In Brief
Strategic Update

Our vision:
"By pioneering exceptional industry partnerships we will lead the way in real world experiences preparing students for life."

Our mission:
Transforming lives. Stimulating discovery. Realising potential.

Our values:

1 We act with HONESTY, INTEGRITY and RESPECT

2 We are PROUD of who we are and we ENJOY what we do

3 We are committed to QUALITY and where we fall short we work hard to make things right

4 We embrace DIFFERENCE and dare to be different

5 We are FRIENDLY and WELCOMING, creating an environment where people feel safe to work, study and grow together

6 We are individually ACCOUNTABLE for what we do and collectively RESPONSIBLE for our University's success.

In Brief
Strategic Update

Highlights

- ICZs approved by Council
- Next operational planning round to start end of October
- Quarterly performance report for May to July 2015
- Towards NSS 2016
- Welcome, Registration and Induction improvements
- Competition and Markets Authority Guidance
- Research and Enterprise update
- Brand audit and development work
- UG Applicant Conversion and Communications Plan 2016 entry
- Student recruitment update

Your strategic update

In Brief is the University's new core brief and replaces the strategic update, Talk Time. It provides you with a summary of high-level, key messages to support you with your face to face communication.

In Brief is issued by the Internal Communications (IC) team to all University Management Team (UMT) members following the monthly UMT meetings, so that it can be briefed out face to face to your direct reports and then cascaded throughout your areas.

Please include any updates, information, success stories from your relevant schools and professional services areas. There is a section on page 8 that enables you to add your content if you wish and a section to capture feedback.

Please summarise where appropriate and deliver in a way you are most comfortable with. In Brief should not be presented verbatim.

Please use the briefing session as an opportunity to invite questions and feedback as well as an opportunity to network.

In Brief is issued by the IC team who welcome any feedback: Internalcomms-uos@salford.ac.uk

Core brief

Vision and strategy – planning for the future

ICZs approved by Council and programme mandate agreed

The development of four industry collaboration zones (ICZs) as the University's sole strategic priority has now been approved by Council.

Business planning for three of these zones – Engineering and Environments, Digital and Creative and Health and Wellbeing – has now started.

A project mandate has been created which inter alia looks at the types of roles that will be required to deliver the zones. These roles include an ICZ Project Sponsor – to be carried out by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and in the meantime by Gerry Kelleher, interim Pro Vice-Chancellor. Reporting to him will be an ICZ programme director – working across the whole programme of zones and individual ICZ directors, who will run each zone long term. They will be supported by project managers and project teams and there will also be a stakeholder group.

It is envisaged that these roles will be filled internally, providing secondment opportunities for colleagues and will be advertised within the next month.

It is expected that during 2015/16, the business cases will be developed with initial and provisional investment agreed as part of the operational planning for 2016/17. Summer 2016 should see business cases approved by Council, with 2016/17 being year one of the ICZ delivery programme.

The zones will be underpinned by three strategic enablers: equipping employees for co-creation; 21st century standard infrastructure and creating a network of exceptional partnerships. Click here for more information.

Strategic Planning update

The UMT approved the latest changes to the four academic sub strategies and how these align to our vision of creating four ICZs, following focus group activity involving employees and further input from the UMT at their Planning Conference last month (September).

Operational Planning process and guidance 2016/17 to 2018/19

The next operational planning round is due to start at the end of October, following the UMT Planning Conference. A coordinated approach to operational planning - with a suite of documents - has been agreed.

Key dates for the planning process can be seen below. (*Please highlight those areas below that are relevant to your Schools and Professional Services areas):*

- 20/21 October 2015: UMT Planning conference: mandate established for planning round
- 21 Oct: operational planning pack issued to include all elements of the Operational Plan
- 13 Nov: student number plans returned
- 27 Nov: SSR and SL:L ratio report issued
- 27 Nov: panel review of admissions plans and associated bids
- 18 Dec: School Operational Plans and Professional Services Operational Plans returned to Planning
- 4 Jan 2016: review meetings with Schools on Operational Plans
- 15 Jan: Professional Services full return of Operational Plans
- 25/27 Jan: Schools challenge days
- 1 Feb: review meetings with Professional Services on Operational Plans
- 8/10 Feb: Professional Services challenge days
- 15 Feb: re-submission of School Operational Plans
- 19 Feb: re-submission of Professional Services Operational Plans
- 22 Feb: School Operational Plan review meetings
- 2 March: Professional Services Operational Plan review meetings
- 24 March: Annual Operating Plan submitted to VCET
- 29 March: Annual Operating Plans submitted to UMT
- 6 May: Annual Operating Plan signed off by Council.

Operational Planning for the Schools will be led by Gerry Kelleher and for Professional Services by Vikki Goddard.

University Council Quarterly Performance Report Quarter 4 (May to July 2015)

The University presented its quarter 4 Performance Report to Council on 25 September achieving excellent results in-year with 12 out of our 16 targets having been met or exceeded.

The outcome of the National Student Survey (NSS) 2015 resulted in the second largest annual increase in overall satisfaction in the sector.
The results of the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) exceeded the target for student employability by two per cent.
We exceeded our target for growth in student recruitment, in particular, in PGT registrations.

We exceeded our International and Enterprise income targets and PGR completion continued to improve. The improvement in University finances has continued but these figures remain subject to finalisation at year-end.

However, student progression remains an issue despite an improvement in attrition rates over the quarter. Research income has met budget but fallen short of the full year target and we lost ground in the REF during the year. Space utilisation improved by one per cent on 2013/14 but fell short of the year's target by one per cent.

Annual Operating Plan 2015/16 – our performance

The UMT responsibilities include the monitoring and review of the University's performance against agreed plans, budgets and associated targets. As part of the new reporting arrangements to VCET and UMT, the UMT were presented with a progress report and supplementary reports on the Annual Operating Plan for September 2015. The UMT will receive an update every month on progress.

Our Academic Sub Strategies

Academic Improvement

- **Delivering tangible results: Towards NSS 2016**. This outlined three main areas of work: (*please ensure that you highlight information relevant to your areas)*

    o Actions arising out of NSS 2015 – with the UMT having already been asked to identify a small number of high level SMART actions in their areas
    o Story-making – ensuring there is a strong, positive institutional narrative
    o NSS 2016 survey operation – the successes of last year will be taken forward with a target completion of 80 per cent. Improvements will focus on the use of student champions and improving advice and support given to academic colleagues. It is also very important that we prioritise work that addresses Organisation and Management across institutional and local actions.

- **Welcome, Registration and Induction** – Phase 2 Project – interim outcomes. A number of significant improvements have been made to the WRI project which dealt with Welcome, School Welcome, Registration and associated processes, student communications and wayfinding on campus.

    At the end of this month, the WRI Project Board will carry out a review of Phase 2 to ensure that the successes are fully embedded and improved as part of our culture of continuous improvement.

    Feedback on the project has been constantly monitored through social media, online questionnaires and vox pop surveys and early analysis shows that the experience of our students has been overwhelmingly positive.

- **Competition and Markets Authority Guidance**

    A paper on the implications of the consumer protection law guidance to HE providers published by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) was presented to the UMT.

The Consumer Rights Act which comes into force this month (October) brings together several existing consumer protection laws. The main areas of concern for the CMA are:

- The **information available for students** to enable them to choose the most appropriate course and institution
- The **terms and conditions** used by some universities, including their accessibility, fairness etc
- The speed and effectiveness of **complaints handling** by some universities as well as an apparent lack of student knowledge about the process.

Employees need to be aware of the information that the University must provide to students to help them make the right choice about which University to apply to. This includes:

- The course content, structure, length, location of study and the award given on successfully completing the course
- Total cost of the course, including tuition fees and necessary additional costs such as field trips, lab equipment etc
- The University's terms and conditions, including rules and regulations and policies relating to student conduct – which must be accessible and clear
- Before, or at the latest when a student gets an offer, the University must tell them about any changes to information since they applied and give them pre-contract information.

A working group convened by the Registrar has already met to consider how well the University currently addresses the requirements under the law, to identify any gaps or issues and is taking the necessary steps to address them. The CMA is carrying out a review of the HE sector this month.

Research and Enterprise

Research within Schools has been consolidated into nine strategic Research Centres. *(Please remind your teams of the Research Centres related to your own particular School.)* Professional Services support for Research and Enterprise has been centralised with a new team structure and ways of working established with the Schools. All Research and Enterprise colleagues have now moved to Joule House from Faraday.

Academic Growth and Diversification

- **Brand audit and development work**

The results of a Brand Audit, commissioned by Marketing and Recruitment, were presented to the UMT.

The audit - which was carried out this June and July - evaluated all aspects of the University brand and involved a combination of internal/external research, interviewing current students, prospective students, careers advisers, parents, a cross-section of employees and some members of UMT.

Creative work on a proposed brand proposition was agreed by UMT with a view to further development of the brand, looking at different types of collateral such as brochures, business cards, promotional material. A "message bible" and core communications themes will be developed. A soft launch will follow in January – March 2016, which will include the 2017 UG prospectus with main implementation and roll-out in April to June.

- **UG Applicant Conversion and Communications Plan 2016 entry**

A Home UG applicant conversion and communications plan was presented to the UMT, highlighting the changes that are being made to improve our applicant service and conversion rates.

Adopting a multi-channel, "drip feed" approach, the 2015/16 conversion campaign will give applicants the information they need at appropriate points in the cycle, whilst promoting the benefits of studying here. The changes to be introduced include:
  - Improvements to the way we invite applicants to interviews and applicant days. This has involved implementing a new Events and Interviews module which allows additional reporting and functionality to improve the applicant experience
  - Additional applicant days will be offered, introducing an enquirer/applicant drop-in service and weekly campus/accommodation tours
  - A series of events in a number of UK cities which include Belfast, Newcastle, London, Birmingham and Nottingham are being considered
  - A social media conversion campaign will be launched inviting students to join Facebook groups linked to their subject of study with the aim of encouraging discussion and creating a sense of community between our employees, current students and potential students – prior to Registration.

- **Student recruitment update for 2015**

The current position on clearing and student recruitment was presented to the UMT. We have exceeded our UG Home and PGT home targets. However, the main recruitment concerns are still around International with an expected outturn of around 550 and the University is exploring the opportunities for further recruitment at a number of entry points throughout the year. *(Would Deans please communicate the numbers which relate to their own particular Schools).*

The next UMT meeting will be held on 5 October, 2015 and the October issue of In Brief will be circulated soon after that. Previous issues of In Brief can be accessed here.

Local brief

Insert text in text box

Questions and feedback

Insert text in text box