

Balfour Beatty Group Chief Executive appointed as Visiting Professor at Aston University

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Balfour Beatty Group Chief Executive and Founder of The 5% Club, Leo Quinn, has been appointed as Visiting Professor at the College of Business and Social Science at Aston University, Birmingham, in recognition of his contribution to business.

Leo Quinn has been responsible for the successful transformation of the UK's leading infrastructure group, Balfour Beatty, returning it to profit, creating one of the industry's strongest balance sheets and managing the growth of the group's order book by c. 45% in the last three years.

Leo has for many years supported the development of opportunities for young people, both individually and collectively. This culminated in his founding The 5% Club in 2013, a dynamic movement of employers committed to earn and learn as part of developing the workforce needed both by their business and to build a socially mobile, prosperous and cohesive nation.

The cross-industry, UK-wide initiative asks its members to commit that 5% of their workforce will consist of

apprentices, graduates or sponsored students on structured programmes within five years of joining The 5% Club.

With nearly half of all construction apprentices failing to remain in the industry long term, Leo Quinn will look to his role at Aston University as part of his contribution to tackling the UK's known and growing skills shortage, including in construction and infrastructure, which is a key industry to national economic recovery.

In addition to his commitment to driving the skills agenda, Leo is the only construction leader asked to join the Prime Minister's 30-member Build Back Better Council, responsible for unlocking investment, boosting job creation and levelling up the whole of the UK.

Speaking about his appointment, Leo Quinn, Balfour Beatty Group Chief Executive, said: "It is an honour to join Aston University as a Visiting Professor. As Founder of The 5% Club, I believe it is critical to engage the minds of the younger generation, empowering and equipping them with the tools and techniques to ensure the continued success of the country as we build back better and more sustainably.

"I look forward to discussing the mechanisms of business with the business leaders of tomorrow at Aston University".

Professor George Feiger, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean of the College of Business and Social Sciences at Aston University, said: "This well-deserved award recognises the distinguished contribution that Professor Quinn has made and continues to make to the business community.

"We are privileged to have a business practitioner of Leo's stature join our Faculty. As a university that values highly practical experience, his wide and varied international track record at boardroom level will provide invaluable stimulus and advice for our students and staff alike.

"Professor Quinn will work at a strategic level across the university in defining future strategies for impactful research and in areas of national importance."

Balfour Beatty's commitment to attracting, developing and retaining talent forms part of its newly launched sustainability strategy, **Building New Futures**, in which it aims to positively impact more than one million people by 2040 through increased employment and training opportunities as well as social mobility.

Photo credit: Balfour Beatty