Appointment of
External Member of Council
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The University of Cambridge is one of the world’s foremost universities and a renowned centre for research, education and scholarship that makes a significant contribution to society.

The University is seeking to appoint an external member of the University Council, the principal policy making and executive body of the University, to serve for an initial period until 31st December 2020, with potential for renewal of four years thereafter. There are four external members in total. All members of Council are also trustees of the University as a charity.

Applications are sought from individuals with a track record of leading organisations of very significant scale and complexity, who can demonstrate relevant leadership experience and who would bring a global perspective and substantial governance experience. A demonstrable commitment to education and research is important.
The role of the External Member of Council

All members of the Council are trustees of the University as an exempt charity (regulated on behalf of the Charity Commission by the Higher Education Funding Council for England) and, as such, have particular legal responsibilities and duties.

External members of the Council bring a valuable external perspective to the Council's deliberations. They are however also expected to develop a detailed and nuanced understanding of the mission, values and workings of the Collegiate University.

One of the four external members of Council is appointed Deputy Chair. The Deputy Chair chairs the Council if it is not appropriate for the Vice-Chancellor to do so (for example, when the Council is discussing the Vice-Chancellor’s annual accountability report and forward plan).

One of the other three external members chairs the Council’s Audit Committee. This Committee meets about six times a year. The Committee’s work is of great importance to the University, especially in providing assurance that public funds are properly managed, and that management overall is sound.

Other external members of Council may be asked to chair, or serve on, sub-committees or other groups.

Mr John Shakeshaft is currently the Deputy Chair of the Council. Mr Mark Lewisohn chairs the Audit Committee. Ms Sara Weller chairs the Remuneration Committee.
The role of the External Member of Council

Person specification

The University encourages applications from senior leaders drawn from a variety of backgrounds. Candidates must be able to demonstrate a high level of personal accomplishment alongside experience of successfully fulfilling leadership roles at the very highest levels in organisations of considerable scale and complexity. In addition candidates will demonstrate many or all of the following:

- Experience of chairing, or acting as a Non-Executive or Trustee, on a range of private, public or voluntary sector Boards.
- Highly relevant experience in a research intensive university or significant science and research institutions, healthcare providers or private sector organisations relating to these.
- Experience of managing a large workforce, or diverse operations, and familiarity with good management and human resources practices.
- The ability to help provide strategic financial oversight for the University and its various interests, including an ability, when necessary, to interrogate matters relating to audit, risk, capital expenditure programmes and financial planning.
- A degree of understanding of the context for UK higher education and research, as well as the wider European and international context for world-leading universities.
- Appreciation of the nuances in regards to decision making within a university environment and an ability to work effectively through a committee structure.
- A willingness to act as a sounding board and adviser on an ad-hoc basis, to give additional time (above formal commitments) and input to certain occasional issues or events when required, often without recognition or reward.
- Strong personal conviction with regards to the importance of research and education.
- A commitment to principles of equality, diversity, transparency and a high degree of personal integrity.
The mission of the University of Cambridge is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

Cambridge strives to fulfil this mission by adhering to its core values of freedom of thought and expression, freedom from discrimination, and a commitment to the confederation of the University with its 31 constituent and independent Colleges.

The University ranks in the top five for the quality of its research in international league tables. Cambridge can claim 92 Nobel Prize affiliates, more than any other university, including 16 since 2000. Undergraduate and postgraduate education, provided in conjunction with the Colleges, is of the highest quality.

Students and staff live and work in collegiate communities that are microcosms of the wider University’s comprehensive range of academic subjects and research centres.

The University has 19,000 students, (of whom 22 per cent are from overseas) and employs about 11,000 people in over 150 departments, faculties, and institutes. It also currently holds an institutional Silver Athena SWAN award for its advancement of gender equality. The University is in contact with over 220,000 of its alumni, 25 per cent of whom live and work overseas. Alumni are important members of the wider Cambridge family, supporting the University, its values, its success, and its fundraising.
The University has an annual income of almost £1.8 billion, of which approximately £660 million is the combined turnovers of Cambridge Assessment and Cambridge University Press. Research income, won competitively from the UK Research Councils, the European Union (EU), major charities and industry, exceeds more than £450 million per annum and continues to grow. The University is financially strong with a Aaa (stable) rating from Moody’s, a balance sheet of £4.3 billion, and a well-performing endowment fund of £2.5 billion that has, over the past several years, achieved returns above its benchmark.

Providing teaching and an education of the highest quality remains central to the University’s purposes. The Tripos system for undergraduate degrees and the distinctive personal attention given to all students remain essential components of the Cambridge experience. “The genius of scale” that provides a personal and supportive focus for students in the Colleges, combined with the scope and range of the University’s subject base and the Colleges facilities, is at the core of this endeavour.

The Collegiate University remains committed to admitting the best students regardless of their background and, at undergraduate level, it invests considerable resources both in widening access and financial support. Through the Cambridge Commonwealth and Overseas Trusts and the Gates Cambridge Trust, among others, significant funds are also available for postgraduate students. Attracting the very best research students from around the world to Cambridge remains a core strategic objective.

Research and teaching are enhanced by the University’s special collections. The University Library (a legal deposit library), the Fitzwilliam Museum, Kettle’s Yard, the Botanic Garden and the other six museums curate and display artefacts and materials important for enriching the educational and research experience of the Cambridge community in many subjects. They are also of national and international significance and contribute in a major way to the public understanding of the work of the University.

In October 2015, the University and the Colleges jointly launched a £2 billion fundraising Campaign (of which more than £750 million has already been secured), building on the success of their 800th Campaign which ended in 2011 and raised more than £1 billion. The University and the Colleges work closely together in this endeavour with a cadre of more than 300 professionals working on fundraising and alumni relations in Cambridge. In addition, the University and the College jointly fund a North American office, Cambridge in America, based in New York.
The structure of the Collegiate University of Cambridge

The University has no founder and no charter but evolved from a group of Masters and Scholars in the early thirteenth century. 1209 has been taken to be the formal date of foundation but there is no doubt that by about 1250 Cambridge was a recognised centre of study. The University is a common law corporation, being a corporation by prescription consisting of a Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars who from time immemorial have had the government of their members and enjoyed the privileges of such a corporation. By Act of Parliament passed in 1571 the incorporation of the University and all privileges then held under charter or by prescription were duly confirmed. The University is now authorised by the Lord Chancellor to act in relation to charitable, ecclesiastical, and public trusts as a trust corporation.

The University works with a relatively small central administration. The procedural rules of the University are embodied in Statutes, Special Ordinances and Ordinances, which prescribe in some detail the formal administrative practices. These rules are made in most cases by the University itself, although the Statutes can only be changed with the approval of the Privy Council. Each College also has its own statutes and regulations.

The University retains sole responsibility for examinations and for conferring degrees. The Colleges, on the other hand, have responsibility for selecting, admitting and accommodating undergraduate students, and a student cannot enter the University unless she or he also becomes a member of a College. However, the University lays down the admission qualifications for postgraduate students and also has certain controls over the statutes of the individual Colleges.

During the 20th century, the role of the University hugely expanded through the provision of facilities, such as teaching and research laboratories. The University employs Professors, Readers, Senior Lecturers, Lecturers and other teaching and administrative staff who provide the formal teaching (lectures, seminars and practical classes). The Colleges supplement the University’s teaching with supervisions and other small-group teaching, given by Fellows or others appointed by the College, and each College also provides library and other learning resources for its own members.

Of the 31 Colleges, all but three admit both men and women, and most admit both undergraduate and graduate students.

The Colleges are separate corporations and legal entities which exist in symbiosis with the University. Their individual histories are very different, and their own internal procedures vary. In general, each College has an elected or appointed Head, who may be termed Master, President, Principal, Mistress, Provost, or Warden.

The governance of the College will be the responsibility of the Governing Body made up of some or all of the Fellows. The Fellows are the elected senior members of the College whose primary duty is teaching and research.
University leadership

The University is led by the Vice-Chancellor who is the full-time resident head of the University and is its principal academic officer. She or he is elected by Grace of the Regent House on the nomination of Council, for a period of up to seven years. The office may not be held with the headship of a College or any other University post.

The current Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, completes his term of office on 30 September 2017, following which Professor Stephen Toope will assume the position.

The Vice-Chancellor represents the University externally and leads development and fundraising campaigns which are vital to the future financial health of the University. She or he has important ceremonial duties, chairs or appoints deputies to chair most University committees, and serves on many national and international bodies.

The Vice-Chancellor provides academic and administrative leadership to the University in relation to its overall mission and the policies established by Regent House, Council and General Board. She or he has the responsibility to ensure that the University continually defines and executes ambitious strategies to enhance its position as one of the world’s foremost universities. In addition to the Registrary, the Vice-Chancellor is supported by a team of five Pro-Vice-Chancellors who form the senior leadership team with the Vice-Chancellor, and a number of Deputy Vice-Chancellors to whom specific duties and areas of responsibility are delegated.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellors work closely with the Registrary and other senior members of the administration and with the heads of the six academic Schools to formulate policy for discussion through the University’s governance structures, and to execute that policy on behalf of the University.
The University has a clearly defined governance structure, at the head of which are the Regent House and the Council. The sovereign body of the University is the Regent House, which exercises deliberative, electoral, and legislative powers. It has more than 5,200 members, including academic staff, heads and other members of the governing bodies of the Colleges, and senior research and administrative staff. It is the embodiment of the University as a self-governing community, a concept that has considerable importance to understanding the culture and values of Cambridge.

Regent House

The Regent House considers and approves major policies submitted to it by the Council and formally approves other matters within the scope of the powers it does not delegate. It elects or appoints members to certain University bodies, including the Council; it approves changes to University legislation; and it also approves the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor.

This information should be read in conjunction with the information on the governance website at: www.governance.cam.ac.uk
Council

The Council, which has 24 members, comprises the Vice-Chancellor as Chair, four elected Heads of House, 12 other members of the Regent House also elected by the Regent House, three student members elected from the student body and four external members, appointed on the nomination of the Council by the Regent House. It is the “principal executive and policy-making body of the University” and is responsible for the administration, planning and resource management of the University.

The Council and the General board conduct their responsibilities directly and through a number of committees, including a Finance Committee and an Audit Committee which are statutorily responsible to the Council, and an Education Committee and Research Policy Committee which are responsible to the General Board.

Chancellor

The Chancellor, who is usually an eminent public figure, serves as the titular head of the University presiding over all major ceremonies. The Chancellor is elected by the Senate (whose membership is all former students of the University who have been admitted to a degree and those members of the Regent House not otherwise qualified as a member of the Senate by admission to a degree of the University). The Chancellor holds office during her or his life or until resignation.

As well as fulfilling formal functions, the Chancellor plays an important informal role as a knowledgeable source of advice and wisdom to senior members of the University and is also the Visitor of several of the Colleges with whom she or he maintains close contact. The current Chancellor is The Lord Sainsbury of Turville.

The General Board of Faculties

The General Board of the Faculties, commonly abbreviated to the General Board, is subject to the powers of the Regent House and the responsibilities of the Council and is responsible for the academic and educational policy of the University. It is accountable to the Council and comprises 15 members including the Vice-Chancellor; eight members are appointed by the Councils of the Schools, four by the Council and there are two student members.
Schools

The teaching and research activities of Cambridge are conducted through six major groupings of cognate institutions – Schools – which consist of Faculties and Departments.

The Schools are:

- Arts and Humanities
- Biological Sciences
- Clinical Medicine
- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Physical Sciences
- Technology.

Each School has a Council. The head of the School chairs this and is the principal academic officer of the School responsible for its overall running, the use of funds allocated by the Council of the School, and the implementation of the academic and financial plans prepared by the University Council.

Faculties

Within the overall jurisdiction of the six Schools described above, teaching and research in Cambridge is organised primarily by Faculties.

Faculty Boards are responsible to the General Board.

Each Faculty is governed by a Faculty Board which is responsible for the provision of adequate teaching and facilities for research. The composition of each Board follows one of a number of different plans defined by Ordinance.

The Chairman and Secretary are elected by each Board from amongst their members.
Departments

The Faculties have different organisational substructures which partly reflect their history and partly their operational needs. Administratively there is great convenience in dividing the work of a large Faculty into separate Departments but it carries the danger that the academic programme may become too compartmentalised. The Councils of the Schools play an important role in ensuring that the natural academic links between different Departments are maintained and developed.
The University is seeking to appoint an external member of the University Council, the principal policy making and executive body of the University, to serve for an initial period until 31st December 2020, with potential for renewal of four years thereafter.

The time commitment associated with the office of an external member of Council varies according to circumstances. The Council meets 11 times a year, in Cambridge, and there are two additional strategic meetings, one in September and one in the spring.

In addition, members of Council serve on sub-committees and there is also the opportunity to support the University in a more informal and ad hoc capacity. Occasional special meetings are also held.

The appointment does not carry any remuneration but reasonable travel and other expenses incurred in connection with Council business may be claimed.
The University of Cambridge will be supported in this appointment process by the executive search firm Perrett Laver. Perrett Laver will support the Nominating Committee under the chairmanship of Ms Sara Weller, who is a current serving member of the Council, in the discharge of its duties, both to assist in the assessment of candidates against the requirements of the role and to identify the widest possible field of qualified candidates.

Applications should consist of a full curriculum vitae along with a covering letter of application, setting out the contribution they believe they could make to the work of the Council.


Applicants are asked to provide suitable daytime and evening contact details. Longlisted candidates will be invited for interview with Perrett Laver in mid-April, following which the Nominating Committee will agree a shortlist. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend formal interviews on Tuesday 30th May 2017.

The final appointment will be made subject to satisfactory references.