

# **School of Law and School of Social Sciences (SoSS):**

## **Position Paper to consider the benefits and risks of a merger**

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# Executive Summary

## Research

There are strong and distinctive research cultures and identity across both Schools and within Departments in SoSS, with shared strengths in impact and engagement.

Both Schools are working towards solid REF 2021 performances (according to RRE and Impact review), although there are some challenging areas in the context of changes to rules on submission. Overall SoSS appears to be in a stronger position than Law.

Both Schools are close to the Russell Group average in most subject areas in terms of research grant income per member of academic staff, with a couple of outlying discipline areas within SoSS (one performing substantially above the average; the other below).

There is evidence of some existing collaboration across Schools, and within research institutes and centres, and a willingness to develop these further. A merger might offer the opportunity for the establishment of a stronger presence in Global Justice, as well as opportunities around big data and LegalTech.

There is a vibrant and well-funded PGR environment in both Schools, although there are significant differences in completion rates. A merger might be a good opportunity to revisit the idea of a Graduate School, and build on good practice to raise performance.

Research support services follow a similar pattern in both Schools, although SoSS has invested in additional research support and therefore is more developed in this respect.

## Teaching, Learning and Student Experience

The Schools have a consistent vision for teaching and learning based on delivering an outstanding teaching and learning experience and high levels of employability. They are both highly committed to social responsibility in the curriculum and widening participation.

SoSS has recently undergone a major review of the BA (Econ) and has adopted a new economics undergraduate curriculum – these developments were motivated in part by NSS concerns and in part by wider developments in Economics education. Law, facing a similar combination of external drivers, as well as changes to how qualification to practice law is regulated at national level, is currently engaged in an ambitious review of legal education which will result in an ‘active study’ approach to pedagogy and a thorough overhaul of the LLB programme. These developments could be considered more broadly across a merged School.

Both Schools recruit high-quality students. However, they share challenges around the range of students and in most areas average tariff is below the Russell Group mean for individual disciplines. The proportions of students who are postgraduate, and international, are higher in SoSS, and improving this still further is a key part of the Faculty’s strategy. A merger could allow the sharing of

best practice with respect to decreasing the volume of UG while increasing quality and overseas PGT across Law.

Law has existing distance learning provision which can be developed further, and the expertise and experience in this area shared with SoSS to enhance the offer.

Both Schools face challenges with inconsistent performance between disciplines across the key NSS categories of overall satisfaction, teaching, assessment and feedback and student support. These challenges are reflected in the broader TEF data which suggests that all subject areas would be awarded silver or bronze on current performance.

## **Social Responsibility**

Social Responsibility is embedded in both Schools' research and teaching culture, and both Schools have a strong record of community engagement; in the last three years of the Making a Difference Awards, the two Schools between them have had four winners and seven Highly Commended awards across a wide range of categories and including both staff and students. High-profile community engagement activities include the Black Lawyers Matter initiative (Law) and running the annual ESRC Festival of Social Sciences (SoSS). Both Schools have an Athena SWAN bronze award.

There are significant differences in the organisation and resourcing of SR activities in the two Schools, for example SoSS has a low level of PSS support compared to Law, and E and D activity (and in particular Athena SWAN) falls within the remit of the SR Director in SoSS but not in Law. There would be a need to address the levels of support across a single School to ensure that we do not lose current benefits.

## **Structure and Management**

Structure and Management in both Schools is designed to support academic strategy and ambition, and there is a strong base on which to build. Within SoSS there are very strong Departmental identities and academic affiliations. Law has a flat structure, but contains two main discipline areas, Law and Criminology. Within a merged School there would need to be consideration as to the optimal academic Departmental configuration.

Both Schools have healthy financial underpinnings to strengthen Research and Teaching and the student recruitment base (UG and PGT) through new teaching programmes. There are opportunities for greater interdisciplinary collaboration in both teaching and research.

Law has a successful external relations remit, and strong relationships with a variety of Law firms. There are existing and potential new international links and international funding applications which can be optimised by combining contacts and interests of Law and SoSS in some areas.

## **Professional Support Services**

Both Schools' PSS structures are organised into similar functional areas – Recruitment and Admissions, Student Administration, Student Support, and Resources. In addition, SoSS has PSS support for Research Institutes and Law has the Legal Advice Centre. There are some differences of detail in the internal organisation of these areas.

Currently the PSS support resource is leaner in SoSS than in Law, and this would need to be taken into consideration in any merger. Although there would be economies of scale, service levels will need to be maintained. It is not the intention that any merger would lead to reductions in PSS resourcing levels, other than there would not be a need for two Heads of School Administration.

PSS support for the Schools in the areas of Research, Communications and Marketing, Finance, Human Resources and IT is provided through business partnering models and Hubs. Currently this is organised in different ways across the Schools (for example, in HR there are Business Partners for Law and SALC; and SoSS and SEED, whilst there is a RSS Hub across SEED, SOSS and Law) which would need to be revisited as a result of a merger.

A new PSS structure, including individual roles and responsibilities, would need to align with any new 'ways of working' model deriving from changes as a result of the Student Lifecycle Project (SLP) which is expected to begin implementation from September 2019. This will need to be taken into account alongside any merger.

## **External Branding**

Many colleagues within the Law have raised their concern about loss of the 'School of Law' brand in a merger. There are, in the view of many in the Law, particular issues for their identity across a range of stakeholders including external partners, potential students and staff.

The view has been taken that the name 'School of Social Sciences' accurately reflects the position of a merged School, and that this should be the proposed name should a merger go ahead.

However, it is recognised that we need to conserve, for external branding purposes only, the concept of a 'School of Law' or 'Law School'.

More detailed information to inform how we might best deliver this is being gathered from publicly available sources, interaction with external stakeholders, and existing internal resources. We have not commissioned any market research to test branding suggestions with key audiences.

## Context

In recent years the University has moved to larger, more evenly-sized Schools, with the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health (FBMH) and the Faculty of Science and Engineering (FSE) both reducing the number of Schools in their Faculties to three and two respectively. These Schools are comparable in size and complexity with four of the current Schools within the Faculty of Humanities. From the 2019/20 Academic session, the School of Law will be the only remaining School at The University of Manchester of a small size, comparable in scale to some larger Departments within the Faculty. Therefore it seemed timely to consider a change in School structure within Humanities in the context of supporting the achievement of our academic objectives and enabling simplification and standardisation of structure.

The School of Social Science's (SoSS) existing subject areas are closely aligned to those within the School of Law, as Law and Criminology are social sciences. Other Schools were considered, but it was thought that this alignment would be the best fit in terms of size and shape. Therefore, the Vice-President and Dean of Humanities began conversations with the Heads of both Schools at the beginning of 2018 to consider the desirability of a potential merger of the Schools.

Following initial discussions with Heads of both Schools about exploring the potential of a merger, the Vice-President and Dean of the Faculty decided to place the proposition before staff in May 2018. Discussions have taken place since then with colleagues in both Schools to explore the advantages and disadvantages of merging, with a focus on identifying if this would lead to any improvements in student experience and research excellence, as well as management, administrative and financial benefits.

A working group was established to develop this detailed position paper for consideration and feedback by staff.

The initial engagement process with colleagues and students in both Schools has raised some important issues for consideration, as well as underlining the need for more information to be gathered and made available. This paper addresses those issues. Initially it was envisaged that engagement could take place over a shorter timescale, but following representation from colleagues in both Schools it was agreed that a longer period was required for consideration of the issues.

Collaborative consideration and engagement sessions will be run by the working group from now until December 2018. The engagement exercise will look at the benefits and risks of a merger, with a view to the Faculty making a recommendation on future organisation in early 2019.

The engagement exercise encompasses a variety of different mechanisms to ensure that as many staff and students have the opportunity to take part. These include School Boards, team meetings, an on-line survey, a dedicated email address for views and questions to be posed, and discussions with students, delivered in partnership with the Students' Union.

The timeline for engagement is as follows:

Early September 2018 – Working group meeting to consider the paper.

Mid-September to December 2018 – Detailed position paper circulated for staff engagement (full details to be confirmed).

October 2018 – Concise version of the position paper to go to Senate for comment.

January 2019 – feedback to be collated and considered by the working group and Faculty and School leadership

February 2019 – If at the end of this process the Faculty Leadership Team decides to proceed with a recommendation to merge the two Schools, a formal proposal will go to Senate in February 2019 at the earliest.

March 2019 – If required, a proposal would be considered by the Board

An implementation date for merger, should this be the proposed outcome, will depend on an assessment of the scale of the operation, which will be considered nearer the time. It would be the intention to move to a single School as soon as practicable to enable new structures and ways of working to become embedded.

The remainder of this paper addresses current performance and issues by each of the University goals, together with sections on structure and management, Professional Support Services, and branding and reputation overview, and then identifies potential opportunities, benefits and risks associated with a merger. Detailed data for each area of activity is contained in appendices (these are not referenced in the main document). If there is data missing that would be useful please contact [lawsooss@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:lawsooss@manchester.ac.uk) and we will add it if it is available.

## Research

### Environment and culture:

SoSS has strong departmental and disciplinary research identities, as well as hosting important cross-School Centres and cross-Faculty Research Centres and Institutes. Key established strengths are around inequalities (especially ageing and ethnicity), environment and sustainability, elections and political change, and the urban (including Manchester/devolution), social networks, political economy and macro-economics with emerging areas around data science (building on existing strengths in quantitative and statistical methods) and China.

The School of Law has five research themes reflecting significant strengths: Bioethics, Health and Law; Crime and Criminal Justice; International Law; Private and Commercial Law; and Regulation and social justice. It houses four Research Centres: Regulation & Governance, International Law, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Social Ethics and Policy.

Both Schools have a strong ethic of civic engagement and a good tradition of knowledge transfer, and policy-relevant research.

SoSS hosts a large number of research conferences each year; the most notable are the Mancept Workshops in Political Theory (which attract 250 people from all over the world). The new International Conference Residency Creative Image: Ways of Seeing, Representing and Reshaping

Reality, hosted by the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology will be attended by 80 people and SoSS will be hosting the 24<sup>th</sup> annual conference for the European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists in June 2019. Law hosted the 2018 Conference of the European Society of International Law.

#### REF: External benchmarking

Using Research Power (RP) (GPA multiplied by FTE of staff submitted) as the key indicator, following REF2014, SoSS maintained its position in the top 3 social science units in the UK (behind Oxford and LSE), while Law was ranked 9<sup>th</sup> nationally. Sociology ranks first for RP and Economics and Politics are in the top 10. On GPA alone, SoSS ranks 9<sup>th</sup>, but has leading research departments in Sociology (including Social Statistics) (2<sup>nd</sup>) and Social Anthropology (2<sup>nd</sup>). Economics was ranked 15<sup>th</sup>, Politics 19<sup>th</sup> and Philosophy 19<sup>th</sup>. Law was ranked 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Analysis suggests that if the combined School had existed on 23 Dec 2014, it would have been ranked 5<sup>th</sup> on Research Power, behind Oxford, LSE, Cambridge and Edinburgh (for full information on REF positioning see Appendices).

#### Outputs

RRE 2018 results indicate that Law has 86% of FTEs (55 of 64 eligible staff) with at least one 3\* or 4\* output, and 80% of the total submission at 3\* or 4\*. There are support mechanisms in place to enable staff to achieve the best possible REF submission.

SoSS RRE results for 2018 show that to date, 78% of eligible staff (153 of 197 eligible staff) have at least one 3\* or 4\* output. Sociology and Philosophy have the highest number of staff with 3\* or 4\* outputs (94.7% and 93.3% respectively).

However, more detailed analysis suggests in reality numbers are likely to be higher, and it is expected that most individuals will have papers suitable for submission to the REF. 4\* publications across the board are lower than might be hoped at this stage.

Both Schools have mechanisms in place to encourage 4\* publications (PERL and REF support budget) and achieve good RGF outcomes.

#### Impact

SoSS requires 19 Impact Cases in total for the next REF. The recent Faculty review of Impact Case Studies in SoSS shows a solid picture for this point in the REF cycle (four green impact cases, 23 amber to date, though internal review puts these numbers at nine green and 16 amber), but this varies across UoAs, with particular concerns in Anthropology.

Law is likely to need five Impact Case Studies for REF2021. The School submitted six templates in April 2018. The recent Faculty review graded these at two green, four amber.

Both Schools have ring-fenced financial support for identified impact cases, and are in the process of applying to Faculty for additional support. This will be foregrounded in the 2019/2020 academic year in the run-up to REF. Law has a strong record in impact, and has a number of cases with global reach.

As with SoSS, these identified cases have been prioritised and money provided to support their development.

### Grant capture

Overall both Schools attract research grants per academic FTE at levels which are around the mean for Russell Group Universities in these subject areas, with the exception of Anthropology and Economics who are significantly under the average figures.

Research grant targets for the two Schools are shown below (noting that these are absolute figures reflecting current performance and relative size of the Schools):

Year	SoSS	Law
2017 / 18	£6 million (£5.5 million actual)	£713.8k (£725.4k actual)
2018 / 19	£5.3 million	£749.5k
2019 / 20	£5.5 million	£786.9k

Research award data for SoSS reduced by 36% in 2016/17 from the previous year but has since improved by 15% in 2017/18 to £5.7M. Award data for Law has reduced on the previous year by 25% to £639k

Application numbers for research funding in SoSS have remained at a similar level although the value of applications nearly doubled in 2017/18 (£29.6M). Law application numbers have been variable over the last three years with a significant rise in 2017/18 (£4.4M).

Research grant support is provided through the RSS Hub which is a shared resource between SoSS, Law and SEED, together with research finance support. In addition SoSS has a new post-award team and research promotions manager, as well as PSS support for the Research Institutes based in the School. SoSS has clear expectations around grant capture (an application every three years), but this has been largely unenforced/unmonitored. There are clear differences in research grant cultures across departments in the School, which is recognised but will also need to be addressed where possible.

There are some areas of existing funded research collaboration across the Schools, notably:

- Jo Deakin and Hilary Pilkington's H2020 PROMISE project.
- Shavana Musa and Wendy Olsen's DfID Project – Bonded Child Labour.
- Elisa Bellotti and David Gadd (Law) are Co-Is on Rose Broad's ESRC project.

There also embryonic links between the Ethics staff in Law and Emma Barrett's work on Digital Security and Trust.

### Research Institutes / Centres:

SoSS hosts four University Institutes and a cross-School centre: the Manchester Institute for Collaborative Research on Ageing (MICRA), the Sustainable Consumption Institute (SCI), the Cathie Marsh Institute (CMI), the Manchester China Institute (MCI) and the Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity



(ESRC). There are three existing research centres housed primarily within Departments (the Morgan and Mitchell Centres in Sociology and the Political Economy Institute in Politics).

There are some existing links between the schools, notably with MICRA, Q-Step (a Nuffield and ESRC-funded programme designed to promote a step-change in quantitative social science training) and CMI. There is scope for collaboration in SCI, CoDE or the Morgan Centre (e.g. ethnicity and family law and criminal justice), although this is not evident at present. Staff from both Schools are involved in the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence, and the Political Economy Institute. The Director of MCI has indicated that there may be good opportunities for collaboration with Law around issues of international law and global human rights (e.g. Law has expertise in Chinese commercial law). A merger might offer the opportunity for the establishment of a stronger presence in Global Justice, as well as opportunities around big data and LegalTech.

#### Internationalisation in research:

The School of Law has a number of existing relationships with the University of Melbourne, the National University of Singapore; the Universidade de São Paulo (Brazil) and Cornell University. Work is underway this year to look at strengthening links with a number of US law schools, aimed both at research and student recruitment, mainly at PGT level. Informally, visiting scholars are welcomed into the School.

In SoSS, the School supports internationalisation in research through budgetary provision to enable School funds to match Humanities Strategic Investment Fund grants as well as internal School funds to prioritise and support SoSS research links. In summer 2018, the School employed two interns to complete a mapping exercise of all international research activity by SoSS scholars to be used in marketing and forward planning.

SoSS has established formally a Visiting Scholars Programme to co-ordinate international scholarly collaboration in key strategic areas, and to integrate these visiting academics into research seminars, PGT events and the wider SoSS research community. The School has established research links with the University of Copenhagen, the University of Melbourne, Australian National University, the University of Chicago, Renmin University, and is seeking to develop strategic partnerships with Columbia University and the Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa.

There are several areas for shared good practice across the Schools in any merger: the Visiting Scholars Programme, the mapping of internationalisation links, and shared links (for example with the United States, and especially with Columbia, which is one of the very best law schools in the US).

#### Postgraduate Research students

SoSS has 173 PGR students in 2017/18 (102 EU/Home FT; 9 Home / EU PT and 62 overseas). 70 are DTP (ESRC / AHRC funded). Numbers are lower in Law (64 in total, with larger numbers/proportions of Home/EU PT students (29, 22 and 13 respectively)). PGR SSRs are very similar between the two Schools at around 1:1.

In 2016/17 Law marginally exceeded the mean Russell Group number of PGRs (FTE), as do all departments in SoSS except Philosophy. These margins increase when compared to Russell Group

median PGR numbers. However only Sociology falls within the top 20% of Russell Group institutions for PGR numbers, while Philosophy ranks within the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile.

SoSS currently offers around 42 competitive PGR studentships (28 home and 14 overseas) (at RCUK levels). Law has 12 fully funded PhD awards in 17 / 18, with 15 awarded for 18 / 19. There are a further 7 Faculty Law PGR studentships (covering maintenance, tuition and a non-pay allowance) for 17 / 18, increasing to 9 awarded for 18 / 19.

There are two students currently supervised across the two Schools.

Research training is currently delivered through a mixture of Faculty and DTC provision, and School-level provision. In SoSS some training is at School level whilst more subject-specific support is at Departmental level. Consideration is being given to whether more can be done at School level. In Law, training is provided through the DTCs and Methods@Manchester, as well as through the MRes programme in Criminology.

Completion rates for SoSS are 84.6% for the latest (2012) entry cohort. For Law these are considerably lower, at 45%. This is an issue for concern and it might reasonably be hoped that Law could benefit from opportunities for sharing good practice with SoSS.

A merger offers the possibility of internships and increased international profile; a chance for greater interdisciplinary research and support and a possibility for professional doctorates. It might offer opportunities too to revisit the idea of a Graduate School to address issues of branding and identity.

## **Teaching, Learning and Student Experience**

### Student numbers and quality of entrants

Overall in 2017/18 Law had 1,400 FTE students, and SoSS 3,324 FTE. 13% of students in Law are PGT, compared to 11% in SoSS. 20% of students in Law are International whereas 35% of SoSS students are. There are significant differences in the proportions between subject areas; Law and Economics are very popular with International students, with other areas less so.

SoSS has broadly twice the number of home/EU students (UG, PGT, PGR) as Law, and just over three times the number of international students (with just under three times the total number of staff). The numbers of international students in Law have declined in recent years, largely due to external factors including currency declines, change in UK government policies around post-study work visas, and the removal of approximately 10 UK HEIs, including the University of Manchester, from the approved list in Singapore.

At UGT, SoSS has a significantly higher proportion of international (34% compared with 17% in Law) for the reasons noted above, but at PGT proportions are similar (45% and 44%, respectively). At PGR though, the proportion of international is much higher in SoSS than Law (37%, 16%).

Both Schools have some very good quality entrants (average tariff in Law is 427 and in SoSS is 415), with some variation between subject areas. However, in both Schools, the quality of intake is below the Russell Group averages. Subject areas in both Schools are mainly popular and generally only need very small UG numbers through Clearing each year. There is capacity to look to increasing the

proportion of PGT students in a number of areas, although obtaining a diversity of International entrants is a challenge. This would also support the strategic objective to move to a higher proportion of PGT and lessen reliance on Clearing.

#### Shared teaching between the Schools

At present areas of shared teaching activity include:

- LLB Law with Politics (2017 intake: 37);
- BA Social Sciences (BASS), Criminology pathways with Politics, Philosophy, Sociology, Social Anthropology and Quantitative Methods (Social Statistics) (total intake 2017: 33);
- MRes Criminology (Social Statistics pathway) (intake 2017: 1);
- MA Human Rights (Law / Political Science pathway) (11).

#### Degree attainment

This area has been a focus over the last two years and SoSS has improved degree attainment significantly with the proportion of students getting good degrees increasing from 71% to 81% between 2012/13 and 2016/17. Law and all SoSS disciplines were below Russell Group averages, but above the sector as a whole in 2016/17 with the exception of Economics which exceeded both benchmarks.

#### Student satisfaction

Both Schools face challenges with inconsistent performance between disciplines across the key NSS categories of overall satisfaction, teaching, assessment and feedback and student support. In Law, Criminology (which contributes to the Sociology JACS3 category) performs at a relatively high level compared to Russell Group positions in NSS while the Law discipline has faced challenges in recent years, particularly in relation to assessment and feedback and academic support. In SoSS the general pattern is that smaller disciplines do better than the larger with Economics performing worst, although Politics, which also has a large cohort size, performed well in NSS 2018 despite a low response rate. Assessment and feedback is a major issue for Economics, along with the NSS Teaching category.

At PGT level most students in SoSS are in Politics and Economics and here satisfaction scores in PTES tend to be higher than in NSS. For the smaller departments there are low cohort numbers making it difficult to get high enough response rates. Therefore there is less consistency and information in their results. At the aggregate level in 2017 overall satisfaction for SoSS was 84% (up six points) compared to 81% in Law (down 13 points). The low response rate for Law in 2017 is worth noting (19%, SoSS was 46%). PTES 2018 had very low response rates and raised some challenges with significant worsening of performance compared to earlier years in a number of areas.

In both Schools there is some evidence of cross-disciplinary programmes performing less well than 'specialist' programmes, suggesting potential issues around the management of such programmes and the development of a sense of student identity and engagement.

#### Teaching and Learning Excellence

In both Schools there are areas of teaching excellence and good practice. SoSS colleagues win institutional and national teaching awards and have been at the forefront of teaching innovation, regularly presenting at the Faculty T&L showcase. The Centre for Innovation in Pedagogy, based in SoSS, brings together academics, e-learning technologists and students to champion innovative approaches to university teaching.

In 2018, Law established the *Learning at Lunch* sessions to enable staff to engage in new developments in teaching and learning, disseminate good practice, and staff are supported to develop best practice in e-learning. Law has many exceptional teachers, including prize winners and a National Teaching Fellow who have created courses that are leading the way in terms of legal and criminological teaching. Law is the only Law School in England to offer a course on LegalTech and is one of four Schools offering students the opportunity to work on criminal appeals.

### Employability

The Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) data from 2015/16 suggest that both schools (except Economics) do well in terms of DLHE data relative to benchmark. However the 2016/17 data shows a dip in performance in a number of areas, which may be due to a change in how the data is collected.

### Widening participation

Both Schools are committed to widening participation and have successful and complementary programmes with SoSS focusing on pre-university courses for students (both face-to-face and online) and Law focusing on liaison with schools. Law works closely with the Justice Museum which is now based in the School. In 2017 Law launched the Black Lawyers Matter initiative.

The pre-University courses in SoSS aimed at Year 12 and 13 students and the existing Pathways to Law programme have the same eligibility criteria. The content and delivery, however, is notably different. The former delivers classroom-based academic courses over a period of six weeks (although extended in 2017/18 to include a distance learning version). The latter, incorporating approximately 20 interactions over an 18 month period encompassing residential activities and work experience, inculcates a distinct ethos to widen access to the legal profession. There is an opportunity to expand the SoSS programme to include Criminology.

### Internationalisation in teaching and learning

The School of Law has introduced a Law with a Year abroad programme while SoSS has done the same, on a 'transfer-in' basis, for three of its specialist programmes and is looking to expand. These programmes are extremely popular and both Schools will explore developing more partner institutions. A merger of Schools would allow this exploration and development to be streamlined and more cost effective.

### Distance learning

Law has distance learning LLM, MA, PGCert and PG Diploma programmes in Healthcare Ethics and Law, which currently have 40 students per year and has been available for 16 years. These DL

programmes were some of the very first fully DL programmes in the University and were relaunched as the first programmes under the University of Manchester Worldwide banner. In addition to these award-bearing programmes, Law has been offering online CPD courses in Healthcare Ethics and Law since 2011. The largest of these courses, Medical Decision-Making, is accredited by the Royal College of Physicians.

SoSS does not currently have any distance learning provision at present and would benefit from Law's expertise: there are areas of potential development in SoSS particularly in the broad area of social statistics.

## **Social Responsibility**

### Major projects

For Law, working relations with legal, criminal justice and health professionals are key to research and teaching performance and there are a number of cross-cutting projects including; Legal Advice Centre, Collaboration with Greater Manchester Police, Black Lawyers Matter, Law Volunteering Network, Hate Incidents Forum and Human Rights Monitor, Law and social justice events, Collaboration with University of Chicago. Many of these initiatives have been recognised through awards, both within the University and externally.

Departments within SoSS largely manage their specific initiatives at a department-level (as evidenced through success in a number of areas at the University's Making a Difference Awards). SR department-level prizes have been introduced, and a school-wide PhD thesis SR prize. The School's pre-university courses (with a clear WP focus) have recently been rolled out across all departments.

### Equality, diversity and inclusion

Both Schools have achieved the Athena SWAN Bronze award and have action plans for further improvement, as part of the broader commitment to EDI issues. Equality and Diversity sits within the responsibility of the Director of Social Responsibility in SoSS. In Law this responsibility sits with the Deputy Head of School.

### Volunteering

In Law, with clinical legal education and experiential learning of growing importance in a highly competitive labour market, volunteering and work experience are vital. There are some opportunities within the Legal Advice Centre, but these are limited, and a consultation on volunteering was held recently with students. As a result, the School of Law Volunteering Network (SoLVNET) will commence in September 2018. The aim is for a co-ordinated volunteering strategy which connects external partners that are seeking volunteers with students seeking volunteering opportunities. Three events are planned for 2018/19. A celebration of volunteering will be held at an end of year Student Volunteering Awards Ceremony.

# Structure and Management

## School structure

Currently Law (78.4 academic and research FTE) has no divisions/departments, but identifies itself around five themes:

- Bioethics, Health and Law
- Crime and Criminal Justice
- International Law
- Private and Commercial Law
- Regulation and Social Justice

Each academic staff member in SoSS (247.7 academic and research FTE) has a unique home in one of six discipline-based departments:

- Economics (53.8 FTE)
- Politics (59.6)
- Sociology (50.3)
- Social Anthropology (25.6)
- Social Statistics (16.8)
- Philosophy (20.6)

Additionally some 21 FTE research staff are based in the Research Institutes.

There are strong individual identities for each of the Departments in SoSS, and Law colleagues identify strongly as Lawyers, Criminologists or Health Care Ethicists. As indicated above there are a number of University research institutes and school research centres in SoSS, and research centres in Law.

Current School Management Structures are broadly similar (but not identical), with School Directors of Research, Teaching and Learning, Social Responsibility, Internationalisation and PGR. Law has a Director of External Relations and a Deputy Head of School. The Faculty has reorganised its governance structure to a single Faculty Leadership Team incorporating key Faculty roles and Heads of School, and there is an opportunity to align any new School with the new Faculty structures.

SoSS is currently managed through the following committees: School Policy and Resources Committee, Teaching and Learning Committee, Research Committee, Postgraduate Research Committee and Social Responsibility Committee to ensure resources are deployed appropriately, the School is developed strategically and has operational priorities against which performance can be measured. Beneath these committees sit a number of groups where the remit is very specific: for example, Equality and Diversity sits under Social Responsibility, Employability under Teaching and Learning. The School Promotions Committee and Health and Safety Committee report directly to the Faculty.

Departments within SoSS also have a Research Committee and Teaching and Learning Committee, which feed up to the main School Committees. All departments are represented on the main committees.

Law is currently managed through the following committees: Senior Management Team, Teaching and Learning Committee, Research Committee, and Postgraduate Research Committee. There is also a Strategic Recruitment and Admissions Group. The Committees ensure resources are deployed appropriately, the School is developed strategically and has operational priorities against which performance can be measured. Beneath these committees sit a number of groups where the remit is very specific for example, Equality and Diversity sits under Social Responsibility, and Employability under Teaching and Learning. The School Promotions Committee reports directly to the Faculty. There is no Health and Safety Committee and relevant matters are reported to the Senior Management Team for information.

#### Academic Staffing and Workload Allocation

There are about 75 academic staff FTE in Law and about 200 in SoSS. In 2017/18, Law employed 31 Teaching Assistants and SoSS 168.

Both Schools operate a 40:40:20 model for research, teaching and administration with respect to the Teaching and Research contract (balanced for major administration, leadership duties and external grant buy-out). For Teaching and Scholarship staff it is 60:20:20 (teaching, scholarship, administration). In Law 'exam' marking is included in the WAM explicitly, in SoSS it is not. In terms of "currency", SoSS operates a points-based system (related to 'hours') whereas Law operates on an explicit hours-based system.

Student Staff Ratios are higher in Law (21.2:1 in Law, 17.9:1 in SoSS). Law employed 31 TAs in 2017/18 and has made provision for additional TA support in 2018/19 to free up academic staff time for curriculum review preparation development. SoSS employed 168 TAs in 2017/18 and has committed to appointing an additional 6 Teaching Associates on for 2018/19.

The PGR SSR is about the same in each School at just under 1:1.

#### Finances

Both Schools are in a strong financial position. Tuition Fee Income per academic FTE is £204k in Law and £193K in SoSS. Of total tuition fee income, 53% in SoSS is from OS students (50% UGT, 53% PGT, 69% PGR) and 32% in Law (30% UGT, 49% PGT, 46% PGR) with plans to increase the latter.

Contribution is about the same for both schools, currently £120k per academic FTE and overall income per academic FTE is slightly higher in SoSS at £240K and £223k in Law, in 2016/17.

Pay expenditure is about 41% of total income in each school (and total pay is about in the same proportion as total staff, 2.8 times higher in SoSS than Law) but non-pay is slightly higher in SoSS at 8% of total income, with 6% in Law. Recognising that it is a relatively small proportion of the total budget, the non-pay is about 4 times higher in SoSS at £4m compared with £1m in Law. Non-pay will need more detailed analysis, as in any new School it will need to be harmonized at the 'nobody is worse off' level.

One reason for the differences above is that Research Grant and Contract income per staff FTE is lower in Law ( $\frac{1}{3}$  of that currently in SoSS) – and this points to an important opportunity offered by the merger, in terms of the experience, processes, supports and potential collaborations that could be

mutually beneficial. This needs to be seen against the benchmarking data suggesting grant income nationally for Law is lower than most Social Sciences.

## **Professional Support Services**

### Organisation and structure

SoSS is the leanest School on PSS support in the Faculty (only 18% of total staff in School, one PSS staff for every 59 FTE students and one for every 4.2 academic staff). Law is better resourced at 28%, 47:1 and 2.3:1. With existing staffing, an integrated School is still lean, and additional staff are likely to be needed to bring it nearer to the PSS resource in other Schools. This is consistent with existing SoSS plans to increase the PSS resource. The overall assessment of requirements will need to take into account SLP and 'new ways of working' which are not yet known.

Both Schools have teams supporting the following functional areas: Recruitment and Admissions, Student Administration, Student Support, and Resources. SoSS has PSS staff supporting the Research Institutes based in the School, a Research Promotion Officer and a small post-award team. Law has PSS staff in the Legal Advice Centre, and supporting External Relations.

Support for other PSS areas of activity within the Schools is organised through the Faculty teams. These include HR, Finance, marketing, research, business engagement, learning technology, and knowledge exchange and impact. Currently these support areas are organised in different ways, with some sharing between different Schools in the Faculty through 'Hub' models.

## **Reputation and Branding**

### External relations

In Law there are four School annual public lectures (Harry Street, Pankhurst, Melland Schill, Gillian White) and conferences are organised such as the February 2018 National Training Conference on Investigating Miscarriages of Justice

In SoSS SR activity also includes annual public lectures, and the ESRC Festival of Social Science

### League tables

In the Global league tables, all of the subject areas across the two Schools feature. In the latest THE table, Law is 28<sup>th</sup> and combined Social Sciences 34<sup>th</sup>. In the QS rankings, all subject areas other than Philosophy feature in the world top 100, with Anthropology 18<sup>th</sup>, Sociology 20<sup>th</sup> and Politics 50<sup>th</sup>. In the ARWU (Shanghai) rankings, Sociology is 21<sup>st</sup> with Economics and Politics in the 51-75 category, and Law 76-100.



## School of Social Science

Information was gathered on the subject areas covered within social sciences at Russell Group universities. This was supplemented by further checks on the university websites. As a general rule the term social sciences is applied to the subject areas that would be covered in a merged school.

As would be expected, each University has a different School and Faculty structure, and in many cases Faculty (or College) is comparable in size and coverage to a School at Manchester. The schools listed within these structures therefore have overlaps with the departmental structure reflected in the schools which make up the Faculty of Humanities at The University of Manchester. Most Russell Group Universities are organised into schools which are more reflective of our departmental level.

In terms of the external branding it is interesting to note that Criminology sits more commonly within the 'social science' fold rather than with Law. Of the Russell Group universities which offer Criminology, 11 place Criminology in Social Sciences, with the majority placing it in a department with Sociology or Social Policy. Five of the Russell Group universities have Criminology sitting in Law. There are no stand-alone Criminology departments.

Early conversations in the Working Group concluded that as Law is a Social Science it did not need to be reflected in the name of the school. If individual departments were to be highlighted individually within the overall school name it would cause challenges in terms of what to include and risks alienating specific subject areas.

## Branding for Law within a merged School

Significant issues have been raised by staff in Law that we need to maintain a 'School of Law' brand in any merger. Our analysis of naming practices and expectations includes looking at the naming conventions for the top international law schools and the Russell Group Universities, desktop research on how Manchester students refer to their course, and a 2017 survey containing information on what motivates students to study law at The University of Manchester. Engaging with external stakeholders was outside of the remit, but will be needed. This initial assessment has been based on anecdotal evidence.

The current position within most Russell Group universities is for Law to be a standalone School, in the context of smaller Faculties in which Schools are, for the most part, closer to our Departments than to our Schools. There are two exceptions to this. Law is combined with other subject areas at Cardiff (School of Law and Politics) and Liverpool (School of Law and Social Justice). In both these instances Law is included in the name of the wider school. Liverpool continues to use the name Liverpool Law School as its external branding.

Internationally, if you look at the top ten Universities for Law in THE, they are 'law schools'. Within the top ten and in our comparator group (we are 28th) there are some universities who drop the term 'school'. For example, Duke Law (1st) and University of New South Wales Law (31st). They use the term 'school' as a descriptor rather than in the name. The trend is to have 'law school' in the name, but dropping the word 'school' does not seem to have a negative impact on brand/reputation.

It is clear from conversations with staff and comments at School Board meetings that they feel not having a 'law school' would potentially impact on our reputation with stakeholders. Given this it is

the view of the Working Group that we should retain a title including 'Law School' or 'School of Law' for external branding purposes only, in the event of a merger.

## **Potential benefits, opportunities and risks from a merger**

### **Research**

There seems to be strong willingness from SoSS Centre and Institute leads/Directors to collaborate more closely with Law in their respective areas, such as Digital Security; Family Law, Ageing, Pensions and Human Rights. Likewise, Law has expertise and synergies which could expand the work of existing centres and institutes. There is potential for a new Centre focused around Global Justice or Human Rights.

There are synergies in the approach to internationalisation in research, and opportunities for collaboration across an enlarged School, which could provide greater opportunities to access international funding schemes (e.g. GCRF).

Research structure and support: our current impact officers are stretched across different parts of the Faculty (SoSS shares their impact officer with SALC and Law with AMBS within the Hub model). Law does not have a post-award team or Research Promotions Officer. Research support structures would need to be reconfigured to ensure optimised support across the enlarged School which would enable more flexibility to support objectives.

Grant capture could be increased through a merger, with opportunities for both Schools, particularly around international links and external/business engagement.

There are related issues about how we 'brand' the different parts of the merged School to ensure a strong external reputation and coherent internal identity such that the School becomes more than the sum of its constituent parts.

Given the advanced state of REF preparations, it is not expected that there will be any alteration in existing arrangements for this cycle, but we may need to consider our REF submission strategy beyond REF2021 in light of collaborations that might develop. This may depend on the overall departmental structure of the merger.

There are some differences in PGR programmes and one area of concern is the differing completion rates for PGR students where Law might benefit from the SoSS culture and organisation. There are opportunities for improving external branding and recruitment of PGR students, principally by considering the idea of a Graduate School.

Placing the disciplines of Law and Criminology within a larger mix of disciplines is likely to lead to a less insular research culture than is currently the case.

Potential risk	Mitigation
There is a loss of School and subject area 'brand' around research which does not enable strengths to be built upon (this is already an issue in SoSS as highlighted by a recent external review).	Working with the Faculty Communications and Marketing and SoSS Research Promotion Officer assess and determine the need for a School academic lead on environment and web presence. There are opportunities to learn from Law's good practice around external relations and extend this across the larger School structure.
A merger detracts from concentrating on optimising performance in REF 2021	REF leads and School leadership teams ensure a focus on delivering the best outputs and impact studies
Overall SoSS is higher performing than Law in research', but performance is uneven across departments and research areas (particularly around grant capture). This raises questions around how to effectively support the different areas in an enlarged structure.	A merged School structure will promote greater collaboration around grant capture, including use of the SoSS grant writer and post-award team. The RSS Hub structure can be changed to support the enlarged school including allocation of dedicated use of an impact officer. School and department research targets and expectations will be developed and monitored through P&DR and PREP.
Consideration of future REF submission structures detracts from research output development.	This will depend on departmental structure and emerging synergies in research themes, centres etc. The focus should be on developing fruitful collaboration rather than REF structures.
Size of the School inhibits the development of Research collaborations.	Develop an expanded research database and provide seedcorn funding/support for emerging collaborations (e.g. around Human Rights or Global Justice centre, or China Institute). Expand existing provision around training and innovation labs, and shared good practice around impact and external / business relations.
Support for PGR students is not adequate, leading to poorer completion rates	Roll out SoSS completion support for Law, to develop shared good practice. Scope out possibilities for Graduate School.

## Teaching, Learning and Student Experience

There are considerable current uncertainties driven by Brexit, the fees review, changes in legal education and potential changes in global trading and political relationships which could impact the demand for Social Sciences from both international and home students. A diversified portfolio of teaching activity in a merged School will be more robust to changes in student demand. A merger brings opportunities to offer a broader social science curriculum that brings together a range of

subjects – this is potentially attractive in the market (e.g. law taught in the context of broader social science). By offering something different the School could attract better qualified students in line with our objectives.

A merger would provide an opportunity for SOSS to develop a professional element to their largely vocational programmes. It would also bring opportunities to share practice across placements and development of student exchanges and enhance this element of provision. Law expertise in distance learning can be utilised to support SoSS developments in this area. Expertise in quantitative modules offered across both Schools, as well as the Q-Step programme, can be shared. A merger would also bring together the active communities of practitioners in SoSS and Law to share excellent practice in teaching and learning.

More consistent organisation and management across a broad portfolio, including on currently shared programmes should leading to an improved student experience. Both schools currently have large programmes which underperform in the NSS, and a revised and enhanced management structure might be beneficial. There is an opportunity to rethink the structure and resourcing of T&L leadership and governance in a large and complex School. More School-level leadership resource will be needed (for example to focus on particular areas where improvement is needed) and there is an opportunity to connect better the leadership at School and Departmental level through more streamlined committee structures.

Improved and consistent promotion, recruitment, and marketing through a diversified team, where economies of scale will enable more resource to be focussed on these activities. This should lead to more efficient recruitment and admissions processes, and increased and higher quality intakes. It will enable more resource to be particularly targeted at improving international student numbers.

Potential risk	Mitigation
Risk to success of LLB reform process through distraction due to merger.	Prioritise reform process, adequately resource module development and appoint leader to oversee this process.
Failure of T&L governance and leadership processes in larger, potentially more complex, School.	Adequately resource T&L leadership. Renew T&L governance structures and have these already in place at inception of new School.
Loss of student identity with 'Manchester School of Law' with implications for experience and recruitment.	Engage with students, ensure branding and promotion protects identity of 'Law School'.
Concerns that Criminology would get 'lost' in large(r) school. The strong sense of identity and community felt by BA Criminology students might also get 'lost'.	Note that small Departments thrive in existing SoSS and smaller programmes do best in NSS. Considerable autonomy for Departments in SoSS and the position of Criminology will need to be properly considered.
Concerns that PSS rebalancing would impact student experience on Law and Criminology programmes.	Make sure that sufficient PSS resources are allocated to student-facing and student experience roles.
Reduced flexibility in a Law department to allocate resources to important activities e.g. student preparation for qualifying exams for solicitors.	Include relevant T&L issues in Departmental Budgets. Ensure Budget and Planning process at School level takes account of

	teaching need. Create new budget lines for appropriate teaching activities.
Reduced ability (resource) to offer bespoke careers advice to law students.	Devolve employability budgets to Departments, proportional to student numbers but with guarantee to maintain current level of support in Law in recognition of specific professional requirements..
The Learning Criminology Inside (LCI) Initiative, which is currently being embedded in the UG programme and expanded to PGT level. This innovative, successful project only has funding to continue for one more year.	Take urgent steps to ensure the continuing support for LCI in the merger.
Potential disruption to preparations for subject-level TEF.	Devolve preparations to appropriate T&L leads in Departments. Access support from TLSO at Faculty and University level.

## Social Responsibility

There is a significant opportunity to develop the best practice within Law in respect of volunteering more broadly across a merged School.

There are excellent initiatives taking place across the two Schools but in some cases these could be more joined-up. A merged School provides the opportunity to take another look at the leadership and organisation of social responsibility and related areas (especially in respect of the broader external relations role, and equality, diversity and inclusion) and to consider how best practice in both Schools can be shared and evolved.

There is potential to consider alongside this how PSS support for these areas can be optimised to ensure that whilst continuing to support existing activity we are building from this to encompass wider SR objectives.

Risk	Mitigation
Collation and submission for the Athena SWAN return will be more problematic in a larger School with more Departments.	Enhanced leadership and administrative support for Athena SWAN.
Difficulty in aligning internally-focused E&D structures and activities across the School.	Renew structures and roles to ensure best alignment around SR/external relations and internally-focused E&D work.
Clear objectives set for Law and strength of message could be diluted if merged into a merged School.	Ensure that the importance of external relations to Law will be maintained and enhanced within a merged School.
Law budget for SR would not be independent and would require more formality for changes.	Consider allocation of individual SR budgets to each department/division within the School, depending on level and breadth of existing and potential activity.

Risk	Mitigation
Current initiatives in Law may not be considered a priority and are under-resourced in a merged school.	Consider how the importance of external relations to Law will be maintained and enhanced within a merged School. Review PSS role support across the School for SR and external relations.

## Structure and Management

A merger would build on both Schools' robust, healthy and stable financial underpinnings to strengthen teaching and research and the student recruitment base (UG and PGT) through new programmes.

A merged School would provide a better 'fit' with the University's overall organisational structure, where its size and range of activities is similar to all others within the structure from 2019/20. The current School of Law would be a significant outlier as a separate School within a 3 Faculty, 10 School structure. This would continue to place a very significant leadership and management burden on the School, detracting from academic activity.

The merger would provide the opportunity for discussion about where Criminology best fits, and the dis/advantages of remaining in a Law 'School' or being aligned with other departments.

Law has better embedded External relations profile, and greater experience of Executive Education and DL, all of which are less mature and are in need of development and strengthening in SoSS.

SoSS has strong UG (and PGT) recruitment across a range of successful programmes with differential fee structures that provide significant financial stability and headroom for School initiatives (a current threat in Law).

Both Schools have a significant stake in Methods@manchester and the Q-Step programme and the School of Social Sciences BASS programme.

Potential risk	Mitigation
A challenge would arise with respect to the configuration of Law as 'School' or department within a merged School	Law would be named a 'School' (exact name to be decided) for external branding and recruitment purposes, whilst operating as a department within a new School structure.
A number of other issues and challenges would be faced, mostly concerning the different processes and procedures adopted in SoSS and Law, and the desirability of harmonising them. These include: WAM principles and work allocation procedures; Academic Leave Procedures; Research expectations;	While WAM principles are there to inform the allocation of work, there could be flexibility at the level of Departments to decide how specific tasks are weighted, as is already the case in SoSS. The combined School would operate according to established principles of academic leave, that take into account the nature of employment contracts (Teaching,

<p>Internal Promotion and Probation procedures; Continuation of Teaching and Learning and accreditation reviews It is anticipated that the WAM might prove most taxing.</p>	<p>Research, Teaching and Research, fixed, ECR and so on).</p> <p>Research expectations would operate according to established and agreed principles, that take into account the nature of employment contracts and comparison with external performance in that subject area.</p> <p>The internal Promotion and Probation procedures would be in line with the University guidelines, and the combined School would adopt a procedure where all Departments were represented in the process.</p> <p>There may also be an opportunity for the Faculty to look at a more standard approach across Schools.</p>
<p>Concerns about the new Law 'School' or Department's diminished 'autonomy' in a combined School</p>	<p>The current SoSS structure includes six Departments, some which are only slightly smaller than the current Law School (e.g. Economics) and all of which are represented on the SoSS management team.</p> <p>Departmental 'autonomy' and School leadership and management currently operate in a relatively unproblematic way to the benefit of Research and Teaching as well as Social Responsibility. Law/Criminology departments would be fully represented on the management team and on core activity committees. Over recent years Faculty has been driving towards a greater awareness of Departments as the building block of academic identity.</p>

## Professional Support Services

The outcomes from the Student Lifecycle Project and associated changes to ways of working will require all Schools to reconsider roles and activities. We need to consider this in the context of a merged School and potential changes to roles.

There is an obvious opportunity to add value in the development of the External Relations function: SoSS does not have an established PSS External Relations team and the existing operating model in Law can be extended across the new School to maintain a high level of service delivery, both in terms of strategic leadership and in operational roles.

Student recruitment and admissions processing teams could be combined to provide additional resource to ensure a quicker turnaround and higher service delivery to prospective applicants and students. There is an opportunity for co-location to share good practice and move teams who are not in student-facing roles into other office space.

A new School would not require two Staff Resources Office teams as per the current structures. This creates a potential opportunity to re-direct staff resource to provide support at departmental level in the new School through, for example, support for departmental Heads in the building where the department is located. This is an area which has been identified by the Faculty as needing more support.

Office space could potentially be freed up through possible relocation of staff and better configuration of support staff from outside the School structures, and may present an opportunity for relocation of the Legal Advice Centre (LAC), a long-established estates priority for Law, to integrate it fully. This would need to be considered carefully given overall space constraints.

The Widening Participation Manager from SoSS and WP Officer from Law work as part of existing student recruitment team structures at present and there is an opportunity to consider a new WP team within any new structure.

Law has recently clarified PSS support for 'year out' options including a year abroad or a placement year (an option under the new UG curriculum for 2020 delivery). SoSS has built in a similar role into the five year plan from 2019/20, so there is potential to expand both elements of the role, internationalisation and placements, to extend the service available to students and ensure they feel supported and part of the School community when not physically in Manchester.

There are also opportunities to look at the configuration of support from Faculty and central PSS teams to provide a more flexible and agile service.

Potential risk	Mitigation
Changes as part of implementation of Student Lifecycle Project (SLP) and the unknown impact on ways of working.	Await more clarity on the new ways of working model before developing a new PSS structure for the merged School, accepting that if a merger goes ahead a complete new structure may not be in place for PSS immediately but would be phased in. Areas outside of SLP, such as resources support, could be considered earlier.
Dilution of service provided by the Law External Relations team in a larger School	Allocation of additional support to develop the External Relations function across the School.
Reporting lines for some members of the PSS management team – predominantly in Law - would change due to differing grades (managers tend to be at a higher grade in SoSS than in Law due to the greater complexity of role).	Clear engagement and open discussion with staff in the context of potential new roles, to ensure such issues are dealt with sensitively.
Confusion around Faculty support for the School and how this is provided, given the current different models.	Clear engagement and open discussion with staff to ensure that the support structure is optimised for a new merged School and for other Schools in the Faculty.
Dilution of the service level across the Law School if no additional PSS resource is provided, given current differences in support levels.	Full review to be undertaken of areas of need and PSS to be re-designed (taking into account SLP) to optimise support.



Ensuring business as usual is delivered and maintaining the well-being of PSS teams in both Schools who are already experiencing a higher than usual level of uncertainty and anxiety in the context of SLP.	Manage the situation carefully and with clear engagement and open discussion.
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## Reputation and Branding

A new School provides the opportunity to look afresh at all areas of activity and to consider how best to enhance teaching and research. Over time this should lead to improvement in reputation and quality of activity.

The launch of a merged School enables us to refresh content and marketing to better showcase the departments within the School. This aligns with current communication and marketing plans to look at course profiles and positioning, along with support for REF and other research activity. This activity could be aligned with the launch of the new undergraduate portfolio in Law, and BA Econ, depending on timing of those reviews.

We will maintain the Law brand for external purposes.

Potential risk	Mitigation
League Table and reputational rankings are impacted by the change in structure	Ensure that we have the leadership and management in place to make the structural change as smooth as possible with minimum disruption to academic activity
Any changes to naming conventions need to be fully looked at in terms of internet search metrics. There is no guarantee that new asset (section of site, subdomain) would inherit all of the subdomain's current ranking potential, especially if the content or layout changed substantially.	It is recognised that we should keep the concept of a 'Law School' for branding purposes, but detailed testing and verification will take place to minimise the possibility of impact of changes to content and layout.
Having an external facing 'school' brand for a department is not formally reflected elsewhere in the university.	Conversations are taking place between the Head of Faculty C&M and DoFO to get agreement from Director of Communications and Marketing and RSCOO to come to a definitive position for external branding  Engagement with staff in other departments of the merged school to explain the reasons and why this is not an option for them.
The majority of other institutions have a stand-alone School of Law (or equivalent). We would be different.	Faculty C&M to work with the School to ensure that our external relations and marketing activity develops a strong brand for Law at Manchester as outlined above

## Conclusion

This paper has outlined the current position and performance of both Schools across the key areas of activity that they undertake. It has identified a number of potential opportunities and benefits from a merger, together with associated risks. Where possible, ways of mitigating these risks have also been outlined.

There are clear academic drivers for a closer relationship between the subject areas currently contained within the Schools of Law and Social Sciences and no academic disadvantages. There are existing collaborations, and many examples of good practice in each current School that could be fruitfully extended within a new School. This would address areas where performance is not as good as it should be. The assessment made has identified several areas where there are exciting opportunities for new activity, which would be facilitated by a single School.

It is worth re-iterating the broader University context in which the School structure sits. Under current plans, with the Faculty of Science and Engineering moving from nine Schools to two, there will be ten Schools across the three Faculties, nine of which will be of similar size and shape, with the School of Law as a significant outlier.

It should also be emphasised that there are no financial drivers for this discussion, as both Schools operate on a sound and sustainable footing. Therefore it is not being proposed that there should be reductions in staffing, other than there will be a need for only one Head of School Administration. There are potential areas for improved effectiveness and efficiency, and other changes to University processes such as those developed through SLP will have an impact.

Having reviewed the evidence, it is the view of the Working Group (recognising that this view has not been endorsed by the two Chairs of School Boards, who are members of the working group but have a different role) that a merger of the two Schools would provide the best opportunity for the continued development and evolution of social sciences at Manchester. We believe that we need to make this view clear at this point so that it can be discussed as part of the continuing engagement with staff and students across the Schools