

Role Description

Chair of the Board of Governors

1. LEADERSHIP

- a) The Chair is responsible for the leadership of the Board of Governors. As Chair of its meetings, he/she is responsible for ensuring that the necessary business of the Board of Governors is carried out efficiently, effectively, in a manner appropriate for the proper conduct of public business, and in accordance with current legislation, including the Charities Act.
- b) The Chair should ensure, inter alia through good working relationships with the Vice Chancellor and Chairs of the Committees of the Board of Governors, that Committee business is carried out in a proper manner, efficiently and effectively, and that regular and satisfactory reports are presented to the Board of Governors.
- c) The Chair should ensure that the Board of Governors acts in accordance with the instruments of governance of the University and with the University's internal rules and regulations, and should seek advice from the Clerk to the Board of Governors in any case of uncertainty.
- d) The Chair should ensure that the Board of Governors exercises collective responsibility, that is to say, that decisions are taken corporately by all members acting as a body. The Chair will encourage all members to work together effectively, contributing their skills and expertise as appropriate, and will seek to build consensus among them.
- e) The Chair should ensure that the Board of Governors approves and operates a procedure for the regular review of the performance of individual members of the Board of Governors, and should participate as reviewer in that process. The Chair should encourage members to participate in appropriate training events such as those organised by the Leadership Foundation.
- f) The Chair will be formally and informally involved in the process for the recruitment of new members of the Board of Governors, recognizing the importance of equality and diversity aspects with the Board, and should encourage all members to participate in induction events organised by the University.
- g) The Chair will be responsible for identifying Chairs of the Committees of the Board of Governors and will make recommendations for appointment to the Board of Governors after consultation with the Nominations and Governance Committee.
- h) The Chair will be responsible for the appraisal/review of the performance of the Vice Chancellor/Chief Executive, and will make recommendations to the Remuneration Committee accordingly.
- i) The Chair will be responsible for relevant aspects of the appraisal of the performance of the Clerk to the Board of Governors and will make recommendations accordingly.

2. STANDARDS

- a) The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the Board of Governors conducts itself in accordance with accepted standards of behaviour in public life, embracing selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- b) The Chair will ensure that the Clerk to the Board of Governors maintains an up-to-date Register of the interests of members of the Board of Governors, and shall make a full and timely personal disclosure. The Chair shall ensure that any conflict of interest is identified, exposed,

and managed appropriately, in order that the integrity of Board of Governors business shall be and shall be seen to be maintained.

- c) The Chair will be responsible for ensuring that the Board of Governors exercises efficient and effective use of the resources of the University for the furtherance of its charitable purposes, maintains its long-term financial viability, and safeguards its assets, and that proper mechanisms exist to ensure financial control and for the prevention of fraud.

3. THE BUSINESS OF THE UNIVERSITY

- a) The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the Board of Governors exercises control over the strategic direction of the University, through the delivery of the Strategic Plan and an effective planning process; and that the performance of the University is adequately assessed against the objectives which the Board of Governors has approved, ensuring that the financial sustainability of the institution is balanced with an appropriate level of business risk.
- b) The Chair should at all times act in accordance with established protocols for the use of delegated authority or Chair's Action. All instances of the use of delegated authority or Chair's Action should be reported to the next meeting of the Board of Governors.
- c) The Chair should establish a constructive and supportive but challenging working relationship with the Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive, recognising the proper separation between governance and executive management, and avoiding involvement in the day-to-day executive management of the University.
- d) The Chair is required to act as a formal signatory to certain documents on behalf of the University in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the University, for example in the case of the execution of high value contracts or documents to be executed as deeds where the University seal is to be affixed.

4. THE EXTERNAL ROLE

- a) The Chair will represent the Board of Governors and the University externally and will be a member of the Committee of University Chairs.
- b) The Chair may be asked to use personal influence and networking skills on behalf of the University.
- c) The Chair will be asked to play a major role in liaising between key stakeholders and the University, or in fund-raising. This role in particular will be exercised in a carefully co-ordinated way with other senior officers and staff of the University.

5. PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS

Essential criteria:

- A strong personal commitment to Higher Education and the values, aims and objectives of the University.
- At all times an ability to act fairly and impartially in the interests of the University as a whole, using independent judgement and maintaining confidentiality as appropriate.
- Strong chairing and leadership skills which promote effective decision making and constructive debate.
- The ability to create a harmonious working environment, by developing and maintaining positive and effective relationships.

- The ability to work as a team, which has both executive and non-executive members.
- The ability to analyse and review complex issues and weigh up conflicting opinions.
- The ability to explain both orally and in writing reasons for arriving at decisions.
- Understanding of strategic planning and resource management.
- A commitment to engaging positively and openly with students, staff, the public and other stakeholders.
- The ability to motivate and enthuse others.
- The highest standards of integrity and honesty.

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- a) The Chair will attend all meetings of which he/she is Chair or a member, or give timely apologies if absence is unavoidable.
- b) The Chair will make him/herself available to attend induction/training events organised by the University or other appropriate bodies.
- c) The Chair is expected to have regular meetings with the Vice Chancellor.
- d) The Chair is expected to commit to attend the graduation ceremonies and other key University events.
- e) The Chair is expected to receive feedback on his/her performance as Chair via a review process informed by other governors.
- f) The likely overall time commitment required of the Chair for the effective conduct of the duties of the post is an average of one day a week.
- g) The Chair is encouraged to reclaim all travelling and similar expenses incurred in the course of University business, via the Clerk to the Board of Governors. The University offers support for the Chair in a number of ways: through the provision of administrative support, IT equipment and the opportunity to attend training events organised by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and other providers.