

September 2017

1. Update from Steve Dauncey

I hope everyone has been able to enjoy a break from work over the summer period and all feel refreshed to cope with the increased levels of activity that comes with the start of the academic year. The British summer continues to delight ducks and gardeners so I look forward to a better September on the weather front.

The closure of the 16/17 year brought better than forecast financial results with expenditure in Q3 not having the up-turn that has occurred in previous years. I appreciate the increased level of scrutiny that will have suppressed spend levels but equally there may well be a correlation with the change programme which commenced in May. On this issue, the consultation with the Unions has been extremely thorough and our own restructure has been considered in line with other areas. I had hoped for a quicker resolution but we have now closed the voluntary severance period and issued letters to all staff concerned. I am very aware of the stress caused to all those involved in the restructure and to most other teams where recruitment has been put on hold pending resolution. I am working with the full finance team on implementation.

I now have the Planning Directorate reporting in to me and I need to consider how I utilise this update. I have tried to ensure that I provide an oversight that informs all across Finance and Procurement and this should also be possible with the inclusion of Planning. However I will discuss with Matt Atkin, the new (appointed in July) Director of Planning. I am also pleased to confirm that Chris Trask has been appointed as Deputy Director of Finance and I am confident that he will receive the same level of support as currently enjoyed by Nicola.

I have had a number of meetings related to Pensions. There are accounting complexities which the teams are getting to grips with and we are reconsidering our previous approach and I also believe we can improve our forecasting in this area. There are also the real challenges presented in addressing the contractual deficit and the cost of future accrual, something well covered (if not always accurately) in the national press. We have also been nearing financial close on a few major capital investments (MECD, Fallowfield and Royce) alongside monitoring the progress on the ongoing builds. It is nigh impossible to walk anywhere on campus without encountering building work and I took a stroll to see the green wall on Schuster, having navigated past the work to develop the park on what was Brunswick Street – something I am looking forward to enjoying.

The move towards even greater use of category management continues in the Procurement team. This project has got the full support of the PSS leadership team and we will need active engagement with the academic community, however first steps involve greater business intelligence. We have already reaped some rewards and have started to address demand management (for example, why so many issued with mobile phones!) but there is so much more to go at.

I took the opportunity to spend some time with the credit control team, thanks to Cheryl Royle for organising, and in the income office, thanks to David Taylor. I found these 'teach-ins' very informative as I followed through the processes and gained an insight into the excellent work that it done. The need for good interpersonal skills was clear as all were routinely dealing with customers/suppliers, both on phone and in person. Thanks to all.

The Planning team are now stuck into statutory returns which is an intensive period. We are also collecting performance data for the APR process and reviewing the results of the confirmation/clearance process. The finance/planning joint working will only get closer and this will be of benefit to all. It is also very

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pleasing to report that our student intake was very close to target and achieved largely in line with quality expectations. It was a very challenging time and the new approach to A levels gave all Universities and students a less than traditional post results period. I hope all of you that had children receiving results including GCSEs are proud parents, a stressful time I remember well.

2. New starter inductions

Something that has been lacking in the Directorate is an effective induction process for new staff. To remedy this, Adam Birch, Communications Officer, has been working on an induction presentation which will introduce new starters to the Directorate and help them settle into their new role. The course will be suitable for new starters across all areas of the University, including transactional and procurement staff. It is envisaged that the course will be run on a monthly basis, starting towards the end of September, and that eventually new starters will be able to sign up for the course via the online training catalogue.

Whilst this is being set up, please give Adam details of any new starters in your area, or staff who have recently joined who you feel would benefit from the induction course. Adam will then invite them to the first session.

Contact: adam.birch@manchester.ac.uk, ext. 52172

3. Online Register of Interests

All Finance staff on Grade 6 and above (plus all Procurement staff) should recently have received an email requesting them to submit an entry in the online Register of Interests. All staff should be aware and take proper account of any conflict of interest which may arise from their role in the University, and the University must be notified of any interests (personal or family, and pecuniary or otherwise). Therefore all staff of Grade 6 and above (and any staff on other grades with possible conflicts of interest) must complete an annual declaration of their interests (until now, using a paper based system). Even if staff have no interests to declare they should submit a 'nil return'.

Further information can be found on the following links:

- The online Handy Guide has more detailed information:
<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=24418>
- The Finance website has further guidance on how to complete the Register:
<http://www.finance.manchester.ac.uk/compliance/roi/>

If you are in any doubt as to what to declare as an interest after having consulted the guidance available above, please contact Laurence Clarke (ext. 52139). If you need any assistance with this process of completing your register of interests form please contact either the Finance Helpdesk (ext. 62535 or finance.helpdesk@manchester.ac.uk) who will be able to assist you with any queries.

4. Website Changes

Link to page	Update
Faculty Team Structures	Updated team structures for FSE, HUM and BMH
Note Owners	Updated document – these named individuals have responsibility for fully understanding one or more notes in the financial statements
Credit control policy	Updated document
Financial Procedures	The financial procedures have been updated for the coming year.
Changes to the Financial Procedures	New webpage detailing the changes to the financial procedures for the current year
Auditor requirements	Additional auditor requirements added to this page
Journal training	Journal training to understand when journals should be used, best practice when preparing and posting journals and what supporting evidence auditors require for journals.
One off payment request form	Updated one off payment form with additional payments to China guidance
Month End Timetable	This has been updated for the current year
Fees and expenses	Updated guidance on paying for alcoholic drinks
PPMS and Equipment Charging for Research Support (FSE)	PPMS Core facilities management system & Charging for access to equipment including Sir Henry Royce Institute - FSE Research Support July 2017
RCUK DI Timesheet 2017	Updated document and webpage

In addition to the above, a full review of the website is currently underway to ensure all content is up to date. If you have any updates or suggestions for improvement, please contact [Adam Birch](#).

5. Staff Updates

BMH:

- No change

HUM:

- No change

FSE:

- Jon Masterson, Physics, Chemistry and Earth Finance Manager, has now left to join the School of Physics and Astronomy as Research Project Manager.
- Andrew Appleby, Chemistry and SEAS Research Finance Officer, has now retired.
- Congratulations to Bo Brandys and Natalie Shore on the birth of their baby boys.

PSS:

- Johana Quiros has joined as Credit Control Officer for UoMW.
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