

Business Update from Director of Finance David Hughes, 2nd March 2021

Dear All,

Now that we are in March and with spring around the corner, I hope you are all keeping well.

Following the Prime Minister's announcement last week about the next steps in the gradual easing of England's current lockdown, and with the vaccine programme continuing to race ahead, we can now see a clear route to better times on the horizon. While things are still tough, we are starting to see real developments we can feel a little more positive about.

Covid Recovery Programme

We promised ourselves we would learn from working remotely during the pandemic and this thinking is being embedded into the University's Covid Recovery Programme. Finance is playing a major part in this Programme, which consists of 13 projects and includes the Finance Transformation Programme's [\(FTP\)](#) Enhanced Financial Transparency project [\(EFT\)](#) and Strategic Procurement and Purchasing [\(SPP\)](#) project. We continue to focus on putting the expertise and resources in place to take this work forward.

The Recovery Programme's ambition is not only to further develop our educational excellence and enhance research, but also to help staff thrive, now and in the future, and create the best possible culture. The Programme will also accelerate work to improve the effectiveness of our processes, reducing complexity and helping put the University on a more sustainable financial footing. I shall keep you updated as this important work develops.

Concluding 2020 reporting

We have reached the last leg of a very challenging 2020 reporting cycle, with our OfS (Office for Students) Annual Financial Return and TRAC (Transparent Approach to Costing) Return now submitted. Additionally, our PWC audit plans for 2021 are going to the Audit Committee this week, which will include all the lessons learned from 2020. I'd like to say thank you to everyone involved in this whole process, a fantastic job has been undertaken in extremely difficult circumstances during what has been a particularly challenging cycle.

Best Wishes,

David Hughes

Director of Finance