

# Universities & Ethics: Lessons in the Long Run

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Simon Lee became Professor of Law at the Open University in December 2015 and is now also Director of Citizenship & Governance Research. He is a Fellow of St Edmund's College, Cambridge, and Emeritus Professor of Jurisprudence, Queen's University, Belfast. He was a Brackenbury Scholar at Balliol College, Oxford (1976-1979) and a Harkness Fellow at Yale Law School (1979-1980). After being a lecturer in law at Trinity College, Oxford, and King's College London, he became professor of jurisprudence at Queen's (1999-2005) and served as the dean of the faculty of law. He was then Rector & Chief Executive of Liverpool Hope University College (1995-2003) and Vice-Chancellor of Leeds Metropolitan University (2003-2009), both institutions winning various awards during his leadership. He was awarded honorary doctorates by Virginia Theological Seminary in 2011 and Liverpool Hope in January 2016.

His contributions to the peace process in Northern Ireland included being the co-founder of Initiative '92, which established the Opsahl Commission. He was appointed by different governments to the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights in Northern Ireland (1992-6), to the Standards Task Force on schools (1997-2001) and to chair the Independent Monitoring Board for the Liverpool Education Authority (1999-2000). He chaired the board of the Playhouse and Everyman Theatres in Liverpool. He then chaired the professional rugby union club, Leeds Carnegie, with first Stuart Lancaster and then Neil Back as head coach. In 2009, he founded Level Partnerships in London, becoming in 2010 also the inaugural chair of the John Paul II Foundation for Sport, which was launched by Pope Benedict XVI. He now chairs the advisory council of International School Partnerships.

Simon Lee writes about law, ethics, religion, politics, history and sport. His books include *Law & Morals* (Oxford University Press, 1986), *Judging Judges* (Faber, 1988), *The Cost of Free Speech* (Faber, 1990), *Uneasy Ethics* (Pimlico, Random House, 2003; Random House e-book, 2011) and *Vincent's Club Oxford 1863-2013* (Third Millennium, 2014, foreword by Sir Roger Bannister). He is currently re-reading a book by a different author each day and blogging a daily review: <https://sixtybookworkout.wordpress.com/>

# Summary



- You can show ethical leadership & contribute to good governance at any level in any university.
- This has several dimensions, eg teaching, wider student experience, research, leadership, public engagement.
- Ideally, all will align with each other & with the mission or vision or values of the university.
- You should engage students & staff on the issues of the day in your university, your country and our world.
- Do not be deterred by setbacks: the impact of this leadership might only show, if at all, in the long run.

# 4 x 4

## Four aspects of ethical leadership ...

- Teaching
- Research
- Leadership & Governance
- Community Engagement

## ... at four universities

- Queen's University Belfast
- Liverpool Hope
- Leeds Met Carnegie
- Open



# Queen's University Belfast

In a biography of a colleague, Mary McAleese (who went on to be President of Ireland), Justine McCarthy reports on the storm around equal opportunities at Queen's that, 'Throughout it all, Mary McAleese maintained a low profile, as did most of the senior nationalists on the academic staff. Only Professor Simon Lee from the law school, who later transferred to Hope College in England, publicly supported the students.'

*(Mary McAleese, The Outsider, Justine McCarthy, Blackwater Press, 1999 p118.)*

# Queen's University Belfast

- Teaching: Asked all law students to write a mini-sequel to Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird*
- Research: *Lost for Words & Parity of Esteem*
- Leadership & Governance: Equal opportunities & responding to terrorism
- Community Engagement: Contributing to a peace process: Initiative '92 & the Opsahl Commission

# Liverpool Hope



LIVERPOOL  
HOPE  
UNIVERSITY

Est. 1844

<http://www.hope.ac.uk/news/newsitems/honorarydegreeforformerliverpoolhoperectorchiefexecutive.html>

# Liverpool Hope

- Teaching: The Case of the Conjoined (or Siamese) Twins
- Research: *Uneasy Cases* in The House of Lords: Its Parliamentary and Judicial Roles, Brice Dickson & Paul Carmichael (eds), (Hart, 1998)
- Leadership & Governance: Changing the name of the university college to Hope
- Community Engagement: Queen's Anniversary Prize for Hope One World volunteering in Ladakh



# Leeds Met Carnegie



# Leeds Met Carnegie

- Teaching: Global Ethics on the Ascent (with Simon Robinson)
- Research: *Ethics in the Dust?* 2003 Conversations in Religion & Theology, p210, Blackwell
- Leadership & Governance: Responding to terrorism (revisited) & resigning over fees
- Community Engagement: Sporting partnerships

# Open



# Open



- Teaching: Jennie Lee's student project on Prejudices (1928?)
- Research: *Inaugural Lecture on Open-Mindedness: Open & Shut Cases (May, 2017)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhaoYjiMBfE>

- Leadership & Governance: A Roundabout Way of Understanding Universities
- Community Engagement: Alan Turing & Human Rights

<http://www.open.ac.uk/research/main/news/human-right-privacy>

