

ISSUE 3 • APRIL 2023

FSP MONTHLY DIGEST

Welcome to the Faculty and Student Partnerships (FSP) Monthly Digest

This is a platform to share news and updates from across the Directorate. Each issue is published on the first Friday of every month. We welcome and encourage submissions. If you have any items to submit, please send these by the last Friday of every month to:

uml.engagement@manchester.ac.uk

Message from Katy, Associate Director (FSP)

Hello everyone,

This month's Digest is full of interesting pieces from across the Directorate.

Highlights include:

- a spotlight on the mysterious SafePod Service managed by Customer Services;
- an update on what Ria Sunga and Laura Earnshaw, from the Engagement Team, are doing to make the Library Living Room feel even more cosy and welcoming for our students;
- a celebration of 10 years of the TLS team's brilliantly successful *Digital Society* course.



[Watch the video message](#)

For me, this last month has mainly been about preparing for the Our Students Workshop, which turned into a much bigger event than I had originally imagined. It was so pleasing to find that so many of our teaching, learning, and student experience colleagues from around the University wanted to join us in talking about where we might want to focus our development effort over the next few years. The level of their engagement sent a really strong message of support and appreciation for the work we already do and was a genuine invitation for us to develop an even closer partnership with them all, including our students. And that is all down to your hard work—so, thank you!

We're now pulling together a summary of all the thoughts and ideas the workshop generated and I'm looking forward to being able to share that with you all very soon.

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In terms of the Directorate, this month has seen quite a big change in the way many of you work, such as with the opening of Crawford House and the associated move out of the Blue 1 offices. I'm sure it has felt like the end of an era for many of you, me included. That was where I was based when I first joined the Library as medical librarian, a mere 26 years ago! Crawford House looks to be an amazing space and I know many of you are already really appreciating the quality and variety of workspaces it offers. I too am looking forward to trying it out when we hold our first Directorate Management Team work together day there later this month. I am also sure our students will really appreciate the extra study space we are creating for them on Blue 1 when it's ready.

So that's all from me this time, except to say that I do hope you have all managed to enjoy some well-deserved time off over the Easter period.

Katy

News and updates

Customer Services

The SafePod

Have you ever wondered what the big box that looks like a bank vault in the Customer Services Admin area is?

It's a SafePod.

SafePod is a standardised safe setting that provides the security and controls for data that requires secure access. A SafePod includes a door control access system, CCTV, a researcher area for dataset analysis, a secure IT cupboard and a height adjustable desk.



The SafePod, located in Customer Services Admin Office (Main Library)

Researchers can use the SafePod to access datasets for their research, if the datasets contain highly detailed and sensitive information about individuals (or households, organisations, etc.) that risk being disclosed. The SafePod provides a safe, secure, and controlled environment that is required to access and analyse these datasets.

The SafePod at the University of Manchester went live in February 2022 and after a trickle of bookings last year, we have seen a significant rise since the turn of the year. We have been 70% occupied since the start of the year, rising to 83% in March.

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Our SafePod users range from researchers based here at the University of Manchester, to those visiting for a conference and taking the opportunity to grab some valuable SafePod time whilst in Manchester.

We have eight SafePod co-ordinators within the Customer Services Team, whose main responsibility is to ensure the secure operation of the SafePod at all times. To become a SafePod co-ordinator, they have all taken DBS checks and passed an 80-question test – they don't allow just anyone to be a SafePod co-ordinator!

New Service: Student card collection

As of Monday, 3 April, students can collect a replacement student ID card from the Main Library Customer Services Desk. This service will be available for all students, Monday to Friday, 8am - 8pm and Saturday and Sunday, 9am - 5pm.

Engagement

Library Living Room changes

Laura Earnshaw and Ria Sunga have been working together to update the Library Living Room, which is located by the Library Lounge. The Library created this space in Winter 2022 to offer a warm, comfortable and relaxing space for students.

Currently, the room has blankets, seating and boardgames. The space is well-used by students, but mainly as an additional workspace.

Some of our planned changes include adding soft furnishings, artificial plants, and additional lighting, to help create a cosy space, as well as painted walls and signage. With the inclusion of posterboards to delineate the space and create a student announcements board or 'community wall', it is hoped that the students will use the area as a recreational and relaxing space.

Ciarán Pook and Pamela Morris have been supporting on the update as well.

Watch this space!



We added an artificial plant and dividers to mark the space



We placed the board games in a cupboard to keep the space tidy



Workers' Playtime

Ria has been working with Emily Tan (Exhibitions and Public Engagement with Research Manager) on the promotion for the Rylands' latest exhibition: Workers' Playtime. This exhibit explores culture and community in 19th century industrial Lancashire.

The exhibit is open from Wednesday, 29 March 2023, to Saturday, 9 September 2023.



All-Staff Meeting presentation: Exam and Assessment Support

Janette Watson (Engagement Team) and Kerry Scott (Teaching, Learning and Students) presented at the All-Staff meeting on Tuesday, 7 March 2023.

They focused on Exam and Assessment Support by providing an overview of how we coordinate and communicate the Library's Exam and Assessment Support campaign. They demonstrated how this campaign is not only a Directorate-led activity, but also one where we partner with other University services, Faculties and Schools, to support and embed the offer.

Look out for our next Exam & Assessment Support campaign running from Monday, 17th April 2023 – Saturday, 10th June 2023!

Teaching, Learning, and Students

A Decade of Digital Society

Digital Society turns ten this year and reaches another milestone with 100 students enrolled in Semester 2! Launched in 2012/3 as *The Digital Society*, the unit is available to all undergraduates via the University College for Interdisciplinary Learning (UCIL), and has seen a number of changes over the years (not least losing the 'The' in 2016).

Originally taught through on-campus seminars, *Digital Society* is now fully online and asynchronous. During the COVID pandemic, TLS were asked to run the course twice in order to meet demand for online teaching at a time when many units were not ready. Originally based in Blackboard, the course materials now form an open online publication on Medium – with most of its 850+ posts written by students.

The Library Student Team play an essential role, running the course podcast since 2019/20, and this year launching the first Student Team-led topic, The Rise of Simulated Spaces (by Sara and Salma), alongside another new topic Chatbots and Questions of digital conversation, from Bonnie.

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Students tell us they enjoy the flexibility of the unit – both in terms of freedom to study when they want, and creative freedom to choose topics to explore and blog about. We love reading what they come up with – and you can too! You can read blog posts from the [first](#), [second](#), and [third](#) assessments on the [course publication](#).

For any queries please contact Dave Hirst or Chris Millson, or post in the [Library Teaching Teams channel](#).

Welcome to new team members

We are pleased to welcome two new members of staff to the Teaching, Learning, and Students team.



Tim Calvert (he/him) joins us as a Teaching and Learning Librarian. He previously worked at Bournemouth University Library.



Bean Sharp (they/them) is our new eLearning Support Officer. They worked as a Graduate Teaching Assistant alongside their PhD at Manchester, as well as working at the University of Salford Library.

Please say hi to Tim and Bean when you see them around!

We also bid farewell to **Matt Hallsworth** (he/him) this month. Matt has worked for the Library for 5 years as Education and Learning Officer, helping to look after the Student Team and our widening access work. We wish him all the best in his new role at environmental education charity, Ocean Generation!

Thank you for reading the FSP Monthly Digest.

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