

## Alumni Association Open Meeting

### **DRAFT Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2014**

#### **1. Welcome by the Chair – Janine Watson**

RECEIVED: An introduction by the Chair, Janine Watson

#### **2. Report by Janine Watson, Chair of the Alumni Association**

RECEIVED: A verbal report from Janine Watson, detailing the work of the Association to date.

NOTED: The Association is the largest Alumni Association of any UK-based campus university. The Association is seen as an asset in the promotion of not just The University of Manchester but Manchester as a city, both through international alumni networks and alumni involvement in Manchester's civic and business life. There have been many successful alumni events this year, including the annual Cockcroft Rutherford lecture. There are plans to encourage alumni to vote in the upcoming election for a new Chancellor. Janine Watson noted thanks to Professor Rod Coombs, who is retiring as Deputy Chair of the Alumni Association Advisory Board. He will be replaced by Professor Colin Bailey.

#### **3. Presentation from Dr Tim Westlake, Director for the Student Experience on improving the student experience**

RECEIVED: A presentation from Dr Westlake on improvements to the student experience and future targets for student satisfaction.

NOTED: Although the University ranks highly internationally for the quality of research, the levels of student satisfaction are not as high as the University aims for them to be. This influences the position within the UK rankings and affects the University's reputation. An overhaul of Welcome Week, streamlining of Student Communications and the updating of Student Services have led to an improvement in these rankings. The goal is to achieve 90% or higher in the satisfaction rates, and to focus on the relationship between students and academics so as to value individuals. Positive work is being done with Widening Participation students, such as the Global Graduates Programme and the summer internship programme.

#### **4. Financial Report tabled by Claire Kilner, Deputy Director (Alumni Relations)**

RECEIVED: A report on the Associations' accounts.

NOTED: The Alumni Association Fund is held in shares, with a cash balance to be carried forward of £4,478.92.

The Alumni Reserve Fund has a cash balance to be carried forward of £6,941.99. This fund covers the Global Travel Award, and a transfer has recently been made to cover incidents when

this award was paid out from another account. The Association is looking at how to continue to support the Travel Awards when this fund no longer exists.

#### **5. Questions from the Alumni Association Members and feedback**

Question/Comment: A question was raised as to whether it was possible to target smaller donations more effectively, such as the ability to specify that the money is to support sports teams through purchasing equipment. He stated that this would be a visible use of small amounts of money. Claire Kilner will take this suggestion back to fundraising colleagues.

Question/Comment: The issue was raised of the clashing of the London Graphene Lecture with the meeting of the General Assembly. The meeting was assured that the Graphene Lecture would be repeated, but this week was the only time the academics were free to perform it in June. The idea of uploading the lectures to the website was suggested. Claire Kilner advised that the long term strategy is for everything to be available online, technology permitting.

Question/Comment: There was a request from the meeting for Alumni Relations staff and officers to be listed on the website. Claire Kilner to take this back to the alumni team and the Alumni Association Advisory Board.

#### **6. Appointment of candidates to the General Assembly. There are seven places available to alumni representatives.**

There are ten candidates for seven positions. The Association is moving to online voting, for the first time. An email with details of the ballot is scheduled to go out this evening, and members have two weeks to cast their vote. The election is being conducted under the Single Transferable Vote system.

#### **7. Date and time of the next Open Meeting of the Alumni Association**

NOTED: The date and time is to be communicated to alumni in due course.

#### **8. Any Other Business**

The Chair tabled a suggestion that had been sent by an alumnus via email for consideration at the Open meeting. The suggestion was for the Alumni Association to invite alumni to consider issues that challenge society, e.g. care for the elderly, transport provision and support for those with illnesses such as cancer, and to provide a platform via which alumni could share their views and opinions on these challenges of the day. The alumnus suggested a working title of 'University Challenged'. The meeting agreed that this idea would be put to the Alumni Association Advisory Board.

#### **9. Chair's closing remarks**

Janine thanked everyone for attending, and reminded attendees that feedback could be communicated with Alumni Relations team members at any time.