

## **The Rt. Hon the Lord Mandelson - Q&A**

### **What aspects of the role of Chancellor of The University of Manchester particularly appeal to you?**

As well as the ceremonial duties, I want to support the dynamism, growth, reputation and continued excellence in research of the University wherever I can, and always be available to the Vice Chancellor to advise and encourage. The Assembly is the essential bridge between the University and the city and its stakeholders and I look forward to chairing it and getting the best out of its meetings. The reason I am keen on the ambassadorial role is because this is an activity where I think I can add real value, as I describe below.

### **How do you think your skills and experience will help you in the role of Chancellor?**

My experience as MP, Cabinet Minister and EU Trade Commissioner has given me the skills to deliver a message about the University and help project its values and future potential. The whole of Manchester, including its University, are on the up. Manchester is talked about; people are interested in where it is going and want to be part of the journey. As Chancellor, I will join a city-wide team dedicated to advancing Manchester's case and that of its University, as well as being part of the institutional framework of the University, bringing dignity and good humour to the role.

### **What do the University and the city of Manchester mean to you?**

As a northern MP, I always saw Manchester as pivotal in re-balancing Britain's economy and politics. The University is a top global as well as national place of learning and research and therefore integral to Manchester's progress. It is also a social and cultural centre, both for its students and staff and its surrounding community. Britain's universities are vital to widening individual opportunity and social mobility, as well as being key to economic growth and employment. The University has constantly to strengthen its offer and performance and Manchester's urban environment and quality of life is important to this.

### **If you were Chancellor, how would you use your ambassadorial role to promote the University and its interests?**

I would use my role as a Peer and elsewhere in national life to promote the University and to help bring attention and resources to it. I would also like to join in the wider debate about the future of higher education and the opportunities it offers to young people of all social and income backgrounds. In my work I travel a lot to Asia, North America and the Middle East, as well as extensively in Europe. I would welcome the chance to combine this travel with opportunities to promote the University and help attract students and academic staff.

### **What do you think will be the main opportunities and challenges facing The University of Manchester over the term of office of the next Chancellor?**

The main opportunities are the continued expansion of higher education and growing appreciation of its role in city and regional development. We need to ensure the concept of a "northern powerhouse" continues to benefit The University of Manchester and that public and private investment advances the University, including its campus development plan. The main challenges facing the University are, first, the alternatives offered by other top-class universities; that's why The University of Manchester needs to maintain excellence in both teaching and research. The second is the financial pressure on students. We need to find ways to alleviate this as much as possible for needy individuals.

