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Directorate for the Student Experience

Title: **Guidance to Schools – Implementing the Manchester Welcome**

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[www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/supporting-students/studentexperienceprojects/welcome/](http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/supporting-students/studentexperienceprojects/welcome/)

Status: Current. Approved by Induction Project Steering Group

Circulation: Welcome and Induction Teams in Schools; PSS Student Experience Leads/HoSAs; June Finch for timetabling officers; Induction Project Steering Group and Team; Head of Student Communication and Marketing.

**1. Overview**

1.1 From September 2013, the University will welcome new students with The Manchester Welcome, encompassing International Orientation and the Welcome Week events organised by the Directorate for the Student Experience (DSE). The DSE will take operational responsibility for the management and ongoing development of The Manchester Welcome.

1.2 This guidance is for use by Schools when reviewing their current Welcome Week arrangements in the light of the Manchester Welcome. School Welcomes should be informed by The Manchester Welcome, adopting a welcoming and celebratory tone, and in particular should build on it by prioritising activities which introduce news students to the School community and begin to build networks.

**2.0 Changes/Minimum Requirements for 2013**

* Publication of Welcome Schedules in advance (mid August) and online
* Reviewing Welcome to prioritise activities that meet Welcome objectives
* Offering Campus Tours

**3.0 Timetable**

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| January 2013 | Induction Project Team identifies School contacts for Welcome and Induction |
| February 2013 | Schools begin to plan Welcome 2013, reviewing existing practice and determining which elements to retain for Welcome and which to defer to Induction |
| End February 2013 | Publication of ‘The Manchester Welcome’ (outline) |
| From 1 March | Schools contacted by the Manchester Welcome Team  - *Process for arranging City Bus Tours*  - *Templates and checklists (etc) for online publication of Welcome Week schedule* |
| February – March 2013 | School Welcome/Induction Teams meet Induction Project Team – Consultation on the Manchester Induction/Support for School Welcome |
| April/May | Deadline for requesting room bookings with CTU (new room booking protocol attached) |
| By mid August 2013 | School Welcome Week schedules published online |
| By 1 September 2013 | School Welcome Week schedules finalised (including venue locations) |
| Welcome Week 2013 | Schools deliver new School Welcome |

The Induction Project Team is developing a staff-facing website for Welcome and Induction information; the link will be published a soon as possible.

**4.0 Purpose of The Manchester Welcome**

4.1 Manchester – City and University – has a proud tradition of inclusivity, diversity and vibrancy. The purpose of The Manchester Welcome is to celebrate new students’ choice of Manchester as the venue for their higher education and to introduce them to our community and the facilities and services it offers.

4.2 The Manchester Welcome is an institutional event that comprises all activities associated with the period at the start of year for all new students, irrespective of nationality, fee status, residential status, level or discipline of study.

4.3 It is the first stage in a process that will continue throughout an individual’s relationship with the University, through which students are offered the information, support and networks that will give them the best opportunity to develop into graduates ‘distinguished by their intellectual capabilities, employability, leadership qualities, and their ability and ambition to contribute to society.’ (Manchester 2020: the Strategic Plan)

4.4 The key underpinning purposes of the Manchester Welcome are:

* Celebrating the student’s choice to study at The University of Manchester
* Breaking down barriers

**5.0 The School Welcome**

5.1 The School Welcome will be informed by The Manchester Welcome and will be the first stage in the overall process of Induction, which will continue throughout the first year and beyond.

5.2 It should be aligned with the purposes of Manchester Welcome: celebrating a student’s choice of Manchester and introducing students to our community. It will have a particular emphasis on establishing new students as members of the School community.

5.3 It is well established that the development of networks within a well-defined community provides a foundation for success and satisfaction. Strong networks also facilitate early help-seeking – should the need arise – and prevent the escalation of problems. A key purpose of the School Welcome schedules is to offer opportunities for new students to get to know each other, more senior students and members of staff in order to start to develop the friendships and study networks that will both sustain them and impart a sense of community and belonging.

**6.0 General Good Practice**

* Involve current students in feeding back on, planning and delivering Welcome events. Student reps, peer supporters and Staff-Student Liaison committees should be utilised.
* Offer a range of events in order to maximise inclusivity.
* Social activities should be timed to enable participation by students who are commuting to campus, or who have responsibilities for dependents. Evening events may exclude some students.
* Events organised by or including significant input from PASS Leaders and Peer Mentors offer the opportunity for new students to mix with more senior students as well as allowing new students to air concerns that they may hesitate to mention to staff.
* Events related to the academic programme of study have been shown to be a good way of enabling students to build relationships with each other and with academic staff.
* Include opportunities for students to meet/engage with Students Union at the School Level e.g. Student Reps etc.

**7.0 Illustrations/Good Practice – How to Deliver Welcome Outcomes**

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| **Outcome and Rationale** | **Illustration(s)** |
| **Students receive a formal welcome** | * **Speech by a memorable/relevant figurehead e.g. Head of School.** ALC for example have an induction talk led by the head of the school during welcome week * **Podcasts**: Lectures in some of the larger theatres and lecture rooms can down be automatically recorded and uploaded to the School website. One idea would be to record the induction lecture and upload it to the School website so that students can access information at a later date if needed. * **Letter**: A formal welcome could begin pre-arrival by sending students a letter, with a School/discipline specific prospectus or guide which highlights academic achievements and the opportunities available to them as new students at the University.   Any or a combination of these could be planned to deliver a formal welcome.  Advice on tone and content may be obtained from the Student Communications Team, email paul.govey@manchester.ac.uk |
| Students appreciate the formal welcome as an acknowledgement of the importance of their decision, and an indication of the respect with which they are received. The formal welcome also offers the opportunity to place their chosen subject of study into the wider context of the discipline and School – what is the School/discipline known for? How is it regarded in the external world? What is the nature of the academic community that the student has just joined? |
| **Students are offered the opportunity to explore their surroundings** | Campus and City tours fulfil two objectives: familiarising new students with their surroundings and giving them opportunities to get to know one another. School-based walking tours might be tailored to School or Discipline specific environs or sites of interest (e.g. Physics students might find a walking tour that incorporated the Rutherford Building of interest, and the involvement of knowledgeable academic staff as guides, as well as more senior students, could prove successful).  Examples:   * Manchester Business School offer their students a choice between a city coach tour or a themed ‘music’ walking tour of Manchester. These tours not only give students the opportunity to explore their surroundings, but are also a fantastic opportunity to socialise with their peers. * MACE offer something similar by offering a city coach tour or a coach trip to MUFC. * A number of disciplines in ALC, including Archaeology, Religion and Theology and Italian Studies, offer their students a ‘scavenger hunt’ which is led by their peer mentors. This offers students the opportunity to meet their fellow peers, their mentors and also explore the campus. * The French department organise something similar by organising a tour of Alliance Francaise, which is also led by peer mentors. |
| Having the **opportunity to explore their surroundings** and establish the location of key buildings and services is a central part of the settling in process for new students.  In 2013, the Manchester Welcome will extend the offer of city Bus Tours to home students (no charge) to give as many students as possible the opportunity to have an initial guide to the city of Manchester.  Schools are expected to ensure that students have the opportunity to explore their local campus surroundings, ideally in a manner that also gives them the chance to meet fellow and more senior students and start to **get to know their School/discipline community**. |
| **Students are offered the opportunity to get to know their School/discipline community** | As well as tours, a range of other events should be planned to facilitate students and staff getting to know one another. There should be a range of events in order to maximise inclusivity.   * Social activities should be timed to enable participation by students who are commuting to campus, or who have responsibilities for dependents. Evening events may exclude some students. * Events organised by or including significant input from PASS Leaders and Peer Mentors offer the opportunity for new students to mix with more senior students as well as allowing new students to air concerns that they may hesitate to mention to staff. * Events related to the academic programme of study have been shown to be a good way of enabling students to build relationships with each other and with academic staff.   Examples:   * Some disciplines, such as Religion and Theology, organise ‘tea parties’ in which peer mentors and academic staff are also invited so that students have the opportunity to ask additional questions * The French department organise a welcome party in Jabez Clegg and academic staff are also invited. * In Archaeology, peer mentors meet with students and take them to the Start of Year Fair * In Music, a tea and coffee morning is organised for students to meet their mentors. After the introductory lecture, students then also go to lunch with their peer mentors. * In MBS, an ‘Alumni Careers Panel’ is organised so students have the opportunity to hear about previous students career choices and ask them questions. |
| It is well established that the development of networks within a well-defined community provides a foundation for success and satisfaction. Strong networks also facilitate early help-seeking – should the need arise – and prevent the escalation of problems. A key purpose of the School Welcome schedules is to offer opportunities for new students to get to know each other, more senior students and members of staff in order to start to develop the friendships and study networks that will both sustain them and impart a sense of community and belonging. |

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| **Choice of Manchester celebrated** | Whilst not every event can be a party, and there are inevitably some routine but important activities necessary during Welcome Week, events and activities can be planned with a celebratory and happy tone. Meeting this outcome could also be achieved through the ‘getting to know each’ other events in the section above. Feedback from students indicates that academic disciplines and research reputation is an important factor in their choice of Manchester so there may be opportunities to base events around that, for example through accessible presentations on current research highlights.  Examples:   * To enable all students to participate in the welcome week social events, MBS organise an ‘end of welcome week tea party.’ * ALC organise welcome week BBQs for each discipline in the School. The BBQs are organised during normal working hours to give all students the opportunity to attend. * Classics and Ancient History organise an exhibitions tour at the John Ryland’s library to look at ancient artefacts. They also organise a welcome week party in Jabez Clegg for their students. * Spanish and Portuguese organise their welcome party in the Institute Cervantes. * To celebrate their choice of Manchester, Archaeology also offer their students a ‘behind the scenes tour’ of the Manchester Museum and a field trip to the Peak District. |
| Recognising that, as they say, ‘other Universities are available’ – we want to affirm with students that they’ve made the right choice |
| **Students know what to expect during Welcome Week** | Publication of the Welcome Schedule online will begin to address this requirement. Ensuring that room bookings are finalised in a timely way will reduce student confusion at the start of the year – or at least enable accurate information to be provided when they ask for locations and directions.  **Examples**   * ALC send a ‘welcome pack’ to all new students by mid August, which includes their timetable for welcome week. If for some reason the timetable cannot be sent with the welcome pack, an email is sent to the student with a link to their timetable at least 2 weeks before their arrival. |
| As with all new starts, arrival in Manchester may be daunting, whether or not the new student has previous experience of University study. Providing enough information so that students are able to plan for their first few days is intended to provide an element of reassurance and certainty. |