

Announcement from Graham Cowley UTC@MediaCityUK Chair of Governors  
Thursday 12 October 2017

I am writing with some news which I wanted to share with you at the first opportunity. It is with regret that we are announcing today that the UTC's Governing Body has accepted the resignation of Sharon Gardner as Principal as a consequence of her desire to take a career break and to be able to spend more time with her family, a position that we fully understand.

Leading a new, ground-breaking UTC is a very demanding role, working closely with not only students, staff and parents but also many local business partners. Sharon stepped into the job during the first year of operation of the UTC having been the founding Deputy Principal, and has overseen our early development. The College today is thriving, enjoys the backing of many local employers, has a full Key Stage 4, and a popular 6th Form.

As Sharon has acknowledged, the UTC needs a Principal who can dedicate everything to the College as we continue to develop and grow. Sharon had a recent health scare which prompted an understandable determination to have more time for her own family. Sharon now intends to take a career break to support her son in his last year of primary education.

The Governors are disappointed but understand the pressures that principals face and in the circumstances we support Sharon's decision. She will, therefore, finish at the UTC at October half term.

I am pleased to announce that Ruth Bradbury, currently Principal of Darwen Aldridge Enterprise Studio school, will join us from Monday 30 October as Interim Principal for the rest of the academic year and until a permanent Principal can be appointed. Ruth is an experienced teacher and education leader who was appointed Principal of the Studio for its opening in September 2013 and led the school to an Ofsted Good rating on its first inspection. In common with the UTC, the Studio serves students from 14 – 19 who have a focus on specific career paths, including creative digital media.

We are grateful for the assistance Aldridge Education are providing the UTC, both in making Ruth available and for the support she will receive from the Trust's Education Director, Andrew Weymouth, who will support Ruth as the UTC's Executive Principal. Andrew has extensive experience in senior leadership roles in education, including as an Education Adviser/Broker for the Department for Education and as Chief Executive of the highly acclaimed East London Academy of Arts and Music.

With the support of our staff and partners we are confident that Ruth and Andrew can continue to grow the UTC and provide our students with a unique, technical and creative education that equips them for success in the digital world.

Finally, the governing body wish to offer their thanks to Sharon for her unwavering commitment to the UTC from before the college was opened up to this point. We have come a long way since the original plans for opening a UTC; Sharon has worked tirelessly to support the students, parents and staff of the UTC.

We offer her our very best wishes for the future.

Graham Cowley  
Chair of Governors, UTC@MediaCityUK