



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: ANDREW RHODES

You asked the Committee to consider an application under the Business Appointment Rules on behalf of Andrew Rhodes, Director General, Operations, at the Department for Work and Pensions. Mr Rhodes has resigned and his last day in the Civil Service will be 22 April 2018.

Mr Rhodes' appointment as Registrar and Chief Operating Officer at Swansea University was announced by Swansea on 16 January, the day after DWP sought the Committee's advice.

DWP have apologised to the Committee and acknowledged that on this occasion the Department fell short of the application process outlined in the Business Appointment Rules. However, the Committee wishes to register its concern that this appointment was announced before it had been afforded the opportunity to provide its advice.

The Government's Business Appointment Rules for Civil Servants specify that retrospective applications will not normally be accepted. To fulfil the remit given to it by Government, the Committee needs to be able to consider an application fully and freely before offering its advice. It is impossible to do this in a way that will command public confidence if an appointment has already been announced and/or taken up. The Committee is therefore unwilling to give retrospective advice for this appointment.

However, the Committee would formally record that:

- Mr Rhodes has been appointed Registrar and Chief Operating Officer at Swansea University, having applied for the role.
- He described the role as being responsible for the day-to-day operation of Swansea University, including all corporate and professional services as well as commercial aspects and oversight of academic performance.
- He has told the Committee that the role is not likely to include any contact or dealings with Government.
- Mr Rhodes informed the Committee that he was an undergraduate and post-graduate student at Swansea University between 1996 and 2003 and has had no contact with the

University since then, two years before he joined the Civil Service. Neither has he had contact with its competitors or access to commercially sensitive information about them.

- DWP has no reservations about the appointment.

Although the Committee has declined to give advice on this appointment, it wishes to draw Mr Rhodes' attention to the normal restrictions it imposes prohibiting lobbying and using privileged information obtained while in public office.

We will publish this letter on the Advisory Committee's website, and include the main details in both the regularly consolidated list on the website and in the next annual report.

Yours sincerely,

Nicola Richardson
Committee Secretariat