

Role Description: Chair of Council

1. The main components of the role are as follows.
2. The Chair is responsible for the leadership of the University's Council, ensuring that it gives clear, effective strategic direction to the University and its Executive, so that the University continues to flourish and succeed in a fast moving, competitive environment.
3. The Chair will lead the Council in working with the Executive to monitor, review and update its strategy. This will in particular pursue the University's ambition to achieve a distinctive reputation for excellence in:
 - a) giving students outstanding support to learn in a community which values them as individuals
 - b) providing a breadth and richness of experience which prepares students for rewarding lives and successful careers
 - c) making an outstanding contribution to the well-being of Gloucestershire.
4. The Chair will lead the Council so as to promote a strong sense of shared vision, ambition and collective purpose. The Chair is not required to have extensive prior experience of higher education, but must have some personal commitment towards the transformative power of a University in promoting the wellbeing of its students and its community.
5. The Chair should ensure that the Council exercises collective responsibility, encouraging all members to work together effectively, contributing their skills and expertise as appropriate, and seeking to build consensus among them. The Chair should constructively challenge the Council, promoting high quality discussion, analysis and direction-setting.
6. Supported and advised by the University Secretary and the Vice-Chancellor, the Chair is responsible for ensuring that the business of the Council is carried out efficiently, effectively, and in a manner appropriate for the proper conduct of public business. The expectations of a University Council are codified in the Guide produced by the Council of University Chairs, the financial memorandum of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, and the "Nolan" standards of behaviour in public life. The specific requirements relating to the operation of the University Council are set out in our Memorandum and Articles of Association.
7. Within the collective responsibility of the Council for holding the Vice-Chancellor and University Executive to account, the Chair has specific responsibility for setting objectives and reviewing performance of the Vice-Chancellor. The Chair should endeavour to establish a constructive and supportive but challenging working relationship with the Vice-Chancellor, recognising the proper separation between governance and executive management, and avoiding involvement in the day-to-day executive management of the University.

The Business of the University

8. The Chair is responsible for ensuring that Council exercises control over the strategic direction of the University, through an effective planning process, and that the

performance of the University is adequately assessed against the objectives which Council has approved.

9. The University has an established, published strategy for the period 2012-17, with an annual operating plan and a range of subsidiary strategies. The Chair leads the Council in reviewing, and holding the Executive to account for, the delivery of this strategic framework, and for revising and extending the framework in response to internal and external developments.
10. The Chair normally chairs the Governance and Nominations Committee and the Remuneration Committee, and attends the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The External Role

11. For certain purposes, the Chair will be expected to represent the University and the Council externally. The extent of this role will depend on the individual's preferences and personal networks and experience. The University's Chancellor (Baroness Rennie Fritchie), Pro-Chancellors (Sir Henry Elwes and Bishop Michael Perham), and Vice-Chancellor (Stephen Marston) undertake a range of roles in promoting the University externally, and the Chair will be able to define their external role by reference to those other roles.
12. It is desirable, but not essential, that the Chair should have experience at the highest level of either higher education or the county of Gloucestershire, or both. It is more important, however, that the Chair should bring extensive experience of successful leadership of large, complex organisations with ambitious strategies, and a commitment to the mission and purposes of the University.

Terms of Appointment

13. The office of Chair is not remunerated, but the Chair may claim travelling and similar expenses incurred in the course of University business.
14. The Chair's term of office is four years, and is renewable once (ie a total term of up to 8 years).

Time Commitment

15. There are three elements to the time commitment of this role.
 - a) The core commitment is to be available to chair meetings of Council, chair or attend certain Committees of Council, and undertake the formal business of the Council. That core role will require the chair to be present in the University for about 15-20 full or part days per year.
 - b) University business is likely to punctuate other days eg telephone conversations, reading in preparation for meetings, and being available for consultation and advice, without needing to be present in the University.
 - c) Being present within the University and our wider community, engaging with the life of the University and contributing to our local profile. This is a more discretionary element, depending in part on the individual's interests and availability and the complementary roles of the Chancellor, Pro-Chancellors, Vice Chair of Council and Vice-Chancellor.

Person Specification: Chair of Council

	Essential	Desirable
Attainments and Qualifications	First degree (or equivalent)	
Previous Experience	<p>Successful leadership of large, complex organisations</p> <p>Successful leadership of the design and delivery of ambitious strategies for organisational development and achievement</p> <p>Ability to think and act strategically</p> <p>Experience of managing change</p> <p>Experience as a non-Executive Board chair or member, including chairing meetings effectively</p> <p>Understanding of good corporate governance</p>	<p>Understanding of senior leadership and management in a University context</p>
Training and Specialist Skills	<p>Understanding the dynamics of large, complex organisations</p> <p>Business strategy</p> <p>Familiarity with financial management and direction of large, complex organisations</p> <p>High levels of written and oral communication skills</p> <p>High level negotiating skills</p>	
Disposition	<p>Personal commitment to the purposes of the University</p> <p>Enthusiasm and energy</p> <p>Ability to lead and inspire others to create and pursue a shared vision and ambition</p> <p>Ability to get the best out of others, working effectively with other members of Council, and with the Vice-Chancellor and other members of the University Executive</p>	<p>Willingness to engage with the County of Gloucestershire and the surrounding region, and to act as a champion and ambassador for the University.</p>

	<p>Diplomatic but firm, with the ability both to listen and to persuade</p> <p>Commitment to the University's mission as an inclusive organisation, promoting equality and celebrating diversity amongst students and staff</p>	
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