

# POLICY PROPOSAL

## UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE REFORM

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### REASON FOR CHANGE

Considering that...

1. The Vice-Chancellor's compensation package, the highest in the country with a value of £468,000, has brought the University into disrepute, drawing attention from the University's work and driving away prospective students.<sup>12345</sup>
2. The Vice-Chancellor's 2016-17 salary was a rise of £17,589 (3.9%) on the previous year. This came after a pay rise of 11% in 2015-16. The Vice-Chancellor now earns approximately 30 times more than the lowest paid worker at the University.<sup>3</sup>
3. The Vice Chancellor has called for increased tuition fees and has failed to oppose the scrapping of maintenance grants.<sup>6</sup>
4. The Vice-Chancellor will stand down mid-way through 2019 after finishing the 2018/19 academic year in-post and completing a semester's sabbatical. She will receive an exit package of close to £700,000 including full pay and all current benefits, with an outstanding £31,000 interest-free car loan being written off.<sup>789</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-42024346>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/vice-chancellor-dame-glynis-breakwell-salary-row-deters-bath-university-applicants-zm9xm7xb2>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2017/08/26/highest-paid-vice-chancellor-country-accused-ofpresiding-cover/>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/lord-adonis-greed-obath-university-vice-chancellor-dame-glynis-breakwell\\_uk\\_59677bebe4b0a8d46d128cf9](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/lord-adonis-greed-obath-university-vice-chancellor-dame-glynis-breakwell_uk_59677bebe4b0a8d46d128cf9)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/pressure-mounts-on-bath-university-fat-cat-chancellor-dame-glynis-breakwell-7zh80rkth>

<sup>6</sup> <http://bathimpact.co.uk/2015/08/06/bath-vice-chancellor-voices-support-for-student-grant-cuts-and-tuition-fees/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.bathchronicle.co.uk/news/bath-news/dame-glynis-receive-full-pay-847550>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-42152743>

<sup>9</sup> [https://twitter.com/Andrew\\_Adonis/status/935877458099933184](https://twitter.com/Andrew_Adonis/status/935877458099933184)

5. The governing Council of the University of Bath have been criticised in the House of Lords,<sup>10</sup> by local councillors<sup>11</sup> and by staff<sup>121314</sup> for their handling of senior management pay and due process.<sup>1516</sup>
6. The Vice-Chancellor has use of a grace-and-favour home, bought by the University in 2002 for £1.6 million<sup>17</sup> and since maintained at an annual cost currently at £18,000, despite a uniquely high income<sup>3</sup>, whilst students must contend with unaffordable accommodation both on and off campus.<sup>1819</sup>
7. The University is currently undertaking an independent Effectiveness Review of Council, reviewing in full the operation of the Remuneration Committee,<sup>20</sup> which was also the subject of a HEFCE report which made thirteen recommendations, finding that the University has “a significant distance to travel to open the committee’s work to legitimate scrutiny”.<sup>2122</sup>
8. 86% of students expressed no confidence in the University’s governance in a referendum.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2017-07-13/debates/746768C3-9CE0-4070-A4AB-53C28A7DBBCE/PublicSectorPayCap#contribution-4C9580D8-3733-456F-80CE-FF97CB7DF06F>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.bathchronicle.co.uk/news/bath-news/revealed-university-bath-vice-chancellor-659148>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/9079/Staff-say-Bath-vice-chancellor-must-resign-following-damning-report>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/nov/20/vice-chancellor-of-bath-university-called-on-to-resign-after-report-pay-glynis-breakwell>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/nov/22/bath-university-staff-vote-for-senior-leaders-to-resign-amid-governance-row>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.bathchronicle.co.uk/news/bath-news/something-gone-very-wrong-probe-260701>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/HEFCE,2014/Content/Regulation/Staff,pay/University-of-Bath%20final%20governance-enquiry-report-nov17.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.bathchronicle.co.uk/news/bath-news/inequality-cry-over-18953-home-435214>

<sup>18</sup> <http://bathimpact.co.uk/2017/05/08/students-slam-disgraceful-university-rent-increases>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.thesubath.com/pageassets/policy/Policy-2016-17-13-Policy-Proposal-Affordable-Accommodation.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.bathchronicle.co.uk/news/bath-news/breaking-university-bath-vice-chancellor-676034>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/HEFCE,2014/Content/Regulation/Staff,pay/University-of-Bath%20final%20governance-enquiry-report-nov17.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/reg/staffpay/bath/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.thesubath.com/elections/referenda/>

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## PROPOSAL

1. The SU University of Bath publically denounces the agreed exit package for the Vice-Chancellor and calls for her to resign as soon as a replacement is selected. This should be before the end of the current academic year.
2. The SU University of Bath calls for the Chair of the University Council to resign.
3. The SU University of Bath calls for the residence currently used by the Vice-Chancellor to be sold, with the proceeds used to invest in affordable student housing.
4. The SU University of Bath calls on the Vice-Chancellor to repay the £31,000 interest-free car loan.
5. The SU University of Bath calls for the position of Vice-Chancellor to have a fixed four-year term, which can be renewed only by the approval of both the University Council and the University Court.
6. The SU University of Bath repeats its calls for greater moderation in senior staff pay at the University of Bath, including the adoption and publication of a 10:1 pay ratio.
7. The SU University of Bath urges governance reform in favour of accountability, democracy and representation.
8. The SU University of Bath calls for the independent Effectiveness Review of Council to not be chaired by or have over a third of its membership be any senior manager at any Higher Education institution. The SU also calls for the review's recommendations to draw heavily on the views of students and staff, and look beyond current practice to alternative models of cooperative governance.
9. The SU University of Bath calls for all the recommendations of HEFCE's review to be implemented in full.

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## RATIONALE

1. The SU's stated mission is 'to help students get the most from their student experience'. This policy is about making the governance of the university more accountable to its students, empowering them to shape their education. This will improve the student experience.
2. As part of its mission, the SU 'promotes the interests and welfare of students at the University of Bath', and more affordable accommodation will improve the welfare of students more than funding the Vice-Chancellor's personal living expenses beyond their salary.
3. The SU works to the value of being 'student led in all we do', recognising that popular participation and democratic accountability represent best governance practice. This is distinct from existing university structures which have been criticised for failing to give sufficient voice to staff and students as well as for a lack of transparency<sup>2425</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/HEFCE,2014/Content/Regulation/Staff,pay/University-of-Bath%20final%20governance-enquiry-report-nov17.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/9079/Staff-say-Bath-vice-chancellor-must-resign-following-damning-report>

4. The current governance systems are inadequate and do not provide enough representation of students or staff or effective transparency.<sup>262728</sup>

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## IMPLICATIONS

1. This policy has no cost to the SU.
2. This policy may have negative implications for the SU's relationship with the University.

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<sup>26</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/nov/20/vice-chancellor-of-bath-university-called-on-to-resign-after-report-pay-glynis-breakwell>

<sup>27</sup> <http://bath.web.ucu.org.uk/files/2017/07/letter-to-members-of-council.july-2017.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/statutes-of-the-university-of-bath/attachments/statutes-of-the-university-of-bath.pdf>