

JULY 2018

TLSO Bulletin

The Bulletin of the University of Manchester's Teaching and Learning Support Office

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Staffing news

Fran Hooley and John Owen both left the Distance Learning team of the TLSO in June to take on new roles as Lecturers in Technology Enhanced Learning based in the School of Health Sciences in FBMH.

We recently welcomed Chara Vareli, Learning Technologist, to the Distance Learning team.

Kerry Jones, Teaching and Learning Adviser (Development), will be taking a year-long secondment from August to take on the role of Institute Manager in the Manchester Institute for Collaborative Research on Ageing, in the School of Social Sciences.

TLSO Website/policy and procedure changes

• **Updates to Regulation XVIII: Student Complaints Procedure**

In response to feedback from colleagues across the University, and as a result of the regular review of the University's procedure against the OIA Good Practice Framework, some minor amendments have been made to the Student Complaints Procedure, with the updated version to be implemented for the start of the new academic year.

The amendments relate to the information provided to students during the process of making a complaint, further information on the informal and review stage of the process, dealing with cases when a student makes an academic appeal and a complaint relating to similar issues, the requirement to provide evidence, complaints about accommodation, and the handling of group complaints.

The updated version will be published in September and will be placed on the Student Complaints Procedure webpage on the TLSO website:

<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/academic-appeals-complaints-and-misconduct/studentcomplaintsprocedure/>

TLSO Website/policy and procedure changes (continued)

- **Amendments to the University's Undergraduate Degree Regulations**

Following feedback from colleagues in Faculties and Schools, Senate has approved a number of minor amendments, for the purposes of improving clarity, to the University's Undergraduate Degree Regulations. The revised wording is detailed below and highlighted in bold and italics.

- Refusing assessment

The addition of the word 'engagement' in paragraph F22 as follows, to clarify that students whose engagement with their programme has been unsatisfactory, can be refused referred assessment:

*"If an Examination Board has documented evidence that, (a) a student's work, attendance **or engagement** has been unsatisfactory, and (b) the student has been formally warned of the unsatisfactory work, attendance **or engagement** but has not shown significant improvement acceptable to the Board, then the Board has the right to refuse referred assessment. See Regulation XX – Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of Students and the Policy on Recording and Monitoring Attendance (<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/student-support-development/recording-attendance/>)."*

Currently, the Regulations only permit Examination Boards to refuse referred assessment, rather than assessment, on the grounds of a student's work and attendance. A new paragraph will therefore be inserted in section D ('Assessment and Progression') to enable an Examination Board to refuse assessment (in addition to referred assessment) on these grounds.

"If an Examination Board has documented evidence that, (a) a student's work, attendance or engagement has been unsatisfactory, and (b) the student has been formally warned of the unsatisfactory work, attendance or engagement but has not shown significant improvement acceptable to the Board, then the Board has the right to refuse assessment. See Regulation XX – Work and Attendance of Students and the Policy on Recording and Monitoring Attendance (<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/student-support-development/recording-attendance/>)."

- Posthumous awards

Section M on Aegrotat Degrees will be updated to reference both 'Aegrotat' and 'posthumous degrees'; the latter are currently not referenced in the Degree Regulations:

Posthumous and Aegrotat Degrees

"An Undergraduate degree may be awarded in the event of the death of a candidate prior to the completion of their degree (posthumous degree). For more information about posthumous degrees and the options open to Examination Boards, please see: <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/teaching-and-learning/teaching/posthumous-awards/>.

***An Undergraduate degree may be awarded should the candidate be prevented from completing their degree due to the diagnosis of a terminal or debilitating illness (aegrotat degree).** The Examination Board may determine from evidence available to it that a candidate for an Honours degree who has been prevented by good cause from completing the final examination or assessment will be awarded a class of degree the Board judges to be suitable, as long as the candidate has gained over half the credits required for the award".*

TLSO Website/policy and procedure changes (continued)

- Considering classifications in the boundary zone

An amendment will be made to Appendix A: *Consideration of Bachelor Degree students within the boundary zone by mark distribution* regarding the criterion for increasing classifications in the boundary. This would clarify that units at level 5 and 6 can be used within the 2/3 credit calculation, to increase classification within the boundary, as follows:

“2/3 of the credits **taken in the awarding academic year** ~~at level 6~~ are equal to/ higher than the final award (for example if the student is in the boundary between a 2.1 and a first, 2/3 of the credits must be at 70% or higher to fulfil this criterion and award the student a first class degree). **The 2/3 credit may include credit at level 5 or 6.**”

- Rescinding Degrees

Following discussion at the Teaching and Learning Group (TLG) and Senate, amendments have been agreed Undergraduate Degree Regulations to enable the rescinding of degrees in specific circumstances. TLG have developed principles to support the process of rescinding degrees, which will be appended to the *Guidance on Examination Boards*. Postgraduate taught students are already able to request the rescinding of a PGCert or PGDip for a higher award but a reference to the new principles will be added to the Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations.

A new paragraph will be added to section J ('Final year of an undergraduate (including Integrated Masters) programme) as follows:

“Integrated Masters students may request that their final year of study be disregarded in order to receive a Bachelors qualification, subject to there being no penalty applied due to academic misconduct in the final year. Such applications must be made in writing to the Chair of the Examination Board within 20 working days of the conferment of the higher award. This should be done in accordance with the University's Principles on Rescinding (see Appendix to the Guidance on Examination Boards).”

- **New Principles on Rescinding Awards**

TLG have developed principles to support the process of rescinding of degrees in specific circumstances, which will be appended to the *Guidance on Exam Boards* (<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/assessment/reaching-decisions-from-assessment/exam-board-guidance/>) from September.



TLSO Website/policy and procedure changes (continued)

- **Amendments to the University's Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations**

Following feedback from colleagues in Faculties and Schools, Senate has approved a number of minor amendments, for the purposes of improving clarity, to the University's Undergraduate Degree Regulations. The revised wording is detailed below and highlighted in bold and italics.

- Refusing assessment

Paragraph F21 of the Regulations will be amended using the same wording as paragraph F22 of the Undergraduate Degree Regulations (see above), to clarify that students whose engagement with their programme has been unsatisfactory, can be refused referred assessment. A new paragraph will also be added section D ('Assessment and Credit Accumulation'), similar to the UG Degree Regulations, to enable an Examination Board to refuse assessment (in addition to referred assessment) on grounds of a student's work and attendance.

- Posthumous awards

Section I, Aegrotat Degrees, of the Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations will be amended to reference both 'Aegrotat' and 'posthumous degrees'.

- Use of 20 credit units

Paragraph E14 of the Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations will be amended to confirm that the maximum number of credits which can be compensated is up to 40 credits at Masters level (rather than up to 30 as the current wording states). This would enable the use of either 15 or 20 credit units at postgraduate taught level. The wording would therefore read as follows:

"PGT programmes can be compensated up to **40** credits for PG Diploma/Masters and **20** credits for a PG Certificate. Please note that the total number of credits allowable for referral for a PG Diploma/Masters is 60, of which **up to 40** can be compensated. For a PG Certificate, the total number of credits allowable for referral is 30 credits, of which **up to 20** can be compensated.

PLEASE NOTE: *The updated versions of both the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations, and the Guidance on Examination Boards (containing a new appendix on principles for rescinding awards) will be published in September, for implementation from the 2018/19 academic year.*

- **New Guidance on Moderation, Fairness and Consistency in Marking**

TLG has approved a new document entitled *Guidance on Moderation, Fairness and Consistency in Marking*, which is an institutional guidance document on moderation. This was based on examples of good practice across the institution, particularly a document produced by the Faculty of Humanities.

The document is now available at:

<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/assessment/practice-of-assessment/moderation/>

The Peer Support programme

- **Peer Support PASS Training and Open days**

In early June, Peer Support began its yearly PASS Leader Training period for 2018/19. Last year we had 823 PASS Leaders for 28 PASS schemes and each year that number rises. Over a two and a half week period, Peer Support delivered 15 PASS in Practice training sessions, which translates to around 90 hours of training.

This could not have been done without the help of wider colleges who helped us train over 500 students in this period. Peer Support would like to thank these volunteers for their contributions and the teams that have allowed these volunteers to support this busy but exciting training season.

Alongside this, we have had a huge success with our new blended learning approach, which sees student's complete part of their training through our newly designed blackboard pages. This ensures students are even more prepared for the role as a PASS Leader and are confident in delivering their weekly PASS sessions. Moving into September we hope to see 1700 students trained in either PASS or Peer Mentoring and ready to provide every first-year undergraduate student in 2018/19 some form of Peer Support at The University of Manchester. We have been blown away by the commitment, dedication and passion of students coming through training – so we have no doubt of the level of Peer Support successes for 2018/19.



Information from other areas of the University: Blackboard updates

- **Is your Blackboard course ready for Start of Year?**

Although September probably feels a long way off at the moment, we wanted to remind you about the annual process of activating and preparing your Blackboard course space (Bb course) for Start of Year. All Bb courses will be visible to students on Monday 10 September 2018. Guidance about accessing Blackboard and updating your course(s) is available on the Teaching and Learning Support Office website: Blackboard and SOY 2018/19 [<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/elearning-distance-learning/blackboard-and-soy-201819/>]. This page also includes information on activating courses for academic leads. For further information please contact your eLearning team: <http://www.itservices.manchester.ac.uk/help/elearning/>

Information from other areas of the University: Blackboard updates (cont)

- **Blackboard unavailable Thursday 19 July (20:00 BST) to Sunday 22 July 2018 (09:00 BST) for Annual Upgrade**

The following information is provided to inform staff members about this update.

a. Who is affected?

All staff and students.

b. What is happening?

The annual upgrade to our VLE (Blackboard) will be taking place in July. The upgrade will improve current functionality, and incorporate performance improvements and bug fixes.

In order for this work to be undertaken, Blackboard (including Turnitin and Grademark) will be unavailable to staff and students from Thursday 19 July (20:00 BST) until Sunday 22 July (09:00 BST). Blackboard (including Turnitin and Grademark) should also be considered to be at risk until 09:00 BST on Monday 23 July. Updated information will be provided on the Knowledge Base, after the downtime.

As part of this year's upgrade, we are introducing 2-factor authentication to the Blackboard login process for anyone who has a teaching or administrative role in Blackboard (around 9,300 people – mostly staff, but some postgrads and a small number of undergrads too). If you are affected you will be sent an email from IT Services (planned for Thursday 12 July) with information about what you need to do. Please note that the login changes do not apply to external examiners – they will not need to use 2-factor authentication to access Blackboard.

c. Why is it happening now?

The functionality and reliability of our VLE is a high priority for the University. In response to feedback from staff and students about the scheduled downtime for Blackboard upgrades, the Online Learning Strategy Group (OLSG) agreed to this timing in order to maximise the availability of the system to students. Your co-operation and efforts to accommodate this work are appreciated.

d. What does this mean for you?

You will not have access to Blackboard (including Turnitin and Grademark) from Thursday 19 July (20:00 BST) until Sunday 22 July (09:00 BST). Blackboard will be available for teaching from Monday 23 July 2018.

e. What do staff need to do?

Please remind your students of the downtime and ensure that any online activities you are asking students to do take into account this downtime. Please adjust any deadlines as appropriate.

We will be giving students the following advice: Plan your work to take into account the downtime and ensure you download any materials you will need during the period Blackboard is unavailable.

f. Follow-up

We will let you know about the status of the upgrade, and any new support documents developed to help you get the most out of the new features, via eUpdate and StaffNet.

Updates to existing documentation and documentation about new features, which you might wish to incorporate in your teaching for next year, will be available as soon as possible after the upgrade.

Contact for further information

Please contact your eLearning team via the IT Support Centre:

<http://www.itservices.manchester.ac.uk/help/elearning/>

Information from other areas of the University: Disability Advisory and Support Services (DASS)

New guidance documents from the Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS) regarding mitigating circumstances and automatic extensions have been published:

- [Guidance for dealing with Disability-related requests for Mitigation](#)
- [DASS-Related Automatic Extensions - staff guidance](#)
- [Student guidance on DASS-related Automatic Extensions](#)

Information from other areas of the University: Student Immigration Team

o **ATAS Clearance – Changes**

ATAS clearance is now required for all courses with the relevant JACS code, regardless of course length. ATAS is a security clearance check required for those studying certain postgraduate level courses (and integrated masters), based on the course JACS code. Previously ATAS clearance was only required if the duration of the course was for over 6 months, but this stipulation regarding the course length has now been removed.

Therefore an ATAS certificate will now be required for students applying for a Short-Term Student visa (where the course JACS code requires ATAS approval), for instance where the student may be applying to return to the UK for resits or a VIVA.

We will be updating our staff intranet pages in the near future with more information:

<http://www.saa.manchester.ac.uk/student-immigration/atas/>

Please also remember that a new ATAS certificate is required where a student on a relevant course extends their studies by longer than 3 months, or where there is a change of course or a substantial change to the course contents.

o **New student immigration website**

The Student Immigration Team has recently updated and improved its student microsite.

Therefore, any web links you have saved or that you use in any correspondence or documents may no longer be accessible. Please check any links and replace them with the new links. If you are unsure where to find specific information on the new microsite please contact the team and we can provide the links for you. Access to the new microsite main page is here:

<http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/immigration-and-visas/>



Information from other areas of the University: The Information Governance Office

A new registered student Privacy Notice has been published, in light of GDPR and data protection requirements. This notice provides information about the use of students' personal information while they are registered at the University.

The details can be found on the Regulations microsite at:

- <http://www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/data-collection-notice/>

The full document can be found by clicking on '[view the full notice](#)' on the right hand side of the screen, or directly from: <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=37237>.

A number of different Privacy Notices have also been published, for different sets of students/staff. The details can be found at:

- <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/igo/data-protection/privacy-notice/>

Periodic and Institutional Reviews

This month's updated review schedule for internal programmes and collaborative provision for the next six years is available below:

- [Periodic and institutional review schedule](#)

Contact

If you are aware of other staff members who would like to be added to the TLSO Bulletin mailing list to receive future editions of the Bulletin, please contact Miriam Graham (email m.graham@manchester.ac.uk).

If you are from a Collaborative Partner and you are having difficulties accessing any of the linked documents or web pages, please also contact Miriam Graham (m.graham@manchester.ac.uk).

This will be the last full Bulletin of the academic year. Have a lovely summer!

