



A 3-Day High-Level Conference for the Governing Councils and Management Teams of African Universities

Management-Council Relationships in Universities: Strategic and Practical Considerations for Executive Leadership and Governance in African Universities

22–24 June 2026

Conference Venue: county South Event Space 2, Lancaster University, United Kingdom

Conveners: Global Skills Hub (UK) & Lancaster University

PROGRAMME RATIONALE

Universities face increasing pressure to deliver quality teaching, impactful research, and societal relevance in contexts of financial constraints, demographic growth, regulatory complexity, and global competition. Governing Councils play a decisive role not only in institutional oversight, but also in strategic positioning, sustainability, and resource mobilisation.

This 3-day executive programme is designed to:

- . Strengthen council–senior leadership management effectiveness
- . Deepen understanding of UK governance best practice
- . Engage in knowledge exchange and good practice sharing with Lancaster University
- . Equip councils with tools for financial sustainability and risk oversight
- . Deliver an immersive experience aimed at developing customizable resource mobilisation strategies for research, teaching, and learning tailored for the African university context.

DAY 1 – STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE AND COUNCIL EFFECTIVENESS

Theme: Governing Councils as Strategic Stewards and Custodians of Institutional Performance

09:00–09:30 | Registration

09:30–10:00 | Opening Session

- . Welcome and introduction from **Prof Kirk Semple**: Director of International Research
- . Welcome from **Prof Rebecca Lingwood**: Deputy Vice Chancellor, Lancaster University
- . Conference objectives, structure, and expected outcomes from **Mr Honey Olawale**

10:00 – 11:00 | Session 1: Building a High-Performing Governing Council and Leadership Team

Speakers: **Dr Vincent G. Gaitho**: Chairman of Council and Pro-Chancellor, Mount Kenya University
Susan Mitchell: Registrar, Secretary, and Chief Operating Officer, and member of Council

11:00–11:30 | Tea Break

11:30–12:45 | Session 2: Governing Councils and Executive Management—Roles, Authority, and Boundaries

Speakers: **Right Honourable Alistair Burt**: Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council member of Lancaster University.

Prof. Shedrack Best: Vice-Chancellor, Plateau State University, Nigeria

12:45 – 13:30 | Lunch

13:30–14:45 | Session 3: The UK/Africa Universities Management Model – Case Study and Dialogue – A facilitated panel session.

Panel Facilitator **Prof. Mark Stevenson**: Cross Faculty Academic Dean for International

Panel: **Right Honourable Alistair Burt**: Pro-Chancellor and Council member of Lancaster University

Adrian Jonas: Council member and Chief Analyst for the NW Region in the NHS and Senior Responsible Officer for the North West Regional Secure Data Environment

Prof. Kendi Guantai: Dean for Culture and Inclusion, Lancaster University

Prof. Amevi Acakpovi: Vice-Chancellor, Accra Technical University

Prof. Paul Gundani: Vice-Chancellor, Zimbabwe Open University

15:15–15:45 | Tea Break

15:45–17:00 | Session 4: Financial Oversight, Risk Management, and Institutional Resilience – short talk and a moderated workshop session

Speakers: **Sarah Randall Paley:** Chief Financial Officer and sits on LU’s Council, Lancaster University
Prof. Oluwatoyin Ashiru, OON: Pro Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Nigeria

Q & A

DAY 2 – TRUST, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND GLOBAL POSITIONING

Theme: Ethical Leadership, Regulation, and International Engagement

09:00 to 10:30 | Session 5: Ethical Oversight & Strategy in African Universities

Speaker: **Prof. Olubayi Olubayi:** Chairman of the Governing Council of Cavendish University Uganda
Followed by a breakout session of four groups

10:30–11:00 | Tea Break

11:00–11:45 | Reporting from Breakout Session

11:45 – 12:30 | Session 6: Autonomy, Regulation, and Government Relations

Speakers: **Prof. Olalekan Asikhia:** Vice-Chancellor of Caleb University, Lagos Nigeria
Michael Wykes: Director of Strategic Planning and Governance

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12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch

13:30–14:45 | Session 7: Governing Councils and Internationalisation Strategy

Speakers: **Prof. Alisdair Gillespie:** University Academic Dean/Prof. VC Education
Prof. Stephen Jobson Mitchual: Vice-Chancellor of University of Education Winneba, Ghana

14:45–15:00 | Tea Break

15:00–16:00 | Session 8: Managing Tensions and Conflict – Scenario-Based Workshop

Facilitated Interactive Discussion

Tours around the university

18:30–20:30: Conference Dinner (hosted by Lancaster University)

Venue: County South Event Space, Lancaster University

DAY 3 – RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Theme: From Dependence to Diversification—Financing the African University of the Future

09:00–09:30 | Setting the Scene: The African University Funding Challenge

Speaker: **Prof. Ahmad Mohammed Gumel:** Vice-Chancellor of Federal University of Dutse, Jigawa.
A brief contribution from Hassan Balarabe: Bursar, Federal University of Dutse, Jigawa.

09:30–10:45 | Session 9: International Research Funding – Strategy, and Case Studies

Speaker **Prof Kirk Semple:** University Director of International Research

10:45–11:15 | Tea Break

11:15–12:45 | Session 10: Short Group Work Session—Understanding the 5P’s of Resource Mobilisation and the 5P’s of Grantsmanship

Speaker **Dr. Akanimo Odon:** Head of Strategic Africa Partnerships, Africa Research and Innovation Partnership, Lancaster University

12:45 – 13:45 | Lunch

13:45 – 15:00 | Session 11: Commercialisation, Innovation, and Third-Stream Income

Speaker: **Prof Kirk Semple, Dr Akan Odon**

15:00–15:30 | Tea Break

15:30–16:45 | Session 12: Institutional Resource Mobilisation Clinics

Breakout Groups and Reporting Back

Facilitated Clinics

16:45 – 17:15 | Closing Session

. Certificates and closing remarks