

In summer 2020, in the face of dramatic predictions of a funding shortfall at the University and the threat of staff redundancies, [UCU members warned of problems with the management practice and culture of the current SLT](#).

Unions and other staff groups asked for greater transparency around the models, assumptions, and data underpinning their predictions and policies; that in the interests of accountability to staff and students, all staff, be meaningfully involved in decision-making; and that the university put people first, to ensure that any shortfalls in income would not lead to intensifying existing problems with insecure work, inequalities among staff, and unsustainable workloads. We asked that the safety of staff, students, and the community be central to our response to the crisis.

However:

- The SLT refused to share with staff detailed financial models of their catastrophic predictions, and failed to re-evaluate them despite changing circumstances. In spite of consistently positive admissions data emerging, it continued to pursue policies of cuts to fixed-term contract staff, reductions in GTA budgets, and a voluntary severance scheme taken up by hundreds of colleagues, largely PS staff. This left the university unprepared, and under-staffed, for one of the most challenging years of its history.
- The SLT also ignored union advice to move the majority of teaching online in Semester 1 in the face of health risks to students, staff, and the wider community. As a result, and as predicted, thousands of our students were infected with Covid-19, and are still suffering the consequences of being encouraged to Manchester with untenable promises of face-to-face teaching and normal social life. Under-staffed departments and administrators are exhausted from being told that they must prepare both online and face-to-face versions of teaching provision, and change between them at any moment.
- The SLT then decided to meet the resulting frustrations and concerns of students with a policy of 'securitisation'. Fences were erected around halls of residence without consulting or informing students, as well as increased security and police patrols. The investigation into the decision to fence in the students in Fallowfield ignores the context of frustration brought about by poor decision-making from senior management, and continues to blame student behaviour for the crisis.

The SLT, despite staff and student concerns, have not taken responsibility for these demonstrably poor decisions. Remarkably, its plan for next semester remains the same as that of Semester 1. We believe the mistakes and lack of appropriate adaptation to circumstances speaks of a failure of both the current leadership/management and culture of governance which actively harms the University of Manchester. This failure has generated unnecessarily confrontational relations between the SLT and the staff and students of the UoM, preventing us from realising our core goals of world class research, world class teaching, and social responsibility.

This meeting therefore resolves:

- To declare a vote of no confidence in the current leadership/management model and membership of the SLT, and the culture of governance operating at the UoM.

- To call for an immediate and independent inquiry into the decision-making around a) the 2-hour teaching promise and subsequent decision to bring students back; b) the securitisation of campus.
- To call for an independent review of the leadership/management culture and aims of the UoM in order to improve the quality of decision-making by the SLT and to produce a management culture capable of delivering the UoM's core goals. This review should be tasked with:
  - co-producing structures which ensure meaningful staff involvement in decision-making which affects our work;
  - identifying processes which will improve the quality of SLT decision-making by involving unions and student groups;
  - restoring the internal democracy of the UoM at all tiers, from the program-level to the Board of Governors.