Manchester’s election specialists
Not having many UniLife articles to write before I retire, let me return to what for me has been a key question since The University of Manchester took shape after the 2004 merger.

How serious are we about Goal Three, which commits the University to making social responsibility a defining characteristic of its mission?

While recognising that social responsibility starts at home and that our University has a special responsibility for contributing to the social welfare, economic development and cultural life of Manchester and England’s North West, Goal Three is also global in the breadth of its aspirations.

The University of Manchester understands that it has a role to play in contributing to the sustainability of economic systems, civil societies and natural environments around the world in the 21st century, and accepts that, as a major knowledge institution, it must be in the forefront of the search for solutions in all three areas.

Given that there are no Arcadian solutions to the great challenges facing contemporary societies, such challenges will be resolved, if at all, only by further advances in human knowledge and technological virtuosity. The knowledge creation and knowledge and technology transfer roles of universities as research institutions are therefore, in a very real sense, part of a wider social responsibility agenda.

But while many other institutions and enterprises undertake research, universities are unique in providing higher learning, and it is primarily how they understand and discharge that educational role that defines the breadth and depth of their commitment to social responsibility.

Who will be the key decision-makers in the 21st century? Will they be pragmatic career politicians driven by the short-term imperatives of the latest opinion polls? Will they be narrowly economic in their vision of social progress, valuing economic growth above and even at the expense of other values? Whoever they are, will their decisions be influenced too readily by the changing moods of mass electorates and fickle media? How strategically will it be possible to tackle great issues? To what extent will the solutions be knowledge-based?

If the path trodden by humankind in the 21st century is not both knowledge-based and highly strategic, this is going to be a singularly dangerous century.

So universities have a vital role to play.

One thing that we may presume about the key decision-makers in the decades ahead, whether they are Government ministers, civil service bureaucrats, leaders of multinational businesses or senior officials in international agencies, is that they will in almost all cases be graduates.

That is why we must oppose the obvious inclination of policy-makers in financially straightened times to over-emphasise the vocational dimension of higher education and to discount the value of a broad liberal higher education. Equally, it is why we should resist targeting the bulk of research funding towards wealth creation at the expense of the kinds of “blue-sky” research in which the answers to fundamental issues so often lie.

Most of all, however, it is why we must challenge all our prospective graduates to confront their social responsibilities and their ethical obligations. For as key decision-makers or decision-shapers, the value they place on fundamental issues such as environmental sustainability, social justice, the remediation of poverty and the widening of access to educational opportunity will be critical.

Will our graduates leave our University with a sense of personal responsibility for building just, sustainable civil societies wherever in the world they choose to live? Will they have acquired leadership skills? Will they have been challenged to understand that a university education is a privilege carrying social obligations, not just a right conferring private benefit?

We have developed the Manchester Leadership Programme as one element in a strategy for ensuring that Manchester graduates do have these qualities, while also trying to ensure that all our programmes combine a fundamental grounding in an academic discipline or one of the professions with a deep commitment to heightening ethical awareness and stimulating a sense of social responsibility.

We are also making social responsibility a key theme in developing powerful Manchester Alumni networks around the world by seeking to mobilise our alumni – as their professional standing grows and their leadership skills are exercised at higher levels – to take seriously the essential thrust of Goal Three of the Manchester 2015 Agenda.

We want Manchester to be one of the great 21st century universities that changes the world for the better, and that is not the sort of aspiration that we can jettison because times are tough.

Letter from the President
Election 2010: how the University played its part

As journalists and commentators have feverishly followed events as the 2010 General Election campaign has unfolded, experts from The University of Manchester have been making their own contribution to the campaign.

The formation of an Expert Media Group, launched just before the campaign got underway, has generated considerable interest in the University’s expertise - with requests coming from Germany, The Netherlands, across the BBC - including the News Channel, World at One, BBC Breakfast News, the World Service, Five Live and the Today Programme.

Two of the world’s leading news agencies Reuters and Bloomberg have contacted the group on issues such as the profiles and fortunes of particular constituencies and parties, the launch of the manifestos and the leaders’ television debates.

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At the forefront of the University’s efforts to demystify the sometimes bewildering twists and turns of the campaign are three established pundits - Dr Andrew Russell, Dr Jane Green, and Dr Rob Ford all based in the School of Social Sciences.

At the time of writing, Jane is preparing for her all night stint as the BBC World Service’s election pundit on 6 May. Andrew is shaping up to co-present the results show with Allan Beswick on BBC Radio Manchester from midnight to 7am.

He will also reprise a now traditional role as BBC TV’s North West’s election analyst.

Rob will also be spending the evening of 6 May with the media - providing instant analysis of the results for the BBC’s election night special.

Another expert to contribute extensively was Professor Geoff Beattie, resident psychologist on all nine ‘Big Brother’ series and one of the nations top body language experts Geoff made some interesting observations for the BBC News Channel, Radio Five Live, the Daily Mirror and the Independent on Sunday.

Professor Ludi Simpson has spoken on ethnic diversity in Barking and Dagenham and Dr Matt Goodwin on the rise of the Far Right - both in terms of the election.

In addition, research by Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change highlighting the dependence of jobs on state and para-state employment - especially in the regions - has also been referred to in numerous outlets - including BBC Two’s Newsnight.

But it’s the University’s election analysts- or psephologists - who have been in almost daily demand.

Dr Russell said: "It’s so easy for people to misinterpret the blizzard of election polling data used by newspapers and broadcasters - so a research-led interpretation of important trends and effects is a hugely valuable part of any election campaign."

"I was heavily involved in media coverage of the 2005 election but the 2010 election has seen a definite gear change with the media coming to Manchester as one of its first ports of call."

"It’s very important as academics that we concern ourselves with public engagement and election time is a crucial opportunity for us to showcase our research findings and expertise."

Dr Green said: "In a context in which the parties each have a message to give, the need for objective interpretation is clear."

"I will sit with Matthew Parris in Bush House on election night, where we both cut through the political messages of the three politicians also present."

"Viewers need the important facts and implications, and because we do this for the World Service, we receive comments and questions from all over the World."

Dr Ford added: "This is a very exciting election, with the possibility of the first change in government for 13 years, and the dramatic shift in polling since the first debate leaving the field wide open."

"It is a great privilege to be working as an analyst for the BBC, where I am one of the first to see and examine the results as they roll in."

"My job is to take a great torrent of data from exit polling and constituency declarations and to identify the key stories of the night."
Organiser Dr Ian Burney said: “In the courtroom, in newspapers, and on our television screens, modern day forensics has never been so visible, so compelling and, in some respects, so contentious. This conference places the remarkable prominence of forensic science and medicine in contemporary culture in analytical and historical perspective.”

Co-organiser Dr David Kirby added: “It brings together leading scholars from history, sociology and socio-legal studies, media and cultural studies, and practitioners working within the diverse spaces of forensic culture - from crime scenes and bio-medical laboratories to television studios. It will enable a genuinely cross-disciplinary conversation of interest to a broad audience of academics, forensic practitioners and the public.”

To book a place or for more information see the website below.

www.chstm.manchester.ac.uk/newsandevents/conferences/forensics/

The science - and art of - forensics

The creators of the popular BBC forensics dramas Silent Witness and Waking the Dead, will feature in a University conference on the science and art of forensics

Nigel McCreary and Barbara Machin, each responsible for attracting six million viewers to the BBC, will discuss screening forensics at the international event.

Sponsored by the Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine (CHSTM) and the Wellcome Trust, the event will also feature William Haglund, the UN’s chief scientific advisor at mass gravesites in Rwanda, Sierra Leone and the former Yugoslavia, while renowned US academic David Foran will cast doubt on Dr Henry Crippen’s celebrated 1910 conviction for the murder of his wife.

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To book a place or for more information see the website below.

Manchester students shine

Their inspirational accounts of student life in the UK have won three students from The University of Manchester top accolades in the UK’s biggest competition for international students.

Astrid Tishler from Estonia has been named the North West's International Student of the Year 2010 in the prestigious competition from the British Council.

Now Astrid from the School of Earth, Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences is preparing to challenge for the title of overall International Student of the Year 2010. As one of 12 regional winners she travelled to London in April to meet a final judging panel, before going on to have her achievements honoured in a national awards ceremony.

In addition, Mechanical, Aerospace and Civil Engineering student Muhanaad Fakhri from Pakistan, based in the School of Environment and Development, have both been named runners-up in the regional finals.

The three were among more than 1,300 students, from 118 countries to enter the eighth annual International Student Awards – a major initiative from the British Council that shines the spotlight on international students and their contributions to life in the UK.

To enter, students had to write a personal ‘letter home’ in English, detailing the out-of-class achievements that help make their time in the UK so rewarding.

Astrid’s letter was judged to be the North West’s most impressive and she will receive £2,000 prize at the competition final in London in April.

As part of her winning entry, Astrid wrote: “The experience and opportunity I am the most grateful of all, is my research in the development of sustainable management in collaboration with BP for my bachelor degree dissertation. Being able to actually contribute to the knowledge base that builds up the reasoning for decision-making of such big corporations like BP is something I never expected to achieve during my undergraduate studies.”

Brian Cox lecture

The University of Manchester’s rock star scientist Brian Cox followed up to the success of his smash hit TV series on the origins of the universe with a public lecture last month.

Due to the demand, the lecture to a capacity audience was made available as a live webcast on the University’s website and streamed to a nearby lecture theatre.

Professor Brian Cox visited locations across the globe to explain how the laws of nature carved spectacular landscapes throughout the Solar System for the acclaimed BBC TV series “Wonders of the Solar System”.

The Oldham-born scientist, based at the School of Physics and Astronomy, told the audience of the strange and fascinating worlds that inhabit our Solar System.

Professor Cox – along with thousands of other scientists – works on the Large Hadron Collider at CERN, the famous scientific research centre in Geneva. He said: “The success of the series has been fantastic and I’d like to thank everyone for their support - it means a lot to me. But more importantly- the series and events such as this lecture get people talking about science.”

©BBC
Manchester biologists and Sir David lead new Society of Biology

Two Manchester academics shared the stage with renowned naturalist Sir David Attenborough when they helped launch the Society of Biology recently.

Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell and Dr Ceri Harrop, both from the Faculty of Life Sciences, spoke at the launch along with Sir David and Nobel-prize winning biologist Sir Paul Nurse.

The Society of Biology has been founded as a single unified voice for biology: advising Government and influencing policy, advancing education and professional development; supporting members, and engaging and encouraging public interest in the life sciences. Created as part of the unification of the Biosciences Federation and the Institute of Biology, it has a diverse membership of over 80,000 - including, students, practising scientists and interested non-professionals - as individuals, or through the 68 Member Organisations.

Dr Harrop, who was asked to speak after winning the Society's Science Communication Award (New Researcher), said: “I was delighted and honoured to be asked to speak at the launch.

“I discussed why public engagement in science is important, not just for their benefit but also for our sake as researchers. It is in fact “the public” to which I owe my PhD and indeed the fact that I am still in research. It was during a particularly low point of my PhD, that I saw a Manchester Museum advert for postgraduate demonstrators to teach hands on science. Watching students learn a completely new technique, discuss the impact of scientific research and genuinely be enthused and inspired by “real-life science” re-inspired me.”

Professor Rothwell, who is President of the Society, said: “The creation of the Society of Biology was driven by the need for a single voice to represent the UK's broad interest and expertise in biological sciences. The output of biology-based research has a huge impact on the UK’s economy, and it is essential that the government continues to support bioscientists at all stages of their careers, from the classroom to the laboratory and including the many ‘amateur biologists’.”

Computer whizz named laureate

Professor Stephen Furber, Professor of Computer Engineering at The University of Manchester, has been shortlisted for the 2010 Millennium Technology Prize, the world’s largest award for technological innovation. He is one of three laureates announced in Helsinki last month by Technology Academy Finland.

Professor Furber is the principal designer of the ARM 32-bit RISC microprocessor, found in most handheld electronic devices and in more than 98% of the world’s mobile phones.

His innovation has underpinned the rapid growth in mobile communications, which has opened up economies of scale and enhanced the quality of life for billions in the developing and developed world. ARM microprocessors tick inside our mobile phones, mp3-players, video recorders and home routers. Today ARM technology is used in more than a quarter of all electronic devices.

In 1985 Furber became the father of a microprocessor phenomenon - a single chip which did the same amount of work as other 32-bit microprocessors but used one tenth of their transistors – and consequently, one tenth of their electricity. Furber was the principal designer of the ARM 32-bit microprocessor at Acorn Computers.

Top of the class for teacher training

Leadership development programmes designed and delivered by the University’s Centre for Educational Leadership (CEL) have been recognised as some of the best in the country.

Now the CEL has been recommended by the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children’s Service as the preferred trainer to assessors at the Regional Training Unit in Belfast.

Last month a group of lead assessors from Northern Ireland travelled to Manchester to receive training at the CEL ahead of their first intake of the Professional Qualification for Headship (PQH).
See-through zebrafish have helped scientists find new drug targets to stop the growth of cancerous tumours and combat a range of other conditions including degenerative eye disease.

The team, from the Universities of Massachusetts and Manchester, used fluorescent proteins to trace blood vessel growth in the transparent zebrafish (pictured above) and were able to watch the process in real time in a living organism where flow was disrupted. This helped them to identify the genetic pathway by which blood flow regulates vessel growth.

Angiogenesis - where new blood vessels grow from pre-existing vessels - is a normal and vital process in growth and development, as well as in wound healing. It also creates new channels when existing ones become blocked (as in coronary artery disease). However, blood vessel growth is also key to the development of many diseases. It is a fundamental step in the transition of tumours from a dormant state to a malignant one. Similarly excess blood vessel formation, specifically proliferation of capillaries, is a feature of degenerative eye disease.

Dr Adam Hurlstone, of the Faculty of Life Sciences, said: “If we could master the process of blood vessel production, it would have an impact in a huge range of diseases. This study has provided very useful therapeutic targets.

“Manchester was very pleased to take part in the study. We had a small but essential role - our novel reagent proved how important this pathway is.”

**Classroom distinction**

A group of leading researchers have published proposals for a radical shake up which they say will help to break the link between education and disadvantage if implemented.

Led by Professor Alan Dyson from The University of Manchester, it argues that despite a huge range of well-intentioned Government initiatives, vulnerable young people are still not getting a fair deal.

Drawing on five years of detailed local and national data, the fifth annual report by the University’s Centre for Equity in Education questions the value of GCSEs and calls for strong ties between education and local communities.

The obsession with targets, grades and micromanaging the system from the centre, they say, are a root cause of the problem.

Instead, the Government should encourage a wide range of learning opportunities, decided locally and linked to the aspirations and needs of young people, their families and communities.

Ofsted taking a more developmental role, rather than focusing on compliance and accountability, as well as close links to voluntary and community sector organisations and other schools and colleges are also urged.

Professor Dyson said: “All too often, instead of equalising life chances, the system reproduces existing advantages and disadvantages. While this is seen most starkly at the extremes, it is endemic throughout the system.

“Endless initiatives targeting failing schools and underachieving groups will make little difference unless the underlying issues are tackled.

Dr Kirstin Kerr said: “Qualifications have become ends in themselves, often with little connection to learners’ lives, their wider wellbeing, and valuable adult destinations.”

**Fish helping to fight eye disease**

**Divided cities exhibition visits Manchester**

A free exhibition showing the complex relationship between the city environment - such as buildings, walls and murals - with urban conflict was in Manchester last month.

The recently finished study was led by Dr Ralf Brand from The University of Manchester, who showed how the urban environment in Belfast, Beirut, Berlin and Amsterdam is affected by and helps to cause conflict.

An ‘Architruck’ - the Royal Institute of British Architects North West’s mobile exhibition - was in Manchester as part of the Manchester Architecture and Design Festival. The exhibition, which has already been to Beirut and Belfast and will also visit Berlin, Amsterdam, Exeter and London, displays photographs and diagrams of conflict points in the four cities.

Dr Brand hopes the work will help policy makers, planners, architects, urban designers and citizens to create a built environment which will tackle social polarisation and foster community cohesion.
A University of Manchester study is to investigate the relationship between older people, their energy consumption and the buildings they live in. The project team will interview older residents across a range of domestic living situations and socio-economic categories to understand the diversity of thermal experiences within this population group.

The project team will also study how older people are adopting energy-efficient technologies, including heat pumps, solar hot water, and mechanical ventilation with heat recovery. The £650,000 study - based at the University’s Manchester Architecture Research Centre (MARC) in the School of Environment and Development is funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and the electricity supplier EDF.

It is led by MARC Director Professor Simon Guy, who will work with Drs Ralf Brand and Andy Karvonen - all from Manchester together with colleagues at the Universities of Exeter, Lancaster and Cardiff. Professor Guy said: “The goal of this project is to understand the diversity and dynamics of thermal experiences in an ageing society and their implications for current and future energy consumption.”

Google grant to help blind web surfers

New research by University of Manchester scientists that could help blind people find their way around the world wide web has been given a boost with a £50,000 grant from Google.

Drs Andy Brown, Caroline Jay and Simon Harper who are based at the University's School of Computer Science, have already developed a prototype screen reader that has been successfully tested on blind web surfers in an independent evaluation.

The team used specialist eye tracking techniques to find out how sighted people interact with complex web pages so they could translate the pages into audio.

Now they are working with Google to make their technology, which is not yet suitable for general use, freely available to people with visual impairments.

They aim to provide a way of modifying web pages so blind people can easily access them without having to wait for commercial screen reading technology - which reads web pages aloud - to catch up with the latest research developments.

Dr Jay said: “The growth of Web 2.0 technologies is fundamentally changing the way that people interact with the web.

“A short time ago, navigating the web was simply a matter of clicking links, moving from one static page to another. “Now it’s possible to spend a considerable amount of time interacting with a single page through its “dynamic micro content” that updates independently, without changing the URL.”

She added: “Unfortunately, blind people are excluded from many of these exciting developments and our research aims to change all that.

“They can have real problems accessing web applications - such as calendars, tickers and suggestion lists - found on travel, entertainment and social networking sites.

“This is because the screen reading technology which converts the visual page to audio doesn’t say when a web page changes, making much of Web 2.0 is inaccessible to people with visual impairments.”

Library lends expertise to Egypt

Caroline Checkley-Scott, Collection Care Manager at the John Rylands University Library has just returned from Egypt where she has been advising on the protection and preservation of publications and manuscripts.

She has been working with the Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation (TIF) and the National Library of Egypt (Dar Al Kutub). The TIF is a non-profit academic organisation founded to support and advance the protection, preservation and study of the Islamic intellectual and artistic heritage. It specialises in scholarly publishing, fine book design, and the care and management of manuscript collections.

The Foundation is helping with the preservation and conservation of the National Library’s manuscript collection and is working with the Library to establish it as a regional leader in collection care and management.

The Library possesses around 60,000 manuscript titles – the largest manuscript collection in the Arab world - and one of the most important collections of Islamic manuscripts worldwide.

The goals of the project include re-designing and re-equipping the Library’s two existing preservation and conservation laboratories, designing and equipping a new conservation laboratory; redesigning and re-equipping the manuscript storage and exhibition areas; the continued professional development of the National Library’s preservation, conservation and exhibition staff; cataloguing selected areas of the manuscript collection; and preparing publications and promotional materials for and about the National Library.

Caroline has been working alongside the team at TIF in a number of these areas mentioned above. Her recent trip was to train both the TIF and Library staff in book handling and to advise on manuscript storage.

‘How green are our pensioners?’ asks study

A University of Manchester study is to investigate the relationship between older people, their energy consumption and the buildings they live in.

The project team will interview older residents across a range of domestic living situations and socio-economic categories to understand the diversity of thermal experiences within this population group.
Self-doubt and guilt: the joys of friendship

As well as bringing support and companionship, friendships can bring a loss of trust and feelings of self-doubt and guilt - especially for women, new research says.

Professor Carol Smart from The University of Manchester analysed 206 people’s written accounts of their friendships.

“The overall sense of the narratives collected was to suggest how important friendships are in people’s lives, not simply in the sense that friends can be supportive or fun, but in the sense that they can be very damaging and unsettling, and that people may be left feeling quite scarred by these relationships,” she told the British Sociological Association annual conference.

Professor Smart worked with Professor Jennifer Mason, Dr Brian Heaphy and Katherine Davies, all of the Morgan Centre for the Study of Relationships and Personal Life at The University of Manchester.

The respondents, both men and women, wrote about friendships including those that had become difficult or had gone wrong. They were taking part in the Mass Observation Project in which people volunteer to write about their lives as a record of everyday life.

The respondents wrote about difficult friendships that they maintained for years even though these caused them irritation, boredom and antagonism.

“For the majority of respondents persevering was really a matter of duty,” Professor Smart said.

She added: “It is clear that when friendships go wrong -especially for many women, people are often quite unsettled and can enter into phases of self-doubt.

“They fear they lack judgement about others, but they also fear they may not know themselves as they thought they did. The mirror that friends hold up…can reflect back an unsettling image at times.

“The overall sense of the narratives collected was to suggest how important friendships are in people’s lives, not simply in the sense that friends can be supportive or fun, but in the sense that they can be very damaging and unsettling, and that people may be left feeling quite scarred by these relationships.”

Better training needed to curb anti-fat discrimination

Prejudice towards obese people is rife among trainee health professionals, but can be modified, new research has found.

The study, published in the journal Obesity, says weight-based discrimination by the public has increased by 66% over the past decade with anti-fat prejudice among health professionals found to often exceed that within the general population.

The research, by scientists at the Universities of Manchester and Hawaii and Yale University, suggests that medical and allied health professions need to present a balanced view of the causes of, and treatment for, obesity when training young professionals in order to reduce the strong prejudice towards obese people.

The team, led by Dr Kerry O’Brien (pictured left) in the School of Psychological Sciences, found that the prejudice could be either increased or decreased depending on the type of obesity training pre-service, health-professional students received.

Health profession trainees from Australia were randomly assigned to one of three intensive, tutorials as part of their degree. One educated students about the role of diet and physical activity as the primary cause of, and treatment for, obesity. A second focused instead on educating students about the uncontrollable causes of obesity, such as the contribution of genes and environmental factors. Finally, a third control group of students attended a tutorial that addressed alcohol use in young people.

The researchers found that there were significant reductions in obesity prejudice for the course delivering material on genetic and environmental factors, while students on the course focusing on diet and physical activity showed an increase in obesity prejudice.

Dr O’Brien said: “One reason for the high levels of obesity prejudice is that people only hear that obesity is due to poor diet and lack of exercise, which implies that obese people are just lazy and gluttonous, and therefore deserve criticism. But, uncontrollable factors, such as genes, the environment and neurophysiology, play an important role.

“Weight status is, to a great extent, inherited. It’s crucial that health professionals, are aware of these other influences, as well as their own potential prejudices, and don’t just blame the individual for their weight status.”

Multi-faith space study

A pioneering architectural study into the history and impact of multi-faith spaces has been launched by a University of Manchester team with a meeting of representatives from the UK’s major faiths.

Dr Ralph Brand, Andrew Crompton, Chris Hewson and Rev Terry Biddington - Chaplain to Higher Education in Manchester - will visit spaces in airports, hospitals, prisons, universities, crematoria and shopping centres set aside to allow the public to practice their faith.

They hope to find out how buildings and areas used for multi-faith spaces can promote tolerance between different religions.

The meeting will guide the research team on where to carry out their research and the issues which are important to the different faiths.

As the project unfolds, the team will visit spaces in the UK and abroad, carrying out detailed assessments of the buildings and the people who design, maintain and use them.

A PhD student, Christina Lacey, has also been recruited to research the history of multi-faith spaces from the seventeenth century onwards to inform the investigation.

Dr Brand, who is based at The School of Environment and Development, said: “More and more attempts - with the encouragement of various authorities - are being made to accommodate religious diversity through the provision of multi-faith spaces.

“They first emerged as single functional rooms in airports, universities, hospitals or shopping malls.

“But more recently, the concept has been expanded to buildings in which different religions have their own sacred spaces with some shared facilities for secular purposes.

“The project will also produce the UK’s first compendium of multi-faith spaces and good practice guide, an interactive website, a design studio at the Manchester School of Architecture and a traveling exhibition.

Dr Crompton added: “What we aim to discover is if these spaces encourage pluralism or merely house difference.

“Are they really good investments and if so how, can they be designed to be better suited to their task?”
The changing corridor

The Corridor Manchester Vision 2020 sets out a clear ambition – that globally and locally people will recognise the Corridor as a place that is original, creative and smart, where knowledge is put to work.

Corridor Manchester is a partnership made up of The University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU), Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU), Manchester City Council and Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has started to deliver some of its projects which will help realise the Vision for the Corridor – the Oxford Road area – over the coming years.

Changing Places
The partnership is working with Greater Manchester Transport Executive as it develops the new Cross City Bus Package. Work to reduce Oxford Road to two bus lanes, flanked by cycle ways is expected to begin next year.

Corridor Manchester’s Vision 2020 highlights the importance of “sense of place” – the Corridor should befit the ambitions that reside there. To help maximise the impact of the Cross City Bus Package on public space and the environment, Corridor Manchester is identifying spaces that can be developed into attractive places to visit and spend time.

Helping local people into work on the Corridor
To help deliver on our aim to be a place of quality employment, skills training and education at all levels Corridor Manchester has set up two pioneering schemes which are seeing excellent results. The first has placed 286 unemployed local people into jobs offered by The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University. The universities provide Aspire (a not-for-profit recruitment agency) with advance notice of job vacancies, enabling people to be matched with jobs that are right for them.

Pathfinder, set up in June 2009 is open to all local residents; it works with people on a one-to-one basis to direct them to job opportunities or into relevant training and education.

Pathfinder set a target of helping 250 unemployed people in its first year, after eight months 280 people were engaged, with 47 finding employment.

Connecting for the future
Corridor Manchester is piloting next generation fibre broadband which will be delivered during 2010 on the Corridor. Working with Manchester Digital Development Agency and funded by the North West Regional Development Agency, the new connectivity will create a true open access network which will revolutionise ways of working and using digital communications.

The project is part of Corridor Manchester’s ambition to ensure the Corridor is recognised as a world class centre of knowledge and innovation.

Corridor Manchester Vision 2020 can be found at www.corridormanchester.com

- The Corridor currently generates £2.8 billion, 22.5% of the city’s GVA.
- 55,000 people work on Corridor, 18% of Manchester’s workforce.
- 43% of the activity on the Corridor is in knowledge intensive sectors, much higher than the national (22%) and regional (21%) averages.
- By 2020 the Corridor will generate £4.8 billion GVA
- By 2020 the Corridor will have a workforce of 77,000.

Reaching Out

The University was the largest contributor to the 2010 “Big Bang” Science Fair that took place at Manchester Central recently.

The Big Bang is the UK’s largest science outreach festival and aims to celebrate the achievements and excellence of young people through competition, while educating and inspiring young people not yet engaged in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) in their future careers.

Building on the University’s wide-ranging commitment to science outreach work, 14 different stands, presentations and workshops were organised and delivered to the 15,000 young people, teachers and parents who visited over the three days.

From “CSI Manchester” and “Plants that Bite Back” to “Observing the Invisible Universe” and “The 3D Journey through the Jet Engine”, pupils were able to engage in interactive displays and workshops to stimulate their curiosity about science and introduce them to aspects of the subject they would not have encountered before. The Flight Simulator from the School of Mechanical, Aerospace and Civil Engineering (MAE) had a constant queue of potential aerospace engineers all hoping to prove their landing skills.

Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell, who helped champion the University’s involvement from the outset, said: “As the biggest festival of its kind in the UK, this was a great opportunity for the University to showcase our strong commitment to engaging more young people and their key influencers with the excitement of science.”

The event was co-ordinated by the Student Recruitment, Admissions and International Development Division.

Nearly 60 leading graduate recruiters recently took part in Target Manchester, a unique event organised by the MLP, Careers and Employability Division, aimed at improving dialogue with, and services to, employers. The delegates represented large national and global companies from a variety of sectors, including Procter & Gamble, Jaguar Land Rover, Citi, Deloitte, AstraZeneca and Shell.

The day focused on strategies to attract student and graduate talent at The University of Manchester and addressed many of the challenges which recruiters face, such as how to capitalise on the explosion of social media and how to tackle diversity issues.

An immigration solicitor led an interactive session on the legal intricacies of recruiting international graduates. Demand for this topic was so great, that a longer follow-up session will be offered in London later this year.

Recruiters ‘Target Manchester’

Big Bang Science Fair
Profile

Kaye’s Knowledge

For Lecturer in Contemporary Literature, Dr Kaye Mitchell, being appointed at The University of Manchester has been a sort of homecoming. With her father in the RAF she grew up on military bases all over the South West* before attending boarding school in Malvern, but has fond memories of visiting her grandparents in Greater Manchester as a child.

“I headed to London after leaving school, where I did my BA in English Literature at Queen Mary University of London, and I automatically stayed there for my post-graduate study and early career,” she says. “But since moving to Manchester and the University a couple of years ago, I’ve really felt at home, and am now selling up in ‘the smoke’.”

Initially studying English and Drama, Kaye realised early in her degree that she wanted to focus on the former and become an academic. “I’d always been a huge reader and English had long been my best subject, but I hadn’t previously considered taking that into an academic career,” she says. “As soon as I focused on English both my studies and my enthusiasm really took off.

“From that point on, I thought, ‘This is what I’m going to do’. So I gave up on the idea of an exciting acting career, although there is still an element of performance in what I do.”

One possible down-side of fixing her sights on academia so early was that Kaye had a long road ahead, and she soon realised that she’d need to support herself with some work relevant to her studies. A high-achiever throughout her education, she was attractive enough to Granta publishing for them to take her on as an undergraduate, at an exciting and interesting stage in their own development.

“They were just re-launching their book publishing division, and I was lucky enough to be involved in many aspects of that,” Kaye explains. “I ended up staying on full-time after my degree and subsequently moving on to Macmillan, where I worked in parallel with my part-time MA and the first year of my PhD (both at Birkbeck).

“I didn’t have the kind of business perspective necessary for a long-term career in publishing, but I racked-up four or five years’ experience of the way contemporary literature is ‘produced’, which is very relevant to the work I do now.”

Kaye attracted Arts and Humanities Research Council funding from the second year of her doctorate, which looked at how far an author’s intentions determine the meaning of a text. “By the end of the twentieth century what the author might have intended had largely been disregarded within studies of English literature, in favour of focusing on interpretations of the text itself. I argued that it isn’t possible to completely disregard the fundamental ‘intentionality’ of a text, be it a work of fiction or a film or painting.”
Also teaching part-time after the first year of her PhD, Kaye was now firmly on the path to academia - quite a new direction for someone from a military background. "Once I’d missed out on becoming the first female pilot in the RAF, my ambitions moved away from working in the military," she laughs. "My family were, and continue to be, supportive and proud - if slightly uncomprehending. I was the first to go to university at all, let alone for as long as I did, and I think they’re just relieved it turned into a proper job!"

Her first ‘proper job’ was at the University of Westminster, where she taught for three years and became joint Course Leader of the MA in English Literature. Her work with an ethnically and socially-diverse undergraduate group complemented her part-time teaching at Birkbeck during her PhD, where she taught mainly mature students ranging from her own age to people in their 60s and 70s.

"It was challenging but it taught me a lot about the experience and frames of reference that students can bring to the classroom, and that teaching can be a valuable two-way conversation," she says.

Kaye came to Manchester in 2007 to join the new Centre for New Writing, a dedicated contemporary writing hub within English and American Studies (EAS). The Centre was founded to offer specialised postgraduate teaching and supervision in the production and/or the study of contemporary literature, including teaching by and regular interaction with leading authors.

Its MA in Creative Writing was already well established within the University, but Kaye’s role would involve the design and direction of a new Masters on the literature and wider culture of recent decades. "I was attracted by the opportunity to be in at the beginning of something new and exciting and the chance to design and run my own MA programme," she says, "as well as using my intellectual excellence of the subject area as a whole.

"The MA in Contemporary Literature and Culture I now direct covers literature written in English since 1970 but particularly since 1990, and it’s rare for a taught postgraduate course to focus on such recent work. What’s even rarer is for students to have access to teaching staff like Martin Amis, M.J. Hyland and Vona Groarke, as well as readings and seminars by central figures in the industry.

Indeed, Kaye herself has a foot in both of these camps, regularly taking part in events in the Centre’s Martin Amis and Literature Live series as well as the Ladyfest, Queer Up North, Manchester Literature and Homotopia festivals. She also takes part in her School’s annual Sexuality Summer School, and in July will host a ‘Contemporary Literature and its Contexts’ conference which will again combine academic research and creative writers.

Also outside the University, Kaye is one of several EAS academics involved in a new course for the public at Manchester Central Library, ‘Reading Literature and Understanding Culture’. This free, monthly course applies university-level reading and instruction to a 90-minute discussion format, but is aimed at people interested in talking about books rather than pursuing ‘target-led’ education.

The course has proved overwhelmingly popular and was immediately fully subscribed, with around 90 prospective students joining a waiting list. And at the other end of the age spectrum, Kaye is mentoring three potential English students in the Manchester Access Programme, which supports local sixth-formers from non-traditional backgrounds as they undertake a guided project.

Within EAS, Kaye is currently supervising four PhD students investigating contemporary fiction, culture and critical theory. Her own research focuses on critical theory and its dialogue with the creative, and gender and sexuality. She has a particular interest in popular and genre fiction, their political qualities and their relationship to gender. Her work in this area has been important in facilitating her activities outside the University, and connecting her with such topical issues as the sexualisation of youth and culture.

Having written a book on A.L. Kennedy’s fiction in 2007 and published her doctoral study in 2008, her next venture will be a study of 1950’s pulp fiction, particularly the lesbian-themed novels popular in the US after the Second World War. Tentatively titled Queer, Pulp, and the Politics of Unintelligibility, the book will elaborate on her recent chapter for the Cambridge Companion to Popular Fiction, and examine incoherence and unintelligibility within Queer Theory and the foregrounding of shame, affect and trauma in pulp fiction.

With so many work-related activities on the go, including a role as EAS’s Assessment Co-ordinator and a new external examiner post for the University of Newcastle, it would be surprising if Kaye found much time for outside interests, but she’s a keen music fan who was partly attracted to Manchester by its celebrated music history. The reality has lived up to her hopes and she’s a regular on the city’s gig scene, but has also discovered a wider love for the place she so often visited as a child.

“I love Manchester - I’m really happy here and have just bought my own flat in the city centre,” she says. “And my colleagues at the University are genuinely the main draw – English and American Studies is a very welcoming, sociable and intellectually engaging place to be!”

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**CV**

**Name**
Dr Kaye Mitchell

**Position**
Lecturer in Contemporary Literature
Centre for New Writing, English and American Studies
School of Arts, Histories and Cultures

**Other positions**
Affiliated to the Centre for the Study of Sexuality and Culture

**EDUCATION**
1992-6
BA English Literature, Queen Mary, University of London

1997-9
MA Philosophy, Birkbeck

1999-2004
PhD: ‘Intention and Text: Towards an Intentionality of Literary Form’, Birkbeck

**Career**
1996 – 2000
Editorial and Personal Assistant, Macmillan

2001 – 2004
Visiting Lecturer/Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of Westminster and Birkbeck, University of London

May – July 2004
Course Instructor, Richmond, American International University, London

2004 – 2007
Lecturer in English Literature, University of Westminster

September 2007 – date
Lecturer in Contemporary Literature, Centre for New Writing, The University of Manchester
Music and Drama at Manchester

Thursday 6 May, 1.10pm
Quatuor Danel Luncheontime Concert
Cutting edge new music, to include a performance of Bruno Mantovani’s piano quintet Blue Girl with Red Wagon with Richard Whaley on piano.

Thursday 6 May, 2.30pm
Quatuor Danel Seminar
The Quatuor Danel introduces us to the imaginative world of Henri Fourès, currently director of the Lyon Conservatoire.

Friday 7 May, 7.30pm
Quatuor Danel Evening Concert
The first performance of The Quartet by Henri Fourès, director of the Conservatoire of Lyon. The season concludes with an explosion of joie de vivre with Dvořák’s Piano Quintet.

Friday 7 May, 1.10pm
Solo Recitals - MUMS FREE lunchtime concert
With only a week before University examined recitals begin, this lunchtime concert gives students a chance to test drive their year’s hard work with excerpts from recital programmes.

Saturday 8 May, 9am-5pm
Quatuor Danel Open House Event
Friday 4 June, 2pm & 7.30pm
Young Vic Theatre and Eclipse Theatre
Pastoral support, guidance and a listening ear to students and staff.

The Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama
Bridgeford Street, Manchester M13 9PL
0161 275 8951/8950
email boxoffice@manchester.ac.uk
www.manchester.ac.uk/martinharriscentre

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Wed 12 May, 11.30am
Trees in Spring, a guided walk of the Arboretum
A family walk of the arboretum to see the blossom and discover some of the legends about trees and plants. Normal admission charge applies, no extra charge for this event.

For further information or to book tickets, please call 01477 571339 or visit our website.

Jodrell Bank Observatory Visitor Centre
Macclesfield, Cheshire
01477 571339
www.manchester.ac.uk/jodrellbank/viscen

Chaplaincies

ST Peter’s House Chaplaincy
11am Holy Communion
12.15pm Bible Study
12.45pm Lunch (first Sun)
6.30pm Evening Worship (term-time only)
Foyer 10am – 5pm
An area where students and staff can relax and meet friends. A tea/coffee machine is available.

RC Chaplaincy Avila House
Mass Times (term-time only)
Sun, 7pm (in the Holy Name Church) next door to the Chaplaincy
Mon, Wed, Fri, 6pm in the Chaplaincy Chapel
Tues, Thurs, 12.15pm in the Chaplaincy Chapel

The Jewish Student Centre and Synagogue
Hillel House, Greenheys Lane
0161 226 1139
Email rabbiby@hotmail.com
www.rabbiby.com

Muslim Chaplaincy
South Campus Mosque, McDougall Centre
Jamaat (Group Prayer) Daily
Juma Prayer Friday 1.15pm
Honorary Imam: Imam Habeeb, h_chatti@hotmail.com
North Campus Mosque, Basement of Joule Library,
Sackville Street Building
Jamaat (Group Prayer) Daily
Juma Prayer Friday 12.30pm

The role of the Volunteer Muslim Chaplain is to provide pastoral support, guidance and a listening ear to Muslim staff and students.

Chaplains’ emails: a.sami99@yahoo.co.uk,
m01411@hotmail.com, asia_shah61@yahoo.co.uk,
hawwa@hotmail.com

International Society

Lake District visiting Aira Force Waterfall and Ambleside
Sunday 9 May
Peak Caves and Caverns including Speedwell and Treak Cliff Cavern
Saturday 15 May
North Wales visiting Colwyn Bay, Caernarfon and the Welsh Highland
Sunday 16 May
Peak District visiting the Heights of Abraham, Matlock Bath and Hardwick Hall
Saturday 22 May
Oxford with guided tour
Sunday 23 May
Staffordshire visiting Ironbridge Gorge and Shugborough Estate
Saturday 29 May
Peak District visiting Chatsworth House’s Tudor Festival and Bakewell
Sunday 30 May
North Wales visiting Llangollen and Chirk Castle
Opening hours
Mon-Fri 9.30am – 7pm (during term time)
Mon-Fri 9.30am – 5pm (during vacation)

Small World Café opening hours
Mon-Fri 11am – 3pm
327 Oxford Road (next to Krobar)
0161 275 4959
email int.soc@manchester.ac.uk
www.internationalsociety.org.uk

Gig Guide

MANCHESTER ACADEMY 1, 2 and 3

Tues 4 May
Kids in Glass Houses - £11 Adv

Thurs 6 May
Hot Club of Cowtown - £15 Adv

Fri 7 May
Misty’s Big Adventure - £7.50 Adv

Sat 8 May
UK Guns and Roses - £12.50 Adv

Sun 9 May
Mr Hudson - £12.50 Adv

Tues 11 May
The Big Pink - £10 Adv

Fri 14 May
Eli Paperboy Reed & The True Loves - £11 Adv

Sat 15 May
Kings Of Leon - £10 Adv

Sun 16 May
Alabama - £18 Adv

Wed 19 May
Diana Vickers - £12 Adv

Sat 22 May
Dreadzone - £14 Adv

Mon 24 May
The Rocket Summer - £11 Adv

Wed 26 May
Heavy Trash - £12 Adv

Thurs 27 May
Dead Meadow - £8 Adv

Sat 29 May
Son of Dave - £10 Adv

Tickets from:
Students’ Union, Oxford Road
Piccadilly Box Office @ easy Internet Café (c/c)
0871 2200260
Royal Court (Liverpool) 0151 709 4321 (c/c)
Students’ Union
Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL
0161 275 2930
www.manchesteracademy.net

Centre for New Writing

Our unique events bring the best-known contemporary novelists and poets to Manchester to discuss and read from their work. Everyone is welcome, and ticket prices include a complimentary glass of wine or soft drink.

Thursday 1 July, 6.30pm,
The Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall
Martin Amis Public Events: Literature and Violence
Martin Amis, Professor of Creative Writing at The University of Manchester, is one of the leading novelists of his generation. In this, one of the latest of his series of high profile public events, he will be discussing the ways in which literature depicts and responds to violence.

Website: www.manchester.ac.uk/arts/newwriting
Online journal: www.themanchesterreview.co.uk

The Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama
Bridgeford Street, Manchester M13 9PL
0161 275 8951/8950
email boxoffice@manchester.ac.uk
www.manchester.ac.uk/martinharriscentre
The Manchester Museum

SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

Nanoq: Flat Out and Bluesom, Snæbjörnsdóttir and Wilson until 11 July
The story of polar bears and their journey from the arctic wilderness to the museums and stately homes of the UK

The Evolutionist: A Darwin Extravaganza of Events and Exhibitions until 30 August
including Charles Darwin: Evolution of a Scientist

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Saturday 15 May, 4pm onwards
Museums at Night
See the Museum at night, watch a special film screening, follow a spooky tour and join in craft activities.

Saturday 22 May, 11am-4pm
Big Saturday: Variety of Life
Discover the amazing diversity of life on earth and your place within it. Linked to the International Year of Biodiversity.

Monday 31 May – Friday 4 June, 11am -4 pm
Biodiversity. walker w ithin it. Linked to the International Year of

TALKS AND TOURS

Monday 20 May, 6-8pm
Ideas Café: Darwin the Lifelong Learner
Be inspired by Darwin’s lifelong quest for knowledge, with short talks and object handling.

Find out more about events in the Museum at www.manchester.ac.uk/museum

Opening hours
Open: Tues-Sat 10am - 5pm
Sun-Mon (and Bank Holidays) 11am - 4pm
FREE Admission

The Manchester Museum
Oxford Road, Manchester
0161 275 2634
www.manchester.ac.uk/museum

The Whitworth Art Gallery

EXHIBITIONS

Heroes and Kings: The Shahnama of Ferдовswi until 27 June
The Shahnama, or Book of Kings, is an epic poem written by the Persian poet Ferdowsi. The national epic of Iran, it tells the mythical and historical past of Iran from the creation of the world up until the Arab conquest of Persia in the 7th Century.

EVENTS

Sat 8 May
Unusual Views: Library Tours for Photographers
Take the opportunity to photograph the Library building from spectacular viewpoints not normally open to the public! Guided by Library staff you will be given unique access to the gallery in our magnificent Historic Reading Room, the cupola above the Historic staircase and other hidden gems.

Sat 15 May
Here be Dragons! A tour of the Library for children
The walls and ceilings of the Library are full of strange and mysterious creatures - dragons, monkeys, green men and exotic birds. Join our tour to seek them out – and meet Flame, our guardian dragon! This tour is most appropriate for families with children aged 5-10, but all are welcome. Booking is recommended.

Wed 19 May
Explorer Tours: A Peek Behind the Scenes! Ever wondered where some of the Library doors and staircases lead to? Then this is the tour for you! Guided by members of Library staff, you will be taken behind the scenes and given the chance to look at parts of the building normally hidden from view.

Collection Close-Up with Library Tour every third Thursday in the month, 12.15pm
With one of our curators, enjoy a closer look at material from the Library’s world famous collections and find out more about this magnificent building. Booking is essential.

For more information and to book tickets please visit www.library.manchester.ac.uk/specialcollections/events or contact our Visitor Services Team on 0161 306 0555 or jrl.events@manchester.ac.uk

Public opening hours
Mon 12-5pm, Tues-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 12pm-5pm
Reader opening hours
Mon-Wed 10am-5pm, Thurs 10am-7pm, Fri-Sat 10am-5pm
FREE ADMISSION

The John Rylands Library
150 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 3EH
0161 306 0555
email jrl.visitors@manchester.ac.uk
www.manchester.ac.uk/library

The W hitworth Art Gallery

Oxford Road, Manchester
0161 275 7450
email whitworth@manchester.ac.uk
www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth

EXHIBITIONS

Walls Are Talking: Wallpaper, Art and Culture until Aug 2010
The first major UK exhibition of artists’ wallpapers with work by over 30 artists including Andy Warhol, Sarah Lucas and Damien Hirst. Kitsch ideas of home decoration are turned upside down as artists subvert the stereotypes of wallpaper to hit home messages about warfare, racism, cultural conflicts and gender.

The Manchester Indian: Thomas Wardle and India until summer 2010
This exhibition celebrates the centenary of the death of Sir Thomas Wardle (1831-1909). Still perhaps best known for his collaboration with William Morris, the exhibition focuses on Wardle’s efforts to reinvigorate the silk industry in India as well as the impact that India had on his work.

The Complete Roberta Breitmore: Lynn Hershman Leeson until summer 2010
In San Francisco in the mid-Seventies, Lynn Hershman Leeson created Roberta Breitmore and performed this persona as a work of art over a four year period, documenting it through artifacts, photography, film and sound. This extraordinary body of work, which raises questions about the complexities of identity and the nature of the work of art, has been purchased by the Whitworth in its final edition and is shown here for the first time in its entirety.

EVENTS

Every Sunday 1.30pm - 3.30pm, Family Friendly, Free

Colourful Sundays
Drop into the gallery any Sunday afternoon for free and fun creative activities at Colourful Sundays. Suitable for all ages no need to book.

Every Tuesday 11am -12.30pm, Free

Tuesday Talks
Each week an artist, thinker or critic talks about their work, influences and inspirations.

Every Monday 10.30 -11.30am, Family Friendly, Free

Toddlerastic
For budding artists under five. Come and enjoy an art, music or dance adventure around the Gallery.

Reserve tickets by calling 0161 275 7450 or events.whitworth@manchester.ac.uk

The Whitworth Art Gallery
Oxford Road, Manchester
0161 275 7450
email whitworth@manchester.ac.uk
www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth
Café on the Park

A stylish place to come for breakfast, lunch, or a relaxing drink.

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www.meeting.co.uk

The University of Manchester
Victorian watercolour artists captured a rural landscape that was fast disappearing, using glowing colour and fine detail.

When Arthur and Helen Grogan began collecting in the 1960’s, works by the Impressionists and Surrealists were beginning to fetch astronomical prices at auction. By contrast, being then somewhat unfashionable, 19th century watercolours were readily available and affordable. Over four decades the couple were able to build up a significant collection that represented major artists including William Holman Hunt and John William Waterhouse.

Victorian art now holds a prominent place in public esteem once again. Today a substantial fortune would be required to own even a handful of the works collected by Arthur and Helen Grogan. Their collection was distributed through The Art Fund last year, and the Whitworth was one of nine galleries across the country to receive a selection of artworks from their magnificent collection of paintings, drawings, prints and ceramics. Highlights of this generous gift are on display from 1 May to 22 August.

Opening hours are 10am to 5pm Monday to Saturday and 12 noon to 4pm Sunday. Admission is free.

http://admiredesire.wordpress.com/

Admire/Desire
A new gift of watercolours from Arthur and Helen Grogan

News Contact
News and story ideas
Internal Communications Office
tel 0161 275 2112
email uninews@manchester.ac.uk
online www.manchester.ac.uk/staffnet/news
Deadline 19 May 12 noon

Events Contact
Events and listings information
Philippa Adshead
tel 0161 275 2922
email unievents@manchester.ac.uk
Deadline 19 May 12 noon

Adverts Contact
Ads
Janice Drew
tel 0161 275 2113
group.uniaids@manchester.ac.uk
Deadline 19 May 12 noon

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