



Twenty-five Years of the University of Westminster

Educating for Professional Life



The History of the University of Westminster
Part Five



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Foreword by Frances Sorrell

The University of Westminster has a rich heritage – it has responded with spirit, resilience and entrepreneurship to the many changes of the past quarter of a century and, as a result, is a truly modern and diverse University with a distinctive offer. This book beautifully chronicles that history, delving into the University's archive and documenting the people who have enabled and experienced its evolution.

I was deeply honoured to become Chancellor of the University of Westminster in 2015. The University has a deep-rooted ethos to offer education for all, regardless of income or background, an approach that reflects George Cayley's original 1838 vision for the Polytechnic Institution. I am immensely proud of this enduring mission.

I have witnessed the positive impact of this inclusive approach with our own education charity, the Sorrell Foundation. We support access to education for all, and we encourage young people from all backgrounds to work collaboratively, building confidence, teamwork and social skills. Working with universities, colleges and schools from across the country, our aim has been to inspire creativity in young people, help them gain new skills, and explore their potential for further and higher education and future careers. Education is truly transformative, with the ability to change people's lives.

Since becoming Chancellor, I have been impressed by the University of Westminster's strong commitment to shape the future of professional life. I have seen for myself the dedication of the University's students and staff, and the remarkable work of the outreach team, who are helping young people in the local community. Today, as it was in the nineteenth century, this is an institutional priority.

And whilst that ethos endures (48 per cent of Westminster students come from within Greater London), the University also benefits from a truly global outlook. Our students face a global marketplace, where traditional careers are changing. They must be ready to adapt, and as Geoff Petts describes so compellingly in the Afterword of this publication, they will need both interdisciplinary skills and knowledge, and the ability to keep learning. The University of Westminster has always equipped its students well for this challenge.

It is of great value to take this opportunity to look back and celebrate the University's achievements. Drawing on our past, guided by founding principles, and remaining open to change and opportunity, we are preparing our students for an exciting future.



Frances Sorrell, OBE
Founder of the Sorrell Foundation & Chancellor of the University of Westminster

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The author also wishes to acknowledge the contribution of Professor Terence Burlin who sadly passed away during the writing of this book.

Abbreviations

AUCF	Average Unit of Council Funding
BA	Bachelor of Arts degree
BEIS	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2016–present
BEng	Bachelor of Engineering degree
BIS	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2010–2016
BSc	Bachelor of Science degree
BTEC	Vocational qualification awarded by the Business and Technology Education Council
CAT	College of Advanced Technology
CATS	Credit Accumulation Transfer System
CDP	Committee of Directors of Polytechnics, 1971–1992
Cm.	Command Paper, 1986–present
Cmd.	Command Paper, 1956–1986
CNAA	Council for National Academic Awards
CVCP	Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, 1918–2000, re-formed as Universities UK
DES	Department of Education and Science, 1964–1992 (formerly the Ministry for Education)
DfE	Department for Education, 1992–1995 and 2016–present
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment, 1995–2010
DfES	Department for Education and Skills, 2001–2007
DIUS	Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, 2007–2009
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
FE	Further Education
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HC Deb	House of Commons Debate
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council England
HEFCW	Higher Education Funding Council Wales
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Council, 1992–1997, replaced by QAA
HERB	Higher Education and Research Bill [2016–17]
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HL Deb	House of Lords Debate
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office, re-formed as The Stationery Office
HNC	Higher National Certificate
HND	Higher National Diploma
IAS	Institute of Advanced Studies (UOW)
ILEA	Inner London Education Authority
IoE	UCL Institute of Education Library and Archives

IIP	Investors in People
LCC	London County Council
LEA	Local Education Authority
LLB	Bachelor of Law degree (<i>Legum Baccalaureus</i>)
LSE	London School of Economics and Political Science Archives and Special Collections
MA	Master of Arts degree
NAB	National Advisory Body for Higher Education (Public Sector), 1981–1989
NAFE	Non-Advanced Further Education
NS-SEC	National Statistics Socio-economic Classification
NSS	National Student Survey
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> , H.G.C. Matthew and Brian Harrison, eds., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Available online: http://www.oup.com/oxforddnb/info/online
OFFA	Office for Fair Access
OHP	Oral History Programme (UWA)
PARISS	PCFC Annual Record from Institutions of Staff and Students
PCAS	Polytechnics Central Admissions System, 1986–1993 replaced by UCAS
PCFC	Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council, 1989–1992
PCL	Polytechnic of Central London
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
QAE	Quality Assessment Exercise
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise, 1986–2008 replaced by REF
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RPI	Royal Polytechnic Institution
RSP	Regent Street Polytechnic
SMG	Senior Management Group (of PCL/UOW)
SRHE	Society for Research into Higher Education
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics academic disciplines
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
THES	<i>The Times Higher Education Supplement</i>
TSO	The Stationery Office
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UCAS	Universities Central Admissions Service
UCCA	Universities Central Council on Admissions, 1961–1993 replaced by UCAS
UFC	University Funding Council, 1989–1992
UGC	University Grants Committee, 1919–1989
UoA	Unit of Assessment
UOW	University of Westminster
UWA	University of Westminster Archive
UWSU	University of Westminster Students' Union
VCEG	Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group (UW)
WIUT	Westminster International University in Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Institutional name changes

- 1838 Sir George Cayley founds the **Polytechnic Institution**, which later becomes the Royal Polytechnic Institution (RPI) following the patronage of Prince Albert.
- 1864 Quintin Hogg establishes the **York Place Ragged School and Mission**, to provide basic education for some of London's poorest children in the slums of Covent Garden.
- 1873 Hogg develops his vision to provide educational, sporting and social opportunities for young working men by establishing the **Youths' Christian Institute** at 15 Hanover Street.
- 1878 The Institute moves to 48–49 Long Acre and is renamed the **Young Men's Christian Institute**.
- 1882 Hogg's Institute moves into 309 Regent Street, following the closure of the RPI, and gradually becomes known as The Polytechnic.
- 1891 The Charity Commission Scheme of Administration establishes the governing body and begins the transition from private to public institution. **Regent Street Polytechnic** becomes the official name, but the institution continues to describe itself as 'The Polytechnic'.
- 1970 The **Polytechnic of Central London (PCL)** is designated on 1 May 1970 following the White Paper 'A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges' (Cmnd. 3006) published in 1966. PCL is the result of a merger of Regent Street Polytechnic with Holborn College of Law, Languages and Commerce.
- 1990 Merger with Harrow College of Higher Education.
- 1992 PCL gains university status following the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act, which abolished the remaining distinctions between polytechnics and universities. It is renamed the **University of Westminster**, with the right to award its own degrees.

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Introduction

This book explores the transformations that have taken place in UK higher education since the late twentieth century. The author uses the vehicle of the University of Westminster to examine how its own evolution from the Polytechnic of Central London can be seen, somewhat curiously, as both archetypal and distinctive. The story of the University of Westminster provides a microcosm through which to evaluate successive UK government policies on higher education. This volume examines how the University adapted to the changing external context, changes to its governance, and the impact of its choice of name and brand identity on staff, students and the wider public. It highlights key developments in higher education, including the binary line, quality assessment and funding. It also focuses on issues relating specifically to the University, notably the London situation and the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), part-time students, and internationalism and trans-national education. This volume explores how the institution remained true to its traditional values, which supported access to higher education for all regardless of income or background, and how it has successfully redefined them for the twenty-first century. In telling this story, this book will show how, twenty-five years on, the University continues to thrive as a confident, innovative and distinctive institution.

On 16 June 1992, the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL) officially became the University of Westminster. This was a result of the *Further and Higher Education Act* that had come into force in May 1992. The change in formal status enabled the University to award its own degrees and to compete for public research funding. It had been a hard fought for change, played out in the lobbying chambers of Parliament and in the editorial pages of the national press. Those pushing for reform had argued that the polytechnics had long contended with the disadvantages of underfunding and unfair treatment compared with the universities, together with unjustified public perceptions of inferiority and prejudice. The so-called ‘binary line’ in UK higher education, which separated the ‘public’, or polytechnic sector, from the ‘autonomous’, or university sector, had been in place since the 1960s,¹ yet, thirty years later,

¹ See *The Robbins Report, Higher Education. Report of the Committee appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins, Cmnd. 2154* (London: HMSO, 1963); DES White Paper, *A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges, Cmnd. 3006* (London: HMSO, 1966).



Fig. 1

PCL began holding formal graduation ceremonies for students in the early 1970s. A range of awards were presented to graduates including CNAAs degrees, University of London degrees and the institution's own well-regarded Polytechnic Diplomas, many of which were professionally accredited.

there was still widespread misunderstanding about what a polytechnic actually was.

Harold Wilson's Labour government established a comprehensive system of polytechnics in 1966 to support what became known as the Robbins Principle of providing for 'all those who had the qualifications and the willingness to pursue higher education'.² The polytechnics were specifically set up to provide wider access to flexible, vocationally-oriented courses at a range of levels designed to support productivity and expand Britain's economy, and by 1989/90 there were actually more students studying in polytechnics than in universities in England.³ Yet polls and surveys conducted throughout the 1980s consistently found that the public, employers, and even MPs, regarded polytechnics as 'second-class' or 'second-best' institutions, with many not even realising that they offered degree courses.⁴ Many of the large international companies refused to visit polytechnics on their annual recruitment 'Milk Rounds' and allegedly discriminated against polytechnic graduates when interviewing, despite the fact that more polytechnic courses aimed to prepare students for work.⁵ Polytechnic supporters also pointed out that 'a polytechnic student, believe it or not, has to work harder than at university. Terms are three weeks longer on average, and the work is more rigorously structured'.⁶ Furthermore, although entry requirements were often not as strict as for university courses, this enabled the polytechnics to open higher education to students without traditional qualifications; and, in fact, for some courses such as business studies, accountancy, law and engineering, entry requirements were the same or actually higher at the polytechnics.⁷

2 *The Robbins Report*, Chapter XIX, Sect. 828, p. 265.

3 DES White Paper, *Higher Education: A New Framework, Cm. 1541* (London: HMSO, May 1991).

4 For example, David Walker, 'Employers biased against college and polytechnic graduates, survey shows', *The Times*, 4 November 1983; Colin Hughes, 'Polytechnic students suffer from employers' bias to universities, report states', *The Times*, 3 September 1984; JD, 'The tempo rises as the axe falls', *The Times*, 7 February 1985; Sarah Thompson, 'A change of style at the polytechnics', *The Times*, 25 June 1987.

5 Hughes, see also Michael Heller, 'The Institute and the Polytechnic', in Elaine Penn, ed., *Educating Mind, Body and Spirit: the Legacy of Quintin Hogg and the Polytechnic, 1864-1992* (Cambridge: Granta Editions, 2013), 45-77 (pp. 73-4).

6 Thompson.

7 Thompson; Robert Jackson, Minister for Higher Education, 'Why we are backing success', *The Times*, 11 September 1987.



Fig. 2
Sir Keith Joseph speaking at PCL's Engineering and Science Faculty in New Cavendish Street during his time as Secretary of State for Education and Science, 1981–86.



Fig. 3
The polytechnics excelled at providing practice-based education and professional training.

Nonetheless, the prejudice against polytechnics ran deep as one graduate from the Bolton Institute of Technology discovered when he applied for a junior research fellowship at Merton College Oxford in 1980.⁸ The College Statutes, which were written before polytechnics and higher education colleges came into existence, stated that only university graduates could be admitted to junior research fellowships. The College said it was reviewing its policy, yet its Acting Warden, Dr Courtenay Phillips, revealed a bias typical of many at the time when he stated: 'We had to draw the line somewhere, and it seemed unlikely that someone who had just graduated from a polytechnic or a college would be of the same quality as a top first from a university'.⁹

The prejudice ran counter to government policy, which openly encouraged polytechnic expansion and acknowledged their role within UK higher education. Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education and Science 1981–86, stated:

The polytechnics and colleges have done a magnificent job in the 1980s. They now provide for 27% more students than in 1979, and are more cost-effective than ever... There is evidence that young people and their parents increasingly recognise that the polytechnics offer high quality vocational courses.¹⁰

Robert Jackson, Minister for Higher Education, said:

I make no apology for giving pride of place to the polytechnics because they are setting such a hot pace. The figures speak for themselves. ... All this spells success ... but it is not all. The Polytechnics have also made themselves more cost-effective, while maintaining their academic standards.¹¹

⁸ Diana Geddes, 'Oxford college rejects polytechnic graduate', *The Times*, 10 December 1980.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Keith Joseph, 'How proposed poly axe will fall', Letter to the Editor from the Secretary of State for Education and Science, *The Times*, 9 April 1986.

¹¹ Jackson.

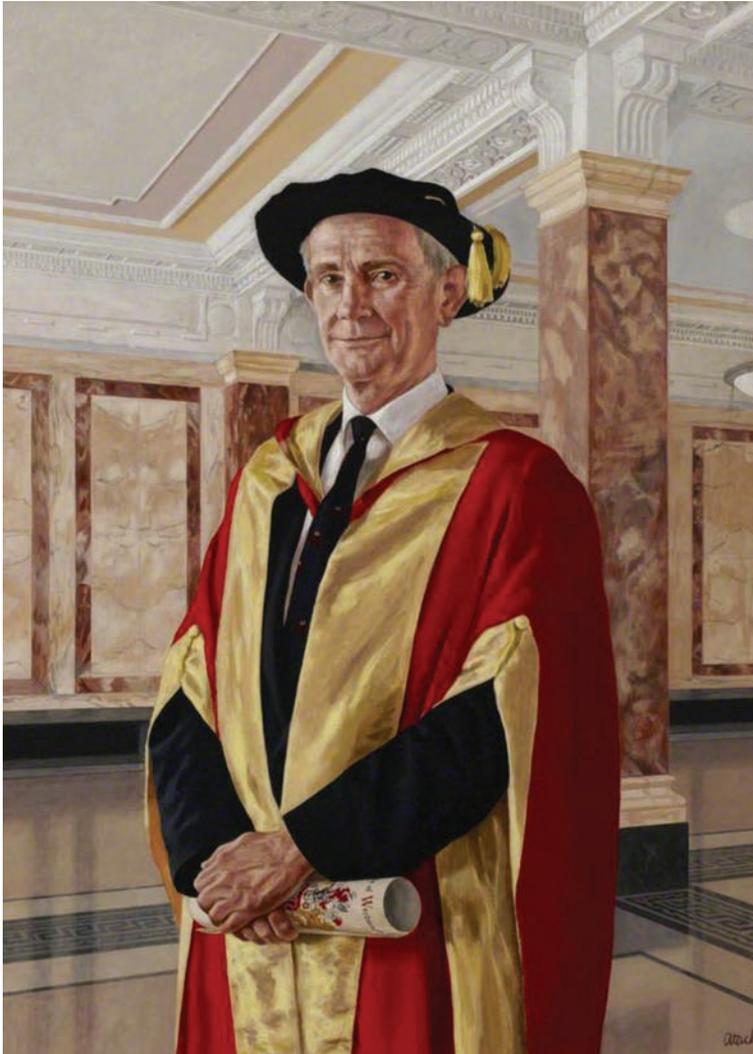


Fig. 4

Professor Terence Burlin played an instrumental role in PCL achieving university status. Having joined PCL in 1962 as a Senior Lecturer, Burlin became Rector in 1984 and held the post until his retirement in 1995. He was awarded a Doctor of Science (honoris causa) by the University in November 1996.

By the end of the 1980s, the polytechnics educated 60 per cent of the UK's students, yet they received only 4 per cent of the funding granted to the universities. Figures for full-time home students at English Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in 1989/90 indicate there were 232,000 students in universities compared with 344,000 in polytechnics and colleges; yet the universities received a total of £1,620 million compared with £70 million received in 1988/89 by the polytechnics and colleges.¹² One polytechnic director complained that: 'the fact that polytechnics, unlike universities, receive virtually no automatic support for research [is] a form of "intellectual apartheid"'.¹³ A significant gap also existed between staff pay in the two sectors, with polytechnic staff awarded a 2 per cent lower pay rise than their university counterparts in 1989.¹⁴

However, despite the pleas for parity and the acknowledgement of prejudice and inequality, the events of 1992 were not a foregone conclusion. Although many within the polytechnic sector, including PCL's own Rector, Professor

¹² DES White Paper, *Higher Education: A New Framework, Cm. 1541* (London: HMSO, May 1991), Sect. 46 and Sect. 29.

¹³ Mark Cross, Thames Polytechnic, speaking at the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics Conference, London, 29 March 1990, cited in Andy Coghlan, 'Polytechnics demand an end to "intellectual apartheid"', *New Scientist*, 7 April 1990.

¹⁴ Sam Kiley, 'Poly chiefs fear change means more bureaucrats', *The Times*, 3 April 1989.

Fig. 5

PCL's Students' Union offered a variety of extra-curricular opportunities alongside the academic programme.



Terence Burlin (1931–2017), had been long campaigning for reform, the government was resistant. Kenneth Baker, Secretary of State for Education and Science 1986–89, was in favour of retaining the existing diversity within the higher education sector, arguing that it was advantageous to the polytechnics: ‘the polytechnic name now stands uniquely high in public esteem. It seems to me the wrong moment to risk submerging your separate identity; the polytechnic name is part of that identity’.¹⁵ In 1985 the Department for Education and Science (DES) published a Green Paper: *The Development of Higher Education into the 1990s* that firmly rejected a proposal to create an overarching body to unite and plan for both sectors of the binary system.¹⁶ Other commentators opposed any change to the established status quo on the grounds that the distinction between the two sectors demarcated the different purposes of the two types of higher education. However, such arguments often contained elements of snobbery and intellectual elitism, for example: ‘Polytechnics... are evidently doing the down-to-earth job for which they were designed’¹⁷ and ‘Polytechnics were never intended to turn out graduates who would compete in the same job market as university graduates. They were designed to perform another role, attract a different type of student’.¹⁸

Throughout the late 1980s, the government consistently refused to support the unification of higher education into a single sector, and instead tried to find other methods to end the perceived division in status. In 1988, it was argued that plans for a ‘more market-driven system’, with the introduction of variable course fees and student tuition fees, ‘would mean the divide between the two would disappear in all but name’.¹⁹ The *1988 Education Reform Act* led to the independence of polytechnics and higher education colleges from the funding and control of Local Education Authorities and the National Advisory

15 Kenneth Baker, Secretary of State for Education and Science, letter to Dr H.D. Law, Portsmouth Polytechnic, 10 February 1988, *Correspondence regarding University status and title, 1986–1990*, UWA/PCL/2/6/2/4.

16 DES Green Paper, *The Development of Higher Education into the 1990s*, Cmnd. 9524 (London: HMSO, 1985).

17 John Clare, ‘Do the polytechnics rate a pass?’, *The Times*, 15 June 1989.

18 Robert Kilroy-Silk [former Labour MP (1974–1986)], ‘Higher forms of education, and yet higher’, *The Times*, 9 June 1989.

19 Sam Kiley, ‘Market forces to lift polytechnics’, *The Times*, 27 October 1988.

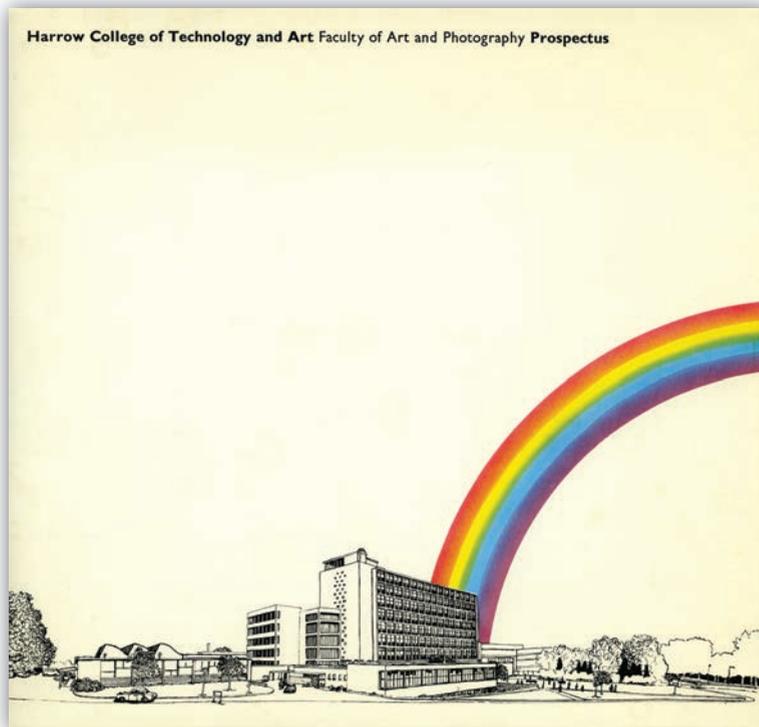


Fig. 6

Harrow College moved to its purpose-built Northwick Park site in 1959.

Board for Higher Education. However, although these institutions subsequently received funding directly from central government just like the universities, it was not via the existing University Funding Council, but through a new quango, the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC). In May 1989, the government rejected calls by Peers to allow polytechnics to include the word university in their title, with Lord Henley arguing that:

The diverse origins of the polytechnics give diverse strengths. ... even if it were legally possible ... to allow the proposed change of title, it would not necessarily change public perceptions. But it would increase confusion and risk permanently casting first-class polytechnics as second-class universities. The distinctive and special contribution of the polytechnics to higher education might well be lost.²⁰

So, what happened to change the government's mind? By 1992 the higher education landscape in the UK had changed significantly from that of the previous decades: most notably, following the *1988 Education Reform Act* many smaller HE colleges were forced to join with a larger institution in order to survive in a climate of decreasing resources and increasing central government oversight. The immediate impact on PCL was its merger with Harrow College of Education – a college whose origins could be traced back to 1887 and which taught a wide variety of undergraduate and professional courses on a full-time, part-time and sandwich basis. Harrow College offered courses at Certificate, Diploma, First Degree and Higher Degree levels to nearly 4,500 students (over

²⁰ Lord Henley, HL Deb 10 May 1989, vol. 507 cc680–718.

3,500 part-timers) at its 25-acre site in North West London. Government objectives to expand student numbers from the mid-1980s had been effective: by 1991, one in five school leavers entered higher education compared with one in eight in 1979,²¹ and the proportion of mature students in higher education had doubled from 15 per cent to 30 per cent between 1986 and 1995, primarily within the polytechnic sector.²² Alongside this expansion there was a drive to lessen the cost of higher education to the public purse by shifting the balance of funding from direct grants awarded to institutions to student tuition fees, and by the increased marketisation of the sector as successive Conservative governments promoted the market and market philosophy as being more efficient and effective than the State.²³ The 1985 Green Paper *The Development of Higher Education into the 1990s* included a clear expression of the government's economic ideology, stating: 'The government believes that it is vital for our higher education to contribute more effectively to the improvement of the performance of the economy'.²⁴ Political attitudes towards higher education and other areas of the public sector during the 1980s and 1990s focused on 'more transparent and numerical forms of public evaluation and democratic accountability' instead of traditional forms of professional self-regulation.²⁵ Inevitably, this drive for greater accountability led to increasing government intervention in areas of measuring cost-effectiveness, value for money, quality standards and assessment within higher education. Seen in this context, the author argues that the profound changes brought about by the 1992 *Further and Higher Education Act* can be viewed as the inevitable evolution of the higher education sector in the late twentieth century.

At the time of writing this volume, UK higher education is in the midst of another period of upheaval and potentially significant change, with the advent of austerity, Brexit, and an upcoming general election. A new *Higher Education and Research Act* received Royal Assent immediately prior to the dissolution of Parliament in April 2017. Its impact, in terms of the inclusion of new specialist providers with degree-awarding powers, the development of a Teaching Excellence Framework, a new Office for Students as the single regulator for the sector, and the creation of UK Research and Innovation bringing together the seven Research Councils and Innovate UK, is as yet unknown. It will undoubtedly present UK universities with both new challenges and opportunities.

This volume is the fifth in a series of publications detailing the history of the University of Westminster for the first time. It draws on an extensive range of primary sources held in the University of Westminster Archive, including oral history testimony from alumni and staff (past and present), as well as archival and secondary documentary sources held elsewhere. The text is richly illustrated with a wide-ranging variety of drawings and photographs. The volume aims to provide a lively narrative account of the main events, people and achievements of the University of Westminster during the first twenty-five years of its history.

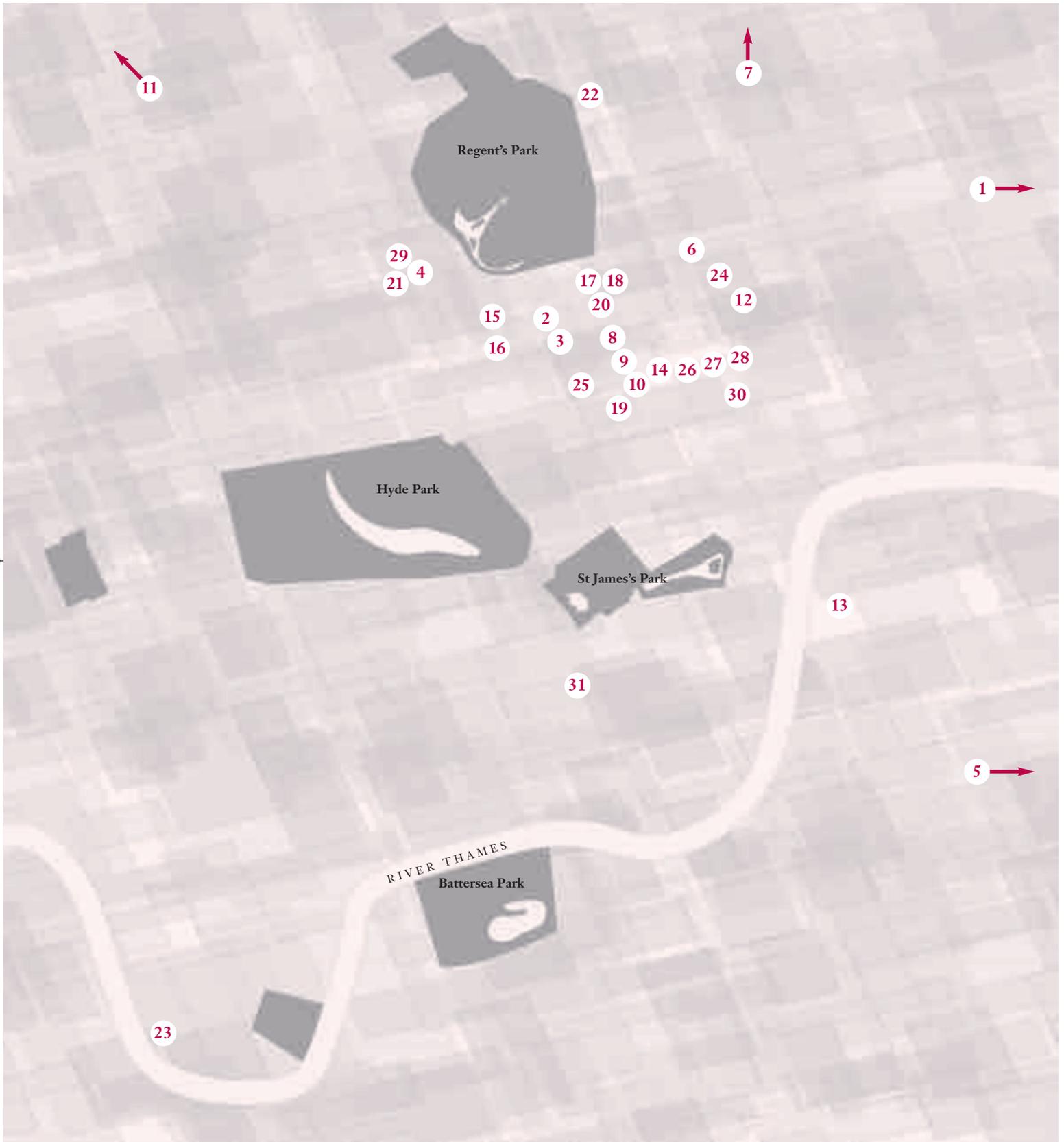
21 *Higher Education: A New Framework*, Cm. 1541.

22 Roger King, 'The Contemporary University', in Roger King, ed., *The University in the Global Age* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 1–26 (p. 16).

23 Tim Edwards and Henry Miller, 'Change in Mass Higher Education: University, State and Economy', in David Jary and Martin Parker, eds., *The New Higher Education: Issues and Directions for the Post-Dearing University* (Stoke-on-Trent: Staffordshire University Press, 1998), 41–61 (p. 57).

24 *The Development of Higher Education into the 1990s*, Cmnd. 9524 (London: HMSO, 1985).

25 King, 'The Contemporary University', p. 17.



Key to Map showing the University of Westminster's sites in 1992

No.	Site	Main usage
1	Alexander Fleming House, 3 Hoxton Market N1	Student hall of residence
2	20–28 Bolsover Street W1	Student hall of residence and nursery
3	104–108 Bolsover Street W1	SU and Student Services
4	Cosway Street NW1	Teaching
5	Docklands (Greenland Quay, Rotherhithe Street and Isambard Place) SE16	Student halls of residence
6	18–19 Euston Centre, Drummond Street NW1	Teaching
7	Furnival House, 50 Cholmeley Park N6	Student hall of residence
8	70 Great Portland Street W1	Administrative offices
9	72 Great Portland Street W1	Administrative offices
10	74 Great Portland Street W1	Administrative offices
11	Harrow Campus, Northwick Park HA1	Teaching, library and student halls of residence
12	235–238 High Holborn WC1	Teaching
13	International House, 1–5 Lambeth Road SE1	Student hall of residence
14	14–16 Little Titchfield Street W1	Administrative offices
15	35 Marylebone Road NW1	Teaching and library
16	Marylebone Tower, 35 Marylebone Road NW1	Student hall of residence
17	Medway House, 12–14 Clipstone Street W1	Teaching
18	Metford House, 15–18 Clipstone Street W1	Teaching
19	76–78 Mortimer Street W1	Teaching and offices
20	115 New Cavendish Street W1	Teaching and library
21	25 Paddington Green W2	Teaching
22	100 Park Village East NW1	Research centre
23	Quintin Hogg Memorial Sports Ground, Hartington Road, Chiswick W4	Sports ground and stadium
24	1–4 Red Lion Square WC1	Teaching and library
25	307–311 Regent Street W1	Central administration and teaching
26	16 Riding House Street W1	Administrative offices and teaching
27	18–22 Riding House Street W1	Teaching and library
28	37–49 Riding House Street W1	Library
29	18 Samford Street NW8	Teaching
30	32–38 Wells Street W1	Student hall of residence and offices
31	Wigram House, 84–99 Ashley Gardens, Thirleby Road SW1	Student hall of residence



The Polytechnic and the UK HE System pre-1992

NINETEENTH-CENTURY BEGINNINGS

The University of Westminster can trace its origins back to 1838 with the foundation of the Polytechnic Institution (from 1841 renamed the Royal Polytechnic Institution with Prince Albert as its patron) at 309 Regent Street in London's West End. The Royal Polytechnic Institution (RPI) was created by Sir George Cayley (1773–1857), a landowner and inventor who is recognised today for his contributions to aeronautics.¹ Cayley was committed to the promotion of science and his institution offered laboratory space for private experimentalists and public lectures on scientific subjects. For the price of one shilling (5p) the Victorian public could enter and see experiments in action

Fig. 7
The Royal Polytechnic Institution building was a well-known landmark on Regent Street in London's West End.

¹ See J.A.S. Ackroyd, 'Sir George Cayley, the Father of Aeronautics, Part 1: The Invention of the Aeroplane' and 'Part 2: Cayley's Aeroplanes', in *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 56 (2002), pp. 167–81 and 333–48; John A. Bagley, 'Cayley, Sir George, sixth baronet (1773–1857)', *ODNB*.

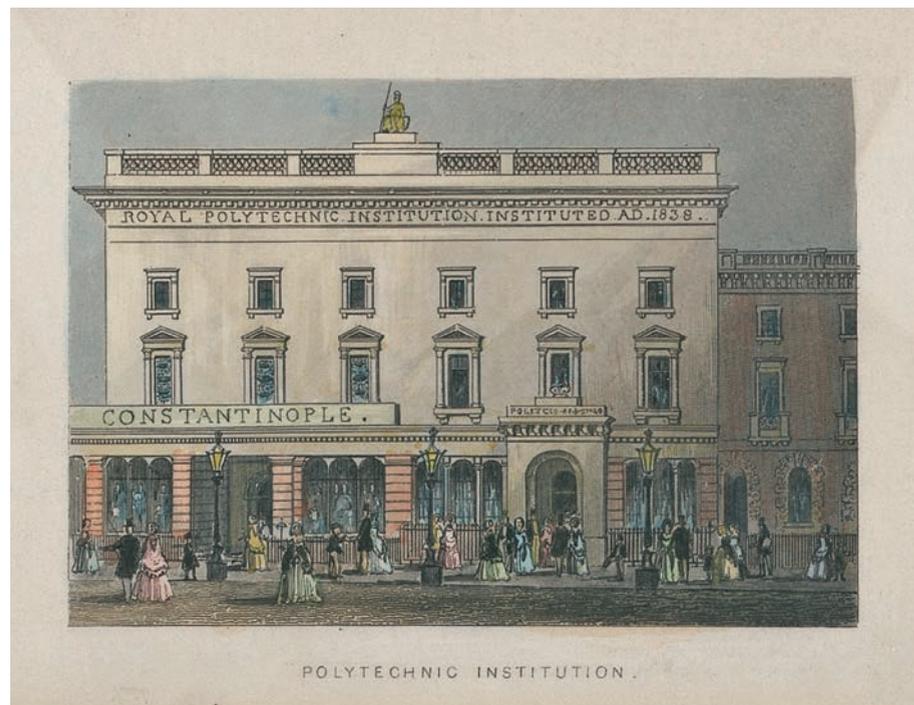




Fig. 8

Quintin Hogg's holistic vision of educating 'mind, body and spirit' continues to inform the ethos of the institution today.

and view the latest inventions and technologies on display in the RPI's Great Exhibition Hall. These included industrial machines in motion, a man in a diving suit, the 30ft spark from an induction coil, and magnified Thames water. Two of its greatest attractions were the large diving bell, where brave visitors could, for the price of an additional shilling, descend underwater; and in a glass studio located at the top of the building visitors could have their portraits taken with the latest photographic technology. In 1848 a new purpose-built theatre was added to the building to accommodate the growing audiences for the RPI's optical shows. These shows became increasingly sophisticated and complex as the Polytechnic developed magic lantern technology and created special effects including the Pepper's Ghost illusion.² Encompassing both science and art, the RPI specialised in 'the education of the eye' in every possible sense, providing exhibition and entertainment 'to delight and instruct'.³

At the same time that the Royal Polytechnic Institution was thriving in the West End of London, a young business man and philanthropist, Quintin Hogg (1845–1903), established bible classes for the flower girls of Covent Garden, followed by a Ragged School and Home to cater for the area's poor boys.⁴ A deeply religious man, Hogg had a vision to provide spiritual, academic, social and athletic education for London's working classes. The popularity of the educational provision soon meant that his Young Men's Christian Institute was looking to expand into larger premises. In 1881, following a serious accident

2 See Elaine Penn, ed., *The Magic Screen: A History of Regent Street Cinema* (London: University of Westminster, 2015); especially pp. 66–7 and pp. 110–12.

3 *The Times*, 3 August 1838, p. 6; see also Brenda Weeden, *The Education of the Eye: History of the Royal Polytechnic Institution 1838–1881* (Cambridge: Granta Editions, 2008).

4 See Helen Glew, 'Quintin Hogg and his legacy', in Elaine Penn, ed., *Educating Mind, Body and Spirit: the Legacy of Quintin Hogg and the Polytechnic, 1864–1992* (Cambridge: Granta Editions, 2013), pp. 7–41; G.S. Woods, 'Hogg, Quintin (1845–1903)', rev. Roger T. Stearn, *ODNB*.



Fig. 9
Chemistry classes were taught at the Polytechnic from at least 1882 and were open to both men and women.

when a staircase in the theatre collapsed, leading to the threat of bankruptcy, the RPI was forced to close. Quintin Hogg bought the 309 Regent Street building and in early 1882 reopened his Institute in the premises. The Institute became known as the Young Men's Polytechnic Christian Institute, taking its inspiration from the former institution whose name remained inscribed on the façade of the building until 1910. Hogg employed some of the RPI staff as teachers and continued the tradition of academic and technological innovation with the introduction of a wide range of evening classes in vocational and technical subjects aimed at London's workers. From the early 1880s, women were also admitted and the Institute gradually became known simply as 'The Polytechnic'. By 1891 it had become so successful that it was renamed Regent Street Polytechnic and provided the model for a series of similar institutions to be created across London.⁵

The Polytechnic continued to expand into the twentieth century, with increasing numbers of full-time day students studying advanced courses at the institution. Teaching became more focused on the professional and academic with an emphasis on Higher National Diplomas and Certificates and Degrees. From the 1960s the Polytechnic began to offer its own degrees validated by the Council for National Academic Awards.⁶ In May 1970 the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL) was created by the merger of Regent Street Polytechnic with Holborn College of Law, Languages and Commerce, a specialist London County Council (LCC) technical college founded in 1884. PCL was one of thirty new

⁵ *Scheme of Administration for Regent Street Polytechnic Institution*, 23 June 1891, UWA RSP/2/15. See also Michael Heller, 'The Institute and the Polytechnic', in Penn, ed., *Educating Mind, Body and Spirit*, pp. 45–77.

⁶ The Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) was a degree-awarding authority for the whole of Britain from 1964–1992. It sanctioned and awarded degrees at polytechnics and other colleges of further education.



Fig. 10

Professor Margaret Harker (1920–2013) was the first woman president of the Royal Photographic Society (1958–60). She was instrumental in raising the educational status of Photography, and the Polytechnic was the first UK institution to award degrees in the subject.



Fig. 11

The Polytechnic launched its first courses in 'Kinematography' in 1913 and maintained strong links with industry, including the nearby BBC.

polytechnics created by the government to provide a broad range of technical and vocational courses at advanced level.⁷ The merger built upon the Polytechnic's traditional strengths in engineering, science and architecture by adding law and reinforcing its provision of business, languages and communication. PCL offered a comprehensive range of studies, including short-term professional courses, sub-degree, degree and post-graduate levels, to a diverse student body. PCL's student demographics included high participation rates by mature students, women, students from lower socio-economic backgrounds and ethnic minorities. PCL also had one of the highest proportions of overseas

⁷ DES White Paper, *A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges*, Cmnd. 3006 (London: HMSO, 1966).

Fig. 12

Lecturers at PCL started collecting posters and ephemera from China in the 1960s, to assist in their teaching of language students. Today, the collection is managed by the University Archive and is accessed by students from a wide range of subject areas.



students in the capital with 25 per cent of its students coming from outside Britain, compared with 10 per cent nationally in higher education.⁸ A description of PCL in *The Times*' listing of all UK polytechnics in June 1989 details that there were 5,260 full-time and sandwich students. It provided major courses in English, Science and Business Studies, and popular courses including law, media studies, social sciences, film, video and photographic arts, and languages. The description also details that: 'Media Studies, Photographic Sciences and Law [are] well regarded. One of the few polytechnics to provide vocational training for barristers and the only one to offer Chinese to degree level'.⁹

'SEPARATE BUT EQUAL': THE BINARY LINE

Since the late nineteenth century, a dual system of higher education existed in the UK, in which there was the 'autonomous' sector, that comprised universities, and the public sector, that comprised polytechnics, technical colleges and colleges of education. Broadly speaking, the former were self-managing institutions that received central government funding for teaching and research, distributed via the University Grants Committee; at the same time the latter institutions were managed by local education authorities from whom they received funding for teaching provision. For much of the twentieth century, this dual system had largely been regarded as a hierarchical one, with the universities at the top and below them all the other institutions that hoped eventually to progress to university status. Successive government policy in the twentieth century had reinforced the hierarchy and sense of competitive aspiration among the non-university institutions: for example, in the early 1950s the government re-designated certain technical colleges that were deemed to provide advanced technical higher education as Colleges of Advanced Technology (CAT);¹⁰ and

⁸ Heller, pp. 88–90.

⁹ *The Times*, 15 June 1989.

¹⁰ DES White Paper, *Technical Education, Cmnd. 9703* (London: HMSO, 1956).



Fig. 13

The College of Architecture and Advanced Building Technology was created as part of a new federal collegiate future proposed for the Polytechnic and became PCL's Marylebone campus.



Fig. 14

Education Minister Anthony Crosland envisaged polytechnics as providing first-class professional training to complement the traditional universities.

following the publication of the *Robbins Report* in 1963, the ten CATs were re-designated as universities.¹¹ Examples in London include Battersea Polytechnic Institute, which became the University of Surrey in 1966, and Acton Technical College, which became Brunel University in the same year. Those institutions that lost out on cherished CAT-status and subsequently university-status, remaining either Regional or Area Colleges (including Regent Street Polytechnic, which was the former), felt aggrieved, yet all continued to strive for the perceived higher status.¹² Tobias Weaver, Deputy Secretary of the DES 1962–72, acknowledged their frustration, commenting:

The Regional Colleges are affronted by exclusion from the university club and faced with the dilemma of either renouncing the advantages of promotion or abandoning their trust – which is to provide massive opportunities for part-time courses at advanced level, and full-time and part-time courses at the next lower, and particular, technician level.¹³

11 *The Robbins Report, Higher Education. Report of the Commission appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins, Cmnd. 2154* (London: HMSO, 1963).

12 Michael Heller explains that the Regent Street Polytechnic was unable to achieve CAT status due to its size because of the large numbers of its students studying at intermediate and basic levels. See Heller, p. 62.

13 Tobias Weaver, *Robbins Report*, January 1964, p. 8. IoE/WVR/3/4.

Fig. 15

HRH The Prince of Wales has visited the institution on several occasions, reflecting his long-standing interests in architecture and the environment, alternative medicine and homeopathy, and music.



14 Anthony Crosland, Secretary of State for Education and Science, *Woolwich Polytechnic Speech*, Tuesday 27th April 1965, issued by the Press Association at 19:30hrs, 29 April, p. 2, LSE/CROS/5/2/158.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 4.

16 In fact, the government broke the second of these with the creation of The Open University (OU) in 1969. A flagship policy of Labour leader Harold Wilson, the 'university of the air', as it was originally conceived, was established to address the continued exclusion of lower income groups from education. The OU was set up by Royal Charter with a similar structure to traditional universities, with a significant difference as it was to provide 'correspondence courses of a quality unsurpassed [...] reinforced by residential courses and tutorials'. *A University of the Air. Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Education and Science by Command of Her Majesty, February 1966, Cmnd. 2922* (London: HMSO, 1966). See also www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/historyofou

17 Tobias Weaver, *Notes on Woolwich Speech in April 1965*, p. 1, IoE/WVR/3/16.

On the evening of 27 April 1965, a dramatic change in government policy was announced by the new Labour government Secretary of State for Education and Science, Anthony Crosland, in a speech given at Woolwich Polytechnic in South London as part of the institution's 75th anniversary celebrations. Crosland outlined the existing dual system and made it clear that in his view it was the best possible one: 'the Government accepts this dual system as being fundamentally the right one, with each sector making its own distinctive contribution to the whole'.¹⁴ In particular, Crosland praised the public sector of higher education as being complementary to the university sector and essential to higher education as a whole. He argued that the technical colleges and polytechnics provided full-time and sandwich courses for students of university quality in vocationally-oriented subjects, together with the provision of non-degree level work and part-time study opportunities – opportunities that were not available in the university sector.¹⁵ Furthermore, in order to support and sustain the dual system, Crosland detailed two important policy decisions: first, the creation under Royal Charter of the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) to award degrees to those polytechnic students studying courses of equal standard and quality with a university course (finally bringing into reality proposals first put forward by Robbins); and second, that no new universities should be created for a period of ten years.¹⁶

The new Labour government believed that there was an increasing need for vocational, professional and industrially based courses to support the British economy. It argued that the UK needed to develop a strong non-university sector, like France's Grandes Ecoles and Germany's Technische Hochschule, and it aimed to strengthen the sector by ending 'the competitive process which resulted in the strongest colleges aspiring to be universities'.¹⁷ To this end, the government proposed the designation of thirty polytechnics that would cater

for students on full-time, part-time and sandwich degree-standard courses to be recognised and validated by the CNAA.¹⁸ These institutions were to continue to be managed and funded by local education authorities and would continue their strong emphasis on teaching ‘to help people to develop a wide range of capabilities ... in contrast with an academic education which is mainly concerned with the acquisition and refinement of knowledge’.¹⁹ The resultant *A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges, Cmnd. 3006* (1966) consolidated what became known as the binary system of higher education in the UK – two sectors: university and polytechnic, theoretically equal in status and importance but separated by the so-called ‘binary line’ of funding, management and purpose.

FIRST REFORMS: THE MOVE FROM LOCAL AUTHORITY CONTROL AND THE ABOLITION OF ILEA

Perhaps the first indication of the important changes that were to take place in 1992 was the publication of the DES’s White Paper entitled *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge* in 1987.²⁰ Although the Paper reaffirmed the Conservative government’s commitment to the Robbins Principle, namely that ‘places should be available for all who have the necessary intellectual competence, motivation and maturity to benefit from higher education and who wish to do so’,²¹ it also emphasised the need for any expansion of the sector to ‘take increasing account of the economic requirements of the country’ and the ‘demands for highly qualified manpower’.²² The White Paper prioritised the achievement of ‘better value for money from the public funds made available to higher education’²³ and many of its recommendations, such as improvements in institutional management, the development and use of performance indicators and improvements in course validation and quality assurance, can be seen as supporting mechanisms for this aim. While ostensibly affecting both universities and polytechnics alike, the Paper recommended the most significant impact to the polytechnics by proposing to transfer their funding and management from local government authorities to a new Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC), an independent non-departmental body appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science. Furthermore, ‘the Secretary of State will provide general guidance to the PCFC on its work and will have reserve powers of direction’.²⁴ For the first time in the UK, central government would both fund and influence the distribution of such funding to the polytechnics. Crucially, rather than the relationship being one of grantor and grantee as in the past, it was to be a contract between government and institution. The aim was greater accountability and commitment to quality of service delivery by the institution and to encourage institutions ‘to be enterprising in attracting contracts from other sources, particularly the private sector’.²⁵ The existing funding body for the universities already reported to central government, to HM Treasury, but this was now to be reconstituted as the Universities Funding Council (UFC) similarly organised under the sponsorship of the Secretary of State.²⁶

18 *A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges, Cmnd. 3006* (London: HMSO, 1966).

19 Weaver, *Notes on Woolwich Speech in April 1965*, p. 2.

20 DES White Paper, *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge, Cm. 114* (London: HMSO, April 1987).

21 *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge*, Sect. 2.9, p. 7.

22 *Ibid.*, Sect. 1.4, p. 2 and Sect. 2.10, p. 7.

23 *Ibid.*, Sect. 2.13, p. 9.

24 *Ibid.*, Sect. 4.19, p. 31.

25 *Ibid.*, Sect. 4.16–17, p. 31.

26 *Ibid.*, Sect. 4.40, p. 37.

Fig. 16
In 1977, PCL's Media Studies students reported on the course's new status as a degree-level course.



Arguably, much of the political context of the 1987 White Paper was less to do with higher education reform and more to do with local government reform. Since 1979, the Conservative government in the UK had introduced various policies on local government reform, aimed at weakening the power of local authorities to derail what it regarded as central government's clear mandate by the electorate to reduce public spending.²⁷ One area of great concern to the government was the cost and quality of state education, which was managed by Local Education Authorities (LEAs). Created in 1902, the LEAs were committees of the UK's county councils or county borough councils responsible for the provision of all levels of education within the local area. One of the biggest was the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), under whose control the PCL was maintained. ILEA covered twelve Inner London boroughs and the City of London, but not the twenty Outer London boroughs in the Metropolitan area including Harrow and Hounslow. It was a uniquely powerful local body, responsible for 1,059 schools, seven polytechnics, twenty-five further and higher education colleges and seventeen adult education institutions.²⁸ It spent far more on education than any other LEA and was constantly accused of profligate spending and poor value for money.²⁹ However, ILEA argued that it delivered unique educational provision – nearly half of its pupils qualified for free meals, more than one fifth had unemployed parents and a quarter of its pupils spoke a language other than English at home.³⁰ ILEA was Labour-controlled, having been so since 1967, putting it at odds with Conservative government policy. As one historian has argued: 'ILEA's strength, related to size, ability to raise the full extent of its income locally and the scope of its activities, enabled its regime to resist the attempts of central government to constrain spending and influence policy'.³¹ It was to become the primary target of reform by Kenneth Baker, Secretary of State for Education and Science 1986–89.

27 Gillian Shephard, *Shephard's Watch. Illusions of Power in British Politics* (London: Politico's Publishing, 2000), pp. 13–14; p. 22.

28 Malcolm Murray Noble, *Policy and Policymaking in Local Government. Revisiting the ILEA: a Study of the Inner London Education Authority 1964–1990*, Associateship Thesis, Institute of Education, University of London, 2010, p. 151.

29 See, for example, HC Deb 17 February 1988, Vol. 127, cc1000–82.

30 Brian Simon, *Bending the Rules. The Baker 'Reform' of Education* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1988), p. 90.

31 Noble, p. 10.

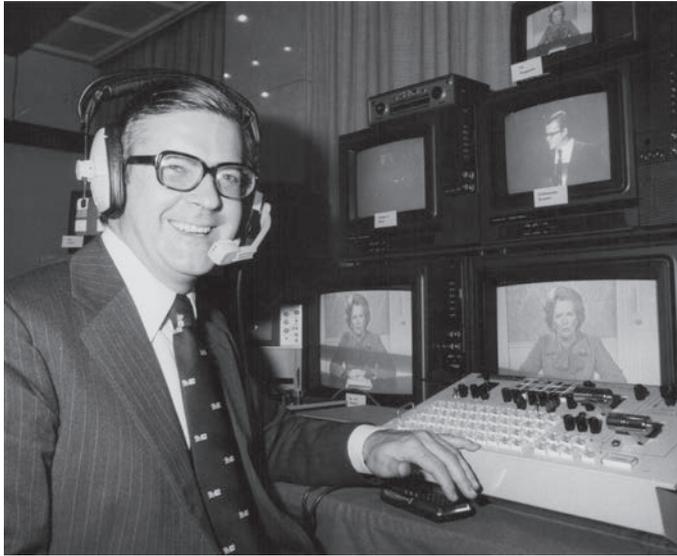


Fig. 17

Conservative politician Kenneth Baker introduced the National Curriculum and is remembered by many in education for his introduction of in-service training for teachers – known as ‘Baker days’.

One of Baker’s first initiatives on becoming Secretary of State was the introduction of City Technical Colleges to build upon the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative which, jointly funded with the Department of Employment, had provided technical and vocational education for 14–16 year olds. Baker wanted to improve the technical capabilities of Britain’s young people, to support its national needs and provide future employment opportunities; he also aimed ‘to shift power towards the parents and children who were the consumers of education and away from the education administrators and vested interests who were the producers of education’.³² Baker’s primary target was inner-city areas, mainly Labour-controlled councils, who he described as ‘obdurate’ when it came to such new initiatives.³³ Baker wrote that:

The City Technical Colleges were key in the process of education reform because they were the first element to be announced, and incorporated many of the changes that I wanted to introduce into the whole system – parental choice, per capita funding, local managerial control, and independence from the LEA.³⁴

Baker regarded ILEA as the worst possible example of a local education authority. In the 1970s as MP for Marylebone he unsuccessfully fought its plans to turn St Marylebone Grammar School into a comprehensive. Baker made no secret of his strong views against ILEA:

It had sink schools where the passing fads of inadequate and politically-motivated teachers had been given full rein. The left-wing politicized bureaucracy which ran ILEA was arrogant. It never listened to my constituents, to the local London Borough councillors, or to me or any other London MP. ... The political indoctrination which typified ILEA went very deep. ... ILEA was incapable of reform. It had to go.³⁵

³² Kenneth Baker, *The Turbulent Years. My Life in Politics* (London: Faber & Faber, 1993), p. 177. The TVEI was administered by the Department of Employment’s Manpower Services Commission, which increasingly encroached on existing Further and Higher Education provision, to such an extent that by 1984 it was envisaged as the ‘national training authority’. DES White Paper, *Training for Jobs, Cmnd. 9135* (London: HMSO, 1984).

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 233–4.

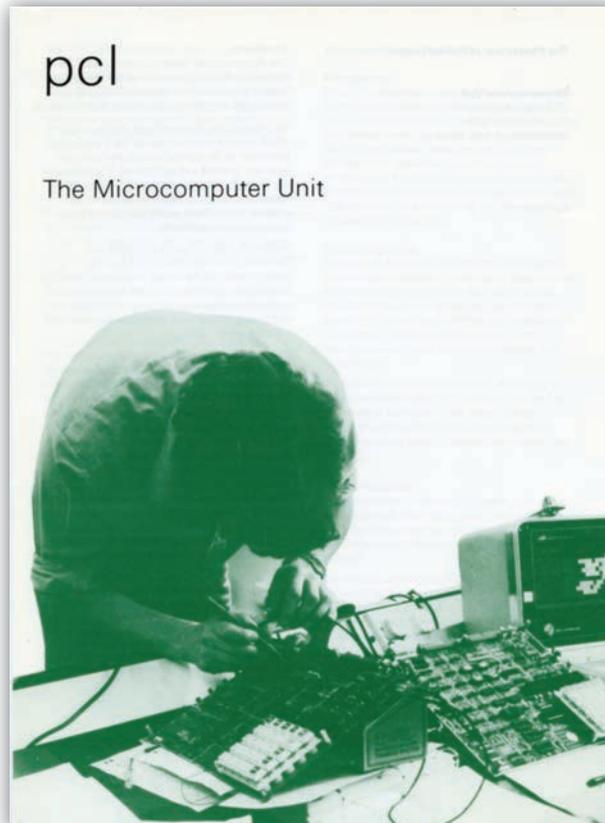


Fig. 18
Ken Livingstone served as Labour Leader of the Greater London Council from 1981 until its abolition in 1986.

The *1983 Conservative Manifesto* included the abolition of the Greater London Council (GLC).³⁶ Baker (who was then Minister for Industry and Information Technology in the Department of Industry, from June 1983, the Department of Trade and Industry) urged that the government should also take the opportunity to abolish the ILEA but others in the Cabinet, including Keith Joseph, then Secretary of State for Education and Science (1981–86), were concerned about the ILEA's strong campaigning lobby and so the published *Manifesto* only included a plan to review ILEA.³⁷ The GLC was abolished under the *1985 Local Government Act*. Ironically, perhaps, the result of the abolition of the GLC potentially strengthened ILEA's position by establishing it as a directly elected body, with representatives from each London borough. However, in the view of Baker, this did nothing to improve its efficiency or effectiveness:

the new directly elected ILEA ... provided a political platform for the same sort of left-wing politics we were seeing in the town halls. Furthermore, ILEA showed itself totally incapable of dealing with militant left-wing teachers who, among other things, absented themselves from their schools to take part in political demonstrations. Together with ILEA's promotion of homosexual literature and the anti-police attitude fostered by teachers in some schools, the Authority became a by-word for swollen bureaucracy, high costs, low academic standards and political extremism.³⁸

Fig. 19
PCL's Microcomputer Unit was launched in 1981 and introduced the first vendor-independent microcomputer course in the UK.



³⁶ 'The Metropolitan Councils and the Greater London Council have been shown to be a wasteful and unnecessary tier of government. We shall abolish them', Local Government: Saving Ratepayers' Money, *Conservative Party General Election Manifesto 1983*.

³⁷ Baker, pp. 225–6.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 226. What became known as the infamous 'Section 28' of the *1988 Local Government Act*, which forbade local authorities from 'promoting teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship', was not repealed until November 2003, under the New Labour government.

In 1987, following his move to the DES, Baker successfully convinced the Cabinet to allow individual boroughs to secede from ILEA and to take responsibility for managing their own local education provision – a proposal that was included in the *1987 Conservative Election Manifesto*. Rather than attempt outright abolition, which might stir up considerable opposition, Baker's plan was that: 'In this way, ILEA would shrink and eventually cease to be viable, thus justifying its winding up'.³⁹ Baker confronted the education authority on all levels – in addition to proposing that London boroughs 'opt out' and take responsibility for their own primary, secondary and tertiary education, he also proposed that higher education institutions be allowed to become independent of local education authority control. This second proposal was made in April 1987 with the publication of the DES's Consultation Paper, *Changes in Structure and National Planning for Higher Education. Polytechnics and Colleges Sector*.⁴⁰ The Consultation Paper gave more detail to the stated rationale of the earlier White Paper, namely that: 'To reflect their national role, give scope for better management and permit greater responsiveness to economic needs, major institutions of higher education under local authority control will be transferred to a new sector'.⁴¹ Many polytechnics were supportive of the move, particularly those that had experienced difficult relations with their own local education authority. In 1986, the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics (CDP), a national body representing UK polytechnics, had conducted a survey of its members to form the basis of a report into polytechnic governance. The initial questionnaire sent out in July 1986 intimated the ill-feeling clearly felt by many polytechnics against their local authority, including comments such as: 'Local authorities exert power over polytechnics in spite of the constraints in articles and financial regulations', 'In operation the current system of polytechnic government is energy-consuming and time-wasting', and '[a polytechnic] is seen as a cuckoo in the nest and resented as expensive and uncontrollable'.⁴² However, Michael Law, Secretary to the PCL's Court of Governors, replied on behalf of PCL that although he agreed that, due to the variety of polytechnic instruments of governance, there was little consistency in practice or experience, and that the processes for planning or developing new buildings were generally unclear, nonetheless:

The premises on which most of the other points are based are simply not true for Inner London Polytechnics and PCL would therefore not wish to be associated with most of the content of the paper and in particular with its general tone of complaints and criticism.⁴³

The subsequent draft report produced by the CDP, *A Blueprint for Corporate Status*, was considerably toned down in its criticism of ILEA.⁴⁴ Perhaps PCL's view was understandably 'better the devil you know'. Or, as Michael Law expressed it: 'whatever we may mutter privately, one has to admit that on the whole they [ILEA] have been generous to us (not always, of course, with Whitehall approval!)'.⁴⁵ Following the publication of the government's 1987

39 Ibid., p. 226.

40 DES, Consultation Paper, *Changes in Structure and National Planning for Higher Education. Polytechnics and Colleges Sector* (London: HMSO, April 1987).

41 *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge*, Summary, p. v.

42 John Pratt, Centre for Institutional Studies, North East London Polytechnic, *The government of polytechnics: Summary of current problems*, summary draft prepared for comment and sent to all CDP members, 10 July 1986, Sect. 1.7, 1.9 and 4.3. UWA/PCL/1/DP/7.

43 Michael Law, *Response to The government of polytechnics*, sent to John Pratt, North East London Polytechnic, 11 September 1986. UWA/PCL/1/DP/7.

44 Michael Locke/CDP, *Polytechnic government. Paper 4: A blueprint for corporate status*, Confidential draft, 15 November 1986. UWA/PCL/1/DP/7.

45 Michael Law, *Response to A blueprint for corporate status*, sent to Michael Locke, 2 December 1986. UWA/PCL/1/DP/7.

Fig. 20
PCL's Computer Centre for Disabled Students was an innovative London-wide initiative that launched in 1984.



consultation paper, Professor Terence Burlin, Rector of PCL, continued in a similar vein, expressing the view that while he welcomed the expansionist principles of the proposals, PCL was keen to maintain its beneficial links with ILEA; and moreover, he noted that the special relationship between PCL and ILEA and its achievements were not being considered.⁴⁶

In September 1987 the DES continued its pressure on ILEA by issuing a further Consultation Paper entitled: *The Organisation of Education in Inner London*,⁴⁷ which invited comments on its proposals to allow the Inner London boroughs to opt out of ILEA. Following discussions at PCL's Finance and General Purposes Committee, PCL sent a formal response to the Secretary of State on 11 November 1987.⁴⁸ The response expressed concerns that 'the present national formulae significantly underestimate the higher costs of educational operation in the central London area' and that the resultant comparisons of educational effectiveness on a London/non-London basis were 'not soundly based'.⁴⁹ PCL also expressed concern for the future funding of its large numbers of continuing education students on professional development and post-graduate courses and its provision of London-wide community projects such as its Computer Centre for Disabled Students, stating that it was only 'through the foresight and generosity of ILEA that these initiatives have been supported to date'.⁵⁰ PCL stated: 'it is far from clear to us how these vital components of the education services needed in the North West London area would be supported under the structures proposed in the Consultation Paper'.⁵¹ PCL, with multiple sites based in different London boroughs,⁵² would potentially have to co-ordinate the funding and management of its non-advanced further education (NAFE) provision among several different LEAs, which was likely to be

46 Professor Terence Burlin, *Rector's Newsletter*, May 1987. UWA/PCL/5/2/b/137.

47 DES, Consultation Paper, *The Organisation of Education in Inner London* (London: HMSO, 11 September 1987).

48 PCL, *The Organisation of Education in Inner London*, 11 November 1987. *Finance and General Purposes Committee Minutes and Papers*, 9 November 1987. UWA/PCL/1/FP/13.

49 *Ibid.*, Sect. 2.

50 *Ibid.*, Sect. 4.

51 *Ibid.*, Sect. 5.

52 In 1991, PCL had twenty-one different sites including properties in the Inner London boroughs of Westminster, Camden and Lambeth, and the Outer London boroughs of Harrow and Hounslow. *PCL Premises Strategy October 1991*, Touche Ross Management Consultants, UWA/PCL/2/2/s/22.

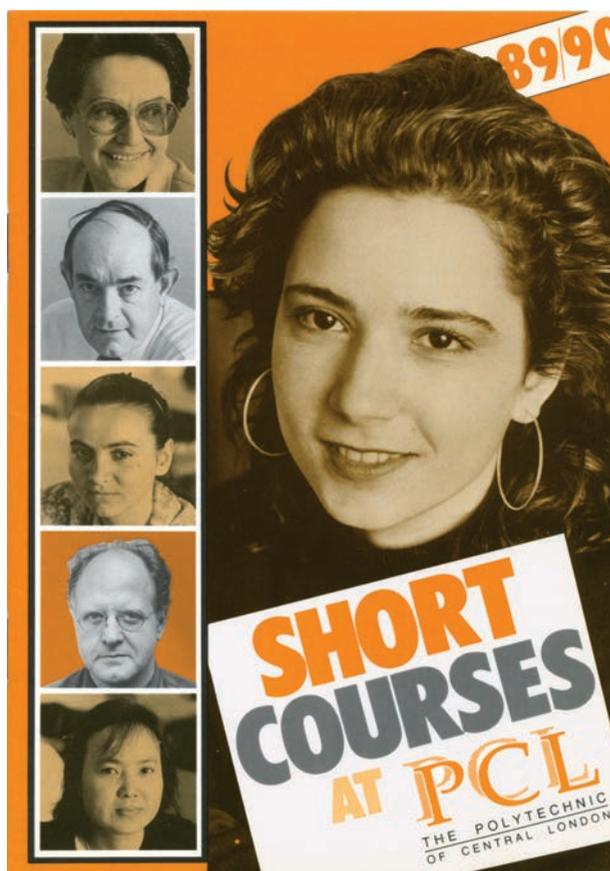


Fig. 21

During the 1980s, it was estimated that over 16,000 students took short courses each year at PCL.

problematic both in terms of the complexities of management organisation and the likelihood of decreased support from each. PCL concluded: 'the proposals in the Consultation Paper need further elaboration and clarification if economically relevant post-School NAFE and special community projects in London are not to be thrown into disarray'.⁵³ PCL was affected more than many other similar institutions due to the high number of non-degree level courses it provided,⁵⁴ and how these courses (primarily part-time and evening) were to be funded would be an ongoing issue for the institution.

Despite a protest campaign by ILEA and the concerns expressed by many of its educational institutions, the writing was on the wall. The Conservative boroughs of Wandsworth, Westminster, and Kensington and Chelsea immediately expressed a desire to opt out of ILEA, while the City of London and Tower Hamlets were seriously considering it; and soon it became clear that ILEA would only be left with a 'rump' of Labour-run boroughs. The government's proposal was that if eight of the thirteen boroughs opted out, then the Secretary of State should have a reserve power to dissolve ILEA. Even ILEA's Chief Education Officer admitted that the proposals were flawed and unworkable, and would leave ILEA 'with an unmanageable rump of schools in which the quality of education will steadily and inevitably decline'.⁵⁵ He concluded that it would be better for the government to simply abolish ILEA outright

⁵³ Ibid., Sect. 11.

⁵⁴ PCL's *Guide for Applicants: Undergraduate Courses Session 1987-1988* indicates that one third of the total number of courses available at PCL were of non-degree level. UWA/PCL/5/4/30.

⁵⁵ William Stubbs, Chief Education Officer, ILEA, quoted in John Clare, 'ILEA might as well be abolished', *The Times*, 12 October 1987.

instead. The legislation was amended to allow for ILEA's abolition should five boroughs opt out, and following Tory victory in the Wandsworth Council by-election of November 1987, ILEA's fate was effectively sealed.⁵⁶ On 1 April 1990 ILEA ceased to exist and its unified education system, which had been in place for 120 years, was split between individual London boroughs that became education authorities responsible for schools and FE colleges, and independent institutions, including polytechnics, that delivered higher education level provision outside the university sector, funded and managed by central government.

The Conservative government had achieved its objective to weaken local government with the transfer of the public sector of higher education out of local education authority control and the consequent demise of ILEA. But the creation of an independent non-university Higher Education sector had unintended consequences, as many of the newly incorporated institutions increasingly began to argue that 'parity in all but name' with their university counterparts was not sustainable.

'NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT': HE EXPANSION AND 'QUALITY'

The 1987 White Paper *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge* emphasised the economic benefits of higher education, with the statement that: 'Higher Education should serve the economy more effectively' appearing first in the list of 'Aims and Purposes of Higher Education' on the first page of the document.⁵⁷ The Paper highlighted 'Access' – with the aim of increased participation rates, and 'Quality and Efficiency' – with improvements in course design and validation, better teaching, more selectively funded research, improvements in institutional management, and the development and use of performance indicators.⁵⁸ In stating these aims, the Paper reflected a perceptible shift towards a new management approach that had taken place within much of the UK public sector during the 1980s. This approach has been described as 'New Public Management' and can be categorised as including the following doctrines:

'hands-on professional management' in the public sector, explicit *standards and measures of performance*, greater emphasis on *output* controls, shift to *disaggregation* of units in the public sector, shift to greater *competition* in public sector, stress on *private-sector styles of management* practice and stress on greater *discipline and parsimony* in resource use.⁵⁹

The approach was endorsed and actively implemented by successive Conservative Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and John Major in the UK as an attempt to 'raise the standards of public services'.⁶⁰ The UK higher education sector was to be no exception, as government policy increasingly focused on accountability and issues of quality in HE against a background of mass expansion

56 Baker, pp. 227–8.

57 *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge*, p. iv.

58 Ibid.

59 Christopher Hood, 'A Public Management For All Seasons?', *Public Administration*, Vol. 69, (Spring 1991), 3–19 (pp. 4–5). Italics in original. See also Christopher Pollitt, *Managerialism and the Public Services: Cuts or Cultural Change in the 1990s?* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1993).

60 *The Citizen's Charter: Raising the Standard*, Cm. 1599 (London: HMSO, 1991).



Fig. 22

PCL was committed to widening participation in subjects such as Law, an ethos that continues within the University today.

and budgetary constraint within the context of a highly competitive world economy.⁶¹

During the 1980s, the participation rate in higher education dramatically exploded: government figures in 1987 suggested that full-time home students in higher education had increased by more than 85,000 since 1979, three times the increases seen during the 1970s;⁶² in fact the participation rate of school leavers was to rise yet further from the mid-1980s, reaching 31 per cent by 1992.⁶³ The total expansion of the sector was even greater when mature students were included as the proportion of entrants aged over twenty-one years old had increased from 14.5 per cent to 29 per cent between 1986 and 1995.⁶⁴ The UK had moved from having an 'elite' to a 'mass' higher education system.⁶⁵ Yet, conversely, expenditure was decreasing. Although the proportion of public funding spent on education as a percentage of UK Gross Domestic Product (GDP) had increased since the 1960s, year on year reductions by a UK government anxious to reduce public spending had resulted in a 40 per cent decrease in funding per student since 1976.⁶⁶

The two sectors of the higher education system each reacted differently to the reduced public funding during this period. Following the first significant cuts in 1981, the University Grants Committee was reluctant to reduce the unit of resource and in order to protect the amount of money available per student it placed a cap on student numbers, effectively halting expansion within the university sector.⁶⁷ In comparison, the polytechnics and colleges increased their numbers, taking in many students who had lost out on university places, but also reducing their per capita funding as a consequence. In the 1987 White Paper, the government acknowledged that 'virtually all of ... [the] major increase in full-time student numbers has taken place in the polytechnics and colleges sector'.⁶⁸ The Paper emphasised the increase in participation among young women and mature students, and those with non-traditional qualifica-

61 See Lee Harvey and Peter T. Knight, *Transforming Higher Education* (Bucks, UK: SRHE and Open University Press, 1996); Frank Coffield, ed., *Higher Education in a Learning Society, Papers presented at St Edmund Hall, Oxford, 26–27 June 1995* (Durham: School of Education, University of Durham on behalf of DFEE, ESRC and HEFCE, October 1995); Maurice Kogan and Stephen Hanney, *Reforming Higher Education, HE Policy Series 50* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2000).

62 *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge*, Sect. 2.1, p. 4.

63 Kogan and Hanney, p. 13.

64 *Ibid.*

65 Martin Trow defined the three systems of higher education as 'elite', 'mass' and 'universal'. The system ceases to be elite when more than 15 per cent of the population participates and becomes universal when more than 40 per cent participate. In 1987 the percentage of the population participating in UK HE was 17 per cent and by 1997 this had increased to 33 per cent. Martin Trow, *Problems in the Transition from Elite to Mass Higher Education* (Berkeley, CA: Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1973).

66 *Dearing Report. Report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education: Higher Education in the Learning Society* (London: DfEE, 1997), Sect. 4.34, p. 59; Sect. 17.16, p. 267.

67 Ann-Marie Bathmaker, 'The Expansion of Higher Education: A Consideration of Control, Funding and Quality', in Steve Bartlett and Diana Burton (eds.), *Education Studies. Essential Issues* (London: Sage, 2003), 169–89 (p. 12).

68 *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge*, Sect. 2.2, p. 5.

tions, together with the development of continuing education and professional training courses. It acknowledged the role played by the polytechnics in achieving much of the success shown in these areas to date and suggested that 'the universities should move in this direction'.⁶⁹ Despite praise from the government, polytechnics were, however, beginning to feel the pressure of increased numbers amid reduced funding. In the spring of 1988, PCL Rector Professor Terence Burlin communicated his concerns to staff, commenting that:

over the last five years [there has been] a decrease in income to the Polytechnic of some £4m. As you know this is to be followed by a further £2m next year. Up until now the Polytechnic has been able to compensate in large measure for the loss of income [...] by means of increased student numbers. [...] Unfortunately this year the compensation is far from adequate for the major drop in income the Polytechnic is suffering.⁷⁰

And this was despite the fact that the PCL had realised the highest FTE growth of all polytechnics – achieving 19.3 per cent against the national average of 9 per cent. The government pledged that its White Paper, and subsequent *1988 Education Reform Act*, recognised the polytechnics' efforts and would address their funding issues through the creation of the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC), which was directly accountable to the DES. However, just three years later, the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics (CDP) felt it necessary to issue a national press release warning that funding was jeopardising quality in HE after the PCFC announced a plan 'for a 17% increase in the number of students entering polytechnics next year, while allocating only 13% more funds to meet that increase'.⁷¹ The polytechnics warned that the government was again 'forcing down the unit of resource' and that 'enough is enough'.⁷²

Fig. 23

From its beginnings in the 1880s, the University's evening language programme has continued to be popular. Many enrolment sessions ran for over a week to accommodate the large numbers of students.

⁶⁹ *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge*, Sect. 2.18, p. 10.

⁷⁰ *Rector's Newsletter to PCL Staff*, March 1988, UWA/PCL/5/2/b/137.

⁷¹ CDP, 'Funding Method Jeopardising Quality Polytechnic Directors Warn', *News Press Release*, 12 February 1991, annex to *Rector's Newsletter to PCL Staff*, February 1991, UWA/PCL/5/2/b/137.

⁷² *Ibid.*



The pressure on public finances had led to greater economic planning by central government with a renewed emphasis on providing value for money, accountability and efficiency savings. The constant dilemma for the government was how to balance the need to expand student numbers with decreasing public funds without a loss of quality of teaching and research. As will be discussed in later chapters of this volume, this dilemma would eventually lead to radical reforms to the way in which higher education was to be funded, with the introduction of student loans and tuition fees. Increasingly, the government sought methods of measuring the quality of output against resource provision and comparing standards of research and teaching across institutions. Lee Harvey and Peter T. Knight argued that ‘quality crept onto the British political agenda for higher education in the mid-1980s’ and was ‘hardly noticed at first’.⁷³ However, arguably, this only holds true for the private or university sector of HE as the polytechnics already had fairly strict control mechanisms in place, including the CNAA and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate (HMI) Inspections. The 1987 White Paper commended the polytechnics for their existing practices relating to quality self-validation, administered by CNAA; and made it clear that, in comparison, the government ‘believes universities, individually or collectively, should do more to reassure the public about the ways in which they control standards’.⁷⁴ However, it is true that the introduction into the higher education sector of new quality assessment methods that drew specifically from the New Public Management approach led to a far greater focus on the issue of ‘quality’ across the whole of the HE sector than in previous decades.

The measurement of quality was (and, arguably, still is) contentious, and the term itself has contested meanings: does quality mean the provision of a distinctive or special service, one that implies a degree of exclusivity?; or does quality mean conformity to a set of specifications or standards?; or does quality mean fitness-for-purpose?⁷⁵ Within education specifically there is a further definition of quality that is associated with the notion of high academic achievement or excellence amid concerns that widening participation of students, with a wider range of academic qualifications, might reduce standards of excellence in academic achievement in HE.⁷⁶ Additionally, there are further complexities concerning whether it is quality of inputs (human and physical resources), or outputs (graduates), or the processes of research, learning and teaching that are being measured.⁷⁷ The tensions between different definitions of quality were exacerbated by the government’s increasing focus on measurable criteria, the concept of value for money, increased competition and meeting customer requirements, core elements of its New Public Management approach. One could be forgiven for wondering if, like one famous figure who went crazy trying to define quality, the exercise was ultimately meaningless: ‘But, when you try to say what quality is, apart from the things that have it, it all goes poof! There’s nothing to talk about’.⁷⁸

Despite criticisms and concerns from within the sector, the demand on all higher education institutions to demonstrate quality was reinforced by a series

73 Harvey and Knight, p. 72.

74 Ibid., Sect. 3.7–9, p. 16.

75 Diana Green, ‘What is Quality in Higher Education? Concepts, Policy and Practice’, in Diana Green, (ed.), *What is Quality in Higher Education?* (Bucks: SRHE & Open University Press, 1994), 3–20 (pp. 13–17).

76 Bathmaker, p. 20.

77 Green, ‘What is Quality in Higher Education?’, p. 9.

78 Robert M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values* (London: Corgi, 1981), p. 178.



Fig. 24
Although the Research Assessment Exercise had been introduced in 1986, it was not open to participation by the polytechnics until after 1992. Despite this, PCL, like many other polytechnics, undertook high-quality research, and was generating £3,500,000 in research income annually by 1988.

of reports through the 1980s that introduced the development and use of performance indicators (focused primarily on economy and efficiency) into the higher education sector as a whole.⁷⁹ These in turn led to the systematic adoption of external quality monitoring and assessment; for example, the quinquennial Research Assessment Exercise (from 1986), and Quality Audits by the Higher Education Quality Council (from 1991),⁸⁰ as detailed in Table 1.

Action	Responsible Agency	Method and Focus
Validation or course approval	CNAA or institution offering course/programme	Appraisal of inputs and design of course/programme as against specified aims and appropriate standards
Course review	CNAA or institution offering course/programme	Evaluation of process and output against initial specification
Accreditation	CNAA or a professional body	Evaluating appropriateness of institution to offer programmes leading to a specified award (inputs, outputs and process considered)
Audit	CVCP's Academic Audit Unit	Examining and commenting on universities' quality assurance systems (inputs and process)
Inspection	HMI	Similar to accreditation but with emphasis on student experience in classroom
Performance Indicators	Funding Councils, accrediting bodies, individual institutions and standards	Quantitative or qualitative methods of assessing quality (inputs, outputs or process)
Moderation	External Examiners	Monitoring output to ensure comparability with national academic standards

Table 1. The various methods for assessing quality in teaching and learning in UK HE in use prior to 1992.⁸¹

The impact on the HE sector was significant as all institutions found themselves increasingly under pressure as they tried to balance a number of competing demands: to increase efficiency and reduce costs; to increase student numbers, particularly of non-traditional students; and to measure their quality in terms of teaching and research. Moreover, many academics were concerned at the proliferation of the use of performance indicators across the sector that they feared:

will be used via the publication of 'league tables' of comparative performance to inform potential customers of relative quality and to reinforce the competitive ethos of higher education desired by the government.⁸²

⁷⁹ Jarratt Report. *Report of the Steering Committee for Efficiency Studies in Universities* (London: CVCP, 1985); *The Development of Higher Education into the 1990s*, Cmnd. 9524 (London: DES, 1985); Lindop Report. *Academic Validation in Public Sector Higher Education*, Cmnd. 9501 (London: HMSO, 1985); *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge*, Cm. 114 (London: HMSO, 1987); *Croham Report. Review of the University Grants Committee*, Cm. 81 (London: DES, 1987).

⁸⁰ From 1997, the HEQC was reformed as the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

⁸¹ Adapted from Green, p. 10.

⁸² Green, p. 12.

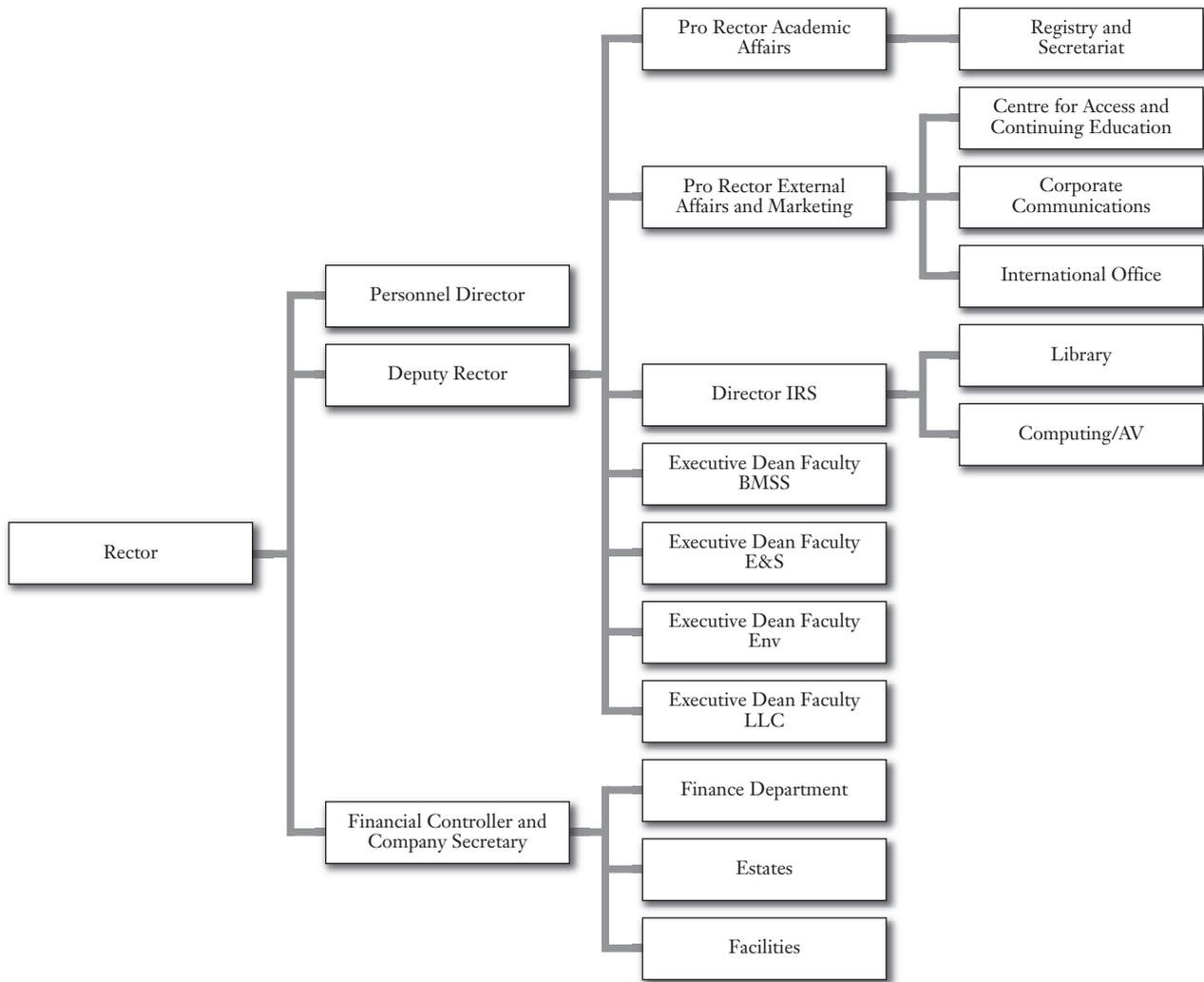
The 1980s was a period of considerable change in the UK Higher Education sector, with an intensification of policy reform and legislation focused on increased marketisation and publicly accountable central management. The *1988 Education Reform Act* significantly altered the HE landscape by freeing the polytechnics from local education authorities, making them independent legal entities with the right to manage their own financial affairs and allocating their resources from central government. Yet the legislation was also an endorsement of the existing binary policy – the polytechnics’ funding, though received from the DES, was regulated and controlled separately from that of the universities; and it did not include a subsidy for research. To some extent this was not surprising, given that, arguably, the political motives behind the legislation were based more on concerns about local government independence and a determination to introduce efficiency management ideologies in all UK public sector services than on an avowed intention to reform HE.

Nonetheless, the *Education Reform Act* served as the catalyst for the demolition of the binary line in UK higher education. The attention once turned on HE did not dissipate and, as the 1980s ended, the national debate about higher education became increasingly focused on the perceived differences and similarities between polytechnics and universities, fixated on the issue of the polytechnic name. One polytechnic director spoke for many when he described the polytechnic name as an ‘albatross’, arguing that ‘the polytechnics are being held back from achieving their full potential as agents of change in higher education by a name which spawns misconceptions and prejudice’.⁸³ In May 1992, the PCL was one of twenty-nine polytechnics who requested a name change to include the ‘university’ in their title.⁸⁴ Although previously there had been major national debates about higher education, polytechnics and universities, none was to be so emotive as the question of a university title.

83 Ray Cowell, Director and Chief Executive of Trent Polytechnic, ‘Polys held back by their name’, Letter to the Editor, *THES*, 26 May 1989.

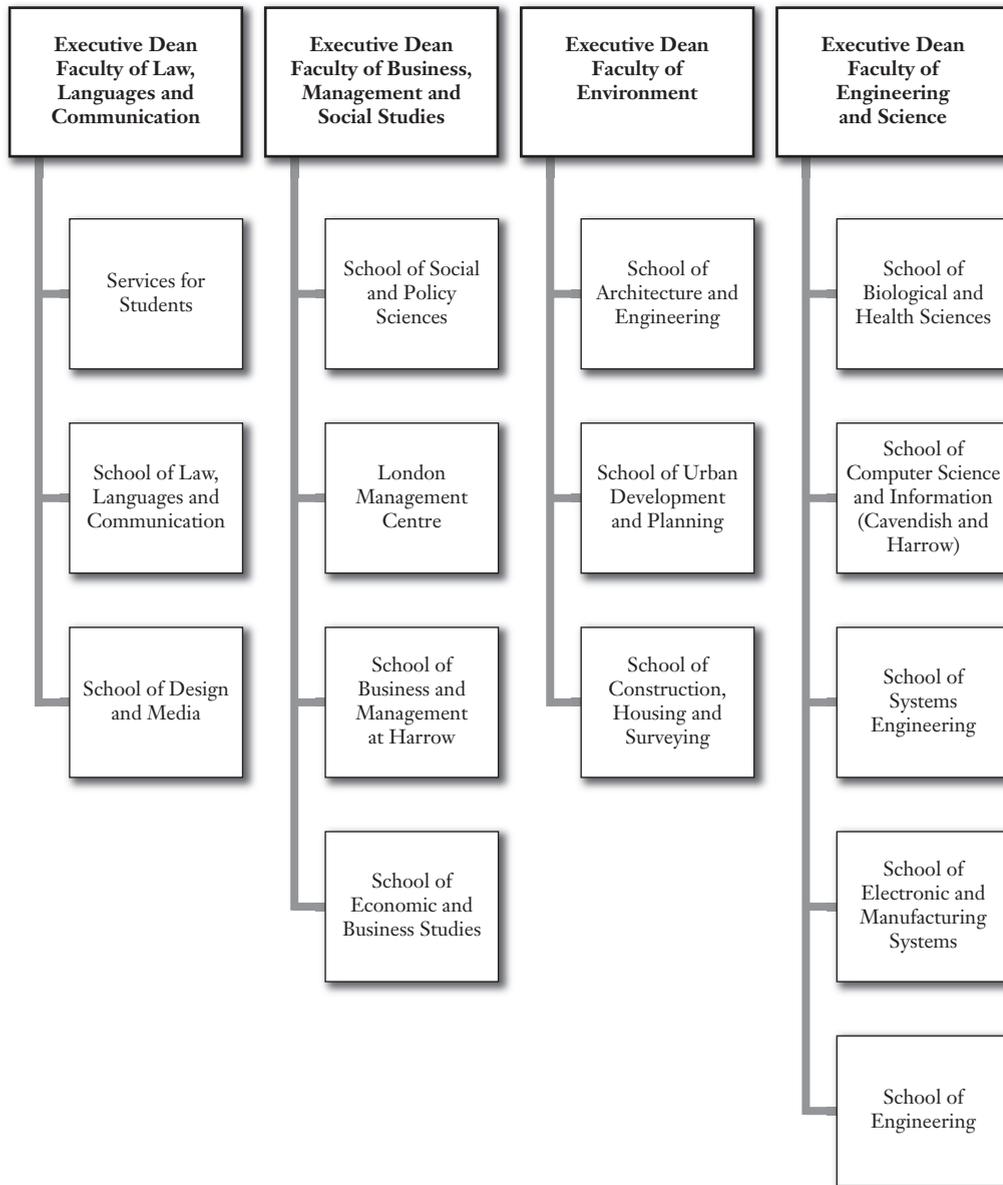
84 The first wave of applications in early May was followed by further applications, Oxford Polytechnic being the last English polytechnic to request that its title be changed, to Oxford Brookes University in October 1992. See Appendix 2.

University of Westminster Management Structure 1992



- BMSS Business, Management and Social Studies
- ENV Environment
- E&S Engineering and Science
- IRS Information Resource Services
- LLC Law, Languages and Communication

University of Westminster Academic Faculty Structure 1992



‘A rose by any other name...’¹

THE END OF THE BINARY LINE

In 1968 Eric Robinson, advisor to Anthony Crosland and head of the Faculty of Arts at Enfield College of Technology, predicted that:

Sooner or later this country must face a comprehensive reform of education beyond the school – a reform which will bring higher education out of the ivory towers and make it available to all. [...] The shape and speed of this change to come depends on the success with which the polytechnics are established. The future pattern of higher education in this country can be set in the development of these institutions as comprehensive people’s universities.²

It perhaps took a little longer than Robinson had foreseen, but in 1992 the UK higher education system was comprehensively reformed. A mixture of determined campaigning from the polytechnics, political ideology, and economic expediency erased the binary line that divided polytechnic from university. In early May 1991 rumours had begun to circulate within the HE community:

It is rumoured that a White Paper has been written or is being drafted on HE and that this paper will be concerned with the moving of the binary line, introducing a single funding council, establishing some common standards and quality assurance mechanisms across the whole of HE and possibly letting polytechnics choose their own title. We wait to see what does emerge.³

The rumours were correct. On 20 May 1991 Kenneth Clarke, Secretary of State for Education and Science, introduced his White Paper *Higher Education: A New Framework* in the House of Commons.⁴ The Paper stated that UK Higher Education was ‘more efficient and effective than it has ever been’, detailing that one in five 18–19 year olds entered HE compared with one in seven in 1987.⁵ It praised the polytechnics and colleges sector who ‘have continued to lead this expansion’ with no loss of quality as the proportion of first and

1 William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, Scene II, lines 43–4.

2 Eric E. Robinson, *The New Polytechnics. A Radical Policy for Higher Education* (London: Cornmarket, 1968), pp. 10–11. Enfield College of Technology is now part of the University of Middlesex.

3 Professor Terence Burlin, letter to Matthew Parris [Conservative MP 1979–86 and journalist], 13 May 1991. UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2.

4 DES White Paper, *Higher Education: A New Framework, Cm. 1541* (London: HMSO, May 1991). Baroness Blatch introduced the Paper in the House of Lords on behalf of the government on the same day.

5 *Higher Education: A New Framework*, Sect. 7.

second class degrees awarded had steadily increased during the 1980s. Participation rates were predicted to increase yet further throughout the 1990s, requiring the continued expansion of HE, but, importantly, this was to be achieved without increased public spending: ‘the general need to contain public spending, the pattern of relative costs in higher education, and the demands for capital investment, all mean that a continuing drive for greater efficiency will need to be secured’.⁶ The government believed that the real key to accomplishing such cost-effective expansion was through greater competition for both funds and students that could best be achieved ‘by breaking down the increasingly artificial and unhelpful barriers between the universities and the polytechnics and colleges’.⁷ Whereas less than five years earlier, Kenneth Baker had spoken of the importance of the distinctions between universities and polytechnics, his successor as Secretary of State, Kenneth Clarke, now talked of ‘ending the old-fashioned division’ between the two sectors of HE.⁸ The government had rethought its HE policy and altered its long-held position in support of the division because it now regarded the binary line as a major obstacle to cost-effective expansion of the HE sector. It believed that ‘granting the polytechnics the right to use the university title and confer their own degrees would remove their “second division” status, creating a “level playing field” which would facilitate genuine competition’.⁹

The White Paper was followed by the *Further and Higher Education Bill* that was enacted into law on 6 March 1992, just days before the ‘wash-up’ period prior to the General Election in April that year.¹⁰ The Act abolished both the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC) and the Universities Funding Council (UFC) and brought their responsibilities together into a single funding council for England: the Higher Education Funding Council England (HEFCE), with an equivalent in Wales. HEFCE was to be responsible for administering the funds made available by the Secretary of State to higher education institutions ‘for the provision of education and the undertaking of research’.¹¹ The Act specified that ‘higher education institution’ means ‘a university, an institution conducted by a higher education corporation or a designated institution’, and amended the *1988 Education Reform Act* to authorise an order of the Privy Council with regard to the instrument of governance of any such higher education institution.¹² Furthermore, the Privy Council ‘may by order specify any institution which provides higher education as competent to grant ... awards granted to persons who complete an appropriate course of study ... [or] programme of supervised research ... and satisfy an appropriate assessment’.¹³ In other words, all higher education institutions could now apply for degree-awarding powers. The binary line had been truly erased – those characteristics that distinguished polytechnics from universities in terms of finance, level of work, degree-awarding powers and governance had homogenised and could no longer be used as criteria to define a ‘university’.¹⁴ The 1992 Act was clear: all higher education institutions could, with the consent of the Privy Council, now ‘include the word “university” in the name of the institution’.¹⁵



Fig. 25
Kenneth Clarke has been a Conservative MP since 1970 and served as Education Secretary under both Margaret Thatcher and John Major in 1990–92.

6 *Ibid.*, Sect. 15.

7 *Ibid.*, Sect. 17.

8 *Text of a speech by The Rt Hon. Kenneth Clarke QC MP, Secretary of State for Education and Science, at the 108th Conservative Party Conference, Blackpool, 8 October 1991* (London: Conservative Central Office, 8 October 1991).

9 Diana Green, ‘What is Quality in Higher Education? Concepts, Policy and Practice’, in Diana Green, ed., *What is Quality in Higher Education?* (Bucks: SRHE and Open University Press, 1994), 3–20 (p. 6).

10 The equivalent *Further and Higher Education Act (Scotland)* had gone through the Commons but was still at Committee Stage in the House of Lords when the General Election date was announced. It became one of several bills that was passed through during the wash-up, and was given Royal assent on 16 March 1992, the day of the dissolution of Parliament.

11 *Further and Higher Education Act 1992*, C.13, Part II, Sect. 65.1, p. 48.

12 *Ibid.*, Sect. 65.5, p. 49 and Sect. 71, p. 53.

13 *Ibid.*, Sect. 76, pp. 60–1.

14 Adapted from Robinson, p. 35.

15 *Further and Higher Education Act 1992*, C.13, Part II, Sect. 77.1, p. 61.

THE POWER OF A NAME

The polytechnics had long argued that their title had been holding them back as the term 'polytechnic' was commonly misunderstood and perceived to be of lower status than 'university' both at home and abroad. The *1988 Education Reform Act* had emboldened the sector and the campaign for the right to use the name 'university' in their titles had become more determined following its enactment. Professor Terence Burlin, Rector of the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL), was one of those at the forefront of the campaign during the mid-1980s and early 1990s. The University of Westminster Archive holds a series of folders that Burlin created and labelled 'University' in which he filed reports, press cuttings, opinion and correspondence relating to nomenclature as if he were gathering evidence for the polytechnic case.¹⁶ Burlin sought opinions on the possibility of a name change for PCL, writing to politicians and legal experts for their views on the matter.¹⁷ He even wrote to John Major following his victory in the Conservative Party leadership election in November 1990, to congratulate him on becoming Prime Minister, but also to stress that the title 'polytechnic' has no place in the 'classless society' that Major had publicly committed to supporting.¹⁸ Burlin pressed home the point in an article published in the *Times Higher Education Supplement* in which he wrote:

The origins of the binary system are class related. As the Prime Minister has committed the government to work towards a classless society, freeing institutions that are already delivering higher education at the level and with the breadth that is internationally recognised as university education, to choose their own title would be an easy step that would cost nothing.¹⁹

Fig. 26
PCL's Information Technology Centre, opened in 1982, was supported by grants from the Department of Trade and Industry and the British Library.



¹⁶ UWA/PCL/2/6/2.

¹⁷ Correspondence regarding University status and title, 1994, UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2.

¹⁸ Letter to John Major from Terence Burlin, 18 December 1990, *Note for Senior Management Group*, nd, UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2. See also Robin Oakley, 'Major campaign pledge to make Britain a classless society by the year 2000', *The Times*, 24 November 1990.

¹⁹ Letter to the Editor from Terence Burlin, *THES*, 15 March 1991.

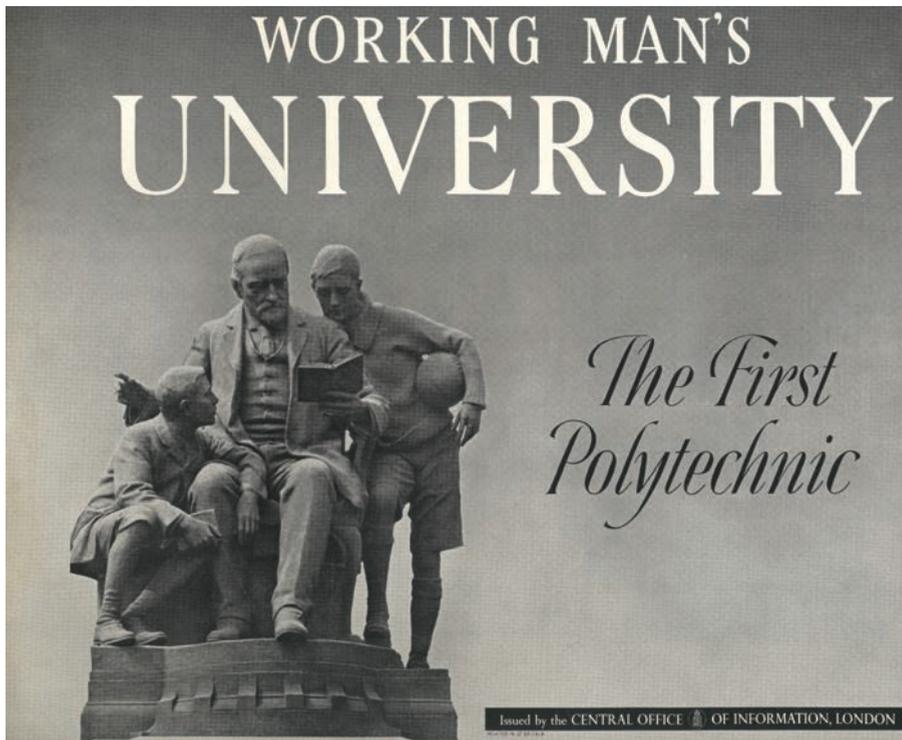


Fig. 27

The Regent Street Polytechnic was the subject of a government publication titled 'The Working Man's University', produced by the Central Office of Information in 1949.

In early 1991, Burlin and several other members of the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics (CDP) met and agreed on the need to 'continue to press for university title' – even if there were differing views on the means of achieving this: at one extreme it was suggested that a number of polytechnics should make a 'pre-emptive strike' by simultaneously announcing that they were going to call themselves universities as their trading name; at the other, the title change was regarded as the inevitable consequence of a merger between the PCFC and the UFC, and therefore they should devote their energies to pressing for these constitutional changes.²⁰

The arguments for and against a name change were debated in the national press, with growing support for the polytechnics' case; for example: 'Why are the polytechnics denied the opportunity to bid for university status and forced to despatch their graduates with a 'second-class' stigma that hampers them for life in the job market?';²¹ and 'British polytechnics are comprehensively and measurably disadvantaged by not having the word "university" in their titles'.²² The dissenting voices were few, even though some did express concern that the focus on the name change was distracting from the real issue of government funding cuts; or, as the Liberal Democrat Education spokesman expressed it: 'changing institutions and arrangements is really no substitute for restoring cuts'.²³ A minority were reluctant to embrace the university title on ideological grounds, including Eric Robinson, recently retired from his post as Director of Lancashire Polytechnic. Robinson wrote in *The Times* of his dismay at the British 'obsession with social status' and stated his continued opposition to acquiring university status because the danger 'was of being

20 *Notes of a meeting held on 15 January 1991 regarding the University Title*. Present: Professor G. Fowler, Sir Raymond Rickett, Professor L. Barden, Mr J. Stoddart, Mr J. Bull, Professor T. Burlin. Confidential, 31 January 1991, JB. UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2.

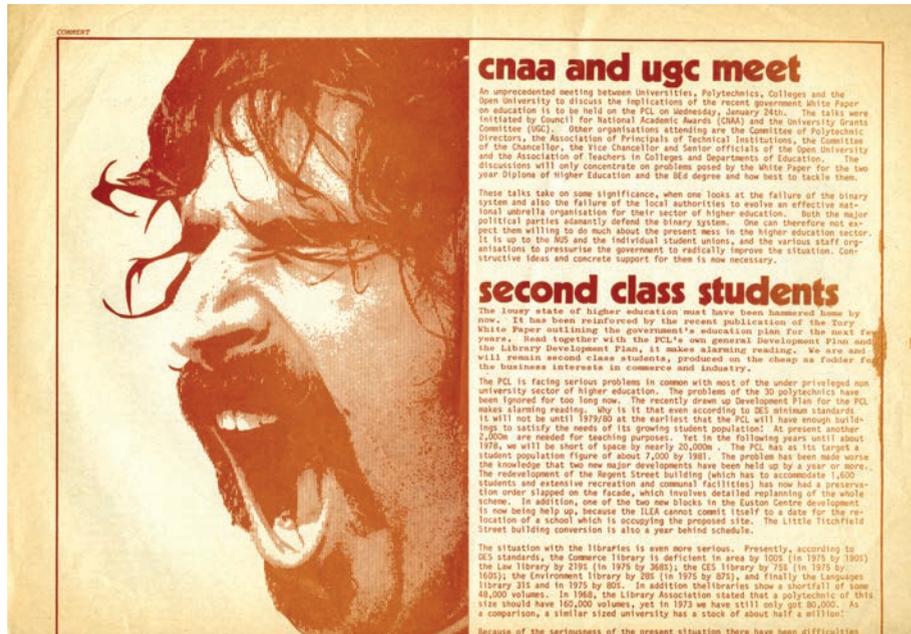
21 Matthew Parris, 'Why Major should be nastier', *Investors Chronicle*, 26 April 1991.

22 Editor, 'What's in a name?', *WHENews* [Worldwide Higher Education News], Higher Education Group, British Council, Issue 3, 3 June 1991.

23 Jim Wallace, cited in John O'Leary and Adam Fresco, 'Mixed reaction at the sharp end', *The Times*, 21 May 1991.

Fig. 28

Nodepaper was one of many student newspapers that proliferated at PCL in the 1970s. It was published by The Marylebone Road Area Group and was typed by Linda and Sue in the Students' Union.



taken over by the existing university establishment and succumbing to the pressure to “go native”.²⁴ He believed that the polytechnics would fulfil their potential as ‘people’s universities’ and surpass the achievements of the traditional universities, not by assuming the university name but by remaining distinctive in both name and mission. This idea of ‘academic drift’ would resurface later as some former polytechnics struggled to find their identity as a new university.

The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the Universities of the UK (CVCP) publicly responded to the White Paper and gave its support to the proposed abolition of the ‘outdated’ distinction between universities and polytechnics, and to the ‘unification of funding, quality control and allowing institutions to use the name “university”’.²⁵ Nonetheless, this powerful lobbying body that represented virtually all UK universities, was also keen to stress that:

The utmost care will need to be taken where a polytechnic is located in the same town, city or region as a university to ensure that its new title is sufficiently distinct from that of any neighbouring university so as not to confuse potential students and employers, at home and abroad.²⁶

Soon rumours began to circulate that the university establishment had been successful in its lobbying and was dictating the rules in the naming game. In early September 1991, the Chair of the CDP wrote to the Secretary of State asking for clarification amid rumours that ‘decisions have already been taken about forms of title, such as “City University”, which would not be acceptable to the government, and about others, such as “Polytechnic University”, which might be’.²⁷ The CDP was equally keen to avoid possible confusion with existing university names, but was adamant that:

24 Eric Robinson, ‘Price to Pay for University Title’, Letter to the Editor, *The Times*, 19 April 1991.

25 CVCP, Press release ‘Response to White Paper’, 31 July 1991. UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2.

26 Ibid.

27 Letter to Kenneth Clarke, Secretary of State for Education and Science, from Chair, CDP, 5 September 1991. UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2.

It would be extremely unfortunate if this were to be used to rule out particular titles or categories of title, or to require institutions to adopt titles such as “Polytechnic University”, which left to themselves I believe hardly anyone would choose. [...] it would be very unfortunate if the positive and intrinsically far more important aspects of the White Paper were to be lost sight of in a prolonged and unproductive wrangle over title.²⁸

Yet a wrangle over title was exactly what some polytechnics were to find themselves in. For the lucky ones, the choice of name was simply a case of replacing the word ‘polytechnic’ with ‘university’, such as in the cases of Bournemouth, Coventry, Kingston or Sunderland. For others, trying to avoid duplication of name with a neighbouring institution was a real problem. Both Oxford Polytechnic and Anglia Polytechnic offered prizes of champagne to anyone who could solve their title dilemmas, resulting from the proximity of existing universities already using their town (University of Oxford) and regional (University of East Anglia) names respectively.²⁹ Even Terence Burlin submitted a suggestion to Dr Clive Booth, Director of Oxford Polytechnic:

I have solved your problem. At the recent European Rectors’ Conference my knowledge of the Turkish language was infinitely improved (from zero to two words). *Bos* means Ox, *phorus* means ford. The future title of Oxford Polytechnic can be the University of Bosphorous – your friends down the hill cannot possibly object to that!³⁰

Oxford Polytechnic, along with Manchester, Sheffield and Liverpool, wanted to retain its city name in its title because it knew that it mattered. A few years earlier, the Polytechnics Central Admissions System (PCAS) had conducted a survey of sixth-formers on the ‘Influence of Institutions’ Names on Perceptions’.³¹ The sixth-formers were asked to name three universities, three polytechnics and three colleges or other higher education institutions. The survey found that the most frequently mentioned institutions were those whose names were based on large provincial towns or cities with the same four cities being the most popular for both universities and polytechnics (Bristol, Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool). In comparison, institutions named after regions were less frequently mentioned compared with those named after lesser-known towns; and the fewest mentions were of those names based on neither a city, town nor region such as Thames Polytechnic or Brunel University.

It was reported that Kenneth Clarke kept his distance from the nomenclature debates, and felt that ‘the difficulties are neither as great nor as important as they have been represented to be’.³² Yet he was also seen to be supportive of the objections raised by the university sector who were accused in some quarters of being ‘overly-sensitive’ on the issue: ‘They wrote to Kenneth Clarke, arguing that the description “city university” would imply that the established universities were less committed to their local communities, while “new university” would suggest that the former polytechnics were more modern and vigorous’.³³

28 Ibid.

29 Editor, ‘Name Game’, *The Times*, 19 August 1991; John O’Leary, ‘Even a title has its problems’, *The Times*, 4 November 1991.

30 Letter to Clive [Clive Booth] from Terry [Terence Burlin], 28 October 1991. UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2.

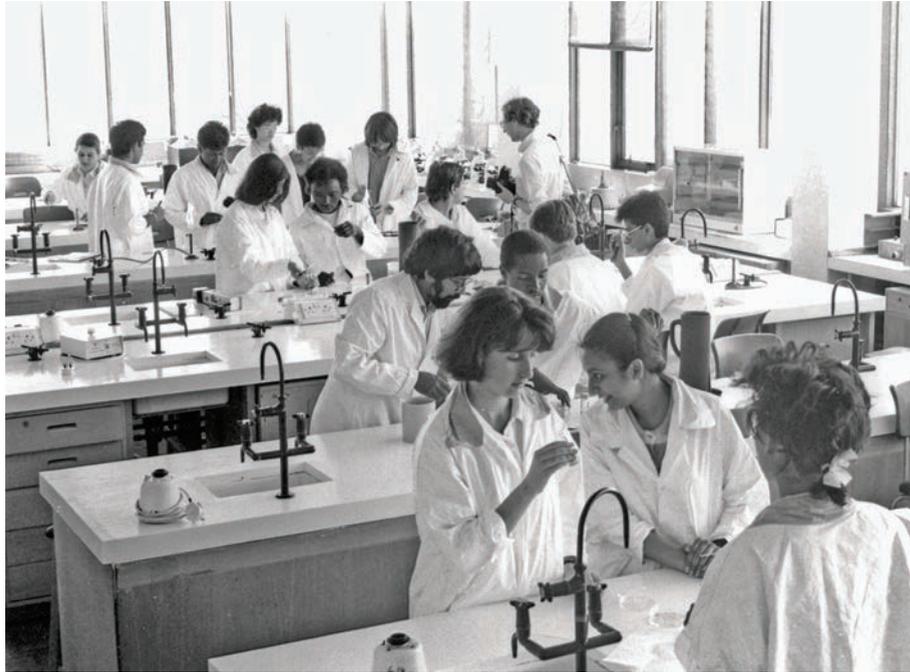
31 Results of a *Survey into Influence of Institutions’ Names on Perceptions*, Letter to the Directors and Principals of Institutions from M.A. Higgins, Chief Executive, PCAS, 20 October 1988. UWA/PCL/2/6/2/4.

32 John O’Leary, ‘By any other name a Polytechnic still needs funds’, *The Times*, 23 September 1991.

33 O’Leary, ‘Even a title has its problems’, *The Times*, 4 November 1991.

Fig. 29

PCL held regular open days for sixth-formers to experience higher education, as the University continues to do today.



The legislation gave the Privy Council sole authority to give consent to the renaming of the former polytechnics. In an effort to clarify the legal process, the Clerk of the Privy Council wrote to all Polytechnic Heads in September 1991 explaining that once the *Further and Higher Education Bill* had had its second reading in the House of Commons, likely to be in November, institutions could apply for a new title.³⁴ The Privy Council explained that the new titles had to conform with principles established in the *Companies Act 1985* and the *Business Names Act 1985*: ‘the name of a new university should not be (a) the same as that of another university; (b) too like that of another university; (c) misleading; or (d) offensive’. All new title proposals would be published in the *London Gazette*, with appropriate time to ‘give an opportunity for individuals or organisations to submit comments’.³⁵ The Privy Council also made it clear that they expected institutions to consult the views of all interested parties and to obtain expressions of support prior to a submission. In early December 1991, the Privy Council again contacted the polytechnics to invite ‘firm proposals from polytechnics wishing to change their name to include the term university’.³⁶

³⁴ Letter to Professor Terence Burlin, Rector PCL, from G.I. de Doney, Clerk of the Privy Council, 20 September 1991. UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Letter to Professor Terence Burlin, Rector PCL, from G.I. de Doney, Clerk of the Privy Council, 5 December 1991. UWA/PCL/2/6/2/17.

THE LONDON CONTEXT

Arguably, the greatest complications over university titles were to be found in London, where there were eight polytechnics that could change their names under the new Act: Polytechnic of Central London, City of London Polytechnic, Polytechnic of East London, Middlesex Polytechnic, Polytechnic of North London, South Bank Polytechnic, Thames Polytechnic and Polytechnic of West London. Before 1992, there were just three HEIs based in the capital

with the name ‘university’ in their titles: City University, Brunel University and the University of London (with its various constituent Schools and Institutes). But between them, these institutions were based on almost forty sites across the capital, and the University of London in particular was keen not to give any ground to the perceived newcomers. In June 1991, Terence Burlin warned the Senior Management Group of PCL that ‘the influence of the University of London was likely to mean that polytechnics would not be permitted to incorporate “London” in their title’.³⁷ Burlin explained further at the Court of Governors’ meeting on 8 July:

In the past the University of London, which has an extremely powerful lobby in government, has insisted that no other university in its vicinity should include the word ‘London’ in its title. Hence when the last polytechnics, then called CATs, became universities, none included the word. Northampton Polytechnic is now City University. Battersea Polytechnic is now Surrey University. Acton Technical College is now Brunel. I assume this lobby would occur again and that this is anticipated in the oblique reference to no duplication.³⁸

In November, *The Times* reported that the University of London had ‘warned’ all the London polytechnics that its name was a registered trademark and asked to be consulted on any proposed new titles.³⁹ Legal action continued to be threatened into mid-1992, with the institution insisting that ‘it would protect its right, established through a trademark, to exclusive use of “University” and “London” in combination’.⁴⁰

In the face of likely opposition to being renamed the ‘University of Central London’, PCL carried out its own market research. In September 1991, PCL commissioned HEIST, a marketing and PR company specialising in the HE sector, to undertake an ‘Empirical Survey on Naming for the Polytechnic of Central London’. Like the previous PCAS survey, lower-sixth-formers and their equivalent in FE colleges were targeted. The students were asked about the relative desirability of twenty-five named HEIs, six of which were possible new names for PCL: Westminster University, University of Westminster, Westminster Polytechnic University, Central London University, Regent Street University and Quintin Hogg University.⁴¹ In the survey, the name ‘Quintin Hogg University’ proved by far the least popular of the six names, achieving twenty-fourth place in the league table of twenty-five names; ‘Regent Street University’ was also of ‘mediocre attractiveness’, placing tenth; and ‘Central London University’ placed sixth. ‘Westminster Polytechnic University’ was given a ‘distinctly low rating’, achieving only eighteenth place in the list. Although ‘Westminster University’ placed fifth, it was the title ‘University of Westminster’ that ‘proved to be an exceptionally attractive name’, being placed in third place from the twenty-five available. The report explained that although the two titles might appear virtually identical, the latter was ‘significantly more attractive’ than the former: 32 per cent of students placed ‘University

37 *Vice-Chancellor’s Senior Management Group Minutes*, 17 June 1991. UWA/UOW/1/VC/2.

38 Terence Burlin, *Paper O: Comments from the Rector*, received by Court of Governors, 8 July 1991. UWA/PCL/1/BG/1/37.

39 O’Leary, ‘Even a title has its problems’, *The Times*, 4 November 1991.

40 John O’Leary, ‘Polytechnic to become University of Westminster’, *The Times*, 15 May 1992.

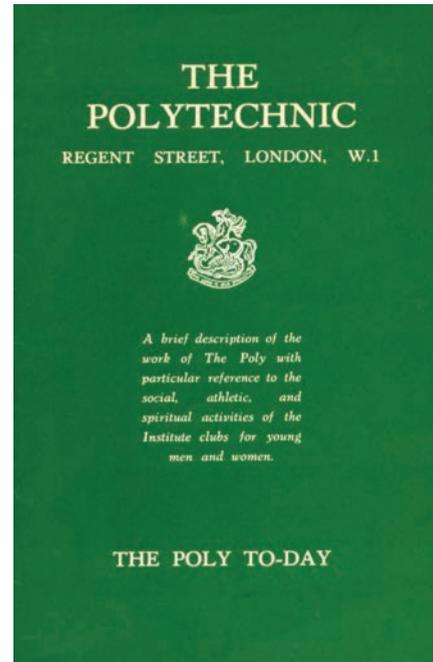
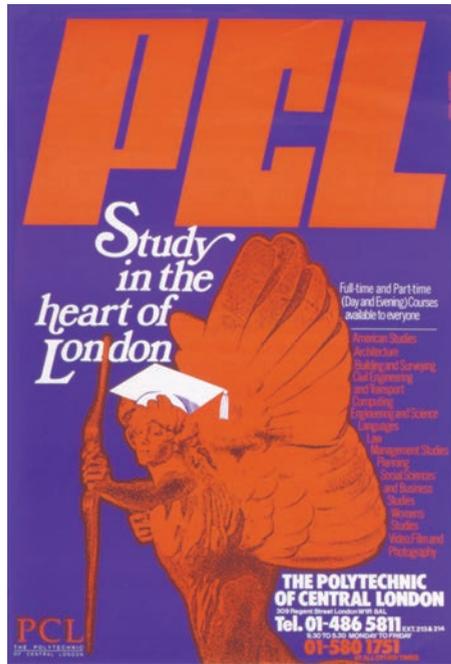
41 *Report of an Empirical Survey on Naming for Polytechnic of Central London*, C.N. Keen, HEIST, 15 October 1991. UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2.

Fig. 30

The institution's central London location has always played a strong role in its identity.

Fig. 31

Although its official name was Regent Street Polytechnic, the institution always referred to itself simply as The Polytechnic.



of Westminster' among their top three choices, compared with 22 per cent for 'Westminster University'. The report concluded that although 'some emotional attachment to "Central London" might tend to sway some staff towards "Central London University", it is definitely inferior from a marketing perspective'. The report recommended the adoption of the title 'University of Westminster', which had proved to be more attractive than the alternatives in every respect of gender, school type, placement among top and bottom choices and study intention.

THE POLYTECHNIC CONTEXT

Even if the issue of the inclusion of 'London' was put to one side, the choice of a new title for PCL was not a straightforward matter. PCL was part of the very firmament of the polytechnic movement in the UK. Tracing back its origins to the Royal Polytechnic Institution established at 309 Regent Street in 1838, it was Quintin Hogg's Polytechnic that had set the model for the other polytechnics that were created in London in 1891. Although the institution had officially been renamed 'Regent Street Polytechnic' at that point to distinguish it from the other polytechnics, its staff and students continued to call it simply 'The Polytechnic, Regent Street', with its headed stationery throughout much of the twentieth century attesting to this acknowledgement of its place in history. Even after 1970, when the institution was renamed Polytechnic of Central London following merger with Holborn College of Law, Languages and Commerce, many continued to refer to it simply as 'The Poly'. Views on the title change were therefore mixed. Many staff were reluctant to replace the name 'polytechnic' with that of 'university'. Former PCL chaplain, Alan Walker,

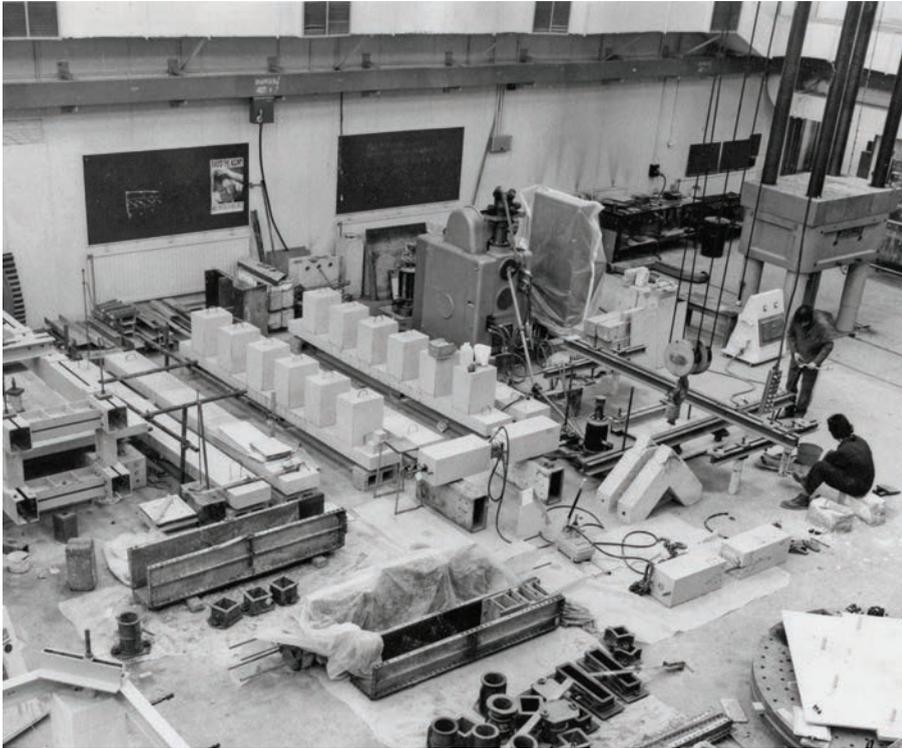


Fig. 32

The Construction Halls at the Marylebone campus were built as testing laboratories for large structures, including Birmingham's Spaghetti Junction and materials for the Channel Tunnel. They were one example of the applied education offered at PCL.

recalled: 'a few of us saw it as not very good, and saw it as a betrayal. [...] especially at this polytechnic because it was the original polytechnic'.⁴² For many others, it was because of what the name polytechnic stood for; Professor Guy Osborn, who studied at PCL before teaching at its Law School, recalled: 'the acting Head of School at the time had been a student and he came to the Polytechnic of Central London precisely because we were a polytechnic and he didn't want to change to a university. [...] it seemed to him to strike at the heart of why he went to a polytechnic in the first place'.⁴³ There is some evidence to suggest that the vocationally oriented origins of the polytechnic also played a role, with some staff based in traditionally more vocational subjects being less positive about the prospects of becoming a university; for example, an Information Technician in the School of Architecture and the Built Environment commented that, 'I would have preferred it staying as a polytechnic. I just found [...] that ethos, you know, being a bit more practical based. The staff had a bit more experience of the real world'.⁴⁴

The Polytechnic was well known and had a strong reputation that some staff were keen not to lose. One member of staff who taught languages at PCL wrote to the Rector against the name change, arguing that:

changing ourselves into a university will merely place us fourth in the league table of universities instead of first in the Polytechnic league table. I was proud to have been recruited by a School at PCL with an excellent reputation in its field, and I believe that many of our students are with us precisely because of the distinctive profile of the PCL languages degree.⁴⁵

42 Interview with Alan Walker, 5 May 2011, UWA/OHP/13.

43 Interview with Guy Osborn, 30 June 2015, UWA/OHP/77.

44 Interview with Eric Mackenzie, 13 September 2011, UWA/OHP/25.

45 Memorandum to the Rector, 26 February 1992.

Fig. 33

The Polytechnic offered its first computing courses in 1956, with a BSc in Applied Computing introduced from 1970.



Even Dr Geoffrey Copland, then Deputy Rector, acknowledged when recalling the events of 1992: 'there were doubts because there was a sense of the polytechnic tradition, particularly this polytechnic, and there were those who felt that we were going to become an also-ran university rather than a rather good poly'.⁴⁶ Due to various factors including the weighting of research, spend per student and staff-student ratios, it was likely that PCL would be positioned lower down a league table that encompassed both universities and polytechnics.

For other staff, the opportunity of becoming a university was enthusiastically welcomed. For Michael Alpert, a former lecturer in languages, it was simple: 'we became the University of Westminster in 1992. This was a marvellous thing'.⁴⁷ Some staff also felt the title change was justly deserved; two professional support staff recalled: 'we were going to get recognition for being the HE institution we were. [...] We were about to come of age and take our place at the table'.⁴⁸ A former lecturer in maths and computing also expressed the sense of accomplishment:

I think the staff felt it was a step up in a way. [...] It was absolutely right that the PCL did become a university because at the time it was way ahead. [...] It pioneered the HND in Computer Studies, it had done a lot of research. It was the first polytechnic to award professorships. [...] So it was the right time for the PCL to become a university. We certainly felt pride in that.⁴⁹

For the majority of staff at PCL, irrespective perhaps of their personal feelings, there was an overwhelming sense of inevitability about the title change. Peter White, who taught transport planning and management, recalled: 'It was going to happen anyway. It was very difficult for any polytechnics to remain with the

⁴⁶ Interview with Geoffrey Copland, 26 May 2011, UWA/OHP/16.

⁴⁷ Interview with Michael Alpert, 12 August 2013, UWA/OHP/52.

⁴⁸ Interview with Dave Haddock, 18 May 2015, UWA/OHP/75.

⁴⁹ Interview with John Turner, 10 January 2013, UWA/OHP/42.

title “polytechnic” after most of the others decided to shift to university title as well as status’.⁵⁰ The former Director of the Scholarships Office also succinctly identified the rationale for change:

A lot of people, probably rightly, felt that the roles of polytechnics and universities had become increasingly blurred. Increasingly the polytechnics were doing more of the things the universities were doing and equally the universities were doing more of the vocational-style things [...] that had been the preserve of the polytechnic. So it was quite difficult to see where one stopped and the other started.⁵¹

PCL’s senior management, led by Rector Terence Burlin, had no doubts that adopting university status and title was the right thing to do. In July 1991 Burlin reminded the Court of Governors that he had ‘campaigning vigorously for everything that is contained [in the White Paper]’; stating that ‘It has always been my belief that such a change would be to the great benefit of our students’.⁵² Furthermore, Burlin had long-considered ‘University of Westminster’ to be an appropriate title. Back in September 1989 he was quoted in a piece in *The Guardian*, saying that ‘PCL has toyed with the idea of adopting the title “University of Westminster”’, although he added that, ‘the eventual title is unimportant, what matters is that we should be allowed to call ourselves what we want’.⁵³ In June 1991, when the dream of a new title looked like it would become a reality, Burlin reminded his senior management team that ‘The University of Westminster had been mooted [and] would probably retain the advantage of universal recognition’.⁵⁴ But he also agreed that ‘given the impact on marketing [...] any change of title should be preceded by market research’, with the HEIST survey commissioned to this end. Burlin’s rationale behind his choice of title was simple:

When I have been challenged in [the] debate on title I have said that I see no objection to the name of our historical location. London grew from two cities: the Roman one-square mile city and the Saxon/Norman minster in the West. As we have no intention to relocate or change our historic mission ‘Westminster’ has appeared to me worthy of serious consideration.⁵⁵

The HEIST survey was discussed at a meeting of the Court of Governors on 14 October 1991. The Court agreed that the title ‘University of Westminster’ should be carried forward for formal consultation and that a final decision regarding title would be made by them in early December. They established a Sub-Committee on University Status that included representatives for Deans and non-academic staff as well as the President of the Students’ Union.⁵⁶ There then followed a period of consultation with staff, students and external interested parties on the proposed choice of title. Staff were kept up to date through *Stop Press* – the regular information update from the Court of Governors – which was published on 31 October 1991 with the headline: ‘Institutional name

50 Interview with Peter White, 8 January 2013, UWA/OHP/41.

51 Interview with Colin Matheson, 20 June 2012, UWA/OHP/43.

52 *Court of Governors Minutes*, 8 July 1991, UWA/PCL/1/BG/1/37.

53 David Gow, ‘Polytechnics call for parity with universities’, *The Guardian*, 12 September 1989.

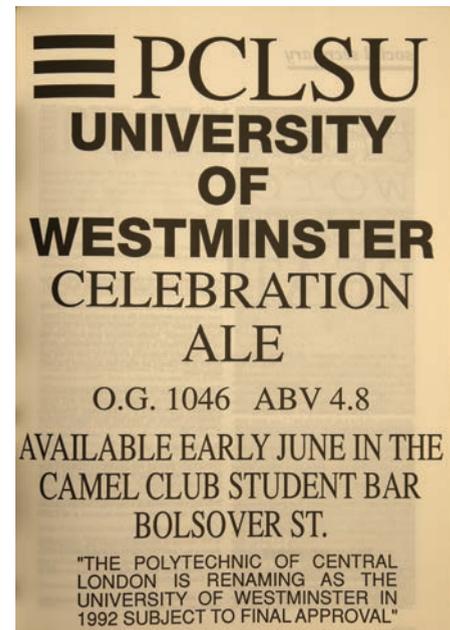
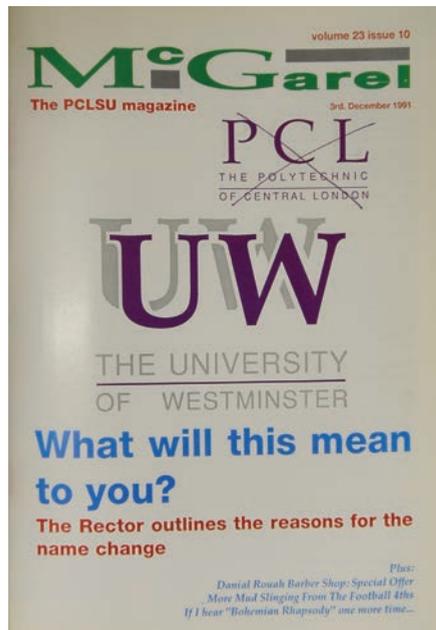
54 *Vice-Chancellor’s Senior Management Group Minutes*, 27 June 1991, UWA/UOW/1/VC/2.

55 Terence Burlin, *Paper O: Comments from the Rector*, received by Court of Governors, 8 July 1991, UWA/PCL/1/BG/1/37.

56 The full membership of the Sub-Committee on University Status was: Sir Cyril Pitts (chair), Margaret Charrington, Brian Clark, Graham Godwin, David Avery, Michael Romans, Terence Burlin, Keith Richards, Addnan Muhamed and Carol Homden (secretary). *Sub-Committee on University Status Minutes*, 24 October 1991, UWA/PCL/1/BG/5.

Figs. 34, 35

The PCL Students' Union reported on the name change in December 1991, and offered a limited edition beer in its honour.



change: The University of Westminster?'.⁵⁷ The internal newsletter set out the case for change of status and change of name, summarising the results of the HEIST survey and inviting written comments from staff on the proposal.⁵⁸

So what did PCL students think about the proposed title change? The Students' Union publication, *McGarel*, devoted a double-page spread to the issue in December 1991, with the SU President, Addnan Muhamed, stating that 'in terms of career opportunities, I have always argued that the change to university status would be of great benefit to PCL students'.⁵⁹ Muhamed also highlighted the advantages of having a town or city name in the title, possible controversies over inclusion of the word 'London' and the potential confusion with PCL's neighbouring institutions. Muhamed endorsed the choice of 'University of Westminster', concluding that: 'I believe this is by far the best option, being highly distinctive from other local institutions'.⁶⁰ The views of the rest of the student body are more difficult to gauge, although the distinct lack of evidence of any serious debate or protest might suggest either tacit agreement or a lack of interest. One former Architecture student did write to Terence Burlin to express his concern that 'PCL is trying to distance itself from the Polytechnic name', although he also added that he hoped that his Certificate, obtained in the 1970s, will be better recognised under the auspices of the University of Westminster.⁶¹ Several alumni, who left PCL just as it became the University of Westminster, expressed a general sense that it wasn't very important to them when they recalled the event; for example, one commented that: 'I wasn't very bothered about the whole university or polytechnic thing'.⁶² However, one former student did admit that 'I certainly felt a bit cheated in that I'd been at a polytechnic that had an established name and I've suddenly got a certificate that no-one's going to know where this place is'.⁶³ New and continuing students did appear to positively embrace the change, with the Academic Council reporting

57 *Stop Press – Information Update from the Court of Governors*, 31 October 1991, UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2.

58 In the documentation submitted to the Privy Council in support of the proposed new title, Burlin explained that 'only a small number of written responses' were received; all were in favour apart from four, which 'were expressions of affection for the words "The Polytechnic" and their place in the institution's history rather than objections for the proposed title', UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2.

59 *McGarel*, Vol. 23, No. 10, December 1991.

60 *Ibid.*

61 Letter to Terence Burlin, 27 December 1991, UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2.

62 Interview with Jim Dunton, 9 April 2013, UWA/OHP/49.

63 Interview with David Bench, 23 October 2012, UWA/OHP/39.

that: ‘the change of status had apparently led to a higher take up of PCAS offers, which had resulted in recruitment over target in full-time and sandwich students’.⁶⁴ In May 1992, *McGarel* excitedly proclaimed ‘It’s happened! PCL is no more!’ and the following month’s issue included examples of the new logo designs, together with a full-page advertisement for ‘University of Westminster Celebration Ale’, available at the Student Bar in Bolsover Street.⁶⁵

As part of the process in seeking approval for the new title, PCL also sought the views of neighbouring institutions and local interested parties including all the London Borough Councils. Copies of the replies can be found in the University’s Archive. All but one raised no objections, with many expressing a positive reaction to the choice, for example the Chair of the City of Westminster Council wrote that ‘I welcome the move to university status and the prospect of there being a University of Westminster within our City’.⁶⁶ The only negative response was received from Wandsworth Council who were concerned at possible confusion with Westminster College, an FE college in its borough.⁶⁷

On 9 December 1991, PCL’s Court of Governors agreed that PCL should make a submission to the Privy Council to change its name to ‘University of Westminster’. The formal submission was made on 16 December 1991. In March 1992, PCL was ‘disappointed’ when it learnt that ‘its application to change its title was not handled in the first batch’.⁶⁸ The Privy Council had given provisional approval to fourteen institutions, but PCL’s submission, along with four others, was not yet at that stage. PCL speculated that another institution may have commented on the title, but the Privy Council had advised them that no further action was needed.⁶⁹ On 8 May, the *London Gazette* published a list of twenty-nine polytechnics and their proposed name changes; PCL was included. A few days later, Burlin was given informal notification that the Privy Council ‘expects to give formal consent [...] to the name University of Westminster’.⁷⁰ In anticipation of the official name change, which was likely to take place in June, the institution was allowed to begin using their new title in the interim. PCL proudly proclaimed the news to staff and students, and issued several press releases: ‘Harrow gains University’; ‘Westminster gains University’; and ‘Brent gains local University’.⁷¹ Finally, on 16 June 1992, PCL received official notification of its title change:

I write to say that the Privy Council, in exercise of powers conferred by Section 7 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, has been pleased to consent to the adoption of the name The University of Westminster by the Polytechnic. Very best wishes for a highly successful future.⁷²

PCL had based its choice of a new name on several different factors; some were negative, for example, the likely opposition from the University of London to the inclusion of the word ‘London’, as well as concerns over possible confusion with neighbouring institutions. But ultimately the choice of ‘University of Westminster’ was overwhelmingly based on the positive attributes of

⁶⁴ *Academic Council Minutes*, 18 November 1992. Reported to Court on 30 November 1992, UWA/UOW/1/BG/1/2.

⁶⁵ *McGarel*, Vol. 23, No. 26, 19 May 1991; *McGarel*, Vol. 23, No. 27, 1 June 1992.

⁶⁶ Letter to Terence Burlin from G. Ellis, 19 November 1991, *University Sub Committee – Status Letters to London Institutions and Bodies*, 1991, UWA/PCL/2/6/2/8.

⁶⁷ Letter to Terence Burlin from Sandi Hallam-Jones, on behalf of the Chief Executive and Director of Administration, Wandsworth Council, 6 December 1991, UWA/PCL/2/6/2/8. The college merged with Kingsway College in 2000 to become Westminster Kingsway College.

⁶⁸ *Stop Press*, 31 March 1992.

⁶⁹ *Court of Governors Minutes*, 30 March 1992, UWA/PCL/1/BG/1/40.

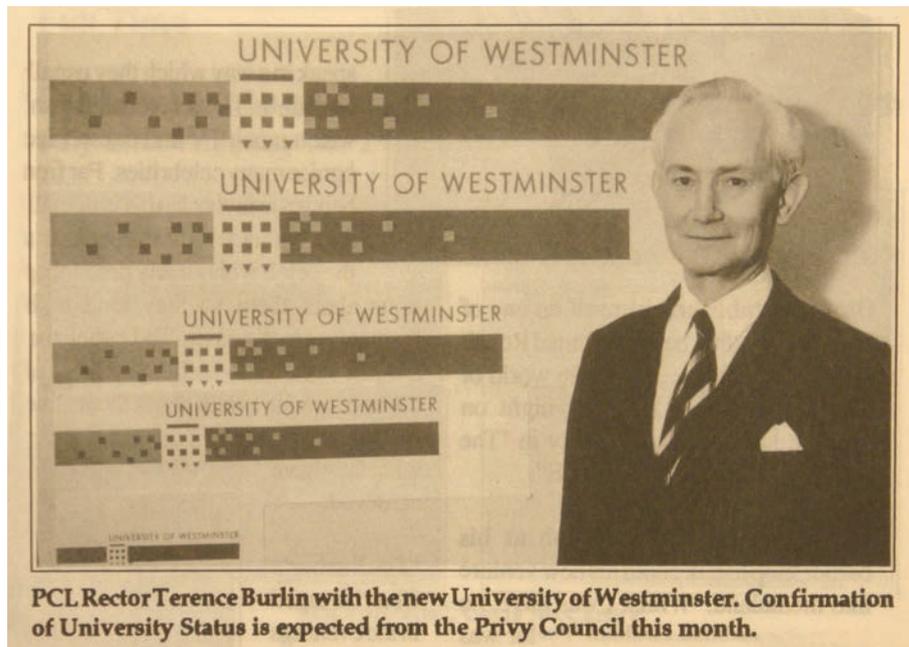
⁷⁰ Letter to Professor Terence Burlin, Rector PCL, from G.I. de Doney, Clerk of the Privy Council, 11 May 1992, *File of correspondence with the Privy Council*, 1991–1992, UWA/PCL/2/6/2/17.

⁷¹ PCL Press Releases, 12 and 13 May 1992, UWA/PCL/2/6/2/10.

⁷² Letter to Professor Terence Burlin, Rector PCL, from G.I. de Doney, Clerk of the Privy Council, 16 June 1992, UWA/PCL/2/6/2/17.

Fig. 36

The University of Westminster's first logo featured a portcullis design and small squares to illustrate the idea of students entering and successfully graduating the institution.



the uniqueness of the name, its attestation to PCL's prime location in the City of Westminster and the universal recognisability of the name both at home and abroad. As one staff member put it 'a lot of people said to me, "You've got the best name, you know, Westminster, that's the best one". Everyone else was scrabbling around with names but we sounded like an old university'.⁷³

Some of the other London-based polytechnics also chose to err on the side of caution: Middlesex Polytechnic and South Bank Polytechnic simply exchanged the word 'polytechnic' with 'university', becoming Middlesex University and South Bank University respectively; Thames Polytechnic opted for University of Greenwich and the Polytechnic of West London chose Thames Valley University. After all the threats of legal action, it seems that the influence of the University of London did not actually extend as far as preventing the use of 'London' and 'University' in combination in a title as the new titles of University of East London and University of North London were approved by the Privy Council in June 1992.⁷⁴ In the end, only the City of London Polytechnic was refused its first choice of name: 'City of London University', due to the very likely chance of confusion with the existing City University based in the London Borough of Islington. The City of London Polytechnic became the last English polytechnic to officially change its name, to London Guildhall University, in December 1992.⁷⁵

Elsewhere in the UK, although the word 'city' had been rejected by the Privy Council, Manchester and Leeds Polytechnics were allowed to change their names to Manchester Metropolitan University and Leeds Metropolitan University. Sheffield City Polytechnic also reinforced its local ties by incorporating the historical name 'Hallam' for the area of South Yorkshire that dated from the Domesday Book in its new title, becoming Sheffield Hallam

⁷³ Interview with Guy Osborn, 30 June 2013, UWA/OHP/77.

⁷⁴ However, it was to be another ten years before a university added the name 'London' to its title: in 2002, North London and London Guildhall Universities merged to become London Metropolitan University. The following year, South Bank also changed its official name to London South Bank University.

⁷⁵ See Appendix 2 for a list of all new universities created under the 1992 Act.

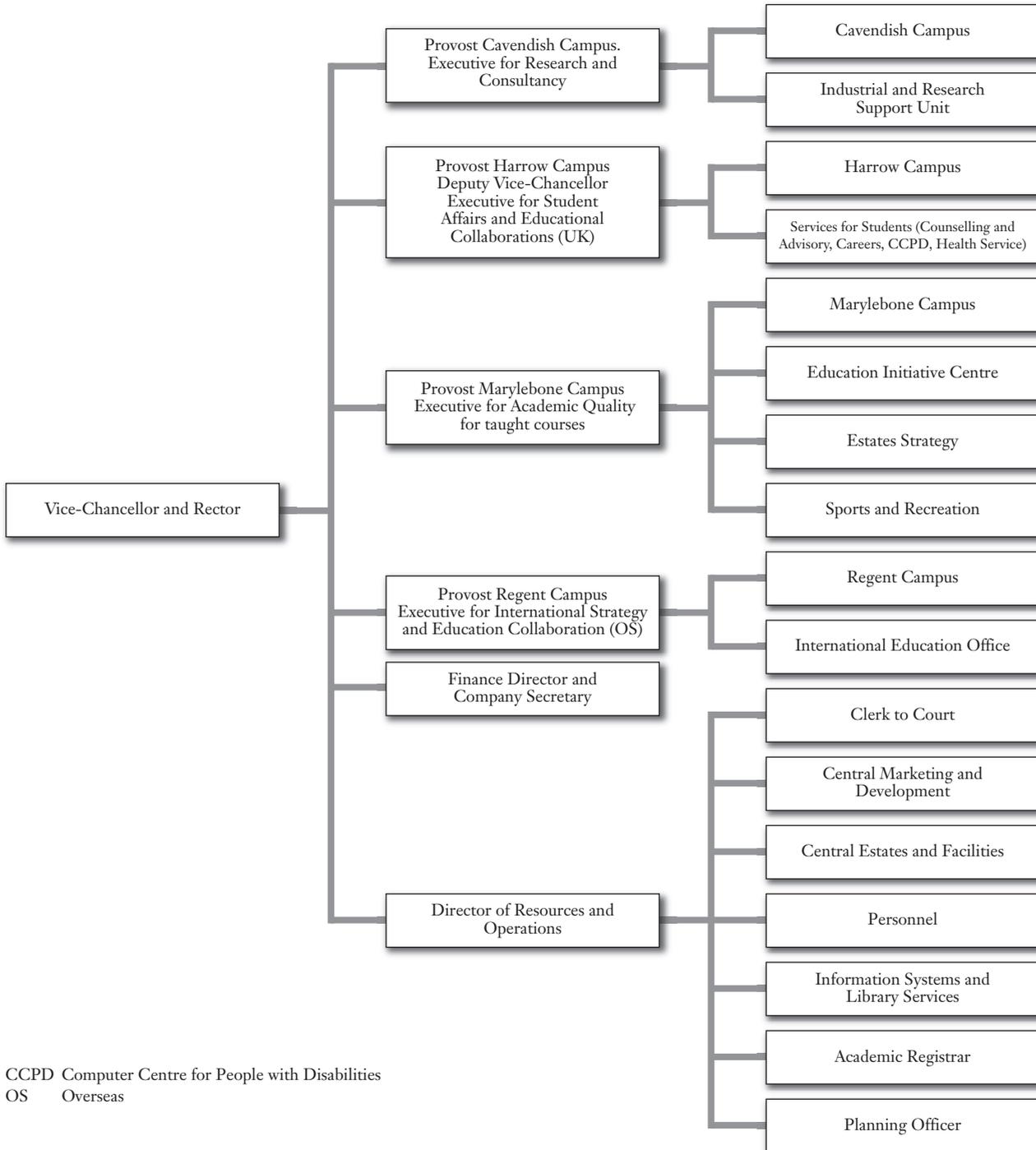
University. Liverpool Polytechnic rejected several name options, including 'University of Merseyside', before becoming the first to choose a title based on an individual's name. In June 1992, it officially became Liverpool John Moores University, named after Sir John Moores, founder of the Littlewoods football pools organisation and a benefactor of many projects in the city who was known for his belief in equality of opportunity.⁷⁶ Other institutions followed Liverpool's lead: Leicester Polytechnic became De Montfort University (named after Simon de Montfort (c.1208–1265), Earl of Leicester and rebel against Henry III) and Oxford Polytechnic became Oxford Brookes University (named after its former Principal, John Henry Brookes (1891–1975)).⁷⁷ Anglia Polytechnic was the only former polytechnic that chose to retain the word 'polytechnic' in its title. It became Anglia Polytechnic University in June 1992, but was to change its title again in 2005 to Anglia Ruskin University (named after art critic John Ruskin (1819–1900) who gave the inaugural address at its predecessor institution, Cambridge School of Art).

The university name game had occupied the thoughts of the polytechnics, the universities, the government and the national press for over a year from May 1991. It had certainly focused debates on the aims and purposes of higher education but, arguably, had also obscured the wider issues of funding as government policy began to make a distinct separation between teaching and research. As the newly enlarged university sector moved towards the end of the twentieth century, the former polytechnics had to establish their new identities as universities, and all institutions had to reposition themselves amid increasing competition and decreasing public resources.

⁷⁶ John O'Leary, 'University to take pools man's name', *The Times*, 6 November 1992.

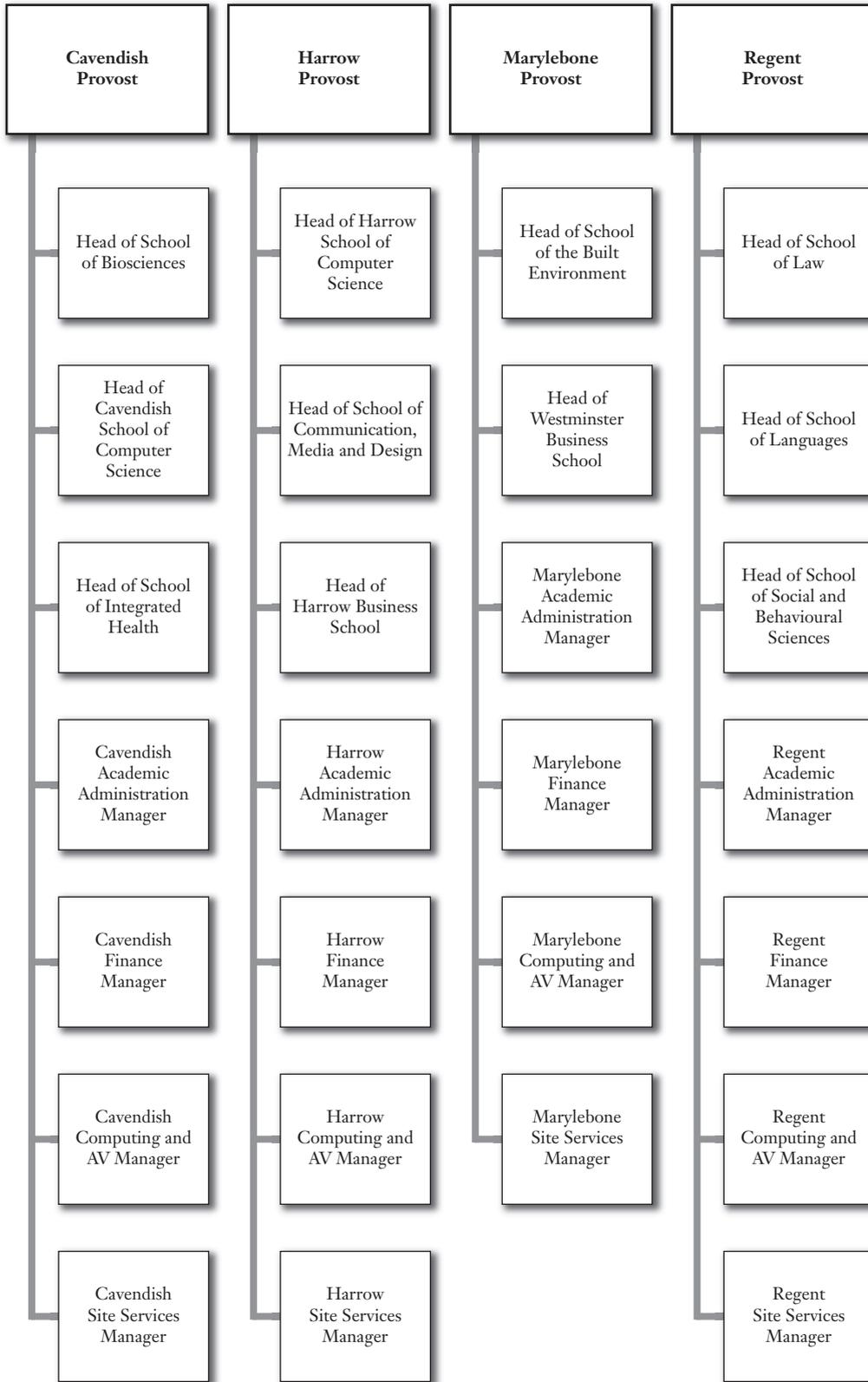
⁷⁷ Matthew D'Ancona, 'Pools tycoon and baron join polytechnic roll call', *The Times*, 17 March 1992.

University of Westminster Management Structure 1998



CCPD Computer Centre for People with Disabilities
OS Overseas

University of Westminster Campus Structure 1998



The University of Westminster: Legal and Brand Identity

LEGAL STATUS AND GOVERNANCE

The legislation of 1992 necessitated changes to the governing instrument of the Polytechnic of Central London so that it could legally become the University of Westminster. The new identity of the institution needed to be established in law, and it also needed to be formed in the way the new university branded and marketed itself – to both internal and external audiences. The University of Westminster is a Company Limited by Guarantee and an exempt Charity. Its status as a university is defined by the *1988 Education Reform Act*, with amendments of the *1992 Further and Higher Education Act*. Unlike most older universities, whose legal status is based on a Royal Charter and Statutes, the majority of the post-1992 universities are limited companies.¹ The University of Westminster’s legal history is typical of many former polytechnics: the institution was originally established through private and charitable donations; from 1891 its constitution was regulated by a *Scheme of Administration* overseen by the Charity Commission.² The merger of Regent Street Polytechnic with Holborn College of Law, Languages and Commerce established the Polytechnic of Central London, which was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee, on 22 April 1970.³ Under British law, a company is a legal entity that has a separate identity from those who own or run it, and this particular type of company is used primarily for non-profit organisations. There is no share capital or shareholders; instead, the company’s members act as guarantors with a limited liability of £1 contribution to the company’s assets if it is wound up.⁴ Every company must have a Memorandum of Association that confirms the intentions and purpose of the company, together with Articles of Government that detail the legally binding rules and regulations of the conduct of the company. Higher education corporations also have charitable status; under the 2001 and 2006 Charities Acts they were designated as exempt charities, which means that they do not have to be registered with the Charity Commission but are instead regulated by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). The University of Westminster, like many of its former polytechnic counterparts, is, therefore, subject to regulation under

1 A few institutions in the non-university HE sector previously existed under Trust deeds; for example, Harper Adams Agricultural College, which changed its legal status to become a company limited by guarantee, renamed Harper Adams University, in August 2012.

2 See Michael Heller, ‘The Institute and the Polytechnic’, in Elaine Penn, ed., *Educating Mind, Body and Spirit: the Legacy of Quintin Hogg and the Polytechnic, 1864–1992* (Cambridge: Granta Editions, 2015), pp. 45–77, for more details.

3 See *Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Polytechnic of Central London, Incorporated the 22nd day of April 1970, Certificate No. 97718*. UWA/PCL/2/1/a/3.

4 Companies House, *Incorporation and Names, Companies Act 2006*, GPI July 2016 v6.1.



Fig. 37

Red Lion Square had previously housed Holborn College of Law, Languages and Commerce, and was used by the University until 1997.

both Charity and Company Law. In practice, the variety of instruments of governance between newer and older universities makes little difference, as both types of higher education institution are charities regulated and funded by HEFCE and both require Privy Council consent for any amendments to their Articles or Statutes.

PCL's *Memorandum and Articles of Association* were significantly revised following the *1988 Education Reform Act*; the changes made reflected the broader objectives of the Act to make the higher education sector more accountable and efficient and to improve links with industry and commerce in order to promote enterprise and serve the economy more effectively.⁵ The major revision was to the number and composition of the Court of Governors (the members of the company under law). The Governors are responsible for the management of the institution, ensuring that it operates in accordance with its objectives and in a lawful manner. In 1970, PCL's governing instrument allowed for fifty or more Governors to be registered. In practice, the usual number in post was thirty-four, comprising three *ex officio* members (Director, Deputy Director and Students' Union President) and fifteen members nominated in a series of categories (five nominated by ILEA, one nominated by the Regional Advisory Council on Technical Education, four nominated by PCL's Academic Council, two academic staff nominated by and from PCL's teaching staff, one nominated by the University of London, one student nominated by and from PCL's student body and one member co-opted by the Court). The remaining sixteen members of Court were independent Governors, 'being persons who have knowledge and experience of industry or commerce or a profession, of whom at least two shall be Trade Unionists of standing and experience after consultation with the T.U.C.'⁶ The sixteen independent members made up

⁵ See DES White Paper, *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge*, Cm. 114 (London: HMSO, April 1987). See also Chapter 2.

⁶ *Articles of Association of the Polytechnic of Central London*, 22 April 1970, Section 6 (3) (c), p. 13. UWA/PCL/2/1/a/3.

Fig. 38

The official opening of the New Cavendish and Marylebone buildings took place on 21 May 1971, along with the formal designation ceremony of PCL. Among the attendees was Baron Hailsbam of Marylebone, grandson of Quintin Hogg.



less than half the total membership of the Court of Governors. They could not be staff or full-time students, were elected for a period of three years, and were eligible for re-election. The same terms of office applied to all the other Governors, with the exception of the ILEA-nominated members and the *ex officio* members who could serve until retirement from their qualifying role.

Following the 1988 *Education Reform Act*, PCL revised its *Articles*, reducing the total number of Governors to twenty-three (with a maximum of twenty-five permitted) and shifting the balance in favour of independent Governors who numbered twelve, more than half the recommended composition of the Court.⁷ As before, the independent members were required to 'have experience of, or shown capacity in, industrial, commercial or employment matters or the practice of any profession' but the need for Trade Unionists had been removed.⁸ The nominated members also represented a wider community; in addition to the *ex officio* posts of Rector and Deputy Rector there were a further eight nominated members: one nominated by the City of Westminster, one nominated by any local authority selected by the governors, one teacher nominated by and from PCL's teaching staff, one nominated by PCL's Academic Council, one member of general staff nominated by and from PCL's non-teaching staff, one student nominated by and from PCL's student body, and two further co-opted members, neither of whom could be staff or a full-time student at the institution – one with experience in the provision of education and one who did not necessarily have such experience. ILEA was now defunct, so its representatives had been replaced by a representative of the Council in which most of PCL's operations were based. The ability to choose the other local authority representative allowed flexibility; for example, enabling PCL to nominate a representative from Harrow Borough Council during the period

⁷ *Articles of Association of the Polytechnic of Central London*, 13 March 1989.

UWA/PCL/2/1/a/6.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Section 2.1 (a).



Fig. 39

The Polytechnic Students' Union was officially created on 25 March 1965.

of the merger with Harrow College of Higher Education. The numbers of PCL staff in academic roles had also been reduced and balanced with a representative of non-teaching staff at the institution. Although the student representation had officially been reduced from two members to one, there was flexibility to appoint a part-time student to the co-opted member's post who did not need to have experience in the provision of education. All members were elected on a three-year term basis, or until the individual was no longer eligible if shorter, and all eligible members could be reappointed.

The PCL *Articles of Association* that were enacted following the 1988 legislation also included several sections that had not appeared in the original 1970 *Articles*, specifically detailing the responsibilities of the Court, the Rector, and the Academic Council, and stating that the Students' Union 'shall conduct and manage its own affairs and funds in accordance with a constitution approved by the Court'.⁹ The revised governing instrument aimed to make PCL's senior management more streamlined and accountable. Consequently, the changes required following the 1992 *Further and Higher Education Act* were rather minor in comparison. The new University of Westminster retained its original, rather lengthy, *Memorandum*, with minimal updating to reflect the new legislation. The name of the company was changed from The Polytechnic of Central London by a Special Resolution passed on 30 March 1993 with the consent of the Privy Council given on 16 June 1992. The *Memorandum* also stated the five objects for which the University is established:

- (A) To establish, carry on and conduct a university.
- (B) To advance learning and knowledge in all their aspects and to provide industrial, commercial, professional and scientific education and training.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Sections 3.1, 11.1, 9.1 and 16.1 respectively. Although it was not until after changes to charity law in 2006 that most Students' Unions registered as separate charities, efforts to improve their regulation and management were already coming into force.



Fig. 40
Students' recreational, spiritual and social needs are catered for through the Students' Union's clubs and societies.

- (C) To provide courses of education or technical study both full time and part time for students at all levels of and in all branches of education.
- (D) To provide opportunities and facilities for research of any kind including the publication of results, papers, reports, treatises, theses or other material in connection with or arising out of such research.
- (E) To provide for the recreational, social and spiritual needs of the students of the university.¹⁰

¹⁰ *Memorandum and Articles of Association of the University of Westminster*, 25 May 1994, UWA/UOW/2/1/a/1.

¹¹ In 2017, further minor revisions were made to the University's objectives, inserting in (C) the words 'to provide opportunities for learning', thus widening the definition of education yet further. In (D), the word 'spiritual' has also been replaced by 'welfare', to reflect a more modern expression of the needs of 21st-century students.

¹² *Ibid.*, *Instrument and Articles of Government of the University of Westminster*, 25 May 1994.

These objects have remained the same for the institution since 1970 (and, arguably, even earlier) to the present day. Only minor changes have been made over time: to the nomenclature ('university' replacing 'polytechnic') and the removal of the phrase 'higher or technical' appearing before education in (C) above. The exact reason for this change in 1994 is unclear, although the elimination of the qualifier does allow for greater flexibility in the breadth of education provision.¹¹

As regards the University's *Articles of Association*, the changes made post-1992 were also of minor impact on the composition of the Court of Governors, whose numbers were reduced to a maximum of twenty-three, including a maximum of two teachers at the University nominated by the Academic Council, and two students nominated by and from the University's student body.¹² There are permitted to be a maximum of thirteen independent members 'persons appearing to the appointing authority to have experience of, and to have

shown capacity in, industrial, commercial or employment matters or the practice of any profession';¹³ together with at least one, but not more than nine, co-opted members appointed by the non-co-opted members of the Court. The co-opted members can be staff or full-time students at the University or elected members of any authority, and have to have experience in the provision of education. All periods of appointment are determined by the governors, provided the members remain eligible within their membership category. Importantly, the Court is permitted to fix the numbers of members in each category in order to 'secure that at least half the members of the Court of Governors [...] will be independent members'.¹⁴ These provisions remained unchanged in several later revisions to the government instrument, up to and including 2010.¹⁵

In 2017, the University submitted a substantially revised *Articles of Association Incorporating Instrument and Articles of Government* for Privy Council approval. The revised document brings together previously separate *Memorandum* and *Articles* into a single, modern governing instrument. The new 'lighter touch' *Articles of Association* are supported by Standing Orders which set out detailed procedures and processes required to implement the responsibilities incorporated in the governing instrument, thereby shifting the onus of responsibility onto the Court of Governors and giving them greater flexibility and control in managing the University's business. The revised *Articles* were approved by Court on 24 May 2017 and include changes to the composition of the Court by increasing the number of independent members to nineteen and reducing the number of co-opted members to four, in a further effort to increase the role of independent specialists.¹⁶

In 1988, the polytechnics were given Model Articles of Government for Higher Education Corporations on which to base their own governing instruments.¹⁷ PCL largely followed the Model Articles, as did most institutions. PCL did, however, choose to retain its use of internal titles which were not commonly used elsewhere: hence PCL has 'Court of Governors' rather than a 'Board of Governors', and an 'Academic Council' rather than an 'Academic Board'.¹⁸ These designations continue at the University of Westminster. The head of the institution had traditionally been titled 'Rector'. This title also remained unchanged until July 1996, when the University's Academic Council and Court approved a title change to 'Vice-Chancellor and Rector', 'bringing the University in line with other UK institutions while retaining its historic and legal title'.¹⁹

The changes made to the University of Westminster's *Memorandum and Articles of Association* post-1992 can be viewed as a minor incremental step compared with the considerable revisions that had already taken place in 1989. The University of Westminster was already well placed to adapt to the priorities of the government's higher education policy: it had already streamlined its senior management in line with efficiency targets, and the role of specialists in business and the professions on the Court of Governors had been long established at PCL due to its historic links with industry.

13 Ibid., Section 2.3.

14 Ibid., Section 2.8.

15 *Memorandum and Articles of Association of the University of Westminster*; October 2010.

16 The *Articles of Association of the University of Westminster Incorporating Instrument and Articles of Government* [2017] are currently awaiting formal approval from the Privy Council.

17 Annex C attached to letter to Polytechnics from the DES, 12 July 1988. *Documentation relating to Memorandum and Articles of Association of the PCL, 1971–1988*. UWA/PCL/2/1/b/3.

18 One other former polytechnic, now the University of Greenwich, adopted the same designations as the University of Westminster. Only Bournemouth University and the University of Huddersfield adopted the traditional university designations of University Council and Senate.

19 *Academic Council Minutes*, 12 June 1996. The change was endorsed at a meeting of the Court of Governors on 1 July 1996. UWA/UOW/1/BG/1/18. Since the start of the 2015/16 academic year the Vice-Chancellor has been formally known as 'Vice-Chancellor and President'. The addition of 'President' reflects 'the focus on our international presence [...] and is a title often used in the US and overseas'. *Senior role and structure review outcomes*, 19 March 2015 [all UOW staff email].

Fig. 41

The institution's degree ceremonies were held at the Barbican Centre from 1988 to 2010; the first one as a University was held in November 1992.



CHARITABLE STATUS

As previously noted, in addition to being a limited company, the University of Westminster is also an exempt charity. The University must therefore adhere to rules and regulations set by HEFCE as its principal regulator.²⁰ The University of Westminster has a *Memorandum of Association and Accountability* with HEFCE and must submit annual, externally audited, accounts to HEFCE (as well as to Companies House). The institution must also meet quality assessment requirements, provide information on its students and performance to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), its students participate in the National Students Survey (NSS) and it must ensure that student complaints can be reviewed independently by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. In return, the University is designated by statutory instrument as eligible to be grant-funded by HEFCE, it can award both taught and research degrees and its students can apply for student support funding.²¹

The University's charitable status is based on its objectives and activities for the advancement of education for the public benefit. Following the *2006 Charities Act*, the previous presumption of public benefit through the advancement of education as a universal good was superseded by a specific requirement

²⁰ All but twenty HEIs are regulated by HEFCE. The remaining HEIs are registered charities, regulated directly by the Charity Commission.

²¹ See www.hefce.ac.uk for details.

for all charities to demonstrate that their aims are for the public benefit.²² There are two basic principles: there must be an identifiable benefit that is clear, related to the aims of the charity and is balanced against any detriment or harm; and the benefit must be to the public, or a section of the public whereby the beneficiaries are appropriate to the charity's aims, no section of the public should be unreasonably restricted by geography or other restrictions, people in poverty must not be excluded from the opportunity to benefit and any private benefits must be incidental.²³ Charity law gives a wide interpretation to the meaning of education, which does not simply mean formal teaching. To advance education means 'to promote, sustain and increase individual and collective knowledge and understanding of specific areas of study, skills and expertise'; and the benefit to the public 'should be capable of being recognised, identified, defined or described, but [not necessarily]... capable of being quantified or measured'.²⁴ The beneficiaries of educational establishments are usually the students who have the opportunity to attend them. Universities must provide a full explanation in their Trustees' *Annual Report* of the significant activities undertaken by the charity to fulfil their public benefit aims. These Reports are also published by the institutions and HEFCE as part of the public benefit reporting requirements.²⁵

As a charity, the University receives certain benefits, including tangible benefits such as tax relief and gift aid status, as well as access to certain sources of grant funding; and intangible benefits such as public recognition and trust. The University is permitted to make a surplus through charges for its services or through trading activities, but it must be 'not-for-profit'; any surplus must be reinvested in the organisation. The University of Westminster, like other universities, has a commercial subsidiary company that undertakes commercial activities that fall outside its charitable status, including vacation letting or halls, commercial room hire, exploitation of intellectual property and consultancy. The profits are declared on the University's financial statements and are covenanted to the institution under the Gift Aid scheme.

THE TRUSTS

The University of Westminster is the beneficiary of two Trusts that have been connected with the institution for over 150 years: The Quintin Hogg Trust²⁶ and The Quintin Hogg Memorial Trust.²⁷ The Trusts hold the beneficial interest in certain freehold and long-leasehold properties and land that are rented to the University for educational use. The origins of the Trusts go back to Quintin Hogg who purchased many of the buildings before transferring his interests to the then Polytechnic. At his death in 1903, the properties were vested in the Official Trustee for Charity Lands (now the Official Custodian for Charities' Land Holding Service).²⁸ The Official Trustee is a member of staff at the Charity Commission who acts as Trustee for those unincorporated charities that do not have a legal identity and therefore cannot hold property in the name of the Trust, but only by nominated individuals on behalf of the

22 This requirement was reinforced by the 2011 *Charities Act*, which consolidated all previous acts.

23 Charity Commission, *The Advancement of Education for the Public Benefit* (December 2008, amended December 2011).

24 *Ibid.*

25 University of Westminster's *Annual Reports* are available online: www.westminster.ac.uk

26 Called The Regent Street Polytechnic Trust until 2001.

27 Previously named The Quintin Hogg Memorial Fund.

28 See Charity Commission, *The Official Custodian for Charities' Land Holding Service* (September 2004).



Figs. 42, 43, 44
 The University's historic estate includes 309 Regent Street, the Little Titchfield Street building, and the Quintin Hogg Memorial Sports Ground and boathouse in Chiswick.

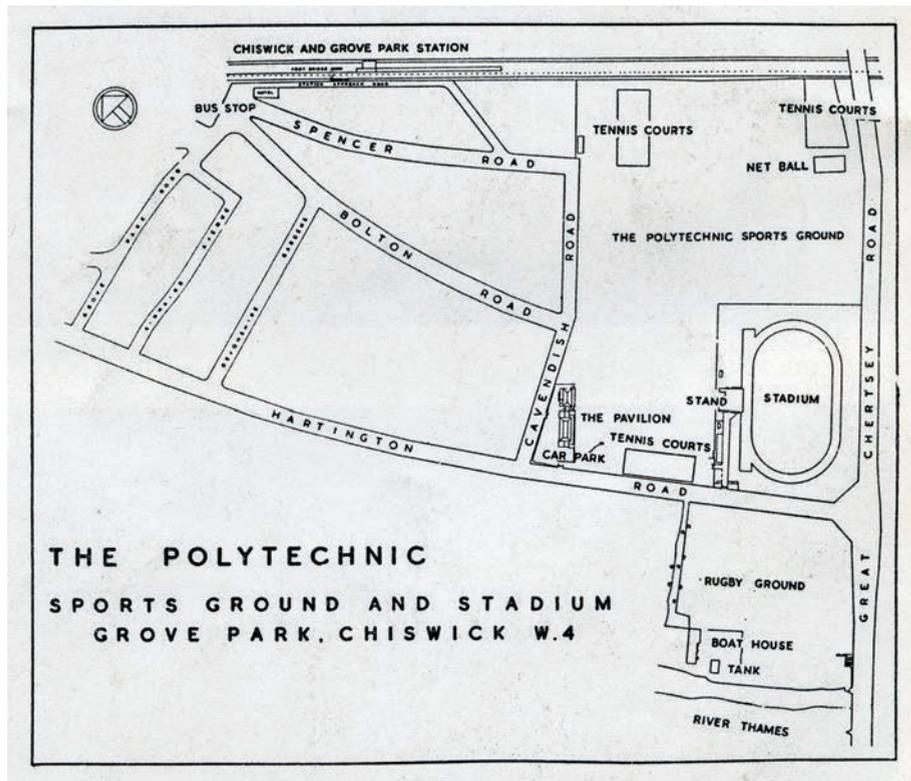




Fig. 45

Sir John Edward Kynaston Studd was unanimously elected to serve as Polytechnic President after the death of Quintin Hogg in 1903. He continued in this role until his own death in 1944.

charity.²⁹ This saves the expense of revising deeds each time a nominated individual changes and the title needs to be transferred to their successor, and does not risk land remaining invested in people no longer involved in the charity. The charity keeps all powers and duties of management and must account for the land and buildings in its own financial statements. The Quintin Hogg Trust owns historic buildings that form the majority of the University's Regent Campus (properties in Regent Street, Little Titchfield Street and Riding House). The University pays an annual rent to use the buildings for educational purposes. The Trust realises public benefit through the provision of properties and by giving donations to the University of Westminster, thus benefiting its students and helping to further their education.³⁰ At Hogg's death, land was also purchased for a sports ground at Chiswick from the estate of Quintin Hogg and other public and private donations. The freehold land and buildings are owned by The Quintin Hogg Memorial Trust and are similarly provided to the University, for an annual rental fee, for the recreation and other educational purposes of its students and other young persons.³¹ Neither Trust engages in fund raising; their incomes are solely derived from leasing properties and from investments. The Trustees are the same individuals for both Trusts and at least one Trustee is also a Governor of the University.

Like many of its contemporaries, the University of Westminster also owns and occupies buildings that were inherited from local authorities following the 1988 *Education Act* (ILEA in 1989 and the London Borough of Harrow in 1990). But it appears to be unique among the former polytechnics in enjoying the occupation and facilities of certain other land and buildings that are the property of a separate Trust. These assets are not reflected in the University's accounts, with the exception of rental payments, running costs and leasehold

²⁹ On 15 July 2016, The Quintin Hogg Trust was incorporated as a private limited company by guarantee without share capital.

³⁰ The Quintin Hogg Trust, *Annual Report and Financial Statement 31st July 2015*.

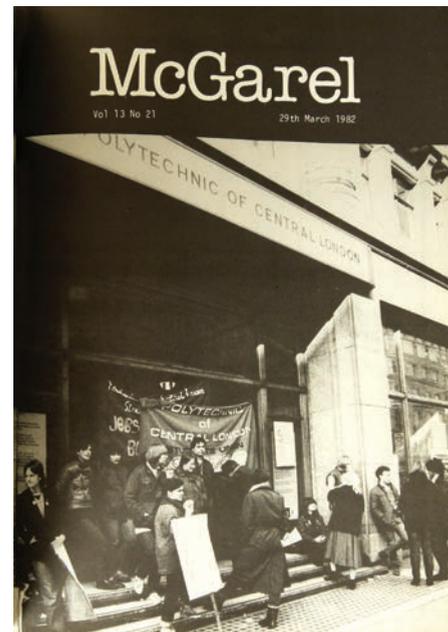
³¹ The Quintin Hogg Memorial Trust, *Annual Report and Financial Statement 31st July 2015*.

Fig. 46

The Student Representative Council was founded on a permanent footing in 1933 and was the forerunner of the Polytechnic Students' Union.

Fig. 47

Students at PCL in the 1980s remember it as a period of regular protests and strike action as students campaigned against grant cuts, increased fees for overseas students and high rents.



improvements associated with the properties. The Trusts are a historical legacy, established to protect the institution's benefit of these properties in perpetuity. The creation of charitable trusts ensured that such assets could not be seized by the local authority during its management of the Polytechnic, or sold off by the institution. It also meant that the institution was not penalised by having these assets counted against grant income. The relationship between the University and the Trusts is one of mutual benefit: the land and properties are used for educational purposes and to the benefit of the University, and the University has stability of accommodation and facilities.

There is a third separately registered charity connected with the University: The University of Westminster Prize and Scholarship Fund. This charity was fully consolidated into the University accounts in 2008, having previously been managed as a separate related party (like the other property Trusts). The object of the Trust is the advancement of education by the awarding of prizes and scholarships tenable at the University and it achieves its objective by raising income through investments and donations.³² The Fund awards several thousand pounds worth of prizes and scholarships each year to Westminster students, including many endowments and bequests in honour of individuals historically connected with the University. In 2015/16 awards and recipients included the Risdon Palmer Scholarship Fund (Atika Shah), Ethel M. Wood Bequest (James Harriss), Lockyer-Whitehead Prize (Elizabeth Wray – HR Management; Huynh May Anh Dang – Quantitative Analysis), Robert Mitchell Medal (Sabha Hussain), Kynaston Studd Memorial Fund Engineering Medals (Ghassan Ameer, Florian Popa, Hailey Atkinson), Graham Brand Prize (Richard Dent), Margaret King Memorial Prize (Suryian Naik) and Sir Alan Thomas Prize (Joshua McClelland).

³² Full details about The University of Westminster Prize and Scholarship Fund can be found on the Charity Commission website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission



Fig. 48

In 2012 the UWSU moved from having Vice Presidents for Education, Communications and Activities, to one for each site (Cavendish, Harrow, Marylebone and Regent), in order to better represent the needs of students on each campus.

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER STUDENTS' UNION

The University's Students' Union can trace its origins back to the 1930s and the Polytechnic's Student Representative Council, which became affiliated to the National Union of Students in 1935. The first official Students' Union was formed in March 1965, and from 1969 two student representatives attended Court of Governors' meetings as well as having representation on Academic Council and other Faculty and Departmental committees. Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s the PCL Students' Union was extremely politically active, engaged in occupations, protest marches and rent strikes against a whole host of local and national issues including student fees, maintenance grants, rents and canteen costs.³³ The Students' Union President is also a Trustee and Governor of the University of Westminster, as enshrined in the University's governing instrument.³⁴

Following the removal of their status as exempt charities in the *2006 Charities Act*, university students' unions had to be established as separate charities from their parent university charity. The University of Westminster Students' Union (UWSU) is an incorporated charity limited by guarantee.³⁵ It is a private company so has a legal identity separate from its members and can own assets and enter into contracts. As a limited company with charitable aims it is regulated by both Companies House and the Charity Commission and must send annual reports and financial statements to both. The Union receives an annual subvention from the University and benefits from non-monetary support by means of occupying space owned by the University, which also supplies

³³ See Michael Heller, 'A history of student life at the Polytechnic', in Penn, ed., *Educating Mind, Body and Spirit*, pp. 81–117.

³⁴ *Memorandum and Articles of Association of the University of Westminster*, 25 May 1994, UWA/UOW/2/1/a/1.

³⁵ See entry for University of Westminster Students' Union on the Charity Commission's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission

utilities and services. The Union supplements its income through trading activities. The UWSU's objects are to 'promote the interests and welfare of University of Westminster students, represent, support and advise students, and provide social, cultural, sporting and recreational activities and forums for discussions and debate for the personal development of its students'.³⁶ The Union fulfils the principles of providing for the advancement of education for the public benefit by serving all the students at the University of Westminster who have the opportunity of being its beneficiaries, even if some opt out of membership. One of the main public benefits of the UWSU is that, by looking after their welfare, students are better able to concentrate on the formal learning that the University provides.³⁷

Fig. 49
The institution's traditional motif of St George and the Dragon features heavily in the entrance hall of 309 Regent Street, visible in the floor mosaic and in the wrought-iron decoration above each lift.



³⁶ Ibid. See also www.uwsu.com

³⁷ Charity Commission, *The Advancement of Education for the Public Benefit*.



Fig. 50

Fyvie Hall is named after Lord Leith of Fyvie who donated £30,000 towards the cost of rebuilding 309 Regent Street in 1910–12. The stained glass windows were made by a firm called Campbell and Christmas and are traditional in style with biblical scenes from both the Old and New Testaments.

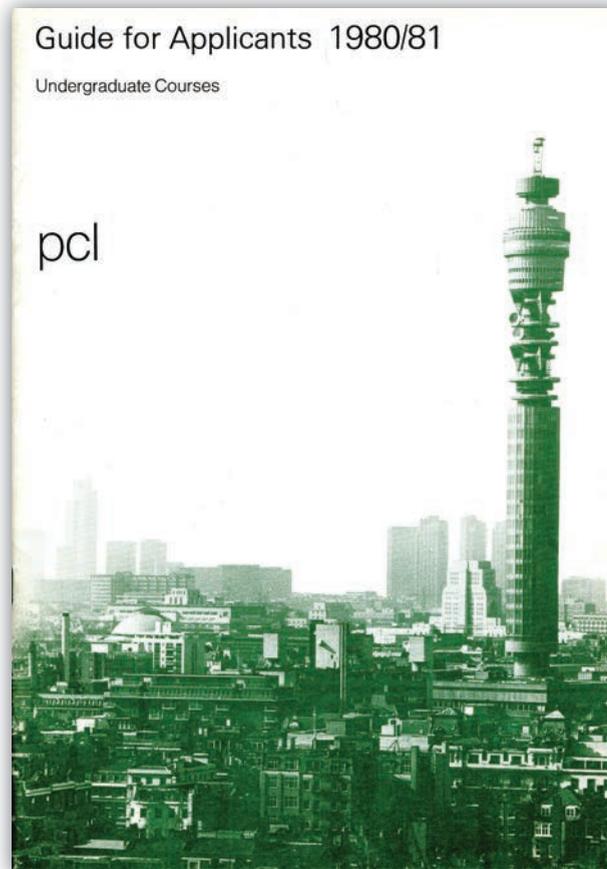
LOGOS AND BRAND IDENTITY

Alongside establishing its legal status, one of the first considerations for the University of Westminster was a new brand identity. The institution had first begun thinking about possible designs for a new logo in September 1991 when Carol Homden, Director of Communications, presented PCL's Senior Management Group with a proposed timetable and approximate costings for re-branding. Homden believed that PCL already had the 'contemporary classicism of a university-type institution' and that it should therefore strive for 'stability, confidence and continuity' by preserving the universally-liked colours of claret and silver and by retaining existing typefaces and the St George motif.³⁸

³⁸ Carol Homden, 'Proposed Timetable and Approximate Costings', 10 September 1991. UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2.

Fig. 51

As well as the simplified logo, the London skyline featured prominently on many of PCL's publications to emphasise the geographical position of the institution.



The Polytechnic's original logo when it was the Youths' Christian Institute based in Hanover Street was a turreted castle, used with the motto 'The Lord is our Stronghold'. The St George and the Dragon motif began to be used by the institution from 1879, and in 1883 the design appeared on the institution's newsletter, *Home Tidings*. St George is depicted facing right with a Roman short sword in his hand, copied from the design of the British gold sovereign coin.³⁹ In 1888, *Home Tidings* was renamed the *Polytechnic Magazine* and the St George and the Dragon became its official logo, with a revised motto: 'The Lord is our Strength'. The design became quite literally part of the institution's buildings, depicted in an elaborate mosaic on the floor of the entrance hall in 309 Regent Street in the early 1890s, in the stained glass panelling of the Fyvie Hall in 1910, and on the façade of 4–12 Little Titchfield Street in 1929. The Polytechnic continued to use the St George and the Dragon motif in various redesigned versions into the late twentieth century.

In 1970, PCL appointed a design consultant to design a house style for the new Polytechnic. The consultant, from Newport College of Art, was appointed for two years from January 1971 'at an immediate fee of 100 guineas plus a fee of 400 guineas per annum'.⁴⁰ The resultant design – 'The Polytechnic of Central London' in lower case, sans serif, black font – was introduced, together with a shortened 'pcl' version. The new PCL logo was used on all institutional

³⁹ *Polytechnic Magazine*, June 1959.

⁴⁰ *Court of Governors Minutes*, 16 February 1970. UWA/RSP/1/BG/1/12. A guinea was £1 1s. The National Archives currency convertor calculates that in today's money 400 guineas is worth nearly £1,100.00. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency

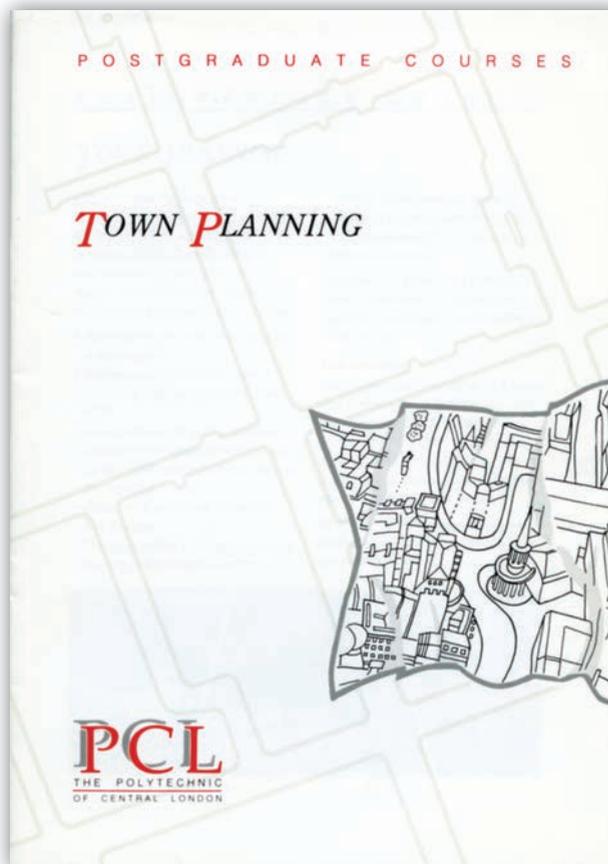


Fig. 52

This booklet design from the 1980s continues to emphasise PCL's place in central London, with a drawing of All Souls Church Langham Place and its surroundings.

publications for the next fifteen years. However, the St George and the Dragon motif did not disappear completely, as it continued to be used on PCL's award certificates and by the Polytechnic's sports and social clubs.

In May 1987 the internal newsletter, *Clarion*, bemoaned that: 'the present PCL logo is now inadequate. [...] Despite the distinctive lettering, it is complacent in assuming that everyone knows what pcl stands for. It also lacks impact and bears more than a passing resemblance to plc'.⁴¹ In particular, the newsletter article suggested that adoption of a house colour should be considered, and suggested a maroon and silver/grey, or blue and silver/grey combination. PCL's Public Relations Office asked for comments and proposals from staff and students for a new logo. In June 1987 *Clarion* reported that nearly 100 responses had been received; many suggested a traditional approach by incorporating the St George and Dragon or 'at Regent Street' to highlight the institution's historic links with the building.⁴² Others argued that the existing logo was an established image that should not be tampered with, as well as expressing concerns about the cost. The article acknowledged these points, agreeing that the choice of logo was not a straightforward matter and pointing out that *The Sun* newspaper had recently 'headlined an article on Birmingham Polytechnic's new logo "£10,000 for dreaming up two words"'.⁴³ The Public Relations Office reported that they had engaged a professional designer who would return to the drawing board, taking into account views expressed about the logo. Five months

41 *Clarion*, No. 3, 29 May 1987.

42 *Clarion*, No. 5, 26 June 1987.

43 *Ibid.*

Fig. 53
From *Family Management to Business Management* was one of PCL's many pioneering courses aimed at encouraging women to return to the workplace.



later, *Clarion* unveiled four new designs 'to take the PCL into the 1990s' and asked readers to vote on their favourite.⁴⁴ All the designs were in claret and grey, 'chosen because of their historical association with the polytechnic and their continuing contemporary usage'.⁴⁵ More practically, perhaps, 'both colours photocopy successfully and grey allows for the inclusion of a hint of silver on appropriate occasions'.⁴⁶ The winning design was an upper case 'PCL' in a serif font, in Pantone 207 Claret with Pantone 429 Grey shadow. The design also incorporated 'Polytechnic of Central London' in full underneath, written in upper case, sans serif font in Pantone 429 Grey. It was suggested that this design 'promotes the abbreviation we use internally and, in moving right from its shadow, also looks forward. [...] it] will help take PCL into the 1990s and keep it firmly on the map in the eyes of all our different audiences'.⁴⁷

This was the historical context for the new logo of the University of Westminster. Although the institution had only changed its logo five years previously, the change of name and the new university status meant that a new brand identity was required. In early 1992, the University appointed creative design agency, Sampson Tyrrell, to assist it in meeting 'the challenge to establish a distinct and appropriate identity which will combine values of PCL with any advantages of the university title without losing any existing student or client group'.⁴⁸ The agency spent a month or so reviewing the institution and its existing marketing materials and corporate 'presence', speaking to representatives at various levels of the institution, including course leaders and students, and also undertaking interviews with external audiences (business, the media and career advisers and the general public). Its resultant report made various recommendations regarding brand identity as well as providing an interesting summary of how PCL was perceived both internally and externally.⁴⁹ For example, PCL's perceived key strengths, recognised by all the categories canvassed, were

⁴⁴ *Clarion*, No. 11, 27 November 1987.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ 'Consultants to Steer Change to the University of Westminster', *Stop Press*, 21 February 1992. UWA/PCL/2/6/2/9. The newsletter also proudly noted that one of the individuals responsible for the successful bid was a PCL alumnus from the Diploma in Management Studies.

⁴⁹ Sampson Tyrrell Limited, *Report for the Polytechnic of Central London on the marketing and identity implications of its change in status to the University of Westminster*, 25 February 1992. UWA/PCL/2/6/2/12.

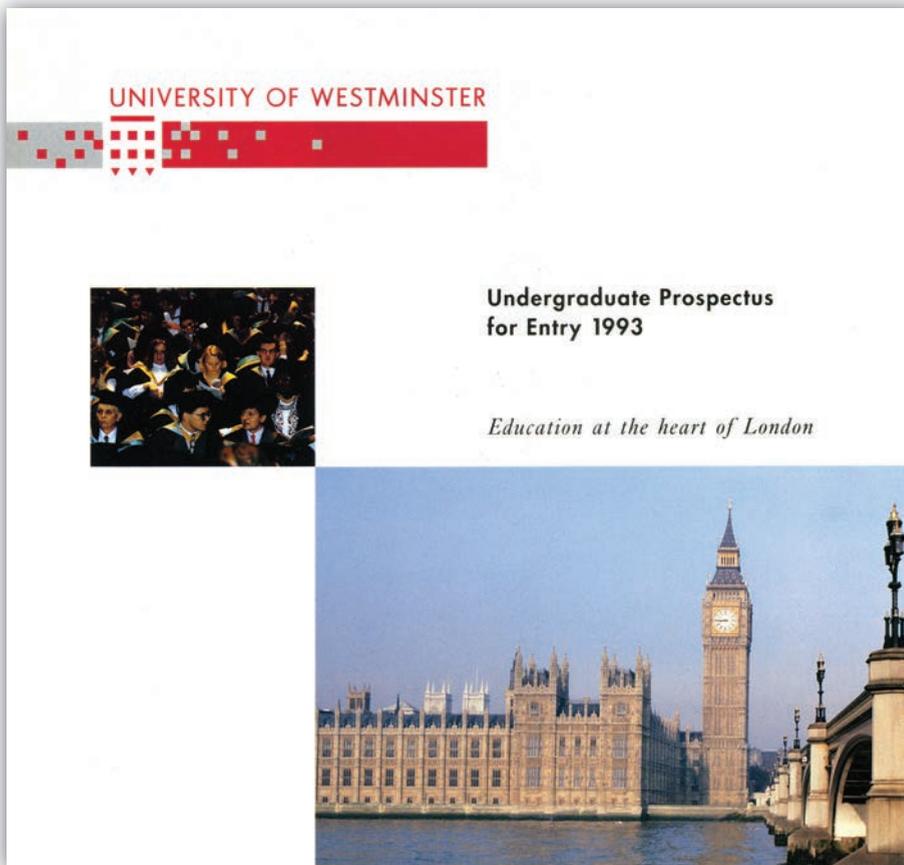


Fig. 54

The first University of Westminster prospectus emphasised the institution's location through visual images and the strapline 'Education at the heart of London'.

its accessibility, flexibility (especially in regard to part-time students), diversity, high quality of specialisms, business orientation, innovation and central London location. Its perceived weaknesses included disparateness (in terms of its courses, types of students, modes of study and wide geographical location of buildings), rundown accommodation, lack of strong central administration, lack of cross-faculty activity and its London location (which while being desirable for many was equally regarded as expensive, crowded and polluted). Although there were many different audiences to which PCL had to address itself, the two key ones were identified as potential students and the business community. Sampson Tyrrell noted that all the other London polytechnics were competitors of PCL; for example, in terms of student applications, Middlesex Polytechnic appeared to be PCL's main competitor as the only institution that received more applications (in 1991, Middlesex received 20,800 applications compared with PCL's 17,500). However, in reality it varied by subject: South Bank Polytechnic for Environment, Hatfield Polytechnic for Engineering, City of London Polytechnic for Business Studies and Middlesex for broader Humanities and Social Sciences. The report also suggested that PCL's name change could be a considerable advantage against these competitors, many of whom were simply replacing the word 'polytechnic' with 'university', compared with the new 'University of Westminster' and its 'unique opportunity to significantly reposition itself'.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 20.



Figs. 55, 56
The University's coat of arms was granted in May 1993 and has been used on its certificates and awards ever since.

In order to meet its challenges and benefit from its strengths, Sampson Tyrrell recommended that the institution needed to adopt a 'strong corporate identity and overall visual system' which 'should reflect a modern and forward-looking perspective'.⁵¹ In particular, the agency recommended that sub-identities should not be allowed to exist, noting in particular that internal structures were of no relevance to external audiences.⁵² To this end, and with cost-saving also in mind, it was suggested that PCL's 'current range of over 80 letterheads throughout the institution' should be radically reduced to no more than seven.⁵³ Sampson Tyrrell proposed that, once a detailed design brief had been agreed, implementation would begin in April so that the newly designed *University Prospectus* would be ready for the new intake of prospective students.

In March 1992, PCL's Senior Management Group and the Court of Governors' Sub-Committee on University Status reviewed three potential designs for the University of Westminster's new logo; the designs were based on a book, a shield and a portcullis.⁵⁴ The book design was immediately dismissed, with most of the reviewers feeling that it represented an overly traditional form of learning and was not modern enough. The shield design was met with more enthusiasm as it was regarded as striking, but concerns were expressed about its symbolism and the use of a heraldic device in a forward-looking institution. The design that received the most support was the portcullis, which was felt to be timeless and a potentially valuable symbolic link with Westminster. Some reviewers did note, however, that the portcullis could be regarded as a barrier

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 25–6.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 5 and 37. For example, the two worst offenders: the Faculty of Business, Management and Social Studies, and Information Resource Services, had 13 and 14 different letterheads in use respectively.

⁵⁴ *Vice-Chancellor's Senior Management Group Minutes*, 20 March 1992. UWA/PCL/2/6/2/9.

to entry or exit that was at odds with the University's long history of accessible participation. The Sub-Committee concluded that the portcullis was the most appropriate design, subject to it being slightly redesigned using PCL's choice of claret and a bolder presentation of the institution's title.⁵⁵ The revised portcullis design was presented to the Court of Governors on 30 March, who approved its implementation as a symbol of Westminster, diversity, progression and development. In order to maintain continuity, Court also approved that the Pantone colours 207 claret and 429 grey should continue to be the corporate colours for the University.⁵⁶ The new design was to be used only in these two colours or in black and white. A strapline was to be included: 'Educating for professional life' and the corporate font was Futura. The *Undergraduate Prospectus for entry in 1993/1994* was the first institutional publication to be published in the new design in May 1992.⁵⁷

And what of the St George and the Dragon motif? The findings of Sampson Tyrell's report suggested that many felt it to be 'a highly inappropriate symbol for the new university' and 'questioned the relevance of Christian iconography for an institution which was multi-cultural in its outlook and multi-ethnic in its composition'.⁵⁸ While some continued to view the motif positively as a symbol of strength and tradition, it was soon to be no longer used officially by the University, although it remains as a historical feature in many of its buildings. From 1994, the newly commissioned University coat of arms instead appeared on the University's awards and certificates, as it still does today.

In some ways the legal and brand identity of the new University of Westminster was straightforward to establish. Its governing instruments had already been brought up to date and made fit for purpose for a modern higher education institution just five years earlier. Its constitution as a limited company was not the same model as that of traditional universities, but it was comparable to most other polytechnics and all were made equal in law as charities advancing education for the public benefit under the 1992 *Further and Higher Education Act*. The University of Westminster retained some unique characteristics, including its historical Trusts, but is subject to the same regulatory powers of HEFCE and the Privy Council as all other universities in England. In comparison, the issue of a new logo was a more complicated matter on which opinion differed greatly. It was perhaps impossible for any institution to find a new brand identity that would position it as a modern, forward-looking university while maintaining its traditional core values of accessibility, flexibility and quality. For the University of Westminster, it hoped that it could accomplish this by adopting a new corporate visual identity that combined both tradition and innovation. It also hoped to ensure that a clear message would be delivered during the potentially difficult transition period that, although many things were new, the essential workings of the old PCL and what it stood for were not changing.

⁵⁵ *Court of Governors' Sub-Committee on University Status Minutes*, 25 March 1992.

UWA/PCL/1/BG/5.

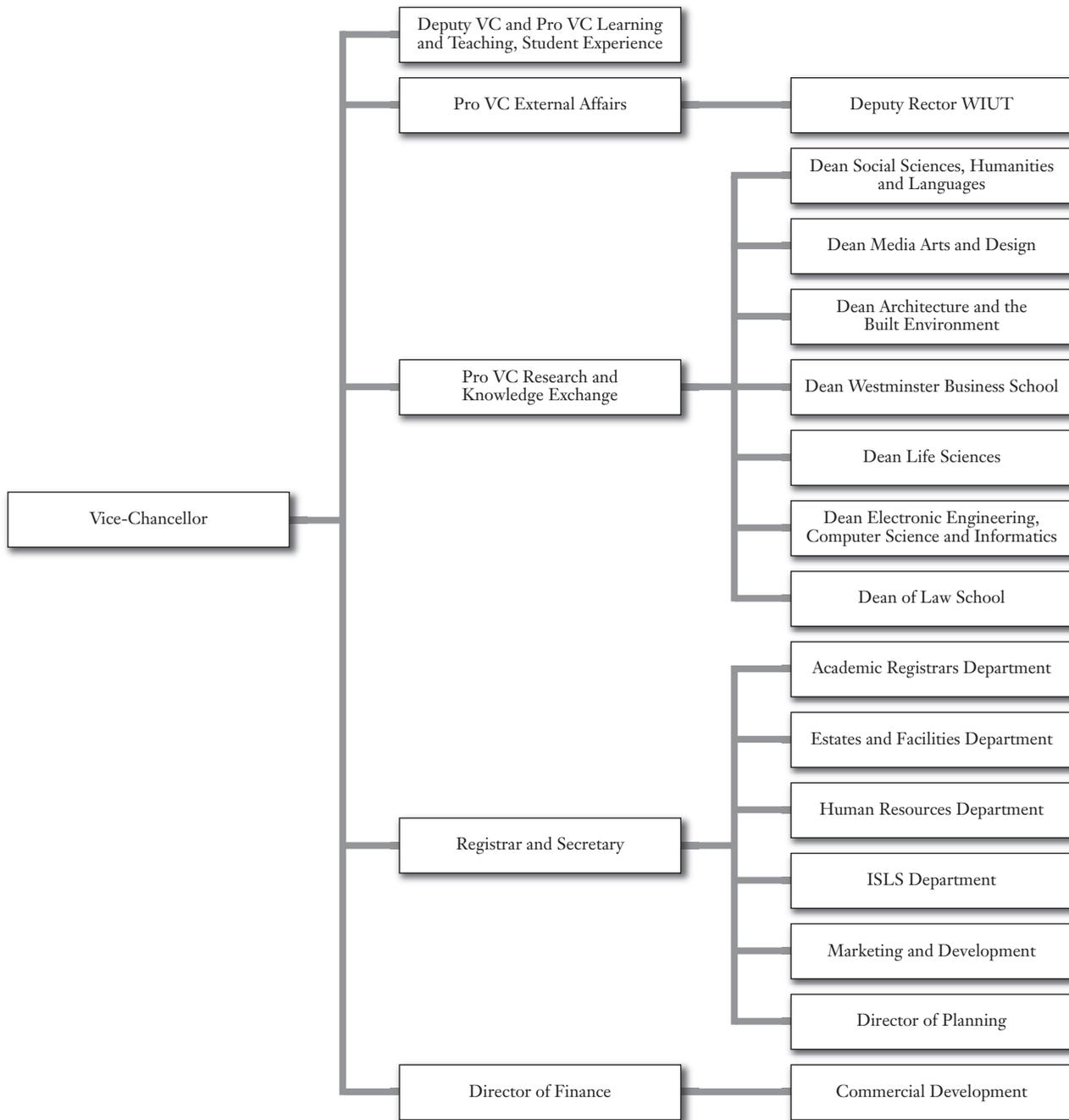
⁵⁶ *Court of Governors Minutes*, 30 March 1992.

UWA/PCL/1/BG/1/40.

⁵⁷ The University's corporate identity was not to change again until 2010.

⁵⁸ Sampson Tyrell, p. 44.

University of Westminster Management Structure 2009



ISLS Information Systems and Library Services

VC Vice-Chancellor

WIUT Westminster International University in Tashkent



The University of Westminster: the first ten years

CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

The Polytechnic of Central London was re-designated as the University of Westminster on 16 June 1992. Although new degree-awarding powers did not officially come into effect until 1 September, the CNAA permitted the former polytechnics to use their new University title on awards issued during the summer. So the 1992 cohort of PCL graduates received certificates from ‘The University of Westminster (formerly PCL)’. The inclusion of the former title was deliberate following requests from some subject areas, such as Architecture,¹ and recognition from Rector Terence Burlin that ‘I am concerned to show our commitment to the last cohort of PCL students, many of whom are disappointed that they will not be included [in] our planning for the autumn launch of the University of Westminster’.² The new University was launched with an Inauguration Festival Programme that took place from mid-October to mid-December 1992 and included lunchtime recitals, evening concerts, lectures and exhibitions as well as the presentation ceremonies held at the Barbican in November and December.³ Many of the staff still remember two events in particular. The first was a boat trip from Charing Cross pier down the River Thames; as one staff member recalled: ‘the boat trip was for all staff and we got to go [...]. It was a fantastic night. It really was a night to remember [...]. It was a nice way to do it for all the staff’.⁴ The second event was the Service of Thanksgiving and Re-dedication at Westminster Abbey held on 1 December 1992, which was recalled by many of those who attended as ‘a moving occasion’ and ‘an important event’.⁵ All the events were planned to celebrate the institution’s new status and title, but they were also designed to give a sense of continuity of ethos and tradition. A Circular to all students in May 1992 was keen to emphasise that:

We are now moving into a new era, but we shall continue our mission to ensure the highest quality of education and facilities to students from every background. The content and teaching approach of the courses will not be changed by the adoption of the University title.⁶

1 Memorandum to Carol Homden from Jane Hopkinson, Secretary and Clerk to Court, 31 January 1992, UWA/PCL/2/6/2/5.

2 *Letter to All Governors* from Terence Burlin, 14 May 1992, UWA/PCL/2/6/2/9.

3 *Letter to All Staff*, ‘Inaugural Events for the University of Westminster’, October 1992. UWA/PCL/5/2/b/138.

4 Interview with Dave Haddock, 18 May 2015, UWA/OHP/75.

5 Interview with John Turner, 10 January 2013, UWA/OHP/42; Interview with Jackie King, 6 February 2013, UWA/OHP/45.

6 *Letter to Students* from Terence Burlin, 14 May 1992, UWA/PCL/5/2/b/138.



Fig. 57

In December 1992 the University held a service of Thanksgiving for its new name and status at Westminster Abbey, London.

In the same letter, Burlin also points out that ‘The Polytechnic has a rich history spanning 150 years, during which time [it] has had five titles’, as if to reassure students that another name change did not indicate any change to the institution’s continuing mission.⁷ The inclusive tone of Burlin’s letter was also important; PCL’s Senior Management Group had already expressed concerns that the HEIST Survey on the name change had focused on sixth-formers and therefore had not taken account of part-time and non-traditional students who made up large numbers of PCL’s student body.⁸ The Court Sub-Committee on

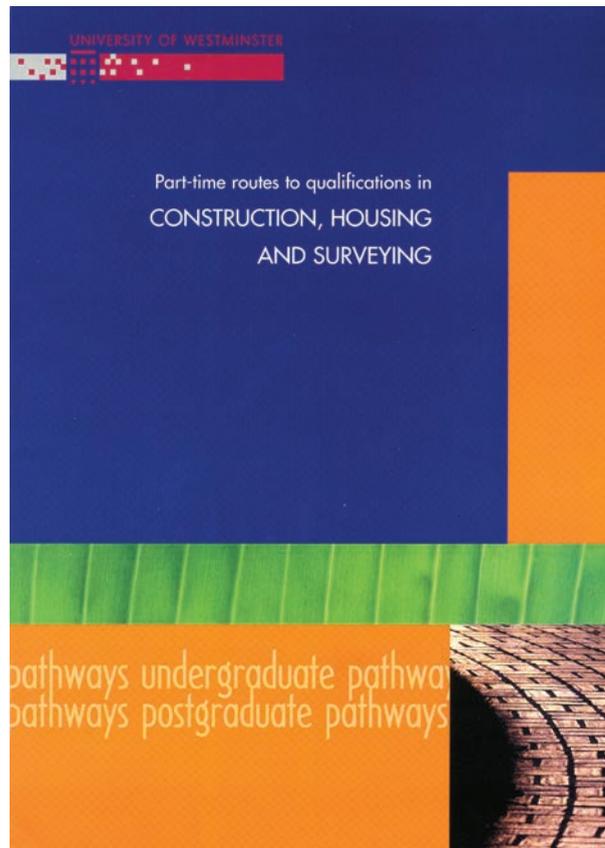
⁷ UWA/PCL/5/2/6/138.

‘University of Westminster’ was actually the eighth formal title of the institution (Polytechnic Institution, Royal Polytechnic Institution, York Place Ragged School and Mission, Youths’ Christian Institute, Young Men’s Christian Institute, Regent Street Polytechnic, Polytechnic of Central London, University of Westminster).

⁸ *Vice-Chancellor’s Senior Management Group Minutes*, 4 November 1991, UWA/UOW/1/VC/2. (*Report of an Empirical Survey on Naming for Polytechnic of Central London*, C.N. Keen, HEIST, 15 October 1991, UWA/PCL/2/6/2/2.)

Fig. 58

Building upon its polytechnic roots, the University has continued to offer many part-time and non-traditional routes into higher education.



University Status reaffirmed the institution's commitment to such students and emphasised the importance of marketing the name change to those groups in such a way to confirm that the Polytechnic's ethos had not changed.⁹

Despite the concerns, as Chapter 3 has explored, the reaction of many students to the name and status change was largely one of indifference. This is further evidenced by the first issue of the Students' Union magazine, *McGarel*, at the beginning of the 1992 academic year, in which the Editorial proclaimed, somewhat sarcastically, 'Hello and Welcome to the all New University of Westminster, and isn't it a lot different from the Polytechnic?'¹⁰ No further remarks on the matter are made in any subsequent issues of the magazine. In some ways this lack of significance is perhaps to be expected, as returning students would have found little immediate change to their institution, and, of course, the new cohort of students knew no different. They were undoubtedly witnesses to visual changes, as signage and publications were gradually replaced to reflect the new University's branding; but in terms of where, what, and how they studied, these important things remained the same for the students in that first academic year of the University of Westminster. But a process of change was underway that would impact on students both at the University and across the HE sector as a whole. Within ten years, higher education in the UK would look very different, not least in terms of numbers of students, and, most significantly perhaps, in terms of funding. The University of Westminster began

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ *McGarel*, Vol. 24.1, 28 September [1992].



Fig. 59
PCL's Central Admissions Unit were responsible for the distribution of student grants.

to prepare for and respond to these transformations as it put into place a new senior management team, a restructured academic portfolio and a significantly altered accommodation base.

STUDENT FUNDING: FROM GRANTS TO LOANS

Arguably, the most significant development to take place within the UK HE sector during the 1990s was concerned with student funding. Since the early 1960s, the cost of tuition at higher education institutions had been paid for by the State for the vast majority of students.¹¹ Students had to pay their living expenses and were eligible for maintenance grants awarded by their local education authorities that covered up to 100 per cent of living costs. These grants were means-tested on parental income. By the late 1980s approximately 30 per cent of full-time home students received a full grant and 45 per cent received a partial grant.¹² As Chapter 2 has detailed, successive government policy in the mid-to-late twentieth century encouraged the expansion of the UK higher education system. By 1990 the participation rate had reached 17 per cent compared with just 5 per cent in 1963 when the existing funding system had been established.¹³ The expansion resulted in increasing costs to the State (and the taxpayer) and decreasing funding per student as government tried to curb public expenditure. Demand for higher education had grown beyond what had been originally envisaged and the British model was increasingly uniquely expensive compared with its European neighbours.¹⁴ Public expenditure on student maintenance had risen from £253 million in 1962/63 to £829 million in 1987/88, with nearly 400,000 students receiving grants from the government.¹⁵ The expected contributions from students (or their parents) had similarly risen from an average of £468 to £827 per annum.¹⁶ The exist-

- 11 See, for example, Robert Anderson, *University Fees in Historical Perspective*, History and Policy Paper, 8 February 2016.
- 12 Nicholas Hillman, 'From grants for all to loans for all: Undergraduate finance from the implementation of the Anderson Report (1962) to the implementation of the Browne Report (2012)', *Contemporary British History*, 27.3, (2013), pp. 469–70. The system was predicated on the assumption that parents (or the students themselves) financially contributed proportionally to the students' living costs.
- 13 Gill Wyness, *Policy Changes in UK Higher Education Funding, 1963–2009*, Department of Quantitative Social Science Working paper No. 10–15 (Institute of Education, June 2010).
- 14 Anderson.
- 15 DES White Paper, *Top-Up Loans for Students*, Cm. 520 (London: HMSO, November 1988), p. 3.
- 16 Ibid.

Fig. 60
Harrow's media studios were refurbished in 1995 with state-of-the-art equipment.



ing funding system was seen as being no longer financially viable. In 1990 the government froze maintenance grants and introduced maintenance loans for undergraduate full-time students.¹⁷ The loans were means-tested and interest-free, and were to be repaid in 60 mortgage-style repayments by the graduate once he or she was earning 85 per cent of the average national earnings (£10,000 p.a.). The maximum loan in 1990/91 was £420, the amount available increasing annually to offset the freeze in the grant.¹⁸ Tuition fees were not covered by the so-called 'top-up' loans, and continued to be paid separately by the State. The maintenance loans were only available for HE undergraduate students but the government also introduced additional Access Funds, each totalling £5 million to provide discretionary support for postgraduate and further education students.

Despite the introduction of maintenance loans, the financial pressure on higher education funding continued. The participation rate rose sharply with the enlarged university sector in 1992, negating the impact of increased expenditure on HE as a proportion of GDP and resulting in a further decrease in per-student funding. The DES estimated that funding per FTE student had fallen from £9,530 in 1989 (when the participation rate was 15 per cent) to a historic low of £4,850 in 1997 by which time participation had risen to 33 per cent.¹⁹ Through the 1990s, further cuts to public expenditure were imposed by the government, causing concern within HEIs who were struggling to meet the costs of the expansion of the sector (i.e. increased costs associated with staff, laboratories, library and resources provision and student accommodation) as their funding per student decreased. For example, HEFCE's funding award to the University of Westminster for 1993/94 initially appeared generous as Westminster received the 5th highest increase nationally of 12.3 per cent, amounting to teaching funds of £22,319,000.²⁰ Many new universities had done well in securing additional teaching funding, apparently in an effort to compensate

¹⁷ *Education (Student Loans) Act 1990.*

¹⁸ Hillman. By 1997 the maximum loan had increased to £3,440 (£4,245 for students in London).

¹⁹ Wyness.

²⁰ *Circular to All Staff*, March 1993. UWA/PCL/5/2/b/138.



Fig. 61

The Dearing Report proposed that working graduates should pay a greater proportion of the cost of their university education.

for the fact that the unit of funding per student in the new universities was significantly below that in the older institutions. However, as Rector Terence Burlin pointed out, serious discrepancies remained in the Average Unit of Council Funding (AUCF) due to the institution's high number of fees-only students (a legacy of the State-encouraged expansion in the PCFC sector in the 1980s) who were now included in the core and taken into account when calculating the AUCF; and, besides, the funding only allowed for minimal growth compared with the University's planned growth of 9.6 per cent.²¹ Burlin confirmed that the University's numbers for full-time students were 'severely constrained', causing difficulties for those courses that had hitherto been building up or expanding.²²

In March 1995, the government suddenly reversed its policy on HE expansion and called on all universities to reduce their intake of full-time HE students as it imposed a 1.5 per cent cut across all budgets.²³ These constraints were further supported by the introduction of penalty fines for institutions who over-recruited. In reaction to the growing funding crisis facing all HEIs, the Committee of Chancellors and Vice-Principals threatened to impose an upfront levy of £300 on all first-year students in an attempt to try and recoup some of the costs of their education provision.²⁴ Although the threat never materialised, it was sufficient to lead the government to establish a National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education chaired by Sir Ron Dearing. The subsequent *Dearing Report: Higher Education in the Learning Society* was to result in yet further, more radical, reforms to the funding of UK HE.²⁵ The Committee's remit was 'to make recommendations on how the purposes, shape, structure, size and funding of higher education, including support for students, should develop to meet the needs of the United Kingdom over the next 20 years'.²⁶ The report identified the various problems with the existing HE funding model and proposed that a new flat-rate tuition fee of £1,000

21 *Vice-Chancellor's Senior Management Group Minutes*, 8 February 1993. UWA/UOW/1/VC/2.

22 *Circular to All Staff*, March 1993.

23 John O'Leary, 'Universities told to reduce student intake by 6,000', *The Times*, 3 March 1995.

24 David Charter and Nicholas Wood, 'Breakaway threat over university entrance fee', *The Times*, 31 January 1996.

25 *Dearing Report. Report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education: Higher Education in the Learning Society* (London: DfEE, 1997).

26 *Dearing Report*, Chairman's foreword.

(which would cover a quarter of the average cost of HE tuition) should be introduced for every student, backed by an income-contingent loan and a continuation of the mixture of maintenance grants and loans. Its proposals were based on the principle that the burden of paying for higher education ‘should be shared among the beneficiaries’, and furthermore that ‘greater contributions should be forthcoming from graduates in work as the chief beneficiaries’.²⁷ This principle signalled a shift in policy from the previously commonly-held view of the value of higher education as a social good being so great as to merit generous public funding in its support. Now, instead of the State and the taxpayer continuing to bear most of the costs of higher education to the wider benefit of society, these costs would be borne largely by those who benefited directly from higher education, namely the students themselves. The *Dearing Report* highlighted the economic benefits to individuals participating in higher education, arguing that these were ‘substantial’, consisting of higher employment rates and pay levels compared with those individuals who were qualified to enter higher education but did not do so.²⁸ The *Report* concluded that:

The arguments in favour of a contribution to tuition costs from graduates in work are strong, if not widely appreciated. They relate to equity between social groups, broadening participation, equity with part-time students in higher education and in further education, strengthening the student role in higher education, and identifying a new source of income that can be ring-fenced for higher education.²⁹

Although the new Labour government accepted much of the *Dearing Report’s* findings and its widening participation agenda, it nonetheless rejected the *Report’s* main funding proposal and instead announced the abolition of maintenance grants in favour of a wholly-loans based maintenance system with income-contingent repayments. A ‘top-up’ tuition fee was to be introduced, not as a loan but as an upfront fee of £1,000 to be paid by the student on a means-tested basis to ensure that only higher income households would be liable for the full amount.³⁰ The new system came into effect at the start of the 1998/99 academic year.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The University of Westminster was deeply concerned about the *Dearing Report* and the government’s response to the funding crisis. The University, like all its counterparts, was concerned that the resultant reforms were estimated to raise less than half of what was required to meet the shortfall in funding but, more significantly perhaps, the reforms touched at the very heart of the University’s mission. The University has a tradition of developing and providing professional education for those working in London and the South East, as encapsulated in the strapline it had adopted: ‘Educating for Professional Life’. It has a long history of commitment to the dissemination of knowledge

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Sections 5.66 and 5.67 respectively, p. 85.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Section 6.16, p. 90.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Section 20.40, p. 313.

³⁰ *Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998*. The Act included a clause barring the imposition of any additional fees by universities.



Fig. 62

Practical professional tasks continue to play a large role in the University's educational approach, including business placements.

to the public and enabling access to education for all those with career or intellectual aspirations, whatever their previous educational experience.³¹ The University of Westminster was recognised as having 'remained true to its founders' views as exemplified by its stated commitment to access, and to flexible modes of attendance to meet the needs of its diverse student community'.³² In practice this meant that the institution had high numbers of part-time students studying for a range of programmes, including undergraduate and post-graduate courses.

In 1994/95 the national average percentage of part-time students studying in higher education institutions was just over 29 per cent.³³ At the University of Westminster 9,079 students were studying part-time, equating to nearly half of its total student body (49.8 per cent). This figure was higher than its nearest competitors at Greenwich (29 per cent), Kingston (28.5 per cent), East London (26 per cent) and Middlesex (18 per cent). Only South Bank University came close to Westminster with a higher than national figure of 40 per cent for its part-time student numbers.³⁴ Westminster also had 20,000 additional students studying on short course continuing professional development programmes.³⁵ Through the early 1990s, the University of Westminster's total student numbers had increased in line with the expansion of the sector as a whole (from 11,568 in 1990/91 to 19,334 in 1996/97).³⁶ In particular, the institution had seen a dramatic increase in student numbers in 1991/92 following the inclusion of students (over 4,000) previously counted under Harrow College of Higher Education prior to its merger with PCL in 1990.³⁷ The University's proportion of part-time students also increased yet further during this period, amounting to over 51 per cent of its student body by 1996/97.³⁸

The unusually high proportion of part-time students at Westminster meant that it was particularly impacted by the changes to student funding which, it

31 See Chapter 2. See also previous volumes on the University's history.

32 HEQC, *University of Westminster Quality Audit Report*, (Birmingham: HEQC Quality Assurance Group, June 1994), p. 3.

33 *Students in UK Higher Education Institutions 1994/95* (HESA, 1996).

34 *Ibid.*

35 *University of Westminster Quality Audit Report*, 1994. Figures for 1992/93 are 20,444 students.

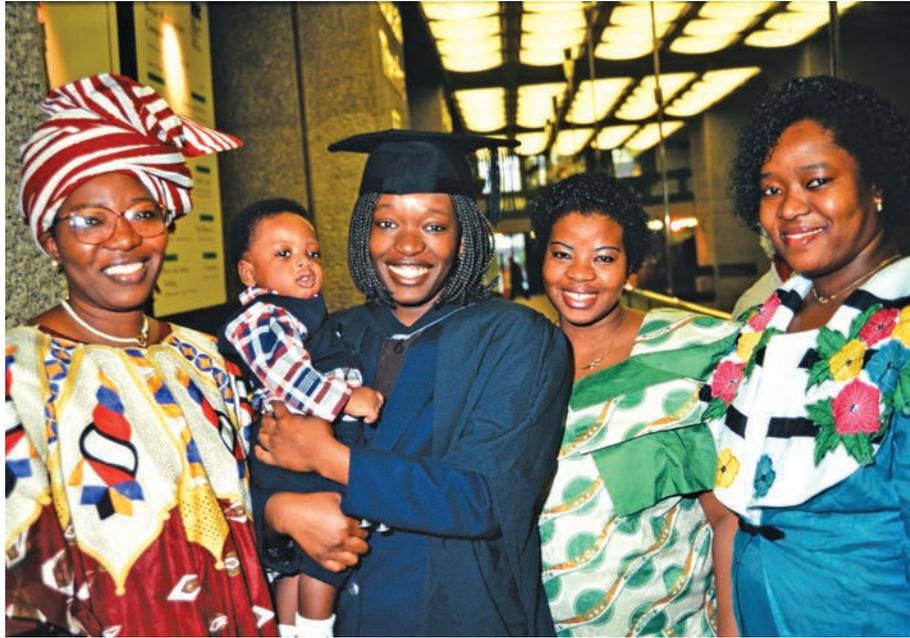
36 Figures taken from *PARISS Return 1990/91* (July 1991) and *Students in UK Higher Education Institutions 1996/97* (HESA, 1998) respectively.

37 *The Polytechnic of Central London Strategic Plan*, n.d. [1989]. UWA/UOW/2/8/COP/12/1.

38 *Students in UK Higher Education Institutions 1996/97*.

Fig. 63

Graduation ceremonies are always special family occasions.



argued, were derived ‘from a traditional model of higher education being primarily for full-time undergraduate students with part-time and multi-mode study being seen as secondary features’.³⁹ The stated aims of the *Dearing Report*, and the Labour government, were to increase widening participation by students traditionally under-represented in higher education (including women, ethnic minorities, those from lower socio-economic groups, and mature students).⁴⁰ However, in the view of the University of Westminster, the reforms would cause the exact opposite, as it argued that the funding regimes ‘are too heavily weighted in the direction of full-time conventionally qualified undergraduates to provide real incentives for truly widening participation from the under-represented social groups’.⁴¹ The lack of any recommendations to assist part-time students was especially troubling for the institution, as was the lack of acknowledgement that part-time provision provided a major opportunity for widening participation and lifelong learning, which was neither emphasised nor properly funded.

HESA figures for 1997/98 and 1998/99 do not indicate a dramatic drop-off in student numbers, despite warnings that the new tuition fee would put many students off participating in HE, and in spite of the rise in gap year students rushing to take up a place before the introduction of the fee in 1998/99.⁴² Furthermore, the number of part-time students at UK HEIs actually rose slightly from 35.2 per cent to 36.1 per cent during the same period, a trend that was to continue until the mid-2000s. However, research has suggested that the students who are more inclined to be risk-averse and anti-debt are the same groups who traditionally did not participate in higher education (students from the lowest socio-economic groups, Muslims, especially those of Pakistani origin, and those from black or ethnic minority backgrounds).⁴³ The overall financial situation of students was declining and although increasing numbers

³⁹ *University of Westminster Response to the National Inquiry into Higher Education*, 3 October 1997.

Enclosed in *Memorandum to All Staff from the Vice-Chancellor and Rector*, 6 October 1997.
UWA/UOW/2/4/2.

⁴⁰ See *Dearing Report*, especially Chapter 7; *Labour Party General Election Manifesto 1997*.

⁴¹ *University of Westminster Response to the National Inquiry into Higher Education*, 3 October 1997.

⁴² *Students in UK Higher Education Institutions 1997/98* (HESA, 1999) and *1998/99* (HESA, 2000); David Charter, ‘Gap students join rush for university’, *The Times*, 6 August 1997.

⁴³ Hazel Pennell and Anne West, ‘The Impact of Increased Fees on Participation in Higher Education in England’, *Higher Education Quarterly*, 59.2 (April 2005), pp. 127–37.



Fig. 64

In 2015–16, a total of 9,853 students graduated from the University of Westminster.

took up the loan facility, many more supplemented their income through overdrafts, savings and by taking paid employment during term-time, to the potential detriment of their quality of life and studies.⁴⁴ In particular, mature students did appear to be less inclined towards entering full-time higher education. In 1994/95, 28.8 per cent of full-time first degree students across the whole of the UK were aged 21 or over. This dropped to 24.8 per cent in 1997/98 and to 22.6 per cent in 1998/99. Similarly, the numbers of full-time first degree students aged 30 or over fell from 8.8 per cent to 7.3 per cent over the same period.⁴⁵ This trend similarly impacted the University of Westminster: in 1994/95 nearly half of its full-time first year undergraduate students were aged 21 or over. This number dropped to 45.9 per cent in 1996/97 and to 42.9 per cent in 1998/99.⁴⁶

FLEXIBLE MODES OF STUDY

In response to the HE reforms, the University did not alter its mission but instead increased the opportunities it offered for part-time study. By 2002, it was possible to study at the institution for undergraduate degree programmes in a variety of different modes: full-time (137 courses), sandwich (20), part-time (17), part-time day only (20), part-time evening only (13), part-time day-release (2), and part-time day and evening (8); and in 2005 a further mode of part-time day or evening was introduced for three first degree courses including the LLB qualification.⁴⁷ The University of Westminster was also one of the early adopters of a modular framework for its courses that enabled students, on successful completion of modules, to gain and accumulate the credits associated with the module in accordance with the national credit accumulation and transfer scheme (CATS).⁴⁸ The framework was:

44 Sandra Winn and Richard Stevenson, 'Student Loans: Are the Policy Objectives Being Achieved?', *Higher Education Quarterly*, 51.2 (April 1997), pp. 144–63.

45 HESA.

46 Ibid.

47 *University of Westminster Undergraduate Prospectus for Entry 2002; Undergraduate Prospectus for Entry 2005.*

48 The CNAA first developed a national credit framework in 1986. Following recommendations by Dearing, a national scheme was finally implemented in England in 2008/09. See *Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Guidance on Academic Credit Arrangements in Higher Education in England* (QAA, August 2008). The scheme also links with the European Credit Transfer System.

Fig. 65

From the 1992–93 academic year, all degrees at the University were offered within a modular framework, one of the first introduced into UK HE.



designed to facilitate inter-institution student mobility, to encourage wider access, to develop the recognition of prior achievement and to assist with the transfer of employees between work and higher education through the accreditation of work-based learning and employee training.⁴⁹

PCL had introduced the modular system in 1990 and from 1992/93 all undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses at the University of Westminster were structured within national and international credit transfer frameworks across a two-semester based academic year. In this way, distinctions between the notion of full-time and part-time study and between single-site or even single-institution study were broken down.⁵⁰ The University also continued to expand its provision of Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas, the majority of which were available to study in various part-time modes.⁵¹ The University regarded these qualifications as ‘essential parts of the provision of access to higher education to under-represented groups and returners to education thereby enabling them to progress to the highest levels’.⁵²

Prior to 1992, there had been substantial further education provision at PCL. However, changes in the funding arrangements for FE increasingly sought to concentrate this provision in further education colleges rather than in universities.⁵³ The University decided to replace much of its FE provision ‘with a more direct provision for access with less dependence upon FE funding’.⁵⁴ It developed a range of Foundation courses in technology-based areas including Biochemistry, Biological Sciences, Built Environment, Computing, Information Systems Engineering, Mathematical Sciences, Modern Electronics,

49 *Dearing Report*, Section 10.32–8, pp. 148–9.

50 *University of Westminster Quality Audit Report*, 1994.

51 See *University of Westminster Postgraduate Prospectuses* for details.

52 *University of Westminster Strategic Plan 1992–1997*, March 1992, amended July 1992, UWA/PCL/2/4/27.

53 See, for example, *Vice-Chancellor’s Senior Management Group Minutes*, 26 April 1993, UWA/UOW/1/VC/2.

54 *Strategic Plan 1992–1997*, UWA/PCL/2/4/27.

Nutrition and Exercise Science, and Technology and Design.⁵⁵ Franchised courses were also developed with other FE and professional providers; in 1996 examples included two HNC courses in Business and in Leisure and BSc Computing Level 0 with Uxbridge College, BSc Biological Sciences Level 0 with Stanmore College, and BTEC HNC in Housing Studies with Hammersmith and West London College.⁵⁶

CAMPUS CONSOLIDATION AND DEVOLUTION

Shortly before PCL was due to be re-designated as the University of Westminster, it engaged consultants Touche Ross & Co. to investigate and make recommendations with regard to the institution's existing estate of teaching and residential accommodation. The resulting *PCL Accommodation Strategy Report* published in November 1991 was to drive the University's estate strategy for the next ten years.⁵⁷ The Report found that the institution was 'fragmented and widely dispersed' over 21 sites across London (excluding halls of residence), many of which were very small and over one third had been assessed as 'intolerable' and 'unsatisfactory' by the PCFC⁵⁸ (see pages 8 and 9 for details). The majority of the sites were within walking distance of Regent Street, but several were inconveniently spread out and Harrow was approximately 40 minutes' travelling time away in North West London. Many of the properties were old and run-down, with a huge accumulated backlog of maintenance needs (a legacy of local education authority management) as well as ongoing high running costs. But, perhaps most importantly, there was a significant 'mismatch between modern teaching and learning and the configurations of buildings', which resulted in 'perceptions of overcrowding and inadequate space for student facilities simultaneously with poor achieved utilisation rates'.⁵⁹ The institution did not have a comprehensive system for space management but initial surveys suggested that space utilisation was well below the DES target of 64 per cent, while PCFC's indicative space norms indicated that there was in fact excessive space and that the Polytechnic's current unoccupied space should be reduced by 16 per cent.

The Report also detailed some of the strengths of the estate: it was in accessible and secure locations in the heart of London; there was a significant market value for many of the sites, which could be used either as a source of finance or as security for commercial borrowing; there was ample space for development at Harrow; and there was huge scope for short-term improvements regarding capacity and space management. The Polytechnic aimed to improve the quality of the experience provided to staff and students as it established 'a distinctive and viable position for the institution as a university competing in the extremely challenging market emerging for higher education in London'.⁶⁰ In order to do this, the Report recommended that the institution followed a consolidation policy, reducing the number of sites in central London while retaining and developing Harrow. The rationale for this policy was that retaining only the West End sites was impracticable for growth but the value (financial

55 See *UOW Undergraduate Prospectuses for Entry 1999 and Entry 2002*.

56 *UOW Undergraduate Prospectus for Entry 1996*.

57 Touche Ross & Co. *PCL Accommodation Strategy Report, October/November 1991*. UWA/PCL/2/2/s/29.

58 *Ibid.*

59 *Ibid.*

60 *Ibid.*



Fig. 66

The Harrow campus was redeveloped in the mid-1990s to bring together all of the University's arts and media specialisms onto one site.

and marketing) of retaining a presence in central London was enormous, while Harrow offered the opportunity for growth on an attractive and relatively low-cost campus. Together this presented the most cost-effective and suitable option for the University.

PCL's significant property portfolio was the result of its complex history, with many sites being acquired following mergers with other institutions; for example, when Holborn College of Law, Languages and Commerce merged with Regent Street Polytechnic to create PCL in 1970, the new institution acquired Holborn's buildings at High Holborn and Red Lion Square; and in 1990 medical laboratory science courses were transferred to PCL from Paddington Technical College along with buildings at Paddington Green and Samford Street (the latter being the site of Chelsea School of Chiropody that had itself merged with Paddington in 1957). PCL had restructured shortly before its merger with Harrow College of Higher Education in 1990. Its academic departments were organised into four faculties (Business, Management and Social Studies, Engineering and Science, Environment, and Law, Languages and Communication). The Harrow merger brought new departments in all areas apart from Environment, including arts and design that had previously disappeared from the institution's academic portfolio in 1964.⁶¹ The Polytechnic's Senior Management, under Rector Professor Terence Burlin, comprised the Group Rectorate (Deputy Rector, two Pro-Rectors), Financial Controller and Company Secretary, four Deans of Faculty, the Director of Information Resource Services and the Personnel Director. (see pages 31 and 32

⁶¹ In 1964, the art schools of Regent Street Polytechnic and South Western Polytechnic were separated off and merged by the London County Council to form Chelsea School of Art, now Chelsea College of Art and Design, which is part of the University of the Arts London.



Fig. 67

The University's art courses can trace their history back to the founding of the Harrow School of Art in 1887.

for details). The problems of having such a large and dispersed estate were long-standing: duplication of resources including library and IT, catering, Students' Union and social facilities, administrative and service functions; duplication of teaching facilities and lack of easy access to specialist facilities; transportation times and costs for staff, students, equipment and materials. And, above all, fragmentation: there was no unified institutional culture and a lack of cohesion between faculties.⁶² The acquisition of the Harrow site exacerbated the problems but also presented the institution with an opportunity to solve them.

A consultation with staff on the accommodation strategy proposals was initiated during the summer of 1992, presumably once the dust had settled on the University name and status change. The Deputy Rector, Dr Geoffrey Copland, produced a summary of responses for senior management in September 1992.⁶³ Although the majority of staff strongly supported the underlying philosophy of the strategy, which was to reduce the number of sites on which the University operated and streamline the operations on each site to minimise duplication, there was considerable concern in some areas about exactly how this reduction might affect them. The main proposals of the strategy envisaged Harrow campus as the focus for communication, design and design-related subjects. It was proposed that this would entail the move of both the School of Communication (from its site in Riding House Street where it was part of the Faculty of Law, Languages and Communication) and the Faculty of the Environment (based at Marylebone Road) to new premises at Harrow. Both academic areas argued against the proposed moves: the School of Communication was concerned about the potential damage to the School's leading academic position that would be caused 'by the removal of the School from the centre of London and the centre of the British media world'.⁶⁴ It also argued that its work had 'a closer relation with Social and Policy Studies, Languages and Engineering than with Design'.⁶⁵ The Faculty of Environment similarly



Fig. 68

The School of Communication was based in Riding House Street (now known as Little Titchfield Street) throughout the 1970s and 1980s, before moving to Harrow in September 1995.

⁶² *PCL Accommodation Strategy Report, October/November 1991.* UWA/PCL/2/2/sr/29.

⁶³ *Accommodation Strategy Proposals - Responses. Report from GMC,* 21 September 1992. UWA/UOW/2/2/10/13.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Fig. 69

With more than 2,000 students in the Faculty, the University is one of the largest providers of Architecture and Built Environment education in the UK.



cited concerns over losing the attractiveness of a central London location, but the proposal for its move was slightly more complicated as it appears that the plan was to retain postgraduate teaching at Marylebone Road while transferring undergraduate work, and most staff, to Harrow. The Faculty argued that it saw no academic basis for the move and that it would be impossible to deliver courses on both sites in this way.⁶⁶ Despite the concerns, the proposals were approved by the Court of Governors and were restated in the University's revised *Estate Strategy* in November 1993.⁶⁷ In addition to the moves of Communication and Environment, it was proposed that languages, business, humanities and social sciences should be united at Marylebone Road with a single Information Resource Services (comprising library, open access computing and audio-visual services). This would potentially leave the Regent campus (consisting of buildings in Regent Street, Riding House Street and New Cavendish Street) as the focus for science, engineering, information technology and law, with a library for these subjects based in Riding House Street.⁶⁸ The total cost of the full strategy to be implemented over a ten-year period, including development at Harrow and significant refurbishment of the remaining buildings in central London, was estimated to be £101 million. It would be paid for by a mixture of sources including sales of unwanted properties, HEFCE assistance (including Hunter Funds for identified maintenance works), commercial loans and joint ventures with private funders.

HEFCE approved the first phase of the development in November 1993 and construction of academic and residential accommodation began the following year at Harrow. In 1995 the School of Communication moved to the Harrow campus. Some staff were still reluctant to relinquish their prime central London location, but the reward was brand-new accommodation, including state-of-the-art studios with extensive editing suites and post-production facilities. On 6 December 1995 HM The Queen officially opened the new Harrow Campus, home to the newly named School of Communication, Media

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ *University of Westminster Estate Strategy, November 1993.*
UWA/UOW/2/2/10/9.

⁶⁸ Ibid.



Fig. 70

In December 1995 HM the Queen, patron of the University of Westminster, visited the Harrow campus for its official opening following redevelopment.

and Design, and to student halls of residence comprising nearly 500 beds. In fact, this was to be the only proposal of the University's *Estate Strategy* that was completed as originally envisaged, as changes in the institution's financial situation, to its academic portfolio, and to its senior management, led to a revision of other aspects of the Strategy. In December 1995 Professor Terence Burlin retired from his position as Rector. He had spent over thirty-three years at the institution, first joining in 1962 as a Senior Lecturer in Radiology. His successor was former Deputy Rector, Dr Geoffrey Copland.

The first priority for the new Rector to address was the University's worsening financial situation. As previously detailed this was a period of severe financial cuts and uncertainty with the Dearing Inquiry underway but its report as yet unpublished. In March 1996 the University's Academic Council considered a new draft Strategic Plan entitled *Into the New Millennium*.⁶⁹ At the meeting, Copland tabled a *Summary of Budget Issues*, which outlined the seriousness of the financial situation. The HEFCE grant to the University for 1996/97 had been reduced by 2.2 per cent in cash terms. Although this was marginally better than the national average reduction of 2.3 per cent, once salary increments had been taken into account it was an income reduction of nearly 6 per cent

⁶⁹ *University of Westminster Strategic Plan 1996–2001: Into the New Millennium*, 1996. UWA/UOW/2/4/4. See also *Academic Council Minutes*, 27 March 1996. UWA/UOW/1/AC/7.

Fig. 71

Dr Geoffrey Copland joined PCL in 1987 and became Vice-Chancellor of the University in 1996.



in real terms. Tuition fees for full-time undergraduate students had been fixed by government at the same level as 1994/95, which meant a further 3 per cent reduction in income. The University could set its own fees for part-time and overseas students but had increased these by less than 3 per cent in order to remain competitive. Staff expenditure was nearly £42 million out of a total recurrent budget of £70 million; and in 1995/96 was over £400,000 above budget. Projected expenditure for 1996/97 on the current figures would result in a deficit of £2.4 million, and, if no reductions to the staffing budget were made, this would increase to a deficit of some £17 million by 1999/2000. The University's financial health was well below that of the sector average as it only had sufficient reserves to run the institution for twenty days (compared with the average of eighty-seven days) and cash balances for just thirteen days. What had two years previously been a small, but steady operating surplus was now being eliminated by an increasing operating turnover that was fast outpacing income.⁷⁰

The University's new *Strategic Plan* was predicated on an aggressive and competitive HE market and the continuing decline of the unit of resource. As a result, in strong contrast to previous iterations, the emphasis of the *Strategic Plan 1996–2001* was on achieving financial sustainability. Its stated strategic aim was 'to enhance the University's teaching and research quality and its public awareness and standing whilst producing a surplus to give a consistent financial

⁷⁰ UOW *Strategic Plan 1996–2001*, Appendix 1 Financial Standing.



Fig. 72

Following the addition of the Copland Building, the University's Cavendish campus was formally reopened by Alan Johnson, Secretary of State for Education and Skills, on 8 November 2006.

return of at least 3% of turnover'.⁷¹ The *Plan* was signed off by the Court of Governors on 1 July 1996 and the first priority was to reduce operating costs, and therefore staff numbers, through voluntary early retirement, no automatic replacement of posts, and tighter controls on filling vacancies.⁷² Unsurprisingly, the staffing unions were concerned at the proposed cuts, accusing the University's senior management of a 'cavalier approach' and a 'botched accommodation strategy'.⁷³ While some of the rhetoric was likely exaggerated, nonetheless the large-scale building projects undertaken by the University had contributed to the financial difficulties with a significant shortfall in the funding of equipment and fit-out at Harrow identified to have risen from £2.7 million to £5.5 million.⁷⁴

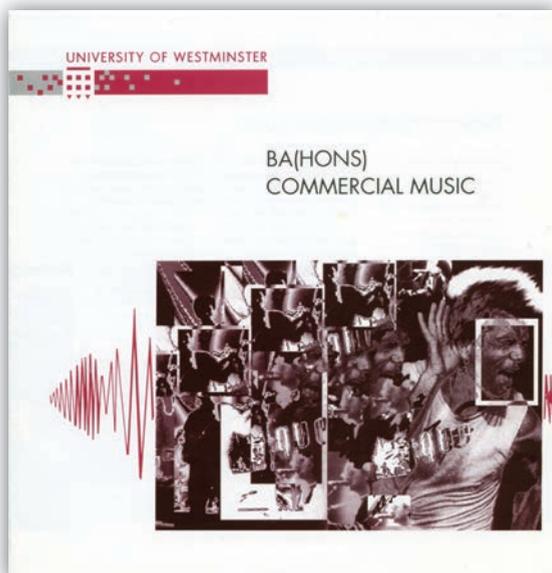
The Vice-Chancellor and Rector pressed ahead with implementation of the *Strategic Plan* and related restructuring. Over the next twelve months, the University moved to a management structure based on four campuses of roughly equal financial turnover and share of the student population: Cavendish, Harrow, Marylebone and Regent. Each campus was led by a Provost, a senior member of academic staff, who 'would be responsible for the academic and resource management of the Campus as a business unit within University's

⁷¹ *UOW Strategic Plan 1996–2001*.

⁷² *Stop Press: News from the Senior Management Group*, March 1996. UWA/UOW/2/4/2.

⁷³ *Not Stop Press: University of Westminster newsletter of Joint Unions Committee (NATFHE/UNISON/GMB)*, 1 March 1996. UWA/UOW/2/4/2.

⁷⁴ *Vice-Chancellor's Senior Management Group Minutes*, 6 February 1995. UWA/UOW/1/VC/2.



Figs. 73, 74

In 1994 the University launched the UK's first commercial music degree. Lulu and Billy Ocean have been involved with the University since the late 1990s and have both been awarded honorary doctorates, in 2000 and 2002 respectively.

⁷⁵ *Strategic Plan Implementation Progress Report October 1996*, Paper presented to the Court of Governors meeting on 28 October 1996. UWA/UOW/1/BG/1/18.

⁷⁶ *University of Westminster Analytical Account for the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2000*. Part 2: The University of Westminster's Strategic Approach to Quality Management. Paper presented to Court of Governors on 6 March 2000. UWA/UOW/1/BG/1/22.

⁷⁷ Interview with Dr Geoffrey Copland, 26 May 2011. UWA/OHP/16.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ This need had been identified by the Vice-Chancellor's Senior Management Group in 1994. *Vice-Chancellor's Senior Management Group Minutes*, 7 November 1994. UWA/UOW/1/VC/2.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

strategic and overall policy objectives and rules'.⁷⁵ The Provost was supported by a Campus Management Group comprising senior academics and finance and administrative officers. (see pages 49 and 50 for details). The aims of this new campus structure were to improve efficiency with a compact, manageable and more economical structure in which there was 'a renewed sense of community evolved in the sites encompassed within each Faculty'.⁷⁶ The former Vice-Chancellor and Rector described the process as one of shifting power from 'the bunker' to 'the colonies' as the institution's structure was regarded by some staff at the time.⁷⁷ It was hoped that devolution of responsibility for budgets and services to the campus level with a reduced core central policy and corporate group would reduce unproductive duplication, inconsistency and a lack of trust between 'the centre' and the Faculties.⁷⁸ The rationale also included a need for strategic management at the Harrow site, which had continued to retain a significant amount of independence from the rest of the University despite efforts at integration following the 1990 merger.⁷⁹

The distribution of subjects between the Campuses was largely determined by the historical pattern and co-location of subjects in the former Faculties.⁸⁰ The *Strategic Plan* identified eight themes around which the new curriculum and research developments would be focused as the University aimed to integrate current provision to secure a sound platform for expansion to meet the needs of London and wider communities into the twenty-first century. The themes were: The Information Society (interaction between media, communications, IT, digital and electronic systems); International Community (international relations, politics, diplomacy and languages); Management of People, Organisations and Society (business, human resources, law and finance); The Creative Society (design, creative arts and performing arts); Urban Environment (transport, tourism and urban environment interaction); Industrial Systems (process control, management, design and efficiency); The Living Society (biological and

behavioural sciences and environmental management); and Health (health, primary and community care).⁸¹ The academic areas were regrouped into eleven Schools with several Departments within them (see page 50).⁸² The decision to maintain two Business Schools and two Computing Schools stemmed from an intention ‘to provide the opportunity for students to follow a programme of study wholly at the suburban campus in Harrow or wholly in the West End’.⁸³ The University believed that there would be ‘an enduring demand’ for these subjects that could be studied locally by students at either Campus.⁸⁴ The Schools were expected to develop different course portfolios drawing on their particular expertise, which would differentiate Harrow courses from those offered in central London. Certain subjects were reviewed and then dropped from the curriculum, including civil engineering, which closed in January 1999 following ‘a lack of market demand’ and ‘an over-supply of civil engineering programmes in London’.⁸⁵ In 1997/98 only seventeen students out of a potential thirty were recruited. Arrangements were made with South Bank University who accepted Westminster’s first and second year BEng civil engineering undergraduates from September 1999. Podiatric medicine, which had been taught at the institution since the mid-1980s, also disappeared in 1996 as a result of a ‘lack of appropriate NHS funding for the public clinic’.⁸⁶

The University of Westminster was facing a period of considerable change and uncertainty as the external context of student funding and student demographics shifted. Confronted with continuing cuts to its income, it had to revise its plans for development to ensure growth that was financially sustainable. The institution sought to maximise efficiency and reduce operating costs under the management of a new Vice-Chancellor and through a new devolved Campus structure. This, it hoped, would support and maintain the University as it prepared to enter the new millennium.

81 *University of Westminster Strategic Plan 1996–2001*, Academic Strategy.

82 The original idea had been to emphasise the change by redesignating the Faculties as ‘Departments’, each with several ‘Divisions’ within but this was eventually rejected due to confusion over the names and the desire of several of the former Faculties to retain the name ‘School’ in their title. G.M. Copland, Vice-Chancellor and Rector, *Academic Restructuring*, 1 April 1997. Paper presented to VCEG, 7 April 1997. UWA/UOW/1/VC/1/42.

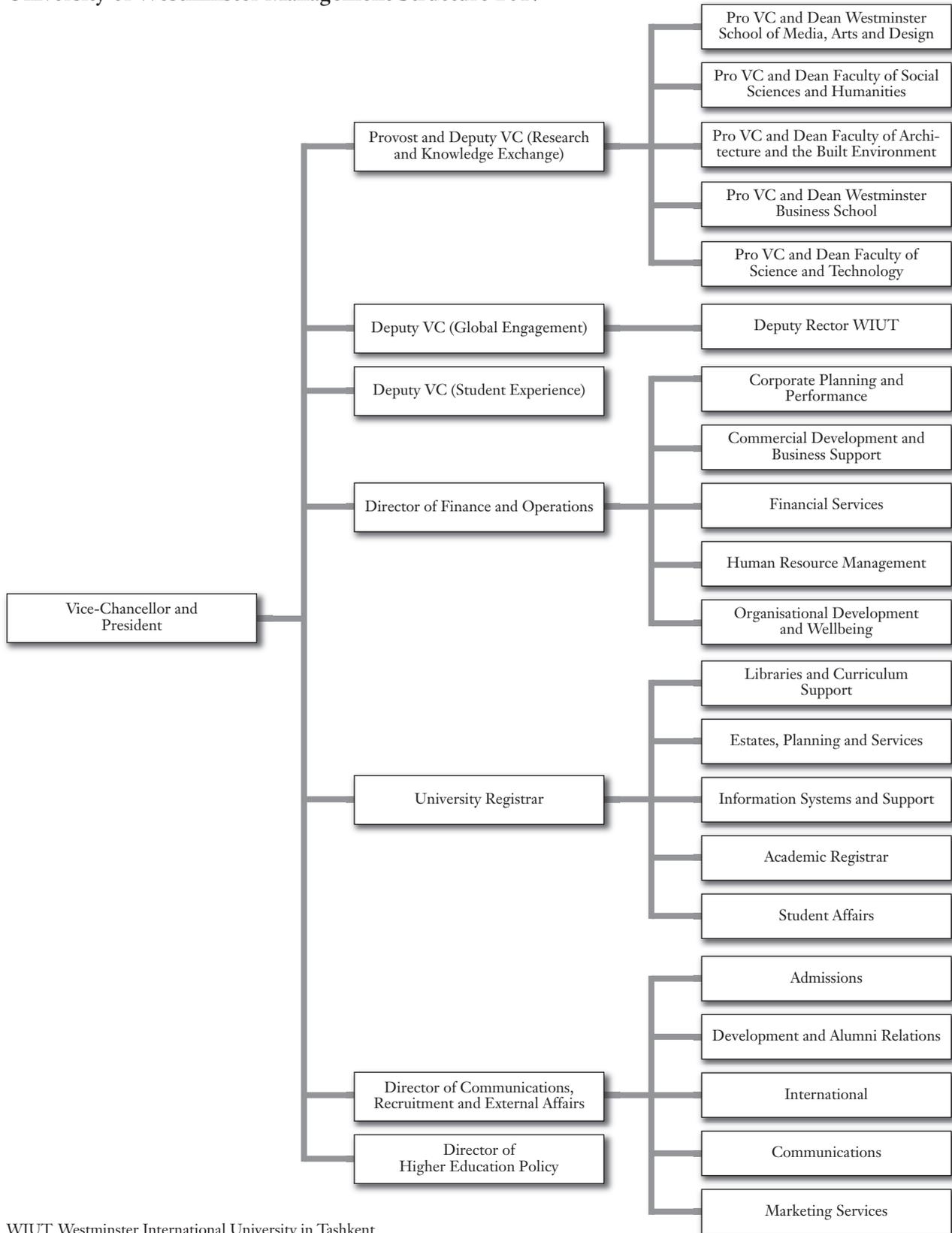
83 *UOW Analytical Account for the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2000*.

84 *Ibid.*

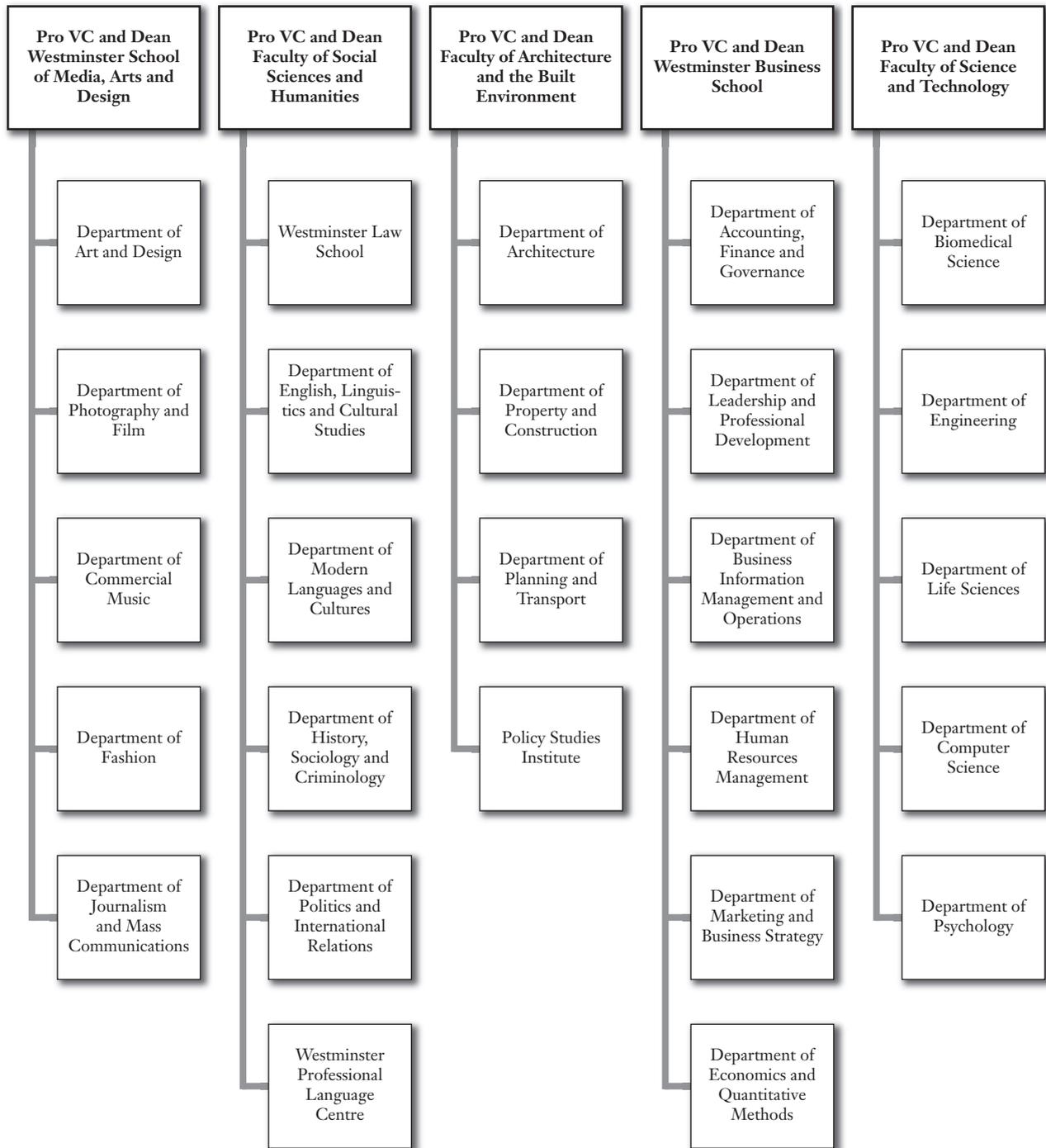
85 *Clarion*, 23 November 1998 and *The Smoke*, 7, 1–15 February 1999.

86 *Clarion*, 54, 8 July 1994.

University of Westminster Management Structure 2017



University of Westminster Academic Faculty Structure 2017



Into the New Millennium

CHOICE AND COMPETITION

Into the twenty-first century, the UK higher education sector continued to be increasingly competitive and regulated as public funding levels decreased yet further. All universities were under pressure to reduce costs, demonstrate value for money, and to lessen their dependence on funding council grants. Against this difficult backdrop, the University of Westminster sought to sustain its mission. The University continued to rationalise its estate and its academic portfolio; it built on its research strengths, aided by increased access to and awards of research funding; and it explored income diversification and a risky but potentially rewarding programme of international collaborations. Throughout this period of near-constant change, the University found stability in its traditional values, redefined for the twenty-first century, but rooted in the vocational, technical skills agenda of its founders.

The student funding regime introduced by the New Labour government in 1998 was short-lived. It had done little to increase widening participation, and shortfalls in income remained; in 2003 a new White Paper entitled *The Future of Higher Education*¹ recommended a settlement more along the lines originally envisaged by Dearing.² The resulting *2004 Higher Education Act* reintroduced maintenance grants (up to £2,700 for those households earning £17,500 or less) and a means-tested maintenance loan (up to £4,405, or £6,710 in London).³ The upfront tuition fee was abolished and was replaced by a new variable deferred fee capped at £3,000 that all students had to pay. Every student qualified for a new interest-free tuition fee loan, repayable after studying, on an income-contingent basis and the threshold for repayments was raised from £10,000 to £15,000 p.a. The tuition fees were still ‘top up fees’ as they were intended to supplement rather than replace the core funding from the government. The fees were variable and each institution could choose what they charged up to the £3,000 limit. Universities that charged the maximum were obliged to give a minimum of £300 in bursaries to students from low-income families (meaning that these students would receive the equivalent of the cost of the fee through grant and bursary awards).⁴ Virtually all institutions

1 DfES White Paper, *The Future of Higher Education*, Cm. 5735 (London: HMSO, 2003).

2 Nicholas Hillman, ‘From grants for all to loans for all: Undergraduate finance from the implementation of the Anderson Report (1962) to the implementation of the Browne Report (2012)’, *Contemporary British History*, 27.3 (2013), pp. 249–70. See also Chapter 5.

3 Polly Curtis, ‘All Change’, *The Guardian*, 4 August 2005.

4 Curtis.

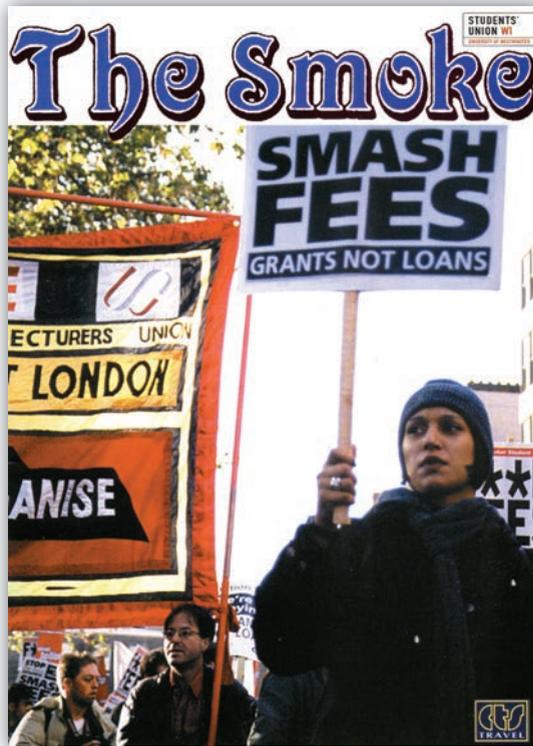


Fig. 75

Student fees have remained a controversial subject since their introduction in 1998.

adopted the £3,000 fee from the start of the 2006/07 academic year. These arrangements only applied in England; post-devolution, Scotland had already introduced a different fee regime and from the mid-2000s Wales and Northern Ireland also introduced different HE funding regimes for home-domiciled students. Divergence of policy between the UK constituent countries continues to the present day.

The changes were still unsustainable in terms of institutional income, and the pressure on funding, coupled with the demand for higher education places, was exacerbated by the global financial crisis and recession of 2008/09. In November 2009 an Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance under Lord Browne was established to examine widening participation, the affordability of higher education for students and taxpayers, and how to simplify the current system of support.⁵ The *Browne Report* made several recommendations ‘based on giving students the ability to make an informed choice of where and what to study. Competition generally raises quality’.⁶ The report recommended a radical departure from the existing system of HE finance: ‘rather than the Government providing a block grant to HEIs, their finance now follows the student who has chosen and been admitted to study’.⁷ The basis of the new system was diversity: ‘England’s HEIs are very varied, in the type of student they attract, the standards of attainment they require for entry, the courses taught and so on. [...] And since one size does not fit all, we would expect the result to be that HEIs will set varied charges for courses’.⁸ In May 2010, the UK government changed to a Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition and there was a noticeable shift further towards finding ways to

⁵ *The Browne Report: Securing A Sustainable Future for Higher Education. An Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance* (London: BIS, 12 October 2010).

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

Fig. 76

Each September, a Fresbers' Fair is held on each of the University's main sites for new and returning students. The events have free gifts and discounts on offer, and showcase the many societies and sporting clubs offered by the Students' Union as well as the University's support services and facilities including learning resources, counselling and career development.



expand HE while reducing the cost to the State. Students were now conceived of as customers who exercised choice in paying for a product in a market, and who would drive the development of the HE system by reshaping it through competition between institutions.⁹ The government abandoned the 'top up' idea and instead proposed a raised tuition fee to cover the entire cost of teaching and to replace the teaching element of the State grant to institutions. Two fees were suggested: a standard fee of £6,000 designed to drive efficiencies and an upper fee of £9,000 for those universities who signed up to a more robust access regime to encourage more applicants from under-represented groups. Both the means-tested maintenance grant and the means-tested maintenance loan were increased to cover nearly three-quarters of the proportion of tuition costs. An interest rate of 3 per cent plus inflation was now to be payable on outstanding loans by students earning at least £21,000, making repayments more like a graduate tax.¹⁰ For the first time, part-time students would be eligible for tuition fee loans to ensure Browne's recommendation that 'those studying for a degree part time will be given proportionate access to funding to those studying full time'.¹¹ The legislative framework established by the *2004 Higher Education Act* meant that a new Act was not required to enact the proposed reforms, but instead simply an amendment to the secondary legislation was required, which, despite student protests and the abstention of several MPs, was passed in December 2010. Although universities had a choice as to what fee rate to charge, between £6,000 and £9,000, once again, virtually all chose to introduce the higher fee; 82 of the 122 institutions charged the maximum for at least one course in 2012/13 and this rose to 94 out of 122 in 2013/14.¹² The University of Westminster implemented £9,000 standard fees for all new full-time first degree courses starting in 2012/13. Most other London universities

⁹ Robert Anderson, *University Fees in Historical Perspective*, History and Policy Paper, 8 February 2016.

¹⁰ Hillman.

¹¹ *The Browne Report*, p. 2.

¹² Graeme Paton, 'Most universities to raise fees in 2013', *The Telegraph*, 13 January 2013. In 2016/17 only four English universities offer some courses for less than £9,000: Buckinghamshire New University, University of Chichester, London Metropolitan University and University of Sunderland. www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk

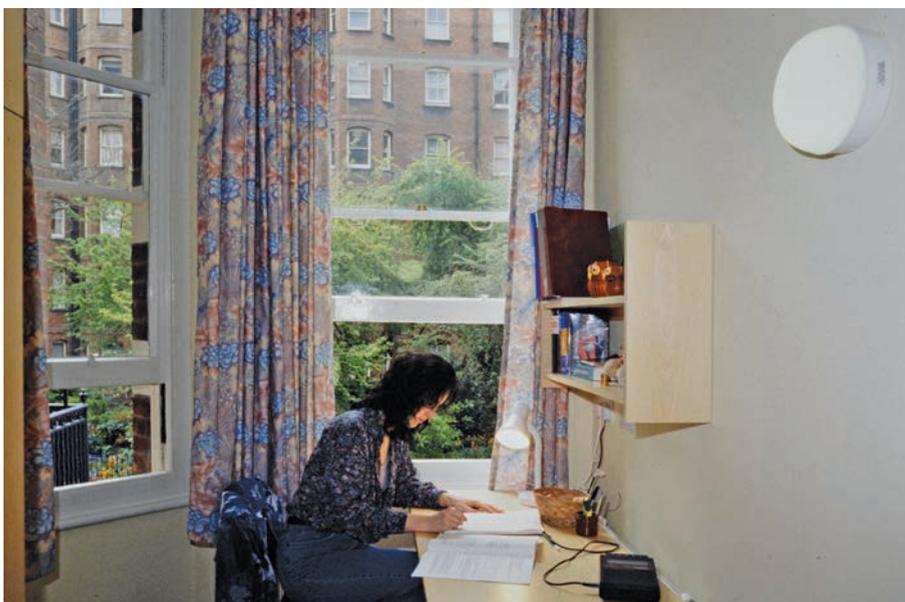


Fig. 77

From 2012 the University offered credit for Halls of Residence fees as part of its package of student financial support.

did the same, and even those institutions that chose lower fees nonetheless kept them towards the top end of the range (i.e. London South Bank: £8,400; Kingston: £8,500; Greenwich: £8,300).¹³

ACCESS AND WIDENING PARTICIPATION

The Office for Fair Access (OFFA) was established in 2004 as an independent public body regulating fair access to HE in England. OFAA ‘approves and monitors access agreements in which universities set out their tuition fees and how they plan to improve or sustain access’.¹⁴ All publicly funded HEIs in England must have access agreements approved by OFFA’s Director of Fair Access to be allowed to charge fees higher than £6,000; and all are made publicly available on OFFA’s website. The access agreements approved for the University of Westminster demonstrate both the unique challenges of the demographics of its student body and its continuing commitment to widening participation. In 2006/07, when variable tuition fees were first introduced, the University of Westminster had approximately 23,000 students, 12,000 of whom were Home/EU students studying for a first degree and 81 per cent of them were full-time.¹⁵ Of the new entrants at the University on full-time first degrees, 95 per cent were state-educated and 40 per cent were from lower socio-economic groups NS-SEC 4-7 (compared with locally-adjusted benchmarks of 91 per cent and 32 per cent respectively). The ethnic breakdown of these students was as follows: 35 per cent White, 36 per cent Asian/Asian British, 12 per cent Black/Black British and 12 per cent Mixed/Other ethnic group. Compared with the UK’s entire student population of new entrants on full-time first degrees, Westminster had half of the average population of White students, four times the population of Asian/Asian British and Black/Black British students and twice the population of Mixed/Other ethnic group students. London census

¹³ University Access Agreements 2012/13, approved by the Office for Fair Access (OFFA).

¹⁴ www.offa.org.uk

¹⁵ *University of Westminster Access Agreement 2006/07*, updated 7 September 2005.

Fig. 78

The windows at 309 Regent Street have long served as a prominent shopfront for the institution.



data also showed that all non-White ethnic groups were represented in higher proportions in the University's full-time first degree student population than in the London population as a whole.¹⁶ These figures meant that the University of Westminster had higher than average numbers of its students who would be disadvantageously impacted by the introduction of higher tuition fees and these were the same students who were under-represented in HE and likely to be discouraged from participating by the increased financial burden. The University already had a generous scholarships scheme of nearly £1 million, which it now expanded to meet the growing financial and support needs of its students. It consistently exceeded the minimum required levels of bursary to students and particularly focused on assistance for students studying at its partnership colleges and the provision of awards to disabled students.¹⁷

One of the University's main concerns was the non-completion rate of its full-time first degree students, which was 13 per cent in 2006/07, higher than the 9 per cent national average.¹⁸ The institution therefore began to refine its financial support provision for access 'to encompass recruitment, including the design of pathway programmes into HE, and activities to support retention and completion'.¹⁹ From 2012/13, the University match-funded the National Scholarships Programme,²⁰ which was available to students at the institution across all subject areas by allocating additional funding for students as they progressed to their second and final years of study. Some 74 per cent of its students benefited from the new support package that included different options students could choose from (including additional fee waivers, credits for Halls

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ *University of Westminster Access Agreement 2007/08*, approved 16 March 2007.

¹⁸ *UOW Access Agreement 2006/07*.

¹⁹ *University of Westminster Access Agreement 2012/13*, July 2011.

²⁰ The National Scholarships Programme, administered by HEFCE, was provided to eligible students in their first year between 2012/13 and 2014/15 and aimed to help individual students from low-income backgrounds as they entered HE.

of Residence fees, study support packages including laptop and credits with campus-based Marylebone Books, a travel award and a Graduate Development Award for mentoring, internships and career development post-graduation). Each student could choose a maximum £1,000 cash payment as an option within a total package worth £6,000.²¹ The extension of the student finance regime to part-time students in 2012/13 meant that the University could also extend its support provision to these students who continued to make up a significant proportion of its student body, even though the proportion of part-time students had decreased since 2003/04. In 2009/10, 35.5 per cent of students at Westminster were studying part-time and this figure fell to almost 14 per cent by 2012/13.²² During the same period, part-time student numbers had also declined nationally, possibly as a result of the prohibitive funding regime, although the proportion of part-time students was now higher than at the University of Westminster, with a national average of 28.1 per cent.²³

The University of Westminster raised its level of investment in access and retention from 22 per cent to 32 per cent of its additional fee income (15 per cent was OFFA's recommended benchmark).²⁴ It continued to build on its collaborative partnerships. In the mid-1990s, the Westminster Group network of FE colleges had been established, through which the University had jointly designed Foundation Degrees since 2002 to provide a direct route to employment with a link to honours degree level study. It also participated in the successful Aimhigher Student Ambassador Scheme by selecting and training highly motivated Westminster students as mentors for school pupils and college students, acting also as campus guides and facilitators for the National Student Survey. Westminster students also participated in the Student Associates Scheme, funded by the Training and Development Agency, which trained students to work as classroom assistants for a total of six weeks in schools in disadvantaged areas of London. The University hosted the scheme since its inception in 2008 and extended it from 2011/12 beyond STEM subjects across all disciplines.²⁵

The University shares its founder with the Quintin Kynaston School in North London, 40 per cent of whose pupils come from two of the most deprived wards in the UK and 89 per cent of its pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. Despite these challenges, in 2012/13 the school was in the top three for progress for 11–19 year olds, and 91 per cent of its pupils stayed on to Sixth Form, compared with a national average of 55 per cent. The University supported the school in many different ways including offering places for Year 13 pupils and supporting initiatives such as the Displaced or Vulnerable in Education programme, which located accommodation and mentoring support for those likely to withdraw from studies. Other outreach activities included the Student Care Leavers' Scheme (for which the University was awarded the Frank Buttle Trust Quality Mark in 2008), AchieveAbility projects including a pilot programme for young male offenders with Specific Learning Difficulties, two thirds of whom were motivated to engage with HE subsequently, and the Pro Bono Law Office and Innocence Project that provided value to the community and developed the professional practice skills of LLB students.

21 *UOW Access Agreement 2012/13*.

22 *Students in UK Higher Education Institutions 2003/04–2009/10* (HESA); *University of Westminster Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 July 2013*.

23 HESA, *Students in UK Higher Education Institutions 2012/13* (HESA, 2014).

24 *Ibid.*

25 *Ibid.* STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Fig. 79

In 1995 the Victorian swimming pool was converted into a student social and study space called The Deep End.



Fig. 80

The University's Student Ambassadors take part in a wide range of outreach activities such as Higher Education fairs and Open Days.



The University continued to review and evolve its financial provision in support of access and sought feedback from students as to its effectiveness.²⁶ Following consultation with student groups in 2012 (including Student Ambassadors, Student Associates and the Students' Union), the emerging consensus was that:

students would benefit more from an extension of infrastructure support for extra-curricular activities such as internships and work shadowing, short study abroad programmes and extension of volunteering opportunities. The development of employability and community engagement attributes are valued more highly by students than reduced fee levels.²⁷

²⁶ *University of Westminster Access Agreement 2013/14*, May 2012, amended July 2012.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

The University established several new outreach programmes including Westminster Saturday University, which adapted its Nobel Laureate series of outreach lectures to attract and motivate young people in inner city schools and colleges to aspire to university; Westminster's Great Start, which provided personalised support for new students in partnership with the UWSU by recruiting FANS (Friends of Arriving New Students) to help freshers settle in and make the most of their time at the university; the Student Associates Scheme, formerly funded by the Training and Development Agency, had been redesigned solely for Westminster students and was now wholly resourced by the University; and the University continued to support the Student Ambassadors Scheme which, by 2013, had trained nearly 650 Ambassadors who were contributing to the institution's access and outreach programme.²⁸

Since the mid-2000s, the demographics of the University's student population have remained fairly constant and continue to exceed many national benchmarks in terms of access: in 2016/17, 96 per cent of its first degree students were state educated, 50.4 per cent come from lower socio-economic backgrounds and 5.2 per cent from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (compared with benchmarks of 93.4 per cent, 36 per cent and 6.7 per cent respectively).²⁹ The University has also successfully reduced its non-continuation rate to 7.4 per cent. It continues to sustain a progression model of support with a shift to a cash choice for eligible students in their second and final years that has proved popular. Westminster Achievement Awards of £1,000 p.a. have also been a significant contribution to student retention and a motivator for full-time and part-time students to maintain their high academic performance.³⁰ In 2016/17 the University's financial support for students in financial need totalled nearly £2 million, supplemented by individual donor awards for students with hidden or specific disabilities, or those disadvantaged and coming from Further and Adult Education Colleges. The University also continues to support students from middle-income backgrounds in recognition of the higher living costs in the capital as well as prioritising Care Leavers, Disabled students and students progressing from Access to HE courses. The future of student funding is yet again uncertain following the publication of the government's White Paper: *Higher Education: Success as a Knowledge Economy* in May 2016. The subsequent *Higher Education and Research Bill 2017* proposes, among other things, a new Office for Students, incentivising excellent teaching by linking a new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) with tuition fees, and making it easier and quicker for new providers to apply for full degree-awarding powers and university titles.³¹ Nonetheless, with numerous outreach activities including new developments such as the Sir Simon Milton Westminster University Technical College in Victoria,³² the University of Westminster's access arrangements continue a commitment to its founder's aim of providing access to learning for those who could benefit, irrespective of social class or income.³³ Its 2017/18 Access Agreement reconfirms the institution's commitment to access and learning opportunities across diverse communities in London and beyond, supporting access and outreach as well as student success and progression leading to graduate level employability.³⁴

Fig. 81

In 1976 PCL's Exploration Society sponsored an ecological research expedition to the Tana River in Kenya.

Fig. 82

PCL's research activities in the 1980s included assessing the impact of town planning on women for the Greater London Council, the development of a prototype public access catalogue supported by the British Library, and testing the concrete for tunnels at Heathrow's Terminal 4.

28 Ibid.

29 *University of Westminster Access Agreement 2016/17*, 23 April 2015.

30 Ibid.

31 BIS White Paper, *Higher Education: Success as a Knowledge Economy, Cm.9258* (London: HMSO, May 2016). The *Higher Education and Research Act 2017* received Royal Assent on 27 April 2017, having been pushed through in the pre-General Election 'wash-up' period. Its full impact is yet to be determined.

32 The Sir Simon Milton Westminster University Technical College is due to open in September 2017 and will provide opportunities for internships and mentoring alongside technical challenges to integrate academic and vocational learning in the specialisms of transport engineering and construction engineering and management. The project is a collaboration between the University, the Sir Simon Milton Foundation and companies in the Westminster Employer Alliance (including Network Rail, Transport for London, BT Fleet, Land Securities and Mace).

33 *UOW Access Agreement 2016/17*.34 *University of Westminster Access Agreement 2017/18*, 22 April 2015, revised 6 July 2016.



THE GROWTH OF RESEARCH

From the late 1990s, the University of Westminster began to greatly expand on its research as the institution built upon its well-regarded but fundamentally low output of research projects that was a legacy of the polytechnic funding system. One of the main arguments for the abolition of the binary line that had divided UK higher education prior to 1992 was the fact that polytechnics and colleges did not have access to the same public research funds as the university sector.³⁵ For example, in 1987/88, the Department for Education and Science allocated £575 million to the Research Councils to which both sectors could apply for funding; at the same time the University Grants Committee received an additional £712 million for the general support of research in universities.³⁶ Despite the perceived unfair treatment, high-quality research was undertaken within the non-university sector of HE. PCL steadily grew its sponsored research from industry, government and research agencies from a research income of £30,000 in 1970 to £3,500,000 in 1988.³⁷ Following the removal of the binary divide in 1992, the ex-polytechnics were eligible to participate in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) for the first time, with the money previously allocated to the UGC now transferred to the Higher Education Funding Councils.³⁸ The RAE had taken place every four-to-five years since 1986 and its purpose was to evaluate the quality of research in the UK's HEIs. The exercise was 'used to produce research ratings which will be used [...] in the determination of grant for research'.³⁹ Each institution submitted research under specific subject areas, or Units of Assessment, for ranking by a subject specialist peer review panel.

The methodology of the RAE had been the subject of debate since its inception, but criticisms of the process increased following the 1992 exercise. Despite some arguments for the need to level the playing field between the old and new universities, the Funding Council decided that its primary objective

³⁵ See Chapter 2.

³⁶ Professor Terence Burlin, 'A Polytechnic Perspective on the Future of Research in Higher Education. A Call for the Removal of Government Inconsistency', 24 October 1988. Circulated with the *Rector's Newsletter*, January 1989. UWA/PCL/5/2/b/137.

³⁷ *Circular to All Staff*, May 1988. UWA/PCL/5/2/b/137.

³⁸ The 'dual support' system for research continued – with funds allocated by the Research Councils for prospective research projects allocated to particular researchers, and funds allocated selectively to institutions by the HEFCs on the basis of previous performance as measured by the RAE.

³⁹ Universities Funding Council, *Research Assessment Exercise 1992. Universities Fund Council Circular Letter, 5/92* (Bristol: UFC, 1992), p. 1.

was not to destabilise institutions.⁴⁰ Decisions about how funding would be distributed as a whole resulted in more money going to areas that generally were the purview of the old universities; for example, subjects in which the former polytechnics dominated such as Communication and Media Studies, and Art and Design shared £775,000 and £2,516,300 respectively; while hospital-based Clinical Studies, an area in which the old universities were major providers, shared £37,189,700.⁴¹ Additionally, a safety net was introduced to ensure that no institution lost more than 1 per cent of its previous year's funding, again benefiting primarily the old universities. One reviewer of the 1992 RAE wrote:

Not a single institution failed to obtain research funds in the 1992 exercise for some of its departments. [...] an exercise which had been intended to concentrate research in fewer institutions had in fact led to its spread to all the institutions in a much enlarged system.⁴²

However, there was also 'an unintended positive consequence: some of the research in the new universities actually turned out to be rather good'.⁴³ The University of Westminster received £1,421,000 in research funding (comprising £972,600 Quality Related Funding, £61,200 Contract Related Funding and £387,200 Development Related Funding).⁴⁴ In terms of total income the University came tenth out of the new universities and 'was quite comparable with the leaders' in terms of quality ratings.⁴⁵ However, it was clear that a number of the new universities exceeded Westminster in the volume of research-active staff at the institution.

The next RAE was in 1996, which barely gave most new universities time to demonstrate the full impact of research that had been funded in 1993/94 as a result of the previous exercise.⁴⁶ Additional criticisms were made regarding the structure of the RAE's Units of Assessment (UoA), which tended to be 'in well-established disciplines', disadvantaging the interdisciplinary work common to many of the new universities.⁴⁷ The University of Westminster submitted in all but three UoAs and maintained or increased its rating across all submissions. In 1992 the University had received one 5 rating, indicating 'research quality that equates to attainable levels of international excellence in up to half of the research activity submitted and to attainable levels of national excellence in virtually all of the remainder'⁴⁸ in Communications and Media Studies. In 1996, it retained this grading and also scored a rating of 4 ('research quality that equates to attainable levels of national excellence in virtually all of the research activity submitted, showing some evidence of international excellence') in two further UoAs: Italian and Art and Design.⁴⁹ The University's Academic Council recorded that the RAE had been an outstanding success for the University, which had improved its position in the overall league table among new universities from tenth to second place.⁵⁰ The University believed that its success in the RAE was a result of its approach that viewed research, scholarship and teaching as a continuum. It welcomed recommendations in the *Dearing Report* that research excellence should be supported wherever it was found, but

40 *Letter to all staff*, March 1993. UWA/PCL/5/2/b/138.

41 *Ibid.*

42 Lewis Elton, 'The UK Research Assessment Exercise: Unintended Consequences', *Higher Education Quarterly*, 54.3 (July 2000), pp. 274–83.

43 Elton, p. 276.

44 *Letter to all staff*, March 1993. UWA/PCL/5/2/b/138.

45 *Ibid.*

46 Clive Booth, 'Pockets of good practice', *THES*, 20 September 1996.

47 Elton, p. 277.

48 *Research Assessment Exercise 1992. Universities Fund Council Circular Letter*, 5/92, Annex C.

49 *RAE 2001 Submission*. UWA/UOW/4/9/2.

50 *Academic Council Minutes*, 15 January 1997. UWA/UOW/1/AC/8.

Fig. 83

In 2007 Professor Geoffrey Petts, Vice-Chancellor of the University, visited China to build on institutional links dating back to the 1970s.



Fig. 84

The Harrow IRS centre was opened in 1995 and provides library and IT support for students and staff.



argued that the definition of research assessed by the RAE was too restrictive and that its panels should take 'greater account of interdisciplinary and applied research'.⁵¹

The University of Westminster entered more research-active staff into the RAE 2001 (219 staff compared with 194 in 1996), spread across all but two UoAs. The institution achieved grade 5 ratings in Communications, Cultural and Media Studies, in Law, in Linguistics and in Asian Studies; and grade 4 ratings in Electrical and Electronic Engineering, in Politics and International Relations, and in Art and Design. The University received nearly £5.5 million in research grants from HEFCE, but the distribution of funding was still disproportionately

⁵¹ *Dearing Report. Report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education: Higher Education in the Learning Society* (London: DfEE, 1997), Sect. 11, see also Chapter 5; *University of Westminster Response to National Inquiry into Higher Education*, 3 October 1997. UWA/UOW/2/4/2.

weighted towards the pre-1992 institutions as only 24 out of 174 institutions that contributed received three-quarters of the funding available.⁵²

As the University began to prepare for the RAE 2008, it underwent a series of internal transformations. On 1 August 2007 the University welcomed a new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Geoff Petts, following the retirement of Dr Geoffrey Copland CBE after almost thirty years at the institution. Over the next twelve months, the structure and academic portfolio of the University was reviewed and significant changes made. Despite its creditable aims, the devolved campus structure had proved problematic both in terms of cost and control.⁵³ Each of the four campuses, led by an academic Campus Provost, was semi-autonomous, responsible for its own student administration, finance, marketing, facilities and IT services. Only libraries and HR remained centrally managed. This had created a great deal of costly duplication of teams and activities. The small central administration had continued to retain overall responsibility in areas such as academic governance and academic regulations, but found this increasingly difficult when it had no line management responsibility over campus staff who implemented the policies. The former Registrar and Secretary, Carole Mainstone, described how ‘some people had enjoyed quite a lot of freedom, not being scrutinised by an academic Provost and they had built little empires and activities of their own’.⁵⁴ Control over their own budgets and the different management styles of the Provosts had created four different environments in which the student experience varied depending on the campus at which the student studied. The new Vice-Chancellor decided to replace a devolved campus structure with a unitary administration, managed centrally but delivered locally, in an effort to make financial savings, improve efficiency and effectiveness and to ensure academic integrity. His goal was to overcome the problems of having a multi-site institution by focusing on the concept of ‘One University’ in which ‘staff and students will be treated coherently across the University in everything they do’.⁵⁵

The process of integrating five teams into one began with IT services in November 2007, before being rolled out across all functions in January 2008. Reporting lines for each non-academic service were moved to the appropriate Corporate Services director, reinforcing the professional identity and accountability of the services. The central administrative functions had been rebranded as ‘Corporate Services’ in 2004 and investment in training and staff development had led to the successful achievement of the internationally recognised Investors in People award in December 2006.⁵⁶ Following the implementation of a comprehensive management programme that had been completed by 170 Corporate Services managers by June 2011, the division gained the national Customer First Standard in 2013. The role of Campus Provost was discontinued from 1 August 2008, with the Provosts becoming Pro Vice-Chancellors with cross-institutional responsibilities. (see page 71 for details).

As well as streamlining the administrative structure of the University, the new senior management also reviewed the academic portfolio, most notably the historical legacy of two Computer Schools and two Business Schools, one

52 *University of Westminster Report and Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31 July 2003*; Stephen Sharp and Simon Coleman, ‘Ratings in the RAE 2001: the Patterns of University Status and Panel Membership’, *Higher Education Quarterly*, 59.2 (April 2005), pp. 153–71 (p. 155).

53 See Chapter 5.

54 Interview with Carole Mainstone, 19 November 2014, UWA/OHP/69.

55 *Message from Vice-Chancellor and Rector*, 30 October 2007 [all UOW staff email].

56 The IIP standard defines what it takes to lead, support and manage people well for sustainable results. The award was a significant achievement. The ‘central’ administration had been awarded IIP during the devolved structure period but new assessment was required when the unitary administration was created due to its size and complexity. Corporate Services has since gone beyond the core IIP standard, achieving the Silver award in October 2014.



Figs. 85, 86

The University continues to invest in its infrastructure and to update its campuses to meet the requirements of contemporary higher education.

each at the Harrow and Marylebone campuses.⁵⁷ The fundamental size of the institution did not change, but it was reshaped from a Campus to a School-based structure with a reduced number of seven schools: Architecture and Built Environment; Business (merging the Westminster Business School and the Harrow Business School); Electronic Engineering, Computer Science and Informatics (merging Cavendish Computer School and Harrow Computer School); Life Sciences (merging the School of Integrated Health and the School of Biosciences); Law; Media, Art and Design; and Social Sciences, Humanities and Languages.⁵⁸ In August 2013, the academic management structure was refined yet further and consolidated into five Faculties. (see pages 93 and 94 for details).

The University entered 253 researchers in 20 Units of Assessment in the 2008 RAE, a 30 per cent increase on the previous exercise, indicating the breadth as well as the quality of its research.⁵⁹ Eighty per cent was judged to be of international quality or above with the institution doing well in areas as varied as Architecture, Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Art and Design, Business and Management Studies, Allied Health Professions and Studies, Computer Science and Informatics, and Law. The results placed Westminster 55–71 in the national research league tables and among the leading post-1992 institutions.⁶⁰ In 2006 the government announced that a new framework would follow the 2008 RAE ‘to keep quality at the heart of the assessment process, whilst reducing the administrative burden on universities’.⁶¹ The new Research Excellence Framework (REF), introduced in 2014, focused on assessing three elements that together reflect the key characteristics of research excellence: Outputs, Impact and Environment, each element graded on a five-point scale (unclassified, one-star to four-star) by an expert panel.⁶² Four outputs over five years could be submitted by each researcher and ‘significant additional recognition will be given where researchers have built on excellent research to deliver demonstrable benefits to the economy, society, public policy, culture or quality of life’.⁶³ Once again, the reforms were not without criticism about the

⁵⁷ See Chapter 5.

⁵⁸ *Message from the Vice-Chancellor: State of the Nation*, 31 August 2008 [all UOW staff email].

⁵⁹ *Research Assessment Exercise e-newsletter from Vice-Chancellor and Rector*, 18 December 2008 [all UOW staff email].

⁶⁰ *Update from the Vice-Chancellor*, 3 March 2009 [all UOW staff email].

⁶¹ Alan Johnson, Education Secretary, *Press release: Response to consultation on successor to research assessment exercise*, 6 December 2006.

⁶² HEFCE, *The Research Excellence Framework: A brief guide to the proposals*, October 2009.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

cost and methodology of the exercise, including accusations that ‘impact’ assessment undermined academic freedoms and could not be measured in any meaningful way.⁶⁴ HEFCE, however, described the results of the REF 2014, in which 6,975 impact case studies were submitted, as positively endorsing the approach:

These studies provide a unique and invaluable source of information of the impact of UK research. [...] Universities engage with a range of public, private and charitable organisations and local communities. Analysis found that these wider impacts and benefits often stem from interdisciplinary work.⁶⁵

The University of Westminster reported ‘a distinguished performance overall with an increase in research strength represented by an increased Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.74 (against 2.23 in 2008)’.⁶⁶ Notable successes included the University’s Centre for Research and Education in Arts and Music and the Communication and Media Research Institute consolidating their leading positions, ranked within the top five of UK universities with 87 per cent and 91 per cent respectively of their work judged as world-leading; and English Language and Literature was rated among the top 20 departments in the UK. The University successfully demonstrated the wider impact of much of its research in Law, Area Studies (Chinese) and Business. Leading projects in Subjects Allied to Medicine focused on the development of a rapid diagnostic system for Ebola in Africa and a European Space Agency project on targeted systems for forest fires; while in Computer Science, knowledge transfer projects included a collaborative development of intelligent computer-based solutions to deal with hand-written documents and a project to optimise access to cloud computing by small and medium enterprises.⁶⁷ The University’s results placed it in the top half of all UK universities, with nearly two-thirds of its research rated as world-leading or internationally excellent and gained almost £4.5 million in HEFCE research funding.

The future of research funding, like the wider student finance system, is currently uncertain. An independent review of the REF chaired by Lord Stern published its report in July 2016, recommending incremental changes including a shift towards a model that includes all ‘research active’ staff, more emphasis on interdisciplinary work, and a broadening of the way impact is defined to include links to larger research work and wider impacts of teaching and public engagement.⁶⁸ More detailed guidance is due to be published in 2017 in preparation for REF 2021. The debates surrounding the assessment of research excellence in HEIs are likely to continue, given the £1.6 billion in funding available and the profound influence it has on research cultures, incentives and management practices. The University aims to continue its momentum in research success, building on the reintroduction of sabbaticals in 2013/14 and the development of targeted mentoring programmes for staff. It is also continuing to develop support and resources for its research students through its Graduate School and a new Virtual Research Environment.

⁶⁴ For example, UCU, *Challenging the ‘Impact’ element of the REF assessment*, 1 October 2013; Peter Scott, ‘Why research assessment is out of control’, *The Guardian*, 4 November 2013; Derek Sayer, ‘Five reasons why the REF is not fit for purpose’, *The Guardian*, 15 December 2004.

⁶⁵ HEFCE, *REF Impact*, www.hefce.ac.uk

⁶⁶ *University of Westminster Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 July 2015*.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ BEIS, *Building on Success and Learning from Experience. An Independent Review of the Research Exercise Framework*, 28 July 2016 (London: HMSO, 2016).

Fig. 87

The University was presented with the Queen's Award for Enterprise in International Trade in 2000. The University won its second Award five years later.



OVERSEAS STUDENTS AND TRANS-NATIONAL EDUCATION

In the early 1990s there was minimal overseas activity taking place at the University of Westminster. The University had a larger than average proportion of international students (11.7 per cent of its full-time undergraduate and postgraduate students were domiciled overseas prior to starting their courses, compared with national figures of 10.4 per cent for all full-time and part-time students),⁶⁹ but almost all of its in-country operations had stopped. Its predecessor, the Polytechnic of Central London, had been particularly active, even adventurous perhaps, in overseas activities and not all had been successful. It had expanded relationships forged by its Diplomatic Academy,⁷⁰ including with the Libyan Secretariat of Education. Following successful training programmes run in London for Libyan technical teachers, in 1983 PCL agreed to provide services in connection with the establishment and operation of a Libyan Technical Institute in Malta.⁷¹ These services included the provision of academic and administrative staff, arrangements for the formal validation of the Institute's qualifications and the supply of materials and maintenance of equipment in the classrooms and laboratories. However, the venture became fraught with difficulties: not least the impact of significant political unrest in Libya which led to the UK breaking off diplomatic relations with the country in 1984. PCL suffered operational problems and incurred financial losses, resulting in the management of the project being investigated by an ILEA Committee of Inquiry. PCL's Court of Governors recommended the phasing out of all existing overseas projects and announced that no new projects were to be commenced until more robust administrative, accounting and reporting mechanisms were

⁶⁹ *Students at UK Higher Education Institutions 1994/95* (HESA, 1996). Figures for part-time students are not available at institutional-level for this period.

⁷⁰ The Diplomatic Academy provided courses to embassy officials, members of foreign mission and government officials from c.1980 until 2011/12.

⁷¹ *Files relating to the establishment of the Libyan Technical College in Malta, 1979–1988.* UWA/PCL/2/9/2.

established. A new Rector was appointed and, arguably, PCL became more conservative and risk averse.⁷² PCL's long-standing commitment to innovation in education had been dented by the financial and political risks of overseas investment but such ground-breaking initiatives nonetheless enabled the institution to learn from experience, and contributed to the development of its capacity-building capability that would be an integral factor in the success of later ventures.

A few smaller-scale international activities did continue in the late 1980s, including a successful liaison with Ngee An Technical College in Singapore that paved the way for the foundation of Ngee An Polytechnic. Together with a project that delivered electrical engineering training provision to the Ivory Coast, these initiatives positioned the University well in securing future contracts for resource and capacity development. The University continued to offer scholarships to international students, including Cuba and Palestine, in the firm belief that 'students, even from the most isolated and perhaps undemocratic countries, should be given an opportunity to study in the West and that this may have some impact on their society'.⁷³ The University's numbers of overseas students continued to grow to over 16 per cent of its student body by 2000.⁷⁴ In recognition of this, in April 2000, Westminster became the first post-1992 university to win a prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise for its success in international markets.⁷⁵ However, national predictions for overseas recruitment expected numbers to fall during the decade and the University sought to expand its activities by re-engaging with alternative international collaborations through capacity-building projects.⁷⁶ In 2001 it signed a £4.31 million three-year contract with the Delta State Government in Nigeria to provide staffing and technical assistance to enable the country to establish a number of new HEIs, and initiated arrangements for the external validation of courses at the International College of Music in Kuala Lumpur and the National College of Science and Technology, Oman. Having learnt from previous mistakes, the University ensured that projects progressed on the basis of 'payments upfront or covered by a UK bank-issued letter of credit'⁷⁷ as it developed an International Strategy based on a shared educational mission for development and capacity-building with a small number of collaborative partners and benefiting from the support of the UK government and the British Council. Arguably, the most significant, and, to date, most successful of these partnerships was the establishment of Westminster International University in Tashkent, Uzbekistan (WIUT).

Following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Uzbekistan was one of several former-USSR states that emerged as an independent country. Governmental links between Britain and Uzbekistan in support of the Uzbek government's education reform programme had made the UK its destination of choice for students studying abroad and Uzbekistan had promoted the UK as its preferred education partner. A Central Asia Project was initiated by the University to provide training for Management Accountants working in the transitional economy. The project also included training programmes for journalists, and

72 Interview with Dik Morling, 13 February 2013. UWA/OHP/46.

73 Interview with Colin Matheson, 20 June 2012. UWA/OHP/43.

74 *Clarion*, 106, April 2000.

75 *Ibid.*

76 Philip Harding and Margaret Blunden, *Briefing Document for the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Board of University of Westminster International*, presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting, 1 October 2001. UWA/UOW/1/EP/1/13.

77 *Ibid.*



Fig. 88

The innovative China Media Centre was launched in 2005 and was the first international unit under the wider umbrella of the Communication and Media Research Institute (CAMRI) which now also includes the Africa Media Centre, the Arab Media Centre, the India Media Centre and The Centre for Social Media Research.

photography projects that documented traditional life in the regions of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan. The Uzbek Umid Presidential Fund (Umid) had been established in 1997 to support the education of talented youth abroad and in 2001 it approached the British Council with a proposal to fund the establishment of a British-style university in Tashkent which would replace the scholarship scheme.⁷⁸ The University of Westminster was one of seven UK HEIs that submitted an expression of interest and was chosen as the successful bidder from a shortlist of three in September 2001. The University, as co-founder with the government of the Republic of Uzbekistan, was tasked with establishing a new university in Tashkent with infrastructure and resources to a quality that could sustain the locally based delivery of Westminster's undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. This is a unique partnership in trans-national education as WIUT is a wholly autonomous Uzbek University, modelled on a UK university, delivering courses validated by the University of Westminster and providing the opportunities for students to complete their whole degree locally. Student numbers in each cohort were projected over six years to rise from 120 in 2002/03 to 261 in 2007/08 and the cost of the project was £12.5 million, entirely funded by Umid.⁷⁹ Dr Copland described his response to the proposal:

I thought this was really interesting. How do you build a nation from nothing? [...] Interestingly it was a Presidential initiative and it intrigued me. Karimov⁸⁰ had identified the only way forward for his country was to

⁷⁸ *Proposed Collaboration to Establish the International University of Uzbekistan*, Briefing paper presented to Finance and General Purposes Committee, 1 October 2001. UWA/UOW/1/FP/1/13.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Islam Karimov, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan 1991–2016.

reduce its ties to Russia and to build something which was completely new, use English as a teaching medium, and would be independent of the administration and thereby free from all the corruption and bribery and everything else that was going on.⁸¹

The Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT) opened in September 2002 with 120 students registered for a Foundation Certificate in Business, and has since grown to over 3,000 students registered for University of Westminster degrees in Economics, Law, Business Administration, Business Information Systems and Teaching and Learning.⁸² All teaching, learning and administration is delivered in English, and WIUT is perceived as a role model for ‘a quality-assured, corruption-free higher education’.⁸³ EU Tempus project support for capacity development in independent learning and career development at WIUT has positioned the University well internationally, and many Faculty members have returned to WIUT after completing their PhDs in other countries. The Students’ Union at WIUT runs its own International Culture Week each year, and members of its Model UN Society have taken part in Westminster’s Model UN Conference. In June 2016, WIUT welcomed Politics and International Relations students from Westminster for the first ever jointly delivered WIUT-UOW Exchange Summer School.⁸⁴ A strategic partnership development plan with an extensive staff exchange programme now focuses on the development of more Master’s courses and research projects.

From 2001, international partnerships have also been keenly pursued in China and India. The University has a long history of collaboration with both countries. PCL established the first study abroad programmes for UK students in China in 1977 and Chinese lecturers regularly joined the teaching staff of PCL. In 2005 the University established the China Media Centre for study and research on the world’s largest media system.⁸⁵ The Centre connects Chinese and European media through scholarship (research, seminars and curricular development), dialogue (UK forum and consultancy) and professional exchanges. Also in 2005, Westminster held its first graduation ceremony in China for forty graduates from its Department of Diplomacy and Applied Languages, and the country continues to have a strong and active alumni network with over 16,000 members.⁸⁶ The University has a dedicated office in China and partnerships with over a dozen Chinese institutions in provision of a mix of progression pathway courses and CPD training. The institution’s connections with India date back even further, to 1841, when two Indian naval architects visited the Royal Polytechnic Institution.⁸⁷ In the early twentieth century Hindustani was taught at the Polytechnic, together with civil service examination courses for clerks in the Indian Civil Service. Students from India continued to come to the University and in the 1970s there was an active student-run Indian Cultural Society that averaged 150 members annually. In 1995 the University established the annual Chevening Scholarships programme for young Indian print journalists – a programme that continues today. Recruiting in India was not

81 Interview with Geoffrey Copland, 26 May 2011, UWA/OHP/16.

82 Alan France, Deputy Rector WIUT, ‘Westminster International University in Tashkent’, *Forum*, 5.2 (Summer 2003), pp. 8–9.

83 Ibid.

84 See www.wiut.uz

85 www.westminster.ac.uk/china-media-centre

86 See www.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/alumni

87 See Brenda Weeden, *The Education of the Eye: History of the Royal Polytechnic Institution 1838–1881* (Cambridge: Granta Editions, 2008).



Fig. 89
The University of Westminster developed the pioneering Chevening South Asia Journalism Fellowship with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. It is the only programme to bring together Indians and Pakistanis and was expanded in 2017 to include Bangladeshi and Sri Lankan high-flying mid-career journalists.

without its challenges, however, as the University's participation in a British Council sponsored exhibition in Hyderabad in 2002 resulted in 'a near riot as thousands of potential students struggled to gain entry to the hall to find out more about UK higher education'.⁸⁸ In 2010 the India Media Centre was launched as the world's first research and knowledge transfer centre dedicated to the study of that media.⁸⁹ This pioneering venture develops, promotes and disseminates research through international conferences, events and publications; collaborates with international organisations; offers consultancy and short courses; and provides a platform for UK-based Indian media, arts and cultural organisations. In 2014 the Westminster Indian Alumni Network was relaunched,⁹⁰ with over 900 active members. The network links graduating students with alumni back in India for placement, internship and mentoring opportunities.

Today, internationalism sits at the heart of the University of Westminster's vision for the future. In 2016 the University was named as the most Internationally Diverse University in the UK by Hotcourses, with students from 169 countries.⁹¹ However, our internationalism goes well beyond the recruitment of overseas students and the Global Engagement Strategy of the University⁹² reflects this, encompassing student mobility and international experience, international alumni relations and the development of institutional partnerships and trans-national education as well as international student recruitment. The

⁸⁸ *Clarion*, 133, May 2002.

⁸⁹ www.westminster.ac.uk/india-media-centre

⁹⁰ The first Indian Alumni Association was launched in November 2005.

⁹¹ Hotcourses Diversity Index, www.hotcoursesabroad.com

⁹² *University of Westminster Global Engagement Strategy* (July 2015).

University has student exchange agreements with well over 100 institutions worldwide, offering students the opportunity for life-changing and career enhancing international experiences. Westminster is also home to the largest and most successful programme in the UK for incoming Study Abroad students. The University now has links all over the globe, ranging from franchise agreements with partners such as the Informatics Institute in Technology, Sri Lanka to collaborative award provision such as that in International Business Europe (BA) at the Ecole Supérieure du Commerce Extérieur (ESCE), Paris; and prestigious alliances such as the bi-annual hosting of the Johns Hopkins University MA in Museum Studies London Summer School. International collaboration and overseas partnerships are an integral part of the University of Westminster's mission.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

An institution with a history as long as the University of Westminster's has witnessed many changes in the provision of higher education in the UK, but it is in the last twenty-five years that perhaps the most radical transformations have occurred, with change seemingly occurring at an ever-intensifying rate. Increased government regulation and control has amassed in the HE sector as a result of New Public Management approaches designed to reform and modernise the UK public sector as a whole, introducing performance management and KPIs (i.e. Student Number targets, REF, Quality Assessment). Successive government attempts to reduce public spending while simultaneously supporting an expanding mass HE education system have led to shifts in the balance of funding and to dramatic changes in student finance mechanisms. In 1999, the University of Westminster still received nearly 49 per cent of its income from funding council grants.⁹³ In 2014, just less than 11 per cent of the University's income came from the funding council recurrent grant, with over 75 per cent being generated from tuition fees.⁹⁴ The increased marketisation of HE has created ever-greater internal competition within an enlarged group of providers in which students, seen as customers, are key drivers in reshaping the system (i.e. National Student Satisfaction Survey). The future looks no more certain or stable as the repercussions of Brexit and the eventual constitution of the *Higher Education and Research Bill* are yet to be known.

Yet, throughout all the change and turbulence of its first twenty-five years, the University has not only survived, but thrived. The University's founders believed in the provision of education for all, regardless of income or background, and the institution has remained true to that mission. The link to the past endures, through tangible things like The Polytechnic name on the façade of 309 Regent Street and the St George and the Dragon emblem in the mosaic floor of the building's entrance lobby. But, more importantly, it also endures through the institution's values which, although redefined for the twenty-first century (connected, courageous, excellence, generous, and sustainable), remain rooted in the institution's proud tradition of academic excellence, cultural en-

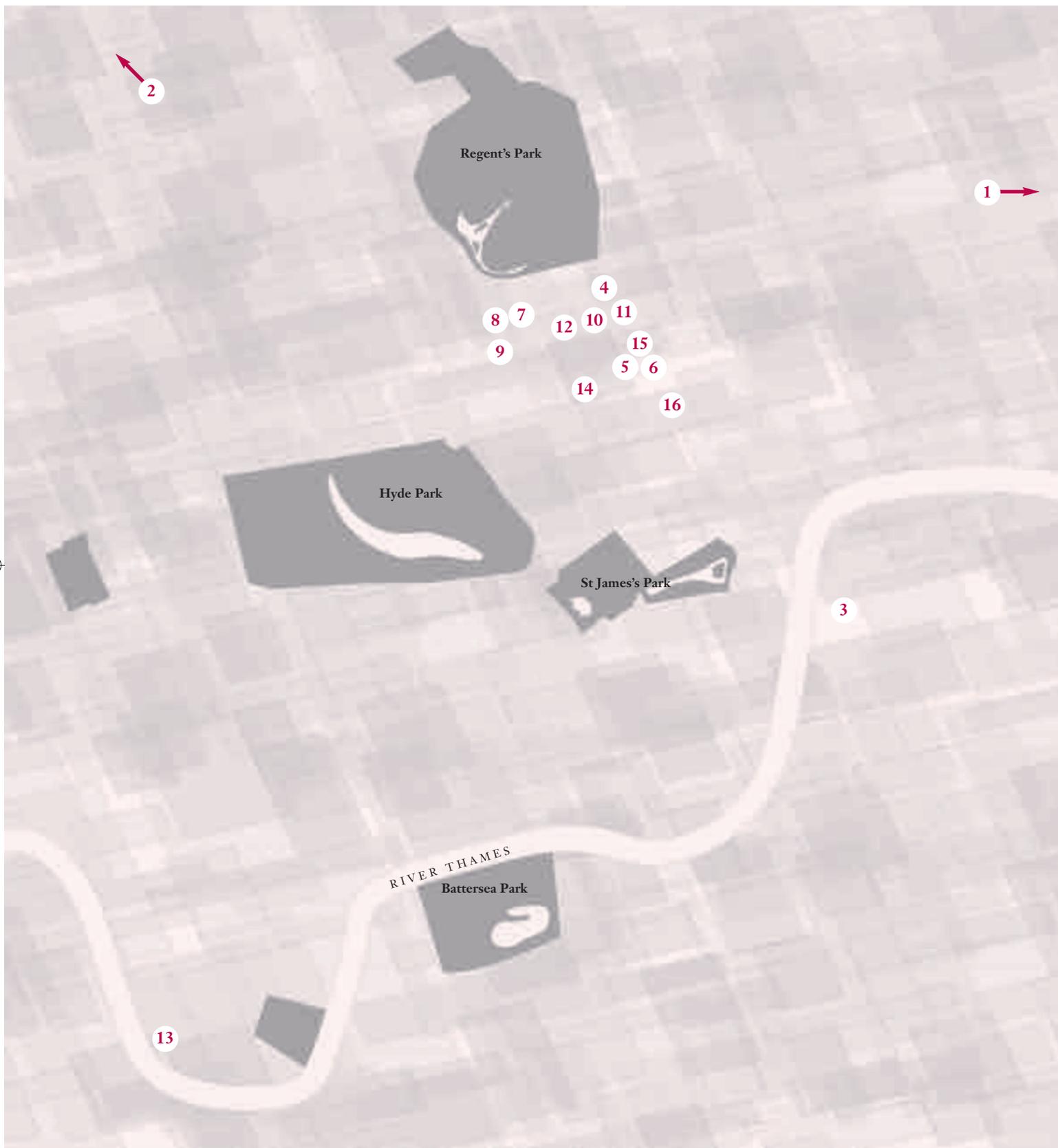
⁹³ *University of Westminster Report and Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st July 2000.*

⁹⁴ *University of Westminster Report and Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st July 2015.*

agement and personal enrichment. In 2013 the University celebrated its 175th anniversary and held various staff and student events throughout the 2013/14 academic year; including a two-day conference on adult education since 1838 and 'Classroom = workshop = studio', an exhibition exploring how learning spaces influence and reflect teaching and learning past and present. London was not the sole focus of the celebrations, with over a hundred guests, including fifty alumni, attending an anniversary reception at the Taj Land's End in Mumbai, India in May 2013. In a poignant recollection of 1992, the University marked the end of its 175th anniversary celebrations with a ceremony at Westminster Abbey conducted by The Very Reverend Dr John Hall, Dean of Westminster, and attended by the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Councillor Sarah Richardson, Baroness Cox, alumna, and members of the Court of Governors, academics, staff and students. As part of the ceremony, the Polyphonics, the UWSU Choral Society, sang hymns, together with students from the Centre for Commercial Music and pupils from Istock Place School and Broomfield House School. The University's staff are proud to proclaim: 'We're a university but we're proud to have been a polytechnic and the first polytechnic'.⁹⁵ As the University moves towards 2020 it will continue 'to build on its progressive, inclusive and enterprising history to shape the future of professional life'.⁹⁶

95 Interview with Guy Osborn, UWA/OHP/77.

96 *Westminster 2020*, December 2014.



Key to Map showing the University of Westminster's sites in 2017

No.	Site	Main usage
1	Alexander Fleming House, 3 Hoxton Market N1	Student hall of residence
2	Harrow Campus, Northwick Park HA1	Teaching, library and student halls of residence
3	International House, 1–5 Lambeth Road SE1	Student hall of residence
4	Latimer House, 40–48 Hanson Street W1	Administrative offices
5	4–12 Little Titchfield Street (formerly 18–22 Riding House Street) W1	Teaching and library
6	14–16 Little Titchfield Street W1	Law pro bono clinic
7	29 Marylebone Road NW1	Administrative offices and teaching (Graduate School)
8	35 Marylebone Road NW1	Teaching and library
9	Marylebone Tower, 35 Marylebone Road NW1	Student hall of residence
10	101 New Cavendish Street W1	Administrative offices and student support services
11	115 New Cavendish Street W1 (incorporating the former Medway and Metford Houses)	Teaching and library
12	120 New Cavendish Street W1	Administrative offices
13	Quintin Hogg Memorial Sports Ground, Hartington Road, Chiswick W4	Sports ground and stadium
14	307–311 Regent Street W1	Central administration and teaching
15	16 Riding House Street W1	Administrative offices and teaching
16	32–38 Wells Street W1	Administrative offices



Afterword

Geoff Petts¹

Our universities rank among our most valuable national assets, underpinning both a strong economy and a flourishing society. Powerhouses of intellectual and social capital, they create the knowledge, capability and expertise that drive competitiveness and nurture the values that sustain our open democracy.

Jo Johnson, MP, Minister of State for Universities and Science²

INTRODUCTION

At the University of Westminster we focus on developing the individual through independent inquiry and guided learning within a research-inspired and multi-cultural environment. We seek to enhance the ‘university experience’ by engaging with practitioners, providing internships, work-place learning, and study abroad, and through opportunities made available by a diversity of academic, sporting and social societies. We have a distinguished past and look forward to a distinctive future.

Through education and through their research, universities transform people’s lives; their research benefits everyone, creating businesses and jobs, enriching society and stimulating culture. In London in 2011/12 the concentration of higher education institutions generated £17 billion in goods and services, produced nearly 140,000 skilled graduates, employed over 88,000 staff and attracted 104,600 international students who contributed £2.9 billion to the economy. The excellence of our twenty-first-century UK university system depends on its international success: international HE is one of the UK’s leading exports; international students provide important revenue streams, and nearly one in four research grants and contracts are from overseas. Overseas staff and students represent an important pool of talent and help create a cosmopolitan learning environment, build global citizens and disseminate British values.

Since becoming a university in 1992, the University of Westminster has graduated more than 100,000 young people into the workforce. They came from all walks of life and many from non-traditional backgrounds, and they have experienced the financial, social and cultural benefits of higher education in London. Today, the University has a hugely diverse student and staff community. Our 20,000 students come from over 165 nations; more than 4,000 are postgraduates. Our 3,000 staff come from more than 80 countries. We offer

¹ Educated at Liverpool, Exeter and Southampton universities between 1971 and 1977, I held academic posts at the Dorset Institute of Higher Education, now Bournemouth University (1977–79), Loughborough University (1979–94), and the University of Birmingham (1994–2007) before joining the University of Westminster. I gained experience as a member of CNAAs panels and as an external examiner across the sector from small colleges to Russell Group universities.

² Jo Johnson, MP, Minister for Universities and Science, ‘Foreword’, in *Laying the Foundations: Examining the relationship between universities, students and society. Advisory Board Essay Collection* (London: UPP Foundation, 2016), p. 8.



Fig. 90

As well as the main sabbatical officer team, the Students' Union also appoints Liberation Officers to lead and represent minority communities in the University.

139 undergraduate and 167 postgraduate courses and more than 50 separate professional organisations and bodies offer accreditation, approval or recognition of many of these courses, or membership for our students after graduation. Hotcourses International recently launched a new Diversity Index and ranked Westminster first in the UK.³ The latest *Times Higher Education* rankings included us in the top 100 international universities in the world.⁴ But we are not a residential campus university and 85 per cent of our home undergraduates commute, with pressures on their time and particular demands on our resources.

Furthermore, once again the highly successful UK HE sector is faced with an uncertain future. Continuing and repeated austerity-driven changes, a new Higher Education and Research Bill (HERB) progressing through Parliament, a challenging immigration policy and the consequences of the June 2016 Brexit vote to leave the European Union make our environment volatile and expose the fragility of the sector. This *Afterword* contributes my own reflections on changes to UK higher education and outlines our proposed route through the uncertainty ahead.

THE JOURNEY

For more than 100 years the debates in Higher Education have focused on who should participate and how it should be funded.⁵ A sub-text has been what level of control on universities should be imposed by the government?

When I joined university as a student in 1971 I entered an elite system when the participation rate was only 5 per cent, but more than four decades later the participation rate has risen to 45 per cent.⁶ The entire cost of my university education was provided by the taxpayer – teaching, tuition fee, maintenance grant, buildings and facilities maintenance and the numerous costs of sustaining the sector. My academic career began as a lecturer in 1977. By 1989 the average funding per student had grown to £9,530 and the participation rate to 15 per cent. I was appointed to a Chair that same year and shortly after entered

³ Hotcourses Diversity Index, www.hotcoursesabroad.com

⁴ *Times Higher Education* World University Rankings 2016–2017. www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2017/

⁵ Nicholas Barr, 'Higher Education Funding', *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 20.2 (2004), pp. 264–83.

⁶ *Students in UK Higher Education Institutions 2006/07* (HESA, 2008).



Fig. 91
The Royal Festival Hall in London was designed by Peter Moro while he taught at the Regent Street Polytechnic, with assistance from his students. Today it forms a fitting location for the University's presentation ceremonies.

‘management’ as a Head of Department. For the next 25 years I witnessed how higher education has had to manage with ever-declining resources. Funding fell to its historic low in 1997 when participation reached 33 per cent. As student numbers doubled and public funding per student halved, the average staff:student ratio across the sector increased from less than 10:1 to more than 17:1, impacting teaching delivery and leading to the disappearance of small group tutorials in many universities.⁷

The 1997 *Dearing Report* challenged many of the established practices in Higher Education and sought to increase funding to institutions.⁸ It ended universal free higher education and recommended that students should contribute to the cost. It also led to the professionalisation of ‘the academic’ and advanced a focus on standards of university teaching. A new system of tuition fees for students in England was introduced at the time I became Vice-Chancellor of the University of Westminster, allowing institutions to charge up to £3,000 per year. It was intended that students would be supported by a loan system with repayment after graduation, sustaining the principle of HE being free at the point of delivery. Government expected institutions to differentiate on price. In practice, the majority of institutions charged the maximum fee and the few that didn’t lost market share under the perception that ‘cheap’ related to both price and quality of provision. The collapse of the global financial system in 2008/09 provided the catalyst to further move the funding for HE from the taxpayer to those who benefit, the graduates. The subsequent *Browne Report* recommended removing the cap on the maximum level of tuition fees that could be charged by universities.⁹

Throughout my career, the journey for most polytechnics and higher education colleges has been one of academic convergence with the ‘older’ universities. Our ‘Poly’, the Regent Street Polytechnic, was the model polytechnic

⁷ David Greenaway and Michelle Haynes, ‘Funding Higher Education in the UK: The Role of Fees and Loans’, *The Economic Journal*, 113.485 (2003), pp. 150–66.

⁸ *Dearing Report. Report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education: Higher Education in the Learning Society* (London: DfEE, 1997).

⁹ *The Browne Report: Securing a Sustainable Future for Higher Education. An Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance* (London: BIS, 12 October 2010).

¹⁰ Eric Robinson, *The New Polytechnics: A Radical Policy for Higher Education* (London: Cornmarket, 1968), Chapter 4.



Fig. 92

The University continues to provide the same employment-focused education as its predecessors, always taking advantage of the latest technology.

advancing ‘knowledge for a purpose’,¹⁰ a modern liberal vocational training including the ability to communicate, analyse theory and develop critical comment. Many of the polytechnics were devoted to teaching rather than research, were vocational and practical in their curricula and at the service of local communities. But the new polytechnic policy focused on providing HE more cheaply under Local Education Authority administration, concentrating resources and achieving economies of scale. Many polytechnics became graduate factories¹¹ but ‘academic drift’ brought them closer to universities, even though hierarchies of prestige survived.¹²

For more than two decades, first degree and postgraduate courses offered by the polytechnics had been regulated by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA). The CNAA endowed legitimacy and status upon polytechnics offering its awards, which were comparable to those of the universities.¹³ Comparability was established through the use of academic peers in the existing universities in course approval and validation. I was a CNAA panel member; I examined at both polytechnics and Colleges of Higher Education, as well as universities, and several of the PhD students I supervised from the 1980s began their academic careers within the polytechnic sector.

The *Further and Higher Education Act* of 1992 abolished the binary line between polytechnics and universities and established a Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) as a non-departmental public body responsible for the distribution of funding to universities and other colleges delivering higher education. The polytechnics gained autonomy from the LEAs and their funding was now tied to student numbers and the Research Assessment Exercise. But the Act created a stratified system under old university rules rather than strengthening the system through diversity.¹⁴

Since 1992, funding constraints had discouraged radical innovation; the student quota system imposed by HEFCE and the Research Assessment Exercise did little to foster diversification. Indeed, the UK’s success internationally was embedded in our reputation for comparability of degree standards,

11 Ibid, p. 72.

12 Robert Anderson, *British Universities Past and Present* (London: Continuum, 2006).

13 Martin C. Davis, *The Council for National Academic Awards 1964–74: A Study of a Validating Agency*, PhD Thesis, Loughborough University, 1979.

14 John Pratt, ‘1964 Revisited: Lessons from the History of Mr Poly’, *THES*, 16 May 1997.

Fig. 93

In 2013 the Duke of Gloucester visited the University to celebrate 175 Years of Innovation in Practice, commemorating the anniversary of George Cayley's foundation of the Polytechnic Institution.



the learning outcomes, and consistency between institutions, subjects and programmes. Being able to participate in the RAE was an important prize for the new universities. The journey of convergence continued.

The Polytechnic of Central London (PCL) was distinctive among the polytechnics in having a history of achievement in research and innovation. By 1988, PCL held research contracts to the value of £3.5 million, sponsored by industry, government and research agencies. The PCL was also distinctive among the polytechnics in having the largest post-graduate community (17 per cent of total FTE) and the highest proportion of part-time (53 per cent) and mature (77 per cent) students among all institutions in 1991/92. The new University of Westminster now had the right to award its own degrees and to compete for research funds through the RAE. Despite the financial legacy from the ILEA period the new University of Westminster emerged as a distinctive institution.

The first RAE, introduced for the 'older' universities in 1986, was to provide for the transparent allocation of some quality-weighted research funding (QR) to universities at a time of tightening budgetary restrictions.¹⁵ The first universal RAE in 1992 promoted the fundamental principle that funding should be targeted at areas of research excellence wherever it is found. Again, the expected level of differentiation did not materialise. All institutions received some QR money, reflecting in part the high quality of research in the new universities but also highlighting the difficulty in separating 'research quality' and volume of research-related activity within the RAE process.

The early RAEs had positive effects,¹⁶ stimulating better research management – which, with hindsight, was much needed. However, successive RAEs have driven competition, discouraged interdisciplinarity and isolated researchers from practitioners.¹⁷ They have also led to a transfer market for the most 'RAE-able' academics.¹⁸ Increasingly, publications became biased towards high-impact refereed journals, away from professional and more popular

15 University Grants Committee, *Planning for the late 1980s: The Resource Allocation Process*. Circular letter from the chairman of the UGC to Universities 22/85 (London: UGC, 1985). See also Maurice Kogan and Stephen Hanney, *Reforming Higher Education Policy Series 50* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2000), pp. 96–103.

16 House of Commons Science and Technology Committee, *Research Assessment Exercise: a Re-assessment. Eleventh Report of Session 2003/04, HC 586* (London: TSO, 23 September 2004).

17 Lewis Elton, 'The UK Research Assessment Exercise: Unintended Consequences', *Higher Education Quarterly*, 54.3 (2000), pp. 274–83.

18 *Research Capability of the University System: A Report by the National Academies Policy Advisory Group* (London: The Royal Society, 30 May 1996).

journals, and away from critical reviews, monographs and textbooks. The RAE reinforced disciplinary silos. As the RAE process evolved through the 1990s and 2000s, in many institutions repeatedly poor RAE outcomes led to departmental restructuring and even closures, with institutions increasingly concentrating on areas of research strength.

2012 – THE TIPPING POINT

Further significant reforms to Higher Education in England followed in 2012. After the *Browne Report*, fees were raised to £9,000 for all disciplines and this reversed the decline in resource available per student. Student numbers were deregulated and the reforms moved the focus of institutional management from student numbers to the quality of the student experience. Many institutions raised concerns over the uncertain financial environment caused by market deregulation. Further, with the loss of capital grants from HEFCE, universities now had to generate surpluses to invest in their estates and facilities as well as in new initiatives. The new fee did represent a financial uplift but then, and increasingly thereafter, it had to include replacement funding for lost grants from HEFCE as well as required spend on scholarships to promote widening access and other initiatives directed by government.

In the new competitive market, student recruitment patterns have changed dramatically with some institutions reporting losses in undergraduate recruitment numbers of more than 30 per cent. The real-terms erosion of the capped tuition fee and recruitment challenges are reducing surpluses in most institutions, limiting investment funds and threatening their long-term sustainability. Indeed, the HEFCE analysis of November 2016 forecast major financial dif-

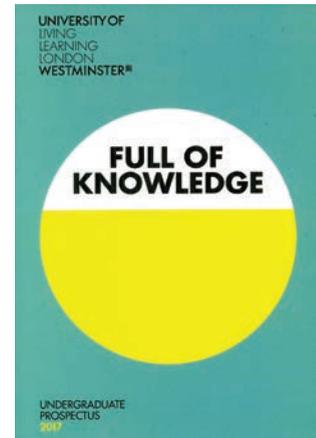


Fig. 94

The University's brand identity was re-designed in 2010 and features the logotype – University of Westminster – and the symbol of the portcullis in Futura typeface. Emotive and inspirational words or phrases are framed by the logo.

Fig. 95

The University has invested significantly in its estates, with the 1920s' gymnasium in Little Titchfield Street converted into a state-of-the-art lecture theatre in 2013.



Fig. 96

In 2016 the University established the world's first two-year MA Menswear course, alongside its renowned Fashion Design BA.



faculties because many institutions continue to base their development plans on an unrealistic growth of student numbers.¹⁹ Yet, simultaneously, the freedom from government funding and regulation has provided a catalyst for innovation and a new diversification of the sector.

The latest changes to the UK government in June 2016 have returned responsibility for higher education policymaking to the Department of Education. Responsibility for research is with a new Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The two have a shared Minister but the implications of this split personality remain to be seen. A new Higher Education and Research Bill (HERB) gained Royal Assent on 27 April 2017. This seeks to make regulatory changes necessitated by the funding and competitive reforms introduced by the previous government. It aims to produce a new lead regulator for the HE sector and to encourage alternative providers. The HERB addresses research and commits to public spending, dual funding and the Haldane principle²⁰ but also seeks to rebalance priorities towards teaching. The perceived success of the REF – the Research Excellence Framework (previously the RAE) in driving up standards would now be matched by a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The TEF should further change providers' behaviour, with success in the TEF attracting more student applications and enabling fees to be increased.²¹ But it would also progress an unfortunate trend towards the view of students as consumers, rather than as partners in their learning.

Government appears to fail to recognise the importance of the university experience in preparing young people to derive maximum personal benefit and make maximum contributions to society, as well as supplying talented graduates to meet demands for employees with higher-level skills in professional roles.²² Moreover, the social and cultural value of a university education is actually signaled by where a degree comes from.²³ This persistent focus on institutional prestige may frustrate the intended social mobility outcomes of previous government policy as well as the TEF.

19 HEFCE, *Financial Health of the Higher Education Sector 2015–16 to 2018–19 Forecasts*. HEFCE Briefing 2016/34 (HEFCE, 10 November 2016).

20 Under the Haldane Principle, government decides how much it is willing to provide for publicly funded research but researchers decide what research to pursue. Bahram Bekhradnia, 'Research', in *Response to the Higher Education Green Paper*; HEPI Report 81 (Oxford: Higher Education Policy Institute, January 2016), p. 29.

21 Graham Gibbs, 'Teaching', in *Response to the Higher Education Green Paper*; HEPI Report 81 (Oxford: Higher Education Policy Institute, January 2016), pp. 11–26.

22 Simon Gaskell, 'Widening Participation Is Not Enough', in *Laying the Foundations* (London: UPP Foundation, 2016), pp. 22–24.

23 Paul Blackmore, 'Why Research Trumps Teaching and What Can be Done About It', in Paul Blackmore, Richard Blackwell and Martin Edmondson, eds., *Tackling Wicked Issues: Prestige and Employment Outcomes in the Teaching Excellence Framework*, HEPI Occasional Paper 14 (Oxford: Higher Education Policy Institute, September 2016), pp. 4–38.

WESTMINSTER 2020

Quintin Hogg's vision that built on Sir George Cayley's ambition to create knowledge for a purpose has inspired our strategic plan, *Westminster2020*. Over more than four decades there has been a journey of convergence within the HE sector but the University of Westminster had not fully committed to that process and retained a degree of distinctiveness. Today, we seek to build on that distinctiveness. Our strategic plan, grounded in strong values and our influential heritage, seeks to advance a research and learning agenda that differentiates us from other HEIs within London; one that is practice-informed with global influence and where inspiration is generated by interdisciplinarity.

A number of initiatives introduced since 2010 are now coming together to drive the University forward. The Learning Futures programme and the new Centre for Teaching Innovation are transforming our learning and teaching; a new Graduate School and Institute of Advanced Studies has given new energy to our research. Innovative changes to the delivery of teaching and learning have been reflected in the estate strategy, including 24/7 opening of library spaces, self- and group-study design features and IT platforms for online learning. Investment in our estate has created new opportunities for enterprise and outreach. The latter includes the long-awaited purchase of Latimer House to complete our ownership of the 115 New Cavendish Street 'block' and the restoration of our iconic Regent Street Cinema.²⁴

In 2016/17 the impact of the post-2012 changes to HE became manifest with courses lacking distinctiveness in the so-called 'middle ground' universities losing popularity. Distinctive courses known for excellence would characterise a 'university of choice'. Many of the undergraduate courses at

Fig. 97

In 1970, the 115 New Cavendish Street building won plaudits from the architectural press for its clever use of a difficult site; the acquisition of Latimer House will allow it to be developed to its full potential as a twenty-first-century space for higher education.



Fig. 98

In 2016 the University of Westminster celebrated 125 years since its predecessor, the Regent Street Polytechnic, was established and received its first public funding to provide education. The event brought together the current and previous Vice-Chancellors of the University; from L to R: Professor Geoff Petts, Professor Terence Burlin (1931–2017) and Dr Geoffrey Copland.



Westminster are ‘courses of choice’. With high applications per place, they met recruitment targets within a few days of the results being published and attract students offering 300 tariff points or better. Our academic staff who teach these courses provide role models in how to think about a subject and how to transmit a passion for it. The link between research and teaching is evidenced by mapping our courses of choice on to our top Units of Assessment (UoAs) in the 2014 REF.

In the new environment, although the HERB is still to be finalised after the General Election on 8 June²⁵ and we await the outcome of Brexit, all universities are now able to plan to become ‘a university of choice’. Institutions are now free to reshape their course provision and rebalance their portfolios. The uniformity of institutional ambitions in the post-1992 era, driven by common courses and the RAE/REF, might now be replaced by a more diversified and agile sector linked to distinctive visions and responding to student and employer demands. As noted in a recent survey of university leaders, the ‘chosen routes towards sustainability and growth are likely to be different for every institution. Leadership teams will differentiate their offers and approaches in fast-changing national and international markets’.²⁶

At Westminster we have the passion and commitment to build a distinctive academic community and a learning environment that nurtures the discovery of new knowledge and provides inspirational teaching. We encourage thinking across traditional disciplinary and cultural boundaries to stimulate inquiry, debate and innovation, and to help graduates prepare for a world where such boundaries have little relevance. This is being advanced in partnership with our students. It is their responses to the evolving university experience that will ultimately determine whether our efforts are successful.

24 See Elaine Penn, ed., *The Magic Screen: A History of Regent Street Cinema* (London: University of Westminster, 2015) for details.

25 The *Higher Education and Research Act 2017* received Royal Assent on 27 April 2017. Its full impact is yet to be determined.

26 Mike Boxall and Paul Woodgates, eds., *New Rules Different Games. University Leaders’ Views on the Unsettled Outlook for Higher Education* (London: PA Consulting Group, 2016), p. 16.

Appendix 1: HE Political Timeline 1956–2017

Date	Department responsible for polytechnics and universities	Secretary of State
1956	Ministry for Education	David Eccles
1963		Sir Edward Boyle Deputy Secretary: Tobias Weaver from 1962
1964	Department of Education and Science (DES), following merger of the Ministries for Education and Science. The new Department also takes over responsibility for the research councils and the University Grants Committee (UGC) from the Treasury.	Quintin McGarel Hogg, Baron Hailsham
1965		Anthony Crosland
1966		
1971		Margaret Thatcher
1972		
1978		Shirley Williams
1981		Keith Joseph
1983		
1985		
1986		Kenneth Baker
1987		
1988		
1990		Kenneth Clarke
1991		
1992	Department for Education (DfE). Responsibility for the research councils is transferred to the new Office for Science and Technology.	John Patten
1994		Gillian Shephard

Government	Key Legislation or Report
Conservative. Prime Minister: Anthony Eden	<i>Technical Education White Paper, Cmnd. 9703</i>
Conservative. Prime Minister: Harold Macmillan	<i>The Robbins Report, Higher Education, Cmnd. 2154</i> <i>London Government Act 1963 c.33</i>
Labour. Prime Minister: Harold Wilson	Anthony Crosland gives speech at Woolwich Polytechnic on 27 April 1965 outlining creation of new polytechnics and the binary system of HE. <i>DES White Paper: A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges, Cmnd. 3006</i>
Conservative. Prime Minister: Edward Heath	<i>The Rothschild Report. The Organisation and Management of Government Research and Development</i> , published as <i>DES Green Paper: A Framework for Government Research and Development, Cmnd. 4814</i> <i>DES White Paper: Framework for Government Research and Development, Cmnd. 5046</i>
Labour. Prime Minister: James Callaghan	<i>The Oakes Report. Report of the Working Group on the Management of Higher Education in the Maintained Sector, Cmnd. 7130</i> <i>DES Brown Paper: Higher Education into the 1990s</i>
Conservative. Prime Minister: Margaret Thatcher	Establishment of NAB to administer funding to the public sector of HE <i>Leverhulme Report: Excellence in Diversity: Towards a New Strategy for Higher Education (SRHE)</i> <i>Education (Fees and Awards) Act 1983, c.40</i> <i>Jarratt Report. Report of the Steering Committee for Efficiency Studies in Universities (CVCP)</i> <i>DES Green Paper: The Development of HE into the 1990s, Cmnd. 9524</i> <i>Lindop Report. Academic Validation in Public Sector Higher Education, Cmnd. 9501</i>
Conservative. Prime Minister: Sir John Major	<i>Croham Report. Review of the University Grants Committee, Cm. 81</i> <i>DES White Paper: Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge, Cm. 114</i> <i>Education Reform Act 1988, c.40</i> <i>Education (Student Loans) Act 1990, c.6</i> <i>DES White Paper: Higher Education: A New Framework, Cm. 1541</i> <i>Further and Higher Education Act 1992, c.13</i>
	<i>Barnett Report. Assessment of the Quality of Higher Education: A Review and an Evaluation (HEFCE/HEFCW)</i>

Appendix 1: HE Political Timeline 1956–2017 *continued*

Date	Department responsible for polytechnics and universities	Secretary of State
1995	Department for Education and Employment (DfEE)	
1996		
1997		David Blunkett
1998		
2001	Department for Education and Skills (DfES)	Estelle Morris Minister of State for Universities: Margaret Hodge
2003		Charles Clarke Minister of State for Higher Education: Alan Johnson
2004		Ruth Kelly Minister of State for Higher Education: Kim Howells
2005		Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education: Bill Rammell
2007	On 28 June, FE, HE and Adult Education is transferred into a new Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) together with parts of the Department of Trade and Industry.	John Denham
2008		
2009	DIUS is merged with the Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform to form the new Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).	Peter Mandelson Minister of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills: David Lammy
2010	The Department for Education is recreated, but higher education remains the responsibility of BIS.	John Vincent ‘Vince’ Cable Minister of State for Universities and Science: David Willetts
2011		
2014		Minister of State for Universities, Science and Cities: Greg Clark
2015		Sajid Javid Minister of State for Universities and Science: Jo Johnson
2016	BIS is disbanded following reshuffle in June. HE, FE and Skills move to the Department for Education	Justine Greening
2017		

Government**Key Legislation or Report**

Labour.
Prime Minister: Tony Blair

Education (Student Loans) Act 1996, c.9

Dearing Report. Report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education: Higher Education in the Learning Society (DfEE)

Education (Student Loans) Act 1998, c.1

Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998, c.30

DfES White Paper: *The Future of Higher Education, Cm. 5735*

Higher Education Act 2004, c.8

Labour.
Prime Minister: Gordon Brown

Sale of Student Loans Act 2008, c.10

Conservative/Liberal Democrat
Coalition.
Prime Minister: David Cameron

The Browne Report: An Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance. Securing a Sustainable Future for Higher Education (BIS)

BIS White Paper: *Students at the Heart of the System, Cm. 8122*

Conservative.
Prime Minister: David Cameron

BIS Green Paper: *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice, Cm. 9141*

Conservative.
Prime Minister: Theresa May

BIS White Paper: *Higher Education: Success as a Knowledge Economy, Cm. 9258*
Brexit Referendum, 23 June

Higher Education and Research Bill, Royal Assent 17 April
General Election, 8 June

Appendix 2: List of English polytechnics that became universities in 1992

Polytechnic Name	New University Name	Subsequent Name Changes (at the time of writing)
Anglia Polytechnic	Anglia Polytechnic University	Renamed Anglia Ruskin University in 2005.
Birmingham Polytechnic	University of Central England	Renamed Birmingham City University in 2007.
Bournemouth Polytechnic	Bournemouth University	
Brighton Polytechnic	University of Brighton	
Bristol Polytechnic	University of West of England	Uses UWE Bristol.
Polytechnic of Central London	University of Westminster	
City of London Polytechnic	Proposed name of City of London was rejected. Renamed London Guildhall University.	Merged with University of North London becoming London Metropolitan University on 1 August 2002.
Coventry Polytechnic	Coventry University	
Polytechnic of East London	University of East London	
Hatfield Polytechnic	University of Hertfordshire	
Polytechnic of Huddersfield	University of Huddersfield	
Humberside Polytechnic	University of Humberside	Renamed University of Lincolnshire and Humberside in 1996, then renamed the University of Lincoln in 2001.
Kingston Polytechnic	Kingston University	Uses Kingston University London.
Lancashire Polytechnic	University of Central Lancashire	
Leeds Polytechnic	Leeds Metropolitan University	Renamed Leeds Beckett University in September 2014.
Leicester Polytechnic	De Montfort University	
Liverpool Polytechnic	Liverpool John Moores University	
Manchester Polytechnic	Manchester Metropolitan University	
Middlesex Polytechnic	Middlesex University	Uses Middlesex University London.
Newcastle Polytechnic	University of Northumbria	
Polytechnic of North London	University of North London	Merged with London Guildhall University, becoming London Metropolitan University on 1 August 2002.
Nottingham Polytechnic	Proposed name of City University Nottingham was rejected. Renamed Nottingham Trent University.	
Oxford Polytechnic	Oxford Brookes University	
Portsmouth Polytechnic	University of Portsmouth	
Sheffield City Polytechnic	Sheffield Hallam University	
South Bank Polytechnic	South Bank University	Renamed London South Bank University in 2003.
Polytechnic South West	University of Plymouth	Uses Plymouth University.
Staffordshire Polytechnic	Staffordshire University	
Sunderland Polytechnic	University of Sunderland	
Teesside Polytechnic	University of Teesside	Renamed Teesside University in 2010.
Thames Polytechnic	University of Greenwich	
Polytechnic of Wales	University of Glamorgan	Merged with the University of Wales, becoming University of South Wales in 2012.
Polytechnic of West London	Thames Valley University	Renamed University of West London in April 2011.
Wolverhampton Polytechnic	University of Wolverhampton	

Appendix 3: Heads of the University of Westminster and predecessor institutions 1838–2017

Royal Polytechnic Institution, Head	
1838–1857	Sir George Cayley
1854–1858	Professor John Henry Pepper
1858–1860	Mr Robert Longbottom
1860–1861	Mr John Phené
1861–1872	Professor John Henry Pepper
1872–1881	Mr R.F. Chapman
Regent Street Polytechnic, Director of Education	
1891–1922	Major Robert Mitchell, CBE, JP
1922–1932	Major Thomas Worswick, OBE
1932–1944	Mr Douglas Humphrey
1944–1956	Mr John Cyril Jones, CBE
1957–1970	Sir Eric Richardson, CBE
Regent Street Polytechnic, Chair of Court of Governors	
1891–1903	Mr Quintin Hogg
1903–1944	Sir J.E. Kynaston Studd, 1st Bt., OBE
1944–1950	The Rt Hon. Douglas McGarel Hogg, Viscount Hailsham, PC, KC
1950–1962	Mr Bernard Studd
1962	The Rt Hon. Quintin McGarel Hogg, Lord Hailsham, KG, PC, QC, FRS (acting)
1962–1970	Mr F. Walter Oakley, CBE
Polytechnic of Central London, Rector	
1970–1982	Professor Colin Adamson
1982–1992	Professor Terence Burlin
Polytechnic of Westminster, Vice-Chancellor and Rector	
1992–1995	Professor Terence Burlin
1996–2007	Dr Geoffrey Copland, CBE
University of Westminster, Vice-Chancellor and President	
2007–	Professor Geoff Petts
University of Westminster, Chair of Court of Governors	
1992–1993	Sir Cyril Pitts
1993–1998	Sir Leonard Peach
1999–2004	Sir Alan Thomas
2005–2009	Dr Terence Wright
2010–2013	Sir Francis Mackay
2013–	Mr Peter Kyle, OBE
University of Westminster, Chancellor	
2006–2014	The Rt Hon. Lord (Swraj) Paul of Marylebone, PC
2015–	Lady Frances Sorrell

Appendix 4: University of Westminster Students' Union Presidents 1992–2017

Academic Year	UWSU President
1992/1993	Alison Woodmason
1993/1994	Lisa Robson
1994/1995	Matt Pledger
1995/1996	Liz Allen
1996/1997	Steve Batten
1997/1998	Tim Cowley
1998/1999	Mykal Riley
1999/2000	Mykal Riley
2000/2001	Angel Jogiya
2001/2002	Chris Beaney
2002/2003	Inderpal Lotay (August 2002–February 2003) Charlotte Fraser (February 2003–July 2003)
2003/2004	Charlotte Fraser
2004/2005	Vinesh Patel
2005/2006	Charlene Allen (August 2005–January 2006) Rayhan Omar (January 2006–July 2006)
2006/2007	Salima Lanquaye
2007/2008	Salima Lanquaye
2008/2009	Shoni Newell
2009/2010	Omar Hussain
2010/2011	Robin Law
2011/2012	Tarik Mahri
2012/2013	Tarik Mahri
2013/2014	Kaled Mimouni
2014/2015	Kaled Mimouni
2015/2016	Jim Hirschmann
2016/2017	Freya Thompson



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