

6 Ways to Help Students Make the Most of Manchester

Study Abroad

The majority of undergraduate degree programmes provide the opportunity for students to study abroad for a semester/year. Over 900 Manchester students study or work abroad as part of their degree programme every year. The University has in the region of 200 partnerships globally to support students in studying abroad and these partnerships tend to be with the leading Universities in each country.

A period of study abroad is designed to enhance a student's intercultural competence as well as enhance language skills and/or provide insight into international business environments. A report by the Intelligence Unit of Quacquarelli Symonds found that the 'majority of employers globally value an international study experience when recruiting' (QS, 2011: 10). The annual feedback from students' highlights that the personal growth and independence gained through an exchange experience is irreplaceable and life changing.

A range of funding is available to support students in participating in international mobility including significant grants through the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission and a significant number of donor-funded scholarships.

Study Abroad alongside a range of other international programmes and opportunities is supported by the International Programmes Office (IPO).

Further information: <http://www.studyabroad.manchester.ac.uk/>

Student Experiences: <http://www.studyabroad.manchester.ac.uk/what-is-study-abroad/experiences/>

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Students' Union Community Volunteering

All volunteering at the Students' Union is completely student led. Our Student Action volunteering group run 33 projects every week, working with people in Manchester most in need of support. Our volunteers, led by student project leaders, work with homeless people, adults with learning disabilities, elderly people and women and families living in shelters, with a variety of projects developed alongside members of the community.

<http://manchesterstudentsunion.com/studentaction>

Our Access All Areas projects are focussed in local schools, and are designed to encourage pathways to higher education for young people who may not normally consider it an option for them. Projects including mentoring, reading groups, creative arts projects and youth groups.

<http://manchesterstudentsunion.com/accessallareas>

Students can also volunteer with RAG, our fundraising group, who raised over £190,000 for charity last year! We are always looking for volunteers to help run events, such as the Bogle, our 55-mile sponsored walk and our annual Beerfest, as well as taking part in street collections and smaller events throughout the year.

<http://manchesterstudentsunion.com/rag>

We support and encourage students to set up their own projects in all areas, giving them advice and guidance on safety, best practice and volunteer management. If a student has an idea, they can always come and speak to us in the Activities Centre in the Union!

Students' Union Other Activities

There are a huge range of activities to get involved in. We support over 1,000 students to be Faculty Officers and Course Reps- ensuring students' voices in their academic area are heard in the University. Our Liberation reps represent groups such as BME, Women and LGBTQ students. Action Groups focus on postgraduates, ethical and environmental issues, and international students. Reps in all areas are democratically elected and work alongside our Exec officers to make real change for students.

<http://manchesterstudentsunion.com/studentofficers>

Our societies are a great way for students to get involved, as there is something for everyone- and if not, they can start their own! We have over 350 societies, including cultural and faith groups, creative arts, course-based groups, political interests and non-BUCS sports. Societies give students the chance to meet new people, find others who share their interests or try something new!

<http://manchesterstudentsunion.com/societies>

The Union has a long tradition of campaigning, and this is alive and well today. We support students to campaign on things they care about, and everyone has the chance to get involved. Existing campaigns include Save Our NHS and We Get It, and we can support students to run their own campaigns around things they really want to change.

<http://manchesterstudentsunion.com/campaigns>

Our student media groups give students the chance to produce creative content and gain media production skills. Fuse FM broadcast live throughout termtime, and Fuse TV produce a range of shows, reporting from around campus and making original content. The Mancunion newspaper is produced 20 times per year, and gives opportunities for students to be writers, editors and photographers.

<http://manchesterstudentsunion.com/studentmedia>

Student Volunteering (UoM)

Volunteering is a great way for students to improve their employability by giving them a chance to develop skills and gain experience in particular sectors. Evidence also suggests that students who volunteer are generally more positive about their university experience as a whole.

The Volunteering & Community Engagement Team is based in the Student Development & Community Engagement Division. The team works with over 500 charities and community organisations, sourcing opportunities that students can then take part in. These include regular volunteering opportunities with these organisations as well as more bespoke projects that the students can volunteer with. Staff mentor many of these projects to ensure that the students have a good experience at the same time as delivering on the project for the partner organisation.

The team offers a range of information, advice and guidance for students including help for those looking for international opportunities, support to keep safe whilst volunteering and help in tailoring volunteering to future career needs. Students can get help from the website at

www.manchester.ac.uk/volunteers and also get tailored support through one to one advice sessions.

The team also generally promotes the concept of volunteering across campus, for example through its annual Volunteering Fair and National Student Volunteering Week.

University College for Interdisciplinary Learning

The University College for Interdisciplinary Learning presents an opportunity for undergraduate students at The University of Manchester to broaden their educational horizons. It offers course units that showcase the breadth and depth of research and knowledge found at the University and encourage students to go beyond the boundaries of their degree programme.

University College provides students with a learning experience that will ensure students are skilled to challenge conventional thinking and able to offer perspectives that make the Manchester graduate more employable. Furthermore, the University College connects teaching to current, cutting-edge thinking and research, allowing students to locate their disciplinary knowledge in the wider world and helping to make a Manchester education of benefit in any future endeavour. University College options are credit weighted and some offer real-world experience. These opportunities can include mentoring school children, working in the local community, as well as business and laboratory experience.

Participation on some University College units can mean that students become eligible for Awards such as the Manchester Leadership Award and the recently launched Enterprise and Global Awards. To find out more about the College and the units on offer visit our website at www.manchester.ac.uk/college

Ethical Grand Challenges Signature Programme

Producing socially responsible graduates is one of the five strategic priorities of the University's Social Responsibility agenda. An Ethical Grand Challenges Signature Programme was agreed by the University's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Social Responsibility Governance Group in June 2013. This commits the University to:

"Provide every Manchester graduate with the opportunity to confront key ethical grand challenges through the completion of a common programme in each year of undergraduate study focusing on: Sustainability (Y1); Social Justice (Y2); and Workplace Ethics (Y3)."

The Signature Programme aims to support and complement other institutional aims and targets including to provide a distinctive Manchester education, to maximize student satisfaction, to enhance student employability and to opportunities for students to take part in volunteering and community engagement.

Pilot activity against each of the themes is taking place in 2014/2015:

- Welcome Week September 2014: Sustainability Challenge attended by 170 first year students from 5 programmes representing all faculties: Midwifery, Petroleum Engineering, Zoology, IT for Business Management, Religions & Theology. Almost 75% of students said that they were more aware of the complexity of sustainability issues having taken part in the event.
- February 2015: MHS Workplace Ethics Pilot
- April 2015: Humanities Social Justice Festival
- Autumn 2015: EPS Workplace Ethics Pilot

To find out more contact: jane.ratchford@manchester.ac.uk