

CANVAS

HIGHER EDUCATION EDITION
2024/25

Saxton Bampfylde

ENGAGE AND COLLABORATE

THE NEW LANGUAGE OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

CANVAS

HIGHER EDUCATION EDITION

2024/25

By Saxton Bampfylde

04



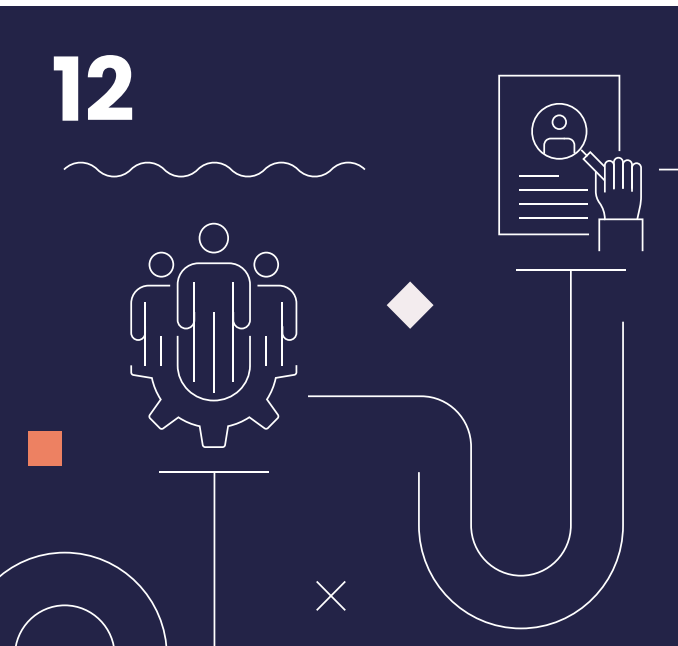
08



14



12



EDITION OVERVIEW

Dr Eugenia Gonzalez

Partner & Consultant
Higher Education Practice

✉ eugenia.gonzalez@saxbam.com



Welcome to the 2024/25 Higher Education edition of CANVAS, the insights update from Saxton Bampfylde and its global community. Through CANVAS we aim to share the thoughts and perspectives of senior leaders on topics and issues that are front of mind for the sector alongside our own insights.

For this edition, we have invited two newly-appointed vice-chancellors at differing – and distinctive – institutions, as they begin their leadership at a critical juncture for higher education. Saxton Bampfylde is proud to have supported the appointment of both. Professor Duncan Ivison is entering his first semester as President and Vice-Chancellor at the University of Manchester, from the University of Sydney, where he was Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Professor Shân Wareing is at the early stages of her time at the helm of Middlesex University, previously Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Northampton, and with a strong track record of leading institutional transformation programmes.

The universities are different, and so are their student and staff demographics, but the ambitions and priorities of these two dynamic and engaging leaders nevertheless have much in common. The recent transition in UK government administration brings opportunity, but crucially a time for higher education to show collegiality in the broadest sense, and to demonstrate its enormous value.

Duncan's international experience is pivotal in his aspirations for Manchester, not just for the institution, but for the city more broadly, and indeed for the higher education sector at a macro level. He is among a number of peers who have come from Australia to lead UK institutions,

and we talked about why this was, and the impact it is expected to bring.

The depth of the local and regional roster of students attending Middlesex University is a significant opportunity. In our discussions with Shân, she highlighted how this important student demographic makeup resonates keenly with a domestic ambition for growth, an emphasis on community, and the need to showcase the essential impact of higher education in its ability to support and deliver these goals.

2024 has felt like a year of change, and sometimes turmoil. The higher education sector faces real challenges that will require real change for the majority of the sector, and the wider landscape – from the UK economy to the wider geopolitical environment – will mean more choppy waters. More than ever we are proud to serve a sector that is such an important asset to society, crucial to economic and cultural development – and vital to addressing pressing challenges, both on a global scale and closer to home. Leaders like Duncan and Shân only add to our optimism for the impact they can have in their own institutions, but for the places and communities they touch and the sector as a whole.

Our own Partner community is what makes us stand out and we are very happy to introduce our colleague Rhianna Connolly, who has recently joined our higher education team, as she shares some personal reflections, as well as her professional experience, her ambitions and her initial insight into our sector.

We do hope you enjoy this edition and welcome any feedback you may have.

CONTENTS

04 A global outlook with community and collaboration at the core

Professor Duncan Ivison, Vice-Chancellor, University of Manchester

08 Times of change: create the conditions for change and it will come

Professor Shân Wareing, Vice-Chancellor of Middlesex University

12 Leadership appointments

A round-up of appointment highlights in higher education by Saxton Bampfylde

14 View from the river: team insight

Meet Rhianna Connolly, Associate Consultant and Partner, higher education Practice



Connect with us
on LinkedIn

Saxton Bampfylde



A GLOBAL OUTLOOK

**WITH COMMUNITY
AND COLLABORATION
AT THE CORE**



Interview with **Professor Duncan Ivison**,
President and Vice-Chancellor,
University of Manchester

As Professor Duncan Ivison embarks on his first semester as President and Vice-Chancellor at the University of Manchester, we were delighted to have the chance to talk to him and hear his ambitions and areas of focus. His global experience is clear and particularly within large, complex institutions, and he sets this in the context of his plans for Manchester so well throughout this interview. But what is very clear from him is the importance in his mind of the history, the community and the opportunity for the institution and the city.

The political environment is also very relevant in the timing of this conversation, but also reflective of the change in government in Australia where he has come from. Manchester is an institution of remarkable standing, and while maintaining the first-rate reputation and position left by former VC Nancy Rothwell, there is a tangible sense of evolution from Duncan, informed by his global, commercial and co-collaboration experience; we were so grateful that he was willing to share this so openly and honestly.

Duncan, congratulations on your appointment at the University of Manchester. Your international background and career, latterly as Deputy VC at the of Sydney and previously with also the University of Toronto offers a new perspective. How do you believe this will shape your approach and ambitions for Manchester?

Thanks very much! The University of Manchester occupies a unique position, not just in the higher education sector in the UK, but globally. The connection to the city and its history here is just extraordinary, particularly as the world's first civic university, and this is increasingly important in today's world where these institutions are so crucial to the flourishing of cities and communities, and increasingly central to the ambitions of government.

I see my international experience in Canada and Australia – and of course the UK – as bringing a global perspective to Manchester, and equally taking Manchester to the world. Nancy and her team have done an amazing job before me, but I do believe there is an opportunity to let more of the world know about this institution and the city through more global engagement.

We need to be clear about our global perspective over the next decade and I believe my experience will help shape that. We can learn from things that have both worked and not worked in Sydney and elsewhere. Part of that is ensuring that Manchester aspires to be seen globally as a high-quality education and research-intensive institution, but also very much a socially engaged and place-based university. The model that Manchester has been developing is powerful, and I want to bring more global awareness to that.

We have an international community already, with our researchers, teachers and students coming from all over the world, so we are automatically involved in lots of global conversation around our disciplines, our students and our alumni.

It's also important that, at a time when states are becoming more narrowly focused on issues of migration and security, universities need to be those institutions that are always

“Australian institutions and their leadership have developed a more strategic edge, and that is an important factor in why many Australian university leaders have been sought out by other institutions.”

looking outwards beyond borders and trying to make connections rather than shut them down. I think we have a moral responsibility to always be looking to connect.

Are there comparisons you can make between leadership approaches in higher education between Australia and the UK? Or equally, differences to note?

There is a great deal of policy interchange between the sectors in Australia and the UK and common interests certainly. The Australian Government recently undertook a major review of higher education and some of the findings from that are of interest for the UK, and discussions are under way in that context. There have been examples of where an Australian policy shift has influenced the approach in the UK (and vice versa). The establishment of the contingent loan system, for example, which was initiated in Australia, subsequently shaped, in part, on what was introduced in the UK.

And Australia also introduced a research assessment process (Excellence in Research in Australia), modelled, at least in part, on the UK's Research Excellence Framework (REF). Although it has recently been dropped.

However, one of the differences I would note is that Australian universities must hustle a bit harder to generate resources. That's not to say that UK institutions don't have to work hard in challenging funding conditions, but in Australia, there is much less government support for research, in particular.

"We can do much more in common by working together, co-investing in infrastructure, in multidisciplinary research and in teaching initiatives. This is something I really tried to drive in Sydney, and I want to do this in Manchester too."

As a result, I think Australian institutions and their leadership have developed a more strategic edge, and that is an important factor in why many Australian university leaders have been sought out by other institutions globally, including in the UK. The leadership culture in Australian higher education is probably more 'top down' in orientation, and this has worked well for some things, particularly in improving research performance.

There is currently a number of UK-based VCs with experience of Australian higher education (e.g. Kings College London, UCL, Aston, and now Manchester). Why do you think this pipeline of talent is so strong, and what makes leaders in Australian institutions so successful in securing top roles in the UK?

I have some personal observations about this! First, I think Australian higher education has been relentlessly globally oriented for a long time. It has had to be to attract the best students and the best faculty to its institutions, and that is challenging given its geographic location and distance from the UK and US, especially. As a result, the research-intensive institutions in Australia have developed a

strong focus on their competitive position and what they need to do to succeed.

Second, there is a lot of similarity between the two sectors, even though there are important contextual and cultural differences. For example, as I mentioned above, there is a lot of policy cross-over between the countries, and now, in Australia there is a relatively new Labour government, and also now a new Labour government in the UK, with a lot of interaction between them and thus a lot of networks that UK and Australian academic leaders and academics share as a result.

And finally, Australia has a concentration of research-intensive universities that are large by global standards, with complex organisational cultures and stakeholder engagement requirements, and there's a limited pool of people globally who have led institutions like that. Many of the Australian institutions that recent VC appointments in the UK have come from are multi-billion-dollar organisations, with 60,000+ students, for example.

I believe these are some of the reasons why larger UK universities are interested in what Australian leaders have done and want to learn from that. Having said that, the UK is also the source of some extraordinary university leaders!

As we enter a period of political change, is there more that you believe can be done to help address challenges in the sector over the next 5-10 years? How do you anticipate addressing this in your role?

There's a huge opportunity here, the focus on city and regional government is an important one for Manchester. We have a deep and meaningful partnership with our city and regional governments and organisations, more so than in any other institution I have ever worked at, and that's been an absolute joy to engage with. I also think that despite all the challenges, there has been a consistent investment in science and innovation in the UK in a way that we just didn't have in Australia, and that can be built on as well.

The sector, especially amongst the larger research-intensive universities, has so much to contribute to the national economy and society. Working in partnership is key: whether with our students, staff, alumni, governments, community organisations and industry and demonstrating how we can contribute to the ambition of delivering genuinely inclusive growth will be critical.

Manchester, and the north-west more broadly, is an innovation powerhouse, nationally and globally. We need to demonstrate to the government how we can work together in areas such as skills, innovation, and better access to higher education to drive genuinely inclusive economic growth.

Previous governments have got caught up in culture wars with universities and while some of those issues will probably remain, the tonal change the new government has signalled is important and an opportunity to position our institutions and sector as problem solvers – rather than problems themselves – who are here to collaborate for the national interest.

A progressive new partnership between the innovation clusters in Cambridge and Manchester was announced at the end of

2023. What do you believe the opportunities are for this and how much emphasis will this have in the future direction of Manchester's research and development aims?

This is a hugely exciting one for me. I am a big believer in universities working more closely together. It's something I did a lot of in Sydney, vis a vis our industry and government partners. In the past, universities have been hyper-competitive with each other. We'll always compete on some levels – for example, for students and to attract the best staff. But I think we can do much more in common by working together, co-investing in infrastructure, in multidisciplinary research and in teaching initiatives. This is something I really tried to drive in Sydney, and I want to do this in Manchester too.

There is already a great relationship between the universities within the city of Manchester, but I'd really like to see that across the north and nationally as well, beyond what the Russell Group and Universities UK already do. If we can develop coalitions and consortia of universities who agree to work together around specific initiatives, this would be a very powerful way for governments, industry and communities to engage with us.

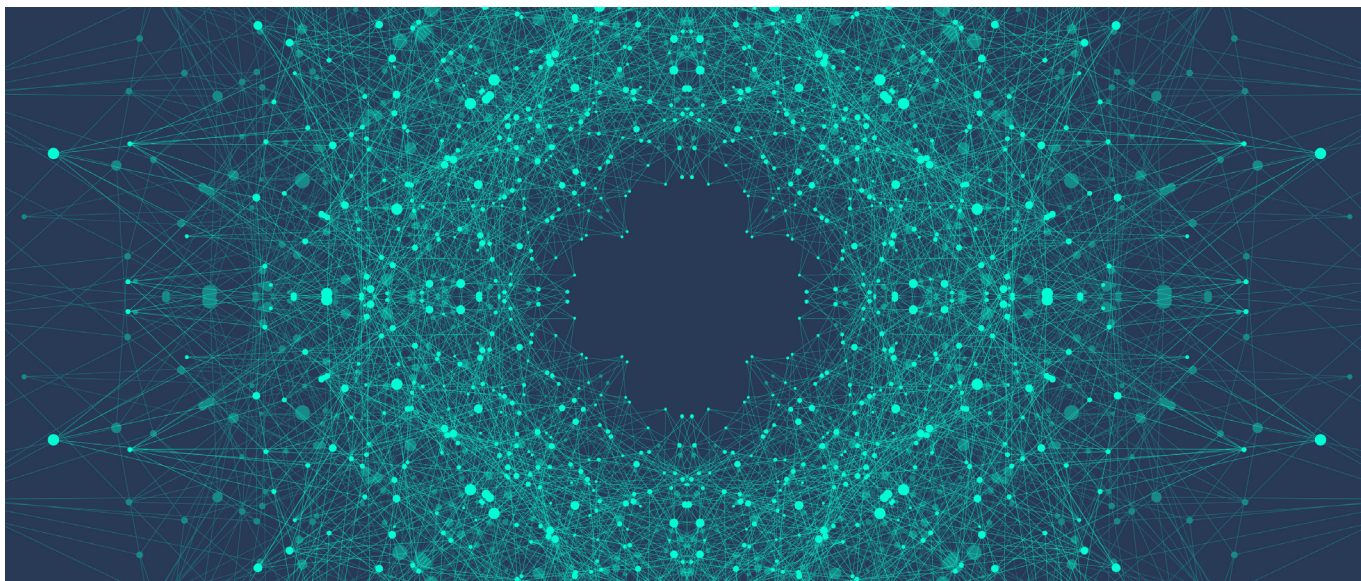
Our emerging relationship with Cambridge, for example, is exciting, and there are collaborative opportunities where we have complementary strengths in innovation, science, and creative and cultural domains. There are also opportunities where we can help each other from a city perspective. Cambridge doesn't have enough space for all the companies it is spinning out, and we have an ambitious innovation agenda and room to grow.

The growth agenda is so important, and Manchester wants to attract the same level of inward investment that is happening in other parts of the country, and I think building relationships with other universities both in the north and the south will help to lift the economic performance of the regions and create amazing opportunities for our staff, students, and our partners. It's a big part of my agenda in this role and I really want to build and invest in those relationships.

The leadership profile of a Vice-Chancellor has arguably evolved in recent years, and perhaps at an accelerated pace since the pandemic. What, in your view, are the most critical attributes needed to be a successful leader in higher education today?

I see the university as a gloriously complex ecosystem and the role of the Vice-Chancellor is to care for and support that ecosystem; to repair broken links that have come under stress, and to think about its future sustainability, and all the while being super clear about the strategic intent of the institution.

One thing I've learned over the years is that my university colleagues really care about the strategic direction of the institution. They want to feel they're part of something that is true to its mission but is also ambitious for the future. The VCs I have really learned from have a deep love of the institution they are part of, but also, and at the same time, they're always looking to the future and challenging the organisation to get better. We're asking fundamental questions about the nature of the world, educating the next generation of students, and contributing



“You need to ensure that the appropriate balance is always being struck between the different parts of the communities we serve. They need to challenge you, but at the same time, be among the institution’s greatest advocates.”

to the flourishing of the communities we serve. We are also engaging with literally thousands of stakeholders in a very complex regulatory and political environment

It is an extraordinary job and we’re all trying to take a long-term view, which is challenging in a very short-term obsessed political and regulatory environment. Days and weeks are often dominated by short-term reactive activity, but VCs cannot lose sight of that long term vision. The institution will be here long after we’re gone, and as VC, your role is to think strategically about its future and to ensure it continues to flourish. In a resource constrained environment, that often means making tough choices, but also bringing the community along with you and explaining why they need to be made.

The relationship between the VC and senior team with the Board of Governors is an important one, but does it need to evolve in your view to meet the institution’s ambitions and also sectoral evolution?

As universities become more and more porous and turn themselves outwards in everything they do, a governance structure which reflects, supports and challenges the leadership team is important. We

need experience from different parts of the community on our boards.

Reflecting on Australian higher education over the past decade, many of the boards of the eight research-led institutions have significantly increased their membership from industry and business backgrounds, and that’s been incredibly valuable. I learned so much from members of Sydney’s Senate (their Board of Governors), for example, who had extensive experience running large infrastructure projects in the private sector with complex stakeholder challenges. On the other hand, there also have to be members who come from the non-profit sector and other communities we serve, as well as appropriate representation from students and staff, to make sure that we are always being challenged to improve our support for them.

There is always a risk that if your board drifts too far away from grasping the complex but core mission of a university, then it can create a disjuncture between the board and the university community. That puts the Vice-Chancellor in a very difficult situation. You need to ensure that the appropriate balance is always being struck between the different parts of the communities we serve. They need to challenge you, but at the same time, be among the institution’s greatest advocates. **6**



Professor Duncan Ivison

Biography

Professor Duncan Ivison, FAHA FRSN, is President and Vice-Chancellor of The University of Manchester. He holds degrees from McGill University and the London School of Economics. With over 20 years at the University of Sydney, Duncan has extensive experience in academic leadership, including roles as Dean and Deputy Vice-Chancellor. A distinguished political and moral philosopher, he has received numerous awards and held visiting positions at prestigious institutions worldwide. Duncan is passionate about public engagement and building partnerships between universities, communities, industry, and governments.

TIMES OF CHANGE

CREATE THE CONDITIONS
FOR CHANGE AND
IT WILL COME



Interview with
**Professor
Shân Wareing,**
Vice-Chancellor
of Middlesex
University

Shân Wareing is no stranger to driving change, having spent much of her career in transformation-based roles and advocating for learning and development in often resource-constrained environments. She is hugely focused on the domestic base of much of the undergraduate population at Middlesex University, and the potential that it offers both for the institution and the country, and its future working population more broadly.

Her commitment to education is clear, as is her belief in investment in maintaining as wide a portfolio of subjects as possible, with a continued commitment to research. However, while this has to be balanced with the recognition of financial constraints, she sees opportunity in engaging collaboratively with local and national government, as well as the business sector to really demonstrate the value that Middlesex brings to the London and south-east region, and beyond.

Her appointment as Vice-Chancellor at Middlesex comes after a period of interim leadership at the institution, and her ambitions and drive to create a thriving and sustainable institution for the future is at the forefront of her approach.

Shân, congratulations on beginning your new role at Middlesex. You bring considerable leadership experience to the role from working within significant and diverse institutions: what are your ambitions for the university?

My ambitions for Middlesex are set over a ten-year time frame, and after that I hope to hand over a thriving, multidisciplinary institution to another Vice-Chancellor. A major challenge will be in retaining the full range of academic disciplines, but that is a key goal that will serve local people in the region socially, economically and culturally. I want us to be driven by a core focus on the mission and purpose of education – ultimately that is what we exist for.

We want to focus on activities and investment that will make the education better, whilst also remaining commercially viable in a constrained financial environment. The emphasis on research and knowledge exchange is important at Middlesex, and will remain so, as they do hugely support the educational element, but don't always cover their costs.

To achieve financial viability, we must be tighter and more focused than we are at the moment, and that also means a stronger regional focus. We are looking at our partnerships with business, industry, public sector and governments (local, national and international). We are based in the London Borough of Barnet, as well as having campuses in Dubai and Mauritius; we are really strengthening relationships in Barnet which is important now and for our future. It is important to have this regional emphasis as local employers will employ many of our graduates and we rely on them to tell us if we are sustaining and improving the quality and relevance of our education.

The pressures on higher education are many at present. We understand there is an ambitious change programme already underway at Middlesex. Can you tell us more about the challenge of inheriting and ultimately leading this?

At the moment the sector is looking at change largely because of financial

“There are lots of reasons why we should always be reinventing ourselves. There is so much change in our environment. We have to meet those needs and shouldn't expect it all to be comfortable.”

constraints and changes in income streams, such as the decline in international students coming to UK institutions.

I actually think there are lots of reasons why we should always be reinventing ourselves. There is so much change in our environment, including what students want, what the business and public sectors are prioritising, how partnerships are formed, and how digital and technology is always evolving. We have to meet those needs and shouldn't expect it all to be comfortable.

I have an appetite for change and have led transformational change in other institutions so it's something I probably seek out and enjoy. I believe renewal is inevitable and exciting.

Ultimately, at university we research and educate, and we should therefore be at the heart of change and adapting to social need. If we accept and embrace change, and support people through it, we will do our

best to bring about success for our students, our institutions, our sector, and our society.

The change programme here is about modernisation and generating capability, as well as about financial rationalisation. We will be advancing all those aspects. As the permanent Vice-Chancellor after a period of interim leadership, I am planning to anchor the changes to a long-term vision for the university, linking us to the local environment and focusing on recruiting local students.

We recruit a large number of domestic undergraduate students, many of whom live at home and commute to university, and we really need to think about that as we shape our portfolio. Many institutions have been so focused on international students that they allowed their market share of home-based students to contract, and financially that didn't matter so much. But I think from the perspective of educational mission it should have mattered, and now financially it really does matter. So, now it is time to refocus on that mission and local recruitment. At Middlesex we are in a densely populated area, with great transport links, and approximately four million people within an hour's commute. For me, that is our primary n market and where we will be focusing.

What do you consider to be the most pressing challenges in the sector and what needs to be done to address these over the next 5–10 years?

We have been changing our narrative in the sector in the past few years, to highlight what we can do for the government, business and society, as opposed to asking for government help. I believe a key focus for the government and the sector will be to determine the type of economy and society we want in the long term and the models from other sectors and internationally that we can learn from.

I can't think of a successful society and economy that hasn't invested in higher education and I think that is what we need to be discussing with the government, to think about how we can encourage prosperity and productivity. We need to think about how higher education contributes to regional and national growth over the long-term, and then extrapolate back to generate options for viable funding and educational models. No government is going to be able

to funnel lots of money into higher education so in the short term we are going to have to manage this ourselves, but longer term the government and the sector need to think about how we work together.

I hope very much that as part of that long term vision we can continue to support a full range of disciplines and maintain creativity and cultural subjects such as arts and humanities. While student demand for them has contracted in recent years, I think these areas encourage creativity across so many sectors, and we must not let them diminish in the long term because we are financially constrained in the short term. As a university that serves a local community, I very much want to offer local people a full range of possible subjects to study.

Are there any particular sort of economies or societies that you are looking at as an example that we could learn from in the UK?

Recently the Financial Times was looking at the graduate premium in the USA and it's sizeable. Meantime ours has dropped in the UK. There is an argument that if you aren't investing in higher education, it has a real and direct impact on your economy and that is why there's been a drop in the UK graduate salary compared to non-graduates.

I don't think we should take the US model for HE and attempt to duplicate it wholesale, but I think we can look at what is working and what isn't. I also look to Australia, Canada and mainland Europe as examples of where we can learn more in this country and in our approach.

How does Middlesex differ from the previous institutions you have been involved in leading? What learnings can you bring from those other cultures/structures?

I see more similarities than differences with my previous institutions culturally and financially. Our staff profile, student profile and mission at Middlesex are similar to most of the places I have worked previously. They have mostly been post-92 universities, taking many students from backgrounds with lower participation in higher education, and with a vocational and professional portfolio of courses.

One of the distinctive elements about Middlesex is where it is located. In a densely

"I can't think of a successful society and economy that hasn't invested in higher education and I think that is what we need to be discussing with the government, to think about how we can encourage prosperity and productivity."

populated area in central north London, which is very residential, with a lot of SMEs and micro businesses. It is also an incredibly diverse community – ethnically and socio-economically. It is not the first time I have worked in an area like this but one of the things that's really interesting about Middlesex is that it's in the middle of large Jewish and Muslim communities and my perception is that it is very harmonious. I love coming to work and seeing the diverse range of cultures on the streets and in the shops and restaurants surrounding us. It is a thriving and inclusive community, and considering the current geopolitical climate that really demonstrates a way forward to me.

I think universities are an opportunity to meet people from other backgrounds and cultures, which present the chance to travel and participate in projects, taking people into environments and communities they might not go enter otherwise. I think that's hugely important for inclusivity and for graduates going out into the world, understanding



“My pathway to Vice-Chancellor is relatively unusual. This gave me a really good understanding that you make change through influence rather than positional power.”

that not everyone's experiences or worlds are the same as theirs.

The leadership profile of a Vice-Chancellor has arguably evolved in recent years, and perhaps at an accelerated pace since the pandemic. What, in your view, are the most critical attributes needed to be a successful leader in higher education today?

When I joined Middlesex University the Board talked about the Vice-Chancellor needing a commercial head and a social heart. I agree with that, and in our sector, I believe that means making commercial decisions to maximise resources for education. Awareness that you're in a resource envelope which you're responsible for and using those resources responsibly for driving your mission is really important.

My pathway to Vice-Chancellor is relatively unusual, through learning and teaching and education development. This gave me a really good understanding that you make change through influence rather than positional power. I have seen people try to use positional power to drive change in their universities and in my view it doesn't work.

I think if you have managed to drive change through a marginal position, which mine was as an education developer, you develop skills of influence, collaboration and communication, primarily, ahead of command and control. I found that incredibly useful experience to be able to understand what might make an organisation resistant to change and how you can make the levers move and get results through influence. I think the pandemic probably also highlighted that we need to really understand the human element too, get people on side, showing empathy and working together.

I think one of the key factors in successfully driving change is to get people to recognise the need for it. I believe you need to make people aware of why change is needed and wanted and let them get on with it. You create the right conditions for change, and I believe it will come.

The role has also arguably broadened over the last decade, with a central question being around the balance of internal and external leadership. What is your sense of that balance, and what will your approach to it be at Middlesex?

I see them both as important and I don't believe you can neglect either.

At the moment I'm trying to do both being new in the role, but I honestly don't know what combination of being internally facing and externally facing is sustainable in the longer term.

I want to work very closely with the leadership in the faculties because I see that as the heart and the driver of the university function. I wanted to really understand the issues from the faculties' point of view so I can support them directly and also be able to make change by working closely together.

“I think one of the key factors in successfully driving change is to get people to recognise the need for it. You create the right conditions for change, and I believe it will come.”

But at the same time, I'm very conscious that I need to be seen externally. I've had engagements already with London Borough of Barnet, with our local further education colleges, and I'm making connections with policy influencers. What I'd like to do over the longer term is to build a really solid team around me so that I can share out the external function. But we all need to be on the same page, with the same strategic view and interacting well with each other. Sometimes it has to be the VC of course, but I do think we as individuals need to be very careful in this role about managing our time, so we have resilience and so that the intent and the action are totally integrated. It is about finding a rhythm to deliver, and while it doesn't happen overnight, it must always be front of mind. **6**



Professor Shân Wareing Biography

Professor Shân Wareing is the Vice-Chancellor of Middlesex University. Prior to this role she was Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Northampton, and other executive roles she has held include Chief Operating Officer at London South Bank University and Pro Vice-Chancellor Learning and Teaching at Buckinghamshire New University.

Shân has a strong track record of leading institutional transformation programmes include assessment at University of the Arts London, digital transformation of the student journey at London South Bank University, which won a PwC award, and recruitment and NSS improvements at the University of Northampton.

She is Chair of the charity, Unite Foundation, Chair of Advance-HE's Leadership and Management Strategic Advisory Group, and has published in the fields of linguistics, equality, diversity and inclusion, leadership and team development, and learning and teaching in higher education. She writes and speaks on university leadership and higher education policy.

LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS

Saxton Bampfylde is proud to have played a key role in appointing outstanding leaders across the higher education sector. Here, we share a selection of recent appointments, with leaders stepping into roles that will shape the future of their organisations and communities.



Professor Duncan Ivison
President and Vice-Chancellor
University of Manchester



Professor Shân Wareing
Vice-Chancellor
University of Middlesex



Professor Andy Schofield
Principal
Univeristy of Glasgow



Professor Robert Mokaya
Provost and DVC
University of Sheffield



Professor Donna Whitehead
Vice-Chancellor
University of Brighton



Professor Damien Page
Vice-Chancellor
Buckinghamshire New University



Professor Symeon Dagkas
Vice-Chancellor
University of Chichester



Sir Robert Chote
President
Trinity College, Oxford



Sir Robert Aston
Pro-Vice-Chancellor
for Research
University of Cambridge



Professor Anna Philpott
Pro-Vice-Chancellor for
Resources and Operations
University of Cambridge



Professor Becky Huxley-Binns
Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Canterbury Christ Church
University



Professor Helen Scott, Deputy
Principal Education, University
of Stirling



Dr Charmagne Barnes
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education
and Student Experience)
University of Hertfordshire



Greg Clark
Chair
Society of Chemical Industry



Professor Abdulnaser Sayma
Executive Dean, College of
Engineering, Design and
Physical Sciences
Brunel University London



Professor Paul Townsend
Deputy Principal Research
and Innovation
University of Stirling



Mark Gibbons
Director of IT
Ellison Institute of Technology



Margaret Martin
Director of Finance
Ellison Institute of Technology

VIEW FROM THE RIVER

TEAM INSIGHT

Meet **Rhianna Connolly**, Partner and Associate Consultant in our higher education Practice

Past, present and future with Saxton Bampfylde

I first joined Saxton Bampfylde as an intern in 2017 during my university summer break and then returned as a researcher the following summer. I spent four years in the research team, including a stint as Research Team Leader and six months with our Panorama partners, Executive Access in Delhi. For the last 18 months, I have been an associate consultant in our public services and regulation practice, learning the ropes of all things consulting. I'm excited to now be joining our higher education team.

You have recently joined the higher education practice, previously working in the public services and regulation team. How do you expect the areas to differ, and indeed what commonalities do you expect?

The public services and regulation practice is highly process-oriented. Our government clients, in particular, often have strict processes to adhere to, for example requiring ministerial sign off on a shortlist. Therefore, candidate care is very important as we need to explain the nuances of public appointment processes clearly. However, I won't be moving too far from this world given the overlap between our higher education and public services work, for example government chief scientific adviser appointments.

What are you most looking forward to in working with universities and other higher education organisations?

As someone who has benefited from higher education like so many others, I am looking forward to engaging closely with a sector that impacts the experience of millions of students each year.

What are the evolving areas of leadership that make you excited about the future?

As in many industries, data-driven leadership is becoming increasingly important for higher education institutions. Having the tools to track and analyse trends in enrolment and student performance, for example, will be important when shaping future strategy. It'll be interesting to hear how much of a priority this is to leaders in the sector.


What is your one desert island luxury?

A Spotify subscription – everything is a little better with music!

Describe your experience of executive search in three words

Constant learning, rewarding, busy!

Get in touch with Rhianna

 rhianna.connolly@saxbam.com



"I am looking forward to engaging closely with a sector that impacts the experience of millions of students each year."

Saxton Bampfylde

OUR MISSION

We exist to change the world by changing leaders in interesting and important organisations. At the same time we aim to create an environment wherein all members of our community can grow to their fullest extent emotionally, intellectually and spiritually.

Saxton Bampfylde is an employee-owned business.

London

The Ministry
79-81 Borough Road
London SE1 1DN
+44 (0)20 7227 0800

Edinburgh

46 Melville Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7HF
+44 (0)131 603 5700

www.saxbam.com

FOLLOW US



Global

Saxton Bampfylde is a member of Panorama – a global community of leading independent executive firms around the world.

Asia. Australasia. EMEA.
Latin America. North America.

www.panorama-leadership.com

