

ASSOCIATION OF COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITIES

Statement of Primary Responsibilities of the Council

Consistent with the Association's Charter and Statutes and in accordance with its Code of Governance, the Primary Responsibilities of the Council are as follows:

1. To approve the mission and strategic vision of the ACU, its long-term business plans, key performance indicators and annual budgets, ensuring that these meet the interests of stakeholders.
2. To establish and keep under review a framework of delegation to the Executive Committee and other committees and to the Secretary General, including the policies, procedures and limits within which the delegated powers are exercised.
3. To delegate to the Executive Committee responsibility, *inter alia*, for (i) reviewing the Association's mission, strategic vision and long term business plans and recommending these to the Council for approval; (ii) reviewing and recommending to the Council for approval annual budgets; (iii) ensuring the implementation of the approved strategies and budgets; and (iv) supervising and directing the ACU's activities generally, including supporting the Secretary General and his/her staff.
4. To take overall responsibility for risk strategy but to delegate to the Audit and Risk Committee (which shall be a standing committee of Council) responsibility for preparing a risk strategy and management policy.
5. To delegate to the Secretary General as chief executive responsibility for the general management and day-to-day operation of the ACU.
6. To ensure the establishment and monitoring of systems of control and accountability (including mechanisms for the prevention of fraud, financial and operational controls and risk assessment) and of procedures for handling internal grievances and for managing conflicts of interest.
7. To ensure processes are in place to keep the Council's effectiveness and that of its subordinate committees under regular review and, preferably every second year but certainly not less than every 5 years, to undertake a formal effectiveness review of the governance structure. Effectiveness shall be measured both against this Statement and against the Code of Governance. In the light of such reviews it shall be the responsibility of the Council to revise its structures or processes accordingly.

8. To conduct its business in accordance with best practice in higher education and with the principles set out in the Code of Governance.
9. To safeguard the good name and values of the Association.
10. To appoint the Secretary General as chief executive of the Association and to put in place suitable arrangements for monitoring his/her performance.
11. To confirm the appointment made by the Chair (in consultation with a Member of Council and the Secretary General) of the secretary to the Council and to ensure that, if the person appointed has managerial responsibilities in the ACU, there is an appropriate separation in the lines of accountability.
12. To be the employing authority for the staff of the Association and to be responsible for establishing a human resources strategy.
13. To be the principal financial and business authority of the ACU, to ensure that proper books of account are kept.
14. As the ACU's charity trustees, to act prudently in exercising overall responsibility for the Association's assets, property and estate to ensure compliance with the laws of England relating to charities.
15. To be the Association's legal authority and, as such, to ensure that systems are in place for meeting all the Association's legal obligations, including those arising from contracts and other legal commitments made in the Association's name.
16. To ensure that the Association's constitution is followed at all times and that appropriate advice is available for this to happen.

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