

REGISTRAR AND SECRETARY'S CORE BRIEF: NOVEMBER 2005

In the October Core Brief I indicated that *"arguably, the biggest challenge I face is to make whatever adjustments are necessary to priorities and working practices so that we (the Administration) are seen to be positive contributors to the Manchester 2015 Agenda.* I should like to elaborate on that statement in this Core Brief.

As a general principle, I have decided to introduce further structural change to the Administration only when that is necessary to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness and/or to give heightened emphasis to particular University priorities. Too often structural change is seen as an end in itself when, in reality, it can only facilitate change. Instead we must turn our attention to priorities and working practices and once I am more confident about the recurrent financial position of the Administration, I will have more to say about both these matters.

However, I can report that I am close to finalising a paper for the President on how the duties of the Registrar and Secretary can be carried out most effectively. While the Registrar and Secretary must retain overall responsibility for the strategic direction of the Administration and be accountable for its performance, there are areas where focused attention, on a daily basis, should reap dividends in terms of improved performance. For example we should be devoting more time to standards setting, performance measurement and improvement, responsiveness to the needs of users, the availability of new ideas, promoting and monitoring better working relationships within the tripartite administrative structure of School, Faculty and Centre and maximising the use of resources. There is also a lot of "fire-fighting" when crises occur and so, inevitably, the urgent matters get precedence over the strategically more important ones. It will be impossible for me to do all of this personally while I am required to devote time and energy to other parts of the job and so, following the conclusion of my discussions with the President, I hope it will be possible to make a further announcement about how these areas of work will be pursued more actively in 2006.

Finally, I can also report that I have prepared a job description and person specification for a post of Academic Registrar who will have managerial responsibility for research; teaching and learning; student support and services; home and international recruitment and admissions (including widening participation) as well as international relations generally; and communications, media and public relations activities. When recruited, that individual will assume responsibility for those functions from me. The title of Deputy Registrar was granted to me by the Board of Governors last April and was *ad personam*. I have no plans, at present, to propose to the Board that another Director or Head should be given that designation. The title of Academic Registrar is not perfect but the alternatives (Academic Secretary, Head of Academic Administration or Services) are no better. I did reflect on the optimum reporting lines for the Careers and Employability Division and the Development and Alumni Relations functions but both Jane Ratchford and Chris Cox and their teams are fully focused on the demanding agendas they face and I came to the conclusion quickly that nothing would be gained from a period of uncertainty about their reporting lines. Both will continue to report directly to me rather than be subsumed within the Academic Registry, but I would expect there to be closer and growing links with colleagues in the Academic Registry.

Pay and Grading

Every member of staff wants an update on pay and grading. I have agreed with the Director Human Resources that, following an important meeting with the trade unions on Wednesday, 23 November, a detailed statement will be sent to staff, by the end of the week, setting out the latest position.

At the time of writing, there are solid grounds for believing that considerable progress has been made and staff will receive a letter within the next three weeks advising them of the personal outcome of the review process and the timetable for payment of the changes and arrears of salary arising from all contractual changes that have occurred since 1 October 2004.

HIGHLIGHTS REPORTS

A number of significant developments take place every month and, as part of the process of keeping colleagues better informed, a sample of such developments is reproduced below.

HR/Payroll System

For payroll purposes, the system went live from 1 November, and single inputting of data has been resumed within HR teams. We can now begin to concentrate on the opportunities this presents to review and improve many business processes.

Staff Incentives

"The Directorate of Human Resources and The Energy and Sustainability Team will be launching two new exciting employee benefit schemes on 28 November, The Home Computing Initiative (HCI) and [Bikes@Work](#).

These schemes will offer the opportunity for all eligible members of staff to obtain: home computers, laptops, printers, cycles and accessories, and pay for them out of their salary before Tax and National Insurance are deducted. This offers savings of between 30% and 50% depending on your rate of tax. The scheme is offered through our partners, Intelligent Shopping, and the bikes and computers can be ordered from them after the 28 November launch

Please contact www.intelligentshopping.co.uk/uom or ring 0870 383 3000 after this date.

A brochure outlining clearly the full range of equipment available and how the Salary Sacrifice Scheme works will be packaged with the next issue of UniLife (shipping 6 December) and a series of roadshows will be held at the Oxford Road and Sackville Street sites on 6-9 December."

Equality and Diversity

Last week the University held its first Equality and Diversity Week, in partnership with the Students' Union, to push forward the equality and diversity agenda.

The week was a great success with over 400 members of staff and students involved in a variety of events including seminars around the main equality target areas such as: disability; religion or belief; lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT); race; and gender. A series of policy awareness sessions were also held to promote and outline the new suite of equality and diversity policies in addition to various evening activities and an exhibition to celebrate the diversity of our community.

A number of network groups have been set up and are key to the development of the equality and diversity agenda in providing an opportunity to consult with and involve members of our community on key issues and to support and enable the mainstreaming of equality of opportunity across the University.

If you would be interested in finding out more about joining a network group, becoming a Diversity Champion, or just more generally about the work of the Equality and Diversity Team and how to get involved, please visit the Equality and Diversity website at www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity/ or contact the team on: tel: 0161 306 5857 or email: equalityanddiversity@manchester.ac.uk

Fairtrade

The University is running a Fairtrade week from 20-25 November in celebration of the Fairtrade status granted to the University. Publicity leaflets have been produced confirming the impact the University expects to make. The statistics are impressive with the University consuming 850,000 sugar sachets, 1,000,000 cups of Fairtrade Coffee and 75,000 Fairtrade bananas, to mention just a few products.

Fairtrade week will see ethically traded clothes for sale, a Fairtrade market and special Fairtrade product offerings throughout the week.

University Accounts

The Finance Committee on Thursday, 17 November recommended the approval of the accounts 2004-05 to the meeting of the Board of Governors on 7 December.

Faculty of Life Sciences

The first phase of the operation to move Life Sciences administration into the Simon building should be complete by Christmas 2005. The second phase should be completed by March 2006.

Albert McMenemy
Registrar and Secretary

22 November 2005