

## Our Second Century: Shaping for Excellence

### What are you planning?

We need to take a strategic view of the size and shape of the University to meet our future ambitions, to invest in areas of strength and to deliver sector-leading research, education and student experience.

### Why are you making these changes?

The pre-change engagement process aims to discuss how we deliver our long term strategy for the University. Our ambition is to be a world leading research-intensive university providing an exceptional educational experience for our students. To compete with the best in the world we must build on our strengths and areas of excellence.

Our new strategy will have three strategic aims: Research Inspired Education, World-Changing Research and Sustainable Partnerships. These aims are underpinned by Diversity and Inclusion, Health and Wellbeing, Environmental Sustainability and Operational Excellence. This has been agreed by Senate and Council and the proposed changes lay the foundations for our strategic plans.

But we can't do everything. We need to stop doing some things in order to focus on our strengths.

We believe we need to take action now to in order protect us from further, larger changes in the future.

### What areas are you looking to make changes in?

Academic transformation to support our strategic plan – impacted areas are:

- **School of Arts**
- **School of Business**
- **School of Informatics**
- **School of Mathematics and Actuarial Science**
- **Department of Neuroscience, Psychology and Behaviour.**

Reshaping our Professional Services to respond to future need – impacted areas are:

- **Customer Services** - Library User Services (LLIS), Student Services Centre (SAS)
- **Doctoral College and PGR Administration**
- **Education Services** - Business Change Team (SAS), Education Strategy Unit (SAS), Leicester Learning Institute (LLIS), and Quality Office (SAS)
- **Estates and Digital Services Division** - Information and Technology Services
- **Estates and Digital Services Division** - Estates Projects, Compliance, Assets Teams and the Reactive Maintenance Team
- **Learning Services** – Academic Skills Centre (LLIS), Accessibility (SAS)
- **Research and Enterprise Administration**

## **Are these proposed changes in response to COVID?**

The proposed changes we are announcing focus on the long term future of the University.

In addition, we have also had to respond to the impact of the coronavirus on some of aspects of our operations. The physical estate of the University is being utilised in very different ways than before. The changes to the physical estate, as a result of COVID-19, are likely to be ongoing and we are proposing to keep a number of buildings closed throughout the academic year 2020/21. As a direct result, the number of staff on campus will be significantly reduced.

Funding for new campus development projects will be extremely limited for the foreseeable future.

## **Are these proposed changes in response to poor student recruitment this year?**

No. We have performed well this year in UK undergraduate student numbers. We are working to achieve our international recruitment targets and will know the final position on this in the New Year when our January start students have registered.

The changes we are announcing today are about the long term future and strategic direction of the University.

## **Why now?**

We have appointed a Vice-Chancellor with new ideas and plans for the University. We are in the final stages of writing our new strategic plan which sets out our ambition for the next 10 years.

We believe we need to take action now, to protect us from further, larger changes in the future.

## **Why are you looking to make changes during a pandemic?**

This decision to commence pre- change engagement has not been taken lightly. It may be a very long time before we are operating in anything approaching normal circumstances.

## **What impact will these proposed changes have?**

The proposed changes will enable us to invest in areas of strength and growth so that we will be world-leading. To compete with the best in research, we need to invest in people (staff, early career researchers, PGRs) and infrastructure (equipment, pump-priming funds, matched funding for bids).

We will be able to invest in our education and student life to enhance the experience we offer to our students. To improve educational outcomes we need to invest in our teaching staff, manage staff workload, invest in our educational infrastructure (learning platforms, student wellbeing support, employability outcomes).

## **What happens when?**

We will be communicating the timescales directly with staff in the Schools/Departments affected by these changes.

The first stage is pre-change engagement and staff will be informed of the timescales within their area. This early engagement will help staff to shape any changes and the feedback will then be carefully considered in deciding the next steps.

## **Will people lose their jobs?**

Each pre-change engagement process may feed into a future business case. This may lead to some job losses but we cannot pre-judge the outcome of this process at this stage.

## **Will I still be able to apply for Voluntary Severance (VSS) whilst participating in an engagement event?**

Yes, VSS is currently open until 28 October 2020 and if you wish to apply please discuss this with your line manager.

## **Finance**

### **Are we in trouble financially?**

Our finances are not as strong as we would like but there is no underlying financial crisis. However, like all universities we need to ensure we are financially stable and have long term sustainability. We face a challenge to manage the short-term impact of COVID-19 alongside longer term challenges such as there being no inflation increases on home tuition fees but growing costs such as pay and pensions.

In that context, the proposed changes we are making will enable us to focus our resources and efforts and build on our core strengths.

In order to compete we need to invest in areas of excellence to retain and grow our reputation. We need to ensure that activities with significant growth and demand are appropriately resourced for the benefit of the whole University.

We also need to invest in people and our infrastructure to improve our performance in research and education.

### **Can you grow income to avoid these changes?**

We have ambitious plans in place to grow income through student recruitment. We are also developing our strategy to increase philanthropic income. However, focusing on these areas alone is high risk - we cannot guarantee income growth.

### **What other steps have you taken to ensure we are financially stable?**

We have worked hard to identify measures to protect the University's financial position for the 2020/21 academic year so that we remain sustainable.

These include setting a budget to deliver £35m savings in this financial year, suspending the senior staff pay and Merit Awards committees and we have opened up a Voluntary Severance Scheme.

### **How much money do you need to save through this process?**

This process focuses on the long term future of the University and is not driven by cutting costs. Making these proposed changes will allow us to operate more efficiently and invest in our areas of strengths and where there is student demand.

## **People**

### **Who have you consulted about these plans?**

Senior College Teams and Professional Services leaders have proposed the change plans.

We are engaging with staff, trade unions and the Students' Union.

There are extensive engagement plans in place to ensure all affected individuals and teams will be able to provide feedback and suggestions regarding the proposed direction.

Senate and Council will be formally informed of the plans and appropriate consideration, recommendation and approval will take place.

### **What is pre-change engagement?**

Pre-change engagement is the process by which a Head of School/Department/Division talks and listens to staff and gathers information to inform a potential change programme. A university process was previously agreed with our recognised Trade Unions in 2018 and sets out a number of principles for leading and managing change [Leading and Managing Change Principles](#).

The overall purpose is to ensure that staff are involved at the earliest opportunity to gather their views and feedback about a potential change programme. We will also invite Trade Union Representatives to participate and we will provide details about the circumstances that have prompted the case for change and the changes that are being proposed, if known during these early stages.

It is recognised that staff members will have views and opinions about what currently works well and ideas on how improvements and/or efficiencies could be made to a service or process. It is these ideas and feedback that we would very much encourage staff to provide during the pre-change engagement process. The intention is that early involvement of members of staff will give rise to a better solution for both members of staff, and the University.

### **What are the options for pre-change engagement?**

Once it has been determined that a School or Division is considering a change programme the purpose of the pre-change engagement must be decided. There are two different options when considering what form pre-change engagement will take: Option 1 - If the decision has been taken about what the proposed change will be or Option 2 - If the outline of the change has been identified but further information/feedback is required before the University develops any change proposal. Further details can be found in section 3.5 of the University's guide to [Leading and Managing Change Principles](#).

### **What is the approach the University takes to pre-change engagement?**

It is recognised that due to the COVID-19 pandemic the way in which we conduct engagement is likely to be through virtual means and we have looked at different methods of engagement that can be utilised to ensure staff are able to participate. The University will give consideration and make every effort to hold the engagement sessions at a time when all relevant staff members can attend.

The engagement will take place in a variety of ways, for example:

- Face-to-face meetings, if COVID secure
- Microsoft Teams meetings (which may need to be extended)
- Facilitated workshop event or a series of sessions
- Surveys to gather feedback.

Sessions will be informal and designed to provide a forum for management and staff to share ideas and opinions freely.

Communication of the agreed process, the progress and outcomes will be widely circulated to the staff affected not just those who attend the session(s). The documentation presented at the session will be made available to ensure everyone has access to the appropriate information. The sessions will usually be hosted by the Head of Department/School or Head of Division (or nominee) as appropriate.

Heads of Department/School or Heads of Divisions will normally present the rationale and drivers for change and provide any relevant data or information. A representative from the Division of Human Resources will also attend the session. All three recognised Trade Unions will be made aware of sessions that are taking place and the relevant materials will be shared.

### **Will pre-change engagement take place face-to-face or via Microsoft Teams?**

The sessions will take place via a variety of different formats and may be face-to-face or via Microsoft Teams. A decision will be made on a case-by-case basis as to which format is the most appropriate for the staff involved. You will also be able to provide feedback via the dedicated email address that will be set up for each pre-change engagement process, details of which will be provided to you at the pre-change engagement session.

### **How long will pre-change engagement last?**

Pre-change engagement will normally last for three weeks but in some circumstances this may be extended to incorporate a wider variety of stakeholders.

### **How do I feedback into the process?**

You will be able to provide feedback during the pre-change engagement sessions or ask questions, potentially through a survey and via a dedicated email address. Details about the process for providing feedback and ideas will be advised to you ahead of any pre engagement session.

### **What will happen after the pre-change engagement is completed?**

The documentation presented at the session will be made available in different formats to ensure everybody has access to the appropriate information. You will be given a timeframe by which to provide any feedback. The feedback will be collated and shared with those involved in the pre-change engagement process.

### **If I am invited to a pre-change engagement session, does this mean that I will be made redundant?**

Pre-change engagement is not part of the formal Redundancy Ordinance. If having reviewed and considered the feedback it is later decided a formal change programme is required to facilitate a necessary change, the staff that will be affected by the change will be consulted with in line with the University's [Redundancy Ordinance](#).

The University is committed to mitigating against compulsory redundancies wherever possible.

### **What support is available to me?**

The wellbeing of staff and students is a key priority and we are aware that staff may feel anxious and uncertain regarding the current situation. Our Employee Assistance Provider, Validium, is there to support you 24/7. Please call 0800 358 4568.

Health and Wellbeing also provide helpful details in their Support Toolkit. Details of which can be found [here](#).

### **If I am on Furlough can I attend a pre-change engagement session?**

Yes, if you are on Furlough at the time of the pre-change engagement session you are able to attend the session and provide feedback. You may also attend the sessions if you are away from the University at present for other reasons ie

maternity leave or long term sickness. Should you need any reasonable adjustments in order to attend the sessions please contact your line manager.

**Do I have to attend the pre-change engagement sessions?**

No, you do not have to attend the sessions. However, we strongly advise that staff actively engage with any pre-change engagement sessions to which they are invited. It is your opportunity to share your ideas and shape any potential change proposal in future.

**Will the Trade Unions attend the pre-change engagement sessions?**

All three Trade Unions will be made aware of the date and times of any pre-change engagement sessions and invited to attend if they wish to. A member of Human Resources will also be present at the sessions.