

Appointments Committee

24/18 A hybrid meeting of the Committee was held on Tuesday 15 October 2024 at 1.30 pm in Committee Room 1 and via Teams.

Present: Lay Member of the Council, Kate Owen (Chair) via Teams
Lay Member of the Council, Sian Butler via Teams
Lay Member of the Council, Kevin Corrigan via Teams
The President of Council, Helen Gordon via Teams
Lay Member of the Council, Sue Maple via Teams
The Vice-Chancellor
The Deputy Vice-Chancellor
An elected member of the Council, John Jack

By invitation: University Secretary
Director of Human Resources
Head of Governance (*Secretary*)

24/19 Minutes of the last meeting

The Committee approved the minutes of the last meeting, held on 4 June 2024, as a correct record.

24/20 Matters Arising

The Committee noted that the report submitted to Council on 1 July 2024 had been accepted, including all changes to membership.

All other matters arising were covered below.

24/21 Disclosures of Interests

The Committee received and noted a paper from the University Secretary in regard to Disclosures of Interests. The Committee received and noted its terms of reference.

24/22 Committees of Selection

The Committee received and noted Committee of Selection Reports for Law and Architecture that had been submitted since the last meeting.

The Committee noted that the University received a strong field of applications for these academic appointments; the candidates appointed were highly qualified in their disciplines.

It was noted that in areas such as Computer Science, Henley Business School, and the Professional Services the market was more challenging and competitive.

24/23 Membership of the Council in Class 2

The Committee received and noted membership of the Council in Class 2. It was noted that a number of renewals would need to be made before 31 July 2025; these would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

It was noted that the following committee appointments had been made by Chair's action since the last meeting:

- Jackie Liu to Student Experience Committee to 31 December 2027
- Paul Milner to Investment and Development Committee to 31 July 2027
- Sally Peck to Student Experience Committee and Honorary Degrees Committee to 31 July 2027

24/24 Appointment – Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education and Student Experience

The Committee noted that on 1 January 2020 Professor Elizabeth McCrum was appointed to the job share role of Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education), on a fixed term basis to 31 July 2025. The role title was changed to Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) on 1 March 2020. The job shareholder was Professor Peter Miskell. With Professor McCrum's appointment coming to an end at the conclusion of the current academic year, it was timely for the Appointments Committee to agree the plans for the appointment to this role.

Given the importance of the Education and Student Experience portfolio to the University, it was vital that there was senior leadership of this portfolio on the University Executive Board. Priorities for this role included the continuous enhancement of the University's quality of education delivery and of the educational portfolio, as measured in the NSS, PTES and TEF, and reflected in student recruitment. The PVC would line-manage a number of Associate PVCs for Education, and others, as necessary.

It was proposed that this appointment follow the same appointment process as other recent PVC recruitment. Among other things, this meant that the role would be advertised internally in the first instance. Professor McCrum was eligible to apply for one further six-year term in this role.

It is proposed that the recruitment panel be as follows:

President of Council (Chair)
Vice-Chancellor
A Member of Council (Chair of SEC)
A Reading SU sabbatical officer (RSU President)
A Head of School
The Director of Education and Student Experience

In attendance:

The Chief Strategy Officer & University Secretary
An HR Partner

The recruitment process would include presentations to a wider group of stakeholders, followed by a panel interview.

The Committee agreed that the process used had worked well in the past and was fair and open.

24/25 Appointment – Director of Finance

The Committee noted that Director of Finance (Andrew Grice) had recently notified the University of his intention to retire on 30 April 2025. The Vice-Chancellor had been reflecting on the type of replacement required and whether this would be a Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Ideally the replacement would have a strong strategic financial view, experience in different sectors, and alternative models of operation. It was noted that in the interim additional resource in Finance would allow Emma Ashley to support work around addressing the financial shortfall, whilst remaining as Deputy Director of Finance.

The Committee made the following comments on the appointment:

- The University needed to be clear on what it was looking for in a candidate; the job description/marketing of the role would be key
- A Director of Finance (DoF) role could be quite limiting; ideally a CFO would have a broader skill set – recruitment marketing for a CFO role would likely attract a different calibre of applicants to a DoF
- It would be helpful to have fresh input, particularly someone who could think outside the HE box, for e.g. on commercial aspects
- Members of the Committee were keen to see a different calibre of appointment who could provide independent challenge in a collegiate way
- The Vice-Chancellor anticipated that the new appointment would start at the beginning of the 2025/26 academic session

- Members of the Committee urged the Vice-Chancellor to move quickly on this appointment given the need to stabilise finances over the short term

The Vice-Chancellor agreed to take the feedback away and work with the Director of HR on a process for appointment.

24/26 Any other business

It was noted that a number of members of Council, including Kevin Corrigan, had been involved in the recruitment process for the new Provost of the University of Reading Malaysia. It was noted that the process had worked well and that a preferred candidate had been selected. The appointment of the Provost was properly a matter for the RUMAL Board who would also need to consult with the Ministry of Education in Malaysia.

24/27 Date of next meeting

Meetings of the Appointments Committee in 2024-25 have been scheduled for:

Thursday 30 January 2025 2.00 – 2.30 pm

Tuesday 3 June 2025 9.00 – 9.30 am