

Uncovered Magazine

A large proportion of my summer, aside from exec training and meetings etc, was spent producing *Uncovered*, the annual freshers' magazine for the Students' Union. The magazine is about 140 pages long and is usually produced in conjunction with the outgoing editor, however this year it was left to me to commission all the articles as well as sub edit them and work with Materialise (the design company within the SU) on the design and typesetting. I also worked with Rachael Browne, our Ad sales exec based over in Salford, on co-ordinating adverts with reviews and promotional features etc. The magazine is available in the Union shop if you wish to take a look. I personally was very pleased with the level of accuracy and some changes (particularly to the organisation and advice sections of the magazine) I instigated this year.

Since the summer, given some difficulties I encountered sourcing writers for the magazine over the summer (in part due to the last minute nature of the commissioning and also technical problems with my email account) I have been compiling a generic contributors list of all writers for the paper in order to make commissioning articles as easy as possible next summer.

Student Direct Ltd. Board Meetings

Every three to four weeks, or so, I have to attend these meetings with the rest of the board for Student Direct (which has its own limited company to organise finances/ad revenues etc). The board is responsible for all matters related to the production of the newspaper and the freshers' magazine *Uncovered*. Key things that have been discussed at the board meeting have included the decision to rebrand the newspaper into three campus-specific editions, hence the current guise of the paper as Student Direct: Mancunions. This was my proposal based on an exec-wide agreement that we needed to do more to strengthen the identity of the Students' Union. The paper used to be called Mancunions up until the '90s and I thought that incorporating a brand that linked 'Manc' with 'Union' with the student newspaper would be a step in the right direction.

I also pushed through the decision to extend the paper to 40 pages, justifying the slight extra cost as it allows greater scope for advertisers- such as the sponsorship on the media and tech pages. Other things I have to attend to from these board meetings include organising the print run for the Mancunions, Salford and Bolton editions of the paper, the delivery schedule as well as the same for *Uncovered* magazine.

Student Direct newspaper

I guess the main thing Council should be concerned with is whether or not I've produced a newspaper each week- which I and the SD editorial team have. I've attached the future publication dates to this report so that Council can see when the paper is suppose to come out.

The obvious change under my editorship is the re-brand to *Student Direct: Mancunions*. Other changes have included: overseeing a complete re-design of the paper (I have been involved on every level down to the format for captions, reviews and even the colour-scheme - incidentally, this week I have made the decision to remove the capitalisation from the opening lines of articles and a re-vamp of the sports section in order to make it less tabloid-y).

I have also created several new sections within the paper, namely Politics & Analysis, Media & Tech, New Writing, a Beauty column within the Fashion section and as of next week a Science & Research section. The creation of these sections has involved the recruitment and training of new section editors. Particularly with these specialist sections I have had to recruit entirely new members to the team (i.e. through the New Student Writing Society for the New Writing page), which I feel has paid dividends in terms of the quality and diversity of the content. Moreover, the Science & Research page was actually founded on some market research by two life sciences students who then pitched the idea to me, I hope the section will prove popular and I also feel that this disproves the commonly held belief that *Student Direct* is an impenetrable clique and demonstrates my commitment to widening participation.

In terms of the *Student Direct* editorial team I've done a few things to help enhance their experience working for the paper, namely arranging subscriptions to student newspapers from around the country, four key national newspapers (Guardian, The Times, The Independent, The Telegraph and the Mail- although that's not to say we're using the latter as an example...) The Times Higher Education supplement plus several magazines ranging from The Economist to Vogue. All these subscriptions will last for at least a year, so it should also mean that next year's team get a head start. I've also arranged delegations to the NUS Media Training Day and to the Guardian's Student Media Conference.

Other key changes that I think are of note is a fairly substantial change to the sub-editing process within the office. I made the decision over the summer that I was going to sub-edit stuff personally

as soon as it was filed. This is different to previous years in that copy was usually given a preliminary edit by a chief-sub-editor or deputy editor before the editor saw it. This was taking too much time and shortening the time Materialise (design team) were getting to type-set everything. As well as (hopefully) being more efficient I also felt that subbing everything personally first of all placed the responsibility squarely with me as an editor and lifted the onus off of the deputy, who after all is a volunteer.

Finally, as I can't submit weekly reports when the paper is in production, I thought I would give you an idea of the way my typical week looks:

EVERYDAY:

- Pick up post and distribute to section editors' pigeonholes
- Collect newspapers from Union shop and display in office for subs
- Emails; specifically making sure sub-editors get relevant press-releases
- Check website comments for spam/ offensive comments.

MONDAY:

- Sub edit Opinion, Column, Politics, Lifestyle, Literature, Science, Media and Tech, Fashion & Beauty and Features sections and transfer to Materialise' network
- Run through News list with news editors
- Chase up any articles due to come in later in the week
- Confirm with Salford Editor (Salford change 12 pages to be filled with their own content) which pages are being changed from our edition

TUESDAY:

- Sub edit anything not completed from Monday. Plus Arts, Lecture Break, New Writing

WEDNESDAY:

- Sub edit anything not completed on Mon or Tues plus Union page, Music, first batch of Sports articles and first batch of News, compile listings for Union page
- Draw up a lay out sheet for Union page

THURSDAY:

- Chase up MPs answers for MPs questions, plus any stray features and interviews
- Finalise front page with News editors
- Sub edit final News content, final lot of sports content, plus anything unfinished from earlier in the week. Compile letters page
- Contact the printers to confirm which pages will be different for the Salford Edition, print numbers etc, page numbers etc.
- Choose an image and content list for Indirect pull out
- Finalise stuff for front page contents bar, write the short blurbs for the masthead etc.
- Write the nibs (news in brief) for 'Inside Mancunion' front column
- Check that sub-eds have checked their printed out proofs and signed them off
- Do my own check of printed proofs so far
- Write editorials

FRIDAY:

- Write editorials if no time the night before
- Drop MPs answers into Politics page and any other stray bits and pieces
- Proof read everything on print-out and mark any changes to be made
- Go through amends on screen with Materialise

- Final check of pdf format pages on screen
- Make any final changes before the paper goes off to print at 3pm
- Work out pagination (order of pages) for next issue having seen the advert book from Rachael. Email pagination in spreadsheet to sub-team in time for Monday morning. Plus update team on any changes to formatting problems/ general SD related news/ opportunities etc.
- Start approving everything waiting to be uploaded onto the Student Direct website and schedule it to go live between 9pm and midnight on Sunday/ Monday

SUNDAY:

- Put everything else I didn't have time to do on Friday online (usually takes about 3 hours)

WEEKLY:

- It's probably worth noting that I usually do at least one piece of writing other than my editorials every week or so
- I also ensure the lay-out sheet grids for sub-team are photocopied for the week
- I organise the SD mail-out list with General Office, updating any addresses for interested PRs, press officers, University offices, advertisers, national media, featured interviewees etc. As well as co-ordinating any mail-outs required by sub-editors