Introduction
Lancaster is a global University and employs people from around the world. From analysing our workforce data we know that:

- 11% of all staff are EU nationals
- 20% of academic staff are EU nationals.

Following Britain’s decision to leave the European Union on 23 June 2016:

- We have held three listening events in early July to get soundings/feedback from staff.
- UMAG set up a EU Referendum Working Group to look at what practical support we can offer staff affected.
- Simon Guy the Dean of FASS is leading the development of a ‘We are Lancaster’ campaign to promote Lancaster values, of inclusivity, tolerance and diversity. Further updates to follow in due course.

There is no immediate impact on the principle of freedom of movement and the right of nationals of the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland to live and work in the UK. However, at the staff listening events held in July 2016, staff told us that they are considering taking steps to protect their position and are looking to the University for practical support with immigration issues.

Package of support for staff

Briefing sessions
A series of 2 hour briefing sessions have been scheduled between 29 November – 7 December to provide all international staff with practical information on immigration issues. Each briefing session will cover guidance on completing the application form, the application process, eligibility requirements, common pitfalls and a question and answer session. Specific briefing sessions will be held on:

- EEA permanent residency
- British citizenship
- Indefinite leave to remain

Interest free loan
The University will also make interest free loans to staff who need financial support with the cost of a UK Visa, residency and/or healthcare surcharges.

A loan of up to £10,000 or 1/12th of gross salary (whichever is the lesser) will be made available to current Lancaster University staff to cover their costs and the costs for their dependents i.e. their spouse, partner/ children under the age of 18 or older children if they are already in the UK as a dependent. Any help with visa or healthcare charges for new starters will still fall under the relevant relocation scheme on appointment.

The loan will be recovered in 12 equal amounts from your salary over course of the year, and if you leave the University, the entire amount becomes recoverable. We may extend the loan period to 24 months if the deductions would cause financial hardship.

Conclusion
At this stage it is not known how the UK’s immigration system will be managed when the UK leaves the EU. The UK will not officially leave the EU for at least 2 years while the terms of withdrawal are negotiated. Lancaster will work with other universities and UUK to focus on securing support that allows our universities to continue to be global in their outlook. A key priority will be to convince the UK Government to take steps to ensure that staff and students from EU countries can continue to work and study at British universities.
Support via briefing sessions on immigration issues are welcomed however will the University also provided advice on an individual basis?

Included as part of the briefing sessions will be a question and answer session where more specific questions can be asked. The University is not at this stage planning to offer immigration advice on an individual basis but will keep this under review.

I don’t know which briefing session is relevant to my circumstances; could you provide additional guidance on this?

Yes. The EU Referendum section of the HR pages have subsequently been updated to provide additional information on when individuals are typically eligible to apply for the relevant immigration certificate/document.

How much does it cost to apply for a document certifying permanent residency in the UK and/or British citizenship?

Permanent residency currently costs, at present, £65 per person applying and can be applied for after living for 5 years in the UK. There is an additional cost to provide biometric information via the Post Office (£19.20 per applicant). The current form is 85 pages long, but there has been talk of the process being simplified following the referendum. You can find more information on the gov.uk website.

For anyone who has lived in the UK for over 5 years and holds permanent UK residency, you may be eligible to apply for British Citizenship through naturalisation. Full details around eligibility and costs can be found here.

I am an EEA national and have a permanent contract with the University, what impact will the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union have on the terms of my contract?

There is no immediate impact on the principle of freedom of movement and the right of nationals of the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland to live and work in the UK. Once the UK Government invokes Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty to begin the process of leaving the EU, a period of negotiation will commence. Until the outcome of the EU exit negotiations and clarity on any transitional provisions are confirmed it’s not possible to know what the impact will be.

I am concerned about feeling less welcome in the UK than before the EU Referendum.

Lancaster University is a welcoming community and racism or abuse is wholly unacceptable behaviour, and it is the University’s policy to take any incidents very seriously and to act appropriately. If you have any concerns please report them to your Head of Department, a trade union representative, HR staff or your college advisor, depending on whether you are a student or member of staff.
**Does the University intend to hold additional sessions in the future, for example following important government announcements on the EU?**

Yes. In addition to the EU related events already scheduled we intend to hold further events throughout the academic year.

**Will guidance be provided to recruiting managers on how to deal with EU nationals who are reluctant to accept an offer of employment due to the UK’s withdrawal from the EU?**

This is an important issue and needs to be picked up as part of the University’s recruitment strategy. We also need to raise awareness regarding the support that is available to new staff joining the University such as the relocation package.

**What other support services are available for employees?**

In addition to the support already announced by the University all employees also have access to the Employee Assistance Programme.

If you have any concerns, issues or questions on how the country’s decision to leave the EU impacts you or the University’s response then please email EUReferendum@lancaster.ac.uk.