



[Read the President's Weekly Update Here](#)

[Humanities eNews](#)

Welcome to this month's Staff Bulletin.
In this issue:

- ❖ **Head of School Update**
 - New Directors and Heads*
 - Budget*
 - GTA Use*
 - WAM*
 - PDR and PREP*
 - Joint School Board*
- ❖ **Teaching & Learning News**
 - SoSS Outstanding Academic Advisor Award*
 - Unit Surveys*
 - Basic Guide to Mitigating Circumstances*
 - Differential Attainment Project*
- ❖ **Research News**
 - REF/RRE*
 - PURE*
 - Awards*
 - Post-Brexit Funding*
 - Research Ethics Training*
- ❖ **Social Responsibility News:**
 - Faculty Social Responsibility in the Curriculum Scheme*
 - SoSS Diversity in the Curriculum Scheme*
 - Caring Costs Scheme (All Staff – academic, PS and TAs – and PGRs)*
- ❖ **Human Resources**
 - Men's Health Week*
- ❖ **In Other News ...**
 - Digital Campaigning and Electoral Democracy (DiCED)*
 - Big Data for Social Good*
 - Congratulations to Natalie Shlomo*
 - Social Statistics PhD Viva Successes*

Head of School Update

New Directors and Heads

This month we I can confirm the new School Directors and Heads of Departments who will take up their roles from 1st August:

Head of Sociology – Alice Bloch

Head of Law - Yen Kong Hodu

Head of Criminology – Juanjo Medina

Director of Teaching and Learning – Mario Pezzino

Director of PGR – Sophie Woodward

Director of Social Responsibility – Dimitris Papadimitriou

Director of External Relations (with additional responsibility for curriculum review, implementation and TEF for the Law Department only) – Claire McGourley

Senior Leadership Team staff member – Jo Deakin

Please see for other updates about the merger

<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/social-sciences/about/merger-law-soss/latest-updates/>

Budget

As you are aware the Augur report was made public this month, and depending on how its recommendations are taken up by Government it is likely to have a serious impact on the finances of University, Faculty and School. Because of this and other more immediate pressures we will have to carefully approach our spending next year to make sure it is kept within budget.

GTA Use

One cost that has risen over the past few years is linked to the employment of GTAs who are now being engaged on almost all modules in years 1 & 2, irrespective of their size. This is not in line with any School policy that I'm aware of. I will be discussing this at SLT, HoDS and SPRC and proposing a new policy to take effect from next academic year.

WAM

The Faculty is setting out revised principles on WAM, which will feed into our own WAM review within the School aimed at making WAM more transparent. Proposals will be shared with Departments for feedback early next academic year.

PDR and PREP

These should be moving ahead in each department/centre and I would encourage colleagues to take advantage of them in terms of seeking advice, development opportunities and in setting realistic aims for the work.

Joint School Board

You will have seen an email about the Joint School Board (SoSS & Law) that is being held on the 18th June, followed by a social event to which all are invited. To clarify, School Boards are open **all** members of staff within the School. They can raise issues of concern to staff, and make recommendations to the Head of School. Please try to attend these if you can.

Brian Heaphy, Head of School of Social Sciences

SoSS Outstanding Academic Advisor Award

The School of Social Sciences' Outstanding Academic Advisor Award recognises advisors who have had a significant impact on students' academic careers.

In the award's first year, from over 50 student nominations for 43 members of staff, **James Rhodes from the Sociology Department** has been selected as the winner. James' students noted how he goes "above and beyond" in his role, his understanding and sympathetic approach and his awareness and ability to address the challenges of those facing mental health issues. The very close runner up was James Lincoln from the Economics Department. Other student nominations describe how our advisors give honest, valuable advice; are always friendly and upbeat; and can be key factors in motivating students to go further with their studies. We are extremely proud of all our Academic Advisors, and hope that they continue to inspire and motivate our students.

Unit Surveys

Unit survey reports for second semester modules should be available via Blackboard. These can be a great way of learning about how our teaching landed with the students and can suggest ways to improve our teaching and content in the future. As noted before it is good practice to respond to the students indicating that their feedback has been received and read. If you are responsible for TAs on your module it is good practice to discuss their feedback with them to help them understand and contextualise it. Less positively, colleagues from elsewhere in the Faculty have reported that some students are using the Unit Surveys to make demeaning or derogatory comments about colleagues. The School is not aware that this is necessarily a problem in SoSS however if you have been distressed by anything you've read in the student comments it may be helpful to speak to your mentor, Departmental T&L Lead or in more serious cases your HoD or the SoSS T&L Director.

Basic Guide to Mitigating Circumstances

The Basic Guide to Mitigating Circumstances

(<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=23886>)

has been updated so that it is now an easy to follow one page 'factsheet' and its style is consistent with the other Basic Guides (on Academic Appeals and Complaints).

Information for students on mitigating circumstances, including a link to the Basic Guide can be found at:

<http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/study-support/mitigating-circumstances/>

Information for staff members can be found on the TLSO webpage on mitigating circumstances at:

<https://staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/assessment/reaching-decisions-from-assessment/mitigating-circumstances/>

Differential Attainment Project

The Differential Attainment Working Group presented its final report to TLG on 25 March 2019.

The Differential Attainment Project sought to identify explanatory factors for undergraduate student groups for whom degree attainment is out of line with expectation at the UoM.

These groups were targeted based on an in-depth analysis of graduation data from 2013/14, compared with other Russell Group (RG) institutions:

- Live-at-Home students (students living in their own or parental home)
- Students from a Black, Asian or other Minority Ethnic background (Home)
- International students (non-EU)
- Mature students (21 years or older on entry)

The project took two main approaches:

- Topic-based investigations into structures and policies (for example, Placement Year and Attainment or What can student Appeals tell us about the factors impacting undergraduate student attainment?)
- and
- Practical interventions in partnership with target Schools / Discipline Areas / Students' Union, (for example, MathSoc as a vehicle to promote Student Inclusion and Belonging, the Living at Home Students' Residential, or MACE: Academic Advising – a blended approach).

The project drew on support from Data Analysts, Learning Technologists, Graduate Interns, My Learning Essentials, Library staff, and other specialist consultants.

More: The full Report of the Differential Attainment Project, as well as Pilot Project Overview and Reports, can be found on the DAP webpages:

<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/teaching-excellence/teaching-research/differential-attainment/pilot-projects/>

A Resources Page is also in development:

<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/teaching-excellence/teaching-research/differential-attainment/resources/>

RESEARCH NEWS

School Director, Claire Alexander

REF/RRE

This year's round of the RRE is now complete. Many thanks to all colleagues who were involved in the reviewing process, and UoA leads for co-ordinating the task. Results will be available to individuals through PURE in early June.

PURE

A reminder to all colleagues that they must have a 'live' and updated PURE profile. This will assist with preparations for the REF Environment statement, and also links to your external profile. Anyone needing assistance with this can contact Gillian Whitworth (Gillian.whitworth@manchester.ac.uk)

Awards

Congratulations to:

Dave Richards (Politics), for his new Nuffield Award for a project on 'Public expenditure planning and control in complex times'

Juan Del Nido (Social Anthropology), who has been awarded an ESRC postdoctoral fellowship for 'Uber, Algorithms and Digital Economic Transformation: A View from The Global South'

Luke De Noronha (Sociology) who has been awarded a Simon Research Fellowship for his work on deportation, starting in October 2019.

Pete Wade (Social Anthropology) who has been awarded an AHRC grant for his 'Cultures of Anti-Racism in Latin America' project.

Nuno Palma and Xiaobing Wang (Economics) who have been awarded Hallsworth Conference Funding for a conference on 'Understanding State Capacity' in November 2019.

Post –Brexit Funding

Any colleagues interested in the funding landscape for EU funding after Brexit are invited to an event on 'Brexit Preparedness: Continuity of UK Involvement in Horizon 2020 and Beyond' with Branwen Hide, from the UK Research Office (UKRO) in Brussels. The event takes place on Wednesday 12th June, Roscoe Lecture Theatre B, 2:30pm – 5:00pm.

All members of University staff are invited to [register for this event](#).

Any questions please email Liz.Fay@manchester.ac.uk

Research Ethics Training

The University is implementing mandatory research integrity training for all staff who undertake research to take a 1-hour concise course by July 31st 2019.

Please can you undertake this online course
<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/rbe/ethics-integrity/research-integrity/>

Guidance on how to access and complete the course can be found in the attached [Staff guide for the Research Integrity course](#)

If you have not completed the course by July 31st 2019 you will not be able to apply for research funding or supervise PhD students until you have completed the training.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Helen Beebee

Faculty Social Responsibility in the Curriculum Scheme

Congratulations to Andreja Zevnik (Politics) for gaining funding from this scheme for her project, which will be a part of her 'Politics of Obscenity' course unit. The project explores the impact of racial/colonial histories. In particular it focuses on how legacies of slavery and colonialism impact everyday race relations in the UK and how these legacies impact the way in which Black British communities organise politically around anti-racist projects. The students will research primary material and prepare group projects and posters on the two theme which will be presented/discussed in both public and in-class settings.

And two reminders of ongoing SoSS schemes. There is no deadline for either scheme.

SoSS Diversity in the Curriculum Scheme

A reminder about this scheme, which pays for up to 6 hours (or more if you can justify it!) of TA time to do some work towards enhancing the diversity of the curriculum of a course unit you convene (or are planning to convene). See the Diversity in the Curriculum page on Staffnet (<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/social-sciences/policies-guidance/equality-and-diversity/diversity-curriculum-scheme/>) for further information and some examples of ways in which SoSS staff have used the scheme so far.

Caring Costs Scheme (All Staff – academic, PS and TAs – and PGRs)

And finally, a reminder about the existence of the SoSS Caring Costs Scheme: <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/social-sciences/policies-guidance/policies-and-procedures/caring-costs-scheme/>. All SoSS staff (both academic and PSS), TAs and PGR students are invited to apply for money from this scheme (or, if applicable, use your own Research Support Allowance or Career Development Allowance) to subsidise childcare or other caregiving, up to £150, when an overnight stay is required for attendance at a conference or training event (or similar).

HUMAN RESOURCES

HR Partner, Jenny Knights

Men's Health Week

Week commencing 10th June is Men's Health Week. We will be providing a range of opportunities to think and learn about important wellbeing issues, as well as the chance to find out more about your own health through some short free health checks. We have seminars on energy, sleep and prostate cancer, as well as a range of daily blog content on our [wellbeing blog](#). Attendees to the seminars will also receive a free men's health booklet.

You can find details on all of the week's activities, book a free health check and [register your attendance for seminars here](#).

IN OTHER NEWS ...

Digital Campaigning and Electoral Democracy (DiCED)

Congratulations to Rachel Gibson for being awarded an European Commission 5 year ERC Advanced Investigator Award. The project title is Digital Campaigning and Electoral Democracy (DiCED)

[https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/en/prizes/digital-campaigning-and-electoral-democracy--major-project-to-investigate-the-impact-of-digital-campaigning-on-democracy\(09c2dfbe-df4f-457b-bea8-592a80d8d446\).html](https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/en/prizes/digital-campaigning-and-electoral-democracy--major-project-to-investigate-the-impact-of-digital-campaigning-on-democracy(09c2dfbe-df4f-457b-bea8-592a80d8d446).html)

This project will examine the impact of digital technologies on electoral campaigning and voter behaviour in five countries. Specifically it will investigate claims that democracies are entering a new era of 'data-driven' political campaigning that is profoundly changing how campaigns are run, who runs them, and their effects on individual citizens and the wider

health of the representative democracy. In doing so it will seek to advance current approaches to studying campaigns and their effects by combining established social science methods with new techniques drawn from data science.

Big Data for Social Good

Jackie Carter and Vanessa Higgins co-organised a prestigious 2 day event in Sao Paolo which was reported in the national Brazilian newspaper.

<https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/empreendedorsocial/2019/05/iniciativa-global-discute-como-big-data-pode-ajudar-o-bem-comum-no-brasil.shtml>

The event on 'Big Data for Social Good' has resulted in a partnership with three Latin American countries, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico. The aim is now to apply for GCRF funds. It is related to our Q-Step Centre in support of data literacy skills.

Congratulations to Natalie Shlomo

Professor Natalie Shlomo gave the invited President's address at the Washington DC Statistical Society on May 1st, 2019 on the topic of Statistical Disclosure Limitation and Differential Privacy.

She was also invited by the ESRC to undertake research on Theoretical Sampling Design Options for a New Birth Cohort in the UK, as a grant of £50k initially.

Social Statistics PhD Viva Successes

Some recent Social Statistics PhD viva successes include:

- Dr. Rihab Dahab.
Title: Investigating Patterns, Trends and Determinants of Malnourishment in a Period of Armed Conflict: A Study of The Sudan
- Dr. Alex Albert (ESRC CASE with the Mass Observation Archive and placement with UNESCO)
Joint PhD with Lancaster.
Title: Citizen Social Science: A Critical Investigation
- Dr. Dan Silver (ESRC CASE with Save the Children / Politics Dept UOM)
Title: Policy Evaluation and Social Transformation

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[Staff Bulletins](#)

