Date: 28 November 2017

Manchester Metropolitan University

Ex Saatchi & Saatchi boss and UKFast CEO to speak at Manchester Met Business School



Kevin Roberts, the former worldwide CEO of advertising agency Saatchi & Saatchi, is to deliver a masterclass at Manchester Metropolitan University Business School on the leadership challenges presented by the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity - or 'VUCA' – of the modern world.

Roberts, who grew up in Lancaster and attended Lancaster Royal Grammar School, headed Saatchi & Saatchi for 20 years until a high profile sexism row saw him put on leave and subsequently resign from Publicis Groupe, the parent company of Saatchi & Saatchi, in August last year. His career has also included sales, marketing and leadership roles at Mary Quant, Gillette, Procter & Gamble and Pepsi-Co.

Also speaking at the event will be Lawrence Jones, founder and CEO of Manchester-based hosting provider UKFast. The masterclass is part of Manchester Met's acclaimed Masters of Sports Directorship (MSD) course which merges sport and business to qualify professional sports people and others for the growing role of sporting director.

The first group of students to graduate from the course in July this year included Aston Villa director of football Steve Round, Leicester City caretaker manager Michael Appleton and Warwickshire County Cricket Club's sport director Ashley Giles.

Dr Sara Ward, programme director of the MSD at Manchester Met Business School, said: "Delivering unique insight from key figures in the worlds of sport and business, our masterclasses are a vital part of

the MSD and one of the reasons why the course has unrivalled credibility and continues to attract the highest calibre people.

“There can be few people in business who have had as colourful a career as Kevin’s and his views on leadership will no doubt be as radical and creative as we are all anticipating.”

Since leaving Saatchi & Saatchi, Roberts has become chairman of several organisations including B2B PR and marketing agency Beattie, and New Zealand cricket company CricHQ. A former director of the New Zealand Rugby Union and former chairman of USA Rugby, Roberts is also the founder of Red Rose Consulting, which advises business leaders on creative thinking, marketing and leadership.

The masterclass takes place on 6 December. Other MSD masterclass speakers include Manchester City director Brian Marwood, Southampton FC sport director Les Reed and Stuart Lancaster, former head coach of England Rugby Union.