Birkbeck noted with sadness the death of Lord Marshall of Knightsbridge on 5 July 2012, aged 78. Lord Marshall was a distinguished Chairman of Governors at Birkbeck from 2003–2010 and a Fellow of the College.

Professor David Latchman, Master of Birkbeck, said: “Lord Marshall was a great friend and supporter of Birkbeck in many ways: personally, philanthropically and politically. He had a strong interest in adult education and this, together with his lifelong passion for London and his extensive business experience, made him an ideal advocate of the College.

“He was an outstanding Chairman, who understood the nature of the relationship between the Chairman and the Master. It was a pleasure for me to work with him and learn from him.

“He used his skills and influence in a range of spheres on behalf of the College during a critical period in higher education.

“In particular, he helped Birkbeck to respond rapidly to a major change in government policy in 2007 concerning Equivalent or Lower Qualification students. He helped Birkbeck to lobby successfully for Government support with the changes, and to develop a strategic plan to address the loss of funding caused by them. We owe him a great deal.”

Lord Marshall began his international business career with the Orient Steam Navigation Company. He spent more than 20 years working first for Hertz and then Avis, before joining British Airways in 1983 as Chief Executive and finally non-executive Chairman. Following his retirement from BA in 2004 Lord Marshall became Chairman of Nomura International plc.

He was President of the CBI from 1996 to 1998, while other voluntary activities included chairmanship of Britain in Europe and presidency of the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council.

A Londoner by birth, Lord Marshall was one of the founders of London First and became the inaugural chairman of London First Centre, the capital’s inward investment agency.

He also helped to create and then chaired the London Development Partnership, the prototype for the London Development Agency.

Colin Marsh Marshall was born on 16 November 1933 and educated at University College School in Hampstead, London. He was created a Life Peer as Baron Marshall of Knightsbridge in the 1998 Queen’s Birthday Honours, having been made a Knight Bachelor in 1987, and he held honorary degrees from a number of universities.

Lord Marshall was a great friend and supporter of Birkbeck in many ways: personally, philanthropically and politically. We owe him a great deal.

Professor David Latchman