

MMU

The Newsletter of Manchester Metropolitan University

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Manchester
Metropolitan
University

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2010.

I hope that you all enjoyed a happy Christmas with your families and friends and return fighting fit for the New Year. I would ask you to spare a moment's thought for the family and friends of Adnan Qadeer, a postgraduate student in Science and Engineering, who was killed in a tragic car accident on the M6 over the Christmas holiday.

Funding of HE

I wish that I could bring good news to the start of a new decade, but I am certain most of you will have seen in the news that universities face further funding cuts in 2010 and beyond as part of the Government's efforts to reduce public spending.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has now received the funding letter for 2010/11 from Lord Mandelson. While the news is not good I want to reassure you that this is in line with my expectations and that our plans remain robust.

I feel it is important to share with you the reality of the funding situation, and our approach to ensure long-term sustainability for MMU and to protect jobs. The sector must make efficiency savings of £180m, but in addition must reduce costs by a further £135m to compensate for the higher costs of student support – in part due to over-recruitment. A substantial part of these savings will be taken from the capital sums allocated to institutions. Universities that have over-recruited against their approved target will pay back £3,700 per FTE.

Maximum grant

How does this affect MMU? We managed our recruitment process very well for 2009 entry, accepting the one-off additional student numbers in STEM

subjects, and recruited to within 1% of our approved targets. We have thus maximised our grant without any claw-back. Our strategy remains to rationalise our campuses and to reduce the costs of operating our estates. It is regrettable that this is likely to result in some redundancies, but we will manage this process with care and sensitivity, and do all that we can to protect long-term employment.

Birley Fields campus

Our capital plans for the development of Birley Fields continue to make good progress, with Manchester City Council agreeing to transfer land valued at £10m to the University, with the North West Development Agency making a positive recommendation to their February Board for a grant of £8.5m, and with HEFCE making a positive recommendation to their January Board of a £10m Strategic Development Fund. These grants will allow the project to proceed and will transform the future of MMU.

Student satisfaction

Now let me turn to students and our courses. HEFCE has been instructed to introduce 'contestability' for the academic year 2011/12. This means moving student numbers away from courses of low student satisfaction and poor progression, to 'good quality' courses in priority skills subjects. It is therefore vital that we all continue the excellent progress that has

been made in 2008/09 to further improve retention and satisfaction. While I fully recognise how harsh this is when you are coping with additional pressures, I am certain that you will all understand that our future viability depends upon good student satisfaction.

Taking MMU forward

Finally, let me assure you about the unity of approach to tackle these funding reductions. The Board of Governors fully support Directorate's strategic plan and have been engaged throughout the process. The University is committed to continuing discussion with our trade unions, but it is unfortunate that some trade union colleagues have chosen to attack individuals and management rather than engage in a meaningful consultation process.

I am very clear that my responsibility is to ensure the long-term future of this University, and I remain positive about our ability to weather the storm and to become an even more popular and more powerful institution.

The year 2010 will be challenging, but together I believe we will see the continued transformation of MMU.

Professor John Brooks
Vice-Chancellor



Editor's Note

Did you have time to look at the first digital issue (No 118) of the MMU Newsletter in December?

Feedback on the readability and content has been incredibly positive but we would like to hear comments from more of you about the publication which is designed to be read on-screen.

Producing one digital and one paper-based issue of the MMU Newsletter each term has halved the print bill and makes the print version a very cost-effective 31p per copy.

Issue 118 can still be accessed at www.mmu.ac.uk/about/publications/mmyou/118.pdf and you can e-mail comments to press@mmu.ac.uk using the heading 'Newsletter' – we'd love to hear from you.

And many thanks to everyone who took the trouble to respond earlier.

Brenda McClean

Training health commanders

MMU is working with the University Hospital South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust to support a course aimed at responding to serious incidents ahead of the London Olympics in 2012.

The MSc in Health Incident Command, which will be awarded by MMU, is the first degree of its kind in the UK. It recognises that there is no education or training for health commanders and is informed by serious incidents such as Hillsborough, the Clapham Junction train crash and the 2005 London bombings.



Professor Janet Marsden of the Centre for Effective Emergency Care is the link tutor for the MSc, supporting the course team through the process of writing, validation and delivery. She says: "Healthcare professionals need to be trained as incident commanders in the event of terrorist attacks, plane crashes or other serious health incidents.

"Aimed primarily at staff who would be called on to work in tactical and strategic management in both the response and recovery stages of a major disruptive incident, the first intake of students includes doctors, paramedics and ambulance service managers."

The online course is hosted within a new virtual learning environment developed by the software company Gödel Technologies and the programme team. Students will take part in exercises that simulate possible real-life scenarios alongside online lectures, discussion forums and residential weekends.

The programme is supported by the Department of Health's Emergency Preparedness Division and will eventually recruit internationally.

Our cover image shows Janet Marsden and David Macklin, programme leader and Assistant Medical Director of the Yorkshire Ambulance Service, outside Wythenshawe Hospital's busy Emergency Department. Dr Macklin is also an Educational Research Fellow in Emergency Preparedness at the Hospital and an Honorary Senior Lecturer at MMU.

The University community was delighted to hear that **Maureen Wayman**, former Dean of Art and Design, had received an OBE in the New Year's Honours List for services to local and national higher education.

Maureen led the faculty for six years before retiring in September 2009. She was a major player in the creative industries and a tireless contributor to textiles education and skills, joining MMU in 1993 as Head of Textiles and Fashion and co-founding the North West Textile Forum.

Most recently, she contributed to two major projects on skills and entrepreneurship in the creative industries and represented HE on the Design Blueprint Group which translates recommendations from the Design Council's Industry Plan for future skills development in the design sector.

Reaping the benefits

Many colleagues have already seen the benefits of signing up for the MCR+ card, but the good news is that the scheme is now bigger and better.



MMU has joined forces with Vectis, a specialist benefits provider, and is now able to provide a wider range of discounts and offers on top of all those already available using the MCR+ card – and what's more, the card is still free!

So if you haven't done so already, go to www.mmu.ac.uk/staff/benefits and start enjoying offers and discounts on high-street brands, restaurants, holidays, insurance, weekend breaks, concerts, theatre packages and much, much more.

Stuart Jensen, Reward and Planning Adviser, says: "The MCR+ scheme is just one of the special benefits you can enjoy as an employee of MMU and our website contains more information to help you make the most of working here.

"And look out for members of our team who will be visiting all campuses in February when you will be able to pick up a new Vectis MCR+ card and talk to us about current benefits and ones you would like to enjoy."

The University has received a record number of applications – a massive 14.5% increase – via UCAS for courses starting this autumn.

Popular study and career paths include nursing and health, technology, education and teaching, business and management. A large number of applicants are over 25 years of age and postgraduate numbers are also up.

The rise comes on top of a 13% increase in 2009 and makes MMU the fourth most popular UK university.

The deadline has now passed for applications for 2010 entry. Between now and the end of July universities will only consider applications if there are vacancies on a particular course.

Audit update

The University has received the draft report of the 2009 Institutional Audit expressing confidence in the soundness of our current and likely future management of academic standards of awards and learning opportunities.

Peggy Cooke, Academic Coordinator for the audit, says that the draft highlights several instances of good practice across MMU: the proactive approach of CeLT in disseminating good practice and developing the academic database; the contribution to the student experience of the 'Fellows' in Public Engagement, Learning and Teaching, in Academic Practice and the Communities of Practice; the MMU Professional Passport that helps students develop employability skills; and the comprehensive training and development provided for postgraduate research students.

The audit team have made a number of **advisable** recommendations for the University to address, such as identifying features of the student learning experience (eg feedback on assessment, access to personal tutors) for which clear-cut requirements should be defined and implemented, establishing University assessment criteria to maintain consistent standards across provision both on and off campus, and ensuring that the name of partner institutions and the location of study are stated on transcripts for all collaborative provision.

Recommendations for action considered **desirable** for MMU to address include securing a more effective discharge of the responsibilities of its committees and maximising attendance at meetings, expediting the introduction of a single University-wide peer support system, and ensuring that the analysis and use of data in annual monitoring processes is more systematic, effective and evident.

The report will be published on the QAA website on 16 April 2010.

Peggy would like to thank the many people who supported the development of the briefing paper or assisted the internal and audit teams in so many ways.



Booked up

With over 100 of the University's 127 buildings containing spaces allocated for teaching and meetings, the method of booking rooms was centralised last term to better manage a complex system to meet future demands.

Faculty databases have now been incorporated into the Web Room Booking system which is coordinated by Nicky Ellis, the Timetabling Manager in PMI who line-manages Campus Timetabling Officers (TTOs).

She said: "With such a huge estate, centralising room bookings is not only more efficient, it allows us to plan for a future that includes more modern buildings and the Birley Fields campus.

"All rooms are now bookable online and we estimated that you are just 12 clicks away from booking a standard room!"

TTOs manage the scheduling of all the teaching activities and also administer the room booking requests. They continue to be based on campus to keep in touch with local issues, but work across campuses to get to know the full extent of MMU accommodation.

Nicky adds: "Our ultimate aim is to produce an online timetable that will allow students and academics to view their schedules on a day-to-day basis in order to better manage their time."

Go to www.mmu.ac.uk/sas/timetabling.php to book a room – confirmation will be by e-mail.

Back: Caroline Zulu (Didsbury), Mark Sanders (Aytoun), Nick Devine (John Dalton), Clare MacInnes (Gaskell). Front: Nicky Ellis (All Saints), Lorna Callander (Geoffrey Manton), Kirstie Brookes (Crewe).

Congratulations to **Carly Green** who has been promoted to Executive Officer to the Vice-Chancellor following the retirement of Jen Anderson last term. Carly has served as Executive Assistant to the VC for 18 months.

Kate Wylie has been appointed Interim Head of Recruitment and Admissions with effect from December for a period of

up to six months and is based at Great Marlborough Street. Kate's HE experience includes employment at the University of Warwick where she was Head of Recruitment and Admissions.

Professor Cathy Urquhart commenced employment with MMU in December as Professor of Digital Business and Management Systems in the Business

School. Cathy was previously a senior lecturer at the University of Auckland Business School, New Zealand.

Carola Boehm has taken up the role of Acting Head of Contemporary Arts with effect from 1 December for a period of up to one year.

Dr Pete Dunleavy

After 18 months as Acting Dean of the Faculty of Science and Engineering, Dr Pete Dunleavy has been permanently appointed to the post and takes on Pro-VC responsibility for curriculum innovation with a focus on cross-faculty portfolio development and structural innovation.



A former MMU student, Pete graduated in Combined Studies (chemistry and biology) and has a PhD from Nottingham Trent University where he studied the impact of pesticides on plants. His early research interests lay in agricultural ecosystems and he is well published in plant sciences and ecology, often funded by the agrochemical industry.

Pete held a series of lecturing posts after graduation and worked for the Open University for ten years as a local tutor in biology. He came to MMU in 1986, teaching part-time, working as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow then as a lecturer in environmental science, and was appointed Assistant Dean of the Faculty in 2007 with responsibility for the student experience and the capital programme.

In 2006, he led an MMU team that won the Green Apple Award as the UK 'green champions' in education and training for work involving students conducting live projects with stakeholders in agriculture, farming and environmental consultancy.

The courses developed by Dr Dunleavy were recognised as the national leaders in employer engagement in environmental education.

Leading research

Professor Val Edwards-Jones has been appointed Director of Research, a role she has been 'caretaking' since 2008 and in which she reports to Pro-VC Professor Gerry Kelleher.

Her remit is to further increase postgraduate research student numbers, income and research-active staff, and to work closely with the Director of Enterprise (to be appointed) to ensure that research and enterprise become more cohesive.



As one of the UK's leading experts in toxic shock syndrome in burned children, wound infection, and the rapid diagnosis of infectious diseases, Val has published extensively on medical microbiology. She is a Chartered Scientist, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine and an expert adviser to The International Wound Infection Institute.

Val Edwards-Jones worked for the NHS for 19 years. As Head of Medical Microbiology she was involved with the diagnosis and treatment of infectious and communicable diseases, and worked in the Infectious Disease Hospital in Manchester when HIV first came to light in the early 1980s.

Joining MMU in 1992 as a senior lecturer in biomedical science, she was appointed Assistant Director of Research in 2004 and Professor of Medical Microbiology in 2007. A graduate of Northumbria University (she holds a Fellowship of the Institute of Biomedical Sciences), her PhD is from the University of Salford.

Professor Edwards-Jones is currently planning for the Research Excellence Framework which replaces the RAE and which is set to judge the societal and economic impact of research for the first time.

Security on the agenda

Mark Shutt has been appointed Head of Security and Business Continuity, a new post reflecting the growing importance of security and business resilience that was recommended in a recent consultancy review when Facilities was restructured.



The business continuity management part of the new post embraces risk and crisis management, physical and IT security, staff welfare, operations and finance. Mark will be required to anticipate, prevent, respond and lead the recovery from disruptions, whatever their source.

Mark had held a similar post at Salford University where he managed a budget of £3 million and recruited 100 staff and student volunteers to be the "eyes and ears" of security services. He also introduced a Campus Watch scheme with a dedicated unrestricted website that, controversially, published the institution's monthly crime statistics.

Starting his public service career with the Benefits Agency, Mark gained experience in a variety of posts, operating within legislative and procedural frameworks and liaising with the police, solicitors, the courts and other agencies. He is particularly proud of helping to produce a fraud investigation manual that standardised processes across the country.

Moving to Trafford Borough Council as Fraud Investigation Manager in the internal Audit Team, he was instrumental in developing a prosecution referral service to all North West Local Authorities which received government funding of £250,000.

Mark, who holds an MSc in Security Management from Leicester University, says his priority at MMU is to create a centre of excellence within Security Services that responds to customer needs.

"Security is everyone's business as organisations can no longer work in isolation," he says, as he focuses on forging partnerships with the City Council, Greater Manchester Police and stakeholders along the Oxford Road corridor.

An interview with Gwyn Arnold

In the last 18 months, Student and Academic Services has notched up many successes about which MMU Registrar Gwyn Arnold says she is “well-pleased” as SAS takes the change agenda forward.



But there have been difficulties, too. “Negotiating huge changes while keeping an eye on costs is a situation that needs to be balanced with a healthy dose of realism,” says Gwyn, “because this is how the sector will be for the next few years.”

Legal and Secretariat

One change has been the discontinuation of the Secretary’s Department: the Secretariat now reports to Gwyn and the Legal Team to the Chief Operating Officer/Financial Director.

In her dual role as Registrar and Clerk to the Board of Governors, Gwyn is now able to more fully advise the Board whilst operationally the unified University Secretariat is “working brilliantly”.

Successful outcomes

Recent major successes owe much to the managers directing them and to their teams. The excellent RAE outcome last year was a tremendous boost to the institution while the launch of Uniview, the sector-leading management information system, has made MMU statistics and data more accessible.

Other successes include the HEFCE Audit that ensures we comply with regulations on student data returns, and Gwyn is “absolutely delighted” with the outcome

of the QAA Audit and the commendations for the work of CeLT and the MMU Professional Passport supporting student employability (see page 4).

Initiatives and awards

Many initiatives have been put in train in the last 18 months. The Associate College scheme has widened MMU’s regional reach while the Public Engagement Fellowships meet the needs and agenda of local communities.

The new International Foundation Year helps with both recruitment and income generation as we provide special routes and support for overseas students, and the Challenging Assessment initiative focused on improving academic practice and assessment issues.

A doubling of membership to 7,700 in just one year is reported from the Alumni Office which has also fundraised and identified over £134,000 that is eligible for Government matched-funding of about £67,000.

In Student Services, our work with youngsters formerly in care has received the Frank Buttle Award.

Culture change

As the change agenda gathers

momentum, improvements to many processes are modifying MMU ‘culture’. SIPs and Student Life Offices have successfully transformed the way we deliver a vast and complex range of services to students, and online enrolments, used by 95% of all students, have additionally speeded up the collection of fees - an unexpected bonus!

Technical services teams continue to support changes to the University’s estate and their efforts in the opening of new workshops for Art and Design students were deemed “outstanding”.

MMU’s reliance on Clearing was minimal in 2009 and early statistics show an increase in applications of 14.5%. Gwyn says that the aim is to avoid Clearing as far as possible this summer as we move from being “a recruiting to a selecting institution in many areas”.

The next stage

Gwyn is proud of her staff and their achievements. “Now that SAS is well-established we need to prepare for the next stage of the estate strategy - the Business School/Hub and the Birley Fields campus,” she says, “and I am confident that we are in a position to assimilate both developments smoothly and seamlessly.”

Online reading group

A new experimental online reading group has been launched to provide a forum for discussion and debate about key texts, using video and commenting tools to provoke a sense of communal enquiry about such texts across MMU and the internet.

The Centre for Research in Education and Technology (CREATE) brings together members who publish and speak widely across diverse disciplines and sectors and who use networks to create rich, interdisciplinary work informed by multiple perspectives. Launching the online reading group is an attempt to reach out beyond the physical boundaries of the Education and Social Research Institute.

The first, short article written by Dr Jonathan Savage and Clive McGoun considers how learning could become more social through the use of various

tools while a second article by CREATE’s Director Professor Keri Facer looks at future scenarios and directions for education and technology.

Colleagues are invited to go to <http://createreading.clivemcgoun.net> to take part in the online reading group. Jonathan says: “It won’t take long to read and future papers will look at other aspects of technology and education. Please visit the site, watch the short video, read the first text and start a discussion by commenting on the ideas.”

Upskilling the technical workforce

The Division of Chemistry and Materials has secured significant funding to develop new courses to enhance the higher level skills of the science-related technical workforce in response to employer needs for upskilling.

The North West Higher Level Skills Partnership initiative, funded by NWDA and coordinated by the NWUA, has awarded the Division £87,000 to work with committed industrial partners, such as British Energy and Hanson Cement. MMU staff are now designing modules that offer maximum flexibility and benefit across the advanced engineering and materials sector.

Project Leader Dr Mike Cole says: "There is a clear gap in the market for this type of



work-based provision which is relevant to the job, and our goal is tailor-made, fit-for-purpose course delivery with a primary focus on laboratory and core scientific and analytical skills."

Another stream of funding via HEFCE's Working Higher project aims to develop a framework of modules to deliver foundation degrees suitable for the nuclear, chemical, bioscience / pharmaceutical, polymer and petrochemical industries. Again, the rationale is to bridge the significant higher skills gap in the technical

workforces in these sectors and will lead to a full 240-credit Foundation Degree in Chemistry and other related disciplines.

A team headed by Dr Cole will join a consortium of HEI partners to lead on the initiative in the sector with funding of £100,000 alongside 50 employer additional student numbers until 2014.

Caroline Sudworth (Cogent), Neil Denoon and Stephen Preece (British Energy), Dr Mike Cole, John Wilcox (Exova) and Dr Michele Edge of MMU.

Saving money and the planet

Student food lovers showed off their culinary skills and their ability to make the household budget last longer in a Masterchef-style cookery contest at Hollings in December.

Organised by MMU alongside Manchester and Salford City Councils, the contest formed part of Greater Manchester's **Love Food Hate Waste** campaign to encourage people to save money and help the environment by not throwing away usable food.

Held in the Food and Tourism Management training kitchen at Hollings, eight sets of two-strong teams were given ingredients typically found in student kitchens – pasta, chicken and vegetables – and 45 minutes to turn them into a mouth-watering dish.

Five MMU students took part in the competition which Ian Ainscough, programme leader for hospitality with culinary arts, said was a great success: "It highlighted the need for students to use up leftover foods and while there is some nutritional loss when cooking food,



adding fresh ingredients to leftovers can replace and increase the nutritional value of the final dish."

The top prize was scooped by students from the University of Manchester while MMU students Abby Holmes and Emma Williams came joint third.

Amanda Norris, MMU's Waste and Recycling Manager, reminds us all that waste food has a big impact on climate

change as most of it ends up in landfill, emitting the damaging greenhouse gas methane when it rots.

Go to www.lovefoodhatewastse.com for more information.

Abby Holmes, Ian Ainscough and Emma Williams - loving food and hating the 1,225,700 tonnes of food left on plates after a meal, worth £3.3 billion (Source: www.wrap.org.uk).

Zero carbon university



MMU has officially signed up to a national drive to cut carbon, committing to a 10% reduction across key areas and aiming for a 10% cut in total emissions in 2010.

According to Head of Environmental Strategy John Hindley, joining **10:10** will help MMU to cut energy costs short-term and will confer a strategic advantage long-term.

He said: "Britain is committed to emissions cuts of 34% (below 1990 levels) by 2020 and the coming years will see high-carbon institutions being squeezed harder by laws supporting this target.

"Joining the **10:10** campaign is a way of advancing environmental and social responsibility with the goal of equipping staff and students with the knowledge to be sustainable global citizens of the 21st century."

If you'd like to join **10:10**, please go to www.1010uk.org. Note for diaries: an open workshop is planned during Mind, Body and Spirit Week (15 -19 March).

Language classes

The Department of Languages is offering evening courses in Arabic, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, Urdu and Spanish this term.

The ten-week courses run from 22 February and finish in the week of 24 May except for Monday classes which finish on 7 June due to Bank Holidays. There is also a four-week break between 20 March and 18 April for the Easter vacation.

Courses will be held at both the All Saints and Didsbury campuses, starting at 6.00pm and finishing at 7.30pm.

The focus of classes is to develop practical communication skills and progress will be closely supervised and supported by regular homework. Courses cost £105. MMU staff and students pay just £85 as do senior citizens and unwaged workers.

Further details, timetable and enrolment forms at www.hlss.mmu.ac.uk/languages/evening-classes/.



Writ large

Recent research by the British Theatre Consortium, a group of experts that includes Julie Wilkinson of the Department of English, has identified a mini-revival in new plays being staged and performing well at the box office.

The research, commissioned by the Arts Council, is good news for young and emerging playwrights, not least for MMU which offers scriptwriting options under a professional writer and showcases new plays written as dissertations.

Julie Wilkinson, Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing and herself a writer for stage, television and radio, said: "Our findings challenge the view which underpinned earlier Arts Council policy that text-based drama is dying and that individual writers are less important than devised and performance drama."

In compiling *Writ Large: New Writing on the English Stage 2003-09*, researchers quizzed 65 regularly-funded English theatre companies about their output and success. They found that since 2003 the amount of new work had more than doubled, from 20% in the late 1990s to 42%, and that average performances of new plays on main stages was a healthy 65% and rising.

They also found significant increases in new adaptations and writing for children (20% of all new writing) and an increase in work devised by actors (7% of performances).

Julie added: "The last decade represents a triumph for Arts Council policy to boost new writing and for artistic directors who refused to accept the presumption that new plays empty theatres."

Above: MMU's Script in Hand showcase of Ruhena Hannan's play, *Asha (Wish)*, performed by George Bukhari with professional actress Tahira Dar.

Introducing Endnote

EndNote is a bibliographic management software package that allows users to collect and organise book and journal references quickly and automatically.

As well as working through exercises to familiarise you with the full, on-campus version of Endnote, sessions include a quick tour of the web version, Endnote Web.

Open to academic staff, researchers and postgraduate students, the Library will be running a number of introductory sessions in March, June and July.

Go to www.library.mmu.ac.uk/eres_targets/endnotelist.php and contact the listed trainer to book a place.

Balancing the third sector

A team at the Business School has developed an online management tool with third sector organisations to help analyse skills gaps as the sector moves from grant funding to self-generating trading income.

Mike Bull, Research Fellow at the Centre for Enterprise, said: "*Balance* is a fast, simple to use tool that provides an action plan for progress and benchmarks organisations against the growing database of 300 people that have used it across the UK."

Social enterprises are businesses run for social and environmental purposes with some 62,000 in the UK having a combined turnover of at least £27 billion and contributing £8.4 billion to the economy per year.

Last year, Mike secured ESRC Knowledge Transfer funding with Sue Baines of Health and Social Care to utilise *Balance* to stimulate engagement between the third sector and NHS Manchester.

Most recently, working with Senior Enterprise Fellow Paula Turner to commercialise the Centre's management tools, Mike sold *Balance* to Social Enterprise North West (SENW), saying: "This is a fantastic opportunity to further embed *Balance* in the region over the next three years."

SENW have now entered into discussion with the NWDA to roll-out *Balance* across their support programmes for an estimated £50,000 and distributorship deals are on the agenda in other regions.

Balance has generated over £380,000 to date.



Mike Bull with Peter Hawkins (NHS Manchester) and Sue Baines at a seminar on knowledge transfer between third sector providers and NHS Manchester.

Library Services were re-accredited against the Government's Customer Service Excellence standard last term.

Head of Library Services Gill Barry says that the assessor's feedback was overwhelmingly positive: "The report notes our continued focus on customer needs, and library staff were described by students as helpful and friendly, and by academic staff as giving a service with bells on!"

The purpose of the assessment is to flag up points for development as well as areas of strength, and so before the

Destination of Leavers

Jan Moore, Employability and Careers Guidance Team Manager, reports that the destinations of students completing courses at MMU in 2008 have held up reasonably well given the current economic difficulties.

Six months after leaving MMU, the figures collected for the HESA survey indicate that just 6.5% were still seeking work (5.3% in 2007) and that MMU's performance against its employability benchmark of 90.1% was 89.7%. Other statistics (2007 figures are in brackets) show:

- **In employment only:**
60.6% (64.2%)
- **Undertaking further study:**
15.2% (11.7%)
- **Combined employment and study:**
9.0% (10.9%)
- **Other activities:**
8.7% (7.9%)

Amongst those leaving full-time undergraduate courses, 54.6% obtained graduate level employment as defined by the Standard Occupational Classification (HE). Obviously, this is a figure we would like to see improve in coming years and the Employability Project, now nearing the end of its second year, continues to implement strategies which will support this.

Further details from Jan Moore or Laura Dixon. National data can be viewed at www.hesa.ac.uk and www.prospects.ac.uk/links/wdgd - data for those graduating in 2009 is currently being collected.

next assessment MMU libraries will be looking to benchmark services, in terms of timeliness and quality, against those offered by other libraries in the North West.

Assessments take place annually, so there is no room for slippage!

National Student Survey 2010

This year's National Student Survey (NSS), which began in January and lasts until the end of April, gives final year undergraduates the opportunity to have a say on their time at MMU.

The NSS helps the University to monitor and improve the service we provide to students and we respond to its findings by building upon good practice and addressing issues that have been raised as needing improvement.

Once again, the University and the Students' Union are working in close partnership on a wide variety of joint activities aimed at raising awareness of the survey amongst students. As last year, it would be appreciated if staff could again encourage final year undergraduates to visit the NSS website at www.thestudentsurvey.com and take part in the survey.



EGS Seminars

Seminars are held in Room E0.05, JD East Building, at 1.00pm.

Sandwich lunch available in Room E402 at 12.30pm.

- 16 Feb** *Magnetic trees and human health: a new means of assessing impacts of particulate pollution* by Prof Barbara Maher, Lancaster University
- 23 Feb** *Policy tourism: programs across borders* by Prof Kevin Ward, University of Manchester
- 2 March** *Reckoning with REDD in the context of industrial agriculture in south-east Asia* by Dr Lian Pin Koh, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich
- 9 March** *Tourism development, cultural identity and the state: Dracula tourism in Romania* by Dr Duncan Light, Liverpool Hope University



Building programme update

Three tower cranes arrived at the construction site of the new Business School and Student Hub at All Saints in December as substructure and foundation works were completed. Work has now started on the superstructure and the shuttering and concrete structural frame will soon be visible above ground level.

Some 4,200 tonnes of material have been excavated and removed from the site where 414 foundation piles (including 12 to support the tower cranes) have been constructed to a depth of 40 feet and a total of 6,000 cubic metres of concrete has been used.

At the John Dalton site, the **IRM extension** is on schedule for handover in March now that the mechanical and electrical contractors are working on the internal installation, and the **heavy engineering workshops** will be finished in February for an April handover.

A design team has been appointed for the Faculty of Art and Design and is defining the brief and developing the scheme for occupation in September 2012. Plans for this summer include the **demolition of the Undercroft Building** alongside further **refurbishment of the Chatham Tower**.

At the Crewe campus, the **Exercise and Sports Science** building, incorporating a new sports hall and weight-training rooms, should be ready for occupation in September and further works are underway to **remodel the car parks and the main access road**.

Director of Capital Projects Richard Cartwright reports that, following a European procurement exercise, the Manchester-based eco award-winning architectural practice Sheppard Robson has been appointed design team leaders on the **Birley Fields campus**. The company is now working with MMU to develop the brief and deliver the first phase of construction by September 2014.

Above: The building site of the Business School and Student Hub seen from Chatham Building.

KTP alumni

At MMU Cheshire, two Knowledge Transfer Partnerships valued at over £200,000 have resulted from the success and experience of two MMU alumni and have led to the planning of other KTPs.

The first project with Wulvern Housing Association is aimed at reducing void properties and rent losses and improving the quality of the housing stock through more rigorous monitoring and evaluation.

Overseen by lecturer and environmental scientist Linda Reichenfeld, a sophisticated diagnostic tool is being developed by Wulvern Housing Association and will be managed by KTP Associate Paudie O'Shea.

The data tool will enhance core operations, focusing actions and investments in construction, repair and modernisation to improve demand, customer satisfaction and neighbourhood improvements.

Business Development Manager Trevor Brown said: "The partnership

with Wulvern Housing owes much to the relationship that its Director of Partnerships, Rob Allen, formed during his time as a student at the Faculty."

The second KTP, with South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry, involves the production of a business strategy and operations realignment to help the Chamber to meet its statutory obligations as it engages with member firms.

KTP Associate Nadeem Ahmed will study an appropriate postgraduate qualification as she carries out a redesign of the organisation to optimise membership and increase its power in representing members.

MMU alumni and Chamber manager, Paul Coleman, is currently undertaking an MSc



in Business Management at the Faculty. During his studies on organisational change with lecturer Bob Spowage he considered the implications for his own company which led to the KTP, and other joint projects are now being explored.

Rob Allen and Trevor Brown.

Controlling income

Faced with invoicing £115 million in tuition, accommodation and healthcare fees, and constant changes to the system by Government and other agencies, staff in Financial and Legal Services helped set up an inter-university group to pool expertise and to source best practice.

The Income and Credit Control Universities Group hosted by MMU in December was organised by Fran Collett, Paul Sheil and Alistair Greer. Attracting 46 delegates from 17 institutions, it was the best attended meeting since the Group's inception in 2006.

The agenda for the day allowed delegates to share their knowledge and expertise on variable fees, debt strategy, the withholding of certificates and awards, legal action against students and non-payments by foreign governments and companies. They also deliberated Home



Office rules, problems with the Student Loan Company, the new points-based scheme for international students and preparations for more changes in tuition fees – amongst many other concerns!

The use of interactive technology in the form of handheld 'pods' was much commented on by delegates, encouraging wider participation and helping to cement MMU's standing in the Group.

For the F&LS team, to deliver a first-class service in financial operations has meant taking the lead to achieve standards of

excellence while providing an outstanding service for students and best value for MMU.

Assistant Financial Director Adrian Clare says he is proud of the work his staff have achieved with the inter-university group and in achieving financial efficiencies, adding: "In today's economic climate, it's more important than ever that MMU invoices students and collects payments as quickly as possible."

Teamwork – Fran Collett, Alistair Greer and Paul Sheil.



Made of Manchester

Entrepreneurial students from the School of Art won free retail space in Afflecks Palace in December to sell a range of hand-made gifts in their 'pop up' shop which they called **Made of Manchester**.

The name of the shop is a unique take on the more commonly used slogan and communicates the message that the products being sold were inspired and made of materials collected from across the city.

The gifts on sale were the result of five-week's work as students learnt the basics of product development, pitching ideas, costing and production. They then pitched their ideas to a team of 'dragons' in a bid to win a place on the stall and the panel selected the strongest, most innovative and commercially-viable products.

Products ranged from pendants using second-hand materials gathered from local charity shops to hand-made tiles that create a map of the city, laser-cut rain cloud brooches and tape printed with the Manchester skyline.

The project was part of an Enterprise in the Curriculum Fellowship award to lecturer Cj O'Neill as well as a Creative Business Development/MA Design LAB initiative supporting graduate work with external companies.



Above: Cj O'Neill is pictured far right with some of the successful students who traded for free over the festive season.

Left: Manchester's skyline informs the project logo.

In The News

Send your news items to the Press Office: Gareth Hollyman (ext 3406/g.hollyman@mmu.ac.uk) or Anna Fenton (ext 2184/a.fenton@mmu.ac.uk). Go to www.mmu.ac.uk/news/ to sign-up to News Alerts. Media reports are available online for staff to check out faculty coverage in the media.

8 Dec **Channel 4 News**

Prof David Lee, Centre for Air Transport and the Environment, comments on a report he co-authored on transport and climate change.

9 Dec **Manchester Evening News**

David Edmundson-Bird, of MMUBS, discusses hijacking of social media persona and scams.

16 Dec **BBC Manchester**

Prof Claire Stewart of the IRM explains the science behind gathering stem cells from milk teeth.

17 Dec **BBC News 24**

Human Resource Management expert Stephen Taylor discusses the BA court case.

2 Jan **Daily Mail**

Psychologist Dr David Holmes talks about how our names shape our future health and prospects.

7 Jan **Runcorn & Widnes News**

Jason Addy of MMU Law School comments on building on asbestos-contaminated land.

January **Professional Manager**

Dr Shirley Jenner of HR Management talks about spirituality in the workplace.

13 Jan **Daily Telegraph**

Psychologist Mike Berry ponders whether lying is part of courtship.

19 Jan **Nursing Times**

Carol Haigh, Professor of Nursing, comments on the Royal College of Nursing's innovation awards for 2010.

January **People Management**

Dr Linda Alker of MMUBS explains how older workers fall into four types.

22 Jan **BBC Manchester**

North West Film Archive manager Marion Hewitt describes how a public engagement fellowship produced a powerful Manchester film.



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