

## THE COUNCIL

### The Pro-Chancellor

#### DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS OF ROLE

##### 1 Formal Role

###### a) The Council

The Pro-Chancellor is Chair of the OU Council, the University's governing body.

As Chair, the Pro-Chancellor is responsible for the leadership of the Council and for ensuring that the necessary business of the Council is carried on efficiently, effectively and in a manner appropriate for the proper conduct of public business. The role of the Council is to set the University's strategy and to monitor its performance against agreed strategic priorities and goals. The Chair leads the Council in providing support and challenge to the executive in the delivery of the University's strategy, ensuring that the needs of the University's diverse stakeholders are taken into account in the Council's decision making.

The Chair should also ensure that the Council acts in accordance with the Charter and Statutes of the University and with the University's internal rules and regulations, and should seek advice from the University Secretary in any case of uncertainty.

The Chair should ensure that the Council exercises corporate responsibility, that is to say, that decisions are taken collectively 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. The Chair will also play an active role in the induction and performance evaluation process for individual Council members.

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

The Chair will also attend a pre-Council briefing meeting.

###### b) Remuneration Committee

The Pro-Chancellor is a member of the Remuneration Committee, which is responsible for the annual review of senior staff salaries.

Remuneration Committee usually holds four meetings per year.

The Pro-Chancellor 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 Pro-Chancellor is Chair of the Governance and Nominations Committee, which is responsible for recommending to the Council the appointment of external members of the Council and the Council's 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 Pro-Chancellor is the Deputy Chair 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 once per year.

**e) Finance Committee**

The Pro-Chancellor is a member of the Finance Committee, which is chaired by the Treasurer.

Finance Committee normally meets four times per year.

**f) Other Council Committees**

The Chair should ensure, inter alia through a good working relationship with the Chairs of the Audit Committee and such other Council committees in establishment that Committee business is carried on in a proper manner, efficiently and effectively, and that regular and satisfactory reports are presented to the Council.

**2 Ambassadorial Role**

**a) Ceremonial activities**

**Degree ceremonies**

The Pro-Chancellor is an Officer of the University and is entitled and strongly encouraged to take the role of Presiding Officer at the University's degree ceremonies. As such, he/she has a principal role in opening the proceedings, in the conferment of academic qualifications on the day, in the presentation of graduates and making a closing address to the graduates.

The Pro-Chancellor's attendance is especially important where an honorary degree is being conferred on a person whose background is in the area of the Council's remit and with whom the University has had a significant relationship.

A specific academic gown is held and worn on such occasions.

**High profile events**

The Pro-Chancellor is also expected to preside at high profile events such as major public lectures and other official occasions where appropriate.

**b) Promotional activities**

The Pro-Chancellor may be asked to use personal influence and networking skills on behalf of the University, for example in lobbying government ministers and funding bodies, or in fund raising.

**c) Representational activities**

The Pro-Chancellor will be a member of the Committee of University Chairman, and similar bodies, and will be invited to attend its biannual meetings.

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

### **3 Consultative/Advisory Role**

The Pro-Chancellor should endeavour to establish a constructive and supportive, but challenging working relationship with the Vice-Chancellor, advising 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.

### **4 Managerial Role**

The Pro-Chancellor will be responsible for the appraisal/review of the performance of the Vice-Chancellor and will make recommendations to the Remuneration Committee accordingly.

## **TERM AND TIME COMMITMENT**

The initial appointment as Pro-Chancellor is for four years. The Pro-Chancellor is eligible for re-appointment for a second term and the maximum period of office is eight years.

The role of Pro-Chancellor is an important one in The Open University and 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. Meetings of the Council, the Governance and Nominations Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Remuneration and Strategic Planning and Resources Committee will amount to approximately 18 days over the year. Some committee meetings are held online. Time is also needed to keep up with the Council and other committee papers, and with other significant University documents; to deal with routine matters; and to provide advice and guidance. Such time is unpredictable and is to some extent self-determined, but in normal circumstances an average of 4 days a month is likely to be needed.

The Pro-Chancellor might also be expected to officiate at one or more degree ceremonies during the year, and there might perhaps be 4 other occasions in the year where the Pro-Chancellor would be expected to represent the University. These may be more of a social nature and in the evening or at lunch time.

## **STATUS/EXPERIENCE REQUIRED**

The Pro-Chancellor of the University should demonstrate the following qualities, skills and experience:

- a) enthusiasm for and commitment to the mission of the Open University, and its values, aims and objectives, particularly diversity and widening participation;
- b) broad experience, a high profile within their sphere of endeavour and the ability to command respect;
- c) access to a network of contacts;
- d) experience of chairing meetings at board level for major/international institutions and ensuring the smooth conduct of their business, both online and in person;
- e) ability to challenge the executive when it is necessary and appropriate to do so;

- f) Good analytical and communication skills and the ability to identify key issues and command the respect of Council.
- g) ability to act fairly and impartially in the interests of the University as a whole, using independent judgement and maintaining confidentiality as appropriate;
- h) good interpersonal/communication skills at all levels;
- i) not overtly party political;
- j) ability to establish a good working relationship with the Vice-Chancellor.