Welcome to the School of Computer Science

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PGT (Postgraduate Taught) Director
Welcome

• I hope you are
  – eager to embark on your MSc or MRes programme
    • … or MEng, but this talk is mostly for 1 year masters

• …but you might also be a bit
  – lost
  – confused
  – bursting with questions
Hence Welcome Week

• we prepare you for the next year in Manchester

• we explain
  – the school, the programme
  – the themes, the course units, etc.

• ...so that you are ready to start on your programme next week
  – there is no ‘warming up’ period!

• Welcome week pages
Welcome to our School of Computer Science

- Possibly the **oldest** Computer Science university department in the world
- The home of the earliest stored-program electronic computer (1948)
- One of the largest departments in the UK, and always highly rated in research quality reviews
- This is your opportunity to make use of the staff and facilities for education and research!
Welcome to the University of Manchester

- One of the largest student campuses in Europe ...and all that goes with that

- Good university facilities – sports, support, etc: see Student Union for a range of activities:

  http://manchesterstudentsunion.com/

- Great ‘student life’
Welcome to Manchester

• Large, lively, and active city: events, sports, nightlife, shopping...

• Long history – centre of the industrial revolution

• Great location with beautiful surroundings:
  – Lake District
  – Peak District
  – Wales, Snowdonia
  – Coastal areas...
Who does what?

• **Organisation:**
  - PGT Director:
    - organisation and planning
  - Tutors:
    - advice and guidance on academic and related matters
  - Student Support Office
    - help with most organisational matters
    - first point of contact for questions that are not specific to a course unit

• **Teaching:**
  - (Senior) Lecturers, Readers, Professors
    - teach courses, set exams, ...
    - supervise projects
    - check how to address them: often by their first name
  - Teaching Assistants
    - help with labs, coursework, example classes
Who am I?

• Career:
  - Reader in Computer Science.
  - Working at Manchester since 2006.
  - Research: Software engineering and human-computer interaction.
  - Teaching: COMP62521 – Agile and Test-Driven Development

• PGT Director:
  - Overall responsibility for masters programmes.
  - On the escalation route for problems or issues.

• Contacts:
  - Office: 2.30.
  - Email: caroline.jay@manchester.ac.uk

• Please call me:
  - Caroline
Tutors

The following are our programmes and their Programme Tutors:

- **MSc in Advanced Computer Science**
- **MRes in ACS:**
  - Konstantin Korovin
- **Part-time & Modular:**
  - Renate Schmidt
Student Support Office

Relevant people include:

Chris Calland
Susie Hymas
Amelia Graham
Your MSc Year (MSc in ACS)

Assessment:

- 50% Taught Course Units:
  - Coursework + Exams (end of semesters)
- 50% Project:
  - Project Overview and Plan
  - Dissertation
By Friday you must have

- Chosen which themes you wish to follow:
  - Taking a theme involves taking two course units in the same semester.
  - You need to choose two themes in the first semester, and one theme in the second semester (the latter taking account of dependencies).

- Chosen which pathway you wish to follow:
  - Taking a pathway involves taking certain themes.

- You may well have applied for a pathway, but in general you can change pathways at any time:
  - ... but the security pathway can become full.
  - ... we could have problems with some units becoming full.
Your MSc Project

- Half of your MSc
- Normally involves both research and development.
- Preparation through Research and Professional Skills training in the first half of Semester 2

Project allocation:
- At the end of the first semester: December
- Choose from a list of many suggested projects or talk to staff about your ideas or areas of interest.
- Supervisor to help and guide you through the project.
Your MSc Project

• **Assessment:**
  - Project Overview and Plan: Late Semester 2
  - Dissertation: September
This Week

• See online Welcome Week timetable

• Activities:
  - Meeting your Programme Tutor
  - Introductory talks for themes & course units
  - Introductory Laboratory Session:
    • getting to know the MSc Labs, tools, eLearning tools, ...
  - Welcome Fair in Student Union & Events for Overseas Students
  - Uni Sport & Library
  - eLearning/Blackboard intro:
    • Plagiarism On-Line course
    • English Language testing
    • Health & Safety
English Language Classes

- Free.
- In the School, targeted at CS students.
  - Time spent here will likely be saved later.
- Time:
  - Wednesdays afternoons
Attendance at lectures, labs, project…

- is compulsory
  - Slides won’t give you the same insight
  - full picture, details, important points, etc. only in classes
- is monitored, through
  - electronic coursework submission or
  - Benchmark app
- if you have to miss classes, let lecturers know
- during your main project phase, June - September
  - you are here in Manchester and
  - work full time on your project and dissertation
Documents Online

• Masters Handbook
  - general information about all MSc & MRes
  - project, course units, rules, regulations, responsible people
  - these should be read – they contain essential information

• Timetable
  - some last minute changes sometimes have to be made
  - timetables can restrict choice

• Per course unit:
  - syllabus: what is learned?
  - eLearning (Blackboard):
    • coursework, assignments, hand-in, deadlines,…
    • discussion, questions, announcements,…
Some warnings...

- the year will be long & you will need to work hard
  - some will struggle with technical depth, work culture, ...
- success is not guaranteed
  - even if you work hard ... but success correlates well with engagement
- **academic malpractice** (collusion, plagiarism, ...)
  - is taken very seriously in this university
  - *any* offence
    - will be prosecuted, normally by a panel in the school or at Faculty
    - leads to loss of marks, resubmission of work, and sometimes worse
- ... make sure you understand **academic malpractice**
  - complete Plagiarism On-Line course
  - ignorance is no excuse
Computer Science Facilities

- **Lower First Student Area:**
  - Byte Café, with hot and cold food, a good place to meet & work informally

- **Your Master Labs / Breakout Area:**
  - Room 2.25 a,b / 2.11

- **Resource Centre:**
  - Room LF21 - all course textbooks and other resources.

- **Student Support Office:**
  - Room LF21 - For administrative and general support
  - **Ask Here First** - after having looked in the MSc Handbook
Computer Accounts and Intro Labs

- See the Introductory Talk and Labs
- If you experience any computer problems:
  - submit details of problem via www.manchester.ac.uk/itservices
  - visit the Helpdesks in the John Rylands Library or the Joule Library in person
- Read your university email regularly
- Access the School’s website for documents & information
- Make sure that you are ready to start next Monday
School Seminars

• The School runs regular research seminars on Wednesday, 2.00pm
• These are given by eminent speakers from around the world
• A great opportunity to learn about many new topics and the latest stage of research in an area.
Student Representatives

- Important for ensuring the school knows about issues and requests, relating to
  - social events
  - taught course units
  - facilities, general infrastructure,
  - etc.

- Contact Amelia Graham
  (amelia.graham@manchester.ac.uk)

- We also require Health & Safety reps; please contact karon.mee@manchester.ac.uk
Help

- Related to taught part or project
  - you haven’t understood some stuff in lecture/meeting
  - you miss some knowledge/skills that
    - lecturer assumes
    - project requires
  - you don’t understand what you are supposed to be doing
    check course material
    ask
    - your co-students
    - either directly or through Blackboard
      - your teaching assistants or lecturer
      - your lecturer
Help

- Related to organisation of MSc programme
  - when or where lectures/labs/... take place
  - how course units are assessed
  - how projects are allocated
  - ...

  check out school’s PGT web site
  look at Masters Handbook
  ask the Student Support Office
  ask your Tutor
Help

- Related to your personal & family life, health, etc.:
  - finding your way in a new city/country/Uni/continent can be stressful & difficult
  - you might need help to find your way around
  - you’ll probably have to work hard - but that should be an enjoyable experience

- Help is available from numerous sources:
  - Your Programme Tutor
  - Student Support Office
  - many many more, e.g., see MSc Handbook
Help: if

- your circumstances
  - health,
  - family,
  - personal, ...

- prevent you from concentrating on your studies
- we need to know in time to help
  mitigating circumstances process and
  mitigating circumstances form
  ask SSO
  talk to your Tutor

- ...the process is confidential and there for you!
Labs and lectures

• Floor 2 of Kilburn – up the main stairs and left
  – MSc labs: 2.25 (on that corridor)
  – 2.15 and 2.15 (round the corner to the left)
Good luck!