guide Live (www.manchester.ac.uk/studentnet/crucial-guide.

  PLEASE NOTE: Many pages with a www.studentnet.manchester.ac.uk URL have had their titling and styling changed to that of My Manchester, in an attempt to wind down the use of the Studentnet brand by staff and students. This may lead to pages hosted on the www.studentnet.manchester.ac.uk URL to be referred to as being **'in My Manchester'.** If you are dealing with any queries about content 'in My Manchester', it's best to clarify whether people are referring to pages with a www.studentnet.manchester.ac.uk URL or whether they are referring to content they are accessing within the My Manchester portal environment (eg after logging in).

- It is planned to gradually phase out use of the Crucial Guide Live content on the StudentNet URL, but at the moment it's not possible to deep link to different areas of the Crucial Guide within My Manchester – an issue that needs resolving before the old Crucial Guide can be retired.

- There are a number of other student-facing sites still hosted on the www.studentnet.manchester.ac.uk URL (for example Occupational Health, Equality and Diversity) – at the moment access remains via direct URLs, but as with the Crucial Guide Live and now the IT Services student micro site, full integration within the My Manchester student portal infrastructure is planned for the future.

- Within My Manchester, **the Crucial Guide Live** can be found under the My Campus Life tab. It can also be seen on the **My Manchester Guest View** at http://my.manchester.ac.uk/guest and also by new students who see the **Applicant View** (eg when they are confirming attendance).

- **Blackboard** is accessible through the Blackboard Tab. The current design of Blackboard will be changing before the start of the 2012/2012 academic year, to reflect the new look and feel of My Manchester.

## What is being done to inform staff and students of the latest change?

Communications to inform staff and students of the change will be led by the Student Marketing and Communications Team in the DSE from the launch date onwards and during the start of the 2012/2013 academic year.

As a staff member, will I see the new version of My Manchester?

There have been **NO CHANGES** to the design and features of the staff version in the latest phase of development. So you will continue to see the old 'blue' version.

Will I see a My Blackboard tab, just like the students?

In the staff version of My Manchester, there is no My Blackboard tab. The My Courses portlet no longer exists in the student version of My Manchester, staff will continue to see a My Courses portlet in the Teaching and Research tab when they log into My Manchester (see below), listing courses under Current, Ended and Future.
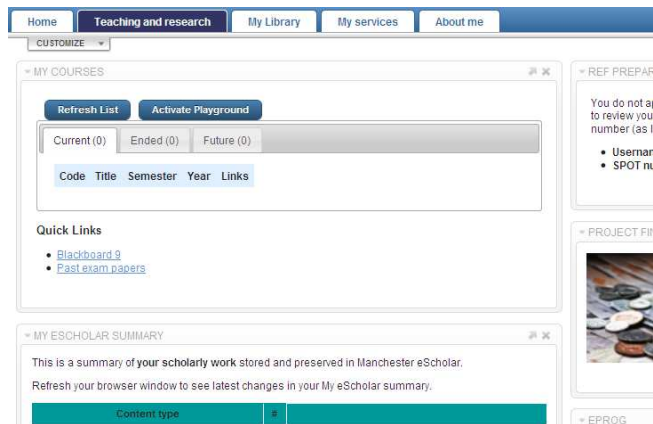
Some students are reporting still seeing the old blue version of My Manchester

As above, a decision has been taken that staff will not see My Manchester with the new design applied, and will instead see the 'old' blue design.

Sometimes students, such as PGRs, will be deemed as being 'staff' by the system, and therefore will see the old blue version with a mixture of staff and student Tabs and Portlets. On other occasions, people who are primarily students but are also staff (eg ambassadors) may see the new design with a mixture of student and staff Tabs.

It's worth noting that if students are seeing the old blue design (or indeed the new design), and cannot see the particular portlet they need, or one that you are trying to direct them to, they should try adding it via the Customize and Add Stuff option (they may need to search for it by name).

Where can students get further help with using My Manchester?

A clearly marked **User Guide** section has been introduced *(see below)* that links to further help and support with using My Manchester (eg guides and short videos).

However, development of My Manchester for the 2012/2013 academic year has been designed to make it more intuitive, so new students should find it easier and more straightforward to use. This assertion will be tested at regular intervals via student consultation, and there is a commitment to making My Manchester increasingly intuitive through phased development.

How do other relevant University microsites like Careers, Accommodation and Sport interface with My Manchester?

These still exist as standalone web sites, as they tend to serve a variety of audience and not just current students. However, access to them – or relevant parts – is provided from My Manchester.

- Careers – students can access live jobs and events feeds, blogs and social media entries from My Manchester, as well as search the Careers web site, using the **My Future Tab**.

- Accommodation – Students whose records show they are in Halls can see a menu of relevant links through to specific sections on the Accommodation in the My Services Tab. They also see a summary of their Accommodation and Hornet (halls internet) accounts, via the **My Services** Tab.

- Sport – a link through to the Sport and Fitness web site is provided from the **My Campus Life Tab.**

    NOTE: The ask me Help and Support section and the Crucial Guide Live also provide many links through to specific information contained on these microsites.

How does My Manchester incorporate School / Faculty online resources?

At present there is limited integration of specific School and Faculty systems (Manchester Medical School's MedLea system, MBS student intranet and the Faculty of Life Sciences Intranet for example). Students who are in these Schools / Faculties will see an additional portlet appearing in My Manchester, directing them through to these resources.

However, the Student Communications Project Steering Group is keen to investigate and pilot the introduction of further localised resources in future phases, especially as this is something students are asking for.

However, given the Blackboard Tab is a prominent feature of My Manchester (and research shows it is the main reason students log into My Manchester), the delivery of key information and communications at a programme and School level, via Blackboard, is well supported.

Why can't some portlets / tabs be turned off in My Manchester?

With the aim of My Manchester being to create a single location for current students to access key services, tools and information, it was felt it would undermine these ambitions to then allow key elements to be omitted by users, who might not realise the significance of some features.

If a key portlet like Registration or Graduation could be turned off, it could also create problems at a later time when issuing instruction to students about important processes. It was also felt it makes it easier for staff to support students using My Manchester by having a core set of standard tabs and portlets that cannot be removed.

Some customisation of layout is possible however, and additional tabs can be added, with the option to add any portlet into any Tab.

So, for example, if a student wants to add the My Exams portlet to their Home Tab, they can do so. However, existing tabs and portlets cannot be renamed, and portlets cannot be moved between Tabs.

<u>NOTE TO STAFF SUPPORTING STUDENTS:</u> If you are trying to support a student with a query, and they are unable to see a certain portlet, in order to perform a function, it may have been turned off or is not available as default for some reason.

They can add the portlet again by going to the Customize menu under the My Home tab (*see below*), performing a search for the portlet title and selecting 'Add Stuff'. The portlet will appear within the Tab they are currently using.
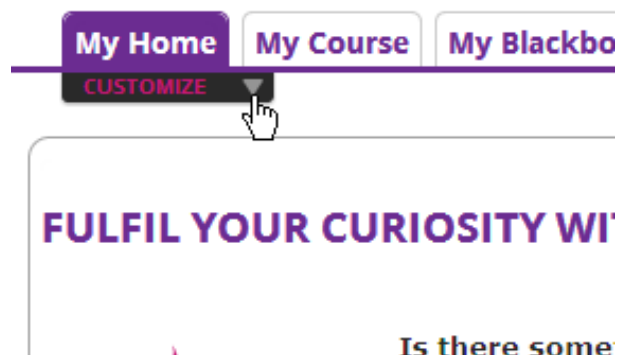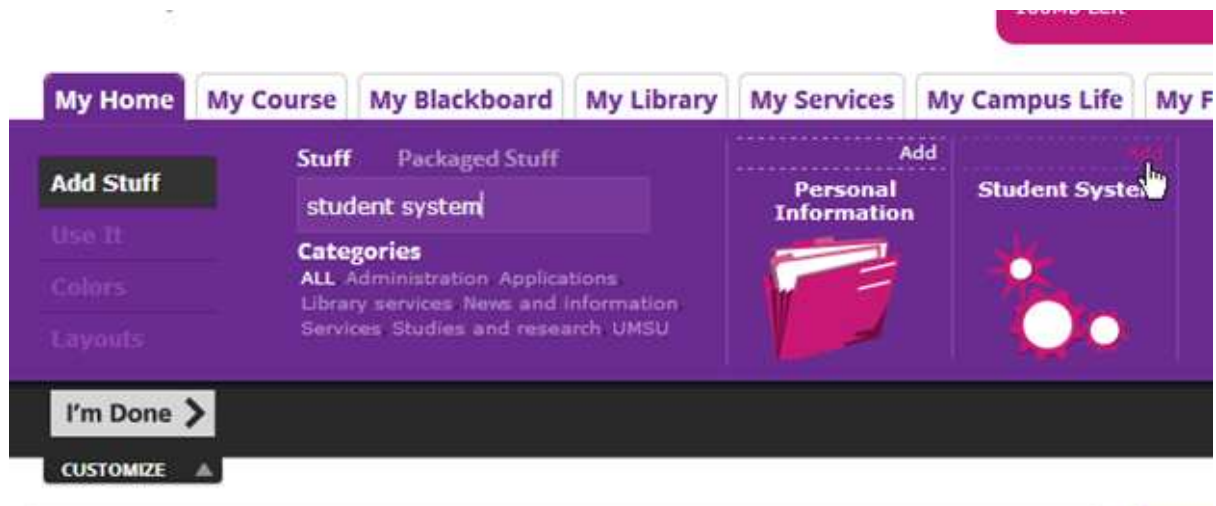
Can I have a dummy account that gives me an exact 'student view' of My Manchester?

Dummy log-ins are not currently available due to security issues, although IT Services are working on developing a solution to this. It's worth noting this has always been the case with the student portal, and is not an issue that has been created by My Manchester.

PLEASE NOTE: Logging into My Manchester with your staff ID will not give you the same view as students – *this guide is intended to help you understand what students are generally seeing.*

A **Guest View** of My Manchester, giving staff access to certain student support resources, such as Crucial Guide Live and the Ask Me Help and Support resources, can be accessed at http://my.manchester.ac.uk/guest - see below for more information on this.

I have a query or question that is not answered by this guide

If you are trying to resolve a technical issue with My Manchester, it should be reported to the IT Servicedesk as usual via http://www.itservices.manchester.ac.uk/contacts/

However, more general queries about the My Manchester environment, including questions about the content and structure, future plans and development, should be directed to the Student Communications Team at mymanchester@manchester.ac.uk.