

MAH WORKING GUIDANCE POST VLS

Oct 2025

Sarah Maltby and Jacqui Guillemard

From October 2025 we are encouraging all colleagues to engage in the guidance outlined below. The guidance is informed by the **Sussex 2025 Strategic Plan: Recovery and Rebuilding** plan for all Faculties which outlines the following priority and goals:

Priority: to improve efficiency and effectiveness

Goals:

- Improve efficiency of course delivery and academic administration to reduce workload pressures and provide opportunities for growth
- Improve, streamline, and harmonise operations processes across Faculties and PS divisions to deliver reductions in cost and improvements in service
- Maximise the benefits of new technologies and automation for service delivery and operations

The MAH working guidance is our first step towards us collectively meeting these goals.

Beyond the Sussex 2035 Recovery and Rebuilding Plan, our wider ambition is to find ways to support all colleagues to work better, more collegiately, and avoid duplication of work and unnecessary stress. The section on Joint Working between Academics and PS has been informed by extensive consultation with professional services who have been most impacted by VLS. We will also be attending to an additional goal in the Sussex 2035 Recovery and Rebuilding Plan which is to “**monitor the impact of change programmes on staff well-being**”. More information will be forthcoming.

If you have any questions please contact your Head of Department in the first instance, or [Sarah Maltby](#) (Associate Dean for Culture, Equality and Inclusion) and [Jacqui Guillemard](#) (Head of Faculty Operations).

MAH WORKING GUIDANCE

STAFF INFORMATION SOURCES

- During 2025/26 we will be building a non-public facing MAH Staff Information Canvas Site. You will be notified when this is published. Until then please use the Internal MAH Staff webpages ([Faculty of Media, Arts and Humanities internal : University of Sussex](#)) as your first source of information noting that these pages are being updated throughout Sept/Oct. The ambition with these information sources is to enable you to keep up to date with the information you need to work easily.

- **It is the responsibility of all colleagues to stay informed** including regarding key dates (for marking, meetings etc), through both Faculty News and Staff Information pages. Please bookmark these where necessary for ease of access and add key dates to your calendars. **Colleagues are encouraged to check the staff information pages** prior to asking for information from Heads of Department and PS Colleagues.
- **There is no longer capacity to send repeated reminders for colleagues** regarding deadlines, actions required. One reminder will be sent following a clearly communicated request. Colleagues are encouraged to action requests in a timely manner and to check the Staff Information Pages (MAH Internal in the first instance and the Staff Canvas site when published) if they are unsure of the scheduling of specific actions such as marking deadlines.

MICROSOFT PLATFORMS

Colleagues are encouraged to use Microsoft Teams as the default platform for communication and work organisation including calendars, online meetings, Teams channels and 'chat' messaging with colleagues, including PS.

Diary: Up to date calendars in Teams is particularly important for ease of meeting scheduling. Your Teams calendar is synced with Microsoft Outlook, so all diary events sent via your email are automatically updated in Teams calendar. Teams also syncs to iCal through MS Outlook account if you are working on an a Mac.

Colleagues are responsible for populating their calendar and keeping it up to date, including with their teaching schedule.

The following links provide information on installing Teams and how to get started:

- Microsoft Teams (installation and Getting Started): <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/its/services/software/teams#started>
- What is Teams: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/topic/what-is-microsoft-teams-3de4d369-0167-8def-b93b-0eb5286d7a29>

ROOM BOOKING

PS colleagues no longer have capacity to book rooms on behalf of colleagues, so colleagues are responsible for booking their own rooms (with the exception of some research spaces).

- For general teaching spaces across the University use the [ORBS system](#)
- For meeting rooms/social spaces in MAH (which are detailed [here](#)) use the TeamUp calendar via the links below:
 - Small Room Booking link: <https://teamup.com/ksxd8b6ueskhbk93rp>
 - Large and Medium Room Booking link: <https://teamup.com/ksxm6cjc82s57r7bac>
 - Research Common Room in Silverstone Building: email mah-research@sussex.ac.uk

- If you want to add your event to the main [MAH Faculty Calendar](#) (which is separate to the room booking calendars), email the relevant team: mah-research@sussex.ac.uk if it's a research-related event or media-arts-humanities@sussex.ac.uk for other events and they will add it for you.

JOINT WORKING BETWEEN PS AND ACADEMICS

PS SUPPORT

- There will be occasions when PS will need to decline requests for their support. Colleagues are encouraged to respect these that declines for support requests are due to insufficient capacity with the PS team.
- Colleagues should check prior to asking for support that the request made is a PS function and sits within the remit of the PS colleague being approached. This can be done through the **Where to Go for Help** document under [Operations/Roles on the MAH Internal Staff webpage](#).

STAFF LEAVE

- Relevant colleagues should inform PS colleagues in advance when they will be on leave to ensure that their leave does not place undue pressure on PS during their absence.
- Colleagues should ensure that they have clear out-of-office messages in place when on leave, including the date of return and, where relevant, a named contact for urgent matters.
- Colleagues should ensure that there is appropriate cover in place when on leave, especially at key points in the academic cycle (for example, when decisions on timetabling changes may need to be made, marking etc) to ensure that work does not unnecessarily fall to PS colleagues. Please consult with your Head of Department on this where necessary.
- Colleagues need to be aware of their marking responsibilities, and who will do the marking if they are not available.
- **Please note:** Annual Leave is permitted during marking and resit marking periods. However, where colleagues are on annual leave throughout this period they are expected to either:
 - complete their resit marking as per the Marking Responsibilities While on Leave policy **or**
 - discuss having their resit marking reallocated with their Head of Department and/or Exams Officer.

SUPPORT FOR EVENTS/CONFERENCES/CATERING

If colleagues are planning to host an event they should:

- Consult relevant PS well in advance (at planning stage)
- Include PS costs in the event budget (e.g., overtime, casual staff)
- Seek PS support only if capacity allows

PS require advance notice of at least a week for catering requests. Last minute requests create undue pressure and may not be fulfilled by PS due to limited capacity. Event organisers are required to take ownership of the set-up and clean-up of events that include catering. PS colleagues will not be available to undertake this work without prior request. PS support for large-scale events, one off events, conferences and catering cannot be assumed.

PS REPRESENTATION AND COLLABORATION

- PS representation is now included in meetings to ensure their knowledge and expertise is integrated into discussion and all implications for PS working considered. This includes BoS and Department meetings
- PS colleagues will continue to support key portfolio and governance activities, including recording confirmed actions at Boards of Study. However, they will not be able to provide notetaking for other meetings (such as Department meetings).
- Course Coordinators, Course Convenors and HoDs are encouraged to meet regularly throughout the term. Weekly meetings, in-person or via teams, are preferable where possible.

ENGAGEMENTS AND PAYMENTS

- Colleagues must consult PS before engaging individuals for work. This includes employing casual workers or engaging self-employed workers being paid by invoice; including if they use a ltd company. If you are unsure please consult with relevant PS Colleagues (see [Where to Go for Help](#) to ascertain the relevant people)
- PS are unable to process payments without prior due diligence and compliance checks. It is essential that enough notice is provided before the work starts to allow for these checks to take place via the appropriate channels.
- Failure to follow appropriate procedure and compliance will result in a refusal to arrange payments, including retrospectively.

CREDIT CARD USAGE

- Credit cards are held by individual colleagues; there is no Faculty credit card available to use. It is their responsibility to ensure compliant use.
- Out-of-pocket expenses are preferable where possible and for ad-hoc costs.
- If credit card usage is required, appropriate notice needs to be provided to the card owner.
- Credit card holders in the Faculty:

- For general, Faculty budget code purchases: Katie Barwick and Danielle Salvage. For languages budget code purchases: Katie Brooks, Louisa Kenyon and Daria Artamonova
- For research project budget code purchases: Laura Vellacott and Medeni Fordham (please note that some research projects have specific administrators that have their own credit card)

TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

- The University travel provider Key Travel should be the default used by colleagues
- If colleagues use external platforms (e.g., Airbnb), they must manage their own payments and claim back through out-of-pocket expenses