



AHUA Spring Conference
Martin Harris Centre, University of Manchester, April 2018
Opportunities and Challenges in a Changing World

Monday 9th April 2018

11:30 Registration and Networking

12:00 Lunch and networking

12:45 Welcome

Lee Sanders, Chair of AHUA and Will Spinks, Conference Host

13:00 Session One – chaired by Will Spinks, Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer, University of Manchester

Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell, President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Manchester

The role of a University in a changing world

The prospects of Brexit, a major review of student funding, the rise of the regulator and a heated public debate about “value for money” and senior salaries means that UK universities are being challenged as never before. How should universities respond to these challenges whilst at the same time demonstrating their commitment to solving wider societal challenges around an ageing population, environmental sustainability and the threat to jobs posed by increasing automation? In the search for answers, Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell, President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Manchester, will argue that we should be focusing once again on the basic purpose of a University, our significant contribution to the economy, society and wider culture and also taking a fresh look at how we engage and communicate with our local communities and wider society.

14.00 Session Two – chaired by John Hogan, Registrar, Newcastle University

Nicola Dandridge, Chief Executive, Office for Students

The Office for Students (OfS) is the new public body, established in law by the Higher Education and Research Act 2017. From April 2018, the OfS will become the regulator for the English Higher Education sector and will aim to put the student interest at its heart. It aims to be innovative in its approach to student participation, success and employability. The OfS will replace the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Office for Fair Access (OFFA).

This session will be an opportunity to hear from the OfS’ Chief Executive, Nicola Dandridge, in the very first weeks of the OfS taking up its responsibilities.

15.00 Refreshment Break – Martin Harris Centre Marquee



15.15 Session Three – Sponsor Sessions

(a) For Better and for Worse? Managing Academic Performance in the Modern Employment Relationship

David Browne and Tom Long, Shakespeare Martineau

Through a fully interactive, case study led session, the speakers will explore what universities need from employees in delivering their strategic objectives including ways to properly manage academic performance, specifically in balancing the imperatives of the TEF and REF. This will include an analysis of the extent to which performance management can be tailored to meet the needs of particular departments/faculties, together with an examination of the hidden pitfalls in the performance management process.

The session will explore the thorny issue of academic freedom, specifically the extent to which universities can manage academics who assert that invoking performance management processes breaches that concept. Speakers will also address the impact of the changing environment on employee and trade union relations and engagement, specifically assessing opportunities and risks arising. Given the new regulatory environment, speakers will also explore the increased importance and risks associated with whistleblowing in HE.

(b) League tables and strategy, a dangerous relationship?

Aaron Porter, Director, Aaron Porter Consultancy and Halpin Partnership Consulting Fellow

Paula Sanderson, Registrar SOAS and Halpin Partnership Consulting Fellow

Phil Baty, Editorial Director, Global Rankings, Times Higher Education

Patrick Kennedy, Director, Collective Intelligence Consulting Ltd and Halpin Partnership Consulting Fellow

This session will explore the relationship between University league tables and the development of University strategies. Do league tables provide a good proxy for performance or are we too driven by league table position to the detriment of market diversity? An expert panel which includes University leaders and Halpin Partnership Consulting Fellows will debate the motion “This house believes that a focus on university league tables is damaging to strategic planning”.

16:15 Session Four – Workshop Sessions

(a) Breaking the Barriers

Sophie Bowen, COO Middlesex University and Robin Henderson, AHUA Development Consultant

The divide between academic and non-academic staff is a perennial problem in Higher Education, creating challenges for implementing change, building positive working relationships and aligning strategy.

This workshop will focus on how leaders in HE can do this.



(b) The value of risk management

Sean Ryan, Director, Uniac

Jean Brown, Senior Assurance Consultant / Operations, Uniac,

Risk management is seen as good management practice – a tool to facilitate communication and discussion of the key risks and opportunities that an organisation faces. Because of the value that good risk management is seen to add, it is a requirement not only for higher education institutions but also of companies through the Financial Reporting Council's UK Corporate Governance Code.

Uniac have undertaken a study with organisations within and beyond the sector, to understand how and where they gain most value from risk management. Study outcomes will be used as the basis for the session which will cover:

- Feedback from both non-executives and executives on how risk management adds most value in their organisations
- The role of the risk register in value adding risk management, and what such a risk register may look like
- An appraisal of elements of interesting practice relating to risk, as observed through the study
- The future of risk management in light of the emerging regulatory framework for the sector: will governing bodies and audit committees change their approach?

(c) Maturing a sense of leadership identity for university leaders and managers

Dr Heather Davis, Program Director LH Martin Institute for Tertiary Education Leadership and Management, University of Melbourne

A hands-on workshop, providing opportunities for critical evaluation of management and leadership development programs in universities in the UK and elsewhere. Building on the adage that there is 'nothing so practical as a good theory' this workshop will focus on unpacking the mindset and skillset shifts required to be agile enough to work with the likely disruptions ahead. Through the lens of Self-Determination Theory's three elements: competence, autonomy and relatedness (Gagné & Deci, 2005), the speaker will consider what is prevalent and what might be missing in contemporary leadership programs for HE, providing some case studies from Australia to tease these out.

17:15 Travel to Hotel

18:45 Rendezvous in hotel foyer for move to Manchester Museum

19:15 Drinks Reception in Manchester Museum and short tour

19:45 Dinner (followed by Quiz – Shakespeare Martineau)

22:15 Depart from Manchester Museum



Tuesday 10th April 2018

09:00 Session Five

Sir Howard Bernstein

Sir Howard Bernstein was the Chief Executive of Manchester City Council from 1998 to 2017. Sir Howard will be interviewed by Professor Andy Westwood Vice-Dean for Social Responsibility in the Faculty of Humanities and Professor of Government Practice on: "In a changing world, how can universities drive regional growth?"

10:00 Session Six – Sponsor Sessions

(a) The Crystal Slipper: Distinctiveness in a crowded marketplace

Louise Simpson, Co-Founder of The Knowledge Partnership and Director of The World 100 Reputation Network

Alan Ferns, Associate Vice President, External Relations and Reputation, University of Manchester

Every university wants to be known for something special, particularly as competition gets tougher, fees rise, and young people are lured by careers that do not require degree entry. But how do you choose what to be distinctive 'in' when universities position themselves usually as 'good at everything' and every mission statement is a duplicate? How do you identify the star attraction without alienating the faculty whose foot doesn't fit the crystal slipper? How do you roll it out to be meaningful to the public? And how do you measure whether that has made a difference to your reputation? This session will look at these questions, and detail how the University of Manchester has worked with TKP to create its own research beacons and used reputational auditing to track its reputation with key stakeholders. You will also see examples of the research beacon marketing, and hear from some of the academic champions bringing it all to life.

(b) The Higher Education and Research Act 2017

Gary Attle, Partner, Head of Education and Governance, Mills and Reeve

The Higher Education & Research Act 2017 has been described as "the most important legislation in the sector for 25 years" and will come into force in 2018.

In this session we provide perspectives on the scope and implications of this legislation and the new regulatory framework for higher education which is being established by the Office for Students.

11:00 Refreshment Break– Martin Harris Centre Marquee



11:15 Session Seven - Workshop Sessions

(a) **Developing yourself as an experienced Registrar / Secretary / Chief Operating Officer**

Dr Kelly Coate, Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy, King's College, London

Robin Henderson, AHUA Development Consultant.

This workshop will be based on findings of a project conducted by researchers at King's College, London on the attributes and career paths of Senior Leaders in Higher Education. With a mix of presentation, reflection and group discussion this workshop will challenge attendees to reflect on their own skills and expertise and to consider their development needs to enable them to continue to thrive in leadership roles within the sector.

(b) **The role of the Audit Committee**

Richard Young, Director, Uniac

Jean Brown, Senior Assurance Consultant / Operations, Uniac

Audit committees' responsibilities have grown dramatically over the last ten years and, coupled with a changing higher education landscape, the demand and expectations placed on committee members are ever more challenging.

Additionally, the emerging regulatory framework for the sector means that it is timely to take stock of the committee's role. With the possible end of the annual cycle of assurances to an external body such as HEFCE (via the annual accountability return) in December 2018, there is a chance to reflect and, potentially, innovate.

The purpose of the session is to discuss the audit committee's focus and draw best practice from across the sector. We will refer to the CUC HE Code of Governance, Financial Reporting Council outputs and HEFCE guidance (including feedback from the institutional assurance reviews) alongside what is known about the new regulatory framework. We will cover:

- How best to structure audit committee meetings – including the balance between strategic risk focus and the ever-increasing compliance assurance requirements
- Unpacking the current requirements within the Memorandum of Assurance and Accountability i.e. opinions on internal control, risk management, value for money, governance and the quality of data returns
- What boards may want in the future (when the Memorandum expires) – more of the same or a different approach to assurances and the focus of their audit committees
- Non-executives – reflecting on the background and skills required for the role and the on-going training and support to aid the maximisation of their input.

The session will consider how to optimise Audit Committee meetings and balance between ever increasing compliance requirements and the broader focus on risk that is also expected.



(c) Surviving the swings

Tess Brooks, AHUA Associate

Andrew Young, Head of Administration and Chief Operating Officer, LSE

Jeannette Strachan, Registrar and Secretary, University of Hull

As a Registrar, Secretary or Chief Operating Officer you will most probably at some point in your role have the challenge of a change of Vice Chancellor. This workshop will explore how you can develop new relationships, new dialogues and support the new VC and existing staff through the transition process.

12:15 Lunch – Martin Harris Centre Marquee

13:15 Session Eight – chaired by Sophie Bowen, Chief Operating Officer, Middlesex University

Drew Povey, Headteacher, Harrop Fold School - as featured in “Educating Greater Manchester”

Leadership in a Changing World – Harrop, History and How

How can we secure sustainable organisational improvements during these uncertain and volatile times? We are expected to do more with less and sweat our assets but how can this be realistically achieved? The answers can be found during this short insight into a leadership philosophy for the modern era. We will explore different approaches from a multi-sector perspective, by taking ideas and concepts from different walks of life, including sport and the business world, and evaluating these real life examples in practice within the education sector.

14:15 Session Nine – Sponsor sessions

(a) Good governance – How to avoid being front page news for all the wrong reasons

Diane Gilhooley, Partner; Chris Mordue, Partner; Siân Jones-Davies, Senior Associate, Eversheds Sutherland

This interactive and topical session will provide advice on how university leaders can best maximise their institution’s internal and external reputation in the following key areas:

- VC and executive pay and the role of the Remuneration Committee
- Strategies for tackling under-representation and promoting equality
- Promoting wellbeing and mental health amongst staff and students
- Sexual harassment – what can institutions do to effectively manage current issues and what about historic claims?

(b) Purpose Built Student Accommodation – Innovation in products and services

Darren Ellis, Higher Education Engagement Director, Simon Jones, Operations Director, Unite Students



Over the last three years, Unite Students has worked with a leading international consultancy to design services for students living in its accommodation that improve their experience. In this session, we will share the service design process, some of the innovations that have arisen from it, and the feedback from, and impact on, students.

15.15 Refreshment break – Martin Harris Centre Marquee

15:30 Session Ten – chaired by Lee Sanders, Chair of AHUA

AHUA Conference Business session

16:15 Session Eleven – chaired by Nicola Owen, Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary, Lancaster University

Governance Challenges in a Changing World

Chris Sayers, Chair of the Committee of University Chairs and Chair of the Board of Governors at Northumbria University
Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli, Principal of the University of Glasgow and Chair of the Russell Group

Chris Sayers will give his perspective on the changing demands on governing bodies generated by:

- the new regulatory framework
- new approaches to academic quality assurance
- challenges over senior remuneration
- a challenging financial outlook

17.15 Return to Hotel

18:45 Rendezvous in hotel foyer

19:00 Depart hotel for Whitworth Building

19:15 Drinks Reception in Christie Bistro

20:00 Pre – dinner speaker

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester

Andy Burnham was elected as Mayor of Greater Manchester in May 2017.

Prior to this Andy was MP for Leigh from 2001. In government, Andy has held Ministerial positions at the Home Office, Department of Health and the Treasury. In 2008 he became Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, before returning to Health as Secretary of State in 2009.

In opposition, Andy has served as Shadow Education Secretary, Shadow Health Secretary and Shadow Home Secretary.



20:15 Dinner Served in Whitworth Hall

22:15 After Dinner Speaker

Lemn Sissay MBE, Chancellor of the University of Manchester

Lemn Sissay is author of a series of books of poetry alongside articles, records, broadcasts, public art, commissions and plays. Lemn was the first poet commissioned to write for the London Olympics. His Landmark Poems are installed throughout Manchester and London. They can be seen in The Royal Festival Hall and The Olympic Park. Lemn was official poet for The FA Cup 2015 and his Desert Island Discs was pick of the year for BBC Radio 4 2015.

Lemn is Chancellor of The University of Manchester, Patron of The Letterbox Club, Canterbury's Poet Laureate and he is a regular contributor to radio and television.

23:00 Depart from Whitworth Hall

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