

# Student Orientation Support (SOS)

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# Student Orientation Support (SOS)

- SOS is a rich source of information **specifically for new students**.
- It provides a wealth of advice and information about **student life in Manchester** on campus and around the city and **what to expect and where to get help within your School**.

# Project Background & Aim

## Background

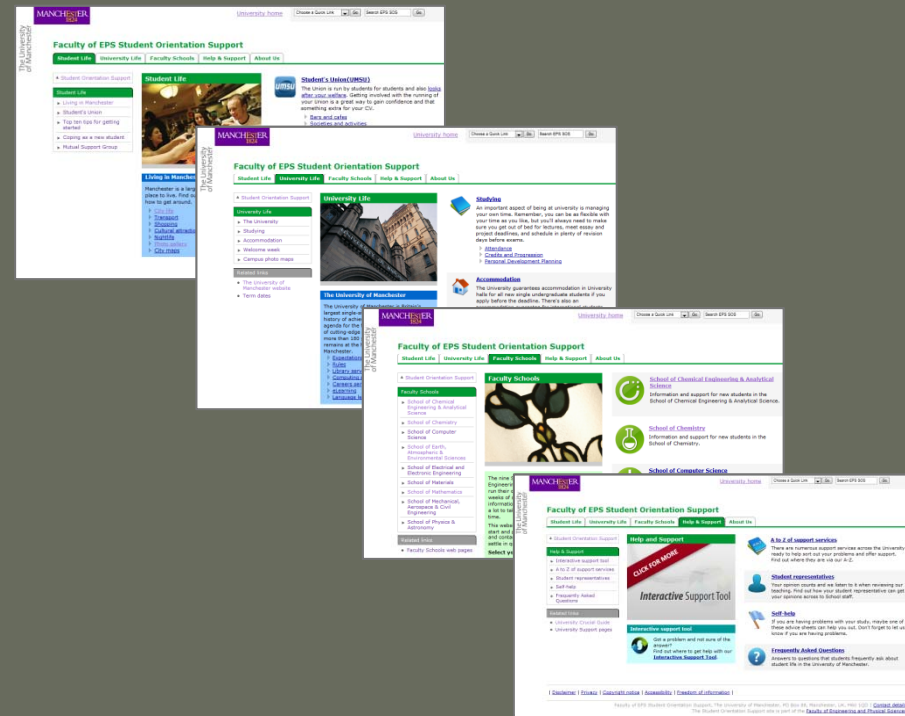
- Initially funded with money from **TQEF/Retention funds**.
- Initially participating **3 schools** later accommodated **all schools** within the EPS
- Originally only provided **UG** information but now supports **PG**

## The website to:

- be **simple, welcoming** and **easy** to use
- Provide all the information given to students in **Welcome Week**
- Provide materials and advice to help **develop study skills** and an **independent learning** approach.
- Integrate with other aspects of **School induction** and the **Student Guidance Service**.

# What information can I find?

- Student Life
- University Life
- School mini sites
- Help & Support



# Student Life

Provides **student friendly information** about life as a student living in the **city of Manchester**



The screenshot shows the 'Faculty of EPS Student Orientation Support' website. The header includes the University of Manchester logo and navigation links like 'University home', 'Choose a Quick Link', and a search bar. The main content area is titled 'Student Life' and features a sidebar with links to 'Living in Manchester', 'Student's Union', 'Top ten tips for getting started', 'Coping as a new student', and 'Mutual Support Group'. The main content area includes a photo of students at a table, a section for 'Living in Manchester' with links to 'City life', 'Transport', 'Shopping', 'Cultural attractions', 'Nightlife', 'Photo gallery', and 'City maps', and a section for 'Student's Union (UMSU)' with links to 'Bars and cafes', 'Societies and activities', and 'The athletic union'. There is also a section for 'Top ten tips for getting started' and 'Coping as a new student'.

## Highlights:

- **Photos gallery** of key city locations
- **Interactive city map** of local attractions
- Specific advice to **disabled**, **mature**, **international** and **'living at home'** students

# University Life

Provides student friendly information about **life on campus** (including academic life).

MANCHESTER 1824 University home Choose a Quick Link Go Search EPS SOS Go

**Faculty of EPS Student Orientation Support**

Student Life **University Life** Faculty Schools Help & Support About Us

▲ Student Orientation Support

**University Life**

- The University
- Studying
- Accommodation
- Welcome week
- Campus photo maps

Related links

- The University of Manchester website
- Term dates

**University Life**

The University of Manchester

The University of Manchester is Britain's largest single-site university with a proud history of achievement and an ambitious agenda for the future. It has a rich heritage of cutting-edge innovation and enterprise of more than 180 years. Today, research remains at the heart of The University of Manchester.

- [Expectations](#)
- [Rules](#)
- [Library services](#)
- [Computing services](#)
- [Careers services](#)
- [eLearning](#)
- [Language learning](#)

**Studying**

An important aspect of being at university is managing your own time. Remember, you can be as flexible with your time as you like, but you'll always need to make sure you get out of bed for lectures, meet essay and project deadlines, and schedule in plenty of revision days before exams.

- [Attendance](#)
- [Credits and Progression](#)
- [Personal Development Planning](#)

**Accommodation**

The University guarantees accommodation in University halls for all new single undergraduate students if you apply before the deadline. There's also an accommodation guarantee for international students.

- [Hornet \(Halls of Residence Network\)](#)
- [Accommodation maps](#)

**Welcome week**

Welcome Week is a festival to launch you into university life, run by the student bodies on campus. This is the biggest student party you'll ever go to. Find out more about:

- [Students' Fair](#)
- [Welcome Week Advice](#)

**Campus photo maps**

To help you find your way around, this section contains

## Highlights:

- Campus photos maps showing all Faculty buildings
- Overview and advice about Welcome Week
- Information about University academic services

# Help and Support

Single help and support area shared by all.

Provides **overviews of University support services** with links to their websites.

The screenshot shows the 'Faculty of EPS Student Orientation Support' website. The header includes the University of Manchester logo and a search bar. The main navigation menu has tabs for 'Student Life', 'University Life', 'Faculty Schools', 'Help & Support', and 'About Us'. The 'Help & Support' tab is active, displaying a sidebar with links to 'Interactive support tool', 'A to Z of support services', 'Student representatives', 'Self-help', and 'Frequently Asked Questions'. The main content area features a large 'Interactive Support Tool' banner with a 'CLICK FOR MORE' button, and a section titled 'A to Z of support services' with a description of the support services available. Below this, there are sections for 'Student representatives', 'Self-help', and 'Frequently Asked Questions'. The footer contains a disclaimer, privacy policy, and contact details for the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences.

## Highlights:

- [Interactive Support Tool](#)
- [A to Z of key University support services](#)
- [Frequently asked questions](#)

# School Mini Site

- Schools have a “user-friendly web address” (<http://www.sos.eps.manchester.ac.uk/maths>)
- School areas contain **only information relevant to their School** and cross-link to other areas of the SOS site or to other external information as needed.

The screenshot displays the 'The School of Mathematics' mini-site. At the top, it features the University of Manchester logo and navigation links like 'University home' and 'Search EPS SOS'. Below this is a green header for 'Faculty of EPS Student Orientation Support' with tabs for 'Student Life', 'University Life', 'Faculty Schools', 'Support & Questions', and 'About Us'. A left sidebar contains a 'School of Mathematics' menu with links such as 'First few weeks', 'How we will teach you', 'How you will learn', 'How to be a successful student', 'Teaching and study rooms', 'People who will help you', 'Things you need to know', 'Student activities', and 'Useful links'. The main content area has a large banner with the pi symbol and the text 'The School of Mathematics Welcomes you to the University of Manchester'. Below the banner is a 'Welcome message' section with a photo of a student and text about the university's reputation and support. To the right, there are sections for 'People who will help you' and 'Support and Questions' with a list of links including 'Student support services', 'Student representatives', 'A to Z of support services', 'Support flow chart', and 'Support FAQ'. The footer contains a disclaimer, privacy policy, and contact details.

## Typical school content:

- How to succeed
- Teaching methods
- School facilities
- School support



# Benefits for schools

- **Limit the duplication** of information useful to all EPS
- Schools gain from a substantial **free source of common information**
  - But, **retaining individuality** within their own specific sections.
- The burden of maintaining all this 'common information' is **passed onto Faculty**, whilst Schools only maintain information specific to them

# Benefits for schools

- In the initial stages of site setup, Schools benefit from the **technical and design skills** available at Faculty
- Schools can **request statistics** on numbers of visitors and average time spent on each page in their sections to **evaluate the effectiveness** of the information they provide to arriving students.
- **Saving staff time** for frequently asked questions

# Student Feedback

## School Specific areas

- Many students simply **did not know** about this site as they were never sent a link in the information sent to them
- Students liked the range of information present in the **different School micro-sites**
- But, it seemed quite varied and they would like to see the site **combine the "good" parts** from each of the different School sites.

## Common areas

- Student/University Life information really useful
- Impressed with the layout/design
- Liked the breakdown of information and the structuring of the Student/University Life information.
- **The photo maps** helped students to find pictures of the buildings when they arrived in Manchester.

The feedback was gathered by the EPS student interns who conducted focus groups with students from four EPS Schools

# Marketing the site 2010/2011

- **eLearning Champions** in each school helped to raise awareness of the site
- Demonstration to **Teaching & Learning Committee** to gain support from academic staff
- Schools sent the link to the website in their **Welcome Pack** to new students prior to arrival
- Link from **School's homepage**
- **Student message of the day** (from Sept to Mid-Nov) to appear on EPS cluster machines
- **Email to all students** at start of term
- **Student Support Forum!**

Now, please go  
<http://www.sos.eps.manchester.ac.uk>  
and explore!

Any questions, please contact

- [Alison.Mcmurray@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Alison.Mcmurray@manchester.ac.uk) or
- [Ryo.Seo-Zindy@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Ryo.Seo-Zindy@manchester.ac.uk)