

JULY 2015

1. DISCUSSION POINT: STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The PSS Staff Development Framework Group is looking at what we can do to improve staff development and training provision for PSS staff. The Group is looking to define a set of core skills and other attributes that all PSS will need to acquire as they progress through operational, manager and leadership roles. These requirements will inform the future provision of staff development and training opportunities and will also be used by line managers to create a more systematic approach to staff development, particularly at induction and in PDRs.

The Group has so far identified nine core requirement categories: managing self and personal skills; delivering excellent service; finding innovative solutions; embracing change; using resources; providing direction; developing self and others; working with people; and achieving results. The next step is to identify under each category a range of skills and attributes that we want PSS staff to develop. For example, under the delivering excellent service category we may want managers to be skilled in understanding customer needs.

The project team is also developing a good practice guide, which will provide a resource to support training and development across the different stages of the employee lifecycle i.e. recruitment through to career progression.

To help inform their ongoing work, the Group is asking for your feedback on the following questions:

- 1) What do you think of the approach being taken? What other approaches might we take?
- 2) Do you think that the nine core requirement categories focus on the correct areas?
- 3) Do you have any examples of good practice or case studies that can be used in the good practice guide?
- 4) How do you think that development opportunities for PSS staff at the University could be improved?

Please send your feedback to:

- PSSstaffdevframework@manchester.ac.uk.

2. PSS CONFERENCE AND HEI SEMINAR

In June we hosted another very successful conference for managers from across the PSS. I began the conference with a presentation and Q&A session about our achievements over the past year and some of the challenges and operational priorities for the year ahead. There was also a series of workshops around some topical themes like the Staff Survey and how we can support colleagues through organisational change.

We also heard from Andy Westwood, our new Associate Vice-President for Public Affairs about the challenges and opportunities for the University presented by the election of the new Conservative Government and a moving and inspirational presentation from three people whose lives had been changed through their involvement in projects run by the University as part of its Social Responsibility/ Goal Three activities.

I repeated my own presentation about the PSS achievements over the past year and some of the challenges and operational priorities for the year ahead for a HEI seminar which I delivered to more than 100 colleagues a few days later. You can see a video of that presentation on StaffNet at:

- [WATCH: Video of Will Spinks' HEI Seminar](#)

3. LEMN SISSAY ELECTED AS CHANCELLOR

As you will no doubt have seen on StaffNet or in the Media, Lemn Sissay, MBE, the poet, broadcaster and writer from the North West, has been elected as our new Chancellor. The 150,000 electorate – comprising University staff, registered alumni and members of the General Assembly – chose the award-winning poet from a shortlist of three nominees, which also included Hallé Music Director Sir Mark Elder and former Cabinet minister and Labour peer Lord [Peter] Mandelson. Whilst I formally served as the Returning Officer for the election, most of the hard work was done by Deputy Secretary Martin Conway, who had contact with all three excellent candidates throughout the election.

Lemn will take up his new role on 1 August and an installation ceremony will take place in October. I would like to thank all of those colleagues who supported this important and high-profile election and also those colleagues who organised the brilliant thank you and farewell dinner held at the Whitworth Art Gallery in June for our outgoing Chancellor Mr Tom Bloxham MBE.

4. BENCHMARKING STUDY

As mentioned in the May CoreMunicate, the University has agreed to participate in a cost benchmarking exercise of its professional support services with a number of other Russell Group institutions. This is a strategically important piece of work for the University and will give us a clear view of how activities are resourced and deployed in the PSS in order to meet our Manchester 2020 ambitions. The Project is being led by Cubane, an Australian company with extensive experience in running similar projects, using a robust methodology which is tried, tested and trusted.

The first stage of the Project, now underway, involves all non-academic pay costs being allocated against an agreed Activity Framework, to enable comparison of our costs with similar activity in other institutions. This will be a large-scale undertaking with several hundred managers required to complete the Activity Survey over the summer period. These Survey Respondents are currently being identified and training sessions being arranged for later in July. There will be other forms of support available to help complete the task. The Project is being co-ordinated by Helen Barton, Director of Planning and Paul Oates, Change Management and Process Improvement team, is Project Manager.

This work will help us to ensure that we are prepared to meet current challenges and ready to face the future by making informed choices about investment and building capabilities to be competitive.

5. SENATE APPROVES REVIEW OF LIFE SCIENCES AND COGNATE DISCIPLINES

As you may have seen from Nancy's recent message, the meeting of Senate on Wednesday, 24 June 2015, endorsed the overall principles put forward in the Review of Life Sciences and cognate disciplines at the University.

The key recommendation, which received strong backing from Senate, is that the University should be reconstituted so that all academic activity is organised around three Faculties, moving different component parts of the current Faculty of Life Sciences into two other Faculties: the Faculty of Medical, Biological and Human Sciences and the Faculty of Science and Engineering (working titles). This is likely to require reconstitution and reorganisation of the current Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences, and expansion of two of the Schools in the current Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences. This will now be discussed by the University's Board of Governors at a meeting on 8 July, where final approval will be sought.

Meetings were held at the end of June for all staff in FLS and MHS and we will be seeking to engage more closely with PSS staff about the next steps when the decision of the Board of Governors is known.

6. IT SUPPORT CENTRE ONLINE

The new IT Support Centre online allows you to log a request, search the Knowledge Base or book a maintenance call at a time that's convenient for you. Bookable maintenance visits run from 9.30am through to 4pm each working day and IT teams now operate by campus area, with each team responsible for visiting groups of buildings located near to each other. A team of IT 'quick responders' will also be on standby to visit any urgent requests that may arise. You can also get in touch with the Support Centre by phone on 0161 306 5544 (or internal 65544) at any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A walk-in IT Support Centre for University staff is also due to open in August. Access the IT Support Centre online:

- [Support Centre online](#)

7. STDU ON THE MOVE

The Staff Training and Development Unit is moving to the 5th Floor Roscoe Building over the summer. From September any courses that would have normally been held in Humanities Bridgeford Street will now be held in Roscoe Building.

8. REQUESTS FOR STUDENT PERSONAL DATA

The University has a new standard procedure that defines how requests from third parties for student personal data should be handled to ensure that the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 are not breached. The new procedure will help you to identify the matters you should consider when deciding whether it is appropriate to share personal data, and how you should respond to requests. The document is available on StaffNet at:

- [Third Party Requests for Personal Data of Students \(Standing Operating Procedure\)](#)

For further information on handling data requests from third parties, please contact the Records Management Office on 0161 275 8111.

9. HR SERVICES ADOPTS NEW CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

HR Services has adopted a new customer relationship management system (CRM) to deal more efficiently and effectively with enquiries. The email for HR Services remains unchanged HRServices@manchester.ac.uk, but the CRM system will now automatically route enquiries directly to the relevant team by reference to keywords or phrases contained in the subject line of the email. Every new enquiry received will create a case in the CRM system and the requester will be provided with a case number. Any subsequent correspondence will be automatically associated to this case. The requester will also be notified when a case has been allocated to a member of the team and when the case has been resolved. The adoption of this new system by HR Services is the first phase of the University wide roll out of Microsoft Dynamics CRM. The Directorate for the Student Experience (DSE) and the Library will follow over the coming months.

10. WORKPLACE GIVING

The University has been granted a Payroll Giving Quality Mark Bronze Award thanks to the generosity of our staff. The award recognises employers and employees who are making a difference together through Workplace Giving. The Bronze Award is given to organisations where 1% of employees are participating in a payroll giving scheme. In the last ten months staff donors at the University have increased by over 200% and donations by nearly 120%. More than £9,800 was donated in May alone which puts our staff community's annual donations on target for £117,000 to their favourite causes.

More information on the Workplace Giving Scheme is available at:

- [Workplace Giving](#)

11. HAPPY HOLIDAYS

This is the final CoreMunicate until October. Can I take this opportunity to thank all of you for your efforts over the last academic year and hope that you find some time over the summer months to enjoy a relaxing holiday or break.

Will Spinks, Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer