1.0 Overview

Student journey mapping has been identified as a critical and value-add tool to support business improvement activities at MMU by adding a rich layer of student (customer) insight and perspective to existing practice and projects.

A large-scale project (Student Curriculum & Data Management) is already underway in SAS (supported by the Business Improvement Team, BIT) to map the following three early lifecycle processes in detail for data management purposes:

- Admissions process
- Enrolment and related processes
- Course approval process

A significant amount of process mapping has already been undertaken by BIT. An opportunity has been identified to use student journey mapping to support this process improvement and ensure any changes made to improve operational efficiency are tested to avoid any unforeseen or adverse impact on the student experience. The aim is to create slick, efficient and connected processes that underpin both operational and customer service excellence, ultimately improving the student experience.

Further aims of SJM within the context of this project are to sense-check the current thinking on prioritisation of key processes to be reviewed and improved. Is the emphasis being placed on the most important areas / processes from a student’s perspective?

People and systems will also need to be mapped to the new processes and SJM insights will aim to highlight any further needs relating to (for example) staff, systems or student interface development.

A programme of activities will be designed and implemented to create student journey maps for the admissions, enrolment and welcome/ early induction stages of the student journey feeding into the project. The journeys of students from multiple Faculties, study patterns and demographic groups will be considered. The suggested timeframe in play is from late August 2012 to the end of the first term for the overall project.

2.0 Objectives

- To map the events/activities, emotional responses and resultant perceptions, views and behaviours relating to MMU of a specified group of students at a key stage of the overall student journey

- To create a rich window of insight into the real-world experiences of a diverse group of students who reflect the overall student body
To better understand the interrelationship between institutional processes, protocols and culture/ethos (‘ways of doing things’) and students’ human and emotional journey

To better understand how students navigate their way through the academic and social aspects of the specified journey stage and to identify where or how MMU activities can support (or potentially undermine) that

To identify which areas / processes are most important to, or have the highest impact on students and prioritise these for change as appropriate

To highlight process issues or student experience hot spots, priority actions and impacts as defined by students

3.0 Methodology

There are already a number of data sources and best practice guidelines relating to the area of pre-entry and welcome / early induction – these include the University’s Shock Absorber project, the existing SiT framework, which was also influenced by the STAR project, SU Induction Survey, Student Barometer survey, amongst others. It is envisaged that existing work will feed into and influence this project as appropriate.

A variety of methods will be used to gain a broad range of insights from a representative group of students over the specified time period. Because the student experience is multi-faceted and multi-dimensional, we will look to capture the rational & emotional aspects of the experience (i.e. ‘what happened to me’, ‘how did it make me feel’) plus some of the time and space dimensions (i.e. ‘what’s it actually like to walk in my shoes for a day’).

3.1 Panel

The main research method will be to recruit and select a small, representative panel whose journeys we will track through a 6-8 week period covering some pre-entry, enrolment, welcome/induction and some ongoing induction. They will be offered a £50 cash (or metcard credit) incentive to encourage retention and participation of the panel over the research period.

10-20 students representing all faculties, study patterns, subjects and demographic profiles will be recruited to provide an account of their experience over a 6-8 week period or longer. In order to ensure the diversity of the panel, a classification / filtering process will be used to
select the most representative group of students from the respondents to the recruitment drive. Key selection criteria will be as below:-

3.1.1 Panel recruitment criteria:-

- Each faculty must be represented
- Each mode must be represented – at least part-time as well as full-time
- Each level should be represented where possible – at least UGFD & PGT
- Each age bracket (18-24, 25-39, 40+) where possible
- Each domicile (commuting, moved away from home/halls, overseas & EU, remote & distance too?)
- Parent or carer
- Disability & ethnicity?

Depending on how the selection process is set-up, much of this data will be available already if students log in with an MMU ID. Other data such as parent/carer status will need to be captured - see appendix 1.0 for a more detailed classification questionnaire

3.1.2 Panel recruitment

- A number of channels could be used to recruit new students to the panel and other feedback/research mechanisms prior to their arrival:-
  - Email (see appendix 2.0 for sample from previous student diary project)
  - mmu.ac.uk/welcome site button or link
  - Button/link on the enrolment site/pages or Faculty / course-based pages with induction, enrolment or joining instructions
  - Moodle or MyMMU portal button/link
  - Other appropriate web pages (e.g. students’ union welcome pages)

- A key recruitment message or call to action would be a positive invitation to provide general feedback on the overall initial welcome / induction period. This would not only serve as a data collection method but also help create positive associations around MMU’s approach to student support or a ‘customer care’ culture & ethos.
- A simple button could be created to be used on all appropriate digital channels / web pages linking to the diary site created for this project – e.g. a post-it note style with a simple message “your feedback is important to us”, or “did you get everything you need?”", etc, etc.
3.1.3 Panel management

Panels are labour intensive and require ongoing management to ensure participation and retention levels. Panel members will be required to meet a certain level of participation to receive the incentive (min of weekly updates). Additionally they will receive reminders and prompts to ensure that updates are maintained.

The core method will be an online ‘diary’ (See appendix 3.0 for excerpts of diaries from a previous student diary project supporting the development of the Induction Survey in 2008/09):-

- Weekly (at least) online updates and some structured ratings with email reminders or prompts will be required, including:-
  - Track emotions (scale / highs or lows)
    - E.g. scale for specific emotional states (happy vs sad, confidence, motivation, anxiety, feeling supported, etc)
    - Simple highs and lows – what I’m feeling, what happened to make me feel this way
  - Track key events / activities (could structure this to ensure key stages / processes are covered or evaluate whether thresholds are being met, and if not, why not, etc)
  - Free-text diary entries with visuals, photo or video uploads
    - Visuals could include pictures to illustrate any aspect of their experience, good or bad, could include screen grabs from the Moodle, website or any other system, pictures of new friends or a great social occasion
It is envisaged that as many tools as possible will be used to create a rich portrait of the diverse nature of the student experience based on a number of factors. Where applicable, online updates will be supplemented with telephone or face-to-face interviews, focus groups and other methods detailed below to gain maximum insight.

- Telephone or face-to-face interviews to supplement data where low participation occurs
- Observation or shadowing (walking in a students’ shoes)
  - What’s their study space like (e.g. halls vs parent with kids, vs other) & impact
  - What’s the commute into / out of MMU like?
  - What’s enrolment or an induction session like?
  - What’s a typical day like?
- Time & space dimensions as well as emotional and rational dimensions
- Encourage photographs, videos and collection of any other visual evidence to create a window into their world (e.g. web pages visited, communications received, documents received as part of induction or enrolment, etc)
- Create a data profile of the panellists using system data from multiple University sources to cross-reference this to the data / information we collect via SJM – how does our ‘system view’ of a unique student match up to who we now know them to be?

3.2 Focus groups / user testing

Retrospective review of experience(s) and feelings to date with the opportunity to probe into more specific or ‘problem’ areas as identified by the panel / diarists or other sources (e.g. student ambassadors, welcome week reps, students’ union student voice reps / roadshows, advice centre case work, etc).

This also presents the opportunity to engage a broader group of students in addition to the panel. The format also provides an opportunity to test or ‘sense-check’ processes or changes with students before they happen or are rolled out across the university.

3.3 Mystery shopping

Identifying a series of tasks that are common / critical to the specified period (enrolment, fees, accommodation, pre-entry tasks and checklist items, etc) and recruiting student mystery shoppers to test key services or information provided.
Examples:-

- Online information / links and systems
- Face-to-face services
- Campus branding & signage – navigational support

This could feed into the Student Support Framework that SAS are developing.

3.4 Online survey

The students’ union has been conducting an annual, longitudinal Induction Survey since 2008. This survey attempts to track the experience of new / first year students only during the first 8-10 weeks of the first term.

In light of the development of the integrated welcome week project, SiT framework and other developments in this area, it is envisaged that a full review of the existing survey be conducted to ensure the data is still valuable and to make changes where appropriate.

This may include introducing an amended version for second and third / final years to evaluate transition at subsequent stages of the student journey.

The survey usually runs for a three-week period from mid-November to early December. Typical response rates have ranged from 8-19% with sample sizes ranging from 1,024 to 2,444 completions.

3.5 Privacy & Data Protection

Consideration must be given to individuals’ privacy in relation to the DPA and MRS Code of Conduct. Some sensitive areas such as how data is treated, how the personal identity of individual participants is protected and the impact of observation on behaviours and research outcomes will form part of the project implementation.

4.0 Budget

An initial budget of £4,000 has been committed by Ruth Ashford to cover the pilot costs, highlighted in red shaded areas below:-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospitality (focus groups)</th>
<th>For student focus groups (to fill gaps in the maps from using existing data sources)</th>
<th>£600.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus group approx. size 6-8 people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working lunch approx. £7.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>= £60 per focus group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Run approx. 10 sessions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incentives</th>
<th>For students taking part in the pilot study (over approx. 6-8 week period)</th>
<th>£1,000.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Met card credit/printing credit – for pilot</td>
<td>Approximately 20 students taking part – each receiving a £50 Met card/printing credit (20 x £50 = £1,000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iPad for students completing student journals over a three year period. Suggestion is to loan each student an iPad which, if they engage ‘fully’ they keep at the end of the project</td>
<td>£8,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iPad: approx. £400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No of students: between 10 and 20 (figures for max of 20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Met card credit/printing credit – for focus groups</td>
<td>For students attending focus groups, a £10 printing credit</td>
<td>£800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum of 80 students over 10 focus groups = £800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Dissemination activities | Project Team dissemination activities, e.g. attending and presenting at external conferences | £1,000.00 |

| Contingency               | 15% contingency to cover unforeseen circumstances | £1,710.00 |

| TOTAL                     |                                                   | £13,110.00 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timings</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W/C</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-Aug</td>
<td>• Outline project plan &amp; budgets approved? (Ruth &amp; Alex?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project board established and feeds into / key interfaces with SAS project agreed (Ruth, Alex, Karen M?).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project board to also provide guidance on SAS stakeholder participation and inputs into SJM project (e.g. SIP managers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 27-Aug     | - Recruit student panel  
               - Build / set-up online blog/diary space                                  |
| 3-Sep      | - Panel initiates  
               - Ongoing panel management                                                  |
| 10-Sep     | - **International student welcome**  
               - **15-16 Sep – Students move into halls**  
               - Ongoing panel management                                                  |
| 17-Sep     | - **Term Starts**  
               - **Welcome Week & induction**  
               - Ongoing panel management                                                  |
| 24-Sep     | - **Submit initial paper for Directorate**  
               - Ongoing panel management  
               - Focus groups / observation?                                               |
| 1-Oct      | - **Initial report back to Directorate**  
               - Ongoing panel management  
               - Focus groups / observation?                                               |
| 8-Oct      | - Ongoing panel management  
               - Focus groups / observation?                                               |
| 15-Oct     | - Panel management/wind down  
               - Analysis                                                                  |
| 22-Oct     | - Analysis                                                                  |
| 29-Oct     | - Induction survey development                                               |
| 5-Nov      | - Induction survey development                                               |
| 12-Nov     | - Induction survey – goes live                                               |
| 19-Nov     | - Induction survey – live                                                    |
| 26-Nov     | - Induction survey – closes midnight Sun 2-Dec                                |
| 3-Dec      | - Induction survey analysis                                                  |
| 10-Dec     | - Induction survey analysis                                                  |
|            | - **Term Ends**                                                             |
Appendices

1.0 Selection criteria – sample questionnaire (if student ID not used). Denotes data which is not available through the student record system

Which faculty do you study in?
(Select from range)

What is the name of your course?
(free-text)

Do you study:
- Full-time
- Part-time
- Sandwich

What is the level of study for the main qualification you will be studying for?
- BA/BSc/Bed/Foundation Degree/HNC/HND or other equivalent qualification
- MA/MRes/MSc/Mphil/PGCE/other postgraduate qualification
- PHD/D Phil/professional doctorate or other doctoral degree
- Other (please specify)

For the purposes of your tuition fees and funding, which of the following statements best describes you?
- I am a UK citizen studying in the UK
- I am an EU citizen studying in the UK
- I am a non-EU citizen studying in the UK

Are you:
- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

Which of the following age brackets do you fall within?
- 18-24
- 25-39
- 40+
- Prefer not to say

Are you a parent or carer?
- Yes
- No
Do you have a disability?
- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Which of the following best describes your ethnicity?
(Select from a range - standard MMU classifications)

For the purposes of your tuition fees and funding, which of the following statements best describes you?
- I am a UK citizen studying in the UK
- I am an EU citizen studying in the UK
- I am a non-EU citizen studying in the UK

Which of the following applies to you?
- I moved overseas to attend University
- I moved from another part of the UK to attend University
- I moved out of my home but stayed in the same area to attend University
- I did not move to attend University
- Other (please specify)

Which of the following best describes your term-time accommodation?
- I live in student halls of residence (please specify)
- I live in other University-owned accommodation
- I live in privately rented accommodation (including local authority housing)
- I own my own home
- I live in my parent / family member’s home
- Other (please specify)

2.0 Recruitment email from 2008 Student Diary Project (leading to the Induction Survey)

From: s.u.internet@mmu.ac.uk
To: p.barber@hotmail.co.uk
Date: Wed, 17 Sep 2008 11:44:01 +0100
Subject: Welcome to MMUnion

Dear Paul
Welcome to MMUnion, the students' union for Manchester Metropolitan University.

You'll soon be arriving at one of the UK's friendliest universities and we'd love to hear about your experience as you prepare for university life, and what it's really like during those first weeks of term.

We're looking for 12 student volunteers to write a diary describing the events leading up to and including your arrival in Manchester or Cheshire and the first 4-6 weeks of term. We'd like to hear your views and learn about your day-to-day experience as you get to grips with university life, make new friends and settle in.

We want a no-holds-barred, warts-and-all account of the academic, social, financial and emotional journey of a new student so that we can make sure that we're doing everything we possibly can to make that initial period as easy and stress-free as possible.

University should be one of the greatest experiences of your life and we're here to see that it is. Get in touch today to see how you can really make a difference to student life at MMU. Simply reply to this email before Friday 19th September if you would like to volunteer as a diarist.

All diaries will remain strictly confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this research. Any excerpts will only be used with the diarists' permission. Diarists are free to withdraw at any time.

We'll look forward to seeing you soon...

Nicola Lee
President

-----

This email was sent to you via the mmunion web site:
http://www.mmunion.co.uk

If you do not wish to receive further emails, please contact s.u.internet@mmu.ac.uk.
3.0 Sample diary excerpts from the 2008 student diary project

Lisa

I am 35, a mum of 2 teenagers and this is my 1st time at Uni!!!!!!

I thought it was really easy applying for MMU, I got loads of help from Dianne Tallintrye (think I’ve spelled her name wrong)…every single query I had Dianne was able to give me the answers straight away or by email the next day. My queries included student finance, course details, who I needed to talk to about the course and what qualifications I needed to have to get on the course. Having the patience she had with me made me feel confident I was choosing the right course and Uni.

MMU was my 1st and only choice on account of it being the nearest to where I live (Flixton).

I expected Uni to be exactly what it was when I got there on my 1st day, all new experiences, meeting new people, knowing I wouldn’t gel with everyone and getting loads of information.

There’s lots of support and most of the staff are approachable, friendly and helpful. However I did come across 1 member of staff (name/dept not known) who made me feel really upset then angry. While waiting in line to complete my registration the staff member walked through a crowd of 50 or so students, stuck a notice to the wall saying ‘please be quiet as people work in these offices’…this is okay. But 1 of the students was sat on the floor and got told to stand up as it was a fire exit….(how this had any relevance to blocking the route I don’t know) the seated student passed comment as we were packed in wall to wall like sardines in a tin why did it matter anyway…to which the staff member said ‘oh the joys of students’ then walked off.

This comment really had an effect on me, what a stupid flippant remark to make, if she doesn’t like students why work in a university and does she not have any respect for the students stood around patiently waiting for their student cards who heard this as well? It made me feel like a naughty school girl being bullied by a headmaster, im 35! And earned my place at MMU! I don’t appreciate being stereotyped.

Week 4
The worst week ever……. I wanted to leave the course!

I feel stupid as I don’t understand what one of the tutors has asked me to do, one of the essays I have to write for December is totally baffling me. A few other students feel the same way, maybe it’s our fault we don’t understand what is being delivered
or is it the way it is being delivered? The tutor told us 3 times what we had to do and we still didn’t understand. I went home feeling deflated, very down and completely useless. Bright side I went home and spent several hours trying to work out what she meant and in the middle of the night it hit me like a tonne of bricks I may have come up with the correct answer, so when I see her next I will ask if im on the right lines. Fingers crossed!

Also I am getting very worried about the lack of money I have, I’m finding it hard to budget my very limited means. There is a distinct lack of correct information regarding monies I am entitled to. I started off at the Students life office at Didsbury by getting my Council tax exemption form and sent that off. I asked if I was entitled to a bursary or access to learning fund, they sent me upstairs to IPP office who promptly told me they didn’t know why I’d come to them and sign posted me to Mmunion advice centre. Which is at All Saints and impractical to get to from Didsbury as they finish at 4pm and I don’t get out of class until 3.30pm, so I phoned them and they aren’t open on Tuesdays. Armed with this information I phoned on Wednesday to be told they only do a telephone service on weekdays between 10am and 12noon. This has left me feeling anxious and wondering if Mmunion will have the answers I need or will they sign post me to someone else? Hopefully not and maybe I will have some correct information by this time next week?

I am feeling particularly disconnected from my family life due to the travelling times, I have to leave my home two hours before Uni starts to get there on time. Im not complaining about the public transport as it is a hell of a lot cheaper than the running costs of a car and usually on time. I work after Uni as well so it means I don’t get home until 9pm and im really missing my children on those days. I think I’ve felt it more this week because I’ve been so tired (even though I haven’t been taking part in Uni socialising) and I’m particularly overwhelmed by the enormity of this 3year commitment I’ve undertaken. Im not sure if I will be able to continue if I carry on feeling this way, I may take advantage of the counselling services available at MMU.

On the whole im feeling quite low, but being an optimist im sure I will cope and things will pick up.

Phillip

Here is my first entry for my diary. I’ve dealt with it by considering how I came to choose MMU, applying, and enrolment - including first impressions now I’m a "real student".

I’ve done a two year Access course at Aquinas College in Stockport - Psychology and Law. Must admit, when I set out I didn’t really think that I would go on to University. I
thought maybe further evening class stuff until I retire in 2011 (I am 57 now). Main reason - I didn't think that I would be able to fit in even a part time degree with a full time job. But as time passed at Aquinas I became fired up with the idea of studying and began to think that maybe a part time degree wasn't such a non-starter after all.

MMU was mentioned several times - in particular that it welcomed Access students. (I've subsequently concluded that some other Universities are a bit sniffy about Access.) I enquired at MMU, Salford University, MU and OU, as well as several colleges. After a while I got a "feel" for what I was learning about MMU.

I attended an Open Day at MMU and was very impressed with what I learned. Everyone was very helpful and seemed to know what they were talking about - with one exception: whilst the Student Finance people were very nice and all, they seemed remarkably uninformed about cost of part time degrees and financial help for part time students. I eventually found out all I needed to know about these subjects via a very helpful chap (don't know his name) at the student info office in G Manton. Seems I am "too rich" to qualify for financial help. Oh well! I'll just have to cut down on the gin and cigarettes and eat cat food.

I also attended a "me 2" session one evening. Again - young lady there very helpful, and I decided that day to apply. I've since attended an Open Evening for part time students. They too were very helpful and I was able to have a frank discussion with them about my fears that I'll now come on to:

As I've said, I'm 57; I work as an Inspector of Taxes in HM Revenue and Customs. Younger people on my course could be forgiven for thinking - man in his 50s - civil servant - doesn't wear ripped jeans and Ramones t-shirts = boring old fart. Actually, I think I'm quite an interesting person but you need to get to know me to find that out. Would the youngsters react against me in some way, I wondered?

Also - would I get frustrated with, maybe, younger students on my course being a bit loud and (perhaps, just perhaps) taking what I might consider to be a less than responsible attitude to the work? Am I a grumpy old man? Who knows?

**Damien (19yrs)**

**Weeks leading up to my arrival...**

When choosing which universities to apply to I had only one thing in mind. "I'm moving away from Northern Ireland." So in my UCAS choices I had one choice from London, The Midlands and Scotland and two in the North West. All my course choices were history and I didn't mind where I went as long as I got to study history. My idea
was to spread my choices across the mainland. When I applied to my universities I was really pleased to receive the confirmation leaflet from MMU to say that they had received my application. I only received a leaflet like this from one other university that being Liverpool (John Moore’s). Throughout my wait from hearing from my universities I did a little bit of research on each city I applied to and Manchester really stood out from the rest!

When I received my confirmation that I had received a conditional offer from MMU I was really happy because now Manchester was a real possibility for me. All I Needed to do now was get BCC in my A-Levels and I would be off to Manchester. I constantly found myself glued to my PC to see if I had received any emails from MMU and I had received many. It was quite helpful as they kept me updated on how things were going. The information booklet I received on the history course I think swayed my decision to go to MMU. It offered a wide range of modules choices. When I got my A level results they read ABB so I was well over what I needed and I knew I was going moving to Manchester. After my results things started to become more hectic, accommodation, enrolment, finance and course details started to pile up. All this was made very easy by MMU’s online enrolment facility. I was able to enrol to university from the comfort of my own home! I got a lot of emails also from the accommodation office detailing the processes of accommodation. When all this was sorted all I had to do now was wait....

**Saturday 20th September**

I arrived in my halls of residence and to be honest I was quite nervous and excited; however all these nerves and jitters soon disappeared when my other flat mates arrived because I soon realised they were just as excited and nervous as I was. I really couldn’t of asked for a better group of flatmates. After I settled in I just could not wait to explore the streets of Manchester. I roamed about on the Saturday night to see what was about and I stumbled across the ASDA which was only a 10 minute walk from my halls which was really convenient as I got transferee from ASDA in Northern Ireland to the ASDA at Hulme. I was sorted with a job already and I had barely arrived which helped a lot.

**Sunday 21st September**

Me and my three flat mates went to the Student Union on the Sunday night and we got to know each other alot more. It was really cool because the four of us had different backgrounds and accents so we had lots to talk about. After a few beers and a couple of dance moves we finally made it back into the early hours of Sunday morning. I was really happy that the Union is so close to my halls as we could just walk home in five minutes.
Monday 22nd September - Friday 26th September

Monday morning came fast and it was the first history meeting. I was really excited I couldn’t wait to get my timetable, meet lecturers, meet fellow historians on my course I just couldn’t wait to get there. When I arrived I did receive my timetable and we got a tour around the Geoffrey Manton Building and Mabel Tylecot building where I would be pursuing most of my studies in the next three years. It seemed difficult and complicated to get around the Mabel Tylecot building but I was adamant I would soon catch on.