

26 July 2019

Mr Charles Counsell
Chief Executive
The Pensions Regulator
Napier House
Trafalgar Place
Brighton
BN1 4DW

Dear Mr Counsell,

We wish to focus your attention on some of the implications for USS member institutions from the ongoing dispute over the USS pension scheme 2018 valuation. We appreciate that the issues are complex and multifaceted, with the several parties involved in the negotiations, but we want to make a particular view from our perspective known to you directly.

The continued uncertainty around the 2018 valuation is causing considerable concern to the College and members of our community who are participants in the USS pension scheme. Making progress towards a mutually agreeable valuation as soon as possible is vital to avoid this uncertainty creating real friction.

If the 2018 valuation cannot be agreed and completed in an open and transparent way, the implementation of the 2017 valuation as approved by the Pensions Regulator, would be a significant burden both to employers and employees. We believe that Option 3 provides the best solution to avoid significant and, for many unaffordable, increases to contributions while allowing time for the Joint Expert Panel to complete their work and move quickly towards a new valuation in 2020.

As we have consistently stated, we strongly support the approach embodied in the JEP process, and believe it is the best way to reach a mutually respected resolution about the costs of the current pension provision. We would urge you to consider how Option 3 may provide a route to this resolution with minimal turbulence for all.

Best wishes,



Professor Alice P. Gast
President



Professor Ian Walmsley
Provost