

A.6 UNIVERSITY SECRETARY

A.6.1 THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY SECRETARY

The University Secretary acts as Secretary to Council and all its committees including Senate and has a key role to play in the operation and conduct of the Governing Body, and in ensuring that appropriate procedures are followed. They are responsible for supporting the governance processes in line with best practice and do not have other managerial duties thus ensuring that the role solely focuses on governance. The role of the Secretary will evolve over time in response to the needs of Council and the Institution.

The University Secretary is appointed by Council and reports directly to Council through the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council who appraises them.

The University Secretary should work to support both the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council and the Vice-Chancellor and President with the aim of ensuring that Council meets its responsibilities and in particular has the ability to make good decisions. It is good practice for the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council, the Vice-Chancellor and President and the University Secretary to work closely together within the legal framework provided by the Charter, Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations and the Office for Students (OfS) Regulatory Framework. If this is not possible because of inappropriate conduct by one of the parties involved, it is the responsibility of the Council to take appropriate action.

They are not responsible for the legal affairs of the University but take responsibility for advising on the legal environment relating to the University's Charter, Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations.

The University Secretary has line responsibility for the Director of Internal Audit and liaises with the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee to ensure Internal Audit can fulfil its role successfully. The Governance Team provides a secretariat service that also supports some of the Vice-Chancellor and President's advisory committees.

A.6.2 MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY SECRETARY

The University Secretary is responsible for:

- i. Acting as Secretary to Council and all its committees including Senate and its Academic Governance & Nominations Committee.
- ii. Supporting all Council members so they can fulfil their responsibilities.
- iii. Working with the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council, the Vice-Chancellor and President and the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that Council meetings and business are conducted satisfactorily.
- iv. Consulting and keeping the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council and the Vice-Chancellor and President informed on all key matters relating to Council business.
- v. Working with the Council committee chairs to ensure that their meetings and business are conducted satisfactorily.
- vi. Seeking to make Governance simpler and clearer and undertaking an on-going review of the Charter, Statutes and Ordinances to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

- vii. Providing Council with authoritative guidance about its responsibilities under the Charter, Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations, and the OfS Regulatory Framework, and on how these responsibilities should be discharged.
- viii. Alerting Council if they believe that any proposed action would exceed Council's powers or be contrary to legislation or to the OfS Regulatory Framework.
- ix. Obtaining such legal and other advice as is requested by Council or required within their responsibility area.
- x. Advising and alerting the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council, and where appropriate Council members, in respect to any matters where conflict, potential or real, may occur between the Council and the Vice-Chancellor and President
- xi. Ensuring that Council and its committees adopt best practice taking account of the Higher Education sector and other guidance.
- xii. Managing the communication of Council business to staff, students and stakeholders.
- xiii. Setting good practice standards for the operation of Senate committees and reviewing their effectiveness.