

your manchester

The Magazine for Alumni and Friends
June 2009

Sammy Gitau's Mathare mission

The future of electronic music

*In good Elf - Toby Jones on set
with Harry Potter*

*Problem pregnancies -
is stress to blame?*

Remembering Oxford Road





features...



welcome to *your*

Welcome to this latest edition of 'Your Manchester', the magazine for alumni of The University of Manchester.

It is now almost five years since the inauguration of the new University, and we are continuing to make encouraging progress towards the Goals set out in the *Manchester 2015 Agenda*, our strategic blueprint for positioning the University as one of the world's leading universities midway through the next decade.

The most reassuring measure of our progress was the University's performance in the independent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Councils and announced in December 2008. As you will see from the article on page 12, the University's performance was outstanding. Two-thirds of our research was judged to be 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent'. This outcome truly establishes the University alongside Oxford, Cambridge and London as one of the UK's premier research universities. Many of us had thought that the 2008 RAE may have come a little too early to demonstrate the impact of the dramatic changes that have

taken place here since the merger, but we were wrong – and the evidence is now there for all to see in terms of research quality and research power.

Another reassuring external measure of our progress has been our position in the annual Shanghai Jiao Tong 'Academic Ranking of World Universities'. The Jiao Tong rankings, while imperfect, represent the most accurate available analysis of the relative strength of the world's top 500 research intensive universities. It is therefore satisfying to report that the University has improved its position every year since 2004 (when one of our predecessor institutions, the Victoria University of Manchester, was ranked 78th), from 53rd in 2005, 50th in 2006, 48th in 2007 to 40th in 2008. The continuous improvement since 2005, amounting to a gain of 13 places, represents the most significant improvement in ranking of any university in the world's top 100.

Manchester's position as a world-leading research centre in the field of Nuclear Science was confirmed earlier this year when a consortium of Serco, Battelle and

the University took over running the UK National Nuclear Laboratory (NNL). The Lab will play a central role in cleaning up the UK's nuclear waste legacy and developing a 21st Century capacity for civil nuclear power generation that is likely to prove vital in the transition to a sustainable low-carbon economy. In the field of health care, the University's research strength was recognised by the Government earlier this year when the Manchester Academic Health Science Centre (MAHSC) – a new partnership between The University of Manchester and six local NHS trusts – was awarded official national status. We are one of just five national centres, and the only one outside London and Cambridge. MAHSC will play a key role in ensuring that advances in medical science are more rapidly translated into improvements in patient care and wellbeing.

While profoundly committed to fundamental research and curiosity-driven discovery, the University has also, since its inception, sought to place an equal weight on applied research, knowledge and technology transfer and wealth creation. In this context, the most important recent development was

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the launch last year of a unique £32 million late-seed venture fund designed to boost investment in intellectual property generated by research at the University.

A major teaching and learning reform agenda has been a top priority over the past year, following the completion of a 'root and branch' review of undergraduate education. We are now proceeding to make radical changes in order to offer students more purposeful curricula, to re-personalise the student learning experience and to provide all students with the kind of genuinely interactive learning that has been becoming increasingly notable by its absence in higher education over recent decades. We are also updating our IT systems and facilities to enable our students to benefit from the best highly interactive online learning environments. In short, we are putting in place new arrangements designed to make Manchester a superb undergraduate learning university as well as a leading international research institution.

With this impressive list of achievements under our belt, I believe that the University

is well-placed to confront the current difficult economic circumstances. Inevitably, there will be a premium on heightened levels of efficiency, effectiveness and disciplined prioritisation in the years ahead. But the commitment, creativity and hard work which the University community has demonstrated over the past four or five years will stand us in good stead in such straitened times.

We are also grateful for the valuable and practical support that we are receiving from our graduates around the globe and this magazine contains many examples of the support that alumni have offered to specific projects and initiatives.

I thank you for your continuing support of the University.

Alan Gilbert

Professor Alan Gilbert
President and Vice-Chancellor

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The articles printed here, to the best of our knowledge, were correct at the time of going to press. We cannot guarantee that all articles submitted will be printed and we reserve the right to edit material where necessary. Furthermore, the views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of The University of Manchester, The University of Manchester Alumni Association, or the Editor.



Manchester awarded major boost for science training

The University has been awarded £20 million as part of a national drive to train a new wave of scientists and engineers.

The funding, from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), is part of a £250 million initiative, which will establish 44 centres for doctoral training across the UK over the next five years.

Its aims are to develop clean renewable energy; fight high-tech crime; assist in reducing carbon emissions; and discover new healthcare solutions for an ageing population. The centres are also set to provide a radical alternative to the traditional 'lone scholar' PhD route,

creating communities of researchers working together on current and future challenges.

The University will lead three of the training centres – including one devoted to nanoscience, an industrial training centre for Nuclear Engineering and a training centre for nuclear fission research – which will all be run in partnership with other universities. A training centre for advanced metallic systems led by the University of Sheffield will also be linked to The University of Manchester.

Professor Nigel Vincent, Associate Vice-President for Graduate Education at the University, said: "The linking of world-class research and world-class doctoral education



is key to The University of Manchester's vision.

"Our success in the doctoral training centres competition both recognises and advances that ambition.

"It will allow us to build stronger and better links at graduate level both with other leading national and international institutions and with industry."



Manchester's medics receive national recognition

The University of Manchester is to be at the forefront of efforts to transform the National Health Service by linking advances in medical science to patient treatment.

The Manchester Academic Health Science Centre (MAHSC) is a partnership between six Greater Manchester NHS trusts and the University. Health Secretary, Alan Johnson, announced this spring that just five centres would be established around the country - with Manchester being the only one outside of London and Cambridge.

The Centres will speed up the time it takes the NHS to make use of research breakthroughs because of the unique partnership between scientists and NHS staff – bringing huge benefits to patients.

Manchester is already leading - both nationally and internationally - in areas such as cancer, cardiovascular medicine and respiratory medicine, and the new partnership will also include the full range of health research undertaken in hospitals, mental health services and in the community.

Professor Alan North, Director of the Manchester Centre and Dean of the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences at the University said: "We are delighted to have

received formal designation from the Secretary of State for Health. This followed scrutiny of our application by an eminent international panel of experts. It is recognition that our member trusts and the University have the expertise, the motivation and the vision to lead the delivery of innovation into health care."

Most importantly, he added, it was good news for patients and the public in Greater Manchester and the North West, who could expect advances in medical science to be more rapidly introduced into patient care.

The Manchester Academic Health Science Centre aims to establish a number of internationally competitive health research programmes by 2013, together with a world class research infrastructure. By 2020, it aims to ensure that Greater Manchester will have become one of the world's leading health research centres.

Alan Johnson added: "In times of economic uncertainty, it is even more important that we continue to support this country's knowledge industries to ensure that we benefit from the competitive edge which they provide."

The five centres are delivering on the commitment set out in Lord Darzi's strategy for the future of the NHS: 'High Quality Care for All'.

Stemcell breakthrough for back pain sufferers

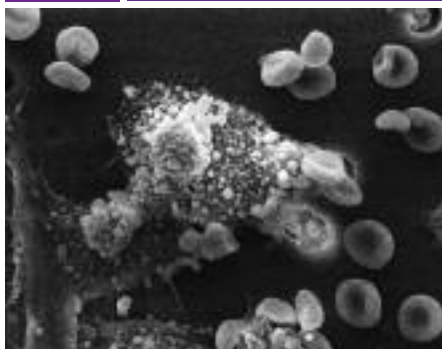
Researchers at Manchester predict that they may soon be able to transform the treatment of lower back pain by using stem cells.

Back pain is Britain's most common disability. More than a million people are struck down every year and the complaint costs the NHS more than £1 billion. The pain is usually caused when discs between the bones in the spine - which act as shock absorbers - become worn down. Currently the problem is often solved by removing the discs but this can cause the bones to fuse together, restricting movement.

A team from the University's Tissue Injury and Repair Group has been awarded funding of £164,406 over three years by the Arthritis Research Campaign to find new ways of regenerating worn discs by implanting conditioned stem cells to repair the damage.

If the research goes to plan, it is hoped the treatment could be carried out on patients with lower back pain within five to ten years.

Lead researcher, Professor Judith Hoyland said: "It is possible to take stem cells from bone marrow and develop them into the kind of cells that are produced in intervertebral discs, and we are now looking at the factors that are necessary for this to happen - such as growth factors, a low oxygen environment and mechanical load - all factors that cells would be exposed to inside an intervertebral disc in the body."



Protein 'magnet' could stop cancer in its tracks

A team of Cancer Research UK scientists from the University have discovered that a partnership between two proteins could be the key to understanding why cancer spreads through the body.

The partnership, between the proteins known as Tiam 1 and Src, causes a group of other proteins to be attracted to Tiam 1 like metal to a magnet. The proteins that are attracted then destroy the 'magnet' protein, which normally keeps cells together.

The scientists believe that it could be the destruction of this magnet protein that causes cancer cells to break away from a tumour and spread through the body. They hope their findings will help them develop drugs that stop the destruction of Tiam1, and potentially stop cancers spreading, increasing the chances of successful treatment.

Dr Angeliki Malliri, based at the University's Paterson Institute, who led the study, said: "We've uncovered a critical step in the process that breaks the links between cancer cells.

"Importantly, we've also shown that blocking Tiam1's destruction can prevent cancer cells from moving apart.

"If we could mimic this effect in the cancer cells of patients, we would restore the links between cells and potentially stop cancer spreading."

Green city living

A new collaboration between the University and property company Bruntwood is aiming to deliver a climate change adaptation strategy for Manchester over the next 18 months.

Project leader Professor Simon Guy from the School of Environment and Development argues that cities have a crucial role to play in a future where climate change will become part of everyday life.

More than half the world's population now lives in an urban area, and the benefits of city life are well known. But the downsides are becoming more obvious too. As centres of population and commerce, cities are responsible for huge volumes of greenhouse gas emissions.

The collaborative venture, known as Eco Cities, aims to finalise a new strategy by the end of 2010 with help from Manchester Architecture Research Centre, the Centre for Urban Regional Ecology, the Global Urban Research Centre and Brooks World Poverty Institute - all based at the University.

"We must also look at how we can respond to projected climate change to ensure that we will still be able to live in our towns and cities," Professor Guy said. "At Eco Cities, we shall try to find answers to questions such as how do we develop

new low-carbon buildings and adapt existing properties to be more resilient to future temperature increases and more extreme weather.

"As the world warms, how do we keep the temperatures in our homes, workplaces and public spaces comfortable, without accelerating climate change via energy-hungry technology? And as the risk of flooding intensifies, how can cities and their residents be made less vulnerable to this threat?"

According to the experts, the differences between those cities which choose to adapt and those which do not will be stark. Research at the University's Centre for Urban Regional Ecology (CURE) has already found that an increase of 10 per cent in urban green cover would be enough to keep temperatures close to current levels, even accounting for the increases predicted by climate modellers.

Another associated project will examine ways to reduce carbon emissions from buildings, exploring both technical and social dimensions of energy use.

Further associated work includes a contribution to an ambitious collaboration between eight European Union member states, which aims to help cities adapt to the effects of climate change.



Photo courtesy of englandsnorthwest imagebank



Warm welcome for new Chancellor

Property developer and Manchester alumnus Tom Bloxham MBE has been installed as Chancellor of the University at an awards ceremony in the Whitworth Hall attended by hundreds of staff, academics and supporters.

Tom is the first Chancellor to have been installed at the University since its

inauguration in 2004. Previously, the role was jointly held by Co-Chancellors Anna Ford and Sir Terry Leahy, who had been Chancellors at the Victoria University of Manchester and UMIST respectively.

Tom, who was recently appointed as a Tate Trustee and who also serves on the board of the Arts Council

England and chairs the Manchester International Festival, spoke at the Ceremony about his hopes of representing the University on a local and national level.

He said he wanted to "let the world know that Britain has more than two world class universities and one of them was not in the South East".



Asthma relief? Just pop a pill, say scientists

Thousands of severe asthma sufferers could benefit from over-the-counter antifungal medication, according to groundbreaking research at the University.

Scientists based at the School of Medicine, led by Professor David Denning and Dr Robert Niven, have found that pills already used to treat everyday fungal infections greatly relieve the symptoms of

asthma in patients who have an allergic reaction to one or more fungi.

Dr Niven believes that his team's findings have the potential to change the way that doctors approach the treatment of severe asthma.

"Oral antifungal therapy will not suit everyone, and is not always helpful, but when it is, the effect is dramatic," he said.

During the eight-month study researchers compared the antifungal drug itraconazole with a placebo, focusing on 58 patients – all of whom tested positive for fungal allergy – at the University Hospital of South Manchester, Salford Royal, Royal Preston and North Manchester General hospitals. They discovered that nearly 60 per cent of patients taking the drug showed a significant improvement in their symptoms.

Groundbreaking virtual graduation ceremony

The first students to graduate from BP's project management course at the Manchester Business School were awarded their certificates in the virtual world, complete with specially designed graduation gowns, lifelike avatars (graphical alter egos) of dignitaries, an academic procession and speeches.

Dom Raban, Managing Director of Corporation Pop, the design company who constructed and managed the February event, said: "It would be almost impossible for so many of BP's senior executives, who are spread across the globe, to take part in a traditional awards ceremony. By holding it virtually, we have made it possible for them to be rewarded for their achievements with minimal



disruption, saving time and money as well as reducing environmental impact."

During the Ceremony the student-controlled avatars took to the stage to

receive their certificates, and scripted handshakes enabled them to be congratulated by the Dean, as they would have been in real life.

University Challenge title goes to Manchester

The 2008/09 University Challenge title has been transferred to The University of Manchester after the BBC and Granada Television concluded that the original winners, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, had unintentionally broken the rule that contestants must be students for the duration of the recording process.

The team member concerned, Sam Kay, introduced himself as a Chemistry student. However, he had actually graduated from Oxford in June 2008 and was working at PriceWaterhouseCoopers in Reading during the later rounds of the contest.

The University of Manchester team captain, Matthew Yeo, has mixed feelings about his team being awarded the title. "While we accept the decision of the University Challenge judges, we are saddened to have been awarded the trophy under such circumstances," he said.

"As far as Simon, Henry, Reuben and I are concerned the final was a great experience and we believe Corpus Christi College were outstanding opponents."

During the final Yeo's team took an early lead against Corpus Christi, which they held onto until the last five minutes of the

show, when their opponents overtook them. Corpus Christi went on to win by a slim margin of 275 points to 190.

The University of Manchester last won *University Challenge* in 2005/6, and was the runner-up in the 2006/7 series.





iCub robot makes its UK debut

Europe's most advanced humanoid robot has made its first UK appearance as part of a major robotics symposium at the University.

The 'open source' iCub is being developed in Italy as part of a 8.5 million Euro project to develop a highly dexterous humanoid robot.

It builds on work being conducted across Europe - including research by scientists at the University's Centre for Interdisciplinary Computational And Dynamical Analysis (CICADA).

Modelled on a three-and-a-half-year-old child, the iCub is already capable of eye and head motion, leg movement, object recognition and a grasping movement that is incredibly reminiscent of a human - as well as playing the drums.

But ultimately, the aim is to develop a robot that can crawl on all fours, sit up, handle objects with precision and have head and eye movements that echo those of human beings.

It's also hoped it will be able to see, move, hear and touch in a human-like manner.

Development of the iCub is based at the Italian Institute of Technology. It made its UK debut at the University's 'Symposium on Humanoid Robotics: the iCub Project'.

Professor John Gray, Visiting Professor at The University of Manchester's Control Systems Centre, was involved in the early development of the iCub in Salford.

He said: "It's a tremendous coup to have the iCub here in Manchester.

"One of the great things about the iCub is it is an open systems platform. Users and developers in all disciplines, from psychology, through to cognitive neuroscience, to developmental robotics, can use it and customise it freely.

"It's hoped the iCub will develop its cognitive capabilities in the same way as a child, progressively learning about its own bodily skills, how to interact with the world, and eventually how to communicate with other individuals."

The symposium included a talk by Professor Darwin Caldwell, Research Director at the Italian Institute of Technology (IIT), who also delivered the public lecture.

Top award is music to student's ears

A talented composer whose music draws heavily on her mathematical background has scooped a prestigious award.

Emily Howard, 29, who is currently completing a PhD in music, is one of three composers and five artists to receive a Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award of £45,000.

Emily said: "It's amazing to receive this award, and it really can be described as a life-changing event.

"It will give me more freedom to decide what I really want to do with my music. Over the next few years, I'd like to write longer orchestral pieces – and this award will help me do that."

Emily, whose PhD is being supervised by renowned composer Professor John Casken, has already been appointed as Liverpool City Council Composer in Residence. One of her most recent pieces, *Magnetite*, opened the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra's Capital of Culture season in 2008.

During her time at Manchester Emily was supported by the Victor Sayer Postgraduate Award. Established in 2004 by Victor Sayer, the Fund exists to provide financial support to postgraduate students of music at the University.



Rare frog find

A rare female tree frog has been spotted for the first time in 20 years during a recent expedition to Central America by scientists from the University and Chester Zoo.

The team came across the 2.5 cm-long, pregnant frog by chance deep in Costa Rica's Monteverde Cloud Forest Preserve.

The species *Isthmohyla rivularis* was thought to have become extinct in the 1980s, but in 2007 Andrew Gray from the University's Museum was lucky enough to find and photograph a male.

The team's discovery suggests that the frogs are breeding, having managed to survive a deadly skin disease – the chytrid fungus – which wiped out many similar species.

Mr Gray said the discovery had been the highlight of his career so far. "It is hard to describe just how unlikely it was to have discovered a female of this particular species," he said.

"Now we know that both sexes exist in the wild, we should intensify our efforts to understand their ecology and further their conservation."



Manchester to play key role in nuclear renaissance

The University has been awarded a key role in running the UK's National Nuclear Laboratory (NNL), which will be at the centre of work to underpin the renaissance in the civil nuclear sector.

Formal agreement has been reached for the NNL to be led by a top consortium on behalf of the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC), following a competitive process to appoint a new managing contractor.

The team has been selected from the successful consortium comprising Serco, Battelle and The University of Manchester, known as SBM.

This team includes Paul Howarth, Executive Director of the Dalton Nuclear Institute, who is acting as Director of Science, Technology and Project Delivery for the NNL.

The NNL was launched formally in July 2008 by John Hutton, then Secretary of State for Business. The facility brings together expert nuclear research capabilities of Nexia

Solutions with world-class nuclear facilities, such as the new Central Laboratory at Sellafield.

It is intended that the NNL will become an international centre of excellence in nuclear research, play a central role in cleaning up the UK's nuclear waste legacy and contribute to the programme of nuclear new build. As such, it will be at the heart of delivering the government's nuclear energy policy as part of creating a low-carbon economy.

The SBM consortium members have the first class nuclear, management and commercial experience necessary to achieve the government's ambitions for NNL as a successful nuclear technology laboratory, world renowned for its exceptional staff, cutting edge facilities and excellent value for money.

Professor Alan Gilbert, President and Vice-Chancellor of The University of Manchester, said: "The NNL already has a highly skilled workforce. Working with our consortium partners, we are committed to ensuring it becomes a world-renowned centre of nuclear science and technology."



Women's wool project warms up tourists

Bedouin women in South Sinai have been learning how to create clothes using felt made from locally-produced wool.

An innovative project run by the Institute of Development Policy and Management aims to help the women sell warm clothing to tourists who visit the area of Mount St Katherine, the tallest mountain in Egypt, which is freezing cold in winter.

Research student Hilary Gilbert teamed up with felt expert Gabi Wortmann, a senior research fellow, who taught her how to make felt from the wool that is readily available to the Bedouin women. In days gone by tribes used the wool from their sheep herds to make tents to live in, but

they now live in houses and the wool is mostly left unused.

The benefit of felt-making is that it uses up coarse texture wool that may not be suitable for traditional spinning, and it is very low-tech and can be done in the women's own homes at almost no cost. "This way of using their wool is completely new to the women, and they are excited by it," Hilary says.

Hilary is a third year PhD student in the Institute of Development Policy and Management in the School of Environment and Development. Her research investigates the social impact of conservation and development policy on the Bedouin people of South Sinai, and she is soon to return to

the area to see the advances the women have made in their felt-making.

Hilary is proud of the fact that these women can now employ previously unused resources to help support themselves. She is also confident that the women can benefit from the captive market made up of the many tourists coming to the area from nearby Sharm El-Sheikh. These tourists come to climb Mount Sinai in the evenings without warm clothes, and Hilary believes the community may be able to sell wool items to them providing an income for themselves.

The project, which is supported by The Funding Network, can be viewed at www.southsinaifoundation.org

**Your
Manchester
News**

Do you want to hear more news from your University? If so, sign up to Your Manchester Online (www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchester) and click on Your Manchester News. You will also receive our e-newsletter six times per year. See page 42 for details.

Manchester was ranked amongst the very best of British universities in a recent national Research Assessment Exercise



Research results: Outstanding!

The big research money in British higher education has for many decades been channelled into the so-called 'golden triangle' of the universities of Oxford, Cambridge and London. But no more! Manchester has now muscled in, and is well on the way to becoming one of the top universities in the world by 2015.

The news is not mere spin, but revealed in official statistics. The national Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) has concluded that Manchester is one of just a handful of universities with an internationally significant research profile over a wide range of subject areas.

The RAE measures the quality of research in the UK against international standards of excellence.

The results are vitally important in terms not only of Government funding and in encouraging others to invest in Manchester's research excellence; they are also of enormous reputational importance to the University, both nationally and internationally.

The outstanding results showed that some two thirds of the University's research activity was judged to be 'world-leading' (4*) or 'internationally excellent' (3*). President and Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Gilbert of The University of Manchester said:

"These results vindicate the decision to merge UMIST and the Victoria University of Manchester in 2004 and justify our massive investment in new staff and facilities since then."

The RAE is carried out every few years by the Higher Education Funding Councils across the British Isles. Professor Gilbert said he had thought the latest RAE may have come a little too early to demonstrate the impact of change at Manchester: "But we were wrong. The evidence is now there for all to see - in terms of both research quality and research power, there is no longer a 'Golden Triangle' in British higher education research".



A ranking which looks at the volume of research activity judged to be 'World-Leading' (4*) and 'Internationally Excellent' (3*) shows Manchester in third position, behind Cambridge and Oxford.

Ranking	Institution
1	University of Oxford
2	University of Cambridge
3	The University of Manchester
4	University College London
5	University of Edinburgh
6	Imperial College London

A similar table which looks at the volume of research activity judged to be 'World-Leading' (4*) shows Manchester in fourth position, behind Cambridge and Oxford and UCL.

Ranking	Institution
1	University of Oxford
2	University of Cambridge
3	University College London
4	The University of Manchester
5	University of Edinburgh
6	Imperial College London

A table of the major research universities according to quality alone places Manchester in sixth place.

Ranking	Institution
1	University of Cambridge
2	University of Oxford
3	London School of Economics
4	Imperial College London
5	University College London
6	The University of Manchester



Rob Ahearne Your Manchester Fund PhD Scholar: World Poverty

"The recent RAE results confirmed my opinion that I am studying at one of the very best Higher Education institutions in the UK. Conducting my doctoral research at one of the top two places for Development Studies research in the UK fills me with optimism about the quality of support I receive from academic staff - and the exceptional research environment in which I am working.

I believe that the RAE results will have a positive impact on my continuing research. On a recent research trip to Tanzania, a prominent scholar in the Institute for Development Studies at the University of Dar es Salaam was full of admiration for IDPM and impressed by my attendance there. Such views can only be strengthened by the excellent RAE results.

The recent investment in facilities on campus has clearly enhanced the research reputation of the School of Environment and Development, and this is reflected in the RAE results. I feel that the results will demonstrate to prospective future employers that I have studied at one of the foremost institutions in the UK. Should I pursue an academic career, a PhD from Manchester will demonstrate the rigorousness of the research undertaken and the quality of supervision and advice I have received here in a supportive but challenging academic environment."

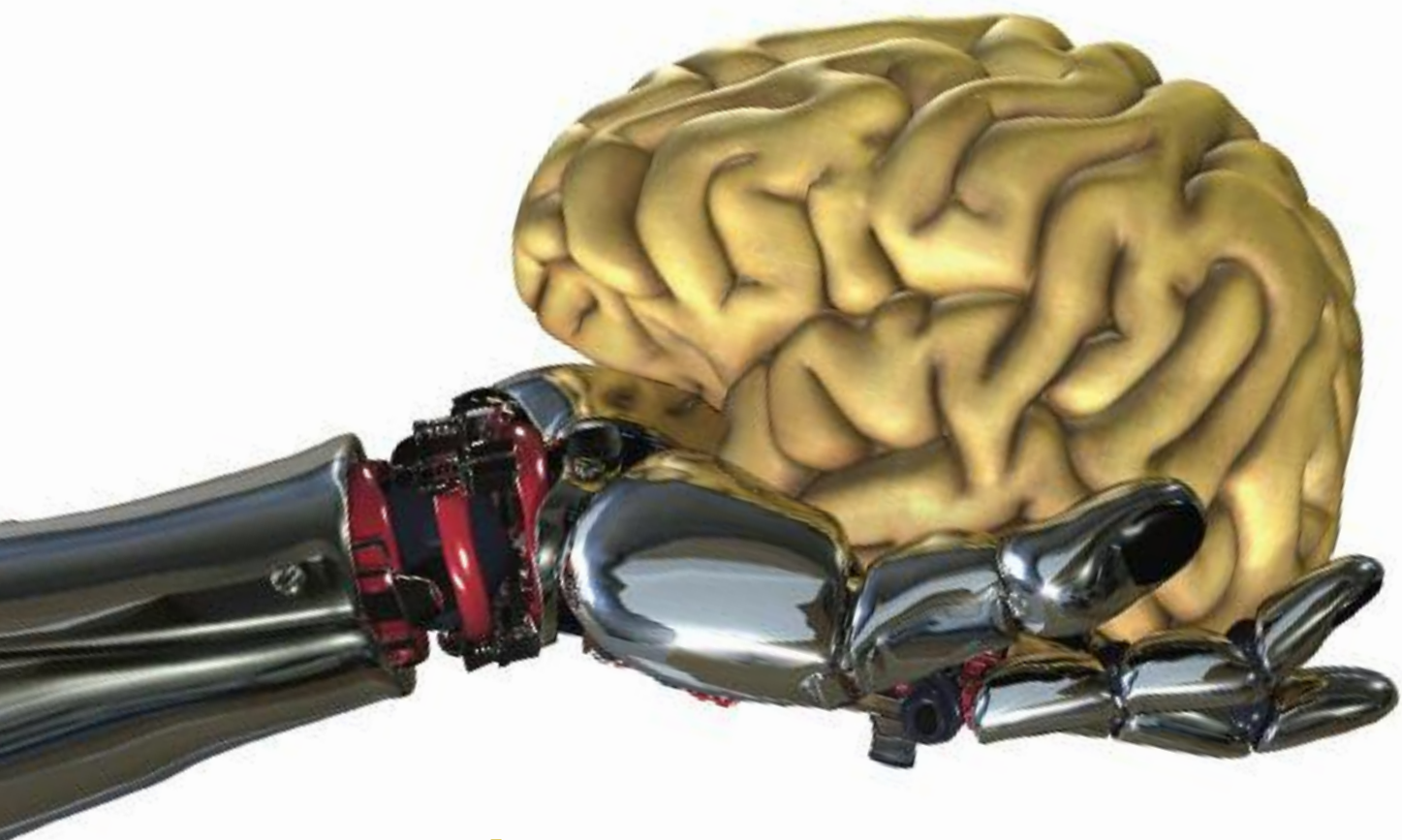
See page 45 to read more about Rob.

None of this has happened by accident. In order to achieve the University's ambition of joining the world's top 25 universities by 2015, around 1,000 new and outstanding researchers have been recruited since 2004, and the University has invested more than £403 million in new and refurbished buildings and facilities.

Manchester's performance confirms the University's position as one of the UK's top research institutions and reinforces the 2008 Jiao Tong (Shanghai) 'World University Rankings' which placed Manchester at 40th in the world and 6th in Europe earlier this year.

The University submitted research in 53 'Units of Assessment', more than any other university in the UK, and the quality profile across the board was astounding.

The amount of data included in the RAE results means there are a number of different ways of analysing the results. But in each case, Manchester ranks among the country's top performing universities.



Human brain inspires next computer revolution

The Manchester scientist who was at the heart of the home computer revolution in the 1980s is hoping to transform computing once again by replicating the human brain

Professor Steve Furber, the ICL Professor of Computer Engineering in the School of Computer Science, is already renowned as one of the pioneers of his generation.

He was part of the team that developed the BBC Micro, which sold more than 1.5 million in the 1980s and made computers a household item for the first time.

More than 20 years later, most mobile phones, digital cameras and computers continue to run on processors that he has designed.

Now Professor Furber is concentrating on the development of a new generation of computer that would work by mimicking the human brain.

Human brains are built from a giant network of small cells called neurons,

which communicate by sending electrical pulses to each other - controlling the way we move, see, hear, speak and think.

Professor Furber is trying to recreate this mode of communication within a computer, with microprocessors that are designed to interact like the networks of neurons in the brain.

He has already teamed up with psychologists from the University to develop a computer system that is similar to the brain's speech and language model.

Together they hope that successfully mimicking this part of the brain will lead to a better understanding of what goes wrong after the brain is damaged as a result of a stroke or trauma.

Ultimately, this research will lead to a generation of computers that are designed

in the same way as the human brain, offering a wider range of applications and with the capability to 'learn'.

"Since the late 1990s we have been increasingly interested in looking at alternative models of communication in computers - and particularly biologically inspired models," said Professor Furber, who has already been awarded a CBE for his work.

"It's this that has culminated in the architecture of a computer that is based on biological principles; built to mimic basic brain neurons. Ultimately, we hope to use this research to build computers with capabilities that have so far eluded computer designers."

While computers are remarkably good at adding numbers together, they are not very good - for example - at recognising pictures. "While a baby can recognise its mother from an early age, programming a computer to do the same is a major challenge."

In the human brain, each of the neurons are connected to between 10,000 and 100,000 others. They pass on messages through pulses known as 'spikes'.

The electrical wires in a computer may be faster and more efficient than the pathways in the brain. But it is not feasible for a computer to be designed with as many connections as there are in the brain.

Now, Professor Furber believes there is a way to replicate the connectivity in the brain, which is one of the major innovations in the project.

Professor Furber is driven in his quest by the idea of creating a new generation of computers that could 'learn' what was required from its user - taking on the role of personal assistant rather than desktop machine.

"The computer would ask about you and learn your preferences. For example if you asked it to book plane tickets it would learn if you preferred one airline to another or that you didn't like flights before 6am so that if you needed to book a flight, it would already know your preferences."

Professor Furber admits he is not yet within sight of his ultimate aim, but - with past successes already ranking him as one of the pioneers on the modern computer - there is no reason to doubt that he will reach his goal.



Professor Steve Furber

Although his interest in computing didn't emerge until he was reading Maths at Cambridge University, and it was rooted in his childhood interest in aircraft and aviation.

After spending a year in Cambridge's Gliding Club, but clocking up just 56 minutes in the air, Professor Furber decided his best chance of experiencing flight was to build his own flight simulator.

So, instead of re-joining the Gliding Club, he opted for Cambridge University Processors Group (CUPG), where students built computers for fun.

"It was a hobby," said Professor Furber. "I came to realise that I was more likely to experience flying in a flight simulator. I had this idea that if I could master computers I could try and build my own flight simulator and learn to fly that way."

During his time at Cambridge - where he completed a PhD in aerodynamics and then continued as a research fellow at Emmanuel College - Professor Furber continued to be involved with the CUPG, where he came to the attention of the founders of computer company Acorn.

By the end of the 70s, he had already hand-built his own computer, which he still keeps in his office at the University. And during his time as a research fellow, (between 1978 and 1981), he became increasingly involved with Acorn.

When he was asked by Acorn to develop a computer for the BBC that could be

used to support a series of television programmes, Professor Furber and colleague Sophie Wilson produced a prototype within a week.

The prototype was based around a design he had already started to sketch out. The BBC was so impressed with their achievement in such a short time that they gave Acorn the contract.

It was initially estimated that just 12,000 BBC Micros would be sold. But that figure soared to an incredible 1.5 million - as the success of the BBC Micro turned computers into household items.

Professor Furber continued to work for Acorn - where he developed the ARM chip, which continues to be used in mobile phones, computers and digital cameras.

In 1990 he became the ICL Professor of Computer Engineering at the University, where he has remained.

Since then he has also been elected as a Fellow of the British Computer Society, the Royal Society, the Royal Academy of Engineering, the IEEE and the Institution of Engineering and Technology.

Professor Furber gave the 'Your Manchester Insights' lecture entitled 'The Relentless March of the Microchip' to alumni and friends, in Greece in June 2008, and in London in October 2008. Please see page 40.

www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchester

Mothers-to-be who suffer emotional trauma in the six months before conception are more at risk of having a pre-term baby, according to new research from the University's Maternal and Fetal Health Research Centre



Worrying prematurely

A study into the effects of stress on the unborn child has found that experiencing severe distress - even before becoming pregnant - raises a woman's chance of having a premature baby, which may suffer from a range of health problems as a result. The risk is particularly marked if there is a death or serious illness in the family.

The study analysed records from 1.35 million mothers in Denmark over a 20 year period and concluded that the effects of stress hormones in the womb may explain the findings, although other factors needed to be considered.

Different types of traumas had slightly varying effects on pregnant women. For example, the highest risk factor seemed to be a serious illness or death in older children in the six months prior to conception. This increased the risk of birth before 37 weeks by 23 per cent,

and the risk of birth before 33 weeks by 59 per cent.

Death or illness in close relatives, such as parents, siblings or a partner in the last six months before becoming pregnant increased the risk of birth before 37 weeks by 16 per cent.

The researchers said they also established that mothers who experienced stress and were also missing a parent or a partner during their pregnancy were significantly more likely to have a premature birth.

Although the study focused on the effects of major life trauma, the researchers said they could not rule out the possibility that less catastrophic events, such as work related and financial problems, could also be linked to pregnancy problems.

There are several possible explanations for the findings, including increased

levels of stress hormones in the mother's body. But lifestyle changes in response to stress - such as increased consumption of tobacco or alcohol - are also possible risk factors, since both are linked with pre-term labour.

Study leader Professor Philip Baker from the Maternal and Fetal Health Research Group at the University said that most research to date had focused on stress during pregnancy.

"Yet these results suggest that the impact could be greater in the period preceding conception," he said. "Although relatively subtle, it is still a real effect."

Tommy's, the baby charity who funded the research, said around 50,000 babies are born prematurely each year in the UK. Some 10 per cent of these will suffer long-term health problems such as chronic lung disease, learning difficulties and blindness.



Professor Colin Sibley

"It is vital that we continue to investigate the causes of premature birth, so we can give every baby the best chance of being born healthy," Professor Baker added.

In the UK alone, £4 billion is spent annually on the neonatal intensive care needed by premature babies. And the enormous healthcare costs associated with long-term illness, loss of education and parents' earnings, and the provision of lifetime institutional care for children with severe disabilities, are likely to rise.

The Manchester Maternal and Fetal Health Research Centre (MFHRC) links research findings into clinical practice. This so called 'bench-to-bedside' research is at the core of the current (2006-2011) five-year plan. Some 60 clinicians and scientists are attached to the Centre, which has achieved impressive success in attracting support from the research councils and other funding bodies.

One of the leading clinicians is Professor Colin Sibley, whose world-renowned research has demonstrated that an abnormally functioning placenta is often

the cause of a dangerous pregnancy complication known as pre-eclampsia.

Professor Sibley told an audience of Manchester alumni and friends, gathered in September for his 'Your Manchester Insights' lecture, that an estimated 200,000 women around the world die from pre-eclampsia each year - one every three minutes.

In addition, he said that a related complication called IUGR (a term used for babies who are smaller than average during pregnancy) is responsible for one in four stillbirths and one in six sudden infant deaths in the UK alone.

The vital importance of the placenta in normal and complicated pregnancies, and the effects of nutrition on the placenta and baby were also highlighted in the lecture.

At present, there is no treatment available to those with pregnancy complications other than early delivery of the baby. However, in order to improve diagnostic tools, St Mary's Hospital in The University of Manchester has recently opened the UK's first placenta clinic. It will carry out clinical

trials on women in the 15th to 18th week of pregnancy to see if placental markers help to predict women who will develop pregnancy complications.

"If we are to tackle the serious problems in pregnancy the answer must lie in understanding how the placenta develops and how we can intervene to help it function properly" said Professor Sibley.

Professor Sibley is currently Professor of Child Health and Physiology in the Maternal and Fetal Health Research Group and is Director of Tommy's, the baby charity. He has published over 100 peer reviewed papers and currently holds several major grants from the Medical Research Council, The Wellcome Trust and other charities. He also leads his own group of around 20 researchers (as well as the 60 plus scientists and clinician-scientists, technical and clerical staff of the MFHRC) making it the largest pregnancy research group in Europe.

See page 40 for details on the 'Your Manchester Insights' lectures.

www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchester



Striking a progressive note

The new Novars Research Centre explores the future of electronic music, as Simon Morrison discovers

Manchester has always struck a progressive musical note, and the Novars Research Centre will ensure that its reputation for electro-acoustic music will be carried into the digital future of the 21st century.

Electro-acoustic music uses technology to further explore and transform sound. The sound may be acoustic 'found sound' recorded from nature or the urban environment, or it may be electronically-manipulated sound.

Imagine a home cinema system, but on a grander scale, with music specifically written for Dolby 5.1 and diffused through multiple speakers - sometimes up to 48 - to create 360 degree soundscapes. It's the aural equivalent of impressionist art - an immersive experience designed to appeal emotively rather than directly.

The Novars Studios (the name derives from composer Francis Dhomont's *Ars Nova*, or New Art) opened recently,

housed in the £2.5 million Martin Harris Centre. Co-Director Dr David Berezan swipes me through the building's glass doors, suitably electronically.

Dr Berezan has been at the department since 2003 and is perfectly placed to lend his eyes, and more importantly his ears, to the project: "I helped with the design and specification of the building," he says as we walk through the ground floor teaching cluster; a new apartment smell to the place,



rows of gleaming Apple Macs almost box fresh. "And one of the things I was careful about was excellent acoustic performance."

As well as the £150,000 spent on equipment like computers, top-end Genelec speakers and recording desks, great thought was put into the construction of the building itself. Each of the three studios are of room-within-a-room construction, suspended on rubber discs, with walls that are within other walls to reduce the contamination of outside sound. The internal acoustics are therefore dry and accurate for working with sound materials – allowing the students to sculpt sound, using a computer almost as a digital potter's wheel. Such is the purity of the studio's acoustic isolation that one industrious student completely missed Manchester's 2008 earthquake!

"It really is an iconic building in terms of the look too," Dr Berezan continues. "The University was keen on developing a building that had a real presence on campus. The Novars Centre is quite small but has a very striking, modernist design."

Dr Berezan saves the best for last: the main studio - larger than the other two - with a 32-channel mixing desk and 30 speakers arranged around the room so sound can be diffused in the process of its composition. It's night-time, but students - from amongst the 40 first years to the eleven taking PhDs in electro acoustic composition – still drift

between the studios. Composers don't tend to keep office hours.

In terms of the application of such endeavours, electro acoustic music shares much with the avant-garde tradition, whether sound installations in art galleries or concert hall performances such as the *MANTIS* series (Manchester Theatre In Sound) founded by Dr Berezan.

Equally, the results can be heard on soundtracks, video games, or in nightclubs. Manipulating electronic sounds, for instance, will be familiar to the producers and DJs of dance music, so central to Manchester's recent cultural history with clubs like the Hacienda, and artists like 808 State and The Chemical Brothers (alumni of the University).

The history of electronic music in Manchester stretches much further back however. In 2008, the Computer Conservation Society uncovered the first ever recording of digital music, right here at The University of Manchester. The sounds were made by the Ferranti Mark I computer, the successor to the 'Baby' computer, the predecessor of all modern PCs. Recorded for the *Children's Hour* programme in 1951, the Ferranti used its 'Hoot' instruction to play *Baa Baa Black Sheep*, *In The Mood* and an electronic rendition of *God Save The King* - very sci-fi for the early 50s!

The Novars Research Centre is also part of the project to digitalise the archive of electronic composer Delia Derbyshire,

who was based at the BBC Radiophonic Workshop between 1962-1973.

Principally known for the electronic swoops and swirls of the *Doctor Who* theme tune, 267 tapes of her work were recently donated to the University, providing what has been described as an 'Aladdin's cave' of proto-electronic soundscapes. "She was sadly a much overlooked force in experimental electronic music in this country," says Dr Berezan, a member of the team re-appraising her work.

The Novars Centre is the perfect home for such sonic space explorations, ensuring that electronic creativity continues to fizz and crackle within Manchester. "It's fantastic to have this wonderful environment dedicated to the subject," says Dr Berezan, showing me out of the building, my ears newly tuned to the synchronous sounds of the campus.

My final thought: love or loathe computers, you will never replicate that iconic *Dr Who* theme by simply whoo-we-whooping from behind the couch...

Simon Morrison is a Manchester graduate who completed his BA in 1991 and gained an MA in Novel Writing in 1997. He is a member of The University of Manchester Alumni Association Advisory Board and the Managing Director of Pad Communications, a Manchester based business providing public relations services.

www.novars.manchester.ac.uk

Oxford Road is the very hub of life at The University of Manchester. It's a bustling, vibrant thoroughfare where students meet and greet on their way to lectures and seminars – or congregate on their way to the Students' Union or a nearby pub or club



The Whitworth Hall 1944



Oxford Road, Opposite the University 1959



Oxford Road, 1973

Remembering Oxford Road

Oxford Road has changed immeasurably since the early 1870s, when the University buildings began transforming the skyline on a four-acre site bounded by Oxford Road, Burlington Street and Coupland Street, as several generations of students now recall...

The architect for the first cluster of buildings was Alfred Waterhouse, who also famously designed Manchester Town Hall. His bold neo-Gothic blueprint marked an exciting development for the University, which started life some 20 years previously in rather humbler premises on Quay Street in the city centre, an area then renowned more for its squalid alleyways and high crime rates than intellectual prowess.

First of the landmark structures to open its doors was the John Owens building in October 1873 and others like the Christie Library and Whitworth Hall followed in the decades immediately afterwards.

By the turn of the 20th century, the Victoria University of Manchester was a major player on Oxford Road. But for many years, the surrounding area changed remarkably little. Packed with terraced housing, shops, pubs and dance halls, it was a close-knit, largely Irish community which for the most part stayed separate from university life. But occasionally the two worlds would coincide.

Dr Lawrence Goldie, a medical student in the 1940s recalls: "We spent most of our

time in the Students' Union, the pubs were pretty off-limits. But the annual Rag Day was an event which the local community joined in and it gave us access to local factories where people always gave generously for charity.

"The Holy Name Church also had a parish centre where keen boxers like me could join in contests with the local lads. We met some wonderful people."

One major difference between then and now is the appearance of the University buildings. In the days before the Clean Air Act they, (like all city centre buildings) were unremittingly black.

Zoology graduate Barbara Fawkes, also a student in the 1940s remembers: "When I first saw Oxford Road and the University,



Reno's music shop 1938



On the eighth day, 1973



The Phoenix Inn 1973

I remember thinking how dark and dismal it all looked and I was not very impressed. But this was the year of demobilisation in 1947 and competition was very tight for places.

"So I was lucky to get a place at Manchester and once I got here I loved it, particularly Oxford Road because of the life and buzz. I remember it as always very busy with lots of trams and traffic which I had to negotiate as I cycled back to my digs."

By the late 1960s, most of the residential housing was being demolished to make way for new university buildings.

Dental student William Hale was an undergraduate in the 1960s: "I lived in digs in Denton and had to get a bus from Brunswick Street. There were still lots of shops and houses but they were being knocked down one by one."

Other landmarks to disappear as part of the re-development included the Royal

Manchester College of Music on Devas Street and the College Hotel, a popular haunt of undergraduates.

A pivotal part of student life, then and now, was the Union building, which was opened in 1958 by the then Prime Minister Harold Macmillan. It replaced Staff House, built in 1937.

But other iconic buildings remain.

One landmark remembered by generations is the Holy Name Church. Designed by Joseph Hansom (of hansom cab fame) it was completed in 1871 and was originally to feature a steeple 240-feet high which was never built.

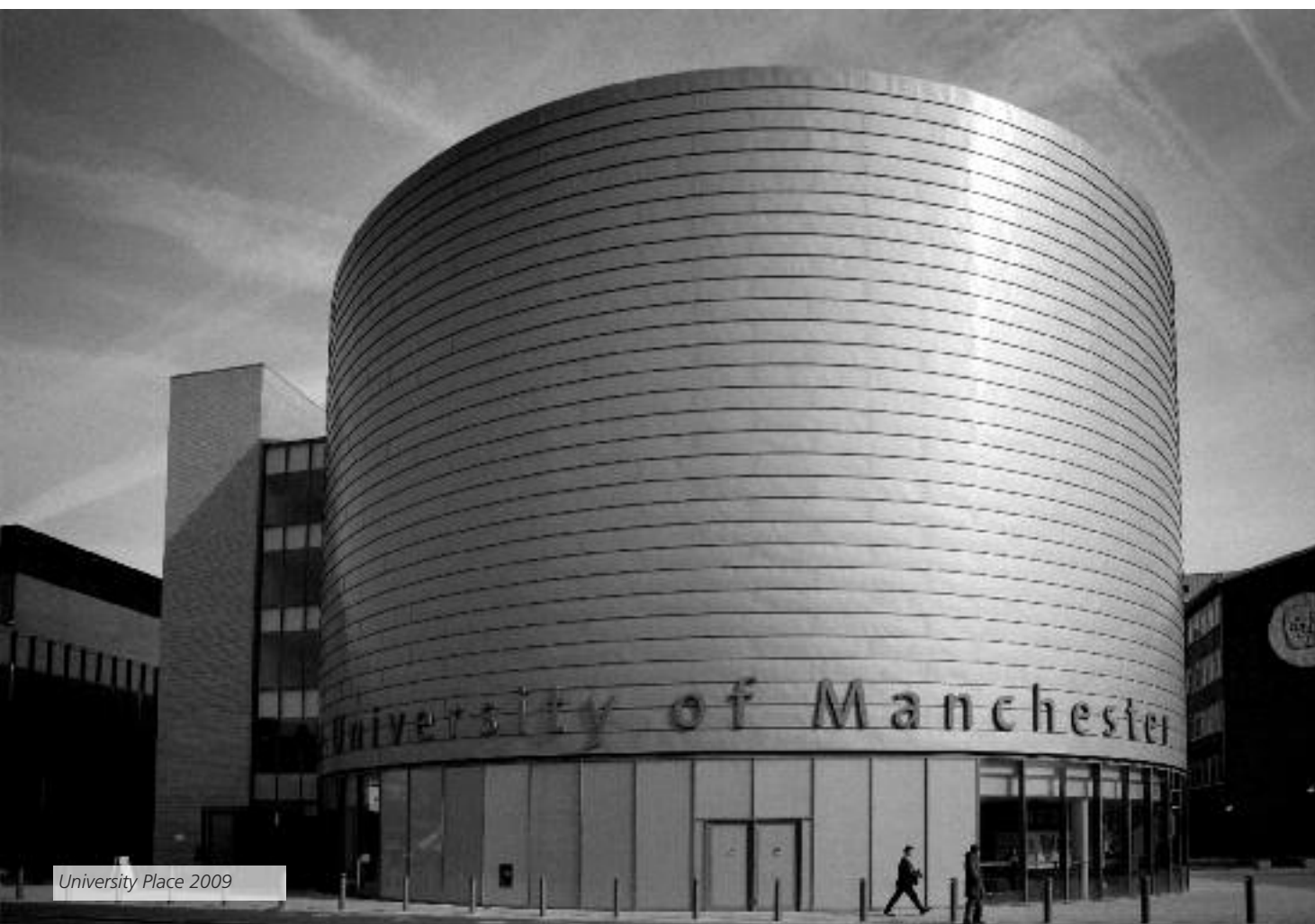
Law graduate Simone Collins remembers going to the chaplaincy next door for cut-price lunches in the early 1980s. "They did a good bowl of soup and bread for very reasonable prices and it was a popular place to go. We'd also often go over the road for the Union debates. Phil

Woolas was the leader of the Union and we had lots of heated but good-humoured discussions. Another favourite spot was the Scott Bar which we thought was very trendy."

Today, students have a plethora of places to eat and drink along the Oxford Road corridor. But that's a pretty recent development.

Economics student Alan Briefel graduated in 1981. "Most of the pubs were very traditional and one of the few places to eat was the On the Eighth Day café, which we thought was fantastic. But the Union was great. I remember going there to see a band I'd never heard of called Dire Straits! Oxford Road was always very busy but for most of my time I didn't have a 9.30 lecture or seminar. In my final year I did and I suddenly realised just how jam-packed it was in the rush hour."

Twenty years on, Oxford Road is one of the busiest public transport routes in



University Place 2009

Europe and has the highest concentration of cyclists and pedestrians anywhere in Manchester outside the city centre.

The latest landmark building is the distinctive rotunda 'University Place', which opened last summer as part of the University's £650 million Capital Development Project and houses teaching rooms, student support services and a variety of cafés, restaurants, shops and the University Visitors' Centre.

Oxford Road's changing face is set for further exciting developments via Corridor Manchester – the University's development partnership with Manchester City Council, Manchester Metropolitan University and Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. CEO Jackie Potter is heading up the project. She says: "Our aim is to maximise the economic potential of the area by harnessing the millions of pounds in investment currently

being made by our universities, Health Trust and the private sector to bring real economic benefits for local residents as well as for the city as a whole."

Plans include more trees and better public transport and more space for businesses and hi-tech industry as well as a major redevelopment of the Whitworth Park and Art Gallery.

English and American Literature student Simon Morrison, who graduated in 1992 and is currently a member of The University of Manchester Alumni Association Advisory Board, remembers the Precinct as a 'forbidding' place which he rarely frequented.

"There was a bookshop there which I used to go to but most of my memories of Oxford Road revolve around food and drink.

"The first place that leaps to mind is Abdul's kebab shop near Whitworth Park. There was a big drinking culture and

Oxford Road was a key part of it. We would start off in the Union bar then go on to the Old Steam Brewery where the Aquatics Centre is now. I remember being rugby tackled to the floor on Oxford Road while I was on my way to a party wearing a toga! The Phoenix was a very studenty pub, but we would venture further down Oxford Road to the Cornerhouse arts complex and I used to go to alternative comedy nights at the Union where I saw Steve Coogan, and Caroline Aherne.

"The colour and the vibrancy of people walking up and down had lots of energy and lots of life and that's what I will always remember Oxford Road for."

Comment on and share with us your fond, student memories of Oxford Road via Your Manchester Online. See page 42 for details.

www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchester





Sammy's Mathare mission

When Sammy Gitau miraculously achieved his dream of gaining a masters from this University, you could be forgiven for doubting he would ever return to the notorious slum where he lived in Nairobi, but 15 months later he's back in Mathare...

In 2004, former Kenyan 'street boy' Sammy Gitau rescued a University of Manchester prospectus from a pile of garbage in one of Nairobi's most lawless neighbourhoods.

Sammy read in the document about an MSc in Management and Implementation of Development Projects at the University's renowned Institute for Development Policy and Management.

After a struggle of epic proportions - and with the help of EU official Alex Walford - he achieved his dream and graduated, to the acclaim of the world's media, in December 2007.

By Western standards his story is remarkable: aged 13, Sammy became his family's breadwinner when his father, who brewed illegal alcohol, was killed in a hammer attack.

Soon after he was beaten by angry mobs for stealing and became a drug dealer in 1997, hitting rock bottom when he overdosed on a cocktail of drugs, ending up as a 'street boy' in nearby Eastleigh.

Mathare is one of the most notorious slums in Africa where brutality, unemployment, violence and disease are everyday realities. Some of its inhabitants are forced onto nearby streets where they try against all odds to survive as 'street children'. Hundreds of homes and businesses were burned in the violence of 2007 following the disputed Kenyan presidential elections.

When Sammy returned there in March 2008 he found a community tearing itself apart as factions dominated by the Luo and Kikuyu tribes violently fought each other in the aftermath of the elections.

According to Sammy, a hundred or so market stalls and homes were destroyed, thousands were injured and at least 12 people were killed in ferocious machete and hammer attacks.

"I honestly feel that it was the right time for me to return to Mathare - despite the violence," he said.

"Because I had been away - and so was seen as impartial - and because



my Manchester degree gave me authority, many people turned to me."

One night during the worst of the violence, word was sent to Sammy that a massacre was being planned by youths, in revenge for previous attacks.

He said: "I went as quickly as I could to find these young people armed with machetes and hammers. They had folded one leg of their trousers and intended to kill anyone they found in the Luo neighbourhood who had not done that. It could have been hundreds of people. Thank goodness I convinced

them to abandon the attack. I think it's fair to say that the authority my masters degree gave me saved lives."

Sammy says he never had any doubt that he and his wife and three children would continue to live in Mathare after his studies.

"I simply couldn't cut loose and run away: I needed to go back and work with my community," he said.

Sammy has put his studies to good use at his community resource centre, which operates out of four painted

containers on the edge of the slum. Each container offers something different: a library of books rescued from a waste paper tip, a rudimentary recording studio and a sewing machine used to train young people.

The fourth container is used for film making with a laptop and video camera that Sammy brought back from Manchester. This is also where he and his family live.

Under Sammy's energetic and creative leadership, the community centre organises a range of activities including



judo, football, fashion shows for teenage girls, and traditional dancing.

His work is clearly paying off: musicians and actors, who might otherwise be caught up in the brutality that occurs every day in Mathare, are fast becoming celebrities of the slum.

"The young people I work with want to shoot but with cameras, not guns" he said.

"One of the boys I worked with - Amanaka - was a talented goalkeeper. To make ends meet he mugged people

with a replica gun. Last year the police dealt him their own form of justice: unable to pay a bribe to save himself, he was shot through the head.

"What he did was wrong but if he had a decent chance in life he would have escaped such brutality. I could have been Amanaka."

And also thanks to the skills learned at Manchester, Sammy is now able to help groups in the slum by writing constitutions and proposals and lobbying the Kenyan authorities.

But it's his latest project - thought up during the course of his studies - which he hopes will make the greatest impact: Mathare Community Radio, which should be up and running soon.

Sammy says he will never forget Manchester and what it helped him achieve: "Manchester is like the waters in a well. You get to drink the water because you're thirsty but my thirst grows daily. I would like one day to return."



Toby Jones' return to the University



'Parlour Song' Toby Jones (Ned) with Amanda Drew (Joy)



'W' Toby Jones, second from right, as Karl Rove

© Donald Cooper / Rex Features

© Lions Gate/Everett / Rex Features

“Acting was never really the plan...”

Actor, Toby Jones (BA Hons Drama 1989), spoke to us from the set of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*

To millions of fans Toby Jones, aka Dobby the house elf, is a little creature with bat-like ears and bulging green eyes the size of tennis balls. After much speculation about whether Dobby would come back, Jones is currently busy filming the last two Potter movies. Without wishing to spoil the ending, Dobby - a computer-generated image character voiced by Jones - is eventually killed saving Harry's life in what promises to be a dramatic climax.

In between playing the magical creature created by JK Rowling, Jones is also currently starring at the National Theatre

in Tom Stoppard's *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* - whilst simultaneously rehearsing *'Parlour Song'* at the Almeida Theatre. Oh, and he's also giving a lecture a London University this week too. Just how does he keep on top of it all?

“I don't really,” he says. “I'm trying to sustain all the different strands and it's a challenge trying to stay engaged with them all. It's very good to be so busy though, and my training at Manchester taught me to have a very broad outlook and a diverse approach to acting.” Just as well.

As an undergraduate, Jones says that he and his fellow drama students were encouraged to write and perform their own work in the Stephen Joseph Studio. “I loved the way we were taught because it made us explore different versions of ourselves,” he recalls. But did he ever imagine that his career would be quite as diverse as it turned out to be? “I thought I would write and direct. Acting was never really the plan, but it's just the way it turned out.”

It has turned out very well, by anybody's standards. Jones was awarded the 2002



Laurence Olivier Theatre Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role for his performance in *The Play What I Wrote* at the Wyndham Theatre, London. He has also found critical acclaim in Hollywood, winning the London Film Critics Circle 'Best British Actor' for his portrayal of Truman Capote in *Infamous* in 2006. Continuing the theme of US politics he went on to act in Ron Howard's *Frost/Nixon* and in *'W'*, the chronicle of President's George W Bush's life and presidency by Oliver Stone. There have been numerous other film, TV and stage appearances for Jones, including a part in *Creation* about the life of Charles Darwin and his tortured relationship with his religious wife, scheduled for release later this year.

Jones recently found time to return to the University to conduct a public lecture about his life and work for staff and students in the School of Arts, Histories and Cultures. According to James Thompson, a professor in the school – and long standing friend of Jones – his performance was 'truly engaging'.

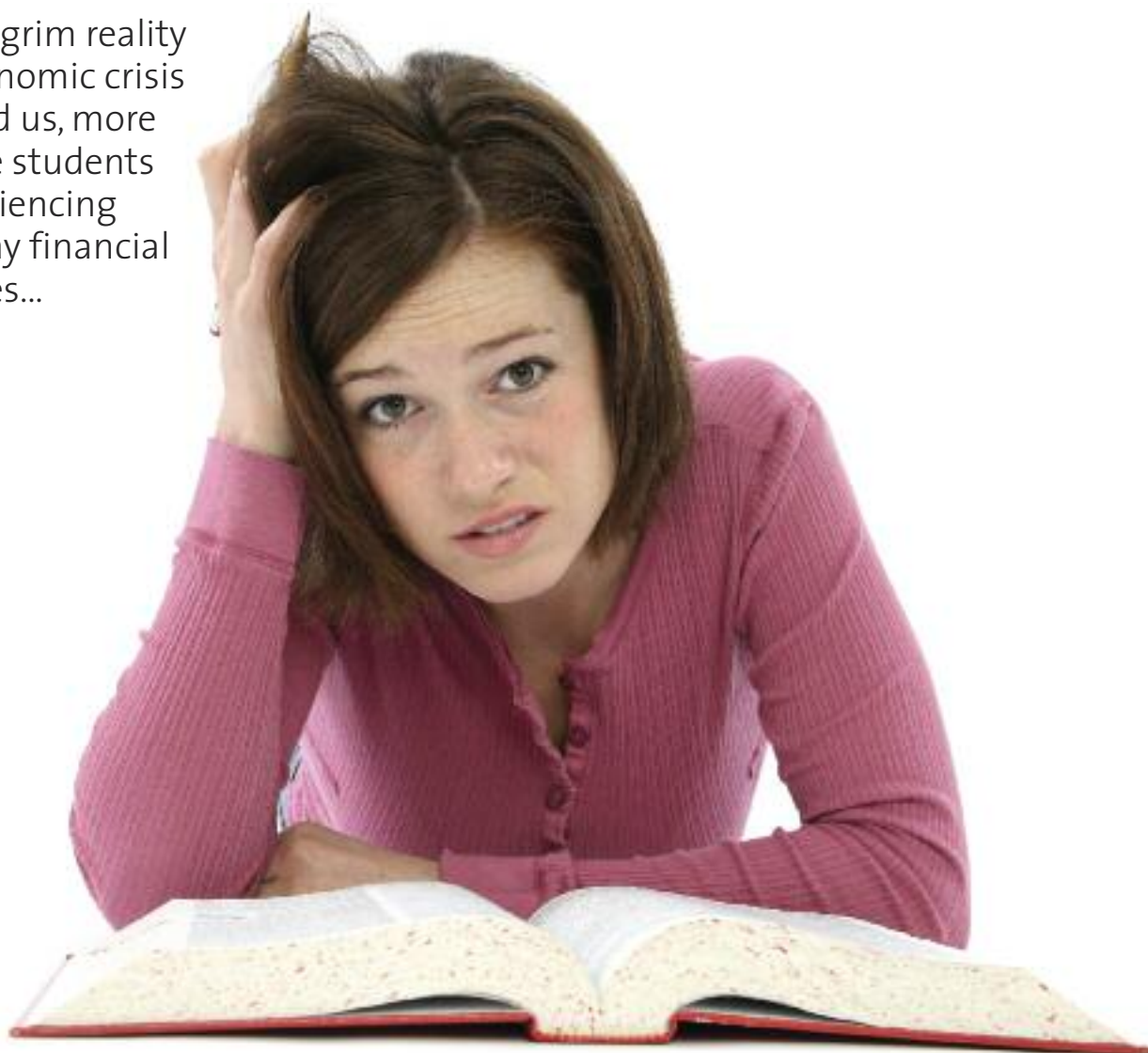
"Toby is one of those actors who can turn his hand to so many different things and can reflect very cleverly about the craft and discipline of acting," he said. "In fact he is one of our very best ambassadors because he can link the practical with the scholarly side of theatre which is exactly what we try to do here in Manchester."

Dobby might be being finished off, but one gets the feeling that Toby Jones has a lot more magic still to come.



Dobby from the Harry Potter Films
voiced by Toby Jones

With the grim reality of an economic crisis all around us, more and more students are experiencing day-to-day financial difficulties...



All Work and Low Pay

Although the words 'student' and 'poverty' have been linked for many years, the halcyon days of the 1960s and 70s - when poorer students could claim a full grant, as well as additional funding to cover transport to and from university, and unemployment benefit during the holidays - are unthinkable today.

So what exactly does it cost to be a student in 2009? Estimates by both the National Union of Students and The University of Manchester, state that it costs approximately £7,000 to study full-time at Manchester during the year 2008-09.

£7,000 would pay for accommodation (the average cost for self-catering halls at Manchester is £3,250 for 39 weeks), meals, books and stationary, clothes, local transport and other general living expenses, such as photocopying and printing, laundry, phone calls, entertainment, sports and cooking equipment.

The term 'entertainment', a pseudo-necessity, will no doubt be met by many a wry smile by those who recognise exactly what those expensively hedonistic nights on the town often entail. Such fond memories will probably be

countered by the sobering knowledge that the average student living outside London has just £13.87 per week to live on after paying their housing and utilities costs out of their student loans.

With the average graduate debt totalling £12,363 in 2007, such a conundrum leaves hard-up students with three options: apply for one of several scholarships offered by the University (see page 44), apply for a Hardship Loan of between £100 and £500, or go out to work and become a (partially) self-financing adult. While modern-day student loans are designed to pay a



proportion of the tuition fees, as well as living costs, the Hardship Loan is only obtainable by those who have applied for the maximum amount of student loan. As a result, many students have little choice but to seek employment.

Whereas in the past top universities such as Oxbridge prohibited their students from working part-time, the class of 2009 really does have to work to pay its way. More than half of students work during term-time to fund their studies, while 86 per cent have worked during the summer vacation period.

Not only has the proportion of students in part-time employment been increasing dramatically over the past decade, but we've also seen an alarming increase in the number of students working full-time. It's not difficult to understand why Oxbridge and other Russell Group universities have discouraged their students from seeking employment: a quarter of students who work report having missed lectures, seminars or tutorials due to paid responsibilities, while almost one in five have missed deadlines. Law graduate and Students' Union Welfare Officer Ellie Reyland is concerned by the findings:

"Around 40 per cent of students working full-time feel that employment has impacted on their studies. This is a worrying trend. Low paid jobs mean students have to work for longer, which affects their studying to a greater extent. Trade union membership is also very low

among full-time students. I would encourage all working students to join a trade union."

Unsurprisingly, most students are forced to undertake work which has little or no relevance to their studies. Like almost a quarter of full-time students, final-year English and Drama student Jennie Agg works in the hotel and restaurants sector, spending more hours per week waitressing at a noodle bar in popular student haunt Fallowfield than she does in the lecture theatre. "While I do enjoy my job, I certainly wouldn't do it if I could afford not to," she says. "I want to be a journalist when I graduate, but in the meantime I get treated like a skivvy by some of the customers who come in. When it comes to my coursework, extracurricular activities and job, it can feel like there aren't enough hours in the week!"

Working isn't the only option the contemporary student has for curbing student debt however. While one can only predict that fewer students will be able to afford the rents in ensuite catered halls of residence, the sight of a tracksuit-clad student carrying the ubiquitous Lidl bag along Oxford Road, laden with cans of baked beans and other cut-price essentials is far from just a stereotype these days.

One way many students avoid perpetrating this stereotype further is by participating in a mass exodus: back to Mum and Dad's. A surprising 22 per cent of students now live with their parents,

although this figure almost doubles among the poorest social classes. Yet, despite hailing from the Greater Manchester town of Urmston, third-year Pharmacy student Ali Yazdi preferred to live with friends while studying at the University, in spite of financial pressures.

"In my second year I worked part-time in Tesco, stacking shelves and working at the check-out, to make a bit of extra money," he recalls. "But in third year I really needed to concentrate on my course work, so I moved into the 'box' room of the house I was renting with my friends. The size of the room meant I could pay less rent and was able to stop working part-time thanks to the money I saved."

Perhaps students' problems should be looked at in the light of former Prime Minister Tony Blair's plans for 50 per cent of young people to attend higher education by the year 2010. With that deadline only months away, it's probably just as well that this goal will not be reached. Widening participation, and facilitating the education of more gifted pupils, is undoubtedly important in the UK. Nevertheless, have we as a nation seriously considered the real cost of such an ambitious policy?

Manchester graduate, Susannah Birkwood (BA Hons Linguistics and Spanish 2008), is editor of Student Direct - the University's weekly student newspaper.
www.student-direct.co.uk



Taking Up Office

Student politics in Manchester has been a valuable training ground for politicians, media commentators, broadcasters, policy advisors, entrepreneurs and investment bankers, as Steve Connor discovers

Manchester's Oxford Road is strewn with fruit boxes covered in slogans, there are banners hung from trees and the hopeful and the headstrong are out on the pavement armed with fistfuls of flyers: it is election time again at the Students' Union.

Whatever the post - President, Communications, Societies, or the political slant, it's a well-worn path for those dogged enough to endure the electoral process, followed by life as an executive officer. It's all consuming. It's a major learning experience. It's something you never forget.

But what comes next?

For many the politics continues, but on the national stage. Ed Straw - brother of Jack - was President of the Union Council at the then Owens campus in 1970 and took up office "in those turbulent times of street revolt, fresh from an anti-Springbok tour, Vietnam war or student grant increase demo".

Ed Straw admits to having "no idea" where he would end up. "Careers were not something which had any space in the minds of us idealistic and naïve student politicians," he says. "Possibly the most use of the 'hurly burly' of

Union life was in my work for John Smith on the organisation of the Labour Party, which went on to become one of the building blocks of New Labour."

Now a partner at PriceWaterhouseCoopers, he admits his Union experience was "both a baptism of smoke and sometimes fire, and a round of unusual experiences." Perhaps the most memorable experience, he adds, was handing over £3,400 to the Rolling Stones for promoting two concerts at the Free Trade Hall.

The path into politics has been followed by a number of former Union 'hacks'. David Clark for example, was President of the



Liam Byrne



Ed Straw



Nick Brown



David Clark



Behzad Sabih

Student Union in 1964, and after a further degree at UMIST, became the Member of Parliament for Colne Valley in 1970 and served in Tony Blair's first Cabinet. Now Lord Clark of Windermere, he is Chairman of the Forestry Commission.

Nick Brown, the MP for Newcastle, is another officer-turned-politico. He was Publicity Secretary at the Owens Union in 1971 and later gave the 1989/90 Communications Officer, Derek Draper, his first job in national politics as an aide in his constituency office.

Draper's colourful Union career was matched by a headline-making stint as an 'architect' of New Labour, then as a leading lobbyist and latterly as a psychotherapist and political 'blogger' who hit the headlines earlier this year.

Following hard on the heels of Draper was Liam Byrne, also a Communications Officer in the early 90s and today the Member of Parliament for Birmingham, Minister for the Cabinet Office and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Running for office appears to be a habit that is hard to kick, but there are plenty of Union officers who have taken a

different course. John Barnes, for example, was first elected in 1969 but went on to work for Proctor and Gamble. He then carved out a hugely successful career as a restaurateur. The old cliché 'If you can't stand the heat stay out of the kitchen' has a special resonance for him. He says "In my case I got used to the heat in Student Union politics at Owens - particularly the hustings when standing for Union President in 1970. And I have spent most of my career enjoying life in the kitchen".

As well as taking Harry Ramsdens from one restaurant to 70 in seven countries, Barnes also developed the La Tasca chain and then the latest Ego Mediterranean Restaurants.

Others choose entrepreneurialism over elections. Sabih Behzad was elected President at the UMIST union in 1999 and it was during his time on the exec that he decided, somewhat to his surprise, to become an investment banker.

"Still in the midst of the dot-com boom in the 90s, I was convinced that an entrepreneurial career was my most likely route to success and that is what I wanted to do as soon as I finished my

sabbatical year," he says from his office at Nomura. "On reflection, I gained a great many skills in those formative years. Learning to handle bureaucracy, speaking in front of large groups, and trying to understand how a balance sheet works, were an excellent platform to build my skills."

Sabih Behza describes his time as Union President as possibly the most enjoyable year of his life so far.

Dominic Herrington, now a civil servant at the Department for Children, Schools and Families, also found his year on the Exec in 1989 a rewarding start to professional life: "I had no idea I would end up where I did, although I suppose education is a theme," he says. "It taught me organisational skills. It taught me about politics with a little p in spades. And it taught me not to take myself too seriously in future, and that I valued life out of 'work' as much as in it."

Emerging from Union life comes a cadre of politicians, media commentators and broadcasters, policy advisors, entrepreneurs and investment bankers. Importantly though, for many, the experience was about keeping students entertained as well as entangled in politics. The last word goes to Kit Bailey, a Women's Officer in the late 80s.

"When I took up office I was excited and terrified in equal measures," she says. "It was a traditionally very radical Students' Union, with an even more radical tradition of Women's Officers and here was I, on an Exec with some of the most outspoken, dynamic and 'blokey' young men I'd ever met!"

"I had no idea that I would end up working in the music business, but the general cut and thrust of Union politics and dealing with very confident and clever men, who were not always the most sympathetic to feminist ideas, definitely helped! It's also the friendships that you make during that time that often last - if it hadn't been for our then Entertainments Manager, I would never have worked on a Spice Girls' Christmas Tour whilst simultaneously producing the live music side of the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards!"

Steve Connor (BA Hons English Language and Literature 1991) was elected as Mancunian Editor in 1989 and now runs the Manchester-based communications agency, Creative Concern.

From Jilly Cooper to Anthony Burgess, Manchester alumni recall their sometimes guilty literary pleasures



What were you reading?

What did you read at university when you weren't grappling with books on the seemingly endless course reading lists?

Hopefully being an undergraduate affords the luxury of being able to explore writers outside the confines of study. And occasionally books read off curriculum can have a profound effect. Jonathan Trigell, award-winning writer of the book *Boy A* and a graduate in English Language and English Literature, says it was one particular author who prompted him to come to Manchester in the 1990s in the first place.

"Anthony Burgess was my favourite writer when I arrived at university," says Trigell, who also gained an MA in Novel Writing in 2002. "In fact, his having been to Manchester was one of my reasons for

going there," he confesses. Burgess studied English Language and Literature at the University in the 1940s.

"As a first year I read Burgess's *A Dead Man in Deptford*, which was a much more interesting take on Christopher Marlowe than all the academic stuff," he continues. "I had a favourite spot in the University library basement, not sure I could take you there now because it was tucked away down circuitous corridors and stairs, but it was really peaceful and you could drink beer and eat crisps while reading. It used to be near the graphic novels, which I enjoyed too: they were kind of hidden away like the secret black library that students weren't supposed to enter. But there was a complete bound set of Dave Sim's groundbreaking *Cerebus* series, which is

an amazing read: the *Melmoth* book, for example, is an exploration of the final days and death of Oscar Wilde."

Jonathan hasn't been the only graduate whose life has been transformed by a writer. Wilfred Hopkins, who under the name Billy Hopkins, is a million-selling author of such titles as *Our Kid* and *High Hopes*, admits that he too found inspiration in the words of one particular scribe whilst at university.

Wilfred, who graduated with a BA in Social Sciences in 1955 and went on to complete a MEd Education in 1968, recalls the books around at the time.

"As for leisure reading - that's a laugh! What leisure? - we had Lloyd C Douglas's *The Robe* and a book I read

several times (I needed to!) *The Power of Positive Thinking* by Vincent Peale.

"But if I were to name the writer who had the greatest influence on my own writing and one who inspired me to try writing myself, it has to be Paddy Chayevsky, who wrote many TV and screen plays. His simple, straightforward style I have tried to imitate ever since, but he was undoubtedly the master. The quotation from Chayevsky which has had the greatest influence on me and made me want to write is the following:

"Our lives are filled with endless moments of stimulus and depression. We relate to each other in an incredibly complicated manner. Every fibre of relationship is worth a dramatic study. There is far more exciting drama in the reasons why a man gets married than in why he murders someone. The man who is unhappy in his job, the wife who thinks of a lover, the girl who wants to get into television, your father, mother, sister, brothers, cousins, friends - all these are better subjects for drama than I go."

Dramatic stuff. And Carola Dunn, a 1967 BA Arts graduate now living in Oregon and writer of historical romances and mystery novels, admits no less a passion for reading the fiction which has informed her own work.

"My greatest love was science fiction - a huge relief between all those heavyweight (in all senses) Russian novels," she recalls.

"I also read every book on the shelves at home, mostly British novels of the 1940s and 1950s and Françoise Sagan as light relief from Père Goriot (actually, I never did read the whole of Père Goriot though it was a set book at school as well as at Manchester).

"And I read Georgette Heyer, who was directly responsible for my later writing 32 full length *Regencies*. I can blame Dorothy Sayers and Patricia Wentworth, and of course the inimitable Christie, for my own murder mysteries, now numbering 17 or so.

"But if there was nothing else to read, the back of a cornflakes packet would do. I'm a printed-word junkie."

By contrast, the Russian heavyweights were the only light relief from her MBChB Medicine studies in 1937 for Dr Nina Murray.

The 95-year-old has just published an autobiography *Ninachka: The Making of an Englishwoman* detailing her life in a family of white Russians fleeing the oppression of the revolution. "My father used to read us the Russian classics when we came home. We also read Dickens but that was about it. We had little time for extra curricular activities."



Fast forward to the 1990s, and the experiences of Nemone Metaxas couldn't be more different. The BBC disc jockey originally came to Manchester to study Maths and Philosophy but switched to Psychology, gaining her degree in 1991.

"I loved our course reading and some of the books were those you might just pick up for fun even if they weren't on a syllabus," she says.

"I loved the Cornerhouse cinema's bookshop on Oxford Road, and could lose myself in the myriad of stationery and film-orientated literature. It's a real treasure trove. In my time, it was topped by the glass-cased second floor coffee shop. I can remember it became a favourite meeting place for a while. I still have Robert Rodriguez's *Rebel without a*

Crew which I picked up from there. It became an inspiration to me. His journey from wannabe film-maker to Hollywood darling spoke volumes to me at a time when I still hadn't fathomed out how to plan my career."

The 'guilty pleasure' of extra curricular reading works its magic in many ways. For Janine Watson, a 1981 BA Hons in Economics graduate and member of the Alumni Association Advisory Board, it was the desire to get to grips with university life in the city of Manchester that led her to buy the works of CP Snow and Kingsley Amis's *Lucky Jim*.

"And what I did do was read the then very racy novels of Jilly Cooper, which all had girl's names like Annabelle and Emily and which I knew were rubbish, but were a distraction from the works of Kant and Hegel and all those other heavyweights I had to read on my course.

"Oh! And I also read an awful lot of cook books. There were seven of us in one house and the *Women's Own* cook book was our bible."

It isn't just reading that inspires students, but encountering writers themselves. Jonathan Trigell recalls seeing writers such as Jake Arnott, Anna Davis and Magnus Mills while in Manchester and even further back in time Andy Spinoza, a graduate in Combined Studies in 1982 and now Chair of the Alumni Association, recalls a famous Kurt Vonnegut visit.

"I had read *Slaughterhouse 5* as part of my American Studies course and remember Vonnegut coming to the University," he says.

"The event was held in a lecture theatre and it was packed with earnest students dressed like me in heavy greatcoats. He made quite an impression that has lasted down the years."

Comment on and share with us fond memories of books you were reading whilst a student at the Victoria University of Manchester or UMIST and sign up to Your Manchester Online. See page 42 for details on how to register.
www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchester

Mind your manners!

Does today's informality on campus mean students have forgotten their manners?



Good manners aren't necessarily the first characteristics that come to mind when you think of today's student population. Take the stereotypical issues of stealing other students' food from the fridge, or being late for lectures. Then, of course, there's the all-night drinking culture you find in university cities, and the trail of destruction that Saturday evening's revellers leave in their wake.

But have students always behaved in this way, or are their manners actually in

terminal decline? We got in touch with a cross-section of Alumni Association members from around the world to get an idea of what manners were like during their time at Manchester, and to ask them whether they thought etiquette had a place in the modern student's world.

Sheila Griffiths (BA Hons History 1957, MA History 1985), Honorary Secretary of the Ashburne Association, remembers a more formal era in which "thank you notes were

written after an invitation from a member of staff in hall or in your department, and invitation notes were even sent between students – replies expected!"

The all-night drinking culture was certainly not experienced by Sheila's generation. She recounts: "We were exceptionally well mannered at formal dances – your partner was expected to ask one of the spinster tutors or the warden to dance. Very little alcohol was actually drunk in hall".

As for borrowing your roommate's possessions and forgetting to return them, Sheila tells us: "The odd piece of clothing might get lost in our terrible drying rooms, but I can't recall any stealing."

Some opportunities for bad behaviour didn't even exist in the 1950s, since there were no student fridges in halls, according to Sheila.

For Sheila and her contemporaries, good manners were a way of showing their appreciation of the freedoms they enjoyed. "Because we had survived a world war, we were extremely grateful to have been given a university place," she explains. "Even the bohemians amongst us, who cut a dash by sitting in the refectory all day smoking and cutting lectures, were quite civilised."

However, she is quick to defend current students against charges of rudeness. "They lead much more pressurised lives, which may explain why they're sometimes tempted to dispense with social niceties," she says sympathetically.

Joyce Kennedy (MBChB 1958) agrees: "I believe that social mores have changed from generation to generation, but basic good manners – the means of living in harmony with other people without causing them offence or embarrassment – haven't," she says.

For Dr Anna Ritsatakis (BA Social Administration 1963, MA Economic 1968, PhD 1984), President of our Greek alumni group, this desire to avoid causing offence by practicing good manners played a vital role in her studies.

"My first degree involved spending a lot of time in other people's houses, not all of which were very clean and where we might be offered dubious-looking cups of tea," she explains. "However, we were instructed to always accept hospitality and respect the homes that we were visiting."

Again, pinching food from other students was frowned upon. "We didn't ever steal from the fridge," she tells us. "I remember one of the girls I lived with whipping a jar of jam out of her startled boyfriend's hand and reminding him that it was my jam as well."

Elizabeth Pole (BA Hons Economics 1990), Regional Coordinator for the Alumni Association of Manchester USA doesn't think young people are any ruder today than they were in the late 80s and

early 90s: "My observation is that people of all ages still hold open doors, give up their seat on the bus and help with heavy bags with the same frequency that they did 20 or 30 years ago," she says.

Although Colin Lin (MSc International Business 1999), representative for the Alumni Association in China, considers the principles of good manners to be universal, he believes that a diverse student body such as Manchester's needs to be tolerant of cultural differences.

"The Chinese definition of what constitutes bad manners is different in some respects to the British one," he says. "Non-Chinese students probably thought that we made far too much noise in the communal kitchens, and we were occasionally shocked by their drunken antics."

When commenting on the behaviour of Nigerian students at Manchester Okwudili Emechebe (MSc Environmental Technology - 2005), representative for The University of Manchester Alumni Association Nigeria, claims: "We were very well mannered. We kept to our upbringing – greeting elders first, helping the lecturers carry heavy things. We always turned up early for lectures and if we thought we would be late we would ask a friend to apologise to the lecturer on our behalf." Okwudili considers manners to be extremely important in today's society, but does concede that they have declined slightly over the years amongst students who "take their youth for granted."

Katherine Leopold (BA Hons German and Linguistics 2001) certainly used to encounter all sorts of behaviour when she ran the cloakroom at the OP Bop. "I'd end up standing on a chair at the end of the night, shouting that nobody would be getting their coats back unless an orderly queue was formed," she says.

However, she recalls that the same rowdy partygoers were always very conscientious about looking after people who had drunk too much and become ill. This informed her belief that there will always be a place for good manners in the modern student's world.

One person who would definitely agree with her is William Hanson, the country's youngest expert on etiquette. Fresh from his appearances on E4's *Big Brother's Little Brother* and the BBC's *The One*

Show, the 19-year-old University of Manchester undergraduate is on a mission to put social graces back in the spotlight. But where does his passionate belief in the value of good manners come from?

It all started when his grandmother – a 'stickler' for protocol – gave the twelve year-old Hanson DebreTT's *New Guide to Etiquette and Modern Manners* for Christmas. He read it from cover to cover, and was soon laying out formal table-settings for his parents' dinner parties.

Hanson's impeccable behaviour did occasionally get him into trouble though – he failed his first driving test after repeatedly taking a hand off the wheel to thank people for letting him out at junctions.

Having given talks to Scout groups and worked for an interview-preparation agency, the Bristol-born smooth talker felt that embarking on a degree in Language, Literacy and Communication at The University of Manchester was the next logical step. You might expect him to have come in for some flak during Freshers' Week, but his peers have given him a warm welcome.

"Students are generally positive about what I do and why I do it," Hanson says. "There hasn't been any animosity here." Not that you'd ever catch him pulling his friends up for breaking the rules – the last thing that he wants to do is to make people feel uncomfortable.

"I'm not constantly telling people how they should conduct themselves," he says. "If someone makes a faux pas they might look at me to see my reaction, but technically it's rude to tell people that they're being ill-mannered."

There are undoubtedly those who would view Hanson's crusade to improve Britain's manners as elitist, but he insists that his aim is to make etiquette accessible to everyone, rather than just a privileged view: "People think that manners are there to divide the classes. They aren't. Whatever class you're from, the principles are the same: respect people and put them at ease," he explains.

Do you think students have lost their manners? Send in your views and comments. Sign up to Your Manchester Online - see page 42 for details on how to register.

www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchester



TV star Olivia is on the rise



Olivia Hallinan, (BA Hons Drama and English 2006), recently starred as Laura Timmins in the BBC's 2008 production of *Lark Rise to*

Candleford. She also won critical acclaim for her portrayal of Kim in *Sugar Rush*, the controversial Channel 4 adaptation of Julie Burchill's novel.

As a child Olivia appeared in *Casualty*, *The Bill*, *Holby City*, *My Family*, *Julia Jekyll* and *Harriet Hyde* and the ITV adaptation of Jacqueline Wilson's *Girls in Love*. She was also actively involved in student drama during her time at Manchester. In the final year of her degree she played Emma in the Torchwood episode *Out of Time*, had a role in an episode of *Trial and Retribution*, and starred as the Girl in the celebrated Radio Four Woman's Hour dramatisation of Marguerite Duras's novel *The Lover*.

Marion blazes a trail through Hollywood



Marion Rosenberg, OBE, (BA Hons French Studies 1958) is a leading Hollywood figure who most recently served as Executive Producer on the Award-winning *Revolutionary Road*, which starred Oscar

winner Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio. She is also a Director of the North American Foundation of The University of Manchester.

Marion began her entertainment career in the Bands and Acts Department of the theatrical agency MCA. Between 1960 and 1976 she worked on such films as *I Could Go On Singing* with Judy Garland, *Kaleidoscope* with Warren Beatty, *The Best Man* with Henry Fonda, and *Where Eagles Dare* with Richard Burton and Clint Eastwood.

In 1976 she became head of EMI Films in Los Angeles, and served as Associate Producer on *The Deer Hunter*. In 1980 she was appointed Vice-President of The Lantz Office, a talent and literary agency representing such names as Bette Davis, Elizabeth Taylor, Milos Forman and Peter Shaffer.

After a successful decade at The Lantz Office, she left to set up The Marion Rosenberg Office, a personal management and production company which currently represents such talents as director Paul Verhoeven, actors Claire Bloom and Jeroen Krabbe, and novelist Allan Folsom, whose book *The Exile* has a Manchester professor as its hero!

In 1987 Marion co-founded BAFTA LA. She chaired the UK Film Council US Advisory Board, has served on the Board of the Association of Talent Agents, and is a member of the Board of Women In Film. She is also a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. In 1996 she received the Britannicus Award from the British-American Chamber of Commerce, and in 2001 she received an OBE from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth for services to the British film industry.

Marion is passionate about The University of Manchester's "commitment to access to education" agenda, and is a generous donor towards scholarships for inner city students from the Greater Manchester area.



Adventurer has world record in his sights

Graham Hughes, (BA Politics and Modern History 2000), really is a modern-day Phileas Fogg! On 1 January 2009 he set off from Buenos Aires on a world record-breaking attempt to visit every country on earth in the shortest possible time without taking a single flight. His aim is to raise £1 million for the charity WaterAid during his eleven-month trip, which will be filmed by Lonely Planet Television for an eight-part TV series.

Averaging 150 miles travel a day, Graham has already visited South

America, the USA, Canada, South Africa and mainland Europe, even finding time to pop back to England for his 30th birthday at the end of February.

Next up are the Middle East and Central Asia, followed by India, the Far East, South East Asia, Australia and the Pacific Islands. Graham's epic journey will end in New Zealand, where he plans to ask his girlfriend to marry him. If he succeeds in his fundraising aim, the money he donates to WaterAid will help to provide safe water, sanitation and hygiene for more than 60,000 people.

Jacqueline's grand designs



Jacqueline Llewelyn-Bowen, (BA Hons French Studies 1987), (married to the designer Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen) recently visited Westminster Abbey for the Woman's

Own Children of Courage Awards in London where ten courageous children received medals from Prince Harry.

The 44-year-old author revealed a trendy new hairstyle and newly slender figure – having shed an astonishing five stone in five months!

Jackie worked for London party planners before starting her own wedding

planning business. She went on to write the Debrett's Wedding Guide 1993 and has two children, Cecile and Hermione.

Since Laurence first appeared on television Jackie has managed his career, acting as chairman and CEO to Llewelyn-Bowen Limited, which is a busy corporate structure that operates design and licensing interests around Laurence's television profile. Jackie's appearances on television with Laurence include *To the Manor Bowen* on Living TV and *Northern Exposure* for BBC Northern Ireland.

Jackie also owns a shop called Charmed in Port Isaac, Cornwall, selling a quirky range of giftware, homeware, and accessories including exclusively designed t-shirts and even equipment for creating your own 'posh picnic'.

Entrepreneur Piers set to become a government ambassador



Piers Linney, (BA Hons Accounting and Law 1994), is one of the government's ambassadors in a new initiative which aims to provide young black men with positive role models. He was selected to be one of twenty national role models for the REACH project, which

was launched by Secretary of State for Communities and Salford MP, Hazel Blears. The REACH selection panel included young black men, winner of *The Apprentice*, Tim Campbell, and fashion designer Ozwald Boateng.

"REACH has the potential to make a big difference to the lives of many young Black men. Our aim is to inspire them to maximise their potential." he says.

After qualifying as a lawyer with SJ Berwin and working in investment banking at Credit Suisse in the City, Piers is now a director and major shareholder of Genesis Communications, a leading independent provider of mobile and hosted IT solutions based in Bury, Manchester. The company has annual revenues of £34 million, employs 250 staff and its key partners are Vodafone and Microsoft.

A busy time for industry high flier



John McAdam, (PhD 1973, BSc Hons Chemical Physics 1970), the senior independent director of J Sainsbury, has been leading the search for a new chairman to succeed Sir Philip Hampton. The former chief executive of ICI juggled the interviews with his other

commitments as chairman at Rentokil Initial, where he is working alongside chief executive Alan Brown on a radical turnaround campaign.

After completing his PhD at The University of Manchester, John joined Unilever as a graduate trainee, and went on to work for Birds Eye Walls, Unichemica and Quest. Born in Cumbria, he has maintained his links with the north-west through his chairmanship of United Utilities, and last year also became a director of Rolls-Royce and Sara Lee Inc.

To read more alumni profiles please visit the alumni news section on the alumni community website Your Manchester Online. See page 42 for details on how to register. There is also a 'distinguished alumni library' which lists some of our eminent alumni.

www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchester

Your Manchester Insights

The Your Manchester Insights Programme takes place in Manchester, London and a number of international cities. It provides alumni with the chance to hear from eminent academics involved in ground breaking research – and to engage in discussion and debate.

This year alumni and friends heard from:

Professor Steve Furber (ICL Professor of Computer Engineering), who in his lecture examined the role of computer science in modelling the components of a human brain (see page 14); Professor Colin Sibley (Professor of Child Health and Physiology), who explained the vital importance of the placenta to a baby's health (see page 16) and Dr Phil Manning (Senior Lecturer in Palaeontology and Research Fellow), who unravelled the secrets from lost worlds. Looking in particular at dinosaur fossils he explored how fast they could run, what they looked like and even the special conditions under which such fossils form. Dr Manning is currently producing a ten-part series on dinosaurs for National Geographic, which he will also present.



Dr Phil Manning

Your Manchester Online registrants can read more about past and forthcoming events including the Cockcroft Rutherford lectures and the annual alumni London dinner by visiting Your Manchester Online (see page 42). www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchester

Outstanding Alumni Awards

The achievements of five former students have been recognised with Outstanding Alumni Awards.

Outstanding Alumni Awards are given to former students who have achieved distinction within their profession, have provided exemplary service to the University, or have made an outstanding contribution of a personal humanitarian nature.

The following alumni have recently received an Outstanding Alumni Award from the University:

Professor Helen Whitwell MBChB, FRCPATH DMJ (Path), FACBS, FFFLM
MBChB Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery 1977
Consultant pathologist to the Home Office in the Midlands

Jeremy Collier
BSc Hons Management Sciences 1982
Chief Executive, Collier Capital Limited



From left to right: Professor Anthony Freemont, Head of Research School Clinical and Laboratory Sciences; Professor Helen Whitwell and Professor Alan North, Vice-President and Dean

Richard Harvey
BSc Hons Mathematics in 1971
Former Chief Executive of Aviva plc – currently performing hands-on charitable work in Africa for Concern Universal

Dr Lazaros S Savvides
PhD Chemical Engineering 1972
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Interior, Cyprus

John P Cheffins FEng CBE
BSc Hons Mechanical Engineering 1971
Former Chief Operating Officer, Rolls-Royce plc

Meet our Outstanding Alumni Award recipients by visiting Your Manchester Online (see page 42).
www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchester

Medical Network

The class of 1958 medical graduates reunited for their 50th anniversary since graduation at a reunion held here at the University.

Read about all our medical reunions past and present by visiting Your Manchester Online (see page 42).

www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchester



International Network

Members of the Alumni Association enjoyed three events across mainland China (in Shanghai and Beijing) and Hong Kong, each hosted by Professor Alistair Ulph, Vice-President and Dean.

Read about alumni activities within your own particular country by Your Manchester Online (see page 42).

www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchester



Your Manchester Online

The gateway to lifelong connections

Many of the articles within the magazine have directed you to the alumni online community – Your Manchester Online - designed to keep you updated with the latest news and activities. Here is a quick reminder of how to register:

1. Log on to

www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchester

2. Click on the Registration button

3. Enter your alumni ID number. This number appears on your alumni membership card.

4. Create a User ID (a name you select when registering on the site) and a



password (which you will need to remember, or keep in a safe place for future use).

5. You will gain immediate access to some parts of the website and then as soon as your information has been validated you will have complete access to the secure features, such as the Alumni Directory and the Events Registration pages.

Already registered?

While some parts of the website are accessible without needing to login, most

of the features are secure and cannot be seen until you have logged in fully. To enjoy the full YMO experience please login first using your User ID (the name you selected when you registered on the site, not your alumni ID, see point 4 above) and your password (see point 4 above).

Having problems registering or logging in? Lost your alumni membership card or need to be reminded of your User ID or password? If so, contact alumni@manchester.ac.uk



Forthcoming Career Fairs

The Graduate Recruitment Fair
Wednesday 17 - Thursday 18 June 2009

The Engineering, Science and Technology Fair
Wednesday, 21 October 2009

The Finance, Business and Management Fair
Thursday 22 October 2009

The Postgraduate Study Fair
Wednesday, 28 October 2009

The Law Fair
Thursday, 29 October 2009

www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/fairs



The Alumni Register

The Alumni Association's graduate body is encourage to participate in the proceedings of the Association including elections - such as Alumni Association representation on the University's Board of Governors and General Assembly, and the elections of a Chancellor for the University.

If you wish to be kept informed of the proceedings of the Association and to exercise your voting rights please ensure that you are registered with the alumni

online community – Your Manchester Online (YMO) – and that your email address is kept up-to-date.

If you do not have access to the Internet and have not told us that you wish to be kept informed of the proceedings of the Association, please contact the Division of Development and Alumni Relations (using the contact details shown on page 3) and request this information via the postal system.

Participation is the key...

...only you can help us
unlock the funds



What is the Government Matched Funding Scheme?

- The UK Government has launched a programme to encourage gifts from alumni and others to support English Higher Education institutions, known as the Matched Funding Scheme.
- As a former student, wherever you are in the world, we can add at least a third to the value of your gift, at no extra cost to you.
- For UK donors, this 33% bonus will be applied both to the gift itself and to the value of Gift Aid. This means the value of your gift could be increased by 70%.

Your Gift	Your Gift with Gift Aid	Your Gift with Gift Aid and Matched Funding	Effect on your gift
£29.37	£37.59	£50	+70%
£117.48	£150.37	£200	+70%
£588.68	£735.85	£1,000	+70%

Which gifts qualify?

- Donations from all donors, given since 1 August 2008
- Gift Aided donations
- Gifts from UK and international individuals, companies and charitable trusts
- All gifts to Your Manchester Fund (see pages 44-45). Certain limits apply to major gifts above £150,000
- Shares, valued at the time received by the Division of Development and Alumni Relations

Which gifts do not qualify?

- Any gifts made after 1 August 2011, or after the University's allocation from the Government has run out (whichever occurs first)
- Gifts in kind
- Legacies

**Your
Manchester
Fund**

Together we're shaping
the world of tomorrow

To find out if any other forms of giving are eligible for Matched Funding, please contact Chris Cox, Director of Development – tel (44) (0)161 275 2620, email Chris.Cox@manchester.ac.uk – for further information

Your Manchester Fund

Together we're shaping the world of tomorrow

Your Manchester Fund is the annual giving programme for The University of Manchester, which creates opportunities for thousands of current students through the generous financial support of Manchester's alumni and friends. Funding is allocated to five key student-focused areas: **Opportunity Manchester, Global Outreach, Research Impact, Bridging Hardship and Learning Enrichment**

Opportunity Manchester

Opportunity Manchester inspires deserving students to raise their aspirations and to realise their potential at Manchester

Opportunity Manchester Scholarships help to ease the financial strain of education on students and their families, many of whom come from lower socio economic backgrounds and have no experience of higher education. The most deserving students are provided with a £1,000 scholarship in their first year to help ease the transition between school and university.

The scholarship programme is aimed at students in the local area who have proved their ability and commitment to study through achieving exceptional A level results and participating in the Manchester Access Programme summer school.

Thanks to generous donations to Your Manchester Fund, 210 students have benefited to date.

Hayley Hepworth
MBCHB Medicine
Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences

"These scholarships are of immeasurable value to students such as myself who come from less affluent families. Without this financial aid, studying for a degree in medicine (or any degree at all) may have proved difficult, if not impossible for me. I would like to thank those who have donated money towards these scholarships as they have enabled me to prioritise my academic concerns. As a result, I hope that I will experience more success academically. I have already spent a large amount on books and resources related to my course and knowing that I have extra money available for this is extremely helpful. I also anticipate that my future travel costs to reach clinical placements may be high and hopefully the scholarship should cover some of this expense."



Global Outreach

Global Outreach enables students from the developing world to study beyond borders and fulfil their potential whilst diversifying the talent pool at Manchester

This initiative helps talented students from developing countries by providing funds to cover their living costs during their studies here. The University waives the tuition fee in full for these students, whilst it is the generosity of alumni which has provided funding to cover all aspects of their living costs, from accommodation to transport costs.

Students belonging to this programme are studying on courses that are likely to be of greatest benefit to their home country.

Your Manchester Fund plays a pivotal role in ground-breaking initiative at the University, which is working closely with partner schools and agencies overseas in Uganda and Malawi to find students from the developing world with the academic potential to come to Manchester straight from school, or for postgraduate study. Due to the success of the programme, it will be made available for students in Bangladesh for the first time in 2009.

Since 2007, donors to Your Manchester Fund have contributed towards providing opportunities to 15 students from developing countries on this programme.

Donald Kamugisha
MSc Electrical Power
Systems Engineering

Donald was attracted to Manchester by the prestige of the University and the fact that research teams here are amongst the best in the field of Electrical and Electronic Engineering.

After completing his masters degree, Donald hopes to return to Uganda to use his acquired skills: "My country is struggling with lack of forward movement in the energy sector and needs bright and innovative people to come in; that is why this degree will be very important because I will be able to contribute to this cause."

Donald is incredibly grateful to Manchester's alumni for providing him, and other scholarship recipients, with the opportunity to study here; "Every student that they support has an impact that reverberates to all towns and villages in the developing world".



Research Impact

Research Impact supports Manchester's most talented students as they undertake solutions-driven research into issues of national and international importance

Research Impact scholarships encourage final year Manchester undergraduates and recent graduates to join top quality research teams in seeking to solve some of the most challenging problems we face today – from poverty and cancer through to global warming and debilitating medical conditions.

Generous support to these areas currently provides 28 postgraduate students with scholarships for the full three years of their PhD study.

Research Impact Scholarships are focused on six key areas:

- **World Poverty** – creating and sharing knowledge to help end poverty
- **Cancer 2015** – translating leading research into life-saving realities
- **Carbon Reduction** – Putting our energies into the environment
- **Regenerative Medicine** – Advancing our human potential
- **Science and Society** – Promoting science and technology for the public good
- **Social Cohesion** – studying our communities to strengthen our society

Rob Ahearne Research Impact Scholar, World Poverty

One of the Research Impact Scholarship recipients, Rob Ahearne, is undertaking research under the area World Poverty.

"In my PhD I aim to challenge some of the mainstream theories and understandings in contemporary international development". In his fieldwork Rob is working directly with local people in rural Tanzania in order to have first-hand knowledge of their experiences and opinions. "The funding has supported my everyday life and meant that I have been able to attend numerous relevant workshops and conferences." he says.



Your Manchester Fund has purchased a minibus to transport students to and from their volunteering projects easily and safely, providing greater accessibility to community locations across Greater Manchester

Learning Enrichment

Learning Enrichment comes in many forms – all positively enhancing the student experience at Manchester

Learning Enrichment Awards underpin our determination to provide and continually improve a world class teaching and learning environment at Manchester. Since 2004, projects such as Manchester RAG, the University Counselling Service and Student Action have been funded to a total of £307,500. Most recently, the Library, Careers Service and Disability Support Office have benefited from alumni generosity.

Andrew Spinoza, Chair of the Alumni Association and Your Manchester Fund Steering Group, made a special visit to the University in October 2008 to officially unveil the latest package of awards designed to enhance the learning experience across campus.

This package included a social learning environment in the Library which provides refreshments to students studying throughout the day and on into the evening hours. The 'Library Lounge' has proved to be very popular with students.

Your Manchester Fund has also equipped the Careers Service with a podcasting facility which allows students to visualise and experience potential employment environments, and get first-hand advice from today's business leaders to support their employment applications and career aspirations.

Bridging Hardship

Bridging Hardship offers a helping hand to hard-hit students in order to see them through their studies at Manchester

Bridging Hardship can mean the difference between a student successfully completing a degree course and having to end it prematurely because of misfortune. Any student, like any one of us, can be hit by unexpected problems at any time, causing temporary, but often critical, financial difficulties.

Our experience tells us that there are many reasons for unforeseen loss of an income source: accident, illness or death in the family, a sponsoring company going out of business, or a natural disaster. Political, economic and environmental crises occur every day in the news and we can forget that this affects our individual students.

Khaqan Khan Bridging Hardship Recipient MSc Human Resource Development Faculty of Humanities

"I really appreciate the support I have been granted by Your Manchester Fund, it means a lot to me in many ways. The Bridging Hardship award has strengthened me not only financially but it has also boosted my enthusiasm and dedication to complete my dissertation and my degree."



YOUR MANCHESTER FUND

Show your support for the transformational power of education and research.

Your Manchester Fund is the programme through which thousands of Manchester alumni target their support for a range of student scholarships, student support resources, and research at the University. For further details on the priorities of the fund, or to donate online please see www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchesterfund

Please complete in block capitals and return to:

Your Manchester Fund,
The Division of Development
and Alumni Relations,
The University of Manchester,
Oxford Road,
Manchester M13 9PL
tel +44 (0)161 275 2619

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for		years	OR		Until further notice (please tick)			

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Your Manchester Fund

<input type="checkbox"/>	To benefit the five student support priority areas at the discretion of the Your Manchester Fund Steering Group
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OR

the following Student Support area: (please tick)

<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity Manchester	<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Enrichment	<input type="checkbox"/> Bridging Hardship
<input type="checkbox"/> Research Impact	<input type="checkbox"/> Global Outreach	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Specific Research Theme (optional)

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If you are a UK taxpayer please take a moment to sign this declaration. In so doing you will increase the value of your donation by 25% at no extra cost to you. For donations made from 6 April 2008 to April 2011, HMRC will also add an additional 3% in transitional relief. A confirmation certificate will be sent upon receipt. I would like The University of Manchester to treat all donations I have made for the past 6 tax years prior to this year, (but no earlier than 06/04/2003) and all donations I make from that date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid donations.

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and say something about yourself

When you remember The University of Manchester alongside your other commitments in your will, you make a statement about the importance you attach to education, and the role that universities play in tackling vital issues and moulding the responsible leaders of tomorrow.

A legacy to Manchester reflects your vision and your values. Please visit our website or contact us today if you would like more information.

Louise Hancock
Research and Legacy Manager
email louise.hancock@manchester.ac.uk
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[www.manchester.ac.uk/
alumni/donorprogrammes/legacy](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/alumni/donorprogrammes/legacy)

Alumni Benefits

Your Alumni Association membership card entitles you to over 40 special discounts and offers. See the alumni community website below for a full listing and click on 'benefits and services' – you will need to register if you have not already done so (see page 42). We have highlighted just a few of the benefits currently available below.

 www.manchester.ac.uk/yourmanchester



Cottages4You

A 10% discount is available for alumni on over 13,000 properties in the UK and parts of Europe



The Magazine Group

Alumni can save up to 75% on over 400 magazines and trade journals



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Available to members, at a specially discounted rate. Prices start at £69.00 (usually £100.00) for a single Will and £99.00 (usually £175.00) for a mirror Will (+VAT)



GiftShop@Manchester
The official online store for university-branded clothing, and a wide range of gifts
www.manchester.ac.uk/giftshop



The Hospital and Medical Care Association

Is offering savings of up to 50% on private medical plans to members of The University of Manchester Alumni Association (UK only) and their immediate families

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