

ISSUE 13 • MARCH 2024

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 Monday 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.

Hope you are all OK. I mentioned last month that I had been preparing for the Exec Winter Summit which was focusing on priorities, challenges and resourcing across our Directorates. Following our discussions, we've agreed some minor tweaks and changes that we'll be gradually rolling out over the coming months.

For Faculty and Student Partnerships, the changes centre around the need to address the way we present ourselves as a Directorate with the recent expansion of our portfolio to include the Projects & Business Analysis team.

There's also a need to relieve some of the workload pressures that have arisen both in our management structure, and for me personally, as a result of the growing emphasis on my role as Deputy University Librarian (as opposed to Associate Director for FSP).

To address the first issue, we've agreed to change the name of the Directorate, as Faculty & Student Partnerships doesn't adequately convey the more Library-wide nature of our current portfolio. We've played around with various options, and believe me, it proved quite a challenge to come up with something succinct that each team would be able to see themselves in! In the end we've settled on *Education, Experience and Strategic Insights*. I hope you like it. The new name will come in to force on 1 May.

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[Watch the video message](#)



To address the second issue around workload pressure, there will be a few changes to team structures. Most significantly, I have decided to build on the relationship that's been developing between Customer Services and Teaching, Learning and Students (TLS) through recent projects, and the natural intersection of services such as enquiries, and widening access.

Both teams naturally share a strong student and front-line service focus, and fit logically together within the Directorate. Formalising this connection will be a great opportunity to form even more cooperative working practices and service enhancements.

In practice this will simply be a transfer in the line management connection through Debbie Allan, from me to Sarah Rayner, currently Head of Teaching Learning & Students, who will take on the strategic oversight of both Customer Services and TLS. There will of course be some knock-on changes needed in TLS to create enough capacity for Sarah, which will take a bit of time to achieve, so we are looking at 1 May for this changeover, coinciding with the launch of our Directorate name change.

More detail on this change will be shared locally in the next few days. Other smaller adjustments planned in the Engagement Team and Projects and Business Analysis will also be shared within these teams later this week.

I want you to know that this has been a tough but necessary decision for me to make after so many years working directly with Debbie, Natalie and Paul - letting go is never easy, but I am sure it's the right move!

So that's all from me this time. Enjoy the rest of the Digest and do get in touch if there is anything you want to provide feedback on or ask me about.

Katy

News and updates

Customer Services

Reflections as a student on the MA Library and Archive Studies

Sharaz Khan

Alongside my role as one of the coordinators in the Customer Services Team, I am one of nine library employees who are enrolled on the MA Library and Archive Studies course.

I have been working at the Library for around two and a half years, this being my first role in such an environment. When the opportunity arose to apply for the MA, I was therefore quite hesitant at first as I wasn't sure I had enough experience to undertake the course.

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The idea of doing a part-time master's whilst also working full-time was daunting at first, but after a few weeks I'd found my stride in being able to manage my workload for both.

The first unit revolved around Archives and Special Collections. It's been so fun and highly interesting to learn about the role of the archivist in greater detail, and just how much thought and consideration goes into cataloguing, collection management, and preservation.

For this current semester, I am enrolled in two units: "Record Management and Information Governance", which dives into the relevant laws and regulations that surround archiving; and "Curating and Managing a Library Collection", which focuses on the collection-management lifecycle, and uses what we learn in our lectures to create our own mock library collections.

With this being a part-time course, I will be finishing in September 2025. I still have a lot more to learn until then and am looking forward to the opportunities that this MA will bring.

Engagement

Miletos and AI search techniques

Paul Tate

Professor Colin Imber and I met with a representative of Miletos, a Turkey-based Artificial Intelligence company. During the meeting, the representative gave a demonstration of how the company has incorporated AI search techniques for non-Roman script databases, using the example of Muteferriqa, a database of 7 million pages of Ottoman Turkish printed books and journals.

AI is used for a variety of advanced search techniques (proximity, image, similarity recommendations etc.), including full Optical Character Recognition and Intelligent Character Recognition. The new functionality allows users to search in both English, Turkish and Ottoman Turkish (Arabic script), therefore removing language barriers to research. It also allows for instant translations of selected passages by hovering the mouse over the text.



I will continue to pursue how AI could be used for the Library's Persian resources, and particularly for the Nashriyah; digital Iranian history project; as it would open up this digital collection to a wider audience, and facilitate interdisciplinary research collaboration.



Student Support Hub Training

Gemma Smith

On Wednesday, 7 February, Nick Birnie-Campbell and I facilitated a training workshop for the Student Support Hub staff in the School of Engineering. The session proved a useful opportunity to give support staff an overview of key Library services and resources. The focus of the session was to help staff navigate and understand what the Library can do to support and help students.



The Student Support Hub, Engineering building

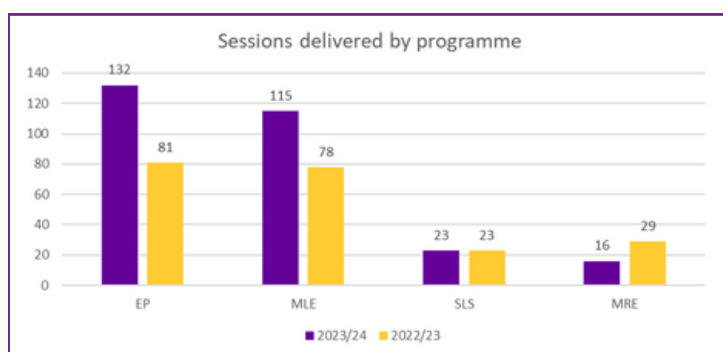
The feedback from the team was positive. They felt the session would improve the student query triage process and ensure Library-related queries are passed on to the appropriate Library team. Going forward, we plan to run a similar session for the School of Natural Sciences Student Support Hub team.

TLS reporting and dashboards

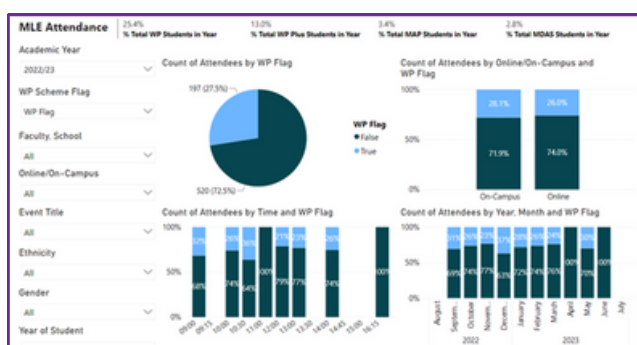
Teaching, Learning, and Students

The Teaching, Learning and Students (TLS) Team had a very busy semester one. We delivered 156 My Learning Essentials (MLE) and Specialist Library Support (SLS) workshops, which were attended by over 1000 staff and students.

We also saw over 280 students at our drop-in sessions, and a further 826 students in our embedded teaching programme (EP). The chart on the right shows how many sessions we delivered in comparison to 2022/23:



In semester two, we are delivering our credit bearing teaching courses; 'Open Knowledge in Higher Education' and 'Digital Society'; where we have over 120 students currently enrolled.



We continue to work with the Projects and Business Analysis team to improve our data reporting. For example, FSP have worked collaboratively to create a new Widening Participation dashboard, showcasing usage of the Library by home undergraduate students flagged as being on a Widening Participation scheme – the report covers loans and eTextbook usage, to Library entrances and attendance at MLE workshops.



TLS On Tour

Students Union (SU) Humanities Executive Officer, Katie Jackson, contacted the TLS Team to partner with the Library to support students in their academic writing. On Wednesday, 21 February, TLS and Student Team members delivered a Widening Participation-targeted event to those students from underrepresented backgrounds in Higher Education, via Access and Success networks and the SU societies.

Marielle Dick, Library Student Team, gives a write up of the event:

Members of TLS and the Student Team took a quick flight to the Students Union to host an Academic Writing workshop, to support students who felt like they needed to brush up their skills, or simply learn how to write an essay. Luckily, this trip didn't empty anyone's pockets as flight tickets were extremely cheap! We'll definitely be visiting again.

The core objective of the workshop was to equip students with the tools and strategies needed to understand essay questions, structure their argument, and overall enhance their academic writing proficiency. With a stellar presentation execution by Tabita-Gabriela Juravle and Iqra Malik, and support from Adam Cooke, I believe we managed to execute these objectives. At first, students were asked to highlight some of the challenges they face when writing academically, such as being too descriptive, not having the appropriate tone, and not having a proper structure. To address this, the presentation touched on what makes a good piece of academic writing, and outlined how to break down the essay question.

The Student Team collaborated with students from many different disciplines, such as Nursing, Management, and Economics, to work on two activities that focused on dissecting the essay question. They focused on understanding what the essay is instructing, defining key terms, and setting parameters for vague questions.



At the end of the session, we facilitated a space for students to chat with any of the Interns or Student Team members, and through this students were able to receive niche advice on essay questions for their module, or further understanding what's required of them in academic writing. Overall, this workshop exemplified the need for this type of resource for students and making our Library resources more accessible to the wider student community.



New and updated online learning guides

Teaching, Learning and Students have launched updated online guides for:

- [Library support for Referencing](#)
- [Writing Scientific reports](#)

Staff updates

Sarah Howley, Teaching and Learning Librarian



I'm delighted to have joined the team this week, having spent five years as a Librarian at University Campus Oldham. I have an undergraduate degree in English and Creative Writing, a Master's degree in Library and Information Management, and a PGCE specialising in teaching academic skills in higher education (HE).

I love working in HE and I'm looking forward to collaborating to create innovative, inclusive learning experiences. I live in Glossop with my husband, 1 year old son, and Rasmus the cat.

Sarah Leonard, Customer Services Associate



I'm Sarah and I have been part of the Library's Customer Services Team for six weeks now (time has flown)! I have really enjoyed getting to know the lovely team, learning more about the Library services, and spending time across the varied sites. As a big fan of all things books, I am really thrilled to be here.

I studied English with Creative Writing in Belfast. Since then, I have worked in Greece as an English language teacher; in France at a juice bar; and with a learning disability self-advocacy organisation.

Outside of work, I am a keen footballer and a Manchester City fan. I also enjoy going to gigs and (very occasionally), attempting to learn French.

I am already feeling settled here and can't wait to keep learning within this fantastic role.

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