



Dear Colleague,

Towards BU2025

In 2012, we launched our [BU2018 strategic plan](#), which set out our vision of Fusion – that by combining excellent education and research with strong links with practice and business we will deliver a unique and stimulating university experience and world-class learning community. I know that across BU we are all focusing this year on delivering those objectives for BU2018. At the same time, we are looking forward and starting work on an updated vision and plans for BU after 2018 taking Fusion forward into BU2025. We want to hear from staff and students about how we can build on the momentum that we have built up and take Fusion to the next level with a focus on impact. This will mean using our powerful combination of education, research and professional practice to develop our learning community. We want to ensure that staff and students achieve their potential, and that our learning and economic and societal contribution enriches the society and the world that we live in. We will be holding workshops and roadshows over the next few months and I look forward to hearing from you about these ideas– you can follow our progress on the [intranet](#) or contact us via [BU2025 Vision and Strategy](#).

University Leadership Team

You will have seen the announcement that Professor Stephen Tee has taken on responsibility for the Faculty of Management for the time being in addition to the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences. I would like to express my thanks to Jane Houzer for her contribution and commitment, and also to Professor Elizabeth Rosser, who will be taking on additional duties as Acting Dean of Health and Social Sciences.

Sector update

The House of Lords are continuing their discussion of the Bill that will confirm that the government can trigger Article 50 and start negotiations for the UK to leave the EU. Last night the Lords voted to force the government to give a guarantee to EU citizens living in the UK that they will be protected when the UK leaves the EU. This amendment is likely to be over-ruled in the House of Commons in due course, but it is important to recognise the concern across the UK about this issue. I recognise the anxiety for colleagues from the EU caused by this extended period of uncertainty, and I hope that the government will, as it has indicated it would like to, be able to set out clear assurances for EU residents as soon as possible.

In the meantime, to reflect rising numbers of applications for mobility from our students, BU has applied for twice as much Erasmus funding for 2017/18. EU undergraduates starting in 2017/18 will pay UK home level fees and remain eligible for student loans.

At BU, we value very highly the academic and cultural contribution made by staff and students

from the EU and across the world. You will recall that at the Conservative Party conference in November, a consultation on potential changes to immigration rules for international students and staff was announced but was postponed. In the meantime, the Home Affairs Committee is conducting an inquiry into [developing a consensus on effective immigration policy](#). It is therefore too early to say what visa or other requirements will apply to EU students after Brexit, or what wider changes there might be to immigration rules for international staff and students. However, I was encouraged by the statements in the Brexit [White Paper](#) (the HE sector was the only sector that is specifically referred to in the migration section):

“The UK will always welcome genuine students and those with the skills and expertise to make our nation better still.....” The Government also recognises the important contribution made by students and academics from EU Member States to the UK’s world-class universities. A global UK must also be a country that looks to the future.”

The Higher Education and Research Bill reaches the report stage in the House of Lords next week. One opposition amendment was passed by the House of Lords in committee stage, seeking to define the role and function of universities. Responding to the debates in the House of Lords and discussion with the sector, a large number of helpful additional government amendments have now been proposed along with further amendments proposed by peers. One key amendment proposed jointly by the government and opposition includes a definition of institutional autonomy to replace the opposition amendment that was passed. Further proposed amendments include changes to allow for higher fees to be charged for accelerated degrees – although not to increase the total cost of a degree. You can see the latest set of draft amendments [here](#).

Research Excellence Framework – the consultation on the Research Excellence Framework exercise for 2021 (REF2021) is on-going with lively discussions across the sector about issues such as how to define which staff should be submitted and the portability of outputs when staff move institutions. At BU we have had interesting debates at Senate and in other committees about these issues and our institutional response to the consultation. One worrying development is the increasing use of teaching-only contracts for staff. At BU, we believe that our vision of the fusion of excellent education with world-leading research and engagement with practice will lead to better outcomes for students and greater impact on society. Our RKEO team is leading on our response to the consultation, please contact RKEO if you would like to be involved.

Teaching Excellence - One government policy which is not dependent on the Bill is the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), and we are already in year 1 of the TEF. In January, Parliament passed the statutory instrument that confirms that the fee cap will rise by inflation (from £9000 to £9250) from 2017/18. A small number of universities will raise fees for all students, but BU confirmed last year, with Board approval, that we will not raise fees for current students. BU along with 80% of UK institutions has opted to take part in year 2. The TEF assessment will be carried out by a panel over the next few months. The final rating, alongside the data and the submission, will be published by HEFCE in late May. The Department for Education (DfE) is undertaking informal consultations about the structure of a TEF at subject level, which will run as a pilot in 2017/18 and 2018/19. It is important to note that fees will be set at institutional and not at subject level. If you are interested in contributing to the debate about subject level TEF, please contact policy@bournemouth.ac.uk.

Industrial Strategy - The government has launched its [Industrial Strategy Green Paper](#). The proposals focus on improving Britain’s innovation and productivity in key areas alongside

upskilling the workforce to become world leading. The document frequently references the role of universities as innovation leaders pushing for greater productive cooperation with business. The paper calls for research strengths to be built in businesses and a wider range of universities. The consultation ends in April and we will be preparing a BU response, please contact policy@bournemouth.ac.uk if you would like to be involved.

HEFCE - Last week HEFCE received its [grant letter](#) from the government – once again teaching funding will fall – by 5% in 2018/19 – and next year because of changes to funding for health and medical programmes the funds will also have to stretch further. The letter highlights a number of government priorities for the higher education sector, including the TEF, Prevent, support for schools and student well-being.

And finally, today is Universities Mental Health Day and [events are taking place across BU](#) – it is important that these issues are discussed and that staff have the tools to support their own mental health as well as supporting students and colleagues. March 8th is International Women's Day and we are hosting [a range of exciting events at BU](#). Do take a look at both of these and get involved.

Best wishes,

John Vinney
Vice-Chancellor

Follow me on Twitter [@VCJohnVinney](#)