

University Announces New Pro-Chancellor

Posted on Monday 30th November 2009

The University of Birmingham has announced today that Ed Smith, who is currently a Board member and Deputy Chairman of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), will become the University's new Pro-Chancellor. Mr Smith takes up the post in August 2010.

Mr Smith has huge experience in business, the public sector and higher education. He is the former Global COO and Strategy Chairman of PricewaterhouseCoopers Assurance business and currently Chairman of WWF-UK and British Universities & Colleges Sport as well as a number of other senior posts.

The Pro-Chancellor chairs the University's Council. Council is the University's governing body.

Ed comments: 'I am delighted to be joining a University with the size and ambition of Birmingham, particularly at a time when the University is looking to enhance its global profile. I have seen in business the benefits for an organisation with strong international links. Universities conduct research through major international collaborations, and recruit students from across the globe – so they do work in a global marketplace.'

Ed also has a strong belief in the positive role universities play in their local community:

'Major universities like Birmingham have a tremendous impact on their cities and wider regions, particularly when they work closely with their local communities. This includes not only their research but also the role they play in demonstrating the benefits of higher education to local communities and providing opportunities for students to progress into higher education, through schemes like Birmingham's flagship access programme A2B.'

The University's Vice-Chancellor Professor David Eastwood comments: "We're thrilled to have someone with Ed's profile and hugely varied experience join the team at Birmingham.

He brings the perspective of someone who has worked at the top in both the public and private sector, as well as a particular experience in Higher Education. We believe this expertise will be hugely beneficial at a time when the University is looking to enhance its research and teaching."

Ed Smith succeeds Jim Glover as Pro-Chancellor. Jim has served as University Treasurer and has been Pro-Chancellor since 2006.

For further information contact: Ben Hill, Acting Head of Communications, University of Birmingham, Tel 0121 4145134, Mob 07789 921163

Ends

Notes to Editors

Ed Smith officially joins the University as Pro-Chancellor from August 2010, when he leaves his current role as Deputy Chairman of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)

Ed Smith – Brief Biographical Information

Ed Smith is Chairman of WWF-UK and a member of its International Board, Chairman of British Universities and Colleges Sport, a Board member of the Department for Transport and a member of the Competition Commission. He is also a Trustee and the Treasurer of The Work Foundation, a member of Council and Treasurer of The Royal Institute for International Affairs (Chatham House), on the Boards of DEMOS, Opportunity Now and Podium, and is Deputy Chairman of Managing Partners Forum. He is also a member of the Commission on the Future of Women's Sport.

Ed's main career was as a senior partner of PricewaterhouseCoopers, where he was Global Chief Operating Officer and Strategy Leader for Assurance. His hobbies include sport, wine collecting, cooking and opera. He is a past Governor of the University of North London, and a Member of the Audit Committee of the former Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council.

Ed Smith chairs the HEFCE Board's Leadership Governance and Management Strategic Advisory Committee and is a member of the Strategic Development Fund and the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Advisory Committee. He lives in Kent and is married with three children.

External Appointments

2009- Member – UK Competition Commission

2009- Board member – Department for Transport & Chair, Group Audit Committee

2008- Chairman – WWF-UK and Member WWF International Board

2008- Chairman – British Universities and Colleges Sport

2008- Member of Council and Treasurer, Chatham House

2008- Chair HEFCE Steering Committee into the Accountability Burden

2008- Board Member, Podium (2012 Olympics Legacy for Higher Education)

2008- Member Commission on Future of Women's Sport

2008- Board Member and Treasurer – DEMOS

2007- Board member and Treasurer – The Work Foundation

2007- Deputy Chairman, Managing Partners Forum

2004-2010 (end) - Board Member and Deputy Chair – HEFCE. Chair, Leadership, Remuneration and Nomination Committee, Member, Enterprise and Skills Advisory Committee and Strategic Development Fund

2001- Board Member – Opportunity Now (BITC)

2007-2008 Chair- HEFCE Steering Committee into University league Tables

2004- Member Accounting for People Taskforce (DTI)

1991-1995 – Governor- University of North London

1990-1993- Board Member PCFC Audit Committee

1987-1988- Financial Advisor (secondment)- Department of Education and Science

The University of Birmingham

The University of Birmingham is a truly vibrant, global community and an internationally-renowned institution. Its work brings people from across the world to Birmingham, including researchers and teachers and more than four thousand international students from nearly 150 different countries.

The University is home to nearly 30,000 students. With more than 7,500 postgraduate students from across the world, Birmingham is one of the most popular universities for postgraduate study in the UK.

The University has a global reputation and is ranked 66th in the world in the latest Times Higher Education–QS World University Rankings.

The University is the eighth largest employer in the Birmingham/Solihull sub-region and plays an integral role in the economic, social and cultural growth of local and regional communities; working closely with businesses and organisations, employing approximately 6,000 staff and providing 10,000 graduates annually.

The University contributes £662 million to the City of Birmingham and £779 million to the West Midlands region, with an annual income of more than £388.6 million.

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