

Role description for Chair of Court

Court has approved the following role description for the Chair of Court:

Role Summary

The role of the Chair of Court is to lead the University Court and enable it to work in an effective and efficient manner in accordance with the University of the West of Scotland Order of Council 2015. The Chair is responsible for the leadership of the governing body and is ultimately responsible for its effectiveness. The Chair should ensure that the institution is well-connected with its stakeholders, including staff and students.

Leadership, Governance & Oversight

- As a critical friend to the Principal & Vice-Chancellor, the Chair will provide governance, leadership and strategic support to the Court.
- To promote the wellbeing and efficient operation of the Court, ensuring that members work together effectively and have confidence in the procedures laid down for the conduct of business.
- To ensure that the Court as a whole conducts itself in accordance with the accepted standards of public life which embrace selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- To ensure that meetings of the Court proceed efficiently and effectively, with appropriate emphasis on Court's strategic and monitoring role and with due recognition of the Executive Leadership role of the Principal and other senior colleagues.
- To ensure that the Court exercises control over the strategic direction of the University, and that the performance of the University is adequately assessed against the KPIs approved by the Court.
- To be fully involved in the process for the recruitment of new members of Court and to ensure that all new members of Court are inducted and fully briefed on the terms of their appointment and are made aware of the responsibilities placed on them for the proper governance of the institution.
- To ensure that Court complies with its obligations as a charity in Scotland, exercises efficient and effective use of the resources of the University for the furtherance of its charitable purpose, maintains its long-term viability, and safeguards its assets, and that proper mechanisms exist to ensure financial control and for the prevention of fraud.
- To ensure compliance with the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance.
- To at all times act in accordance with established protocols for the use of delegated authority or Chair's action.
- To be fully involved in the process of the appointment of a new Principal & Vice-Chancellor.
- To be responsible for coordinating and conducting an annual performance evaluation of the Principal & Vice-Chancellor.
- To ensure that the Court operates a procedure for the regular review of its effectiveness.

Effective Working Relationships

- To maintain a constructive and challenging working relationship with the Principal & Vice-Chancellor, recognising the proper separation between governance and executive leadership and avoiding involvement in the day-to-day management of the University, whilst also acting as a trusting advisor to the Principal.
- To hold regular meetings with the Principal & Vice-Chancellor and with the University Secretary & Registrar between meetings of the Court so that he or she is well informed about strategic issues affecting the University and on progress regarding the implementation of Court decisions.
- To liaise with the Principal & Vice-Chancellor and University Secretary & Registrar in relation to the development of the agenda and briefings for meetings of Court taking into account sector wide and University strategic issues.
- To ensure that members of the Court work together effectively and have confidence in the procedures laid down for the conduct of Court business.
- To hold regular meetings with Chairs of Committees of the Court in order to co-ordinate and monitor progress of Court business and to ensure that appropriate reports are made to Court.
- To meet with members of the Court on an individual and informal basis at least once annually to discuss their contribution, receive feedback and provide guidance if needed.
- To Chair meetings of the Governance & Nominations Committee. The Chair of Court is also a member of the Policy & Resources Committee, Remuneration Committee and Honorary Awards Committee and may also attend the Audit & Risk Committee from time to time as required.



Raising the Profile of the University

- As leader of the governing body, to ensure that the University is well connected, and responsive, to key stakeholder groups.
- To represent the Court and the University externally, including sector wide activities and act as an ambassador and positive spokesperson for the University.
- To be a member of the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) and the Committee of Scottish Chairs (CSC).
- To attend graduation ceremonies and other University ceremonial events.

Other Requirements

- The likely overall time commitment required of the Chair of Court for the effective conduct of the duties of the post is an average of 30-35 days spread across the academic year. This will include attendance at meetings of Court and other sub committees, preparation for meetings including agenda setting and briefing meetings, attendance at graduation ceremonies and other public events, sector wide activities and possible overseas trips.
- The appointment will be for an initial period of 3 years, with the option of an extension to the appointment for one further year, subject to the approval of Court.
- The role is unremunerated, although incidental expenses will be paid.
- The University maintains a Register of Interests of members of Court and its senior officers. This Register is published on the University's public website.
- An annual appraisal of the Chair's performance is undertaken by the Court.

Competencies and Personal Qualities

- Extensive professional experience with significant executive leadership accomplishments in business, government, philanthropic or non-profit sector organisations.
- Experience of chairing high level meetings.
- Understanding and experience of the principles of corporate governance.
- Strong personal commitment to higher education and the purpose and truths of the University of the West of Scotland including transforming the lives of those who contribute to or experience higher education.
- Personal influence and networking skills.
- Excellent written and oral communication coupled with a natural affinity for public speaking.
- Ability to establish effective relationships with a diverse range of people across all of the University's stakeholder groups.