

School of Social Sciences

Staff Bulletin

September 2020



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[Humanities eNews](#)

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

Dear Colleagues

I hope you are feeling energised by the prospect of inspiring our new and returning students. They are very enthusiastic, and seem to be very ready to engage with us.

Of course, this year we are facing new challenges in how we teach and engage with students. While we have had some experience of dealing with some of those challenges last semester, we are much better prepared for them this semester through the blended approach we are offering. That is not to undermine the risks that are still associated with COVID 19, but through our mix of online and socially distanced face-to-face teaching we are in as safe a teaching and learning environment as is possible in light of the commitments we have made to students.

Please make sure you have read the various documents that have been circulated by myself, Mario, Alison and Heads of department about returning to and working on campus, as well as any health and safety or COVID specific information. If you are unsure about the implications of what you have read then please discuss it with your line manager.

As you may know, or will see in the sections below, we can be cautiously optimistic about the coming year. First, the School is likely to meet, if not exceed, both our undergraduate and postgraduate recruitment targets. Second, we have recently had some notable research grant and Postdoctoral Researcher application successes, while our preparations for the REF and entering their final stages. Third, colleagues continue to publish top quality publications and to be awarded Fellowships and Senior Fellowships of the Higher Education Academy. Additionally, we are continuing to make good headway with social responsibility activities and with addressing equality and diversity.

The success we have had and will achieve in these areas is, as always, due to the tremendous effort of academic and PS staff. So, thank you all for making the School the exciting and collaborative working environment that it is.

Last academic year and this year (so far) I have found our School Open Meetings to be informative and useful in addressing the concerns of colleagues. Unforeseen and unplanned events will no doubt occur, but I know we will continue to work in collegiate way to address them and solve any problems.

Brian Heapby, Head of School of Social Sciences

I would like to start the Teaching and Learning section of our bulletin thanking all colleagues (PS and academic) involved with recruitment and, more recently, with course unit selection and welcome/induction weeks. There has been a lot of planning, online engagement with students and filming, so much filming!

We are getting ready to start our flexible/blended teaching for semester 1. I am really impressed with the way departments, in spite of many uncertainties, have discussed and considered various forms of delivery of teaching in this new environment. The circumstances in which we find ourselves operating have demanded significant investments in time (spent in training, learning the use of new pieces of software and re-designing our modules) and resources (e.g software and equipment). I really hope that these efforts will contribute to the quality of our teaching in the years to come. Also many thanks to the colleagues who have contributed during the summer to the [teaching workshops](#) hosted by the Centre of Innovation in Pedagogy.

In spite of the exceptional circumstances, 2019/20 has brought great news to the School in terms of T&L. Prof. Jackie Carter (Social Statistics) has been named [National Teaching Fellow \(NTF\)](#) for her contribution in creating the [Q-step programme](#). This is a very prestigious recognition. The Advance HE scheme celebrates and recognises individuals who have made an exceptional impact on student outcomes and the teaching profession in higher education. Some of our students have also achieved national recognition. Indeed, two out of three of the winners of the [UK Data Service Dissertation Award 2020](#) are Manchester students (one BScEcon and one BASS).

Unit Surveys Student Experience Action Plans (SEAPs)

Every year Jo Kaiserman (Head of T&L) and I meet in September/October with programme directors and departmental T&L leads to discuss Student Experience Action Plans (SEAPs). This is a very helpful exercise to discuss local challenges and objectives, performance (e.g. NSS/PTES) and, at the same time, form a School plan.

Surveys

It has been decided that an early/mid semester survey will be released among students in semester 1. A working group will be working on the questionnaire and I will keep T&L leads in the department aware of any development.

Academic Advising

This year, more than ever, academic advising will play a key role for the experience of our students. Due to the lockdown, incoming year 1 students may have had a reduced learning experience at the end of college; due to the no-disadvantage policy that we have implemented in semester 2 last year, returning year 2 students had only formative assessment last year in semester 2, and the grades of year 3 students may have been influenced by the baseline mark. At School level, we shall provide advisors with data (e.g. the grades of formative assessment and the grades obtained by students before the baseline mark was implemented) and support.

Also, please note that guidance can be found in the [Academic Advising Toolkit](#) (see specifically [Advising Online](#)).

Also, notice that a Yammer Group, the [Academic Advisors' Support Network](#) has been set up as a forum to share practice about engaging students and supporting students' development.

RESEARCH NEWS

School Director, Claire Alexander

First, I want to thank Pat Gorham, who left the School's Research Office in August and wish her all good things for her retirement. Pat did a great job in building our exceptionally talented RSO team, and in supporting all of us through the turmoil of the past few months. Thanks to Pat and her team, we continue to see strong applications for research funding, and some major awards that have been granted, or are in the pipeline. Thanks too to Neil, Becky and Damaris, who have all worked incredibly hard to support colleagues over the past 6 months.

I would also like to welcome Pat's replacement, Paula Dalzell, who comes to us from SEED, and has already proved invaluable in supporting some very short turnaround times for applications.

REF Preparations

REF preparations have been ongoing over the summer, and thanks are due to the UoA teams and to Gillian and Clare who have been supporting colleagues in this work. We have a number of upcoming deadlines for Environment Statements, Impact Case Study drafts, and output profiling. Thanks to everyone helping out with this work, and any reviewing that will be coming up over the next few months. While we think/hope the bulk of the work is now behind us, there are likely to be requests coming your way for information or assistance with reviewing, and we would be grateful for your support in these crucial final stages.

On which note, can I please remind people to upload any new publications on PURE, and nominate any you think are 3* or above for RRE. Please also update your PURE profiles.

Awards

Congratulations to the following people who have received grant awards in recent weeks: Bridget Byrne (PI), James Nazroo, Claire Alexander, Ken Clarke, Remi Joseph-Salisbury, Dharmi Kapadia, Natalie Shlomo, Meghan Tinsley, Gary Younge (CoDE) for their recent ESRC Award 'Exploring Racial and Ethnic Inequality in a Time of Crisis'.

Christian Schemmel (Politics) ISRF Political Economy Research Fellowship '*Making all Work Pay, Just Wage Regulation*'

Madeleine Reeves (Social Anthropology) Wellcome Trust Investigator Award '*Addressing infertility in emergent reproductive markets: an anthropology of cross-border reproductive care in contemporary central Asia*'

Sebastien Bachelet (Social Anthropology) ESRC New Investigator Grant '*Acts/Crimes of solidarity: an ethnographic study of illegalisation and criminalisation amongst pro-migration activists and other citizens*',

Peter Wade, ESRC Standard Grant (with SALC) *'Comics and Race in Latin America'*

Catherine Walker (SCI) , ESRC New Investigator Grant *'Young People at a Crossroads: Negotiations and Environmental Knowledges, Practices and Subjectivities in Immigrant Homes at a Time of Climate Crisis'*

Congratulations and Welcome to our new ESRC Postdoctoral Researchers

Antonia Gama (Mentor Gillian Evans and Angela Torresan) – Social Anthropology, *Between Takes and Edits: media-activism against the terror politics in Brazil*

Pete Jones (Mentor Tarani Chandola, Termeh Shafie) – Social Statistics, *Exploring the marginalisation of women in popular cinema using quantitative network tools*

James Pattison (Mentor James Rhodes) – Sociology, *Left behind? Precarity, stigma and migration in a post-industrial colliery town*

Caroline Henaghan (Mentor Alexandra Mullock) – Law, *Squaring the circle' of the menstrual cycle? An interdisciplinary approach to the premenstrual problem*

Research Applications

Please note that we are currently short-staffed in the RSO and the team will be mainly working from home for the next semester. It is therefore very important that colleagues wishing to apply for grants allow sufficient time for grant preparation and sign off.

Please contact the office as soon as you begin your grant application, and ensure you maintain regular contact with the RSO supporting you, so that costings and approvals can be managed and updated in a timely manner.

All grants MUST have their costings prepared by the Research Support Hub (even if they are being led in another institution), and must be signed off by Head of Department and Head of School. Grants over £1 million must be signed off by Faculty, and over £5 million by the University.

We need AT LEAST 2 weeks for standard UKRI grants, and AT LEAST 4 weeks if Faculty and University sign off are required.

There are of course some exceptions to this timeline, for Rapid Response calls only, but colleagues should make sure the RSO is informed of any such plans ASAP to allow us to schedule workload and sign-off accordingly.

British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowships

The BA postdoctoral fellowships are now live
(<https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/funding/postdoctoral-fellowships/>)

The funder deadline for BA postdoctoral fellowships is 14/10/20, however, we have an internal deadline of 30/09/20 for the completion of applications to allow for amendments and approvals.

Notification of any potential applications should be forwarded to al.researchhub@manchester.ac.uk as soon as possible.

Please note that each BA postdoctoral application requires a UoM academic mentor who must obtain approval from their Head of Department prior to contacting the research support office. The School will only allow mentors to support one BA postdoctoral application.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS NEWS

Head of School Operations, Alison Wilson

PS Staff Departing

We will be saying good-bye to a number of colleagues over the next 6 weeks and indeed some have already departed. This is a mixture of colleagues taking voluntary severance and resignations. Many have been with Social Sciences for many years and have provided an excellent service. Regardless of length of time they have been with us all have made an excellent contribution and will be missed. On behalf of myself and Brian I am sure you will join us in wishing them all the best for their future endeavours and for those retiring a happy retirement and much deserved rest!

PG Admissions

- Vicky Barnes – leaving 31 October
- Janet Smith – leaving 31 October
- Eve Foster - leaving 31 October
- Laura Littlewood – leaving 30 September

UG Teaching and Learning

- Susan Rowe – leaving 31 October
- Jay Burke – left 31 July

PG Teaching and Learning

- Marie Waite – leaving 30 September

External Relations

- Will Bevin-Nicholls – leaving 30 September

Reception

- Martine Youngman - left 31 July.

School Resources Office

Domenica Scinaldi – leaving 16 October

We will be saying hello to some new colleagues who will be joining us over the next few months and more news to follow on this in due course.

Congratulations

I am delighted that Paul Smith has been awarded Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, well done Paul and many congratulations.

Admissions Changes

As a result of staff leaving SoSS admissions will move to a single team covering UG/ PGT/ PGR Admissions for 2020/21. The team will be led by Amanda Grimshaw.

It has also been agreed with the Faculty's Leadership Team and Professional Services Leadership Team that the School Admissions team will transfer line management to Humanities Teaching Learning and Student Experience from 1st October 2020. These new arrangements are part of the bridging structure that is being put in place for Applications and Admissions until the outcomes of the People and Structures Project, part of the Student Experience Programme (SEP), are agreed and implemented. However, the direction of travel is towards a Faculty led Application and Admissions team therefore this transfer of line management is a step towards that.

The aim of the SEP is to make student and applicant experience more consistent and to introduce new systems and processes that will make existing activities as efficient as possible. As part of the Programme new structures have been proposed for Applications and Admissions, which will align with proposed structures for Student, Marketing and Recruitment, so that the services can be delivered collaboratively across the different parts of the institution.

In/Out of Scope

- PS colleagues in the team with a remit for widening participation will continue to report to the Head of School Operations and will continue to work with the Admissions team.
- PGR admissions will remain within the PG Admissions team and for the interim transfer to HUMS TLSE. PGR is being considered separately within the SEP and therefore it has been agreed not to disentangle PGR admissions at this stage.

What will transfer to the Faculty HoTLSE?

- Line management of staff and responsibilities that come with that such as 1-2-1s, PDRs, staff wellbeing, staff development, workload prioritisation
- Staff budget
- Ensuring that systems and processes are consistently applied and implemented across Humanities

What will remain with the Schools?

Responsibility for the following areas of activity will remain with the School as per current arrangements:

- Student number planning and strategic direction
- Academic qualification verification and standards
- Interface with School TLSE functions with regard to student numbers, Welcome Week and the transition from applicant to registered student.
- Fee setting
- Operating budgets for recruitment activities

Admissions Managers will continue to have the existing working relationship with the Senior Leadership Team in Schools, providing advice and guidance and will continue to take direction from the School Leadership Team, with a 'dotted line' reporting responsibility to the Head of School Operations. They will continue to operate as part of the School and support the School to achieve its targets and strategic objectives. The team will remain physically located within the Schools and it is expected that they will continue to contribute to School governance and decision making.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of this, please do contact us.

Emma Rose

Faculty Head of Teaching, Learning and
Student Experience

Alison Wilson

Head of School Operations

Health and Safety (COVID19)

- The first priority is safety and wellbeing.
- The UoM will be observing 2m social distancing where possible in all buildings. Most buildings have clearly marked entry and exit doors. Please make sure you use them to help maintain social distancing.
- You should follow the latest government guidance on hygiene (especially handwashing and sanitising) and social distancing. This is regularly updated on the government website: www.gov.uk/coronavirus.
- Face coverings - you will be expected to wear these in communal areas including kitchens, stairwells and corridors. You are not expected to wear them in your office if single occupancy and 2m social distancing is being observed in open plan areas.
- **At the current alert level there will be no full or unrestricted return to campus.** Staff should only return to work on campus with the approval of your line manager.
- Use hand sanitiser where available immediately on entry to a building to avoid contaminating high-contact surfaces. Alternatively, use toilets on the ground floor to wash your hands thoroughly using soap.
- The '[Managing COVID-19 Infection on Campus](#)' guidance must be followed if someone on campus develops coronavirus/COVID-19.

Working on Campus – Key Points

- **We need to know when you are on campus to manage building occupancy and so test and trace is effective.** There has already been a case in the Ellen Wilkinson Building. **It is not acceptable to just pop in**, you need to follow the following process:
 - You need to let your line manager know which days you wish to be in and their permission be granted.
 - Your line manager then informs the Resources team who hold the central record on building occupancy.
 - PS Line managers inform the Resources team of any changes in the rota.
 - Remember to return your IT Checklist after your first visit to your line manager.

- Once teaching starts we expect to have a regular rota of academic colleagues being present in the building and we only need to be informed if there is a change.

When you are in a University Building:

- Follow any signs and markings on the floors, stairwells and lifts to maintain social distancing.
- Avoid touching high contact surfaces such as door handles and lift buttons if you can. You may be able to use your elbow or foot to push open the doors.
- Use stairs wherever possible and avoid using lifts. Lifts are reserved for those that need them most and will have much reduced capacity (in our buildings 1 person).
- Make your way to and from your area of work directly.
- Do not enter PS Open-Plan Offices, as these will be at maximum capacity for social distancing. If you need to meet with a PS member of staff make an appointment for a zoom/teams call.

Meetings

- Meetings should continue to be held virtually utilising Zoom or MS Teams, even if all participants for a meeting are present on the campus.
- If, exceptionally, any meetings are held on campus, then 2m social distancing must be adhered to and face coverings must be worn.
- Only current staff and current students should be accessing our buildings. Any engagement with visitors should be virtual, exceptions must be signed off by the HoS/HOSO and must be logged for tracking purposes.
- Colleagues should not normally organise any internal or external events that require people's physical attendance on campus. All events must be virtual. The exception to this are the agreed face to face student events/activities e.g. during welcome week.

Cleaning Protocol

Staff Responsibilities:

- Daily cleaning of workstation/ shared office equipment/ IT equipment in teaching space/ kitchens when used common touch points with COVID cleaning wipes issued. Dispose of wipes in nearest general waste bin.

Estates Responsibilities:

- Thorough inspection and clean of common touch points incl. door handles, light switches; chairs & teaching lectern, kitchen areas maintain general cleanliness, reception areas, toilets – daily
- Scheduled programme using preventative long acting antivirus cleaning solution/ misting – teaching space/ student space – Library/ Learning commons.
- Emergency cleaning - Deep clean in accordance with HSE requirements and agreed risk assessment following a confirmed case of COVID-19 known to have been present
- As soon as practicable after notification to Estates – space will be locked off until deep clean certified completed to Estates.

Student Responsibilities:

- Cleaning of shared IT equipment with COVID cleaning wipes issued before and after use. Dispose of wipes in nearest general waste bin.

HUMAN RESOURCES**HR Partner, Jenny Knights****Report a positive COVID-19 Test or Self Isolation**

The University has launched an online reporting system on the StaffNet home page to record any known cases of staff members, or students, who are either self-isolating (this may be for a number of reasons) or who have received a positive Covid-19 test result. The details can be found at <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/coronavirus/report/> (the Covid-19 Support and Guidance box at the top of StaffNet homepage). The 'report a case' link will take managers to a guidance document on next steps, and provide them with the link to the online reporting system.

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[Staff Bulletins](#)

