

Dear Mr Astle

Please find attached a letter signed by 174 current Professors and 24 Emeritus Professors (most of whom remain active in teaching and research) expressing serious concerns about the M2020 proposals. It is unprecedented in the history of this institution for so many members of the Professoriate to write expressing no confidence in management. It reflects the widespread feeling that compulsory redundancies are being imposed without adequate justification of management strategy and without giving academic staff any input into the process.

Despite management¹'s breach of the implicit contract under which we were all employed, the 198 professors who signed this letter remain constructive. We all share the aspiration to make Manchester a truly great University grounded by its civic responsibility. For that aspiration to become a reality and to translate it into practice, there should at least be an attempt to involve ordinary academics area by area in defining problems and finding solutions. A great University will be defined by how it engages its staff and the way it transforms the lives of its students. We urge you and the governors immediately to ask for a pause in the implementation of these proposals, especially in removing the threat of compulsory redundancies.

After we had collected the signatures, last Friday 26th we read the statement that you posted on the University CEs staff net. It will not reassure the 198 signatories to our letter. They will be alarmed that you wish to proceed ³ expeditiously² with the consultation that takes us collectively towards compulsory redundancy and imposes huge stresses on individuals already being pressured to take voluntary redundancy because the compulsory scheme offers so little. And they will be puzzled by your assurance

that due process has been followed in the governance of our university.

The Board may have in March 2016 concluded that a step change in performance was needed. But the really big step is then moving from SLT¹'s March 2017 problem definition about underperformance in some academic areas to SLT¹'s proposed solution in May 2017 of compulsory redundancy. Two points about procedure concern us: first, the absence of consultation with Senate and with staff members in threatened units; and, second the nature and quality of the evidence available to the Board.

Issues around the quality of our research and the improvement required in teaching and learning are academic issues that should have been discussed by the Senate. However Senate was only informed of the decisions that had already been taken. Equally, there was no consultation with staff in threatened units who had no chance to correct misinformation about under performance or to explain the implications of what was planned for teaching programmes or research centres.

The second issue concerns the ³detailed presentations and plans² which were presented to the Board which we would now like to see published. Management justified M2020 to ordinary staff members with short power point presentations; subsequently leaked documents set up a false choice between doing nothing and choosing the SLT strategy. If SLT provided detailed, evidence based justifications for the M2020 proposals, could you please publish them so we can be reassured that the Board had the information necessary to challenge management¹'s assertions of necessity. It would also be useful for staff and public to have sight of the minutes of the relevant meetings of staffing committee. The Board of Governors may have followed process but we have no evidence if critical

challenge took place on such an important issue.

We sincerely hope that you will seriously consider the issues that our colleagues have raised, call a halt to the threat of compulsory redundancy and begin the process of engaging with the Professoriate to develop solutions to the problems that are being raised.

We would also ask that all members of the Board of Governors are given copies of this email and the letter from the 198 Professors.

Yours sincerely

Aneez Esmail, Professor of General Practice

Karel Williams, Professor of Accounting and Political Economy

30th May 2017