Master’s Paper:

The Strategic Direction of Birkbeck

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This is the fifth year in which my Strategy Paper is presented to the spring term Away Day Meetings of the SPC and Governors. This year we face significant financial challenges both in terms of the predicted deficit for this financial year and in terms of our future financial sustainability. As well as discussing our current and future activities, this paper will focus on our recovery plans and the manner in which we ensure the sustainability of Birkbeck’s mission to and beyond our 200th Anniversary.

1.2 As in previous strategy papers, I will first discuss some of the achievements in the College in the last year and will then discuss in turn each of our key areas of activity. I am most grateful, as always, to the Vice-Master (Professor Matthew Innes), the College Secretary (Keith Harrison), Pro-Vice Masters, Deans and Directors of Professional Services, for their leadership of different aspects of our work and their contribution, to our strategic development.

1.3 Before discussing our different activities, however, I would like to highlight a significant development, which cuts across all our areas of activity. This is our developing strategic collaboration with New York University (NYU), a major US University with fourteen campuses worldwide and, like ourselves, a strong widening participation/research excellence mission.

1.4 Following my visits to New York in August and October and visits to the UK by the President of NYU, Professor Andy Hamilton and Vice-President for International Strategy, Linda Mills, we have chosen to focus our collaboration initially on several key areas where both Universities are strong. These are China, Cities, Jewish Studies, Medieval Studies, Law and Neuroscience. To facilitate these collaborations we are announcing a $50,000 fund, jointly supported by both institutions, designed to facilitate and develop links in these and other areas. Potential uses of these funds will include short trips by staff or PhD students of one University to the other, for example, to give a lecture, discuss collaboration, spend some time working in a local archive, etc. Evidently, the discussions which will develop from these trips are likely to lead to joint research projects and the submission of joint research grant applications.

1.5 As well as facilitating research collaborations between the two Universities, we are also developing teaching links. These are most advanced in the Law area where NYU Abu-Dhabi (NYUAD) is partnering with us to offer a unique opportunity for students in NYUAD’s Legal Studies Major. By combining course work in Abu-Dhabi with a year in London, students in the Major will take courses at Birkbeck that prepare them for qualifying as Solicitors in the
UK legal system. This joint teaching will begin in Spring 2019 and study of the students at Birkbeck is financed by NYU. It is of particular importance given that NYUAD specialises in widening participation by educating low income students from around the world.

1.6 Clearly, our collaboration with NYU has a strong academic stream involving both research and teaching. However, it also involves a property sharing arrangement in which NYU would take a 15-year lease on day time usage of our completed Cambridge House building, allowing NYU to significantly expand its teaching provision in London. For Birkbeck, this would represent a significant development both financially and in terms of facilitating further teaching collaboration in the building. Interestingly, collaboration with NYU in Cambridge House has proven to be a significant positive factor in ongoing discussions with two potential donors in the seven figure range.

1.7 Evidently, we are unique amongst London’s Universities in being able to provide a partner with significant day-time space. However, NYU would not have entered into a multi-faceted collaboration with us were it not for our position as a strong research-led University.

1.8 This was confirmed by our position in the annual Times Higher Education (THE) world Universities rankings in which we figured in the top one-third of over one thousand Universities representing the world’s best Higher Education institutions. Notably, we figured in the top 10% of such Universities for international outlook, including overseas staff, students and research collaborations. Similarly, our Department of Psychological Sciences was ranked 85th in the world in this analysis, whilst our School of Arts activity was ranked 87th.

1.9 Very good results were also obtained in the QS worldwide rankings by subject, with English and Philosophy both in the top 100 Departments worldwide and History, Law and Psychology all in the top 150.

1.10 In terms of UK rankings, we have emphasized our position in UK Government rankings of research (Research Excellence Framework: REF) and Teaching (Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), where we figure as one of the top twenty-five institutions in the UK in terms of the combined REF and TEF ranking. We have also chosen to withdraw from commercial league tables on the basis that these emphasize qualifications of students admitted (A level scores) and the class of Degree given. They therefore favour institutions which take those with high A-level scores and give them high Degree classifications (thereby promoting grade inflation), rather than those which provide significant added value to individuals with no or poor qualifications. Our decision to do this has been met with general support from a number of individuals praising it as the beginning of the end for league tables. Moreover, the league table compilers themselves have indicated that they understand the reasons for our withdrawal since their system does not do justice to a unique institution like Birkbeck.
1.11 The uniqueness of Birkbeck as an institution does mean that we need to promote ourselves so that our work and its importance are fully understood by all stakeholders and the general public. Following the results of the Fundraising Review, discussed in last year’s paper, we are now engaged in a rebranding exercise led by our Director of Marketing and External Relations, Lynn Grimes with professional advisers. This has the aim of rebranding ourselves so ensuring that our mission and the quality of our work are fully understood by as wide a range of audiences as possible, including potential students.

1.12 Clearly, the achievements of our staff and students are of key importance in this process. These have occurred across all our five Schools in the last year as well as in the general College and are discussed below.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS

2.1 In April, the Compass Project which fully funds 20 asylum seekers to study at Birkbeck won the prestigious Guardian Higher Education award in the widening access and outreach category. It commended the College’s extensive outreach work, pre and post entry support for twenty forced migrants.

2.2 The success of the Compass Project goes much further than just the opportunity to explore University study. Of the first group of students who completed their first year in 2018, two have taken fully funded scholarships at Kings’ and Royal Holloway, ten have continued their studies at Birkbeck whilst others have taken up professional work or are returning to Birkbeck next year. The profile of the project has grown hugely and is seen as an exemplar in practice and provision for forced migrants across the HE sector but also in the third sector with charities such as CRISIS, Article 26 and RefuAid. Alongside this we have also seen a significant rise in the number of students with refugee status coming to study at Birkbeck as a result of the reputational value the Compass Project has generated.

2.3 This has led to more formal discussions with other Universities about formalising progression routes for Compass Project students to access scholarships and degree subjects elsewhere. This includes a progression agreement with the UCL Bartlett School of Architecture and their commitment to accepting Compass students onto UG programmes with scholarships.

2.4 The project has also proved popular with donors with over £270,000 being raised for the work by the Development and Alumni team. Moreover, we plan to submit the Compass Project as the College’s submission for the Queen’s Anniversary Prize, which the College last won in 2006 for the Baby Lab.

2.5 In another cross College achievement five of our staff (one from each School), were successful out of thousands nominated to join the Peer Review College for the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Future Leaders Fellowship (FLF) Scheme. Professor Rosie Cox (SSHP), Dr Isabel Davis (School of Arts), Professor Sarah Hart (BEI), Professor Carolyn Moores (Science) and Dr Sappho
Governors’ AwayDay 2019

Xenakis (Law) will assess applications to the FLF scheme which will provide £900 million to develop the upcoming generation of UK innovators.

School of Arts and Humanities

2.6 Professor Lynda Nead, Professor of History of Art, was appointed as a Fellow of the British Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences. This highly prestigious award reflects her important work on 19th and 20th Century Visual Culture. In addition, her book “The Tiger in the Snake” was shortlisted for the PEN Hessel Tiltman Prize.

2.7 Professor Laura Mulvey, of the Department of Film, Media and Cultural Studies, was awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humanities by Yale University for her work in the area of Film.

2.8 As well as these staff successes, Birkbeck Alumna Nicole Lindau from Tajikistan, was awarded the Michal Collyer Memorial Fellowship in Screen Writing, by the Writers Guild of America for her screen play “Wolf Girl”, which she wrote for her final dissertation at Birkbeck.

School of Business, Economics and Informatics

2.9 Both staff and students from the various Departments in the School were successful in obtaining a number of different awards. For example, Benedetta Crisafulli, of the Department of Management was awarded the Prize for the best paper given at the 4th International Conference on Corporate Branding Identity and Image for her work on Corporate Crisis Management and the use of on-line influences to mitigate reputational damage, whilst Emma Vetrianou, a graduate from the MSc in Sports Management in the same Department, was named one of the thirty Sports Industry Next Generation Leaders for 2019.

2.10 In the Department of Economics, Mathematics and Statistics, two students, Charles Shaw and Daniel Pycock, were awarded the Institute of Economics Prize in a competition to produce policy proposals for dealing with the UK Housing Crisis.

School of Law

2.11 Dr Sappho Xenakis was awarded the Annual Criminal Justice Scholar Award from the US-based Academy of Criminal Justice, whilst Law School students won the National Mooting Contest. Interestingly, all three students in the winning team are studying on the intensive LLM Qualifying Degree, combining work with intensive studies.

School of Science

2.12 The Department of Biological Sciences was awarded an Athena Swan Silver Award by the Equality Challenge Unit for its work in promoting Gender Equality in Higher Education, whilst Dr Sanjib Bhakta, was awarded the
inaugural Rishi Benkira Chandra Memorial Award by West Bengal State University for his work on *Global Infectious Diseases*.

2.13 The Athena Swan silver award extends our success in receiving bronze awards both for the College as a whole and for several STEM-based Departments. As the scheme extends its remit beyond the STEM-area, we are preparing for the renewal of our College award, as well as submitting School-based applications in Arts and Humanities, Law and SSHP.

2.14 In the **Department of Psychological Sciences**, Dr Thera Lloyd Fox, was awarded the British Academy Prize in Psychiatry for her research into *Infant Cognitive Development*, whilst graduate Mathew Danvers, was awarded the BPS Prize for his work on *Putative Biomarkers of Social Attention in Infants at High Risk of Autism*. In the same Department, Professor Ulrika Hahn won the Cognitive Science Society award for Computational Modelling in Applied Cognition, for her paper on “*How the Accuracy of Political Information is affected as it is shared through Social Media Networks*”. In addition, a student in **Psychological Sciences**, Tanya Botha, was awarded the British Psychological Society Undergraduate Award and the Birkbeck Honorary Research Fellows Prize, for her work “*Ways of Boosting Emotional Resilience in Individuals at Risk of Depression and Anxiety*”.

**School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy**

2.15 A number of staff in the School won prestigious Prizes, notably Dr Sue Brooks (**Geography**), who won the Geographical Association Prize for the best paper in one of its Journals in the area of Geography, Teaching and Learning, Dr Mathew Champion (**Department of History**), who won the Gladstone Prize of the Royal Historical Society for his book entitled “*Fullness of Time, Temporalities of the 15th Century Low Countries*”, and Professor Frank Trentmann (**Department of History**), who was awarded the Austrian Science Prize 2018, for the best book in Humanities, Social Studies and Cultural Studies, for his work entitled “*Empire of Things*”.

2.16 In addition, Professor Jan Rueger (**Department of History**), was shortlisted for the highly prestigious Wolfson Prize for his work on *Heligoland: Britain, Germany, and the Struggle for the North Sea*, while Professor Marjorie Lorch (**Department of Applied Linguistics**) was part of a team which was awarded the Silver Gilt Medal of the Royal Horticultural Society, for their work on “*The Embroided Minds: Epilepsy Garden*”.

2.17 Finally, a student on the MSc Public Policy, Anne-Marie Canning, was awarded the MBE for her services to Higher Education, whilst Professor Paul Watt (**Department of Geography**), was appointed Chair of the Harringey Fairness Commission and Professor Joanna Bourke (**Department of History**), was appointed Chair of the PEN Hessel Tiltman Prize, judging the best work of historical non-fiction.
3. **RESEARCH**

3.1 The successes above clearly testify to the academic strengths of the College. As in previous years this has also resulted in the award of numerous research grants. In fact, despite an increasingly competitive research environment, this year we secured our highest research grant income ever at nearly £14 million and our overall research grant income reached £52.47 million, another record figure. I will highlight a small number of such grants which illustrate significant points concerning our research activities.

3.2 As usual, large grants were obtained by Departments in the School of Science. Importantly, Dr Emily Jones and Professor Mark Johnson of the Baby Lab, Department of Psychological Sciences, were part of a Consortium of forty-eight World Class Universities which were awarded the largest ever Autism Grant of 115 million Euros, to set up “Autism in Medicine-Trials”. 2.8 million Euros, of this funding will come to Birkbeck which is leading in the work on infants within the Consortium.

3.3 Also in the School of Science, Professor Carolyn Moores of the Department of Biological Sciences was part of a consortium which was awarded a European Research Synergy Grant of 10.7 million Euros, for the “Study of Muscle Development, Function and Disease” of which 3.4 million Euros will come to Birkbeck, for work using Electron Microscopy to investigate this topic. This award is particularly noteworthy because Professor Moores was also the Departmental lead for the successful Athena Swan Silver Award submission referred to above.

3.4 As well as the School of Science, major awards were also obtained elsewhere. The School of Business, Economics and Informatics was part of a Consortium which was awarded £40 million of Government funding to set up an Institute of Coding, in order to plug the digital skills gap and to promote the participation of underrepresented groups in the digital skills area. The Department of Computer Science within the School will use its expertise in flexible study in order to develop this area for those wishing to retrain and/or enhance their digital skills.

3.5 Other notable grants in BEI include £100,000 from the Michael J. Fox Foundation to Professor George Roussos (Department of Computer Science) to use smart phone and wearable APS to provide information on Parkinson patient motor skills, as well as an award from the British Academy to Dr Libby Drury (Organisational Psychology), to study “Intergenerational work relationships”.

3.6 Similarly, in the School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy, Dr Sue Brooks (Department of Geography), was awarded an Australian Research Council Discovery Award for A$ 324,000 for a UK - Australian collaboration “Analysing the vulnerability of coastal areas to sea rise”. Dr Melissa Butcher of the same Department was awarded an ESRC Grant to study “Challenges to small Cities in India in becoming a smart City”. In History, Classics and Archaeology, Dr Julia Laite has secured a grant of £99,700.
from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a project “To explore and record the heritage of Latimer Road and Ladbroke Grove”, and in particular, to share their stories of the Grenfell Tower fire, placing it in a longer timeline of history and heritage. In addition, Jessica Reinisch was awarded a HERA Grant, with partners in Paris, Maastricht and Uppsala, for a project on “The Scientific Conference: A Social, Cultural and Political History”.

3.7 In the School of Arts, Dr Toby Litt (Department of English and Humanities), was part of an £8 million Project funded by UK Research Innovation and the Government Industrial Strategy to examine “Mental Wellbeing of Students”, whilst Professor Martin Eve continued his successful run of grant applications in the area of Open Access Publishing, with an award from Open AIRE.

3.8 In another welcome development in the School of Arts, the College was part of the CHASE Consortium which succeeded in obtaining one of ten AHRC Doctoral Training Centres nationwide. This is of particular importance since in the last round of such Centre applications the College was part of an unsuccessful London-based Consortium. In contrast, the CHASE Consortium is more broadly based including not only institutions in London (Courtauld Institute, Goldsmith’s College, SOAS and ourselves) but also Universities in the South East (Sussex, Essex and Kent Universities and the University of East Anglia). The Consortium is able to award up to 56 PhD Studentships per year for the next five years. Our role in the successful South East/London Consortium parallels our involvement in other London-based PhD Consortia which have resulted in PhD Studentship Awards from all the other Research Councils in our research areas, BBSRC, ESRC, MRC and NERC.

3.9 These grant awards and the research excellence underlining them will be of great value when Birkbeck’s research is assessed in the next Government REF. Under the leadership of Professor Julian Swann, Pro-Vice Master Research and Dr Sarah Lee, Head of Research Strategy Support, we continue to prepare for this submission.

3.10 In REF 2021, research impact will represent 25% of the overall assessment and as it is something that usually develops over a lengthy timeframe, preparations have been ongoing to identify, encourage and track both new case studies and those submitted in 2014. Regular workshops have been held to assist academic staff to understand and prepare case studies and seed corn funding has been made available to help in their development. In total, it is expected that Birkbeck will submit c. 35-40 case studies, and in each Unit of Assessment (subject) the required number, plus reserves, have been identified. Preliminary drafts were reviewed by the College in July and it is expected that the College will soon be in a position to make final decisions about those case studies that will go forward, allowing time and resources to be concentrated accordingly.

3.11 Another major change in the regulations for the next REF is that requiring us to submit all staff with teaching and research contracts, rather than omitting those with inadequate or no outputs. In general, this is advantageous to Birkbeck which has always submitted a very high proportion of its eligible staff rather
than “game playing” by omitting those who would otherwise lower the average score of the submission. Following the Output Census conducted by Professor Swann in 2018, the REF working group is focusing on the relatively small number of individuals with no research outputs in the census period or whose research outputs are not of sufficiently high quality for submission.

3.12 Individuals in this category are being assisted and mentored to try and ensure that they produce an appropriate output before the end of the Census period. In some cases however, individuals are carrying a very heavy teaching and administrative load which is of enormous value to their School and Department but have therefore become effectively research-inactive. As part of our efforts to fully recognise teaching and administrative contributions (see under “Teaching” below), it may be more appropriate for these individuals to transfer to a teaching focused career pathway of equal status to the standard academic pathway, in order to ensure that their contributions are appropriately recognised.

3.13 To underpin its broader research environment and prepare for the REF, the College has been restructuring its research support. In August 2018, Birkbeck launched a new independent Research Office headed by Liz Francis, under the direction of the College Secretariat and PVM Research. While it is important to recognise the excellent work that has been achieved by the Finance Office and the RGCO team, the creation of a Research Office has been a long-standing ambition of the academic staff and it is part of a longer-term strategy of aligning Birkbeck’s structures with those of other research-intensive Universities. The new Research Office will offer enhanced and more focused support for individual researchers, the Departments and Schools, in identifying research grant funders, preparing applications and managing the post-award finance and administration for successful applicants.

3.14 Success in the CHASE and other Doctoral Training Partnerships, has been accompanied by the ongoing development of the Birkbeck Graduate Research School (BGRS), headed by its Manager, Tim Hoe. The BGRS is now functioning much more effectively and delivering what the students need through a much improved website, a presence on the College’s VLE (Moodle) and a more structured programme of training, events and activities. Each Department now sends a PGR representative for termly meetings with the BGRS Manager and PVM R and the student representatives have been established as the BGRS Steering Group. In addition, proactive systems of gap analysis are being undertaken to ensure that the generic skills training we offer meets the needs of our students. The BGRS is also working with IT Services to further develop and deliver an in-house Research Management System, “Research Track”. This will help research students, supervisors and support staff to better understand which stage each student has reached and to ensure that as many students as possible complete on time.

4. TEACHING

4.1 The uniqueness of Birkbeck lies in its flexible teaching model allowing students to combine work and family commitments with study. Moreover, the College’s
financial position (see below), is critically dependent on student recruitment and retention. Paradoxically however, in common with other research intensive institutions, we have traditionally given much greater weight in promotions, etc. to excellence in research compared to teaching or administrative work.

4.2 Clearly we need to continue to give considerable weight to research excellence in career progression at Birkbeck. However, we also need to recognise that we are critically dependent upon a number of colleagues who take a considerable teaching and administrative workload, which contributes greatly to the quality of our teaching and the student experience. In a number of cases, this has been achieved at the expense of their research, resulting in difficulties in promotion, etc.

4.3 For these reasons, we intend to introduce a new teaching focused career pathway with a distinct contract for use by mutual agreement with such staff. This will have the effect of better reflecting their work. Moreover, it will be possible to be promoted to a Professorship on the basis of work in the teaching and administrative fields by staff on such contracts and such a Professorship will be of equal status to that achieved by the traditional route.

4.4 This needs to be accompanied by a workload allocation model which ensures that all staff in a particular Department make a similar overall contribution to its various activities. Evidently, in different cases the balance of research, teaching and administrative activities will differ but it is important that each individual contributes a similar overall workload and in particular, younger staff are not given a heavier load than more senior staff. This is of particular importance in terms of equality issues and is one of the criteria for receiving Athena Swan Awards (see above).

4.5 I am therefore very pleased that we have reached agreement with staff and the Unions on such a workload allocation system in which each Department will be able to develop (or in many cases has already developed) its own workload allocation model, with these models being subject to central scrutiny.

4.6 Similarly, the College has been discussing with our Academic Staff Union, UCU, the agreement which governs the contract we use for our part-time Teaching and Scholarship staff (formerly known as Sessional Lecturers) and both sides have agreed in principle, a new approach which now needs negotiating in detail. This is likely to involve some Teaching and Scholarship Staff who do a significant amount of teaching moving onto fractional contracts to support their career development and teaching quality.

4.7 Evidently, the quality of teaching which we provide is a key element in student progression, achievement and satisfaction. In terms of student satisfaction, there were a number of positive elements in the results of this year’s National Student Survey (NSS) of final year students. In particular, Birkbeck achieved the highest score in London for teaching quality and third highest for overall satisfaction. Moreover, Birkbeck was rated number one in London for the organisation and management of its courses.
4.8 In terms of subject ratings, there were also a number of positive results. For example, a considerably improved score was recorded in Maths with our students rating us seventh in England for overall satisfaction and third in England for teaching, as well as being number one in London in both categories. Psychology and History of Art were also rated best in London for overall satisfaction whilst Accounting and English studies rated third best. Clearly, these results are encouraging but we need to do more to improve student satisfaction across all areas.

4.9 In this regard, under the leadership of Professor Diane Houston, Pro-Vice Master for Education we have begun to implement the conclusions of the Student Experience Review which reported to Governors in 2018. The overall aim of this work will be to make the College more navigable, supportive, transparent and consistent for all our students across all areas and levels of study.

4.10 Good progress has been made both in terms of initiating long-term initiatives and completing short-term projects. Changes to enrolment processes were successful in ensuring that many more of our students were ready and equipped to begin their studies in the first week of term. Over the summer, new strategies were employed to ensure that all students who are registered are engaging with study and that those who have taken a break in study are supported to return. Future IT developments will support this work and aims to support students in returning to study and to alleviate debt burden on students who are not progressing.

4.11 A centrally-coordinated orientation day was held in September for new students, almost 2,000 attended and feedback from students was positive. On the basis of this experience, plans for 2019 orientation are already underway.

4.12 A governance structure for the education strategy has been created and the new Education Committee and associated sub-committees are now in operation. The College’s personal tutor policy has been revised in order to make roles and responsibilities clearer, this work will be supported by more on-line support for tutoring outlined below.

4.13 A substantial review of the College’s approach to technology enhanced learning, was conducted over the summer and a report considered by the Education Committee in October. This report paves the way for a new Digital Education Strategy and the appointment of a Head of Digital Education (see Recovery Plan section). The strategy will aim to embed digital education across the College, creating an important scaffold for our classroom teaching.

4.14 A review of the College’s academic regulations and policies has taken place and a set of proposed revisions have been consulted on. This includes changes to undergraduate programme structures and the introduction of progression rules to ensure that students can achieve their best possible performance. In addition, ongoing work will look critically at our portfolio as part of our Annual Review processes and consider innovation and teaching efficiency.
4.15 Over the summer period, the College was offered the opportunity to be the first in London to pilot a service called 'Studiosity'. This has been widely used in Australia and has been adopted by a number of UK Universities. Studiosity is an online service that provides 24/7/365 feedback on assignments prior to submission and also access to a live online tutor, to work through problems with more numeric/formula based work. Assignment feedback will be given within 24 hours by a specialist in academic writing and focuses on key elements such as structure, language, grammar and punctuation. The feedback does not cover subject-level content; it supports students in making their arguments and producing clear, grammatical text. This service has been made available to all our first year students for this academic year and has received very positive feedback.

4.16 In parallel with these processes, we also need to respond to student demand for more study space, both individual “quiet” space and space for small group discussion. For 2018-2019, a large space on the ground floor in Malet Street (G20) has been made available for study space and a co-ordinated programme of student support activities.

4.17 We are also proposing a redevelopment of the library located in our main Birkbeck building to make this a place where students can study effectively and where they have all the support in one place, including a Wellbeing Centre, support for study skills and assistive technology.

4.18 In this project, new space will be dedicated to group work with flexible furnishings, assistive technology and dedicated pods designed to encourage collaborative learning. There will also be 15% more silent study space for individual working.

4.19 As part of this work we will also reconsider the entrance to our building on the ground floor. The plans include outdoor seating expanding out into Torrington Square, a Café, flexible meeting space and a Student Common Room. This is a major project with an estimated cost of £3 million and its prioritisation is discussed further in the section on Estates.

4.20 As well as developing the Student Experience and thereby promoting effective learning and retention, as in all previous years, there has been a major focus on student recruitment which is crucial to our mission and financial stability.

4.21 Encouragingly, our marketing and recruitment activity generated the highest number of applications since 2011, with 18,363 applications being received for 2018-2019 entry, 9% up on last year. Similarly, total offers made were up 10% to 12,415. This is very encouraging despite increased competitiveness in the market. However, we need to pay close attention to the conversion from offer to acceptance, which is clearly our weak point.

4.22 Thus, for example, applications to our three-year Undergraduate Degrees via UCAS showed an increase of 6% year-on-year at Birkbeck compared to a 4% decline in England as a whole. However, conversion to acceptance decreased by 5% compared to the previous year. This is presumably due to increased
competition in the sector, with Universities accepting students with lower predicted grades.

4.23 Interestingly, part-time, four year, undergraduate Degree recruitment increased for the first time since 2011-2012 with enrolments up 27%. This is possibly due to the introduction of maintenance loans for part-time students for the first time in 2018-2019. However, the procedure for applying for such loans was only announced by Government very late in the 2018-2019, application cycle so we would expect the availability of these loans to have a greater impact in 2019-2020 onwards.

4.24 Unfortunately, applications from EU students continue to decline. There was a 12% fall in 2018-2019 applications compared to 2017-1018, with a continuing differential between those EU applicants who are UK domiciled (down 24%) and those domiciled in EU countries (down 2%). Encouragingly however, the conversion from offer to enrolment increased by 7% overall (to 50%), so resulting in enrolment being down only 6% in the UK domiciled group, compared to the 24% decrease in applications. This may represent the first impact of our announcement that students who have to leave Birkbeck due to change of circumstances (for example, relocation of their job to an EU country) can retain their credits and complete their course on-line at the Open University. Clearly, we need to publicise this further as well as emphasizing that 2019-2020 will be the last year in which EU students are guaranteed loans and home fees for the duration of their course.

4.25 In terms of international applications from non-EU countries, these grew to 5,434, an increase of 26% on 2017-2018 applications for Undergraduate and Postgraduate full-time programmes. In spite of a decrease in the conversion rate from offer to enrolment, this has translated into a 14% increase in enrolments. Moreover, it has contributed significantly to the growth of full-time Masters’ recruitment which is now at a record level of 946 new students (Home, EU, Overseas enrolled). As part of this, we recruited thirty students from twenty one countries with Chevening Scholarships for future global leaders.

4.26 Overall, these changes contributed to a predicted increase in fee income of approximately £1.5 million in 2018-2019, compared to 2017-2018, reversing the decline in fee income seen in 2017-2018, compared to 2016-2017. Although this is encouraging, it does mean that we have fallen short of the fee income target set for 2018-2019 and this will therefore contribute to our ongoing financial difficulties. The manner in which we need to respond to such difficulties is discussed in the next section.

5. **RECOVERY PLAN**

**New Initiatives**

5.1 Although the 2019-2020 applications recruitment cycle is still at an early stage, the early signs are encouraging. Applications are currently up 21% for 2019-2020 entry, (4,819 applications compared to 3,986 last year). At this stage of
the cycle, applications are predominantly from international students, with an increase on last year of 32%. However, home applications are up by 6% and EU applications are up by 32%, although these are relatively small numbers. Offers are up 50% on this time last year, with postgraduate Masters offers up by 94% on last year and undergraduate full-time offers up 27%.

5.2 These are encouraging signs and we need to continue our intensive recruitment campaign, emphasising particularly that this is the last year EU students will be able to have access to UK Government-backed loans and to pay home fees. Similarly, we need to emphasize the availability of maintenance loans for part-time undergraduate students since this is the first full recruitment cycle when information about such loans and the method for applying for them will be available.

5.3 Our challenge however, is to ensure that as many of these applications and offers as possible are converted into enrolments. One major part of this is to ensure that offers are made as quickly as possible before the student has received offers from other institutions which they may potentially have accepted before the Birkbeck offer is made. Encouragingly, we are making offers more quickly than before.

5.4 This is of particular importance with younger students applying via UCAS, who are heavily influenced by the timing of offers, in responding to the five institutions they have applied to.

5.5 Unfortunately, there are still a number of applications where a decision has not been made within 30 days or indeed in some case within 50 days. We have analysed the Departments and Courses where these backlogs are occurring so allowing Deans and Assistant Deans to intervene appropriately. Moreover, it is clear that we need to move to a more centralised admission system in which straightforward decisions on the basis of the applicant’s qualifications are taken centrally and only more complex cases are considered within individual Departments. Such a centralised admissions system was successfully piloted by the Academic Registrar Fraser Keir and his colleagues in the run up to the January 15 UCAS deadline for students preparing to take their A levels to submit university applications. Straightforward admission decisions were taken by Registry staff with the more complex cases referred to academic departments. As a result 56% of home/EU applicants and 48% of international applicants received a decision by return, resulting in 634 more UCAS offers being made than at the same point last year.

5.6 Although the current increase in applications/offers and the efforts to increase enrolments are encouraging, they are unlikely to yield a sufficient increase in student numbers in future years to provide us with financial sustainability. We therefore need to consider new initiatives which will both be in accordance with our mission to provide flexible Higher Education and yield increased student enrolment and therefore fee income.
**Foundation Year**

5.7 We have recently introduced the option of a full-time Foundation Year as a preparation for our full-time three-year Programmes, appropriate for those who are not yet ready to begin degree level study.

5.8 From 2019-2020, we will offer an integrated Foundation Year Programme across SSHP, Arts and BEI, which will provide core modules designed to ensure that students have well-developed skills for academic study, by the time they begin their degree programme.

5.9 In 2018-2019 applications to the undergraduate Degree with Foundation Year were up 49% compared to 2017-2018 with 17% of the “with Foundation Year” applicants being referred from the three-year Degree for which they had applied. This innovation is important therefore both in terms of increasing student numbers but also providing an appropriate route for a number of candidates who might otherwise struggle to complete the three-year Degree.

5.10 For the first time, we are currently recruiting to the Undergraduate Degree with Foundation Year in both Computer Science and Business for entry in 2019-2020. These are the biggest recruiting subjects for Degree with Foundation Year across London providing a considerable scope for growth.

5.11 In future, we need to ensure that the Undergraduate Degree with Foundation Year is implemented across our full portfolio and that it is also offered in part-time mode to students preparing for entry to the four-year part-time Degree.

**Access to Postgraduate Courses**

5.12 As well as enhancing access to Undergraduate Degrees, we need to recognise that Postgraduate Degrees are the “new frontier” of widening participation. Thus, there will be many individuals who need to obtain a Postgraduate Degree for their employment and career progression but who are not yet fully prepared to take such a course.

5.13 To this end, research has been conducted within Birkbeck into the barriers to Postgraduate study and the reasons for individuals being rejected when they apply for such study.

5.14 Following this, it is clear that we need to develop a pre-study proposal, paralleling the Foundation Year at Undergraduate level, with appropriate on-programme support. The availability of a pre-entry offer should allow us both to make offers to individuals who we currently reject for direct entry to a Masters Programme, as well as enhancing applications from individuals who realise that they are not ready for such a programme and would be attracted by the offer of a pre-programme prior to the Masters Course.
Short Courses

5.15 Clearly, access to Birkbeck at Undergraduate or Postgraduate level may involve short Preparatory Courses designed to bring the individual up to the level where they can begin degree study. However, short courses are also of importance for other purposes, for example, many individuals in specific professions require continuing professional development (CPD) other than full Degree courses to enhance their careers. Similarly, there will be others who simply wish to learn more for whom public engagement activities with high quality lectures, etc. would be appropriate.

5.16 The area of short courses is a complex one with individuals taking such courses for a wide variety of different reasons. We need to analyse our existing Higher Education Certificate provision (including Higher Education Introductory Studies: HEIS) to determine whether it is fulfilling an appropriate role, then carry out market analysis to understand where we could develop our provision in the short course area.

Interactions with Business

5.17 The potential for CPD Courses discussed above represents only one example of potential interaction with business. Under the leadership of the Pro-Vice Master for Enterprise and Innovation, Professor Philip Powell, several Apprenticeship Programmes have been developed with a blend of Modules from existing Programmes and Work-based Learning. These Programmes are Chartered Manager (Undergraduate), Digital and Technology Solutions (Undergraduate), Laboratory Scientist (Foundation) and Senior Leader (Postgraduate).

5.18 Although these Programmes have suffered from the general unpopularity of the Government’s Apprenticeship Scheme, as well as bureaucratic difficulties, they offer a unique opportunity for a student to study with the fee being paid by their employer out of the Apprenticeship levy which the employer loses if they do not spend it on their own employees.

5.19 We have now been successful in recruiting Apprenticeship students both from the world of business (for example, five Apprentices from Morgan Stanley) as well as from local Councils (including Camden). Unfortunately this work is time-intensive both in dealing with the bureaucratic rules of the scheme and persuading individual companies to send their staff to us. We are currently recruiting a Corporate Partnerships Manager (Apprenticeships and Professional Development) whose brief will be to increase the numbers at steady-state to 100-200 apprentices.

5.20 As well as student recruitment, our engagement with business obviously has several other aspects. For example, a number of staff at specific businesses act as mentors for our students advising them, for example, on how to prepare for the job market during their course. Similarly, a number of companies support us philanthropically. For example, Santander has supported the College previously in the area of scholarships for Latin American students and support
Governors’ AwayDay 2019

for entrepreneurship initiatives. This year, Santander invited all its 80+ partner Universities in the UK to enter a competition for £100,000 of further entrepreneurship funding and Birkbeck was one of the five successful Universities in this competition. Santander funding will support our Pioneer Programme providing advice to potential entrepreneurs amongst our students as well as conducting a research project as to the most effective manner of supporting potential entrepreneurs at an early stage.

5.21 In many cases, the first interaction with a business may involve only one aspect of our potential interaction with that business. We have therefore set up a Business Engagement Forum, under my Chairmanship, which analyses our interactions with individual businesses in terms of student recruitment, corporate philanthropy, research/consultancy and mentoring/volunteering. It then considers how best to move from an initial interaction in one area into linking with that business in other areas.

5.22 In its early work, the Group has analysed the numbers and roles of our alumni within specific business organisations in order to identify ways in which they could assist us in broadening our relationship with their organisation. Similarly, the Group has identified a potential for widespread mentoring programmes such that we aim to provide each individual student in Birkbeck with the offer of a mentor to assist them through their programme and beyond. A mentor could be a Birkbeck alumnus or simply an individual within a business who wishes to give some of their time pro-bono. If we can implement such a programme it should have considerable positive benefits in terms of retention and of career progression of our students.

**Online provision**

5.23 Although face-to-face learning will remain the core of the majority of our courses (either alone or as blended learning), we need to consider online provision where appropriate. For example, major firms with offices nationwide and indeed internationally have indicated to us that they do not wish to have separate apprenticeship provision for their staff in London but would prefer online provision for all their appropriate staff.

5.24 We do already very successfully conduct fully on-line provision in association with the University of London International Academy, for example, in Law and Organisational Psychology. Further discussions have taken place with a view to expanding this provision introducing, for example, MSc in Global Marketing, which is likely to attract a large number of students. Development of such courses will be based on our relationship with the International Academy and provide an additional source of students/income.

5.25 In addition however, we are also engaging with commercial providers who have an excellent reputation in working with individual Universities to produce online versions of the University’s courses. Discussions are therefore taking place with a view to doing this for several of our more popular courses and potentially for the Undergraduate Apprenticeship in Chartered Management.
5.26 As noted in the previous section, the number of overseas students on our full-time Undergraduate and Postgraduate Course continues to rise. Thus, international applications for 2018-2019 grew by 26% which translated into a 14% increase in enrolment and thus far, applications for 2019-2020 from international students are up 32% on last year.

5.27 To continue and enhance this progress, we need to invest more effort and resource in marketing both in our regular recruitment areas (such as the USA, China and India) as well as in new markets where we have not thus far carried out any recruitment work. We also need to use scholarships to attract students from markets where these are considered an important part of the offer.

5.28 In parallel with these approaches, the Pro-Vice Master International, Professor Kevin Ibeh, has been developing links with a number of Universities overseas. As well as being important for the development of future strategic alliances such as our alliance with NYU (see above), these are also of importance as a potential source of student recruitment. Thus, rather than simply recruiting students individually we can also form alliances with overseas institutions which wish to send their students to London. For example, following initial links brokered by Professor Ibeh, the Beijing Film Academy is now in detailed discussions with our Faculty of Arts and Humanities, which could result in them sending approximately 100 students per year to study at Birkbeck, taking advantage of our considerable expertise in the film area.

5.29 The various programmes described at (a) to (f) above, have the potential to deliver significant income for the College and most importantly are in accordance with our mission of providing flexible Higher Education. However, many of them are highly time-intensive and require an individual lead in the area who is not burdened with other administrative responsibilities. For example, in the area of Foundation Year provision, Professor Joanne Leal is taking the lead, whilst the development of different aspects of our relations with individual businesses via the Business Engagement Forum, is being led by Anneka Hendrick, Head of Corporate Partnerships in the Development and Alumni Team.

5.30 In other areas however, we need to recruit individuals to take the lead, working closely with the appropriate member of the Senior Management Team. We therefore issued an internal call for individuals to take the lead in three areas, widening access to Masters’ Programmes; Digital Education and Short Courses/Continuing Professional Development. A number of expressions of interest have been received. In January, I will chair an Interview Panel to decide on the most appropriate individuals to lead in these areas.

5.31 In addition, in reviewing the recommendation of our external consultants, SQW, on Birkbeck Stratford, we have identified that a number of these areas are highly relevant to our provision in Stratford. It has become clear that more of the same at Stratford will not maximise its usefulness to us. Rather, our
provision at Stratford requires a radical overhaul involving potentially more online courses and continuing professional development courses, and courses providing access to postgraduate study. We therefore potentially have the ability to develop Stratford as a test-bed for new ideas. These new initiatives, if successful, can become a major focus of our Stratford provision providing a separate identity for Stratford and allowing us to compete successfully with newer providers in East London. This work on the development of Stratford is being led by Caroline McDonald, Director of Widening Access and Engagement together with the Vice-Master, Professor Matthew Innes.

Implementing Savings

5.32 The initiatives described above have the potential to produce considerable growth with the aim of increasing our student body to a stable level of 10,500 FTE. However, we also need to prepare for the possibility that these initiatives take some time to deliver or deliver only partially. Therefore, we need to function in a more efficient manner so that we can stabilise at a break even position with the current student body of approximately 9,000 FTE. This will allow time for our new initiatives to bear fruit and further enhance the College’s financial position.

5.33 This involves operating more efficiently, for example, in terms of not teaching small and uneconomic courses as recommended by the Student Experience Review, as well as further investigating other potential innovations such as three term teaching and extended evening teaching hours. Similarly, we need to conduct a full review of professional services including the potential for greater delegation to central administration as piloted in the admissions process (see above), so that Departments can focus on the more complex situations requiring specialist input.

5.34 Most importantly, the introduction of academic workload models across all Departments combined with a review of School and Central Professional Services will ensure that duties are distributed in the most equitable and efficient manner.

5.35 Clearly, since the vast majority of our costs involve staff salaries, this process will need to involve the loss of individual members of staff. For this reason we have once again launched a Voluntary Severance and Early Retirement Scheme (VSER).

5.36 The plans endorsed by Governors provide a one-off, time-limited budget to support restructuring through early retirement and/or voluntary severance. In the current climate, other institutions have been reviewing their arrangements and in considering the update to our current scheme we have thus taken account of best practice. The proposed offer available now is a generous one and reflects the current needs of the College. However, it is also time-limited and consequently may not be available in the future.

5.37 The scheme has the aim of achieving a £2 million savings target which will involve reducing by approximately fourteen academic staff and seventeen
professional services staff, assuming a proportion of split based on current staff expenditure. Clearly further staff losses will be required either as part of VSER or subsequently, if student numbers do not grow as expected.

5.38 It is clearly important that in implementing savings, we bear in mind not only improvement in efficiency across the College but also the financial state of individual Departments and their staff/student ratios (SSR). In 2017-2018 the Internal Distribution Model (IDM) shows nine of our eighteen Departments in deficit and nine in surplus. The deficit Departments will be required to produce a plan to return to break even or better based on increasing student numbers and/or reducing staff costs. In the majority of cases this will need to be achieved within a year although those Departments with larger deficits and more complex issues (particularly Biological Sciences and Psychological Sciences) will require more time to deliver the full recovery plan. In all these Departments replacement of existing staff who leave will be dependent on analysis of the SSR and demonstrating clear progress against the recovery plan as well as the strategic importance of filling the post.

5.39 In those Departments with small surpluses, replacements of existing staff will also be closely scrutinised and any additional posts will only be allowed against a business plan, which clearly shows an improvement in the Department’s financial position based on this additional post rather than any deterioration.

5.40 Although the surpluses in most surplus Departments are relatively small (less than £250,000 per annum), one Department, **Management**, has a surplus in excess of £2.5 million. This Department clearly has the possibility of delivering even further improvements in its student numbers and surplus, provided that further resources are provided. For example, the introduction of new distance learning, **MSc in Marketing**, in association with the University of London International Academy will clearly require additional staff resource and it would be foolish not to provide this in an area which has considerable potential for expansion and financial success.

5.41 Overall therefore, we need to continue with the student recruitment initiatives described above, whilst ensuring that we cut costs and operate in the most efficient manner possible so as to ensure our financial stability if individual initiatives deliver partially or not at all.

**Political Developments**

5.42 Our difficulties with student numbers and therefore our finances stem from the unique nature of our student body. For example, our student numbers would be at a sustainable level if we had not experienced a considerable decline in enrolments of EU nationals living in the UK due to Brexit. Similarly, we previously experienced a considerable decline in numbers on our four-year Undergraduate Degrees based on mature students not wishing to take out Government loans for the increased fees.

5.43 As well as enhancing student numbers and reducing costs as described above, we therefore also need to lobby politically in order to improve the support
provided for our students and potential students so as to increase the numbers who apply to us.

5.44 Clearly, it is unlikely that anything we do will influence the treatment of EU students in the future. The Government has announced that such students will in future be treated as overseas students in terms of not being eligible for UK loans. For this year’s recruitment cycle we therefore need to emphasize that this is the last opportunity for such students to access loans (which will be available for their entire course) as well as indicating the opportunity of transferring with their accumulated credits to the Open University, should they be posted outside the UK during their course.

5.45 In the future, we will need to consider how our fee structure will operate. On the one hand we can charge the same overseas fee for EU students as for other overseas students. This could involve offering Scholarships for some or all EU students to reduce the fee level to the home level or accepting that the overseas fee will deter many EU students but the income obtained from those that remain will increase on a per capita basis.

5.46 Alternatively, in a more radical approach, we could charge the home fee (although without loans) to EU citizens already living in the U.K. This could ultimately evolve into a fee system where the differentiator between lower and higher fees was not nationality but period of residence in the UK, with the home fee being paid by all individuals regardless of nationality, who had lived in the UK for say, two years.

5.47 Most importantly, in parallel with our internal discussions about future support for EU students, we need to continue our intensive lobbying campaign with Government to enhance support for part-time and mature students. In 2018, the Government launched a Review of Post-18 Education, led by Philip Augar, which is due to report early in 2019. We have met two of the Review Members, Professor Sir Ivor Crewe and our Fellow, Baroness Alison Wolf and it is clear that the Review Panel clearly understand that the market has failed in part-time Higher Education leading to catastrophic falls in student numbers. I believe they also understand the need to do something about this.

5.48 In terms of the general remit of the Augar Review, there have been a number of leaks designed to test the response to various proposals. One of these was that the fees for full-time courses would be reduced to £6,500-£7,000, rather that £9,000 with potentially Government support to Universities for all or some areas to make up the difference. This has provoked a horrified response across the sector based at least in part on the belief that Government will not top up Universities to compensate for the reduction in fee income. Working closely with Jonathan Woodhead, our Policy Adviser and Ollie Berman, our Head of Communications, I have developed a strategy for responding to these leaks with a particular slant on the part-time sector.

5.49 In response to the leak on fee income, we responded in the Sunday Times and the THE indicating that we would welcome a 50% reduction in the fee for part-time study, provided that Government made up the difference in grants to the
Universities teaching part-time students. This recognised that the market had failed in part-time due to the loan aversion of part-time/mature students. A fee reduction would therefore be likely to increase applications from such students enhancing their lifelong learning and career development.

5.50 The possibility of such a partial shift from loans to direct support to Universities occurring has been increased by the recent decision by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) that Government must account in the current deficit for the proportion of loans which will not be repaid rather than only writing this off, at the end of the repayment period. This means that there is no advantage to Government in terms of its accounting systems of a loan compared to providing direct support to Universities.

5.51 Moreover, we have responded to a further leak indicating that loans may not be available to those with A level grades lower than a certain threshold (potentially 3 Ds). Obviously, we have been lobbying that this should not apply to mature students returning to Higher Education with minimal or low qualifications and informally we do understand that this proposal, if introduced, would only apply to those below the age of 24. However, we also need to lobby that an exemption should apply to those of whatever age who choose to take a Foundation Year combined with a three-year Degree, so as to prepare themselves for Higher Education and also to those taking part-time courses and combining them with work, regardless of their age.

5.52 Overall, our argument needs to be that whilst the vocational route involving not studying full-time at a University from the age of 18 is certainly a valuable one, steps need to be taken to allow individuals who opt for this route to obtain a University education either via part-time study or at a stage of their life/career appropriate to them.

5.53 In the past, our lobbying has achieved a number of changes to the funding system, such as an increase in subjects exempt from the Equivalent or lesser Qualifications (ELQ) rule, the introduction of fee loans and subsequently maintenance loans for part-time undergraduate students and the raising of the age restriction of postgraduate loans rendering individuals under 60 years of age eligible rather than only those of under 30 years of age.

5.54 However, the existence of the Augar Review, as well as the apparent belief of some of its members and many in Government that too many individuals go to University at the age of 18, offers a unique opportunity to lobby for a significant change in the whole system. Thus, we should agree that full-time day-time University study at the age of 18 is not appropriate for many. However, rather than being encouraged to enter an irreversible pathway of vocational education outside University, such individuals should be offered the opportunity to study to combine work and vocationally-related University study at the age of 18, or having taken the vocational route to return to University at a stage of their lives appropriate for them. If we can achieve this, we should not only see a significant increase in applications from younger and more mature individuals to study at Birkbeck, we will also have ensured the continuity of our mission in
the medium to long-term and enhanced its relevance to current and future conditions.

6. **ESTATES**

6.1 Governors have approved an ambitious £150 million Building Programme designed both to enhance our research facilities and to ensure that all Birkbeck students are taught on premises owned either entirely by Birkbeck or in partnership with another institution where Birkbeck has exclusive evening use of the facilities.

6.2 This programme consists of four major Projects namely:

A. **Provision of Toddler Lab Research facilities in a new building**, 33 Torrington Square and refurbished 32 Torrington Square.

B. **Refurbishment of Cambridge House**, with addition of a two-storey sky level lecture theatre.

C. **Building an infill block**, outside the current Council Room, for Biological Sciences laboratories.

D. **Demolition and rebuilding of the Extension Building**, to create a new Teaching facility.

6.3 The first three projects were placed into **Phase 1** of this Programme, with the ambitious/expensive **Project D** to be carried out in a subsequent second phase.

6.4 Since the approval of this plan, we have made considerable progress on **Projects A and B**, both of which are now underway. The preferred building contractor has now been working on the site of the Toddler Lab for several months and is making good progress. In terms of Cambridge House, planning permission has been obtained and we are about to sign the contract with our preferred building contractor.

6.5 Both these projects are monitored monthly by Project Boards chaired by myself and including Peter Zinkin, our lay Governor with appropriate Estates expertise, internal Birkbeck staff, (including the College Secretary, Keith Harrison and the Director of Estates, Jeremy Tanner), as well as our professional advisors.

6.6 These projects should therefore proceed smoothly to completion providing us with excellent research facilities for one of our top ranked groups, as well as a new facility providing more teaching rooms and other student-focused space.

6.7 However, in view of the financial situation, we need to consider how to proceed with **Project C**, the **Infill building** which was originally placed in **Phase 1** of the Programme. Thus, in the near future, we cannot expect financial contributions from any surpluses towards the cost of the project and indeed may have to use some of our reserves to service our current deficits.

6.8 Moreover, we now have two additional Estates projects which need to be carried out urgently, namely, the redevelopment of the **Library**, in accordance
with the Student Experience Review (see above), and the urgent refurbishment of our properties in Gordon Square which have now been found to have significant safety issues, that need to be urgently remedied and the opportunity taken to render these buildings fit for purpose. Although these projects are less costly than the four main projects, they will both require significant sums which need to be taken into account.

6.9 It seems clear therefore, that we should place the building of the Infill building into Phase 2 of the programme, together with the building of the Extension block. This makes sense not only in financial terms but also given that the building of the Infill building is designed to facilitate the rebuilding of the Extension block by removing the Science labs from it, as well as providing excellent new facilities for Biological Sciences.

6.10 In doing this, we should consider the affordability of these projects, not only in terms of the positive or negative contribution of our income/expenditure account to capital projects but also in terms of the potential for additional income.

6.11 Thus, our Fundraising Team under the leadership of Chris Murphy, Director of Development and Alumni, has been successful in obtaining major donations for the Toddler lab (Wohl Foundation, Wolfson Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, Daniel and Elizabeth Peltz) and we are now in advanced discussion with two major donors who are considering multi-million pound proposals, to support the Cambridge House project. These would be recognised respectively by the naming of the building or the sky-level lecture theatre. Similarly, we have had initial discussions regarding a major donation for the Library project.

6.12 The success and future activity of our Fundraising team in the Capital Projects area is paralleled by their success in other areas. Overall in 2017-28, £2.4 million of new philanthropic income was raised for widening access/student support and for research as well as for capital projects. The silent phase of our 200th Anniversary Campaign has now raised over £13 million, paving the way for the successful public launch of the Campaign. Moreover, Helen Shaw, Head of Campaign Management has taken the lead in co-ordinating all our 200th Anniversary activities.

6.13 The success and potential of our Fundraising Campaign for Building Projects does indicate the potential for it to contribute to the development of Phase 2, when combined with regular assessment of the overall financial position both of the College and specifically of the building programme. Thus, if our recovery plan develops as proposed, this would result in our not being required to use reserves to service ongoing deficits as well as moving into surplus with the funds being potentially available for Estates projects. Similarly, if we are successful in signing a 15-year leasehold agreement with NYU, this will provide a considerable capital injection to the College, a major part of which could be used in the Cambridge House development, minimising the call on our reserves.
Finally, as well as identifying sources of funding for the Estates Programme, we also need to look critically at the **Extension Block Project** to see whether an extensive refurbishment, rather than demolition and rebuilding, would offer a more cost-effective proposition to achieve what we require. Similarly, should the **Extension Block Project** as rebuild/refurbishment prove to be unaffordable in the short/medium term, we need to ensure that the **Infill building** is put to the most appropriate use for the College's immediate needs.

Overall therefore, the Estates Programme is on course to deliver two major projects namely, the **Toddler Lab** and **Cambridge House**, together with refurbishment of the **Library** and of **Gordon Square**. We need to continue consideration of how best to move forward with the **Infill building** as well as ultimately the **Extension Building** as the financial situation improves.

**CONCLUSION**

Evidently, it is of great importance that we deal with the difficult financial situation and progressively recover to a break even and then surplus position. An important component of this recovery plan will be reduction in costs and ensuring that we operate in as efficient a manner as possible, particularly in our teaching and administrative/recruitment procedures. However, this needs to be combined with the recruitment of additional students via emphasis on different forms of provision and access to them, so that we not only benefit financially but also sustain and develop our unique mission. Similarly, the current political environment provides a valuable opportunity to lobby on behalf of this mission and to emphasize its importance as an alternative model of University education combined with work, either immediately after school or at an appropriate point in an individual's career development.

This combination of greater efficiency and increased recruitment will allow us to fulfil our mission of providing an opportunity to all those who can benefit from our flexible model of Higher Education and providing them with the very best facilities to do so as we move towards our 200th Anniversary and beyond.

**Professor David S. Latchman**

January 2019