



## Welcome to the New Academic Session

This is the first of, what I hope will become, [monthly bulletins](#) to all Staff in the School containing a digest of bite-size nuggets of information, communication and consultation affecting and/or of interest to the School and its members.

The format will no doubt evolve over time, but the intention is disseminate brief headline topics, with any key contacts and web-links (who/which can provide more information) should you need/wish to follow up. In this bulletin, items have been themed under the headings of: **General, Teaching & Learning, Research, Postgraduate Research, Social Responsibility, Staffing & Human Resources, Finances** and **Professional Support Services**.

*There are also a number of items for your TO DO LIST which requires your attention. Thank you.*

These [bulletins](#) will be emailed to staff and posted on the School [Staff Intranet](#), for future reference.

Please, also, take notice of [The President's Weekly Update](#) and [Humanities eNews](#), which will keep you informed about the general mood music around the University and Faculty.

Chris Orme, *Head of School, September 2016*

### General

Head of School: [Chris Orme](#)

1. Final [Strategic and Operational Plans](#) have been posted on the staff intranet together with a revised SWOT for the School. In particular, the Operational Plan describes our key objectives for the year and will inform the work of all our Committees during the year.
2. **Completion of Milestones on eProg**

This is part of the [standard supervisory role](#) and one which we are contracted to perform. It does not come under the list of those activities affected by the continuing UCU Action Short of Strike. Indeed, I understand that nearly all the incomplete milestones are explained by staff assuming this comes under Action Short of Strike.

I am very disappointed that there is an interpretation amongst some staff that completing these milestones is somehow not part of our job as supervisors. This is not only "problematic", in general, but could have very serious consequences where PGRs on Tier 4 visas are concerned. *Please expect me to follow this up.* If you need guidance, please contact: [Bernadette O'Connor](#).

3. **Forthcoming School Roles.** Jackie Carter has taken up the role of School Business Engagement Lead. The School will shortly be advertising the following roles: Internationalisation Lead, Employability Lead, TA Co-ordinator and BAEcon Programme Director.
4. **Heads of Discipline:** We will also soon be seeking to appoint new Heads of Discipline, in Philosophy and Social Statistics. Staff in each DA will be emailed details in the next few weeks. I would also like to “welcome” Graeme Kirkpatrick as the new Head of Sociology.
5. Details of all [School Committees](#), membership and dates of meetings, are posted on the Staff Intranet.
6. ***Estate and Humanities Bridgeford Street 2nd floor refurbishment.***  
This is proceeding and we are now at the design stage, which I we have just signed off. If we keep to the project plan, and budget, we hope that the Philosophy DA will be able to move from ALB in towards the end of Semester 2. The refurbishment allows for PhD space and a new School committee/seminar room which will be bookable, from the next academic session via the [School's Resources Office](#).
7. **Reminder:** The **Dean's Visit** will take place at 1pm, 12th October, in the ALB Boardroom.
8. **CoDE Support**  
The School, in agreement with the Faculty, University and ESRC, has been able to broker an agreement whereby the [Centre for the Dynamics of Ethnicity](#) can be supported through a six month gap in funding in order to be in a strong position to apply for a second phase of ESRC funding. The research of the centre is strategically important for the School and plays a large part in the [University's Research Beacon](#) of “Addressing Global Inequalities.”
9. The [Staff Handbook](#) has been overhauled this year, and I hope will find it a useful resource (please keep it close). In particular, I need to draw your attention to the following matters:
  - a. **Health & Safety** – All accidents/near misses, whether involving injury or not, must be reported to the University on [this form](#). You should now hopefully have an H&S notice on your inside office door. Please read this (and help the School improve its Staff Survey response on “how to report an accident”!). Contact: [Carla Liburd](#).
  - b. **Data Protection Training** - Most staff regularly handle personal data of staff, students, research participants and others. It is a School requirement that all staff complete the [on-line course](#)
  - c. **Attendance** - [Policy on attendance](#) stipulates that academic staff should be normally working at the University for a minimum of THREE days per week during teaching semesters Staff wishing to be temporarily absent from Manchester for more than 3 days during teaching semesters must seek permission in writing from their HoDA.
  - d. **Leave** – The University is extremely supportive in enabling staff to achieve a [good work life balance](#). This includes:
    - annual leave
    - helping staff to undertake roles in the community such as being a School Governor (public duties)
    - helping staff manage their caring responsibilities at home (family friendly) ways in which staff may apply to work flexibly or to take career breaks and sabbaticals (flexible working)
    - [Sickness Leave](#) – For absence of seven calendar days or less, a University Self Certification / Return to Work Form must be completed and submitted on the day of return to the manager or their nominee. After seven calendar days, the member of staff must obtain a statement of fitness to work (a ‘fit note’) from their GP covering any further periods of sickness in the same absence period.

10. As the use of **Twitter, Blogs** and other **Social Media** platforms become more prevalent, and the medium of choice for dissemination and communication, could I draw your attention to the University's Guidance and Policy on use of Social Media for [Staff](#) and [Students](#). It is also imperative that Staff know that they retain the support of the University under its [Academic Freedom](#) policy.

## Teaching and Learning

School Director: [Ken Clark](#)

### 1. NSS - summary, challenges & TEF

The [NSS 2016 results at School](#) level showed overall satisfaction (Q22) rising one percentage point to 84% - short of our target of 86%. The School aggregate figures mask considerable variation across DAs and programmes. At JACS3 level, the standard classification which is used to compare Universities in league tables, both Anthropology and Philosophy achieved an overall satisfaction score of 94%. This represents an improvement of 15 percentage points for Philosophy compared to last year which is a particularly impressive achievement. Both Sociology and Politics scored 87% overall satisfaction at JACS3 level and in both of these DAs particular degree programmes did even better with the BSocSc Sociology and Law with Politics achieving 91%. School-level programmes also did well with 100% overall satisfaction on the BASS Politics and Philosophy pathway and 91% for PPE. These achievements are the result of considerable effort, energy and creativity around the student experience on the part of academic and PSS colleagues.

***There remain, however, considerable challenges for the School.*** The NSS results for programmes particularly in the BAEcon involving Economics were poor. Economics' overall satisfaction JACS3 score of 79% was no better than last year and, over the seven years of NSS data now available, this has consistently been an area for concern. Levels of student satisfaction for Economics in the areas of teaching and learning and assessment and feedback were considerably lower than Russell Group competitors and student comments around teaching, the curriculum and assessment highlighted an unfavourable comparison with other parts of the School. We are working constructively and collegially with Faculty and the DA to address issues associated with the student experience in Economics, to devise an action plan and to spread good practice more widely around the School. This may involve an external review of the BAEcon and, possibly, the place of Economics and Business Studies teaching within it.

More generally, the government's plans for the imminent [Teaching Excellence Framework](#) (TEF) will only intensify the focus on teaching, learning and the student experience for all of us. Measures of employability, student satisfaction (particularly with the quality of teaching, assessment, feedback and support) and retention will be at the heart of a process which will have reputational and financial consequences for the University. While recognising the areas where work is needed, an outstanding student experience built on the quality of the social science scholarship we produce is not only achievable but no more than we and our students deserve.

### 2. Student Numbers (UGT, contact: [Amanda Grimshaw](#); PGT, contact: [Vicky Barnes](#))

At the time of recruitment overall recruitment of undergraduate (UGT) and taught postgraduate (PGT) students has gone well. At the time of writing, UGT registrations stand at about 685 Home/EU and 360 International, and PGT registrations at about 180 Home/EU, and 110 international. This slightly exceeds UGT international budget targets and, by a bigger margin, Home/EU PGT budget targets, and means that (if these numbers remain stable over

the forthcoming weeks) that our core UGT/PGT Tuition Fee income will be about £250k favourable to budget. This, I hope, will allow us resources to enhance PSS support (see below).

### 3. **Postgraduate Taught Open Days**

Our next open day for [postgraduate taught study](#) will take place on Wednesday, 23 November 2016. Could I also remind you about our Fast-Track to Postgraduate Study scheme? This is a scheme where we encourage our current undergraduates to consider postgraduate study in the School and we simplify the admissions process for them. All they need to do is [email](#) us with their name and ID number along with the PGT course they wish to be considered for.....and we simply do the rest (so they don't have to submit an on-line application). To further help promote this, we now have some purple fast-track bookmarks which you can give out to any undergraduate student you see in your capacity of Academic Advisor etc. Supplies of these were left on the 3rd and 4th floor reception desks and for Social Anthropology by the pigeon holes on the 2nd floor.

If you'd like more copies, please collect from the PG Admissions Office, 4th Floor, ALB.

## Research

School Director: [Brian Heaphy](#)

### 1. **Open Access, PURE, REF and Staff Profiles** (see also [Staff Handbook](#))

- It is essential that all staff familiarise themselves with the University policy/procedures on [Open Access](#) and deposit open access documents within 3 months of acceptance of publication (not publication date itself). [PURE](#) has now replaced e-Scholar.
- [Staff Profiles](#) are now also managed through PURE, and could all staff ensure that their [Profile](#) is up-to-date and [published](#). (You may also wish to access PURE [training](#).)
- You may have already seen the [Stern Review](#) of REF, published earlier in the summer. A summary of the recommendations are on p.36 of that [report](#). HoDAs and Directors of CMIST, SCI and MICRA have been asked to contribute to our response to the recommendations of the review.

### 2. **SOSS Small Research Support Grants and Impact Fund 2016**

The first call, for up to £1000, to support the submission of research grants and impact activities will be advertised in October. Applications can be made on the basis that spending from Personal Research Funds for the year ahead are fully accounted for and that support from Discipline Area funds have been sought.

### 3. **Recently secured notable Research Grant Award**

I am delighted to congratulate:

Penny Tinkler, Sociology, on her ESRC award: *"Transitions and Mobilities: Girls growing up in Britain 1954-76 and the implications for later-life experience and identity"*. Value: £531,633.

## Postgraduate Research

School Director: [Stuart Shields](#)

### 1. **ESDRS NWDTP and CDT bids**

I am delighted to report that we have been [successful](#) in our (joint) ESRC funded [NWDTP](#) and two [CDT](#) bids.

### 2. **PGR Review May 2017**

The Faculty of Humanities carries out periodic reviews of PGR provision in Schools. It's SoSS's turn in May 2017. The following *areas* should give you some idea of the content of the review: *Administrative and programme support; PGR Strategy; recruitment; Admissions requirements; Conversion activities; Student Satisfaction and Support; Feedback from PGRs and other*

*stakeholders; support for students with disabilities; allocation of supervisors; quality of supervision; Training for Supervisors; Progress Review, eProg and Completion rates.*

### 3. Allocation of PhD Studentships

With the addition of 10 new fully funded PhD studentships, the current School budget now allows for a total of some 32 competitive awards; including some specifically distributed to Economics. As we now have many more Studentships than we did just a few years ago, and the financial situation in the School has changed, we will be consulting (through the PGR Committee) on new arrangements for distributing some *or all* of our PhD Studentships.

### 4. PGR Open Days

Our next open day for [postgraduate research](#) will take place on Wednesday, 2 November 2016.

### 5. Please complete eProg milestones ([see above](#)).

## Social Responsibility

School Director, [Helen Beebee](#)

1. **Helen Beebee** is the School's new Director for Social Responsibility, and will be taking a keen interest in Equality & Diversity issues across the School, following up our ...
2. **Athena Swan, bronze award application**, has been discussed at SPRC and will feature at our School Away Day, next week, and DA Staff Meetings. The final submission is due in mid-November following University review. (Contact: [Claire Alexander](#)).
3. To help the School progress our Athena Swan Action Plan, and give more prominence to Equality & Diversity issues, we have instigated a new Equality & Diversity Committee.
4. Please make a note in your diaries for this year's [Arthur Lewis Public Lecture](#), on the [27th October](#).

## Staffing & Human Resources

HR Partner: [Jenny Knights](#)

1. **Jenny Knights** has returned from maternity leave to her role as SoSS HR partner. Welcome back Jenny, and thanks to Sarah Lindop for all her help, advice and support over the past year.
2. **New Staff**  
All new academic staff should ensure they have met their line manager and mentor, received the [Staff Handbook](#) and are fully aware of any probationary requirements and these have been detailed on a written letter. Please see your line manager if you are unsure about this.
3. **Recruitment Training**  
All academic staff involved in recruitment activities must undertake the appropriate [training](#). Please discuss with your line-manager/HoDA on accessing this course.

## Finances

School Head of Finance: [Suzanne Davies](#)

1. [Annual Research Support Allowance](#): as announced in my communication to staff last semester, this now stands at £2000 for eligible staff on Teaching & Research contracts, and £1000 for eligible staff on Teaching contracts.
2. **2015/16 Financial outturn summary and 16/17 Budget Summary**  
The School, again, showed a strong financial performance last year, ending with a £400k favourable budget contribution (0.8% of income). As previously communicated, the headline school budget for this year is:  
TOTAL INCOME: £48.7m, including:

Tuition Fees: £38m

HEFCE Income: £3.1m

Research Income: £5.4m

EXPENDITURE: £25m

Contribution: £23.7m

### 3. Expense Forms

Colleagues seeking reimbursement for expenses of any kind must complete an [on-line claim form](#), following [University Guidance and Policies](#):

- Like all employers, the University is obliged by law to follow the rules imposed by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). These include a requirement that all expenses payments are "wholly, necessarily and exclusively" for work purposes.
- If this is not the case, expenses may be paid only at the discretion of the University, and income tax and National Insurance Contributions (NIC's) must be deducted from the payment.
- Please submit original itemised receipts (debit or credit card receipts are not acceptable). Photocopies are not acceptable. If the receipts are in currencies other than UK sterling the claimant must list the expenditure clearly and append the claim form.
- Claims must be clear – unclear forms will be rejected. The University will not accept scanned or faxed forms.
- Claims must be submitted within 3 months of the expenditure.
- Staff should be aware that when the purchase of goods is reimbursed through expenses they become the legal property of the University. This applies irrespective of the source of funding used.
- Equipment such as IT, printers etc., should be acquired by contacting IT directly on 65544. It is against financial regulations to acquire such items and then seek reimbursement through an expenses claim.
- Please be aware that due to HMRC rules, the University will refund expenses for one small alcoholic beverage with a meal (staff entertaining – i.e. taking guests out for a meal).

### 4. Egencia

The University employs the travel management system "Egencia" which all staff should use for booking rail travel, flights and accommodation. If you book flights, rail travel and accommodation outside Egencia and then claim back on an expenses form, you will be required to provide a written explanation as to why you did not use Egencia.

- [Guidance, help](#) and [FAQs](#) are available for staff on the use of [Egencia Travel Management](#) system in order to organise their own flights, train journeys and hotel bookings.
- The Egencia system is just like using expedia.com and train bookings take you through to the trainline.com.
- Egencia have created a [mobile app](#) that self-bookers are able to use to book accommodation and track flight information.
- Egencia will do their best to price match if you see a journey/hotel cheaper on another website. You should contact their customer service team if this is the case. It can take up to 24 hours for them to get back to you so it is advisable to put the flight on hold in Egencia in the meantime. Note that they can only price match if the details elsewhere are literally 'like for like'. There is no charge for this service.
- Egencia do charge if you ask them to make a booking for you, rather than you doing it on-line, yourself, and the cost (around £30) is deducted from your allowance.

**1. Staffing & Structure**

Net Tuition fee income is up on Budget which we hope will allow us headroom to address enhanced PSS support following a review, with new posts. These were paused over the summer until the Faculty had reviewed student numbers, which now look positive. Additional or enhanced roles are as follows:

- Additional full-time reception post for the UG Office
- Additional Welfare Officer for UG
- Communications and Academic Engagement Officer
- Full-time reception post for the fourth floor ALB from January 2017

*Granada Centre Technician* – Bill Brown retired at the end of July and the role has been developed and enhanced to a coordinator post and is currently advertised to redeployees moving to an internal advert next week.

*Resources Administrator* – since Lucy Shanahan's departure in September, it has been decided to replace this post with a Resources Manager and to merge the Discipline Support, Conference Administration and School Office into one team which will be known as the ***School Resources Office***.

The DA administrators and receptionists will still remain in the same roles, so designated DAs/floors to support but there will be greater flexibility in terms of playing to strengths of the individuals.

- 2. Register of Interests-** All Colleagues who are grade 6 or above, with no exception, are required to complete a register of interests on-line annually even if it is a nil return. You will be prompted to do this by the Head of School Administration in the next couple of weeks.