

THE COUNCIL

The Vice-Chair of the Council

DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS OF ROLE

1 Formal Role

a) The Council

The Vice-Chair is an external member of the Council, and as such the role encompasses those duties and expectations outlined in the role description for a Council member.

In the absence of the Pro-Chancellor, the Vice-Chair will chair meetings of the Council and fulfil the responsibilities outlined in the role description for the Pro-Chancellor.

The Vice-Chair will work closely with the Chair, acting as a sounding board and providing support as required.

The Council normally meets at least 4 times per year, attends one meeting a year with the academic Senate and also hold an annual development event.

The Vice-Chair should also contribute to the work and decision making process of the Council through discussion, advice and guidance on issues, strategy and policies brought to the Council for its consideration and through membership of the committees of Council as determined from time to time. He/she should identify and raise issues pertinent to the remit of the Council, and the policies of the University.

b) Remuneration Committee

The Vice-Chair is a member of the Remuneration Committee, which determines the remuneration of senior staff of the University.

Remuneration Committee usually holds two meetings per year.

The Vice-Chair should contribute to the work and decision making process of the Remuneration Committee through discussion, advice and guidance on issues and policies relating to the determination of remuneration of senior staff of the University.

c) Governance and Nominations Committee

The Vice-Chair is a member of the Governance and Nominations Committee, which is responsible for recommending to the Council the appointment of external members of the Council and of Council Committees and for assuring the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements.

Governance and Nominations Committee normally meets four times per year.

d) Strategic Planning and Resources Committee (SPRC)

The Vice-Chair is a member of the Strategic Planning and Resources Committee which is a joint committee of the Council and the Senate responsible for reviewing progress against strategic priorities.

SPRC normally meets annually, to consider strategic performance, with other meetings being convened as required.

e) Chair – Performance Evaluation

The Vice-Chair will also take the lead role in evaluating the performance of the Chair: meeting with the Council, without the Chair, to discuss feedback from members; and subsequently holding an appraisal meeting with the Chair.

f) Council Members - Induction and Performance Evaluation

The Vice-Chair will play an active role in supporting the Chair in the induction and performance evaluation process to assess and support the performance of individual members of the Council, focussing on the appraisals for staff and students. The appraisal will not only be about the individual, but will also provide an opportunity for the members to evaluate the way in which the Council and the secretariat operate.

The Vice-Chair will also encourage members to participate in appropriate training and development events.

g) Senior Independent Council Member

The Vice-Chair will be an as an alternative point of contact or intermediary for other Council members, members of VCE, or other staff or stakeholders, with whom they can raise concerns informally and take advice about further action.

2 Public Relations/External Role

The Vice-Chair will support the Pro-Chancellor in acting as an ambassador or representative for the University, attending high profile events and promoting the University's interests as appropriate.

The Vice-Chair is strongly encouraged to attend one or more degree ceremonies of the University. A specific academic gown is held and worn on such occasions.

When required, the Vice-Chair will deputise for the Pro-Chancellor at meetings of the Committee of University Chairman, and similar bodies.

The Vice-Chair may also represent the University formally and informally at special events or conferences.

3 Consultative/Advisory Role

The Vice-Chair should support the Pro-Chancellor in advising the Vice-Chancellor on strategic and policy issues whilst recognising the proper separation between governance and executive management, and avoiding involvement in the day-to-day executive management of the University.

TERM AND TIME COMMITMENT

As a member of the Council the Vice-Chair may serve for a period of four years and is eligible for re-appointment for a second term. The maximum period of office as a member of the Council is eight years.

The Vice-Chair shall hold office for three years, subject to their continued membership of the Council.

The role of Vice-Chair will require a significant time commitment for the effective conduct of the duties of the post. This commitment will normally be fairly evenly spread through the year.

The Council meets normally in Milton Keynes with one meeting per year scheduled in University locations in Manchester or Nottingham or in the Nations.. The meetings of the Council, the Governance and Nominations Committee, the Remuneration Committee and the Strategic Planning and Resources Committee will amount to approximately 13 days over the year. The Performance Evaluation process is likely to require another 3-4 days. Time is also needed to keep up with the Council and other committee papers, and with other significant University documents; and in providing advice and guidance. Such time is unpredictable and is to some extent self-determined, but in normal circumstances an average of 1 day a month is likely to be needed.

There might perhaps be 4 other occasions in the year where the Vice-Chair, in support of the Pro-Chancellor, would be expected to represent the University. These would be more of a social nature and in the evening or at lunch time.

STATUS/EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

- a) Enthusiasm for and commitment to the mission of the Open University, and its values, aims and objectives, particularly diversity and widening participation.
- b) Experience at board level for major/international institutions and experience of chairing high profile meetings.
- c) Good analytical and communication skills and the ability to identify key issues and command the respect of Council.
- d) Demonstrate independence of character and judgement
- e) Knowledge of higher education in the UK and national and international issues that would affect the operation of the University.
- f) The Vice-Chair should also demonstrate the qualities, skills and experience outlined in the role description for a Council member.