

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR THE CHAIR OF COUNCIL

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Council is the governing body of the University of Bristol and exercises general control over the University and its affairs. All members of Council are trustees of the University, and their decisions affect all aspects of the University's life and work. All members of Council are therefore expected to play an appropriate part in ensuring that the business of Council is carried out efficiently, effectively, and in a manner appropriate to the proper conduct of public business.
- 1.2 The Chair and Vice-Chair of Council are elected from amongst the lay members of Council in accordance with the University's Ordinances. Whenever practicable, their terms of office shall be staggered to avoid their terms expiring at the same time.
- 1.3 The Chair plays a key role in the business of the University but does not become involved in day-to-day executive management, which is the responsibility of the Vice-Chancellor and his or her senior team. The Chair maintains a constructive working relationship with the Vice-Chancellor, the University Secretary and other members of the University Senior Executive. These relationships are mutually supportive, but incorporate the checks and balances imposed by the different roles each has within the institution's constitution.

2. Duties of Chair of Council

The Chair will ensure that Council observes the principles of public life and operates effectively. In doing so, the principal duties of the Chair of Council are to:

- provide leadership to members of Council in their role of setting the strategy and policy of the University
- chair meetings of Council and to promote their efficient operation, ensuring that members of Council work together effectively and have confidence in the procedures laid down for the conduct of business
- promote the effectiveness of Council and University governance in general, including ensuring that Council undertakes regular reviews of its own effectiveness
- as may be necessary for the good of the University, take decisions on behalf of Council between meetings
- attend meetings of Court and other formal and informal meetings in the University, as appropriate
- attend the Awards Ceremonies of the University and other events of the University, as appropriate
- act in accordance with delegated authority granted by the Council
- act as an ambassador for the University, promoting its activities in the wider community and, in particular, assisting with philanthropic activity and fund raising projects of the University
- represent the University as the Chair of the Governing Body on external bodies as appropriate (for example, the Committee of University Chairs) and at external meetings (for example, the HEFCE Annual Meeting for Chairs of Governing Bodies)
- undertake duties specified by the University Statutes and Ordinances and the Standing Orders of Council
- as appropriate, help to identify and act as the primary point of contact for candidates for future membership of Council
- ensure, with the support of the University, that new members of Council receive a full induction upon joining Council and that opportunities for further development for all members of Council are provided regularly in accordance with their individual needs

- attend training and induction as required to carry out the role of Chair and member of Council.

3. Qualities of the Chair of Council

The qualities sought in the Chair of Council are:

- a strong personal commitment to Higher Education and the values, aims and objectives of the University
- a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as Chair and member of Council
- a sophisticated understanding of governance processes and effectiveness
- political awareness and an understanding of the economic, social and political dynamics of Bristol and the region
- strategic vision and good, independent, judgement
- a sound understanding of financial issues and the ability to understand the University's financial policies and reporting (with advice as necessary)
- diplomacy and sensitivity
- honesty and integrity
- skills of networking, influencing and advocacy
- an understanding of the importance of and a commitment to equality and diversity
- respect for confidentiality.

1. Other

All members of Council are expected to act in accordance with the University's Code of Conduct for members of Council: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/university/migrated/documents/codeofconduct.pdf>.