

School of Social Sciences Staff Bulletin January 2020



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Welcome to this month's Staff Bulletin.
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Head of School Update

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the second semester.

It seems like a long time ago now, but I hope you had a good Christmas break and returned with renewed energy.

As you know the University has now launched the vision and strategic plan for Our Future, which will inform our activities over the coming years. This emerged from the ideas that were submitted by staff, students and other stakeholders last year. Central to Our Future is a focus on our people and our values. In line with this we are still working on addressing the issues of concern that were flagged up by last year's staff survey, with the aim of improving staff satisfaction. A working group has been set up to identify and advise on implementing measures for this.

Students are also 'our people', and as you are aware academic and professional service staff are working hard and improving student satisfaction across the School. With the NSS now open for student feedback it is important that we encourage students to complete early on so that we can get a good sense of what is working and what could be improved in terms of changes we have made.

As you will see in the sections below, we continue to have successes in research, awards, social responsibility and in publicising the work we do. Also, in teaching, learning and student support it is clear that the majority of students appreciate the efforts we make to enhance their experience.

While many colleagues are supporting or participating in ongoing industrial action, the respectful way in which this has been carried out and responded to within the School is testament to colleagues' professionalism.

So, while there continue to be challenges ahead – not least the introduction of SEP (Student Experience Project), and in broader terms the implications of developments such as Brexit and a new Government, there is much to be positive about as well.

I hope you enjoy your work this semester.

Brian Heaphy, Head of School of Social Sciences

National Student Survey (NSS) 2020



The National Student Survey (NSS) 2020 launched at the University on the 27th of January. This is a survey of final year undergraduates in England, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. Early online completion would be desirable so, please, I would like to invite you to make sure our students are aware of the survey and encourage them to complete it online at www.thestudentsurvey.com before 30th April 2020.

Below are some of the University and School activities that are going to take place over the next couple of months.

University Incentives

As with previous years, the University is offering two incentives.

1. For each response the University will donate £1 split between the following four charities:
 - [LGBT Foundation](#)
 - [IntoUniversity](#)
 - [Mustard Tree](#)
 - [Partisan](#)
2. The University is also running a prize draw scheme to win one of ten £400 Amazon vouchers.

School Level Initiatives

The School is undertaking the following engagement activities:

1. SoSS Director of Teaching and Learning or Departmental UG Directors to talk to selected 3rd year UG lecture groups.
2. School administrators to contact student societies to encourage their members to complete the NSS.
3. Text message to be sent to all 3rd years after Programme Director emails have been sent (w/c 10th Feb)
4. School student reps to be asked to encourage their peers to complete the survey
5. Email signatures.

Promotional advice and materials are also available at <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/student-engagement/student-surveys/nss/toolkit/promoting/>

Centre of Innovation in Pedagogy

The purpose of the Centre of Innovation in Pedagogy (CIP), directed by Dr Paul Middleditch, is the enhancement of the quality of teaching and learning in SoSS. The activities of the Centre are based on a close collaboration between academics, students and eLearning technologists.



Centre for Innovation in Pedagogy

Home People Workshops Videos Research and Activities Professional Development Scholarship papers in SoSS

[The CIP's website](#) has been expanded and it provides two new tabs: "Professional Development" and "Scholarship Papers in SoSS".

"Professional Development" provides information on professional accreditation, scholarship literature, conferences/workshops.

"Scholarship Papers in SoSS" provides a showcase of the pedagogical research pursued in SoSS. I am in particular very keen to have in place a Working/Discussion Paper Series.

We plan to have soon an additional tab for resources specific to SoSS TAs.

The website, by its nature, is a continuous work in progress and it is meant to offer support to all colleagues in SoSS involved in teaching and learning. Please, get in touch with me (mario.pezzino@manchester.ac.uk) if you have suggestions or would like your scholarship research to appear on the website.

RESEARCH NEWS

School Director, Claire Alexander

Awards

Congratulations to:

- Tine Buffel (Sociology/MICRA) 'Urbanisation and Population Ageing: An interdisciplinary approach to understanding "Ageing in Place"', Leverhulme Research Leadership
- Mark Elliott (Social Statistics/CMI) 'Anonymization and Data Provenance', Alan Turing Sponsored Pilot Project
- Maria Sobolewska (Politics/CoDE) 'Ethnic Minority Voters in 2019: Brexitland or business as usual' ESRC
- Nan Zhang (Social Statistics) 'Socio-cultural participation and wellbeing of older people in China and UK', MICRA Seedcorn Funding

SoSS Small Grants

The second round of the SoSS small grants competition closed on 16th January. Congratulations to the following:

- Martyn Andrews (Economics)
- Elisa Berlotti (Sociology)
- Jamie Hodgson (Sociology)

- Andrew Irving (Social Anthropology)
- Hanwei Li (Manchester China Institute)
- Sherilyn McGregor (Politics)
- Chris Phillipson (Sociology/MICRA)/Patty Doran (CMI)
- Carlo Reggiani (Economics)
- Reka Solymosi (Criminology)
- Paul Tobin (Politics)
- Luke Yates (Sociology)

Simon and Hallsworth Fellowships

We received 122 applications to this postdoctoral scheme this year – 50 Hallsworth, 57 Simon and 15 Chinese Political Economy. The School will be shortlisting the candidates for the Faculty competition at the end of January. Many thanks to all colleagues who are involved in this process.

REF Progress

We are now in the final run-up to REF and things are moving quickly and smoothly. The latest round of environment statements and impact cases are submitted to Faculty at the end of January. Many thanks to all of the UoA teams who have been involved in this work, and to Gillian Whitworth and Clare Canning for their ongoing support.

Thanks too to our impact case study authors, for their work in pulling our impact case portfolio together. The range of work under consideration is really excellent and highlights the quality of work across the School.

RRE: All RRE/REF eligible staff will by now have received an email from Colette Fagan, Vice President for Research, inviting them to participate in the RRE. The deadline for proposing new outputs for review is **31st January 2020**. **This is particularly important for all new REF eligible staff.**

For new staff there is guidance on how to [upload their outputs to PURE](#) and [how to propose them for review](#). Please contact gillian.whitworth@manchester.ac.uk if you have any questions about the process.

Please also update your activities and impacts at the same time.

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH

School Director, Sophie Woodward

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Alexus Davis** a 2nd year PhD student in Sociology has had a book of poetry published called '**St John's Wort**'; she is using poetic methods in her PhD so this is both a personal individual success as well as showing the diverse ways SoSS PhD students engage with methods.

<https://www.animalheartpress.net/p/purchase-st-johns-wort-by-alexus-erin.html>

An Introduction to Higher Education – Resource for new starters

There is a new online learning course available for new starters: An Introduction to Higher Education. It is suitable for anyone who is new to HE, or HE in the UK. The course provides context on the history of the sector, current and future challenges and issues such as university governance and structures.

The course can be accessed [here](#)

Stress at Work Support Group

This is a newly formed group which will launch in February 2020 and is aimed at any member of staff at the University who is experiencing stress.

The group is based on a model of peer support and will be run by a regular facilitator who has experience of participating in groups and has themselves had relevant personal experience. The running of the group is supported by the University Counselling service and routes for individual support will be highlighted when deemed appropriate.

If you would like to be added to the confidential mailing list, please contact equalityanddiversity@manchester.ac.uk

IN OTHER NEWS ...

Guardian University Awards

With the Guardian University Awards around the corner, the paper caught up with some of the [winners of 2019](#), including the University's **Prof Claire Alexander**. Clarie won an award for her work on presenting the stories of migrants who have shaped Britain.

External Relations News

- **Claire McGourlay** (Director of External Relations) was on a Keynote panel 'Rethinking Collaboration and Innovation' at the Rethinking the Business of Law conference at the Hilton Deansgate 28th January -this is a brand new event for law firm leaders, created by Manchester Law Society.
- **Claire McGourlay** will be in one of the episode of *The Humans* on NHK Japan, in late February (date to be confirmed), called blind injustice that focuses on Innocence Project work.
- In January Law with Politics student **Gabriella Hartfield**, Criminology student **Alexandra Meek** and recent LLB graduate **Cian Hickey**, who now works in our Justice Hub, featured in a jury on a BBC series presented by two Manchester graduates, investigating how Britain's courts are handling our law and order crisis. In *Crime – Are We Tough Enough?*, Chris Daw QC and solicitor Ayesha Nayyar spend time with people working in the criminal justice system as well as those affected by it. You can catch up on the series on [BBC iPlayer](#)."

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