

From: [John Vinney](#)
To: [All Staff](#)
Subject: An update from the Vice-Chancellor
Date: 09 July 2018 10:40:55



Dear Colleague,

The end of this month will mark the end of our BU2018 strategic plan. This is an important moment to mark the progress that we have made at BU since 2012, as well as looking back over the academic year, and for me to thank all of you who have made this possible.

The external environment

The government's review of post-18 education is on-going and BU submitted [a response](#) to the call for evidence in May. Amongst other things, we cited staff concerns about the impact of maintenance costs on students. We raised concerns about the impact of increased information to be provided for students – internal evidence shows that students do not use the existing data and providing more detailed information may not be helpful. We also raised concerns about the potential impact of the current arrangements for TEF and REF on innovation.

The Department for Education are undertaking a review of subject-level TEF. There have been some practical challenges with the pilot scheme which has been running this year, and it seems likely from feedback that neither of the pilot models will be adopted. BU submitted [a response](#) to the recent consultation. We suggested that subject level TEF should be dropped for subjects with PSRB accreditation, proposed a longer time frame for TEF assessments, instead of the current rolling annual review, a change to the awards to remove gold, silver and bronze and replace them with a two tier system with commendations.

BU2018

Since we launched BU2018 in 2012, we have made great progress to embed Fusion across BU, and our final report on our BU2018 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) demonstrates the hard work and commitment of staff across BU to embrace Fusion and to meet the stretching targets we set for ourselves.

I am particularly proud of our progress on many of the Fusion measures:

- The recent AACSB accreditation for the Faculty of Management is part of our fantastic story of industry and professional engagement at BU. The percentage of eligible programmes with PSRB accreditation has risen to 95%.
- The proportion of academic staff also working in industry has risen from 1% to 35% since 2012, and the proportion of staff with professional affiliations from 27% in 2013 to 66% today.

- Our average research income per academic FTE has grown by 33% since 2012.
- We have seen significant growth in the proportion of academic staff with doctorates from 56% in 2013 to 70% today, and those with teaching qualifications from 57% in 2013 to 78%.

And we have also made progress in other areas, increasing the proportion of female professors from 19% in 2012 to 35% in 2017, gaining a TEF silver award and working towards a REF2021 submission that will reflect the growth and importance of research at BU.

You can read more about our KPIs and our achievements [here](#).

For BU2025, we will be using many different measures, and changing our focus towards team objectives, using qualitative as well as quantitative measures and ensuring that our metrics are more relevant to professional services.

Thank you for your contribution to our success so far, and I look forward to working with you on the next phase of our development at BU.

Building our research

Research at BU has grown significantly, in terms of the number of staff actively engaged in research, the number and quality of your publications, research income and research collaborations, and it is important to recognise and celebrate this. Thank you to our academic staff and professional services' staff who have supported, enabled and contributed to this. I particularly want to thank Professor John Fletcher for leading our research and innovation agenda during this transformation. John has now moved into a new role as a Professor of Economics.

Advancing knowledge as a key element of our purpose at BU, and the impact of our research is one of the ways that we will enrich society and contribute to societal growth and development. We are working on ambitious targets for research for BU2025 and we plan to accelerate the development of our research at BU and to grow its impact.

As part of our BU2025 implementation, we are therefore reviewing our organisation and support for research. We are establishing a new Research Performance and Management Committee, as a sub-committee of the University Leadership Team, to ensure that we monitor and review not only our research performance but the effectiveness of the systems, processes and support that enable it. This committee will be chaired by Professor Tim McIntyre-Bhatty, and in the meantime the Research and Knowledge Exchange Office under Julie Northam will report to Tim.

These changes should not disrupt our progress and indeed I am pleased to see that we are maintaining momentum in all our Faculties on developing our research and preparing for REF 2021.

Inclusivity, equality and diversity

You will be aware that we have recently reinforced our commitment to Athena Swan at BU. We are expecting to launch a staff survey soon, and there is a great deal of activity being undertaken to prepare for our organisational submission in the Autumn. Thank you to those who are supporting this.

We are also, as you are aware, preparing for a submission to the Race Equality Charter. I was pleased to see that we had a good response to our recent staff survey – more news will

follow about our progress.

Sustainability

Thank you for all of you who signed up to our staff engagement platform, Green Rewards, and took action to reduce your carbon footprint and reduce your impact on the environment, as well as improve your health and wellbeing. The winner this year was announced last week - Finance and Performance won a £100 donation to the Bournemouth food bank. We will continue with Green Rewards for the coming year - so please keep logging your activities to collect points and prizes. Your contribution alongside our investment in our estate is vital if we're going to cut our energy and water bills and meet our carbon target. You can help by sending in ideas for improving the estate or letting the [Sustainability team](#) or [Estates Helpdesk](#) know about energy/water wastage.

Our learning environment

Our physical and virtual learning environments are a vital part of our staff and student experience. You will not have missed the changes on Talbot and Lansdowne as the new Gateway buildings go up. These are only some of the changes taking place across our campus, and thank you for your patience as the building works continue.

One area for action in BU2025 is ensuring that we make the most of the technology and systems available to us to provide a consistently excellent learning experience at BU. 43% of students have moved to Brightspace, our new virtual learning environment (VLE) and the remainder will move in September 2018. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those involved in phase 1 of the rollout. With any transition of this size, there have been challenges and hurdles along the way but all of those involved have helped contribute to a very successful implementation and have provided feedback into enhancements for the next phase. I appreciate your continued support as we complete the implementation and are able to make the most of its capabilities to enhance the learning experience.

We are awaiting the results of the National Students' Survey for 2018 – this is one area where we have so far not been able to meet our BU2018 targets. The quality and consistency of the learning experience at BU, including co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities, and wider aspects of student life, such as accommodation, health and wellbeing and community engagement, are all areas of focus in BU2025, and I look forward to seeing further progress in all these areas in 2018/19 and beyond.

Vice-Chancellor's awards

The Vice-Chancellor's awards this year are bigger and better than ever before. Instead of one event in November, we will be holding multiple celebrations over the year, shining the spotlight on our amazing staff for your different achievements.

- The **Long Service Celebration Event** will take place around September and will recognise the dedication and impact of staff with 25 years' service at BU. These colleagues will be treated to a special lunchtime event.
- The **Qualifications Celebration Event** will be an afternoon celebration in January for staff who have achieved qualifications relevant to their role.
- The **Promotion to Professor Celebration Event** will take place in February, marking the achievement of our staff promoted to Professor during the previous academic year.

The **VC Staff Awards** will celebrate the achievements of staff across the organisation, They have been refined to align more closely to BU2025 and our vision and values. 7 of the 8 award categories are new this year. All awards are open to all staff, whether Professional & Support, Academic or Affiliated colleagues, and other than the Unsung Hero Award, all nominations can be for individuals or teams. In response to feedback from previous years, we have also now created a simpler [online nomination form](#). The nomination deadline this year is Friday 20 July and the VC Staff Awards event will take place on Thursday 22 November. More details about the [Staff Awards](#) and the [Celebration Events](#) can be found on the [staff intranet page](#).

Best wishes,

John Vinney
Vice-Chancellor

Follow me on Twitter @VCJohnVinney

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