

REGISTRAR AND SECRETARY'S CORE BRIEF: MARCH 2006

The President's Challenges for the Administration

In last month's Core Brief, I set out the President's five key challenges for the Administration which will be the benchmarks by which the performance of the Administration will be judged this year. In this Core Brief I want to focus on the first two challenges.

Challenge 1 reads, "*resolving potential administrative dysfunctions arising from the devolved structures of the University, including effectively apportioning authority, responsibility and accountability between Schools, Faculties and Central Administrative Directorates*".

This is the knottiest of the challenges and requires immediate attention. Therefore, the Directors of Estates, Finance, HR, STARS, with Dr Pat Sponder representing the Office of the Academic Registrar and the four Heads of Faculty Administration will join me at a session on 6 April to map out how we are going to achieve this objective and within what timeframe. The final outcome, however, is already clear. We must have a clearly articulated statement (or series of statements) which describes, unambiguously, the extent and limit of authority, responsibility and accountability within each level of the tripartite structure. Directly or indirectly, this will have an impact on all staff but, overall, the effect should be beneficial resulting in greater clarity about these matters which can then be communicated across the University. I imagine that colleagues meeting on 6 April will require two or three attempts to provide a fully satisfactory answer to the problem the President has identified so it may take a little while for the detailed statement to emerge. You will be kept informed of progress.

Challenge 2 concerns HR issues generally, particularly achieving integration of the legacy administrations. Below, the Director of HR reports on the latest developments on pay and grading. In addition to that, I want to make you aware of a review of the scope of the HR service which is being conducted across the University. The impetus for this arises from discussions I had a few months ago with the Director of HR and his senior colleagues. We came to the conclusion that it would be timely to consult on two basic questions:

- (i) is there any activity, task or role the HR Directorate should be performing that is currently undertaken by other parts of the Faculty/Directorate or not done at all?
- (ii) is there any activity, task or role currently undertaken by the HR Directorate that should be performed by another part of the Faculty/Directorate or not done at all?

Arrangements have been agreed with every part of the University on the way consultation on these two questions will be carried out. Supporting papers to inform the consultation have already been made available. Consultation ends on 8 May and a small working group (Professor Clive Agnew, Kay Day, Ray Lewis and Andrew Mullen) will work with me on an analysis of the consultation and its implications for the future. This is a positive development and the consultation exercise should be conducted in that spirit.

Budget 2006-07

I am grateful to all colleagues, including those within the Finance Directorate, who have already contributed to the production of base budget figures for 2006-07. I apologise to those in Faculties who have experienced a delay in receiving figures about central expenditure from Finance colleagues. I accept full responsibility for this delay because I have been at pains to present the budget figures this year in a form which is acceptable to me and which is more readily comprehensible to Vice-Presidents and Deans. Margaret Laithwaite met the Deans last week or will do so in the course of this week to explain the basis upon which centrally based expenditure has been compiled.

There will be few, if any, additions to the budget this year as far as the Administration is concerned. Budgetary discipline has to be tightened to begin to eliminate the deficit the Administration faces. Initial discussions with the President and the Vice-President/Deans have been rigorous. The timetable for concluding the budgetary decision-making process is as follows:

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| April | Further budget iterations before agreeing a proposed budget for the Administration which will be submitted to the PRC. |
| 2 May | |
| 23 May | PRC to receive the first and the final budget figures. |
| 6 June | Consolidated budget presented to the PRC. |
| 19 June | Submission to the Finance Committee for approval. |

I have asked Margaret Laithwaite to ensure that budget and sub-budget holders receive prompt and direct communication from the Directorate of Finance about the details of their budgets as soon as the final budget is agreed. I attach particular importance to this because it is essential that each budget or sub-budget holder has accurate budget data well before the start of the new financial year. I have no doubt I will return to this subject in subsequent Core Briefs because the financial pressures on the Administration are intense.

**Albert McMenemy
Registrar and Secretary**

29 March 2006

Human Resource Matters

The Director of Human Resources has provided the following information.

- 1 Following agreement on interim pay and grading arrangements with the UMAUT, and AMICUS South and North procedural areas, the University has taken the decision to apply interim arrangements for staff in the UNISON procedural area on the same basis, to ensure equivalence of treatment for all University staff. These arrangements do not form an interim agreement with UNISON.

This will result in the introduction of a common single 51-point pay spine and associated processes for all staff.

This decision will be advised to staff covered by UNISON's procedural area later this week; who will be notified individually in writing shortly thereafter of the precise point to which they will transfer on the new pay spine. The timing of any adjustments in salary and any back pay (calculated from 1 October 2004) will be determined and communicated later.

The letter to staff will be accompanied by a Frequently Asked Questions document, which will clarify many of the points of detail about the interim arrangements and the transfer process.

The University remains committed to working jointly with all our trade unions towards the introduction of a robust and fair pay and grading structure underpinned by the principles of equal pay for work of equal value. It has been agreed that this can be achieved by the continued use of the HERA job evaluation process with appropriate use of agreed HERA-based role profiles.

Our trade unions have been reassured of this commitment, and in resumed consultation and negotiation with all trade unions, the production of a jointly agreed project plan with clearly defined milestones to achieve final agreement in August 2006 is at an advanced stage.

- 2 Discussions are being conducted between the University and the North West Development Agency (NWDA) about how the University might most appropriately contribute to the economic regeneration of communities within the travel to work area around campus. The NWDA contributed c. £30 million to the establishment of the new University and one of their key performance indicators was that the University should be seen to be addressing social inequalities through the provision of employment and/or training opportunities.

Two initiatives to flow from these discussions are an Employment and Training Open Day, to be held on 19 April in the Whitworth Hall, for members of the local community, at which circa 300-400 people are expected to attend, and for which the MEN has donated advertising space; and a Work Placement Programme also for members of the local community, where it is proposed to provide work placements over a six week period for 20 people with limited or no work experience. Job Centres and local connections will initiate the preparatory work, and financial support will be provided through a new benefits initiative for unemployed people who are willing to pursue work experience.