

Vice-Chancellor splashes £15k in first term

By Neil Johnston, News Editor (2012/13)

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The new Vice-Chancellor and his department have claimed £15,000 on credit cards and expenses during his first term in charge.

These expenses include thousands of pounds on furniture, purchases from the Apple Store, trips abroad, and online shopping.

Kallum Taylor, YUSU President, described the claims stating: "No-one should have to pay out of their own pocket for their employer's goods or benefits. There are though, as there often always is, some pretty tenuous claims being made on behalf of the VC's department – and when it comes to the University telling ourselves and other departments to tighten our belts and make efficiencies, this doesn't look good at all."

Credit cards used by the department of Koen Lamberts, who joined the University in January, were charged for three transactions totalling £4700 from furniture shop Barker and Stonehouse, while £1141.99 has been spent on the Apple Store online. Nearly four and half thousand has been spent on a trip to South Africa and another £625.70 to Scandinavia.

The University says the trip to South Africa for the World Universities Network, was one of "three or four overseas trips this year" to "help strengthen our profile as a world top 100 university and establish research partnerships." The payment of £4393 for the trip appears to only account for air travel. Money has also been spent on hotels at a cost of £412 and £163 a time.

On one occasion £324 was spent on a single office chair while several purchases made are listed as 'VC Office iPad.' Other miscellaneous purchases included £149.95 at John Lewis, £49.33 at Hotel Du Vin, and £54.29 at Amazon. The new furnishings for Heslington Hall come on top of £19,000 spent last year on art for the building, taking the University's collection to £640,000.

The University has defended the recent purchases, pointing out that expenses are made on behalf of the department including the Deputy V-C and three Pro-Vice-Chancellors.

A University of York spokesperson said: "The Vice-Chancellor will undertake three or four overseas trips this year which help to strengthen our profile as a world top 100 university and establish research partnerships. The trip to South Africa was for the annual meeting of the Worldwide Universities Network, hosted this year by the University of Cape Town.

"The purchases have included IT equipment for various members of the VC's department and some replacement furnishings for the function room in University House. He regularly has work-related evening meetings – occasionally in restaurants. The role of the VC does not stop at 5pm."



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