

FEBRUARY 2015

1. CHALLENGES AHEAD IN 2015 AND BEYOND

Welcome to the first CoreMunicate of 2015. At the start of this New Year and halfway through our ten year plan, the University is assessing our progress towards achieving our ambitious Manchester 2020 vision – to be a truly world class university across research, teaching and learning, and social responsibility. We should recognise the good progress we have made – but we also need to reassess whether that progress is good enough in all areas to meet our ambitious agenda.

2014 saw us deliver a good financial position and a positive outcome in the Research Excellence Framework (REF2014). We also continued to work hard to improve our student satisfaction levels. While all of this is pleasing, we know that 2015 will present us with some major challenges. Some of these are in our direct control, while others like HEFCE funding, fee levels, pay, pensions and potential political change, are not.

Last week, around 150 PSS leaders came together at the PSS Conference to talk about the need for us to plan, and prepare for, the challenges ahead in the coming months. We asked ourselves some difficult questions and discussed the progress that we will have to make to realise our ambitions. We also addressed the need to be imaginative and innovative in finding new and better ways of doing things. This process must be pursued across the whole University, but I want the PSS to be at the forefront, leading on the changes we need to make to deliver the opportunity we have and bring us closer to our 2020 ambitions.

This month I want to hear your thoughts on the kind of things we need to stop doing, start doing differently, or introduce, to deliver the results which will lead us towards Manchester 2020. I would ask you to identify specific opportunities you have in your teams to contribute. You can send your feedback and ideas to: coremunicate@manchester.ac.uk and I will report back on your feedback in the next CoreMunicate.

2. 'WE GET IT' FEEDBACK

In December's CoreMunicate, we asked you to talk about bullying and harassment, to mark the launch of the University's 'We Get It' campaign. The Equality and Diversity team reports that many of you have provided feedback or have signed up for focus groups to explore this issue further. 12 new Harassment Advisors have been appointed and a new and easier way to report bullying and harassment online has been launched – see www.manchester.ac.uk/we-get-it. The first two months of the campaign have seen 122 people access the online tool, 12 members of staff have received support from Harassment Advisors and two Schools have signed up to the campaign. You can still get involved, or give your feedback, by contacting we-get-it@manchester.ac.uk

3. LAUNCH OF OUR RESEARCH BEACONS

At the end of January the University launched its five 'research beacons' – areas where we offer a unique concentration of high-quality research and are at the forefront of the search for solutions to global challenges. These are: industrial biotechnology; energy; cancer; advanced materials and addressing global inequalities. Over the coming months you'll be hearing a lot more about our research beacons as we promote them internally and externally to give a better focus to the way we talk about the things that make our University distinctive. You can find out more at:

www.manchester.ac.uk/research/beacons/

4. WHITWORTH ART GALLERY GETS READY TO OPEN ITS DOORS

The Whitworth Art Gallery re-opens on 14 February following a £15 million transformation – part of our Campus Masterplan - which sees the building really make the most of its location in Whitworth Park. There's an art garden, sculpture terrace and orchard garden, alongside a landscape gallery and café in the trees. The result is one of the most remarkable galleries in the North. There are lots of exciting (and free) events taking place during the opening weekend. To find out more visit: www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth

5. STAFF SURVEY 2015

The Staff Survey 2015 opens on 9 March and runs until 20 April - and we need you to take part to tell us what it's like to work here at our University. Back in 2013 we achieved a 71% response rate and we're looking to at least match that this year. The Staff Survey 2015 campaign starts in mid-February and will feature the ways in which your feedback from the 2013 survey have been put into action at a University and local level.

6. UNIVERSITY LAUNCHES 2015 APPRENTICESHIP CAMPAIGN

The University has launched its 2015 apprenticeship campaign to encourage managers to consider hiring apprentices when suitable vacancies arise. The University has set a target of having 100 apprentices in post by the end of 2015. We have already been recognised by the Skills Funding Agency and the National Apprenticeship Service as the only university in England to have committed to recruiting apprentices directly to its workforce on this scale. If you're interested in finding out more about our apprenticeship programme, contact Steve Grant on 275 2040 or email steven.e.grant@manchester.ac.uk

7. SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY GUIDELINES

A new set of Social Media Guidelines are available to help anyone who uses social media in a work capacity to make the most of their channels and protect both their own reputation and that of the University. Also, if you're setting up a new social media account, let the Division of Communications and Marketing know at:

socialmedia@manchester.ac.uk so they can add it to their growing Social Media directory. In addition, guidelines to

help you promote your social responsibility activities have just been launched and you can find these, as well as the Social Media Guidelines, at our brand microsite at www.brand.manchester.ac.uk/toolkit/

8. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AWARDS

The first Social Responsibility Making a Difference Awards have launched to celebrate the different types of social responsibility achievements of staff and students. Individuals or groups can enter themselves, or be nominated, and the closing date is 2 March. Find out more at: www.manchester.ac.uk/socialresponsibility

9. UNIVERSITY STORMS UP STONEWALL WORKPLACE EQUALITY INDEX

Stonewall is Britain's leading tool for employers to measure their efforts to tackle discrimination and create inclusive workplaces for lesbian, gay and bisexual employees. In 2014, the University not only entered the Stonewall Top 100 Employers, but went straight to 43rd place (out of 397 organisations) making us one of the top three universities in the UK. This remarkable achievement reflects the hard work of ALLOUT (the LGBT Staff Network Group), and would not have been achieved without the support of senior leaders, staff and students.

10. CHANGES TO UNILIFE DISTRIBUTION

From the February issue onwards, UniLife will no longer be sent to individual members of staff. Instead, boxes of UniLife will be sent to each University building for onward distribution. The change has been put in place to meet with our environmental sustainability aims and to cut down on the number of personalised copies being returned as 'addressee unknown'. Copies of UniLife will also be available at the Visitors Centre in University Place and at news stands located as follows: EATS, University Place; Potter's, Simon Building; The University of Manchester Library (Reception); Manchester Business School; The Manchester Museum; Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama; The Whitworth Art Gallery (re-opens on 14 February). Distribution to external stakeholders will continue as normal, but if you have any questions contact: uninews@manchester.ac.uk

Will Spinks

Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer