TLSD Academic Development and Policy (ADP) Bulletin

Division of Teaching, Learning & Student Development (TLSD)

1. Staffing News

Daniel Bayes, previously one of our Student Engagement Graduate Officers, has now moved to a new role within the office - Higher Education Administration Intern supporting a review of our continuous monitoring processes in partnership with students.

2. Website/policy and procedure changes

- **Programme Amendment and Withdrawals during the coronavirus outbreak**

Temporary arrangements for programme amendment or withdrawal have been amended slightly following a planned review, and the relevant webpages have been updated. The main change is that our usual dates for approval have been reinstated so that we are compliant with CMA and OFS requirements, and the associated interim programme amendment matrix and the interim programme amendment form have been updated. These slight revisions have been made primarily to alert colleagues to the potential for cumulative change and to consider carefully the impacts of making changes where units/content is shared with a different area. Colleagues involved with approval or withdrawal of programmes are strongly advised to review this information.

Faculty Teaching and Learning colleagues have been notified directly to expect these changes. We have also retained the same URL links to the amended versions of the templates so that you do not need to update local documents that link to them.
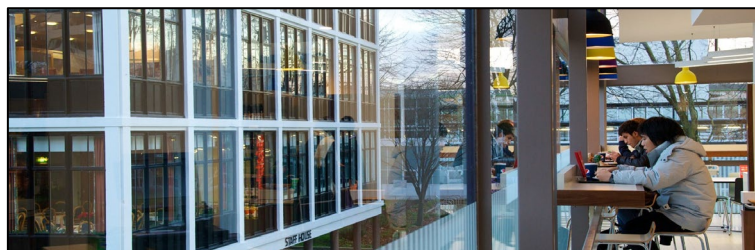
Details can be found on the website at: https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/quality/development-programmes/corona-updates/

2. Website/policy and procedure changes (continued)

- **The University's Assessment Pledge**

The Teaching and Learning Group has been working closely with the Students' Union to develop our new Assessment Pledge, which sets out the additional measures we are putting in place to support students, taking the impact of the pandemic on their performance into account. The Assessment Pledge includes the following points:

1. Automatic extension
2. Simplifying mitigating circumstances
3. Moderation in line with previous years
4. Regulation changes
5. Waiving of re-sit fees

We are in agreement with the rest of the Russell Group that a blanket 'no disadvantage' policy would not be appropriate or possible this year. We are in a very different set of circumstances this year and our teaching, learning and assessments have been designed from the start with blended, online learning at the forefront. Crucially, no students have any pre-pandemic marks from earlier in this academic year for us to benchmark against, which is how the 'no disadvantage' policy was applied last year.

Our Assessment Pledge is designed to support students in this year's circumstances, rather than those of last year. We will keep it under review, continue to monitor how it is working, and take advice from our Examination Boards and External Examiners. However, as things stand we feel these measures are fair to students and satisfy both our need to protect students' interests and to protect the quality and standards of our awards.

The details on our Additional policy guidance in response to the Coronavirus outbreak have been updated to reflect the new Assessment Pledge, including the Guidance for staff on Mitigating Circumstances, Self-Certification of Absence and Automatic Extensions relating to Covid-19 (Coronavirus), 2020/21.

Student FAQs about the Assessment Pledge can be found on the Student Support website.

2. Website/policy and procedure changes (continued)

- **Policy on Feedback to Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students**

The Policy on Feedback to Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students is due for review and updating, with work commencing last academic year when the TLG Policy and Guidance subgroup carried out initial discussions and a student focus group was held. The review was put on hold due to being overtaken by other policy priorities relating to the Coronavirus pandemic, however, the plan is to still progress with a full review of the Policy during the current academic year, as priorities allow.

In the meantime, a few revisions have been made to the Policy due to a number of recent queries relating to the existing wording around providing access to students to the feedback they received on their exam scripts/online exams. Paragraphs 16-18 of the Policy have therefore been updated to provide clarification in this area. The updates can be seen on the [ADP website](#).

- **Safety Guidance for undertaking off campus activities (fieldwork) during Covid-19**

Safety Guidance for undertaking field courses during Covid-19, for use during the 2020/21 academic year, has been introduced. All staff members undertaking off campus activities/field work during the Covid-19 pandemic should follow this guidance, and the related risk assessment. The documents can be found at https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/teaching-and-learning/learning/fieldwork-safety/, with the links to the individual documents provided below:

- [Safety Guidance for undertaking field courses during Covid-19](#) (pdf document)
- [General risk assessment for essential field courses during Covid-19](#) (Word document)
- [Statement on field courses during Covid-19](#) (pdf document)

3. Peer Support Programme

Happy New Year from Peer Support! Whilst our PASS and Peer Mentoring Volunteers are focussing on their studies the Peer Support team are busy working on plans for Semester 2.

- **Leadership in Education Awards Programme (LEAP)**

We have received an amazing 16 applications, 14 from our Peer Support Volunteers and 2 from our new Peer Support Graduate Officers, for Associate Fellowship status! This is more than we received for both the January and March submissions combined last year. It's incredible to see our Student Volunteers demonstrating how their Peer Support role has supported the teaching and learning of their Mentees. Massive thanks are in order for all the Mentors who provided help and advice to this cohort of applicants. We also have several members of the Peer Support team who are in the process of applying for Senior Fellow, best of luck to them all!

- **Peer Support Week**

The Peer Support team are currently in the process of planning Peer Support Week. This is a week of activities and events for our Peer Support Student Volunteers to kick-start semester 2. Some of the activities include upskilling our PASS Leaders and Peer Mentors so they can provide more engaging sessions, showing our Volunteers how they can further get involved as Student Partners and a Q&A panel about PASS and Peer Mentoring for potential future volunteers. Peer Support Week will be 15th to 19th February, look out for a run down on how it went in next month's bulletin!

4. Student Partner programme/Student Engagement

Student Partnership is all about bringing our Students on board to feed in their ideas and contribute towards projects that will improve the Student Experience and Teaching and Learning across the University. The Student Partnership Team is here to help with facilitating projects across the University, both to recruit and engage a diverse cohort of Students to work on a range of different projects. We are also more than happy to help Staff members who are interested in recruiting some Students to work with you on projects.

We can assist you in planning projects and how to bring on Student Partners, we can then assist you with the recruitment and line management of the Student Partner Interns. We would then also offer development opportunities/selective workshops to skill them up further. Joining into our larger Partnership Network will also provide you the opportunity to find out more about Partnership activity across the University and join in with the network after your project has concluded.

Over the past Semester there's been some big changes in the Student Partner Programme, we now have several Student Partner Intern (SPI) cohorts: Online and Blended Learning (OBL), Diversity and Inclusion, Careers, Institute of Teaching and Learning (ITL) Fellows, and the Student Experience Program (SEP).

The 'Your Say for Your Uni' website is now hosting Student Partner Intern information, from updates on projects, recruitment, and blog posts.

As we head into the Second Semester, we are pleased to be opening up recruitment again for our Student Partner Intern roles, we would be grateful if you could share this opportunity with anyone who might be interested our website can be found here which provides more info.

5.   Contact

If you are aware of other staff members who would like to be added to the Academic Development and Policy TLSD 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). The Academic Development and Policy/Peer Support area of the TLSD website is available at: http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/

To find out more information about the Division of Teaching, Learning and Student Development, please visit: http://www.dse.manchester.ac.uk/our-directorate/tlsd/