

Professor Keith T. Maunders

Keith Maunders is Emeritus Professor of Accounting & Finance at Hull University, having retired from there in September 2004. Since his “retirement”, he has been Academic Director of the Central European University Business School, Budapest for two years and is currently Visiting Professor of Accounting at the University of the South Pacific, Fiji.

This taste for exotic locations is probably partly explained by his leaving high school to enter the Merchant Navy, as an Engineer Cadet, at the age of 18. He spent seven years in this and subsequent Marine Engineer Officer roles. He came ashore to work as a Computer Programmer for Stewart & Lloyds, being involved in some relatively early computer applications in financial management. Not entering university from school was remedied by reading an Economics and Accounting degree at Hull University, in which he gained first class honours.

Following graduation, he was employed at Hull as a Lecturer and also worked part time in the University Finance Office, as a means of obtaining his ACCA qualification. Whilst at Hull, he carried out research into the role of accounting information in collective bargaining, resulting in the publication of a book by Macmillans, as well as a number of academic articles.

He then transferred, as Senior Lecturer, to Lancaster University, at a time when it was particularly stimulating to work in the Accounting and Finance Department there - his colleagues included Eddie Stamp, Klaus Macharzina, Ken Peasnell, Sid Gray, Len Skerratt, David Otley, Clive Emmanuel, Kenneth Gee and Michael Mumford. With this advantage, he was promoted to the founding Chair in Business Finance and Accounting at Leeds University. His research interests developed in the directions of Employee Reporting, Value Added Reports, the Employment Report and Corporate Social and Environmental Reporting, each of which resulted in books, monographs and/or academic papers.

He was at Leeds for some 12 years and it was during this time that his administrative connection with the Association of University Teachers of Accounting (later the British Accounting Association) developed. He became Treasurer of the AUTA and later General Secretary of it and the BAA – helping to steer the strategic transition between the two entities. His service as General Secretary of AUTA/BAA came to an end in December 2006, after some twenty years.

Also whilst at Leeds, he became actively interested in the education of managers from developing countries. In addition, he could not resist the temptation of opportunities for other academic travel – being successively Visiting Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, Sydney University, Virginia Tech., and the Australian National University. As a result of all this, he has worked as an academic in over thirty countries to date.

His next “permanent” appointment was as Professor of Accounting and Finance at Hull University – a return to his alma mater – where, as might be expected, he became actively involved in Hull’s offshore teaching programs in such venues as Hong Kong, Singapore and the Middle East. In 1996, probably realizing the hopelessness of trying to keep him “at home”, Hull gave him four years leave of absence which turned into an exercise in institution building practice. It started with a period as Associate Dean to the Tel Aviv International School of Management. TISOM was intended to demonstrate the feasibility of providing higher education in management to Jews and Arabs together, as part of the Middle East peace process. Unfortunately, political support was withdrawn and his job became an exercise in how to close as well as open such an institution, but not before one cohort was graduated at MBA level. Being unemployed and still on sabbatical leave, he moved to the Wissenschaftszentrum, Berlin, to continue research into Environmental Accounting. After a few months there, he was approached to play an advisory and participative role in the projected expansion of a business school in Taiwan, which he carried out for about half a year. Even before taking up this challenge, however, he had been invited to take on the even more challenging role of becoming President of a new private-sector German university – the Stuttgart Institute of Management & Technology – a developmental task which occupied the remainder of his “study leave” from Hull.

Balancing his somewhat unorthodox academic career has been a steady institutional involvement with the accounting profession, and the ACCA in particular. At an early stage, this involved being part of their professional examinations system, culminating in the role of Examinations Coordinator for both financial and management accounting papers. Later, he served more than 12 years as ACCA representative on the Sustainability Working Group of the European Federation of Accountants (FEE). He has also served on a number of other national committees including, most recently, the Social and Environmental Committee of ACCA.

Miscellaneous activities over the years have included many External Examinerships – currently Cranfield University and Universiti Teknologi MARA; service on editorial and advisory boards and various consultancies for private and public entities.

But over and above all this has been his birdwatching. His wife characterizes him as an amateur academic but a professional birdwatcher – and he wouldn’t have had it any other way!