

StaffUpdate

Exclusively for staff at The University of Manchester

NEW LOOK FOR STAFFNET

A new home page for StaffNet, the University intranet, was launched last month bringing a range of new features designed to make news and information easier to find and selected tasks easier to carry out.

News is more prominent and is now organised into categories to help you find different kinds of stories more easily. The top StaffNet news stories are featured prominently and are regularly updated. The news categories are:

University News - major announcements about the University

Staff Announcements - news to support and inform you in your work and life on campus in general

Events and Activities - designed to entertain or cater to general interests

Training and Development - courses, workshops and other events to support/improve job or academic performance

University in the News - news stories generated by the University's media team and media coverage of the University.

By clicking on each heading, a drop down menu appears displaying the latest stories within that category.

There is also a news feed of higher education stories from Universities UK and of media coverage of the University updated in real time.

News and story ideas are always welcome and can be submitted directly via the link on the right hand side.



The newly-launched weekly online update from the President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell is displayed, this is also sent out via eUpdate each Thursday.

There's also direct access to The Marketplace, where you can buy and sell items and a 'Top Task' section which provides quick links to allow you to carry out selected tasks including accessing webmail and searching for job opportunities. Click on the title and you'll be taken to a page with a comprehensive list of How to's. Feel free to suggest more, using the online form.

InFocus is a series of short videos designed to inform staff about different aspects of the University's activities.

As always, the StaffNet team welcome any feedback and suggestions via email: staffnet@manchester.ac.uk

The home page has been developed by the Communications, Media and Public Relations division.

DANCE CLASS

Bollywood Dance was just one of the varied sessions on offer at the annual Clerical, Secretarial, Administrative and Support Staff (CLASS) Network conference.

Staff who attended the session as part of the conference held at the Sackville Street site, got the chance to learn a basic Bollywood dance routine with tutor Ria. Among the less energetic sessions on offer were creative problem solving, calligraphy and sign language.

The CLASS Network aims to foster workplace and social links and to enhance careers and working practice. It is supported by the Staff Training and Development Unit (STDU).



NEW STAFF SURVEY - HAVE YOUR SAY

A new and redesigned Staff Survey is now available for all staff to complete.

This time it's quicker to do with fewer questions but with more of a focus on you and your day-to-day work. All staff are encouraged to take part in the survey which aims to help the University address any staff concerns.

Staff with internet access are asked to complete the survey online at www.manchester.ac.uk/staffsurvey

Paper copies have been made available to Estates and STARS staff who do not have computer access. If you have responsibility for members of staff without email or internet access, please could you ensure that a paper copy of the survey is made available to them. Additional paper copies are

available from janice.drew@manchester.ac.uk (x52113).

The survey will remain open until 5pm on Wednesday 13 October 2010.

Focus groups were held earlier this year to seek feedback from staff on previous surveys. As a result of this a number of revisions have been made to the questionnaire and there is now much more of a focus on day-to-day working life within the University. The total number of questions has been reduced and this, in turn, has reduced the length of time it takes to complete the survey to 8-10 minutes.

In a letter inviting staff to take part in the survey, the President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell, said: "The University is committed to listening and responding to your views and the

survey provides you with an opportunity to have your say."

For a full copy of the President's letter which accompanies the questionnaire, please go to: www.manchester.ac.uk/presidentletter

All responses from the survey will remain completely anonymous and confidential and only combined results will be reported.

The headline results of the survey together with an indication of when the action plan will be publicised will be released before the University closes for the Christmas break in December.

If you have any queries, please contact a member of the survey team at staffsurvey@manchester.ac.uk

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

This is the first weekly update from the President and Vice-Chancellor, Nancy Rothwell, reproduced here for those staff who were not able to read it in eUpdate on 16 September. This update can also be seen at www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk

In forthcoming issues of Staff Update we will provide a summary of the previous month's updates, primarily for the benefit of staff who do not have email/internet access at work.



"Those of you who were able to come to the open meeting I held back in July, or watched the video on StaffNet, will know that I made a commitment to communicate openly and regularly with staff and students.

One way I hope to live up to this commitment is by sending out a regular weekly message for staff as part of eUpdate. The aim is to keep you up to date with what I am doing as your President and Vice-Chancellor, to talk about what's going on across campus and to also respond to issues within the higher education sector and how these may affect us here at Manchester.

As well as these weekly messages I will be writing a regular feature in UniLife, holding open meetings with staff and students, putting together video messages and most importantly of all, visiting staff and students across campus. I hope all of this will encourage you to share your views with me, and while I can't promise to respond to everyone personally, I will certainly try to address as many of your questions and thoughts as possible.

This week's message is going to be a little longer than those which will follow in the coming weeks - simply because there is a lot to catch up on following the summer break.

■ First, to the many announcements about public spending cuts coming from the Government over the summer months.

At the recent Universities UK conference, which Rod Coombs attended on behalf of the University, both Vince Cable, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills and David Willetts, Minister for Universities and Science, gave some further pointers about likely cuts to research and teaching.

Vince Cable indicated that 45% of UK research is below international standard and hence should not be funded, but ignored the fact that most of this research is not funded at the moment. His conclusion was based on RAE 2008, yet well over 90% of the subsequent HEFCE funding went to the 55% which was rated internationally recognised or excellent.

■ Funding from the Research Councils is even more selective.

I have said previously that we must increase the proportion of our research that is of international standard - but for different reasons. Research that does not meet the highest standards is taking up the valuable and stretched resources of our own staff and with the financial constraints we face, we must be ever more focussed on activities that deliver real value.

We are all just too busy to do things that aren't yielding value - whatever the reason. We will never achieve 100% of our research ranked internally or externally as excellent. Nor should we - for two very important reasons. Firstly, because some of our research has valuable outputs that are hard to measure by the tools we most commonly use and secondly, good research by its very nature investigates the unknown.

Some of the very best research is risky, which means that a high proportion will not pay off. We must be rigorous in the standards of our research, but must not take the sometimes attractive route of only undertaking "safe" research with reliable outcomes.

■ And so as we move towards the beginning of a new academic year, I just wanted to acknowledge the amazing amount of hard work and commitment shown by staff in Faculties, Schools and the Professional Support Services who are involved in confirmation and clearing.

They have been dealing with the thousands of students who have applied to study here.

I visited central admissions during clearing (pictured) and it was a hive of activity with many staff there and in other parts of the University working long hours and juggling work with leave commitments over the summer holidays. The outcome is that we have hit our targets for home students without penalties. The situation with overseas students is less clear, especially with concerns about visas. I'll update you on this later, but again thank the many people who are working hard on this really important area.



Nancy visits clearing

■ The new academic year also sees some changes in the senior management and I'm sure you will all extend a very warm welcome to Keith Brown who is joining us as the new Vice-President and Dean of Humanities.

Keith brings great experience having acted as Deputy Vice-Chancellor at St Andrews for some time. Keith is taking over from Alistair Ulph who has been a fantastic Vice-President and Dean since 2004. We owe Alistair a great deal for his contributions, not just to Humanities but to the wider University and I'm pleased to say that he will be staying on at the University in a new part-time role as Associate Vice-President for a year.

■ You'll also see elsewhere within eUpdate that Alan North will be standing down as Vice-President and Dean of the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences at the end of the current academic year.

He will remain with the University as a Research Professor in the Faculty. Alan has played a key role over the past six years and I'm sure you'll join me in thanking him for his contribution. We have begun an international search for a new Vice-President and Dean of the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences.

■ Finally, I know that large numbers of you are working hard to prepare for the arrival of our students next week.

I appreciate how much work this involves and would urge everyone to warmly welcome our students and be as helpful as possible in dealing with their many needs. I'm hoping to get out and about and meet with staff and students over the next few days so I'm sure I'll be updating you about this in next week's message."

Nancy Rothwell
President and Vice-Chancellor

Email your thoughts and comments to president@manchester.ac.uk

PRESIDENT'S OPEN MEETING

The President and Vice-Chancellor Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell will hold an open meeting for all staff on Monday 11 October at 12.30pm in the Whitworth Hall.

All staff are welcome to attend, there is no prior registration required. There will be an opportunity to ask questions.

Staff who are unable to make the meeting can watch it via a webcast. Details of this will be publicised beforehand.

POLICY

Following severe weather disruption at the start of this year and the volcanic ash cloud which disrupted air travel, the University has agreed a policy on attendance at work in these circumstances.

While the University recognises that staff may face difficulty from time to time attending work and is committed to safeguarding the health and safety of its employees, the policy aims to ensure that disruption to its business remains minimal.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the normal, minimal arrangements for treatment of staff who cannot attend work during periods of severe weather conditions or disruptions to public transport/air travel. It also sets out the responsibilities of employees for attendance in these circumstances.

For full details visit:

<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/listofpolicies.aspx>

PROFESSOR DAME JANET FINCH JOINS MANCHESTER

One of the country's leading social scientists and retiring Keele University Vice Chancellor has joined The University of Manchester.

Professor Dame Janet Finch takes an honorary position at the Morgan Centre for the Study of Relationships and Personal Life, based in the School of Social Sciences, as stated last month.

Professor Finch retired from her role as Vice Chancellor at Keele University, in August.

She has recently been appointed Chair of Main Panel C for the forthcoming Research Excellence Framework exercise, the new system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions to be completed in 2014.

Professor Finch's research expertise lies principally in studies of family relationships, especially relationships across generations.

MANCHESTER PROFESSORS ELECTED FELLOWS

Two Professors have been elected as Fellows of their respective Academies.

John Gledhill, Professor of Anthropology at The University of Manchester has been elected a Fellow of the prestigious British Academy.

John Gledhill joins nearly 900 scholars who have attained distinction in their field of research and been honoured by the Academy, which represents the humanities and social sciences by providing expertise and contributing to public policy.

He is a specialist on Latin America, with particular expertise in political, economic and historical anthropology.

Computer Scientist Professor Carole Goble has been awarded a prestigious fellowship of the Royal Academy of Engineering.

Professor Goble was one of 53 of the UK's leading engineers awarded the honour by the academy.

She was chosen because of her "achievements in eScience and semantic technologies, with significant contributions to both underpinning theory and engineering practice, leading to real systems that are transforming the way research is conducted, particularly in the life sciences."

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AWARENESS RESOURCE

UMIP – the University's intellectual property (IP) commercialisation company has created an IP Awareness Resource, co-developed with Eversheds LLP.

The resource is targeted at academics and research staff and its aim is to increase the awareness of IP and demonstrate the benefits of its commercialisation to the University and the IP generator.

You will find a series of video clips by professionals and academic colleagues on various aspects of IP and its commercialisation. We hope that this resource gives you a valuable insight into the types of IP which can be used to protect novel ideas/inventions and how, for example, IP can be commercialised via spin-out or licence with the help of UMIP.

Also featured is information on IP and Academic Materials and IP within a Research Contract and Consulting environment with links to various forms, process guides and booklets which you may find useful.

www.manchester.ac.uk/ipresource



REGISTRAR AND SECRETARY

Mr Albert McMenemy has decided to retire from his position as Registrar and Secretary at the end of the current academic year.

Albert has been Registrar and Secretary since 2005 and has enjoyed a distinguished career in local government and higher education. He has been a member of the senior leadership team since the University's foundation in 2004. He has also represented the University on a number of regional and national bodies.

Albert joined the Victoria University of Manchester in 1988. Since then he has occupied a number of senior roles. He also played a major role in the successful 'merger' of UMIST and the Victoria University in his capacity as joint Project Manager for 'Project Unity'.

Commenting on his decision, Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell said "We are all indebted to Albert for his many contributions to the University. He has played a major role in establishing and building the reputation of the Professional Support Service within the University and he made a critically important contribution to the merger. There will be opportunities nearer to his actual retirement for me to reflect more fully on the extent of Albert's contributions to the University."

The University has initiated a major search to appoint a Registrar and Secretary/Chief Operating Officer to succeed Albert.

Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell
President and Vice-Chancellor

JUST THE JOB

EMMA BRITAIN

Project Officer for Orientation

SHONA DALY

International Relations Assistant,
Student Recruitment and International
Development – International Relations.



Every year thousands of students leave home to go to university and more come to The University of Manchester than any other university in the UK. A significant proportion of new students are from overseas and the University runs an International Student Orientation Programme immediately prior to Welcome Week to help its international students settle into life in Manchester. A six-day Airport Collection Service for new international students is also provided at the start of semester.

The Orientation programme is well established at the University and this year's Programme is managed by Emma Britain. As Project Officer for Orientation she is responsible for planning, organising, delivering and monitoring the four day event which takes place in mid-September.

Emma says: "An event like this takes a lot of organisation – such as determining what kinds of events to run as well as the practicality of booking the buildings, rooms and specialist speakers. Attendance at the event isn't compulsory so the aim of the department is to deliver an event that people want to turn up to, to provide a balance between providing essential information on subjects like registration, healthcare and security as well as an opportunity to socialise and make friends by offering a programme of social events which are provided by The International Society."

"I am lucky" says Emma, "although the event takes a huge amount of planning, a lot of work had already been done before I started in April and the mini programme for students arriving in January set the wheels in motion for the preparation of the September event."

On a day-to-day basis Emma is supported by Shona Daly, a recent graduate of Manchester with a degree in Law. She gained employment via the Manchester Graduate Internship Programme (GMIP) which is provided by the University's Careers Service and whose aim is to increase and maintain a Manchester graduate presence within the city and region generally.

Shona has been working in the 18-month long post since graduating in July. She supports whichever part of the programme needs supporting at any given time undertaking mainly administrative and reporting tasks though she does have specific responsibility for planning and delivering the vaccination programme. This mainly involves liaising with Occupational Health and arranging the appointment booking and ticketing system. Afterwards she has to report on how well that component of the event has gone. Shona views her position as International Relations Assistant as an exciting opportunity and a challenge. "It's also interesting to see things from the perspective of a member of staff," she says.

During the event itself Emma relies on the help of a team of 109 student ambassadors known as "Purple People". They provide support to new students from arrival at their accommodation and throughout the

event itself, not only running services like Campus and Supermarket tours but giving general help and advice. "The role of 'Purple People' is very important, says Emma. "The training programme is very intense but our aim is to give them the confidence they need to do their job successfully. During Orientation they are not here as students, they are a valuable part of our team."

The success of the Orientation Programme is a university and community-wide effort involving staff from departments including Student Services Centre, Accommodation, Security, students of the University and from outside organisations like the police and local businesses. "What we hope to provide", says Emma, "is a really important stepping stone for our International Students, which sets them on their way to getting the most out of their experience as a student – like all students they deserve the best service."



CONTACT US

If you have any news or story ideas, you can contact us via:
uninews@manchester.ac.uk or 275 2112

OPT OUT OPTION

If you wish to opt out of receiving a printed copy of Unilife/Staff Update each month you can do this by completing the online form at:
www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/optout

If you wish to keep up with the news, you can still view the magazines online at:
www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/unilife
www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/staffupdate

Next issue: 1 November Copy deadline: 13 October

J3056 09.10 The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL Royal Charter Number RC000797

