

# CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY REPORTER

No 6764

WEDNESDAY 18 DECEMBER 2024

VOL CLV No 13

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UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

## NOTICES

### Calendar

18 December, *Wednesday*. Last ordinary issue of the *Reporter* in Michaelmas Term.

19 December, *Thursday*. Michaelmas Term ends.

25 December, *Wednesday*. Christmas Day. Scarlet Day.

5 January, *Sunday*. Lent Term begins.

8 January, *Wednesday*. First ordinary issue of the *Reporter* in Lent Term.

21 January, *Tuesday*. Full Term begins. Ballot of the Regent House, voting opens at 10 a.m. Discussion by videoconference at 2 p.m. (see below).

24 January, *Friday*. End of first quarter of Lent Term.

31 January, *Friday*. Congregation of the Regent House at 2 p.m. Ballot of the Regent House, voting closes at 5 p.m.

### Discussion on Tuesday, 21 January 2025

The Vice-Chancellor invites members of the Regent House, University and College employees, registered students and others qualified under the regulations for Discussions (*Statutes and Ordinances*, p. 111) to attend a Discussion by **videoconference** on Tuesday, 21 January 2025 at 2 p.m. The following items will be discussed:

1. Annual Report of the Council for the academic year 2023–24 (*Reporter*, 6762, 2024–25, p. 152).
2. Annual Report of the General Board to the Council for the academic year 2023–24 (*Reporter*, 6762, 2024–25, p. 160).
3. Report of the General Board, dated 17 December 2024, on the establishment of a Department of Public Policy (Bennett School of Public Policy) (p. 196).

Those wishing to join the Discussion by videoconference should email [UniversityDraftsman@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:UniversityDraftsman@admin.cam.ac.uk) from their University email account, providing their CRSid (if a member of the collegiate University), by 10 a.m. on the date of the Discussion to receive joining instructions. Alternatively contributors may email their remarks to [contact@proctors.cam.ac.uk](mailto:contact@proctors.cam.ac.uk), copying [ReporterEditor@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ReporterEditor@admin.cam.ac.uk), by no later than 10 a.m. on the day of the Discussion for reading out by the Proctors,<sup>1</sup> or may ask someone else who is attending to read the remarks on their behalf.

In accordance with the regulations for Discussions, the Chair of the Board of Scrutiny or any ten members of the Regent House<sup>2</sup> may request that the Council arrange for one or more of the items listed for discussion to be discussed in person (usually in the Senate-House). Requests should be made to the Registrary, on paper or by email to [UniversityDraftsman@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:UniversityDraftsman@admin.cam.ac.uk) from addresses within the cam.ac.uk domain, by no later than 9 a.m. on the day of the Discussion. Any changes to the Discussion schedule will be confirmed in the *Reporter* at the earliest opportunity.

General information on Discussions is provided on the University Governance site at <https://www.governance.cam.ac.uk/governance/decision-making/discussions/>.

<sup>1</sup> Any comments sent by email should please begin with the name and title of the contributor as they wish it to be read out and include at the start a note of any College and/or Departmental affiliations held.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.scrutiny.cam.ac.uk/> and [https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/regent\\_house\\_roll/section1.shtml](https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/regent_house_roll/section1.shtml).

## University Composition Fees

17 December 2024

The Council is proposing amendments to the fees for certain categories of students as set out in the Table of Fees attached to the Ordinance for University Composition Fees.

### A. Home Undergraduate regulated fees in 2025–26

*Cost of an undergraduate education*

1. Ordinances provide that recommendations for the University Composition Fees to be charged to Home undergraduate students be accompanied by an analysis of the cost of an undergraduate education agreed by the General Board and the Council following consultation with the Colleges (*Statutes and Ordinances*, p. 155; Grace 13 of 26 May 2011). The outcome of the agreed calculation for 2022–23 is an average cost per student of £30.2k as follows:

2022–23	£k / UG FTE
University expenditure	21.7
less: College fee	(4.8)
net University expenditure	17.0
plus: College expenditure	13.3
<b>Total cost</b>	<b>30.2</b>

*Home undergraduate students subject to the regulated maximum fee (Table 1 in the attached Schedule)*

2. In November 2024 the government's Education Secretary announced<sup>1</sup> that the maximum tuition fee cap for Home students would increase to £9,535 with effect from the start of the 2025–26 academic year.

3. The Council therefore proposes that Home students admitted on or after 1 September 2017 will be liable for a fee of £9,535 in 2025–26. The cap and fee may be increased for those students and for new entrants in future years.

4. Table 1 in the Schedule sets out the fees subject to the cap, including the fee for the year abroad.

5. Fees for the courses in Table 2 in the Schedule shall be as set out in the table.

6. Fees for the degree of Master of Architecture (M.Arch.) and the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (P.G.C.E.) are also regulated by the government and are in line with the fees as described above.

## **B. Home Equivalent and lower qualification (ELQ) exemptions**

*Fees for ELQ-exempt students in 2025–26*

7. Students aiming for equivalent or lower qualification (ELQ) on courses in Medical and Veterinary Sciences leading to the B.A. Degree, as defined in the Regulations, to the M.B. or B.Chir. Degrees, the Vet.M.B. Degree, on courses in Architecture, or the Postgraduate Certificate in Education, are exempt from the ELQ policy and pay the regulated fees set out in Tables 1 and 2.

The Council is accordingly submitting a Grace to the Regent House (Grace 1, p. 198) for the approval of the fees set out in the Schedule attached to this Notice.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tuition-fees-and-student-support-2025-to-2026-academic-year>.

## **SCHEDULE**

*Home undergraduate and certain other fees in 2025–26 for students subject to the regulated fee*

**TABLE 1**

<i>Qualification</i>	<i>Annual fee (£)</i>	
	<b>Home</b>	
	<b>2025–26</b>	
	<b>Students who commenced on or after 1 September 2012 but before 1 September 2017</b>	<b>Students who commenced on or after 1 September 2017<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>B.A. Degree:</b> <i>Courses leading to Tripos, Preliminary or Ordinary Examinations in</i>		
<b>Group 1</b>		
Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic	9,000	9,535
Archaeology	9,000	9,535
Asian and Middle Eastern Studies	9,000	9,535
Classics	9,000	9,535
Economics	9,000	9,535
Education	9,000	9,535
English	9,000	9,535
History	9,000	9,535
History and Modern Languages	9,000	9,535
History and Politics	9,000	9,535
History of Art	9,000	9,535
Human, Social and Political Sciences	9,000	9,535
Land Economy	9,000	9,535
Law	9,000	9,535
Linguistics	9,000	9,535
Modern and Medieval Languages	9,000	9,535
Philosophy	9,000	9,535
Theology, Religion and Philosophy of Religion	9,000	9,535
<b>Group 2</b>		
Mathematics	9,000	9,535
<b>Group 3</b>		
Architecture	9,000	9,535
Design	9,000	9,535
Geography	9,000	9,535
Music	9,000	9,535

Qualification	Annual fee (£)	
	Home	
	2025–26	
	Students who commenced on or after 1 September 2012 but before 1 September 2017	Students who commenced on or after 1 September 2017 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Group 4</b>		
Chemical Engineering	9,000	9,535
Computer Science	9,000	9,535
Engineering	9,000	9,535
Management Studies	9,000	9,535
Manufacturing Engineering	9,000	9,535
Natural Sciences	9,000	9,535
Psychological and Behavioural Sciences	9,000	9,535
<b>Group 5</b>		
Medical and Veterinary Sciences (including for this purpose the Second M.B. and the Second Vet.M.B. Examinations)	9,000	9,535
<b>Year Abroad</b> <sup>2</sup>	1,350	15% of the full-time regulated fee applicable in the year that the year abroad is taken
<b>B.Th. Degree</b>	9,000	9,535
<b>Medical and Veterinary Degrees:</b> M.B., B.Chir. Degrees, Vet.M.B. Degree	9,000	9,535
<b>M.Eng. Degree and M.Sci. Degree</b>	9,000	9,535
<b>M.Math. Degree</b>	9,000	9,535

<sup>1</sup> Fees are liable to change annually.  
<sup>2</sup> The Year Abroad fee applies to students undertaking a full year course of study abroad or working away (see Regulation 7 for the Law Tripos, Regulation 23 for the Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Tripos, Regulation 28 for the Modern and Medieval Languages Tripos, Regulation 24 for the Engineering Tripos).

TABLE 2

Qualification	Annual fee (£)
	Home
	2025–26
Postgraduate Certificate in Education (P.G.C.E.)	9,535
Master of Architecture (M.Arch.)	9,535

VACANCIES, APPOINTMENTS, ETC.

Appointment

The following appointment has been made:  
Professor RICHARD CHARLES POWELL, *F, M.A., Oxford, M.A., British Columbia, Ph.D., EM*, Professor of Arctic Studies (Grade 11) in the Department of Geography, appointed Director of the Scott Polar Research Institute from 1 October 2024 for five years.

NOTICES BY THE GENERAL BOARD

Professorship (Grade 11) of Infection and Immunity

Further to its Notice published on 9 October 2024 (*Reporter*, 6754, 2024–25, p. 48), the General Board has agreed, on the recommendation of the Head of the School of the Biological Sciences, to amend the title of the above Professorship to the ‘Professorship (Grade 11) of Infection/Immunity’, to ensure the broadest range of applicants for the office.

## REPORTS

### Report of the General Board on the establishment of a Department of Public Policy (Bennett School of Public Policy)

The GENERAL BOARD begs leave to report to the University as follows:

1. In this Report, the General Board proposes the establishment of a new Department of Public Policy within the Faculty of Human, Social and Political Science, to be known as the Bennett School of Public Policy. The new Department will expand on (and replace) the existing Bennett Institute of Public Policy.

2. The new Department will:

- (a) build on the outward-facing and practitioner-focused ethos of the Bennett Institute with a significant expansion and scaling up of some of the activities which the Institute has successfully nurtured, particularly in the areas of policy research, stakeholder engagement, intellectual leadership and education of future policymakers;
- (b) bring together its research, policy and teaching activities across disciplines into a globally distinctive centre, focused from the outset on some of the major challenges of the 21st century, including technological disruption, climate damage and biodiversity loss, the deep-seated productivity challenge and geographically rooted inequalities and their political consequences, and on the tools and skills needed to address them;
- (c) enable Cambridge to amplify its research strengths and convening power to become one of the major centres of public policy expertise in the world and a leader in the development of the innovative and rigorous policy thinking imperative in this age of immense disruption and turbulence; and
- (d) work as a hub within the School of the Humanities and Social Sciences and across all Schools to become the policy arm for the University, as exemplified by existing successful research and engagement collaborations with researchers in (for example) economics, education, law, public health, computer science, engineering, AI@cam and Cambridge Zero.

3. The new Department will continue and build on the Institute's success in:

- (a) securing a significant amount of research funding from a range of philanthropic donations, grants and corporate partnerships. These have ranged from the White House and United Nations bodies to indigenous Australian campaigners, heritage organisations, Whitehall and UK local and devolved governments. Engagement activities include those in the University's locality, through the Regional Productivity Forum, Innovate Cambridge, and local authorities in and around the city; and
- (b) developing teaching and training programmes in public policy with funding secured from the University's Surplus Investment Fund, including expansion of the existing M.Phil. course in Public Policy, and launching a new M.Phil. course in Digital Policy.

4. The Vice-Chancellor has accepted with gratitude a benefaction of £10m from the Peter Bennett Foundation to support these developments. This, together with matching investment by the University, and growth in postgraduate activity, will enable the institution to grow rapidly to a Department of viable scale.

5. If this Report's recommendations are approved:

- (a) four academic officers would be reassigned to the new Department from the Department of Politics and International Studies, including the holders of the two Professorships noted in Recommendation II, all of whom have been consulted and support the plans;
- (b) the staff of the Bennett Institute have been kept informed about these developments and would transfer to the new Department;
- (c) Ph.D. students in the Department of Politics and International Studies, supervised by Bennett Institute staff, are aware and will have the option to transfer to the new Department once it has developed its own Ph.D. programme;
- (d) the General Board has agreed to make the General Board Regulations for the new Department and other consequential changes as set out in Annex A.

#### 6. The General Board recommends, with effect from 1 August 2025:

- I. That a Department of Public Policy be established within the Faculty of Human, Social and Political Science, entitled the Bennett School of Public Policy.
- II. That the following Professorships be reassigned to the Department of Public Policy:
  - Bennett Professor of Public Policy (2017)
  - Professor of Public Policy (2016)
- III. That in Regulation 1(a) of the Ordinance for the School of the Humanities and Social Sciences (*Statutes and Ordinances*, p. 601), the reference to the number of Departments within the Faculty of Human, Social, and Political Science be amended from 'four' to 'five'.

- IV. That the Ordinance for the Bennett Institute for Public Policy Fund (*Statutes and Ordinances*, p. 789) be retitled the Department of Public Policy Fund and be revised to read as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC POLICY FUND

1. The funds received from or on behalf of Peter W. Bennett, together with the funds received from the Peter Bennett Foundation and such other sums as may be received or applied for the same purpose, shall form an endowment fund called the Department of Public Policy Fund to advance research in the field of public policy by supporting a Bennett School of Public Policy.<sup>[1]</sup>

2. The Managers shall be responsible for the administration of the Fund and the application of its income and shall comprise the Head of the School of the Humanities and Social Sciences, who shall be Chair, the Chair of the Faculty of Human, Social, and Political Science, and the Head of the Department of Public Policy.

3. The income of the Fund shall be applied towards the following:

- (a) the payment of the stipend, national insurance, pension contributions, and associated indirect costs of the following offices and posts payable by the University:
  - (i) the Head of the Department of Public Policy, which may, subject to the provisions of Special Ordinances C (vii) A.10 and C (ix) 9, be held concurrently with a University office;
  - (ii) two Bennett Lectureships or such other named teaching offices (including more Bennett Lectureships and/or Professorships) as the Managers shall determine;
  - (iii) Bennett Senior Visiting Fellowships, the holders of which shall be appointed by the Managers, in accordance with criteria and for a period of tenure and a stipend determined by the Managers, the stipend within a range approved from time to time by the General Board, with one or more Fellowships being appointed from the income of the Fund in any financial year;
- (b) the support of the Department of Public Policy in such manner as the Managers shall determine.

4. Any unexpended income in any financial year, including income accrued during a vacancy in the offices and posts supported by the Fund, may, at the discretion of the Managers be carried forward for use as income in accordance with Regulation 3 in any one or more subsequent financial years, including the support of additional Lectureships and Fellowships.

<sup>[1]</sup> See the General Board Regulations for the Department of Public Policy, which uses the title of Bennett School of Public Policy.

17 December 2024

DEBORAH PRENTICE,  
*Vice-Chancellor*  
MADELEINE ATKINS  
KATIE CLARKE  
TIM HARPER

ELLA MCPHERSON  
NIGEL PEAKE  
RICHARD PENTY  
JON SIMONS  
EMILY SO

PIETER VAN HOUTEN  
BHASKAR VIRA  
JOCELYN WYBURD

## ANNEX A

The General Board has agreed to make the following changes to General Board Regulations if the recommendations of this Report are approved:

- (a) By inserting the following new regulations for the Department of Public Policy in Chapter IX of Ordinances:

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC POLICY (THE BENNETT SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY)

1. The Department of Public Policy shall be a Department within the Faculty of Human, Social and Political Science and shall have the title ‘The Bennett School of Public Policy’. The Head of the Department shall be the academic head of The Bennett School.

2. There shall be an Advisory Board constituted under terms of reference and membership approved from time to time by the Faculty Board of Human, Social, and Political Science. The membership of the Advisory Board shall include at least four external members who have experience of government, policy and business. It shall be the duty of the Advisory Board to advise the Head of the Department and the Faculty Board on policy for the future development of the Department.

3. The Head of the Department shall be appointed by the General Board on the recommendation of the Faculty Board of Human, Social, and Political Science for a period of five years and shall be eligible for reappointment for a further period of five years. The Head of the Department shall be responsible for the direction of education and research in the Department, and the management of the necessary resources.

4. There shall be an Executive Committee constituted under terms of reference and membership approved from time to time by the Faculty Board. It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to advise the Head of the Department on matters concerning the staffing, resources and administration of the Department.
- (b) In Schedule I of the regulations for the Classes of Faculty Board Membership, Elections and Periods of Office (*Statutes and Ordinances*, p. 609) by amending the number of members of the Faculty Board of Human, Social, and Political Science in class (a)(i) to 5 and class (a)(ii) to 0.
- (c) In Regulation 3 of the regulations for Departments and Heads of Departments (*Statutes and Ordinances*, p. 612) by inserting ‘Department of Public Policy’ under the heading for the Faculty of Human, Social, and Political Science.

## GRACES

### Grace submitted to the Regent House on Monday, 30 December 2024

The Council submits the following Grace to the Regent House. This Grace, unless it is withdrawn or a ballot is requested in accordance with the regulations for Graces of the Regent House (*Statutes and Ordinances*, p. 112), will be deemed to have been approved at **4 p.m. on Friday, 10 January 2025**. Further information on requests for a ballot or the amendment of Graces is available to members of the Regent House on the Regent House Petitions site.<sup>§</sup>

1. That the table of fees attached to the Ordinance for University Composition Fees (*Statutes and Ordinances*, p. 155) be amended for 2025–26 as set out in the Schedule attached to the Council’s Notice dated 17 December 2024 (p. 194).

<sup>§</sup> See <https://www.governance.cam.ac.uk/governance/key-bodies/RH-Senate/Pages/RH-Petitions.aspx> for details.

E. M. C. RAMPTON, *Registrar*

END OF THE OFFICIAL PART OF THE ‘REPORTER’



## REPORT OF DISCUSSION

### Tuesday, 10 December 2024

A Discussion was convened by videoconference. Deputy Vice-Chancellor Dr Jessica Gardner, *SE*, was presiding, with the Registry's deputy, the Senior Pro-Proctor, the Deputy Junior Proctor and nine other persons present.

#### *Report of the Council, dated 13 November 2024, on the office of Chief Financial Officer*

(*Reporter*, 6759, 2024–25, p. 117).

Professor G. R. EVANS (Emeritus Professor of Medieval Theology and Intellectual History), received by the Proctors:

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the title of 'Director of Finance' is now to disappear in a merger with that of 'Chief Financial Officer'. When the Unified Administrative Service (UAS) first came into being Directors were appointed to lead its Divisions. At first they were not to be University Officers. A 'Report of the General Board on the recruitment, reward, and retention of academic and academic-related officers',<sup>1</sup> published on 17 June 1998, listed some named Directors. It was followed by a 'Second Report of the Council on the Unified Administrative Service'<sup>2</sup> on 3 October 2001, which acknowledged 'some concern' that the Director of Finance was not to be included in the existing grade structure of Assistant Registraries and that so senior a post was not to be an Office.

A new category of Office was then proposed:

The new office proposed is designed to provide professional leadership in each Division of the Unified Administrative Service and this defines its seniority.

It was explained that the Council was 'considering a revision of Statutes for the principal administrative officers' that might include 'a new Statute for the office of Director'. On 7 June 2002 appeared a Report on the stipend attaching to the office of Director in the Unified Administrative Service proposing that

by analogy with Professors and other senior office holders, each Director should be appointed on a specific step in the professorial range.<sup>3</sup>

Statute C now seems to know only the Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum, though the *Statutes and Ordinances* as a whole mention a 'Director' 1,932 times.

This Report states that 'leadership' is to be an intended responsibility of the holder of the conjoined Office. But who are the University's 'leaders' and how is their 'leadership' defined? The Annual Report of the Council published on 4 December notes 'Changes in the University's senior leadership'. It comments that 'at the Strategic Away Day in March, attendees received an overview of the University's financial model and an update on the short- to medium-term plan to address the existing deficit'. For this purpose, the Senior Leadership Team evidently comprised:

the Vice-Chancellor, the Pro-Vice-Chancellors, the Registry, the Heads of the Schools, the Chief Financial Officer, the Executive Director of Development and Alumni Relations, and the Executive Director of Communications and External Affairs.

That left two 'executive directors' in play.

A Report on the place and character of 'leadership' in the University of Cambridge would be helpful in enabling the Regent House to clarify its definition. As envisaged in this Report, 'leadership' seems to involve the exercise of top-down powers. The CFO is to 'remain a member of the University's senior leadership team, reporting to the Vice-Chancellor, and providing strategic oversight of the University's financial position'. There is to be operational 'leadership', with the new CFO having:

responsibility for leading and managing the Finance Division (250 FTE) in support of all aspects of operational financial accounting, management and control of the Academic University and its subsidiary companies.

On the other hand, he or she is also described as a mere transmitter, continuing 'to be the main adviser to the Council on financial matters', reporting to it proposals framed elsewhere, namely:

the views of the Finance Committee, which is responsible for the consideration of the financial resources available to the University and for recommending to the Council the medium-term financial strategy for the University.

Recently sent to 'all-staff' through SharePoint by the University's 'Leadership and Management Community of Practice' was advice on 'how organizations can build a leadership factory that shapes, develops, and mentors the next generation of managers'.<sup>4</sup> The Notice of 31 July announcing a New Fellowship Programme for Emerging Academic Leaders surely hinted at such an intention when it spoke of 'the creation of an internal pipeline of future academic leaders at the University'.

Something similar seems to be afoot in Oxford, which is 'reimagining' its 'professional services' and offering training in 'Leadership essentials'. The 'programme' there has as its 'target audience' University staff:

with professional (line management) responsibility for one or more other members of staff, this includes first line managers, team leads, supervisors, new PIs and researchers with supervisory responsibilities for others.<sup>5</sup>

In Cambridge there is mention under 'talent management' not only of 'leaders' in Professional Services such as the new Chief Financial Officer but also of 'academic' leaders and managers:

We will seek to provide high-quality development opportunities to prepare current and future leaders and managers to perform effectively in their roles, with a specific focus on academic leaders.<sup>6</sup>

That hint of plans for a 'leadership factory' sits uncomfortably in a constitution where all members of the Regent House are equals.

So may we have that Report on the definition and place of 'leadership' in the University of Cambridge before this language of 'leadership' becomes further embedded?

<sup>1</sup> *Reporter*, 5742, 1997–98, p. 804.

<sup>2</sup> *Reporter*, 5856, 2001–02, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Reporter*, 5887, 2001–02, p. 864.

<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-art-of-21st-century-leadership-from-succession-planning-to-building-a-leadership-factory>.

<sup>5</sup> See <https://staff.admin.ox.ac.uk/article/reimagining-our-professional-services-at-a-time-of-change>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/people-strategy/people-strategy-talent-management>.



Dr W. J. ASTLE (MRC Biostatistics Unit), received by the Proctors:

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the Council has a general duty of supervision over the finances of the University. Statute F I 1(a) sets that out:

[It shall be the duty of the Council] to exercise general supervision over the finances of the University and over the finances of all institutions in the University.<sup>1</sup>

Special Ordinance F (i) 1(a) elaborates:

[The Council shall] include in its general supervision over the finances of the University the supervision of reserves and investments and the income and expenditure of the Chest;<sup>2</sup>

Yet a proposal of this Report would make the Chief Financial Officer accountable to the Council through the Vice-Chancellor. That seems constitutionally inconsistent. What is the reason for it, when the Vice-Chancellor is famously not the Chief Executive Officer of the University?<sup>3</sup>

At its meeting held on 21 October 2024, the Council authorised the submission of a Grace ‘on divestment from the arms industry’, initiated under Special Ordinance A(ii) 5, to the Regent House. A minute of the meeting records that

The Registry explained that there were two options for the Council on receipt of an initiated Grace: to authorise the Grace for submission to the Regent House; or to publish a Report giving reasons for its decision to withhold authorisation and recommending that the Regent House approve that decision. It was proposed that the Council take the first option and submit the Grace to the Regent House and publish a Notice at the same time.

The Council was willing to investigate the costs and effects of such divestment. It therefore agreed to expand the remit of the working group to cover the additional points the Grace raised, alongside the matters raised by the students. The Notice would emphasise that the Grace, if approved, would not bind the Council.<sup>4</sup>

In its Notice of 7 November on the Grace the Council noted ‘that it has sole responsibility for decisions about investments, and therefore the Grace would not be binding on the Council if approved by the Regent House’ citing Statute F I 1(a) and Special Ordinance F (i) 1(a) in support of its claim.<sup>5</sup> But there is nothing in either of these bits of legislation that grants the Council such a power of veto. A ‘general duty of supervision’ does not imply a ‘sole responsibility for decisions’, which can trump the Regent House as the governing body of the University.<sup>6</sup>

While the Statutes for the Chief Financial Officer are being updated, perhaps it is worth taking the opportunity to adjust the name of the Office. The term ‘Treasurer’ is generally used for similar posts in collectively governed institutions in Britain. It has been used historically by the University and its resurrection would symbolise that good financial management, while necessary to allow the University’s academic activity, is subordinate to it.

<sup>1</sup> *Statutes and Ordinances*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Statutes and Ordinances*, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> See *Reporter*, 2002–03: 5898, p. 82 and 5912, p. 542.

<sup>4</sup> Minutes of the Meeting of the University Council, held on Monday, 21 October 2024, available at: [https://www.governance.cam.ac.uk/committees/council/2024-10-21/MeetingDocuments/24.10.21/Confirmed Council minutes.pdf](https://www.governance.cam.ac.uk/committees/council/2024-10-21/MeetingDocuments/24.10.21/Confirmed%20Council%20minutes.pdf) (University account required).

<sup>5</sup> *Reporter*, 6759, 2024–25, p. 112.

<sup>6</sup> Statute A III 1, *Statutes and Ordinances*, p. 5.

***Joint Report of the Council and the General Board, dated 26 November 2024, on the disbanding of the University Theatre Syndicate***

(*Reporter*, 6761, 2024–25, p. 141).

Professor G. R. EVANS (Emeritus Professor of Medieval Theology and Intellectual History), received by the Proctors:

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, when I became a University Teaching Officer many years ago I was warned that the real power in the University lay with the General Board and I found that to be true. This proposal is to rescind an Ordinance and create a new one, lowering certain responsibilities from a ‘Syndicate’ to a ‘Committee’. Statute A VI 1 allows Boards, Syndicates, or Committees to be established by Ordinance, but Statute A VI 2 allows only a Board or Syndicate but not a Committee ‘the right of reporting to the University’. Any ‘reporting’ on the ADC Theatre in the future will depend on the General Board.

It seems worth just mentioning on the record that this is a further addition to its powers. The ADC Theatre will be a General Board institution.<sup>1</sup> ‘The duties of the office [of Manager of the ADC] shall be determined by the Committee’, but the University Theatre Committee ‘shall report to the General Board through annual reports and accounts, and/or by such other means as the Board determines’. The stipend of ‘the office of Manager of the ADC shall be determined by the General Board’, with the advice of the Committee but not on its authority.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.governance.cam.ac.uk/committees/general-board/Pages/committees.aspx>.

***Report of the General Board, dated 26 November 2024, on arrangements for the implementation of an Academic Career Pathways (Research) scheme***

(*Reporter*, 6761, 2024–25, p. 144).

Professor S. RUSSELL (Department of Genetics):

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, I am Chair of the Working Group that developed the proposals underpinning the General Board Report before us today and Head of the Department of Genetics. I provide these remarks in both capacities, to commend them to the Regent House as Chair of the Working Group and as a Head of Institution committed to improving the research culture throughout our University.

The University’s mission is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence, with core values that include recognition and reward of the University’s staff as its greatest asset alongside the encouragement of career development for all staff. Over the past few years the University has made very positive strides in recognising these core values for some of our staff, through the substantial revision of the Academic Career Pathways scheme and the more recent introduction of a Teaching and Scholarship (T&S) scheme in line with that offered to our Research and Teaching academics. This latter scheme in particular recognises the substantial contributions individuals make to advancing our excellence in education and learning, providing a clear route for career progression and career development.

In the case of research however, the current recognition and promotion arrangements for the community of over 4,000 individuals who make vital contributions to our internationally recognised research excellence are outdated, poorly reflect the University’s core values and are badly in need of revision. Over the past eighteen months the Researcher Reward and Progression Arrangements

Review Working Group undertook extensive consultations across the University to develop the current proposals. While not wishing to dissect the proposal line by line, there are some key points I would like to emphasise.

First, opportunities for researcher career progression are limited and do not reflect on us well as an institution. At present the University recognises five researcher grades: Research Assistant (Grade 5), Research Associate (Grade 7), Senior Research Associate (Grade 9), and two additional senior researcher roles at Grade 11 (Principal Research Associate) and Grade 12 (Director of Research). I will turn to the senior roles in a moment.

It should be immediately obvious that there are no even numbered grades below Grade 11 and consequently extremely limited progression opportunities for the vast majority of research staff in the University. The two grade jumps required for promotion are a clear barrier and are completely out of step with our peer institutions, where individuals have a clearer stepwise path for progression. Our proposal rectifies this anomaly by introducing the missing 6, 8 and 10 grades.

In many research areas across the University, funders are increasingly offering grants with a duration of 5 to 10 years. Under our current scheme there is very limited opportunity to progress given the role profiles we use. For example, a postdoctoral researcher on Grade 7 may normally only progress to Grade 9 if they are able to demonstrate significant research independence – a clear barrier for most of our postdoctoral staff. The opportunity to recognise and reward excellence is much better afforded by offering the possibility of a one grade promotion. Even more egregious, research assistants without a doctorate have virtually no route for advancement other than to the top of the Grade 5 salary scale, and many of these individuals have long careers at the University that offer very little prospect of progression.

Turning to the senior grades, while these are a minority of our researchers, the individuals in these roles are most often recruited to provide strong strategic research leadership to centres or large-scale projects across the University. The appointment and promotion criteria for these two grades are well established and in line with those used for Established Academic staff. Here the issue is not with the grades but rather the out of date titles recognising such individuals. The term ‘Director of Research’ is virtually meaningless outside Cambridge and is not perceived as attractive to individuals we seek to recruit to these research leadership roles.

For our Working Group, the work leading to the development of the ACP (T&S) career progression scheme was seen as a clear and established route for framing a scheme for researchers. We therefore propose introducing, along with the missing grades, a new set of titles that more clearly reflects the roles, especially those of more senior researchers. The proposed new titles are detailed in the proposal.

I understand there are those members of the Regent House who will object to broadening the application of professorial titles to unestablished positions: I would however remind the Regent House that this door has already been opened, or rather dismantled, by the ACP (T&S) pathway and it is only natural justice that we recognise our senior researchers with similar recognition. The new titles will not only provide recognition for the excellent and impactful research the University’s mission demands, but also contribute to career progression in Cambridge or for those individuals who look to move to other institutions in their career.

Finally, the current contribution reward scheme we have for researchers is out of step with the vast majority of schemes for other University staff and therefore we have proposed harmonising the researchers’ scheme with others in making it an annual rather than a termly exercise.

Over the course of 35 years in the University, starting as a postdoctoral researcher, I have been very fortunate to be afforded opportunities for career progression, first to Senior Research Associate and subsequently to a University Teaching Officer position. Alas, any form of career progression is relatively rare for the majority of our research staff. Since taking on a more senior role in the University I have dedicated considerable effort towards improving aspects of the University research culture, including the implementation of policies for fairer research assessment such as DORA.<sup>1</sup> I see this set of proposals as a further step in improving the way we celebrate and reward research excellence, providing a very substantial improvement to our research culture and environment that will put this University in a sector-leading position for researcher recognition.

<sup>1</sup> San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment, see <https://sfidora.org/read/>.

Dr S. CAVE (Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence):

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, I am Co-Director of the Institute for Technology and Humanity and Director of the Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence.

I would like to commend these proposals for an Academic Career Pathway for Research staff, and thank the Working Group’s Chair, Professor Steve Russell, and its Secretary, Philip Willatt, for their work on this.

I was a member of the Working Group, as my Institution has a large proportion of research staff. I know first hand the frustrations with the current policies. For example, the missing grades (6, 8 and 10) make promotion slow, or indeed impossible for many on shorter contracts, and also limit the options for hiring managers. The opaque titles (such as Principal Research Associate and Director of Research) make it difficult for more senior researchers to interact on an equal footing with senior academics and other stakeholders outside this institution. I have no doubt that this University has missed out on competitive opportunities because the standing of these colleagues has not been legible to the outside world.

It was very welcome that the University a few years ago introduced a proper career pathway with legible titles for its teaching staff. These new proposals are modelled on that pathway, bringing the structures for research staff in line with ‘Research and Teaching’ and ‘Teaching and Scholarship’ staff. They will make a great and positive difference to this University’s thousands of researchers. I therefore urge their adoption and speedy implementation.

Professor G. MICKLEM (Department of Genetics and Pembroke College), received by the Proctors:

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, I am a Professor of Computational and Molecular Biology in the Department of Genetics and I make these remarks in a personal capacity. I am strongly supportive of the proposals put forward by the working group presented in this General Board Report. Providing the full set of grades and the corresponding revision of titles will bring us into line with other major Universities and is long overdue. It will also give much-needed greater flexibility when making appointments.

Dr D. J. HODSON (CRUK Cambridge Centre and Department of Haematology), received by the Proctors:

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, I see that Grade 11 researchers will be renamed 'Research Professor'. This is great and it levels them up with those on the academic track. However, I see that clinical researchers will be excluded from this change and must continue to use the rather demeaning title of 'Clinical Principal Research Associate'. I am a Grade 11 researcher myself. I run a successful laboratory science research group, funded entirely from external fellowships and grants. The requirement to use this title inhibits my ability to recruit outstanding postdocs, who often prefer a professorial group. It causes confusion when I join international expert panels and must explain that a Clinical Principal Research Associate is different from a Clinical Fellow. There have been occasions where I have missed out on leading funding applications from research consortia because it was felt better to have a professor as lead applicant. The 'Clinical Principal Research Associate' title is unnecessarily inhibitory to the career progression of clinical researchers and devalues their contribution to research in the University.

Could the University please provide some rationale why Grade 11 clinical researchers are specifically excluded from the proposed changes and will be precluded from using the Research Professor title?

Professor G. R. EVANS (Emeritus Professor of Medieval Theology and Intellectual History), received by the Proctors:

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, 'Research' clearly demands a place among the University's Career Pathways for its academic and research staff but the history suggests this may not be straightforward. Adding 'research' before the titles of the University's 'Professors' proved controversial at first,<sup>1</sup> though the titles of the prestigious competitive Leverhulme Research Professorships or MRC Research Professorships were allowed to keep their adjectives.<sup>2</sup>

In May 2018 new 'arrangements for senior academic promotions' were proposed in a Report of the General Board. This was to replace that scheme with 'a new Academic Career Pathway model', in response to 'concerns that the current process is unduly complex and lengthy, the evaluative criteria are weighted too heavily towards research, and there is a lack of constructive feedback to candidates'. The model for scoring and weighting the 'evaluative criteria' of teaching, research and general contribution was to be 'adjusted'.<sup>3</sup>

In October 2020 Human Resources published a 'manual' of 'Procedure and Guidance' for Senior Academic Promotions, accommodating various difficulties, including the weight to be placed on research:

Exceptionally, holders of stipendiary University offices whose duties are not primarily concerned with either teaching or research or both may be eligible for consideration if they are known to have made a significant contribution to research in addition to fulfilling the duties of the office they currently hold.

There was an experimental linking of 'research' with 'scholarship'.<sup>4</sup>

The next development was the creation of the Pathway for 'Teaching and Scholarship' in which 'scholarship' replaced 'research' alongside 'teaching' in a Joint Report of the Council and General Board in March 2021.<sup>5</sup> This was not uncontroversial, demanding as it did an acceptable definition of 'scholarship'.<sup>6</sup> The Report suggested that scholarship might 'include research within the discipline

and/or applied research, which may be pedagogic in nature or related to relevant professional practice' and would 'vary according to discipline and context' and lie 'outside the core expectations' of the 'role', including 'applied scholarly activities, resources permitting'.<sup>7</sup> These posts might or might not be Offices.<sup>8</sup>

'Title' changes were made in 2021.<sup>9</sup> The Schedule to Special Ordinance C (i) now recognises (including some remaining Lecturer posts not yet vacated) University Assistant Professors (Grade 9); University Associate Professors (Grade 10); there are also Professors (former Readers) at Grade 11 and full Professors. Generic Role Profiles including the adjective 'research' are available, for example for a 'Senior Research Associate'.<sup>10</sup> A Professorial Office at Grade 12 under Statute C XI requires no qualifying adjective.

There has so far been no defined Research Career Pathway tidying all this up. The present proposal to create one differs from the existing Pathways in apparently not leading towards a University Office for a researcher. It:

is anticipated that academic staff will not be permitted to transfer to the ACP (R) track unless they choose to apply for an unestablished research staff vacancy and are successful in being appointed to it.

If that is the case this proposal does not deal with the longstanding fundamental difficulty that a researcher whose post depends on fixed-term (even if in principle renewable) external grant funding may not hope for an established post, and with it an Office. 'Under the current ACP (R&T) scheme, there are certain circumstances in which 'Research staff' can apply for promotion via the ACP (R&T), which will remain', but not, it seems, *within* this new Pathway.<sup>11</sup>

An earlier attempt at a revised Senior Researcher Promotions scheme (for research staff at Grades 9 and 11), was 'put on hold' and in framing the present proposal efforts were made to engage 'directly with early-career research staff', but it seems to offer only a limited 'coherent progression and career development scheme for research staff'. A Council Minute of its meeting on 21 October 2024 does not bode well for getting over difficulties about recurrent funding, at least in the case of the UAS where it was not proving easy 'to get an accurate head count budget in the UAS'. 'In the past requests for non-recurrent funding had been put into the budgets as recurrent funding' and the Registry explained that 'she was working with colleagues to analyse the fixed-term posts to ensure that, where appropriate, the posts came to an end when planned, thereby releasing savings to the University'.

The 'new annual Contribution Reward Scheme' for researchers includes a 'proposal that where an individual meets the criteria for a contribution award but insufficient external funds are available, the cost may be met through School budgets'. There is a warning that for some Research Council grants there is no 'contingency provision for contribution increments' so it may be necessary to 'transfer' the 'required amount from other headings'.<sup>12</sup> That does not seem to deal satisfactorily with the problem of research grants funding fixed-term posts, which is surely incompatible with confidence in a Career Pathway.

Review of the three 'schemes' supporting researcher reward and progression is clearly needed, since none of these schemes has been revised for some years, nor have the schemes been considered collectively until now. The ACP (R) is designed to offer a route to 'career progression' in a 'scheme' aligned with 'the University's new People Strategy, specifically the strategic theme of Talent



Management'. The proposal is also linked to the University's need to be seen to comply with various expectations, its own postdoc Research Culture Institutional Action Plan<sup>13</sup> and to 'provide clear and transparent merit based recognition, reward and promotion pathways', the national Researcher Development Concordat<sup>14</sup> and the forthcoming 2029 Research Excellence Framework exercise.<sup>15</sup>

The question is whether this proposal as it stands, even with these assurances, will satisfactorily mend the 'lack of alignment between promotion pathways for other staff categories in the University, particularly the Academic Career Pathways schemes for Research and Teaching (R&T) and Teaching and Scholarship (T&S)'.

<sup>1</sup> *Reporter*, 2000–01: 5842, p. 552 and 5850, p. 814.

<sup>2</sup> *Reporter*, 5773, 1998–99, p. 587.

<sup>3</sup> See *Reporter*, 6505, 2017–18, p. 556 and [https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/sap\\_2020\\_procedures\\_and\\_guidance\\_manual.pdf](https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/sap_2020_procedures_and_guidance_manual.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/sap\\_2020\\_procedures\\_and\\_guidance\\_manual.pdf](https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/sap_2020_procedures_and_guidance_manual.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> *Reporter*, 6612, 2020–21, p. 454.

<sup>6</sup> *Reporter*, 2020–21, 6616, p. 554.

<sup>7</sup> *Reporter*, 6612, 2020–21, p. 454.

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.acptands.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/acp\\_ts\\_guidance\\_v3.0\\_-\\_2024\\_final.pdf](https://www.acptands.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/acp_ts_guidance_v3.0_-_2024_final.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/changes-to-academic-titles-2021>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/seniorresearchassociate.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> The ACP (R&T) guidance states 'If a member of Research staff wishes to apply for promotion via ACP R&T, they must have written support from their Head of Institution, and approval from their Head of School, prior to applying. Evidence of this written support and approval must be sent to the ACP mailbox (acp[at]admin.cam.ac.uk) in order for the individual to be granted access to the application portal to prepare their application', see [https://www.acp.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/acp\\_rt\\_guidance\\_v2.0-2024\\_final.pdf](https://www.acp.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/acp_rt_guidance_v2.0-2024_final.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/pay-benefits/pay-and-reward/reward-policies/reward-schemes/researcher-contribution-increment-scheme>.

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.postdocacademy.cam.ac.uk/files/research\\_culture\\_action\\_plan\\_2021.pdf](https://www.postdocacademy.cam.ac.uk/files/research_culture_action_plan_2021.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> <https://researcherdevelopmentconcordat.ac.uk/>.

<sup>15</sup> <https://2029.ref.ac.uk/>.

Dr E. DRAGE (Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence and Gonville and Caius College), received by the Proctors:

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, I am a Senior Research Fellow at the Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence, now part of the Institute for Technology and Humanity. I am also a Tutor and Bye-Fellow of Gonville and Caius College. I am speaking in support of the coherent progression and career development scheme.

I am currently Co-I of a €1.9 million grant ending in 2027, and while as a 5-year grant this is considered a long research contract, we have felt the retention crisis acutely. Next year, I will have lost three-quarters of my team of terrific researchers because they felt they got stuck at Grade 7 or Grade 9 and saw the only way up as going elsewhere. These losses undermine what we are able to achieve in our Centre and the ability to build on and establish continuity with previous research. It is indicative of how researcher churn and the uncertainty and worry we have about our jobs has become normalised, even though the research we do is at the heart of the University's mission. Giving researchers an option equal to the two existing Academic Career Pathways (either 'Research and Teaching' – UTOs – or 'Teaching and Scholarship') would

be transformative, stabilising and motivational, provide the feeling of having a proper career, and generally be an all-round boost. The creation of career pathways is also in line with what University staff have been campaigning for for many years, and would demonstrate that the University values its researchers.

On the matter of titles: not having Professor titles makes researchers ineligible to apply for certain grants, as was the case when our team tried to apply to Google's Society-Centered AI grant, which only accepted Professor-titled staff. Having titles that everyone recognises would also make it easier for our eligible researchers to be approached for international collaborations. It is important that our seniority is not illegible to universities around the world that don't know what 'Senior Research Fellow' means. As a relatively young-looking female researcher without a Professor title I am often mistaken for a student when I give talks at both universities and corporate institutions. However, a Director of another prominent Cambridge AI research centre tells me he has also been mistaken for a graduate student at a corporate event upon saying he was a researcher, to which he responded that he completed his Ph.D. eighteen years ago..!

I look forward to being part of this terrific institution for as long as possible, and to hiring and retaining more exceptional scholars with the knowledge that I can offer them a coherent progression and career development scheme.

Professor G. N. WELLS (Department of Engineering and Jesus College), received by the Proctors:

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, I am a member of the Researcher Reward and Progression Arrangements Review Working Group that developed the proposal for the Academic Career Pathways (Research) scheme and Deputy Head (Research) of the Department of Engineering. I make the following remarks in a personal capacity, and as a member of the Working Group, in support of the Report.

The University's stated mission includes contributing to society through the pursuit of research at the highest international levels of excellence. Integral to the University fulfilling its mission is the contribution of the many research-focused staff, both individually and as members of research teams. In recent years, the University has created a revised career pathway for academic staff involved in research and teaching (ACP (R&T)) and a new track for teaching-focused staff (ACP (T&S)). The schemes recognise the need for, and importance of, career development pathways that are aligned with the University's values. The proposal for an ACP (Research) scheme provides a transparent career progression route for research-focused staff that is aligned with the University's approach to career development and progression for 'Research and Teaching' and 'Teaching and Scholarship' paths.

The Report summarises well the work of the Working Party and I strongly support all recommendations in it. I would like to highlight two specific points in the Report, namely the introduction of new grades and the proposed titles.

On grades, the absence of even-numbered grades below Grade 11 can make it difficult to make appointments at a level that appropriately recognises a researcher's skills and experience, and it can make career progression difficult due to the two-grade jumps. In many areas, an experienced researcher brings advanced skills and valuable experience to a research team. Presently, at Grade 9 the role expectation is a high level of research independence. Researchers newly graduated with a Ph.D. start at Grade 7. Consider a researcher with some experience and who brings distinctive and necessary skills to a team lead by a Principal

Investigator. At what level should they be appointed? This is an example where the introduction of new grades, Grade 8 in this case, will allow skills and experience to be appropriately recognised and rewarded. On career progression, two-grade steps can be a barrier to career progression. The large jumps in role expectations between promotion steps at present can mean that opportunities to demonstrate the requirements for promotion to a higher grade can be limited. One-grade progression will reduce barriers to promotion.

On academic titles, the discussion on the wider use of ‘professor’ has been had and concluded with the implementation of the ACP (R&T) and (T&S) tracks. We must also remember to stand on the outside and look in; we are not helping ourselves if we use titles that are not widely recognised. The ACP (R) proposal aligns the use of titles with the other ACP schemes and introduces titles that are widely recognised outside of Cambridge.

The proposal for ACP (R) is an important step in supporting the Cambridge researcher community, in recognising the crucial role of research-focused staff in fulfilling the University’s mission, and in developing a strong and positive research culture.

Dr S. S. Ó HÉIGEARTAIGH (Institute for Technology and Humanity and Darwin College), received by the Proctors:

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, I am a Principal Research Associate at the Institute for Technology and Humanity in the School of Arts and Humanities, where I manage postdoctoral and senior research associates. The proposed new researcher titles and progression scheme described within the Academic Career Pathways (Research) proposal is timely and well-considered, and would represent a significant improvement on the present academic career pathways framework.

Roles at Grades 6, 8, and 10 provide important stepping stones for researchers advancing their academic careers; at present Grades 7 to 9, and 9 to 11 represent very big steps. The intermediate grades provide attainable goals for researchers, as well as more flexibility for the institution. I anticipate it will help significantly in researcher retention within the University. The postdoctoral researchers and senior research associates I have spoken to about this proposed change have been very encouraged by them.

The new researcher titles bring researcher titles in line with teaching titles. This will affirm the University’s commitment to research as a highly valued part of its activities. It will also be highly beneficial to individual researchers, in terms of being recognised as having a university standing appropriate to their research track record, which will aid significantly in policy and public engagement. I therefore support these changes strongly.

Dr W. J. ASTLE (MRC Biostatistics Unit), received by the Proctors:

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the University has a hierarchy of offices for research academics. There are no statutory teaching duties attached to the generic offices of Senior Assistant in Research, Assistant Director of Research, Professor (Grade 11) or Professor. In this Report the General Board proposes the creation of a new unestablished ‘academic career pathway’ unregulated by the Statutes and Ordinances. If adopted, it will loosen a foundation stone of the University’s constitution, while offering few material benefits to the University’s four thousand casualised researchers.

There are several problems with the Report. I suspect that its central proposal is unlawful and that an application to the Commissary for review under Statute A IX has a good chance of success. Nevertheless, if the Council presses ahead with a Grace, I hope that the Regent House will send a message by voting *non-placet*.

The principal problem faced by the University’s researchers is that they are employed insecurely as researchers rather than securely as academics, because the ratio of research to academic posts (in the University and in the higher education system generally) is too high. These proposals seek to paper over the problem by reclassifying researchers as academics. If they are adopted, the principle that the University’s academics should be securely employed will have been breached, putting at risk a class of staff that (with some exceptions) has hitherto been well protected.

The Report states that the Working Group developing the proposals was ‘steered by the University’s... commitment to fostering good working conditions and career development opportunities for researchers’. In truth, the University has no such commitment. If it did it would recognise that good working conditions and career opportunities depend on stable employment prospects, but the Working Group had no remit to address the problem of employment stability. Appendix A acknowledges frankly that while the Group recognised ‘the issue of precarity’, the new scheme has been developed ‘accepting that a large fraction of our researcher community is transiently employed’.

Under the present system for the promotion of researchers, an application will be approved only if ‘there is sufficient grant funding for the post for the full duration of the appointment’.<sup>1</sup> If these proposals are adopted, promotion will remain contingent on the provision of the requisite funds ‘but [if] insufficient external funds are available, the cost may be met through School budgets’. It seems unlikely that Schools will be willing to meet such costs, except perhaps to allow promotion to the most senior grades in exceptional cases. Any general commitment would be unaffordable, particularly since institutional budgets have been subjected to 5% reductions in Chest allocations in 2024–25 and 2025–26.<sup>2</sup>

The claims that the scheme will create ‘coherent progression and career development scheme for research staff’, that recognition will be ‘merit based’ or that promotion will be ‘equitable across the University’ are illusory. Applicants for promotion to Grades 10–12 through the proposed scheme will be briefed:

If you intend to apply for promotion, you are expected to ensure that the requisite funding is in place, or can realistically be put in place, to meet the cost of the proposed change in role and grade. If this resource is not available through your existing grant, you might need to submit new funding application(s), in discussion with your line-manager.<sup>3</sup>

The ‘indicators of excellence and impact’ proposed for promotion go a step further by making the award of funding itself a criterion for promotion. The indicators include, for example,

A track record of securing research funding directly or indirectly, according to the rules of the funding body (or otherwise ensuring research activity is sustainable)<sup>4</sup> or for those working in the biomedical sciences,

Sustained success in peer reviewed grant funding over at least two grant cycles (3 years) from reputable funding bodies.

and

Sustained success in programmatic (5 years or more) funding from major funding bodies, e.g. MRC, BBSRC, Wellcome, British Heart Foundation etc.

For promotion in an academic pathway to depend so nakedly on financial rather than academic criteria is surely to cross a red line. Rather than contributing to a 'positive research culture', the use of such indicators seems more likely to encourage the development of – in the words of the UCL pharmacologist David Colquhoun – 'a generation of spiv scientists'.<sup>5</sup>

Administrative concern with 'research culture' is, in any case, largely financially motivated. It arose as a major source of anxiety only after the UKRI and other research funders began to use its assessment as a criterion for the award of funding. Appendix A is candid about it:

A further driver for change is emphasised by the June 2023 Future Research Assessment Programme (FRAP) report on proposed changes to assessment in REF2028. The report highlights that supporting a healthy research culture should be an underpinning principle with recognition of institutions striving to create a positive research culture and nurturing research and research-enabling staff.

Notice that the concern is with 'research culture' not with the working conditions that are a principal determinant of it. Any union case-worker operating in a research intensive university knows that a good fraction of interpersonal disputes arise from pressures created by the funding system: principal investigators, themselves employed insecurely, placing excessive demands on junior researchers; disputes about authorship arising from the need to find new employment. A proper addressing of working conditions in universities would call into question the whole system of research funding, and the role played in it by the funding agencies. The introduction of the bureaucratic assessment of 'research culture' as an alternative, provides a useful defence for funders and employers, diverting attention away from their institutional responsibility for working conditions and towards the predictable consequences of those conditions for human behaviour.

Many, if not most, members of the new class of staff proposed will find themselves in the curious position of being University of Cambridge academics without any academic freedom. Unlike their established academic counterparts they will be made redundant easily. Outside funders, possibly even private companies, will be able to exert line management control over them *de facto*, through the threat of funding withdrawal. External funders of unestablished academics already make requests for changes to plans for research. Even in the absence of external interference there will be difficulties. How can an Assistant Research Professor (Grade 9) line managed by an established Professor and employed to work on a particular research project have the academic freedom which ought properly to be associated with a job whose title contains the word 'Professor'? How will the University satisfy its legal obligations to protect the academic freedom of this new class of academic staff?

Paragraph 6 of the Report advises the University that 'consultation has included engagement with Unite and the University and College Union (UCU)'. However, it omits to mention that the Cambridge branch of the UCU opposes the proposals, partly because they are in flagrant violation of the 2004 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Association of University Teachers (the AUT, the predecessor union of the UCU) and the University and College Employers Association (UCEA).<sup>6</sup>

The MOU was agreed following the introduction of the 'Framework Agreement for the Modernisation of Pay Structures' which replaced a pay spine with increments of 5% by one with increments of 3%.<sup>7</sup> To defend themselves from a large reduction in career aggregated pay, members of the AUT took industrial action in the form of a marking and assessment boycott in 2004. The industrial action was settled by the MOU, under which the AUT agreed to the new pay spine on the basis that it

should provide a platform for the long term improvement of salaries across higher education to address the problem of historical decline in the relative value of earnings

and that the new arrangements would be

designed with the intention – as far as practicable and foreseeable – of avoiding detriment to the present pay progression expectations of academic and related staff.<sup>6</sup>

This was to be achieved by local agreements between institutions and unions having regard to the principle that incremental progression to the contribution threshold will take no longer than under current equivalent arrangements.

Cambridge managed this by introducing 'ghost points', certain points on the single salary spine which are skipped over when an annual in-service increment is applied. The introduction of new research posts at Grade 8 will drive a coach and horses through the MOU, by extending the number of years required for a researcher to move up the spine. It will also introduce an extra promotion hurdle.

I urge members of the Regent House to *reject* the proposals in this Report. They do not level up research staff and they will be used to level down academic staff. Those staff working in unestablished academic teaching posts deserve proper academic offices. Those of us working in other unestablished academic or research posts deserve a national system of higher education that offers stable academic employment, not nomenclatural fakery. We should vote against these proposals for the 'management' of our 'talent' and demand something better. Academics holding established posts should vote against them as well. If the University can create a body of unestablished academic research staff and a body of unestablished academic teaching staff then why not a body of unestablished research and teaching staff? This is a slippery slope. You may not be at risk of falling on it yourself but those research and teaching academics following you are likely to be.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/srp\\_-\\_scheme\\_guidance\\_2025\\_-\\_final.pdf](https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/srp_-_scheme_guidance_2025_-_final.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Council recommending the budget and allocations from the Chest for 2024–25, *Reporter*, 6745, 2023–24, p. 670.

<sup>3</sup> Appendix C of the Report.

<sup>4</sup> Appendix B of the Report.

<sup>5</sup> 'How should universities be run to get the best out of people?', *DC's Improbable Science*, 3 August 2007, Blog post by Professor David Colquhoun FRS, Emeritus Professor of Pharmacology, University College London, accessed 9 December 2024 at: <https://www.dscience.net/2007/08/03/how-should-universities-be-run-to-get-the-best-out-of-people>.

<sup>6</sup> Memorandum of understanding between AUT and UCEA, Framework agreement for the modernisation of pay structures, 16 March 2004, accessed 9 December 2024 at: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/media/1664/AUT-Memorandum-of-Understanding-over-Framework-Agreement-Mar-04/doc/fworkmemorandum\\_mar04\\_1.rtf](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/media/1664/AUT-Memorandum-of-Understanding-over-Framework-Agreement-Mar-04/doc/fworkmemorandum_mar04_1.rtf).

<sup>7</sup> Framework Agreement for the Modernisation of Pay Structures, Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff, 2004, accessed 9 December 2024 at: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/framework>.

<sup>8</sup> See Note 7 in the Notes to Schedule I of the Ordinance on Stipends, *Statutes and Ordinances*, p. 686.



## COLLEGE NOTICES

### Elections

#### Darwin College

Elected to an Official Fellowship under Title A from 2 December 2024:

Diana Arseni, Ph.D., *Glasgow*

Elected to an Honorary Fellowship under Title B from 2 December 2024:

Janet Browne, Ph.D., *Imperial* (Aramont Professor of the History of Science, Harvard University)

#### Hughes Hall

Elected to a Fellowship in Class B from 5 December 2024:

Zhiwu Wei, B.A., *Beijing*, M.Sc., *Birmingham*, Ph.D., *Q*  
Emmanuela Wroth, M.A., *CTH*, M.Phil., *K*, Ph.D.,  
*Durham and the Bowes Museum*

Elected to a By-Fellowship from 13 November 2024:

Robert Dillon, M.A., M.Sc., *SID*

John Fawcett, M.A., Ph.D., *CHU*

Simon Glynn, M.A., *T*

Zahra Joya, B.A., *Gawharshad*

Sonya Nevin, B.A., M.A., *Reading*, Ph.D., *University College Dublin*

Barry Phipps, B.A., *Wolverhampton*, M.A., *Warwick*, M.St., *Oxford*, M.Phil., *CHU*

Noel Rutter, M.A., Ph.D., *JN*

Harry Samuels, B.A., *Oxford*, LL.M., *City, University of London*

Gillian Secrett, B.Sc., *Surrey*, M.St., *CHU*

#### Peterhouse

Elected to an Official Fellowship and College Lectureship in Anatomy and Radiology with effect from 1 October 2024:

Andrew James Grainger, B.Med.Sci., B.M.B.S.,  
*Nottingham*, FRCP, FRCP

Elected to a Professorial Fellowship and College Lectureship in Modern and Medieval Languages with effect from 1 October 2024:

Sally Faulkner, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D., *F*

Elected to a Supernumerary Fellowship and appointed Development Director with effect from 1 October 2024:

Edward Alexander Davies, M.A., *Oxford*

#### St Catharine's College

Elected to an Official Fellowship with effect from 13 January 2025:

The Rev'd Nell Whiscombe, M.A., *CL*, M.Phil., *CC*

Elected to an Official Fellowship with effect from 21 January 2025

Hannah Pinnock, M.A., Vet.M.B., *CTH*,  
Pg.Cert.(SAM), *BSAVA*, MRCVS

Elected to an Honorary Fellowship with effect from 25 October 2024

Jennifer Gibbons, B.Sc., *McGill*, Ph.D., *JE*

Elected to an Honorary Fellowship with effect from 6 December 2024

The Very Rev'd Mark Bonney, M.A., *CTH*, M.A., *Oxford*

#### St John's College

Elected to a Fellowship under Title B with effect from 1 January 2025:

Jeanne Salje, M.Bioc., *Oxford*, Ph.D., *JE*

#### Sidney Sussex College

Elected into a Fellowship in Class 1 with effect from 4 December 2024:

Ruth Jackson Ravenscroft, M.A., *SID*, M.Phil., *F*,  
Ph.D., *CC*

#### Trinity Hall

Elected into a Staff Fellowship with effect from 1 January 2025:

Boris Bolliet, B.Sc., M.Sc., *ENS Lyon*, M.Sc., Ph.D.,  
*Université Grenoble Alpes*

Pawel Dydio, M.Sc., *Warsaw*, Ph.D., *Amsterdam*

Elected into a Visiting Fellowship with effect from 1 January 2025:

Elliott Grant, M.A., M.Eng., Ph.D., *TH*

## EXTERNAL NOTICES

### Oxford Notices

*Faculty of History and St Antony's College*: Eleanor Rathbone Professorship of Contemporary European History; tenure: from 1 October 2025 or as soon as possible thereafter; closing date: 3 February 2025 at 12 noon; further details: <https://www.recruit.ox.ac.uk>, vacancy ID: 177349

*Faculty of Law and Jesus College*: Professorship of Corporate Law; tenure: from 1 October 2025 or as soon as possible thereafter; closing date: 27 January 2025 at 12 noon; further details: <https://www.recruit.ox.ac.uk>, vacancy ID: 176956