

SCR Annual Dinner

Wednesday 17 May 2017

Guest of Honour and speaker

Professor Dame Shirley Pearce



Shirley is currently Chair of Court and Council at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and a member of the Higher Education Quality Assurance Panel for the Ministry of Education in Singapore.

She has held senior executive and non executive roles in higher education, health and policing. Her non executive roles have included four ministerial appointments in three different government departments; DoH, BIS and the Home Office. Prior to moving to LSE, she was appointed by Theresa May then Home Secretary, as Independent Chair of the College of Policing. This was the first professional body for policing.

During her executive and academic career she held appointments at University College London (UCL) the University of East Anglia (UEA) and Loughborough University.

At UEA she was Pro Vice Chancellor responsible for the health and professional schools. She led the growth of these teaching and research programmes, culminating in leading the bid for a new medical school at UEA. This had a distinctive, innovative, presentation-based curriculum, which also enabled medical students to learn in an inter-professional environment.

Shirley moved from UEA to become Vice Chancellor of Loughborough University where she developed and delivered a new strategy for the university. The university enjoyed numerous successes and grew its turnover from £160 million to £235 million. It had significant research success working closely with industry partners and gained the greatest increase in REF funding in 2006 of any university without a medical school. Loughborough University was top of the student experience league table for six consecutive years. It hosted Team GB in the lead up to the 2012 Olympic Games in London and established a new campus on the 2012 Olympic site. She still holds an Emeritus Chair at Loughborough.

Amongst her non executive role Shirley was non-executive director of: Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority; deputy chair of the Healthcare Commission, which had responsibility for the regulation of NHS and private healthcare providers in England and Wales; a board member for the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and a Board member for Health Education England.

In her early career Shirley was a student at St Anne's College, University of Oxford where she graduated with a degree in Psychology, Physiology and Philosophy. She then trained as a clinical psychologist at the Institute of Psychiatry in London. She worked at St Mary's Hospital in Paddington as a clinical psychologist before becoming a lecturer and then a senior lecturer in psychology at University College London. During her time at UCL, Shirley established a postgraduate training programme in clinical psychology and studied part-time as a postgraduate student, obtaining her PhD in Psychology in 1986.

In 2005, Shirley was awarded a CBE for services to education in the National Health Service and in 2014 she was appointed Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire for services to higher education.