



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR EMPLOYEES

1.	<p>What is meant by the term “merger”?</p> <p>The Governing Bodies of Bury College and Bolton College have proposed to merge with the University of Bolton through the incorporation of the two colleges into the university. This means each will dissolve on an agreed date and the businesses will be incorporated into the University.</p>
2.	<p>What is the business rationale for the proposed merger?</p> <p>This strategic proposal is in response to the national (and Greater Manchester) review of Post-16 - Sixth Form and FE colleges that is intended to reshape FE landscape and develop a more effective and responsive system to meet the needs of the national economy.</p> <p>This proposed merger provides an exciting opportunity to shape the future development of education, training and skills in Greater Manchester and beyond. The proposed merger will:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Create a larger, stronger, and much more sustainable institution with a common mission and values, which puts “student learning experience” at the core. b) Strengthen already successful relationships between the 3 organisations and employers in the region (e.g. the University already offers a number of our degree programmes with the Colleges). c) Provide a more comprehensive, flexible and responsive curriculum offer, with the potential to improve access and increase choice for a broader range of learners at all levels. d) Achieve significant growth in student numbers, through the combined institution, with integrated progression opportunities for the learners. e) Strengthen relationships with employers in the region and build a stronger platform for delivering the Government’s apprenticeships agenda especially Higher and Degree apprenticeships. (For instance, Bury College is the one of the largest providers of apprenticeships in GM region.) <p>Both the Colleges would continue as visible and significant brands and provide high quality training and education as part of the combined incorporated University group.</p>

	<p>This potential partnership with the colleges brings significant complementary strengths to the combined institution. This will be a strategic merger of successful, high performing educational organisations with a track record of continuous improvement, high quality standards, excellent achievement rates and outstanding financial performance.</p> <p>As a Teaching Intensive Research Informed (TIRI) institution, overwhelming priority is the commitment to continue to ensure positive benefits, outcomes and success for our students and the communities we serve.</p>
3.	<p>What is TUPE?</p> <p>“TUPE” refers to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (2006). The Regulations are intended to protect and preserve the employment rights of employees following their transfer from one organisation to another.</p>
4.	<p>What does TUPE mean for me?</p> <p>Employees of Bolton College and Bury College will transfer automatically on existing terms and conditions to the University of Bolton (including pensions) on the date of the transfer. There will be no detrimental changes to terms and conditions as a result of the transfer.</p> <p>There will be no changes to terms and conditions of existing staff at the University as a result of the transfer.</p>
5.	<p>What happens to my continuous service when I transfer?</p> <p>Your service with Bolton College or Bury College will be recognised when your employment transfers to the University of Bolton. You will maintain continuity of service in respect of all contractual and statutory rights.</p> <p>As outlined above, there will be no changes to terms and conditions of existing staff at the University as a result of the transfer.</p>
6.	<p>Who will be my employer after the Transfer?</p> <p>You will be employed by the University of Bolton. All employees will receive a confirmation letter once the transfer has been finalised.</p>
7.	<p>How will this process affect me?</p> <p>The process should be seamless. It will be business as usual for all employees and you should continue to perform your duties in the normal way. Your terms and</p>

	conditions of employment are protected by TUPE and will not change as a result of the transfer.
8.	<p>When do you expect the transfer to take effect?</p> <p>At the moment, it is anticipated that Bury College will transfer to the University on 1st September 2016 (or such later date as may be agreed).</p> <p>It is anticipated that Bolton College will transfer to the University on 1st October 2016 (or such later date as may be agreed).</p>
9.	<p>Is there a requirement to consult regarding the proposed transfer?</p> <p>Yes, there is a requirement to inform and consult with Trade Union Representatives regarding the transfer. Consultation is already underway and there will be regular meetings with our Trade Union colleagues during this period.</p>
10.	<p>What happens if I don't want to transfer to the new employer?</p> <p>Your employment will automatically transfer to the University of Bolton on the respective transfer date. Should you object to the transfer, your contract will terminate. This would be considered a resignation and there will no redundancy payment made. Please speak with a member of your HR team as soon as possible if you do not wish to transfer.</p>
11.	<p>Can I take Voluntary Severance instead of transferring to the new employer?</p> <p>Should you object to the transfer, your contract will terminate but this would not be a redundancy dismissal. This would be considered a resignation. Therefore, there will be no redundancy payment or Voluntary Severance for those individuals who choose not to transfer across to the new employer.</p>
12.	<p>What happens to the Trade Union arrangements after the transfer?</p> <p>Trade Union recognition agreements will transfer to the University of Bolton. It is envisaged that local TU arrangements will continue in the usual way. The University is committed to an ongoing dialogue with our recognised Trade Unions and will also look to put in place an overarching model post-transfer.</p>
13.	<p>Will my pay date change?</p> <p>With effect from the transfer date, there will be no change to payroll dates.</p>
14.	<p>What happens to HR policies and procedures after the transfer?</p>

	With effect from the transfer date, the existing arrangements will continue.
15.	<p>Could the University change the terms and conditions of employees once a certain amount of time has passed since the transfer?</p> <p>Whether or not an employer can change terms and conditions following a TUPE transfer depends on the reason for the change and not the amount of time that has passed.</p> <p>Any attempt to vary the transferring employees' terms and conditions of employment, whenever it takes place, will be void where the sole or principal reason for the variation is the transfer itself, and it is not an economic, technical or organisational reason (an ETO reason) entailing changes in the workforce.</p> <p>The University can confirm that there are currently no proposals to change the terms and conditions of employees. The proposed changes have been outlined below in question 17.</p>
16.	<p>What will the new Governance arrangements be?</p> <p>It is envisaged that there will be a new Board made up of some Governors from each of the pre-existing Boards of the three separate entities. These arrangements are yet to be confirmed.</p>
17.	<p>What changes will be implemented following the transfer?</p> <p>a) There will be one accountable officer within the merged entity. This role will be performed by the Vice Chancellor.</p> <p>b) Senior Post Holders from both Bolton College and Bury College will be subject to the equivalent policies and procedures applicable within the University.</p> <p>c) There will be a review of the operation of the merged entity following the transfer. This is particularly relevant in the context of the Greater Manchester Area Review which has prompted this merger proposal. The aim will be to deliver a more resilient and efficient merged entity where we can achieve efficiencies over time.</p> <p>Should you have any queries, please contact a member of your HR team.</p>
18.	<p>What is the Strategic Steering Group?</p> <p>In response to the national (and Greater Manchester) review of Post-16 – Sixth Form and FE colleges, this group identified an opportunity for a strategic merger between the three successful education organisations. The group continues to work together to ensure that if the proposed merger goes ahead, it will be implemented in a way which meets the interests of all relevant stakeholders. This group includes the Vice Chancellor, Chairs from the respective Governance Boards, the Registrar and the Group Chief Executive.</p>

19.	<p>What is the Executive Steering Group?</p> <p>Should the merger proceed, this Group will ensure that the partnership is successful and that the three educational organisations can work together to create a larger, stronger and much more sustainable institution with a common mission and values, which puts “student learning experience” at the core.</p> <p>The Executive Steering Group includes the Vice Chancellor (Professor George Holmes); Group Chief Executive (Mr. Charlie Deane); Assistant Vice Chancellor - Student Experience and Transition (Dr.Ebrahim Adia); Academic Vice Chancellor – Quality (Professor Patrick McGhee); Pro Vice Chancellor (Baroness Sayeeda Warsi); Registrar (Mrs. Sue Duncan) and an external consultant (Professor M Gunn).</p>
20.	<p>Why has the University appointed a new Group Chief Executive?</p> <p>This is a newly created post which reports directly to the Vice Chancellor (currently on a secondment basis). The Group CE (Mr. Charlie Deane) has responsibility for overseeing the vertical integration and legal incorporation of the Colleges into the University structure. The post holder will also ensure there is a smooth transition to create a unified and efficient organisation moving forward. Following the merger, the Group CE will have operational responsibility for all academic activity across the new organisation.</p>
21.	<p>Will there be an opportunity for colleagues from the 3 organisations to work together in the combined entity?</p> <p>Yes. We have already identified the need for a number of informal working groups including HR; Finance; IT Quality; and Safeguarding etc. Once established, these working groups will include representatives from each of the organisations to enable colleagues to get together and explore opportunities for collaboration moving forward.</p>
22.	<p>Am I able to apply for vacancies that may arise?</p> <p>Yes, colleagues are free to apply for job vacancies that may arise at any of the three organisations. It is intended that information regarding vacancies will be shared across the three organisations. Each organisation will continue to publish their current vacancies on their respective websites and appointments will be subject to the relevant recruitment and selection procedures at each establishment.</p>