EU Referendum: Staff Listening Sessions
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Please see here for student related Brexit information

Q1: Is there a source of information for legal advice on visa and leave to remain applications, and for questions around specific scenarios?

HR are exploring options for setting up workshops to provide legal advice and access to immigration experts to help with visa applications and more specific queries. Further details will be provided soon, please look out in LU Text and on the Intranet.

Q2: Will any additional support be offered to employees who are affected?

In addition to the above all employees have access to the Employee Assistance Programme: http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/depts/safety/intranet/eap.html

We are also exploring and accessing additional support as required, on a case by case basis. HR would be interested to hear suggestions from staff or work directly with colleagues to ensure their needs are met.

Q3: Will any financial support be provided to staff applying for settlement or indefinite leave to remain in the UK?

Retention of staff is a key priority and the University is exploring how it can support employees and their families with the costs associated with obtaining permanent residency in the UK. Any support made available will be offered to all individuals (EU and non-EU nationals) affected by this issue but may be subject to PAYE taxation under current HMRC guidelines. It should be emphasised there has been no decision taken by the Government and existing EU staff have permanent right of residency as things stand at present, and this is likely to remain the case.

Q4: Will the University fund any costs for non UK nationals to remain in the UK if additional charges are imposed?

This will be discussed with the UMAG working group and feedback will be provided/policy developed in due course.

Q5: Will I be able to access the NHS or will I need to obtain my own health insurance?

At present you will be able to access the NHS. 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, which is anticipated to last 2 years or more. Throughout this period, the UK will maintain all aspects of its current EU Membership. As part of the negotiations, any changes to access rights in the UK, which will include health services, will be decided by the UK Government. It is unclear at present whether protection and a continued commitment of service provision will be offered to EU staff who are already settled here in the UK.

Q6: Does being a PhD student count towards the 5 year qualification for applying for residency?

Information on applying for settlement in the UK can be found on the Government website:
https://www.gov.uk/settle-in-the-uk. The workshops being organised with HR will also cover
this issue. A statement on the status of EU nationals in the UK can also be found on the Government website: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-the-status-of-eu-nationals-in-the-uk

Q7: **EU colleagues are covered by the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) for medical insurance, does the University have any plans to include medical insurance as part of its recruitment package?**

The University has committed to exploring whether this could be considered as part of the flexible benefits package if and when a decision is taken that means the EHIC is not applicable in the UK.

Q8: **Is Lancaster University committed to staff that are funded by ESIF?**

Yes. Staff funded by ESIF (European Structural and Investment Fund) programmes such as ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) have very important skill sets, and this is a key area of strength for Lancaster University. Major projects at the University have benefitted through ESIF funding including the Health Innovation Campus, and Lancaster is committed to retaining these vital skills. This commitment has been demonstrated by the University’s recent decision to transfer all individuals funded through HEIF and ESIF/ERDF to indefinite status. It is highly likely that European regional funding will be replaced by English regional growth and development programmes in the future, and the University need to be in a good position to access these as part of working with the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

Q9: **The discussions have focused around academic colleagues, is there an opportunity for other staff, to find out more?**

It is intended that communications channels will be set up, including a dedicated email box for questions and issues to be directed to. We will also be uploading the FAQs from the listening sessions onto the website. The HR department will be ensuring that there are relevant communication channels for all staff.

Q10: **Will employees on probation now be more vulnerable?**

No, employees on probation will not be treated any differently to other members of staff.

Q11: **Given the uncertainty in the current climate will there be a staff recruitment freeze?**

The University remains committed to invest in the campus and will continue to expand and recruit staff to support this growth. Staff recruitment is therefore very much business as usual and there is no present need for a recruitment freeze.

Q12: **Are we going to review our recruitment literature to encourage international candidates and send a positive message to job seekers?**

All recruitment stems from the University values and we already actively promote the University as a global University. International employees are currently offered relocation packages which are in line with the rest of our sector.
Q13: How does the University plan to retain and attract excellence in our staff?

A key component of attracting the best staff to Lancaster University is the views and opinions that existing employees portray through word of mouth. The University therefore needs to reinforce that we are a welcoming community that values diversity. If we can further embed this into our culture then this message will continue to be disseminated by our existing employees.

Q14: Do we have staff working in European institutions and if so how does this affect them?

The University has staff working in many continents across the globe but they are domiciled in the UK and are therefore UK employees (with a very small number of exceptions). A worst case scenario is that in the future they may need to apply for visas to enable free movement but as with many of the issues covered, there is not yet clarity on how this will look in the future and the rules that will be applied.

Q15: What is going to be the impact of Brexit on the University's research?

A statement outlining the issues for research at Lancaster has been prepared by the PVC Research and Research & Enterprise Services (RES), and this is included as an Annex to these FAQs. We will continue to update staff on research related issues as further information emerges.

Q16: Will Brexit have an effect on recruiting PhD students? It may become more difficult given the uncertainty.

The University will continue to explore strategic partnerships with global institutions and may need to adopt practices used by other institutions. Universities in the USA currently do this successfully.

Q17: What impact will leaving have on fieldwork in EU countries and academic mobility.

At this stage it is unknown what and if any restrictions will be introduced.

Q18: We currently have over 1500 EU students and spend 15/16 weeks per year recruiting. Does the University have any plans to lobby the government on student loans, particularly before January's intake/deadline?

The student loans company has committed for next year. The VC has been attending meetings at UUK where these issues are under discussion. Overseas student recruitment is even more important in this environment and the University needs to think about how we present ourselves in a global market. This will be an even higher priority than before.

Q19: What information and message should we be providing to prospective students?

All prospective students were contacted by the Vice-Chancellor the day after the EU Referendum results. Information and FAQs for students are also available on the University website which you should signpost students to http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study/eu-referendum-faq/.
In summary, the message is that students from other EU countries who are currently at UK universities and those starting in autumn 2016 will receive student loan support for the duration of their course. During the period of negotiations, anticipated to last 2 years, the UK will maintain all aspects of its current EU Membership. Should there be any governmental change during this period, we will publish the information on our website.

Q20:  *Will the tuition fees EU students pay to the University change now or in the future?*

The University can confirm that it has no plans to change the tuition fees for EU students that have already been published for 2016/17. EU students who are registered at the University in 2016/17 (either as a new or continuing student) will continue to be charged the home rate for tuition fees for all subsequent years of their programme. As further details become available, we will publish information on our fees website.

Q21:  *What will happen with the Erasmus scheme and will the year abroad continue to be funded in the future?*

Student and staff mobility is important across Europe and across the world. The University is committed to finding ways to continue to support and fund these initiatives. Lancaster is a global University and we need to rearticulate and reinforce this message so that it is embedded in everything that we do. Continuing to support and fund initiatives such as the Erasmus Scheme is a key part of this message.

Q22:  *Is LU anticipating a fall in student numbers as a result of the EU Referendum? If so, is the University financially prepared for this?*

The University is financially robust and has a surplus, and we are not anticipating a fall in student recruitment. The University plans to take full advantage of new funding rules that allow institutions in England to recruit an unlimited number of home and EU undergraduate students. We are therefore confident that student recruitment at Lancaster University will continue to grow.

Q23:  *Is there a danger that prospective EU students will feel unwelcome and avoid Lancaster University because the district voted to leave the EU?*

Although the Lancaster district result was to leave the margin was very narrow with 48.9% voting to remain. This is clearly a very complex issue and individuals will have considered a variety of issues when deciding how to vote. One of Lancaster University’s key strengths is its cultural diversity and its welcoming and collegiate attitude. It is important that the University reinforces this message locally, regionally and nationally.

Q24:  *There is some indication that there has been a downturn in graduate recruitment. How will the University consider the impact of this on a longer-term basis?*

The University believes it is important to build up strategic partnerships with major employers. We have been talking to major businesses and they are working in an uncertain environment that has brought about some short-term measures. However, the new Conservative party leadership is expected to provide some stability within the wider economy and will make it easier for employers to make further commitments.
Q25: Has the University thought about introducing visible signs around campus? (e.g., other universities have flags of European countries that are visible on their campus)

The importance of visual reinforcement of our international staff and student body and our global outlook is key. We will be working with colleagues across the University and within Marketing and Communications to develop ideas we can take forward.

Q26: Reports of hate crimes have risen following the UK’s decision to leave the EU and staff and students are concerned about not feeling welcomed. What’s the University’s stance on this and what is the University doing within the local community to stamp out discrimination?

The University’s stance remains unchanged and there are escalation routes and support in place for staff and students which should be used. The University has a responsibility within the local community to influence these important issues and we will rearticulate and reinforce our values to reflect the global nature of Lancaster University and the importance of diversity. In parallel, the VC has asked the Dean of FASS, Professor Simon Guy, to lead a piece of work looking at how we can communicate the huge value we place in our diversity, both within the University, the City and the wider region. More information on this work will be communicated in due course.
Annex

Impact of Brexit on Research: Statement from the PVC Research and RES

Following the result of the EU referendum on Friday 24th June we would like to reassure staff that Lancaster is continuing to work towards its strategic goal of establishing Lancaster University as a global research leader, a university with international research networks in the EU and beyond, and as an attractive destination for talented researchers from across the world. This briefing will hopefully be of use with any discussions you are having with European partners.

EU Funding and Collaborative Research

Maintaining and building our collaborative partnerships across Europe is a key priority for Lancaster University - we are committed to our involvement in the European research landscape, and will make every effort to ensure its continuity and success. The UK is still a member of the EU, and this membership will continue until the conclusion of exit negotiations, which will take at least two years to complete. It is our full expectation that the UK will take forward discussions with the European Commission regarding Associated Country status, and that the details of our eligibility to take part in funding schemes like Horizon 2020 and the future FP9 programme would be concluded as a part of the exit negotiations.

At this point UK researchers are still entitled to apply for EU funding, and Research Services at Lancaster will continue to offer full development and support for new applications. Moreover we know that most other UK universities are also continuing to encourage applications.

We understand, however, that in the current climate individual academics will wish to weigh up the pros and cons of applying to EU programmes like H2020. We should bear in mind that UK universities are some of the best in the world, with high positions in global league tables, excellent facilities and highly cited and respected research leaders. We anticipate that our colleagues around Europe will continue to recognise this. Academics may, however, wish to re-assure partners that in the event of any change in the ability of UK institutions to lead a collaborative project, we will do everything possible to support a smooth transition of the lead role to another partner, to ensure continuity of the project.

In addition to this we will make every effort to ensure that there is no disruption to existing EU projects or collaborative partnerships as the UK goes through this transition process. We appreciate that this is an uncertain time for staff and the University has listened to staff’s concerns at a series of Listening and Engagement Sessions and the FAQs from these events are now available on the staff intranet.

Although the EU provides an important source of research funding to the university it is worth noting that we are not overly dependent on this stream, and there is a wide range of alternative funding sources open to our academics. This year our awards from the EU have only been 8.5% of the total value of all awards (which is much smaller than some
of our competitor HEIs), and so we are in a strong position to adapt to the new post 'Brexit' era.

**Global Challenges Research Fund**

For Lancaster University the new Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) offers a real opportunity – this is RCUK funding to support research with the potential to benefit developing countries. This new £1.5bn RCUK fund plays well to our interdisciplinary strengths. It represents an opportunity not just for those with existing links in low income countries, but also for those who have never previously engaged in impact in such counties, and we will keenly support academics wishing to engage in this agenda for the first time. Given the scale of the opportunities we are expecting that most of our future funded activities under the GCRF will be for staff for whom this is new.

This fund will also open up new opportunities to work with a wide range of international partners – for example, around issues relating to sustainable development and economic growth, eradication of poverty, skills development, health, combating inequalities and strengthening global governance. Through work with partners it will help us build capacity and capability in interdisciplinary approaches for the future; and provide agile responses to sudden emergencies or new opportunities requiring interdisciplinary solutions.

Given our expertise, the agile and interdisciplinary nature of the university, and the size of funding available, it is expected that GCRF will substantially outweigh EU supported projects at Lancaster, and exceed what we have ever achieved previously in EU funding.

**Next Steps**

We will be monitoring the situation regarding EU research programmes closely, and a UMAG Working Group has been established to review this and the wider implications of the UK’s exit from the EU. We will keep you updated as further information emerges.

In regard to our engagement in the GCRF, we have established a Management Group (involving the ADRs) and a wider steering group drawing on expertise from across the University. These will help shape our strategy for engagement with this new funding. Lancaster is holding a series of internal events around Global Challenges Research Funding. Please do keep your eyes on the GCRF webpage for more information: [http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/research/support-for-researchers/research-services/gcrf/](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/research/support-for-researchers/research-services/gcrf/)

If you have any queries about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact one of us.

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