

ASSOCIATION OF COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITIES

Role description of the Chair of the Council

1. Leadership

- a) The Chair is ultimately responsible for the leadership of the Council and for ensuring that it acts in accordance with the Association's Charter and Statutes and with its Code of Governance.
- b) The Chair is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the Council's business and the business of committees are carried out efficiently, effectively, and in accordance with the Code of Governance.
- c) The Chair should ensure that the Council 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.
- d) The Chair should ensure that, in accordance with the Governance Code, the effectiveness of the Council and its committees is kept regularly under review.
- e) The Chair will be responsible for the appraisal/review of the performance of the Secretary General and will make recommendations to the Remuneration Committee accordingly.
- f) In consultation with a Member of Council and the Secretary General, the Chair will appoint a secretary to the Council, with such duties as the Council prescribes.

2. Standards

- a) The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the Council, in accordance with the Code of Governance, conducts itself in accordance with accepted standards of behaviour in public life, embracing selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- b) The Chair shall ensure that the secretary to the Council maintains an up-to-date Register of Interests of members, and shall make a full and timely personal disclosure of any relevant matters. The Chair shall ensure that any conflict of interest is identified, brought to the attention of Council, and managed appropriately in order that the integrity of Council business shall be and shall be seen to be maintained.
- c) The Chair shall be responsible for ensuring that the Council exercises efficient and effective use of resources for the furtherance of the Association's charitable purposes, maintains its long-term financial viability, and safeguards its assets.

3. The Business of the ACU

- a) The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the Council exercises control over the strategic direction of the ACU and that its performance is adequately assessed against the objectives which the Council has approved.
- 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 shall be reported to the next meeting of the Council.
- c) The Chair should endeavour to establish a constructive and supportive working relationship with the Secretary General whilst at the same time recognising the proper separation between governance and executive management, and avoiding involvement in the day-to-day executive management of the Association.

4. The External Role

- a) Together with the Secretary General, the Chair will represent the Council and the Association externally.
- b) The Chair may be asked to use personal influence and networking skills on behalf of the Association.
- c) Together with the Secretary General, the Chair may be asked to play a role in liaising with the Association's stakeholders.

5. Personal

- a) The Chair will at all times act fairly and impartially in the interests of the Association as a whole, using independent judgement and maintaining confidentiality as appropriate.
- b) The Chair is expected to attend all meetings of which he/she is Chair or a member, or, if absence is unavoidable, to give timely apologies.
- c) The Chair will be required to commit sufficient time to ensure the effective conduct of the duties of the post.
- d) The Chair is a Designated Officer within the terms of the Association's Public Interest Disclosure ("Whistle-blowing") Policy.
- e) The office of Chair is not remunerated but the Chair is entitled to reclaim expenses in accordance with the Association's arrangements.

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