

FEBRUARY 2018

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## 1. MESSAGE FROM THE REGISTRAR, SECRETARY AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER (RSCOO)

Welcome to February's CoreMunicate. I started the year by speaking to staff in the Directorate of Development and Alumni Relations (DDAR) at their away-day. I outlined both the challenges our University faces and the possible opportunities that we might take. If you would like me to come and meet with your team, please speak to your line manager or email me at [registrar@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:registrar@manchester.ac.uk).

You may also be aware that I am retiring from my position at the University at the end of September. I am very proud to be part of the positive contribution that this great University makes to our city, our country and across the globe and I know many of you feel the same about working at the University and in the PSS. This was very clear in your Staff Survey 2017 results. September is, however, still some way off and I remain absolutely focussed on my role. I remain firmly committed to working with PSS staff to ensure you that you continue to feel valued. I will therefore be working with colleagues in the PSS Leadership Team to act upon the ideas that have been put forward as part of the Hive campaign. To watch the February CoreMunicate video visit: [www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/pss/coremunicate/](http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/pss/coremunicate/)

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## 2. INVESTING IN OUR STAFF

Two significant strategic investments in our people have just been launched in support of our ambition to become a world-leading institution. 'Investing in Success' is a scheme which is open to all paid staff (subject to eligibility criteria), to apply for funding to enhance the contribution that they make to the University through exploring new ideas, creating projects and investing in personal development. If you have an innovative idea that could enhance the way you work and which would be of benefit to the University, visit [www.manchester.ac.uk/investing-in-success](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/investing-in-success) for details of the scheme, application information and criteria. Applications must be received before 16 March 2018.

Also launched at the beginning of the month were the prestigious new University of Manchester Presidential Fellowships. These aim to attract the highest quality early career academics to Manchester. There will be 100 appointments across a range of disciplines and research areas in all Faculties. This investment in new talent will help to support our core goals of research and teaching excellence.

The University's portfolio of endowment funds has also been made available to support a range of projects that will help the University achieve its strategic ambitions and more details about projects funded this way will follow.

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## 3. INTERNAL SECONDMENTS

A new [Internal Secondment Policy](#) has been launched to encourage and support internal secondments, which can provide support for a project, provide cover for an employee taking family leave or fulfil fixed term vacancies. In many cases, individuals will return to their original team at the end of the period with increased knowledge and experience and a greater understanding of the University.

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## 4. STAFF SURVEY UPDATE

During January we used The Hive to ask PSS staff what we can do, as the University, to better demonstrate how much we value them. This was as a result of the Staff Survey 2017 findings where some PSS staff said they felt less valued than their teaching and research colleagues.

There was a lot of discussion around career progression which is one area where Investing in Success can help. We're also in the position where we can offer staff different experiences and the opportunity to learn by taking up secondments within the University. Please explore the opportunities that are on offer and talk to your line manager in your PDR discussions. Flexible

The University of Manchester

working was by far the most voted for and commented thread and we will of course be exploring this further. We already have extensive [policy](#) in this area but it is valuable to hear that this is a key area that affects your feeling of being valued. I'll provide a full update in March outlining how your feedback will be used.

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## 5. CHERIL GRANT AWARD

The CHERIL (The Centre for Higher Education Research, Innovation and Learning) Grant Award, a competitive research grant open to staff, has now opened for bids. The grant facilitates research into aspects of teaching, learning and assessment, which enhance teaching and the student experience at the University. CHERIL usually awards 10-14 grants per academic year, up to £20,000 (although smaller grants are more usually awarded). For more information on the process, and how to apply, please see the CHERIL Grant Award page on StaffNet: <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/cheril/grants-and-awards/>

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## 6. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS (GDPR)

You may be aware that a new Data Protection Act is coming into force on 25 May 2018 to implement the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). As part of this, staff have been asked to review all person identifying information they may hold both electronically and in paper form. If the information is no longer required it should be deleted. If it is required, then this information should be retained in line with the [Records Retention Schedule](#).

Every member of staff has an obligation to review their own files, including emails, and they will be required to complete a compliance return form in July to confirm that they no longer hold any duplicate or obsolete person identifying information. Further information will be shared with staff over the coming months. For guidance contact your local [Information Governance Guardian](#) or email: [information.governance@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:information.governance@manchester.ac.uk)

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## 7. USS PENSIONS

The Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) has agreed a Universities UK proposal to address recent deficits and future costs in the USS pension scheme. The proposals would offer defined contribution pension benefits (and retain other important benefits such as death in service and incapacity benefits) for members at all salary levels from 1 April 2019, with an option to discuss a reintroduction of defined benefit accrual in the future should funding conditions improve. All USS employers are required to undertake a formal consultation process with their own affected employees and their elected representatives and it is expected this will commence on Monday, 19 March.

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## 8. STUDENT LIFECYCLE PROJECT

One of the biggest phases of the Project – Design and Discovery – came to a successful end in January. This phase saw hundreds of colleagues collaborating to propose a set of business outcomes and underlying processes for each of the 14 areas of the student lifecycle, with the aim of improving the experience of students and staff and increasing efficiency and effectiveness. Following this exercise, the scope of SLP's initial release will be approved by the SLP Board with a view to delivering it in September 2019. This will involve IT systems, such as Campus Solutions 9.2 and Microsoft Dynamics 365, entering development and build as well as looking at different ways of working. It will require significant input from staff and students. Further details will be announced shortly. More information is available in the latest [SLP video update](#) and on the [SLP's website](#).

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## 9. AUA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The AUA Annual Conference and Exhibition returns to the University on the 26 and 27 March this year and will tackle the subject of the moment: Brexit. To find out more visit: [www.aua.ac.uk/aua2018](http://www.aua.ac.uk/aua2018) and register by 9 March 2018.

**Will Spinks, Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer**