



THE POST

College/Service: University Corporate Services (UCS)

Post: Assistant Director, Governance

Reference No: R80694

Grade: H

Reporting To: The Director of University Corporate Services (UCS)
Chair of Council for matters related to the University Council
Registrar and Secretary for matters related to the University Council, its committees and Senate

Responsible For: Management of the Committee Secretariat/UCS Governance team.

Other Key Relationships:

The Pro Chancellors and other members of Council
The Vice-Chancellor
The Head of the Vice-Chancellor's Office
The University General Counsel
The Registrar and Secretary's Business Manager
Members of the University Executive Board

Job Description

Assistant Director, Governance

The Assistant Director, Governance will be one of the assistant directors in the University of Exeter's new Division of University Corporate Services (UCS) and will report directly to the divisional director.

The Assistant Director, Governance will work closely with the Chair of Council and the Registrar and Secretary in ensuring effective management and support for the business of the University Council, the University's governing body, and its committees. They will act as the Secretary to Council.

The Assistant Director Governance will also have responsibility for the effective management of the University's institutional governance arrangements, including compliance with the University's articles of governance, the Office for Students Regulatory Framework and relevant sector guidance such as the CUC Higher Education Code of Governance. There will also be an expectation that the Assistant Director, Governance will work with senior officers to ensure governance arrangements and practice effectively support the delivery of the University's corporate strategy, Exeter 2030.

There will be a reporting line to the Chair of Council for Council matters. There will also be a reporting line to the Registrar and Secretary in his role as overall University Secretary and the senior officer responsible to the Chair of Council and the Vice-Chancellor for the good governance of the University.

The postholder will also have a reporting line to the Registrar and Secretary for work associated with the management of and support for the business of the Senate, the University's senior academic forum.

The Assistant Director, Governance will provide independent governance and related policy advice to the Chair of Council and other independent members of Council as required. They will also provide a single point of contact for the Chair of Council with regard to the management of the business of Council and its committees.

Building on the recent review of the University's governance arrangements, the Assistant Director, Governance will also be asked to undertake a review of the current staffing resource and structures required to support the University's governance activities and to work with the Director of Corporate Services to agree a final set of optimal staffing arrangements.

In addition, the Assistant Director, Governance will be responsible to the Director of University Corporate Services (UCS) for:

- (a) Management of the Committee Secretariat team, subject to the review of optimal staffing arrangements;
- (b) All other elements of the role as described in this job description.

The Assistant, Director, Governance will also work closely with the Head of the Vice Chancellor's office and the Registrar and Secretary's Business Manager regarding the interface between the University's institutional and executive management governance arrangements, particularly to ensure that there is close alignment and understanding of the work undertaken with the University Executive Board and the work of Council.

Main duties and accountabilities:

Council matters

- To lead on the organisation of the business of Council, liaising closely with the Chair of Council, Chairs of Council committees, the Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar and Secretary and other relevant senior managers. This will include formulating agendas, preparing relevant papers, producing the formal minutes of the meetings of Council and ensuring that outcomes/actions are taken forward.
- As Secretary to Council, to provide independent governance advice and support to the Chair of Council and members of Council as required, including advice on the University's articles of governance, alignment of governance with the delivery of the corporate strategy, the external regulatory framework and the provision of relevant guidance and policy briefings.
- To ensure that the business of Council is conducted in line with the expectations of:
 - The Council of University Chairs Higher Education Code of Governance, the public interest governance principles of the Office for Students Regulatory Framework, and the Charity Commission Governance Code.
 - The Nolan Principles of Public Life
 - The University's statement on the primary responsibilities of Council.
- To ensure that all members of Council have a good understanding of these expectations and the duties that are subsequently placed upon them.
- To ensure that all members of Council are provided with a thorough, rigorously structured induction into the role of member of Council, and the University and the wider higher education sector as necessary, and also given access to relevant training, support and development opportunities during their period of office. This should include appropriate information and communications relevant to their role as governors, including a monthly Council bulletin summarising key updates for their consideration.
- To support the Chair of Council in the process of Council self-evaluation and the annual evaluation of independent members of Council, including the creation of an independent Council members skills matrix.

- To oversee on behalf of the Chair of Council, Registrar and Secretary (as appropriate) the regular effectiveness reviews of the University Council and the Senate, and – where relevant – their committees.
- To support the effective operation of the Dual Assurance system, especially with regard to reporting to Council and integration, where necessary, with the University's decision-making structure as detailed in the delegation framework. More detail can be found at: (<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/about/organisation/governance/dual-assurance/>).
- To ensure close liaison with the General Counsel on any item of Council business that may require legal advice. The Assistant Director, Governance will not give legal advice.
- To work closely, including holding regular business alignment meetings, with the Head of the Vice-Chancellor's Office in her role as Secretary to the University Executive Board to ensure an effective business interface and understanding between the University Executive Board, the Council and its committees.
- To facilitate strong joint working between the Council and the Senate on matters relating to Council's role in seeking assurance of the adequacy of the University's academic governance arrangements.
- Working closely with the Chair of Council and the Registrar and Secretary, to plan the content of the annual Council away day and the annual joint meeting with Senate.
- In collaboration with the Chair of Council and the Registrar and Secretary, and as Secretary to the Council Nominations Committee, to manage the administrative processes of Council membership.
- To supervise the work of relevant Committee Secretariat staff with regard to the administrative duties associated with supporting the operational business of Council and its members.
- To manage the Council budget, authorising and reporting on expenditure.
- To undertake any other duties relating to the business of Council and its committees as may be determined by the Chair of Council and the Registrar and Secretary.

Other Council Committees

- To act as Secretary to the University's Audit Committee.
- To act as Secretary to the University's Nominations Committee.
- To act as Secretary to the University Remuneration Committee

Senate Matters

- The effective management and support of the University Senate, including supporting the Registrar and Secretary in his role as Secretary to the University Senate.

General Governance Matters

- To ensure the University's governance operations and structures comply with the expectations of the Office for Students' regulatory framework and other relevant regulatory expectations.
- To ensure the effective operation and understanding of the University's delegation framework, particularly amongst committee chairs and secretaries.
- To be the first point of contact for advice/guidance on governance matters for senior managers and governors.
- To promote understanding of the University's governance arrangements and the wider higher education governance environment across the University, including further development of the University's governance website.
- To play a key role in supporting the effective operation of academic governance at the University. This will include ensuring the appropriate integration of the University's institutional and academic governance arrangements.
- To be responsible for the development and effective use of governance-related management information, especially with regard to the Charter, Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations, the University Calendar, the University committee structure and the operation of the Council and Senate and their committees.

- To work closely with the Head of the Vice-Chancellor's Office, the Registrar and Secretary's Business Manager and the Director of UCS on the agreement and delivery of the annual committee meeting timetable.
- To be responsible for the creation of an institutional governance handbook for the guidance of committee chairs and secretaries.
- To have oversight of training arrangements for senior committee secretaries, including business support and the standard institutional approach to minute writing.
- To support the implementation of required governance changes and developments, including liaison with the Privy Council over changes to the Charter and Statutes.
- To be responsible for the management and support of staff working within the Committee Secretariat and any subsequent UCS governance team.
- To undertake any other governance-related duties as may be determined by the Director of UCS or the Registrar and Secretary,

This job description summarises the main duties and accountabilities of the post and is not comprehensive: the post-holder may be required to undertake other duties of similar level and responsibility.

Person Specification

| Competency | Essential | Desirable |
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| Prior Experience | <p>Experience of the role of senior committee or company secretary and corporate governance duties within a large private or public sector organisation.</p> <p>Experience of supporting senior committees, particularly with regard to the production of high quality minutes and reports.</p> <p>Demonstrable experience of internal and external stakeholder relationship management at a senior level.</p> | <p>Experience of higher education governance and the broader higher education operating environment</p> <p>Experience of regulatory body governance (e.g. the OfS or similar)</p> <p>Line management responsibility for staff.</p> <p>Understanding of the principles of information management and governance.</p> |
| Attainments/Qualifications | A first degree (or equivalent) | <p>A post graduate qualification (or equivalent)</p> <p>An accredited company secretary qualification (e.g. via CGI) or equivalent</p> |
| Skills and Understanding | <p>Demonstrable high level analytical skills, with ability to interpret and present complex information, both in written format and through delivery of presentations.</p> <p>High level of literacy and language skills.</p> | Budget planning, management and reporting |

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| | <p>Strong interpersonal and communication skills, including well developed influencing skills and strong emotional intelligence.</p> <p>Demonstrable ability to manage complex projects involving multiple stakeholders and also to work across multiple reporting lines.</p> <p>Demonstrable ability to work effectively and confidentially in a politically sensitive environment.</p> <p>Strong organisational and time management skills.</p> <p>Effective use of common IT office applications.</p> | |
| Behavioural Characteristics | <p>Demonstrable ability to act in a diplomatic manner with a wide variety of people, particularly senior figures in an institution, organisation, government department or similar.</p> <p>Absolute confidentiality, professionalism and discretion.</p> <p>The ability to take responsibility for initiating, developing, progressing and completing complex tasks.</p> <p>Absolute attention to detail</p> | |
| Circumstances | The role holder may be required to work outside of normal office hours on an occasional basis | |