

The University plans to make around 171 staff jobless despite the fact that it faces no imminent financial crisis (unlike in the 1980s and after the merger of UMIST and the Victoria University of Manchester) is unprecedented in the UK Higher Education sector. Never before has a British university sought to sack large numbers of professors, senior lecturers, lecturers and non-academic staff purely for the sake of creating financial "headroom". Given the buoyant state of the University's finances, such draconian measures are completely uncalled for.

Management say the proposals are motivated by the HE Bill passed by Parliament just 13 days ago and the desire to "move from good to great" by reducing student and staff numbers. Reducing student numbers and increasing entry requirements will, it is said, "enhance the student experience", enabling it to score more highly in the new Teaching Evaluation Framework (TEF) and charge higher tuition fees. In other words, the aim is to become a smaller but more elite university, regardless of the costs to staff or the impact on students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

However, the University's latest Financial Statements show that its finances, bolstered as they are by massive increases in student fee income, are in a much better state than those of many other UK universities and businesses. Compared with the rest of the public sector, it has barely been touched by Austerity: it has reserves totalling £1.5bn, of which £430m is cash and immediately available, and had a surplus of £59.7m in 2015/16 after recording a £19.6m deficit the year before. Contrary to current scare mongering about the impact of Brexit, the USS etc., the Financial Statements 2016 (p.18) conclude, "No material uncertainties that cast significant doubt about the ability of the University to continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future have been identified by the Board of Governors." The University is using Brexit and the government's contentious HE Bill as excuses to make short-term cuts that will cause long-term damage.

NO JOB CUTS

A clash of values: collegiality and public service vs. corporatism and top-down managerialism

The cynicism of the timing of the announcement just days after the annual Staff Survey closed is breath taking. Sadly, over the past ten years the University's management has increasingly adopted a corporate business, top-down managerialist approach that many feel is inimical to the values of true collegiality and public service upon which universities should be based.

This has included the outsourcing of cleaning and catering services, which has affected many low paid workers, especially women, and threatening punitive pay deductions for actions short of a strike. In 2015, over 200 IT staff were threatened with compulsory redundancy leading to the first local ballot on industrial action in the University's history; this averted compulsory redundancies and persuaded the University to abandon its plan for wholesale outsourcing of IT Services but still resulted in the departure of over 60 IT staff, huge disruption and multiple IT failures at the start of the academic year. This was followed in 2016 with a major restructure and merger of the Faculties of Life Sciences and Medical and Health Sciences, fast on the heels of which came the review this year of the Faculty of Science and Engineering.

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The University of Manchester



**EMERGENCY
General Meeting**

NO JOB CUTS

**Thursday 18th May
12.00pm - 1.00pm**

**St Peter's Chaplaincy
Oxford Road**