

NOVEMBER 2016

PROGRESS / UPDATES

£25 million secured for University-wide Student Lifecycle Project

In last month's CoreMunicate, Tim Westlake and Clive Agnew mentioned that the Student Lifecycle Project (SLP) had been approved and was going ahead. Some more details have now been released, as follows:

The Planning and Resources Committee (PRC) met in September to approve £25 million of funding following work undertaken by colleagues across the University to scope the SLP. This means that the University can now embark on a new and exciting phase of this transformational project, bringing significant improvements and efficiencies in the way the University works with our students and enhances their experience.

The key objectives of the SLP are to:

- Improve the student experience
- Improve the staff experience
- Improve efficiency and effectiveness

The SLP will review all business processes and systems used by the University to support our students, and will be completed by September 2019.

A new governance structure is currently being put in place to deliver the SLP. The project sponsor will be Professor Clive Agnew (Vice-President for Teaching, Learning and Students). Dr Tim Westlake (Director for the Student Experience) will act as the business sponsor and Malcolm Whitehouse (IT Director) as the IT sponsor.

A comprehensive plan on how the SLP will be mobilised is being developed, and more information will follow soon. In the meantime, anyone wanting to be kept informed should sign up via the SLP website: <http://man.ac.uk/F85IYy>

Faculty intake update

2016 registrations

The Faculty of Humanities has registered 96.4% of its undergraduate intake target as of 3 November (94.3% of home target and 105.4% of international target). Although not all Schools have met their undergraduate intake targets, as was anticipated, preliminary analysis of entry grades indicates that an increased number of students met or exceeded course entry requirements compared to 2015. Postgraduate Taught registrations have shown significant improvement, primarily driven by the availability of the PGT Loan. Home registrations are at 109.9% of target and international registrations at 108.7% of target. While this has financial benefits, the Faculty is still challenged by issues around diversity of the intake in some subject areas. The Faculty has fallen short of its PGR

intake targets (91.4%) for 2016, and enhancements to recruitment and conversion activity continue as we enter the 2017 admission cycle.

2017 applications

Early reports for 2017 show that home applications for the Faculty are down 12%. This reflects the national and institutional trend and is influenced by a decline in the number of 18 year olds in the general population, and strengthening of entry requirements to our programmes. Other factors such as the campus development may also be having an impact, and so conversion is once again a key priority for 2017/18. International applications are on a par with 2015. The Faculty faces challenges due to a reduction in scholarships being offered by governments in traditionally strong international markets such as Malaysia, as well as the continuation of our strategy to improve the quality of student intake. PGT applications continue to build on successes in 2016, with home applications remaining the same as 2015 and a 10% increase in international applications.

Faculty Conference

As you may be aware, our fifth annual Faculty Leadership Conference will take place later this month (24 and 25 November), for senior academic and PSS staff across the Faculty. This is an opportunity for senior staff to come together to share ideas with colleagues outside their usual areas of work and consider the Faculty's strategic aims, as well as how to lead their teams to deliver these. The theme this year is 'responding to strategic challenges and opportunities', and attendees will be able to attend workshop sessions on the Student Lifecycle Project, the RCUK Global Challenges Research Fund, and 'transformative change', as well as hearing from Nick Hillman, Director of the Higher Education Policy Institute, on the possible future direction of HE policy.

Annual Performance Review

The Faculty Senior Leadership Team has recently had its performance review with the President and other members of the University's Senior Leadership Team, an annual meeting where the Faculty's performance over the past year is discussed, along with priorities and challenges for the coming year. University SLT congratulated the Faculty on a strong performance overall, but noted NSS scores and research income as areas for improvement. Future priorities included a strategy for student entry grades.

Staff updates

PGR Support Services

- Nicola Sheehan, Researcher Development Officer (Administrative), will be going on maternity leave in December and her role will be covered by Dalinder Sall, who is currently working as an administrative assistant in the Photon Science Institute in the Faculty of Science and Engineering.

School of Social Sciences

- Anna Bakhda, UG Admissions Administrator, has recently begun a period of maternity leave. Her role will be covered by Sashin Bhakoo.

Research Support Services

- Update on recruitment of Humanities Grant Writers: interviews for the second phase of recruitment to the four available posts were conducted on Monday 17 and Wednesday 26 October. Four offers have been made to the successful candidates for appointments in AMBS, SEED and SoSS, and a full update will be provided as soon as possible. The first phase of the recruitment led to the appointment of Dr Jonathan Memel in SALC, who is now in post.

And finally...

This will be my last CoreMunicate as Director of Faculty Operations before Andrew Walsh takes up the post on an interim basis, as I move to the new position of Director of the Programme Management Office working on the delivery of Manchester 2020. As I reflect on the time I have spent in this role, I feel immensely proud of the things we have achieved, the way in which the Faculty has developed, and the contribution of PSS staff to that development. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the support you have given me over the past twelve years. It is nice to think that, in some respects, this is not goodbye but 'au revoir', as I am sure that I will work with many of you in my new role. In the meantime, I know that you will join me in welcoming Andrew to the Faculty, and supporting him during his time here.

Russell Ashworth
Director of Faculty Operations