

SAA Newsletter

March 2018

Inside This Issue

- 1-3 Operational News
- 2 Staff News
- 3 SAA Job Vacancies
- 3 SAA Staff Development Group
- 4 SAA Staff Awards Scheme
- 4 University Long Service Awards
- 4 Academic Registrar's Commendations
- 4 Employee Engagement Strategy Group Request for Volunteers
- 4 SKILLS Network
- 5 Project Updates
 - Placements Management
 - PGR Tracker 2
 - Banner 9 Upgrade
- 5 Banner Downtime

Forthcoming Marks Release & Awards Dates

Sun 6 May, 17:00	Deadline for marks upload
Tue 8 May, 12:00	Marks release and classification
Tue 8 May, 12:00	Deadline for approval of awards
Thu 28 Jun, 12:00	Deadline for marks upload
Thu 28 Jun, 14:00	Marks release and classification
Thu 28 Jun, 12:00	Deadline for approval of awards

Should you have any queries, please contact: awards@soton.ac.uk

Welcome!

Welcome to the March issue of the SAA Newsletter. We are pleased to detail numerous success stories this month, with news of a number of SAA Staff Awards, Academic Registrar's Commendations and five recipients of the University's Long Service Awards. We also have the usual mix of operational, HR and staff-related news, plus project and student systems news.

Operational News

ADMISSIONS

UCAS Admissions

UCAS Extra is now open. Applicants who have already used their five choices but who are not holding any offers can apply through UCAS Extra. Applicants can apply for further courses one at a time. If you do not wish to make an offer to an applicant through UCAS Extra, please process the reject decision promptly so that the applicant can make further applications elsewhere.

Further information about UCAS Extra can be found on page 37 of the 2018 UCAS Undergraduate Admission Guide which is available from [UCAS](#) or from the Admissions Registry team.

Upcoming UCAS Deadline Dates:

- 31 March 2018 – Applications received at UCAS by 15 January should have had a decision processed
- 2 May 2018 – Decline by default for applications with UK and EU postal addresses
- 3 May 2018 – Reject by default for applications received by 15 January 2018
- 7 June 2018 – Decline by default for all main scheme applications where the last decision was entered by 3 May 2018.

Certificate of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)

New guidance has been published to help teams complete the SPACMNT screen for CAS and UKVI audit purposes. Please contact the CAS team if you have not received a copy.

The SPACMNT screen is an important part of the CAS Raising process as well as being where UKVI audit information is held. Please complete the SPACMNT screen by the time an applicant is UA or UF, as the information in SPACMNT is used to raise the CAS and the CAS cannot be raised without it.

If you are a new member of staff and would like training on the process for completing SPACMNT or if you have been doing it for years but would like a refresher, please contact the CAS team who will be happy to help.

CURRICULUM AND TIMETABLING

Curriculum Planning 2018/19

Faculty CQA Teams have started working on changes to curriculum structures for 2018/19 programmes, which should all be returned to CTT by Thursday 29 March 2018.

The team will then update Banner accordingly, ready for the Online Option Choice open period for continuing students, which begins on Monday 23 April 2018.

These programme rules and regulations will then be used to create the timetables for new entrants when the team schedule in June/July 2018. Module and section data should now be up to date following the deadline on Thursday 1 March 2018 for these changes.

We would also like to remind Faculty CQA Teams that it is vital that we have all amendments in the database before we begin scheduling, in order for us to build the 2018/19 timetables around the real curriculum.

Any changes that are given to us later than June will be very difficult to implement and may result in student clashes in the programme timetables.

The [Curriculum Planning Flow Diagram](#) illustrates the relationship between curriculum data and how this informs timetabling.

Online Option Choice – Continuing Students

Continuing students will be able to select and subsequently amend their optional modules for 2018/19 using the online option choice facility during the open period from Monday 23 April 2018 to Friday 11 May 2018.

Students should be advised of this by their Faculty and sent guidance to help them with the process, as well as chase emails towards the end of the open period where students have not yet made their selections.

Reports should be run by the Faculty during this period using Discoverer to monitor the selections, demand for modules and to ensure that co and pre-requisites have been met where there may be prior study such as A Levels.

2018/19 teaching timetables for continuing students are scheduled wherever possible around real student choice as per their selections during this open period, so students should be encouraged to make their selections during this period rather than the start of term.

All optional modules are chosen subject to timetabling availability.

[Frequently Asked Questions](#) can be found on our SAA website.

2018/19 Timetabling Data Collection

The CTT will shortly begin the data collection exercise for timetabling requirements for next year, ready for scheduling in June/July 2018.

Business Critical and Freshers' Week bookings will also be requested at this time and should be collated by Faculties and sent to timetabling@soton.ac.uk ahead of the scheduling exercise.

Common Learning Space Refurbishments

In response to your feedback, CLS refurbishments will be carried out this Spring/Summer as part of the 2017/18 programme – a list of the planned works will be added to our SAA website shortly.

SAA Staff News

Registry: Student Records

Laura Blake has left the team to start a new job at Bournemouth University and Emily Jones has recently joined Student Services in a new role – we wish them both well in their new jobs.

Faculty of Engineering and the Environment

There have been a number of movements within FEE. Claire Brockman is now the FEE CQA Team Leader. Jacqui Bonnin is now the NGCM CDT Co-ordinator within the Grad School.

We also welcome Claire Mitchell and Ayeisha McNab who are both new to the Student Office in reception.

Anna Merilainen has left on her maternity leave and we wish her all the best.

Quality, Standards & Accreditation Team

The Quality, Standards & Accreditation Team are delighted to welcome Catherine Willetts, who joined the team in February 2018.

Catherine, who was the CQA Team Leader in FSHMS, will have particular responsibilities for PGR-related issues.

STARS Programme Team

Jo Bailey has left the team to become a Business Analyst in iSolutions. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Jo for all her hard work during her time in the STARS Team.

Fund Raising Success for Sport Relief

Registry colleagues in Room 37/2035 recently raised £113.27 for Sport Relief thanks to a very successful cake sale.

Thank you to all our colleagues who supported this.

STUDENT RECORDS

New Year (NY) Record Creation

New Year (NY) records will be created for all continuing students in April 2018.

We recommend that Faculty teams use Discoverer report 3.008 to identify which students will and will not have NY records automatically created, and ensure that any necessary data amendments are made in Banner.

If you have any queries, please contact the team on sturec@soton.ac.uk or x29967.

SLC Change of Circumstances (CoC)

Please be aware that the final liability point for SLC funded undergraduate students is 16 April 2018. Any student in attendance on or after this date will be liable for the full tuition fees for the academic year.

If you have any queries, please contact slccoc@soton.ac.uk or x29667.

VISA & IMMIGRATION STUDENT ADVICE SERVICE (VISAS) Team

Our VISAS SharePoint site has been restructured and has been updated with information about the Tier 4 pilot and the latest immigration rule changes.

Over the next couple of months:

- USMC & Dalian transition support for visa applications - in addition to our usual support, we will be offering a series of webinars and Skype appointments during April
- Compliance talks and presentations in faculties - keep an eye on your emails for your invitation to participate
- Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES) - workshops for PGR students interested in the Tier 4 DES. Dates will be formalised within the next couple of weeks
- Visa Workshops - planning the support package to assist pre-sessional students to extend their Tier 4 visas in the UK.

Please note that the Easter vacation period is usually a busy time for the team given that many students lose their travel documents (passports/visas) whilst overseas during this period. These students require substantial guidance to replace their documents.

CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Curriculum Management System support has transferred from the STARS Programme Team to the Student Systems and Operations Team as part of business as usual arrangements. Will Napier will be the lead for this activity within the team.

Any related queries/issues should be raised in the normal way, via ServiceLine.

SAA Job Vacancies

Faculty of Medicine: Administrative Officer, Curriculum, Quality & Assessment

Location: Highfield Campus

Salary: £19,850-£23,557, Full-Time Fixed Term until 18/08/2019 (secondment may be considered for internal applicants)

Closing Date: Monday 2 April 2018

Interview Date: TBC

Reference: 991718GX

<https://jobs.soton.ac.uk/Vacancy.aspx?ref=991718GX>

Faculty of Health Sciences: Administrative Officer, Assessments Team

Location: Highfield Campus

Salary: £19,850-£23,557, Full-Time, Permanent

Closing Date: Wednesday 11 April 2018

Interview Date: Friday 27 April 2018

Reference: 992118GX

<https://jobs.soton.ac.uk/Vacancy.aspx?ref=992118GX>

Faculty of Medicine: Administrative Officer, Placements

Location: Highfield Campus

Salary: £19,850 to £23,557, Full-Time Permanent

Closing Date: Friday 13 April 2018

Reference: 985518GX

<https://jobs.soton.ac.uk/Vacancy.aspx?ref=985518GX>

SAA Staff Development Group

A number of SAA staff attended the SKILLS session in November where Nic Monks from IT Training & Development told us about the Microsoft Office Specialist Training (MOST) programme, which develops skills in Word and Excel and is being piloted at the moment.

A survey that attendees completed after the session confirmed that 87% of attendees would be interested in working towards the qualification.

The SAA Senior Leadership Group has made the decision in principle to support MOST training for SAA staff and we are now working out the process and negotiating with Nic when this could take place. We expect to have further information for you in April.

SAA Staff Awards Scheme

The first round of the SAA Staff Awards Scheme took place earlier this year and members of the SAA Directorate were delighted with the variety and quality of the nominations – so much so that we have decided to make 14 awards in this first round.

Many congratulations to the award winners: Darren Chant, Catherine Cutts, Karen Dawkins, Clare Dillury, Beata Ferris, Tracey Grace, Adam Hussey, Lorraine Prout, Chloe Joseph, Helen Ralph, Tracy Reed, Emma Stephenson, Stephen Wakeling and Amy Willis.

Nominations were requested under one of five areas: Excellence, Creativity, Community, Integrity and Efficiency. Individuals awarded under the 'Excellence' banner include an 'unsung hero' whose 'passion and drive' motivated the nominator, someone who went 'above and beyond' with 'exceptional commitment' and an individual whose hard work has been demonstrated in our relationship with an external regulator.

Our 'Creative' award winners include someone who has, at short notice, stepped in to deliver presentations and training and who has brought new ideas into an established area of business, and someone who revitalised Selection Days.

Under the 'Community' heading, winners include someone who has, through a series of small steps, 'created a really positive, inclusive and collaborative atmosphere in the team' and a nomination as a result of a 'high performing project team working in a collegial and respectful way'.

Under 'Efficiency' (which received the most nominations) we saw examples of individuals who have challenged and changed processes, and who have demonstrated flexibility which has led to an improved student experience.

The final category, for 'Integrity', received several nominations but individuals were also nominated in other categories. On reflection, the SAA Directorate felt that this category was very difficult to select winners from so, in future rounds, we won't be asking for nominations in this category.

It was a real pleasure to read the nominations and we would urge all members of SAA to consider nominating people for the next round of SAA Awards. Reflecting on the process, future nominations will be made against only one of four categories (Excellence, Creativity, Community and Efficiency) and the SAA Employee Engagement Strategy Group will be tasked with selecting one winner in each category, several times a year.

The next round of nominations opens on Monday 26 March 2018. Details on how to nominate will be emailed to all members of SAA.

SAA Directorate

University Long Service Awards

We are pleased to report that five colleagues from SAA were recently awarded their Long Service Award. Congratulations to Lucille Dowle (FSHMS), Claire Caffrey (FSHMS) and Mark Simmons (FBLA/FEE) who are recipients of the 30-Year Long Service Award.

Congratulations also go to Natasha Renwick-Meikle (Humanities) and Hilary Chandler (Health Sciences) on their 20-Year Long Service Award.

Academic Registrar's Commendations

Congratulations to Catherine Willetts who was recently awarded an Academic Registrar's Commendation. This was in recognition of her commitment to ensuring the success of the Curriculum Management project, including leading the rollout to module leads and being the driving force behind trialling the Curriculum Management system to produce programme specifications.

The Recruitment and Admissions Team in FSHMS were also nominated and awarded with an Academic Registrar's Commendation, for outstanding performance and exceeding expectations in the community. Congratulations go to the team members; Tina Birring, Heidi Craddock, Natasha Cosens, Susan Phillips, Paul Tubb, Jennifer Walsh, Rebecca Scivier, Papinder Sappal, Rachel Slack, Kath Murphy and Victoria McConnell.

SAA Employee Engagement Strategy Group: Request for Volunteers

The SAA Employee Engagement Strategy Group are calling for new members to join the Group following the departure of a number of members from SAA.

This is a great opportunity for a colleague at any level who wishes to play a prominent role in shaping how we engage internally with our staff.

The Group meets every two months and is chaired by Cath Thomas.

If you are interested in joining the Group we would love to hear from you – please contact Cath at crt1v14@soton.ac.uk

SKILLS Network

The next SKILLS Network session will take place on **Friday 27 April 2018, 11:30-12:30, Room 34/3001**.

Entitled 'What's going on in Higher Education?' Nick Hull and Jennifer Arkell will run through some of the changes happening in the UK sector which are influencing the University at the moment.

Discover what is happening behind the new acronyms, the national challenges to Higher Education, and some of what the University is having to consider as it makes its plans for the future.

Placements Management Project Update

As a direct result of feedback from both our students and staff, we're delighted to announce that the University is investing in a state-of-the-art Placements Management System which will be available during the 2018-19 academic year.

Placements are a key part of many of our students' time whilst studying here at Southampton, particularly in the fields of Business, Chemistry, Health Sciences, Medicine and Modern Languages among others.

The new system, *InPlace*, is delivered by Quantum IT (one of the market leaders in this area) and is currently being used by over 30 Universities in the UK.

By adopting this new system, the University hopes to make some significant improvements to the student and employer/provider experiences around placements, for example:

- More accessible information about placement opportunities
- More advanced notice of where placements will be located (for programmes of study with mandatory placements)
- Better management of pre-placement requirements
- Improved communication during placements
- More straightforward submission of timesheets, expenses and assessments (where relevant).

However, the main drivers for the introduction of a new system have been:

- Relieving the administrative burden of placement management
- Streamlining and standardising processes
- Developing a University-wide solution for tracking student placements and employer engagement.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved with the project so far, and helped us to evaluate the most appropriate system to procure.

There is still a large amount of work to be done to get *InPlace* up and running in the University, and we thank everyone who will give their time to help make this happen over the coming months.

We will post regular updates in this newsletter, but if you have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact the Project Manager, Helen Ralph (H.Ralph@soton.ac.uk)

PGR Tracker 2 Project Update

Following a soft market testing exercise, the Project Board decided on 22 March to work with Procurement to produce and issue a Tender to enable the University to identify a suitable supplier and product. Further information regarding how the requirements gathered to date will be validated, and how supplier responses will be evaluated, will follow in due course.

Banner 9 Upgrade Project Update

The first project milestone was successfully reached in March when the Student Record System (Banner) Self Service was moved to a new server. The URL for this is now **student-selfservice.soton.ac.uk**.

One of the pre-requisites for moving to Banner 9 is that Banner Student needs to be updated to the software supplier Ellucian's most recent release, for compatibility reasons. Work for this is underway and is due to be completed in May 2018.

Attention will then shift to implementing Banner 9 baseline which are modules which have not been customised in our Banner 8 system.

We are planning to run open user sessions for staff in late-April/May. The intention is to not only convey the scope of work that this project entails but to also provide a flavour of what Banner 9 will mean for users. Further details will be communicated in due course.

Given the volume of work and technical complexities in delivering this upgrade, the Banner 9 Project Board has agreed that it is essential for a Banner Change Freeze to be implemented throughout the lifetime of the project.

This means that there will be no Feature Request updates to the system unless there are statutory or regulatory implications, essential bug fixes, or there is a compelling business case.

Please contact Project Manager, Jeff Monger at J.R.Monger@soton.ac.uk if you have any questions about the project.

Forthcoming Live Student Administration System (Banner) Downtimes

The [downtime schedule](#) for the Student Administration System (Banner) has been updated up to December 2018.

In the shorter term, please note that the live system will be unavailable on:

- **Wednesday 11 April 2018, 17:00-21:00**
- **Wednesday 2 May 2018, 17:00-21:00**
- **Wednesday 16 May 2018, 17:00-21:00**

As is standard, the online postgraduate application form, Banner Gradebook, Application Review Centre (ARC) and Self-Service will be unavailable as part of these downtimes.

Please could we consequently ask faculty teams to pass this information on to those academics who use Banner Gradebook or ARC.
