



CHAIR OF COURT



Abertay
University®



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ABERTAY UNIVERSITY

Abertay University is a modern, pioneering, and ambitious university with around 4,500 students. We have a strong and evolutionary tradition of preparing students for the industries and jobs of the modern world. Abertay has made its mark with high-quality, well-directed teaching and research which, in turn, provides a stimulating and enriching experience for our students.

With roots going back to 1888, Abertay has always responded to the needs of industry, supplying a pipeline of graduate talent to work, lead and innovate across a wide range of sectors. We also work closely with industry supporting local and national companies to innovate and grow through a range of practical research collaborations.

In 2022 we opened the new **Abertay cyberQuarter**, our new hub for cybersecurity research, innovation, and industry growth jointly funded by the University and the UK and Scottish governments through the Tay Cities Region Deal. The Abertay cyberQuarter builds on Abertay's reputation as a UK leader in cybersecurity education and provides a new model for supporting the rapidly growing cyber sector in a facility that is the first of its kind in the country.

ABERTAY UNIVERSITY

Having forged a reputation as one of the UK's leading tech universities, we are best known for our expertise in video games education and our degrees in this field have been ranked in the top 20 in the world and number one in Europe for the last seven consecutive years by the prestigious Princeton Review.

From Mental Health Nursing to Civil Engineering, and Criminology to Ethical Hacking, our three academic schools offer programmes that prepare our students for employment and, in most cases, offer real-world work experience alongside their studies. Our Bell Street Ventures Student Enterprise Centre is supported by Santander Universities and provides a supportive environment for our students to undertake enterprise and innovative first-stage commercial activity.

We pride ourselves on offering an inclusive, friendly and welcoming environment for our students and staff alongside first-rate teaching and excellent student experience.

We're proud to be the 2021 Sunday Times University of the Year for Teaching Quality, and to be a National Centre for Excellence for both video games and cybersecurity education. We are Athena Swan Bronze Award holders, recognising the university's achievements in respect of gender equality. We were the first University in Scotland to be awarded a Race Equality Charter Bronze Award for our ongoing commitment and active steps to improving race equality for our staff and students, and we have held this since 2017.





MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The University Court is the Governing Body of the University. Its powers are set out in the University's constitutional document, which is 'Abertay University (Scotland) Order of Council 2019'.

Court is made up of a maximum of 25 members, including independent members, ex-officio members, staff, trade union and student members. Independent members remain an absolute majority. Court meets at least five times each year.

The University Court has statutory responsibility for the governance of the University and is the employer of its staff. Day-to-day management is delegated by the Court to the Principal & Vice-Chancellor, Professor Liz Bacon, who is currently assisted by the Executive Group (Deputy-Principal & Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the Vice-Principal (Strategy & Governance) and University Secretary, the Director of Finance, Infrastructure and Corporate Services, and the Director of People and Organisation Development) along with a wider Senior Management Team comprising five Deans and two other Directors of Service.

The University Court is responsible for effective governance of the institution and agrees the strategic plan and budgets. The Principal and the Senior Management Team are responsible for delivering the strategic objectives and managing the University's finances. For more information on the management structure of the University, please visit the University's [website](#).



THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR OF COURT

INTRODUCTION

The Chair is responsible for the leadership of Court. As Chair of its meetings, they are responsible for ensuring that the necessary business of Court is carried out efficiently, effectively, and in a manner appropriate for the proper conduct of public business.

1. LEADERSHIP

- a) The Chair should ensure, inter alia through a good working relationship with the Chairs of the Committees of Court and the Secretary to Court, that Committee business is carried out in a proper manner, efficiently and effectively, and that regular and satisfactory reports are presented to Court.
- b) The Chair should ensure that Court acts in accordance with the instruments of governance of the University and with the University's internal rules and regulations, and should seek advice from the Secretary to Court in any case of uncertainty.
- c) The Chair should ensure that Court exercises collective responsibility, that is to say, that decisions are taken corporately by all members acting as a body. The Chair will encourage all members to work together effectively, contributing their skills and expertise as appropriate, and will seek to build consensus among them.
- d) The Chair should ensure that Court approves and operates a procedure for the regular appraisal/ review of the performance of individual members of Court, and should participate as appraiser/reviewer in that process. The Chair should encourage members to participate in appropriate training events such as those organised by the Secretary and by external organisations such as AdvanceHE.
- e) The Chair will be formally and informally involved in the process for the recruitment of new members of Court, and should encourage all members to participate in induction events organised by the University.
- f) The Chair will be responsible for the appraisal/ review of the performance of the Principal & Vice-Chancellor, and will make recommendations to the Remuneration Committee accordingly.
- g) The Chair will be responsible for the appraisal/ review of the performance of the Secretary to Court, taking care to ensure that any other duties the Secretary may perform for the University are excluded from consideration, and will make recommendations accordingly.

THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR OF COURT

2. STANDARDS

- a) The Chair is responsible for ensuring that Court conducts itself in accordance with accepted standards of behaviour in public life, embracing selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- b) The Chair shall ensure that the Secretary maintains an up-to-date Register of the Interests of members of Court, and shall make a full and timely personal disclosure. The Chair shall ensure that any conflict of interest is identified, exposed, and managed appropriately, in order that the integrity of Court business shall be – and shall be seen to be – maintained.
- c) Since the University is a Charity, the Chair shall be responsible for ensuring that Court exercises efficient and effective use of the resources of the University for the furtherance of its charitable purposes, maintains its long-term financial viability, and safeguards its assets, and that proper mechanisms exist to ensure financial control and for the prevention of fraud.

3. THE BUSINESS OF THE UNIVERSITY

- a) The Chair is responsible for ensuring that Court exercises control over the strategic direction of the University, through consideration and approval, and that the performance of the University is adequately assessed against the objectives which Court has approved.
- b) The Chair should at all times act in accordance with established protocols for the use of delegated authority or Chair's Action (ensuring that such protocols are drawn up if none exist). All instances of the use of delegated authority or Chair's Action should be reported to the next meeting of Court.
- c) The Chair should endeavour to establish a constructive and supportive but challenging working relationship with the Principal and Vice Chancellor, recognising the proper separation between governance and executive management, and avoiding involvement in the day-to-day executive management of the University.



THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR OF COURT

4. THE EXTERNAL ROLE

- a) The Chair will represent Court and the University externally. The Chair will be a member of the Committee of University Chairs and the Committee of Scottish Chairs.
- b) The Chair may be asked to play a role in liaising between key stakeholders and the University, or in fundraising. This role in particular should be exercised in a carefully coordinated fashion with other senior officers and staff of the University.
- d) The Chair will make themselves available where appropriate to attend induction/training events organised by the University or other appropriate bodies such as AdvanceHE.
- e) The Chair will receive feedback on their effectiveness in the role following an annual review by Court which will be led by the Court Intermediary.
- f) The Chair will receive remuneration for their services as Chair of Court in line with the arrangements agreed at the time of appointment. The Chair is also encouraged to reclaim all travelling and similar expenses incurred in the course of University business, via the Secretary. Directors and Officers Liability Insurance is in place.

5. PERSONAL

- a) The Chair will have a strong personal commitment to Higher Education and the values, aims and objectives of the University.
- b) The Chair will at all times act fairly and impartially in the interests of the University as a whole, using independent judgement and maintaining confidentiality as appropriate.
- c) The Chair is expected to attend all meetings of which they are Chair or a member, or give timely apologies if absence is unavoidable.
- g) The appointment as Chair of Court is for three years with the possibility of one extension of one further three-year period of office, subject to the agreement of Court.



CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENT

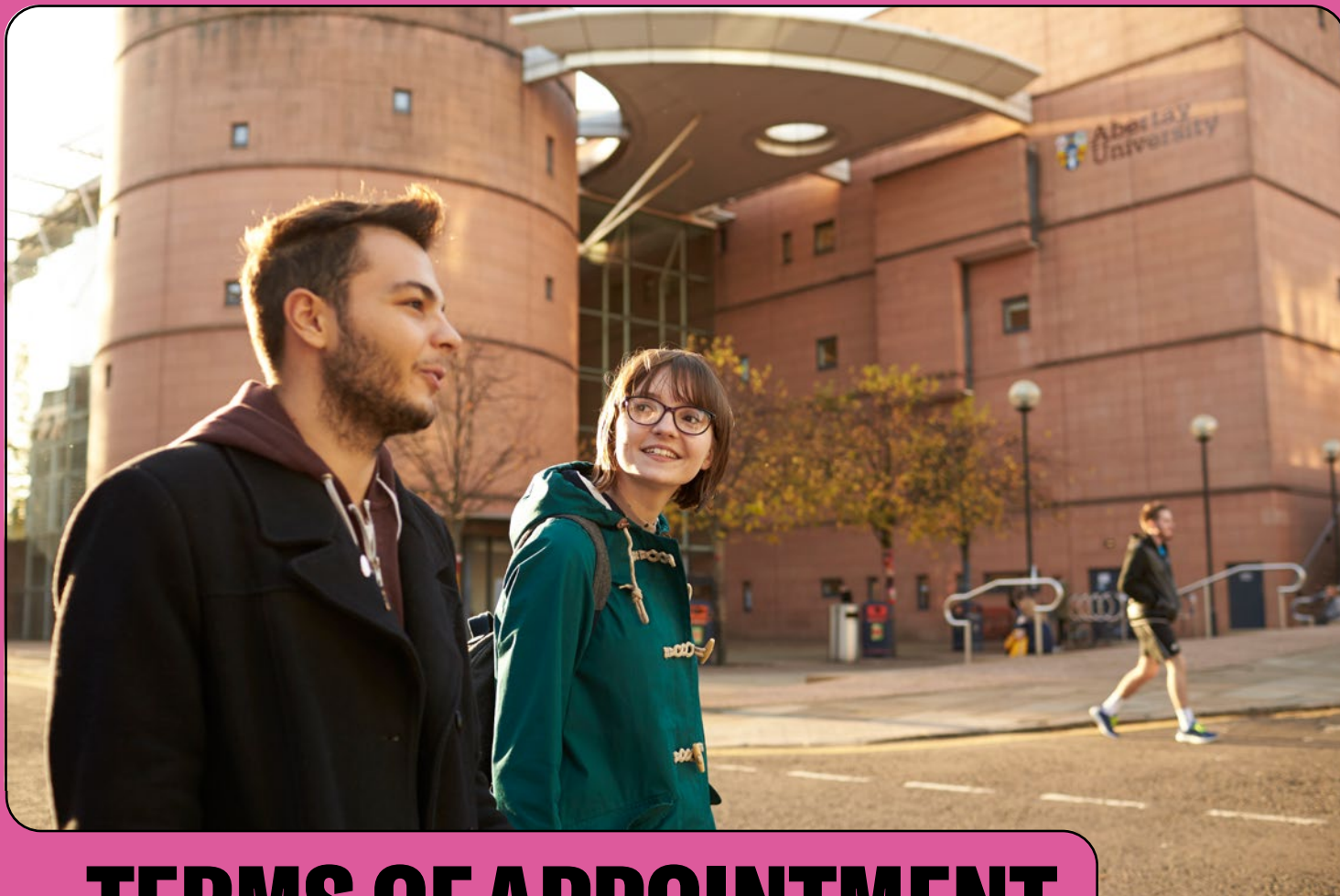
The Chair of Court will be expected to demonstrate the following personal qualities, expertise and experience.

PERSONAL COMPETENCIES AND ATTRIBUTES

- A strong commitment to, and affinity for, higher education and to the vision, strategic goals and values of Abertay University, recognising the significant role the University plays in transforming the lives of students.
- An authoritative yet collegial approach to leadership which will command the respect of other members of Court, Senate, senior managers, and the staff and students of the University.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to establish good working relationships with other members of Court, the Principal and other members of the Senior Management Team.
- Sound judgement and a calm, measured approach to the duties and responsibilities of the role.
- Personal integrity and the ability to exercise independent judgement.
- A demonstrably strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- The ability to build connections, influence and persuade a range of stakeholders including ministers, civil servants, students, staff, the local community and potential funders and donors.

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

- A proven track record as a successful leader at a senior level within an organisation of comparable size and complexity to the University.
- Substantial experience of chairing board-level meetings and working alongside Chief Executives gained within complex organisations in the private, public or third sectors.
- Appropriate executive leadership expertise in areas relevant to the successful operation of a complex organisation, for example in relation to strategy, governance, innovation, people, risk management, finance or organisational change.
- A strong understanding of the principles and effective implementation of good corporate governance and how these apply in the context of Higher Education.
- A track record of ensuring effective strategic oversight of transformational change and strategic projects.
- An understanding of the higher education landscape, and the political environment in Scotland, the rest of the UK, and internationally.
- Evidence of a track record of building positive relationships and enhancing organisational performance in previous roles and positions.
- Significant experience of representing an organisation in an ambassadorial role to external bodies and stakeholders, ideally with experience of interacting with politicians, civil servants and senior business people in Scotland and elsewhere.
- An understanding of the rules and regulations relating to charities.
- An appreciation at board level of fundraising and/or philanthropic development



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

ELIGIBILITY

- As prescribed in the HE Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 (section 9(2)) a person appointed to the position of Chair of Court may not be a student or a member of staff of the University during the period of the person's appointment.
- In addition, no former member of staff or student of the University is eligible to be appointed until a period of four years has elapsed from the date they ceased to be a student or member of staff.
- The Chair of Court may not be in substantive employment at another higher education institution while undertaking the role.

- The Chair of Court may hold membership of a political party or organisation; however, the Chair may not hold an elected political office position during the term of their appointment.
- Members of Court are charity trustees and therefore applicants must be eligible to hold office as a charity trustee in terms of the Charities & Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 as determined by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

PERIOD OF OFFICE

- The initial period of appointment to the position is for a period of three years. At the end of that period, the Chair will be eligible for re-appointment, by the agreement of Court, for one further period of three years.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

AVAILABILITY

- The Chair of Court must be able to make the significant time commitment required of the role. It is estimated that the Chair will need to devote time in the region of 50 days per year in aggregate to effectively fulfil the responsibilities outlined above and in the role description.
- The estimate of the time that the Chair of Court will be asked to devote to the University is based upon preparation for, travel to and participation in, the meetings and other events taking place over the course of the year. These are normally:
 - five meetings of Court each year), one of which will take place during the annual Court Conference, a residential event;
 - five meetings of Chair's Committee each year;
 - four meetings of the Governance and Nominations Committee each year;
 - two meetings of the Remuneration Committee each year;
 - regular scheduled meetings, typically twice a month, with the Principal and with the Secretary to Court;
 - ad hoc events, lectures or dinners taking place throughout the year to promote the University;
 - attendance at Committee of University Chairs (CUC) and Committee of Scottish University Chairs (CSC) meetings (2 one day events in London for CUC meetings, and around 3 two-hour meetings for the CSC meetings);
 - the annual Graduation Ceremonies (taking place on one day in July and one day in November);
 - the conduct of other duties or involvement in Court and university business between meetings;
- Court meetings take place in-person at the University. Committee meetings are currently a mixture of in-person and hybrid meetings;
- There will be occasional requirements to attend events in the evening and for the Chair to be flexible and to be available to attend meetings in Dundee at relatively short notice;
- Applicants must provide assurance that they have the time capacity to fulfil the duties and responsibilities of the Chair.

REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

- The Chair is entitled to non-pensionable remuneration of £16,900 per annum fixed for the initial three-year term of office and reviewed at the commencement of a second term. The Chair is eligible to claim travel and other incidental expenses related to the conduct of Court business and in accordance with the University's financial regulations.



APPOINTMENT PROCESS

- The appointment process, which conforms to the requirements of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, comprises three stages: application; interview and election.
- An executive search exercise is being undertaken by Perrett Laver in parallel with an open advertisement of the post. Perrett Laver will support the Appointment Committee in the discharge of its duties, both to assist in the assessment of candidates against the requirements for the role and to identify the widest possible field of qualified candidates.
- Interviews are expected to be held in February 2023. Candidates required to attend the University in connection with their application will be eligible to reclaim all reasonable travel expenses incurred.
- Following this interview, the Appointment Committee will reach a decision on whether the interviewed applicants have met the criteria for the role. Those that in its judgement meet the criteria will be declared candidates in an election.

APPLICATION

- Interested parties are invited to submit a CV and covering letter. They should explain why they feel they meet the criteria set out above and how they would be successful in the role. All candidates must complete and submit an Equality Monitoring Form.
- The closing date for applications is **Monday 30th January 2023 at noon**. Applications should be uploaded at <https://candidates.perrettlaver.com/vacancies/>, quoting the reference **6282** or sent to Thomas Eade at thomas.eade@perrettlaver.com.
- The Appointment Committee will review all applications and determine which of them appear to meet the criteria for appointment. Those applicants so shortlisted will be invited for interview.

INTERVIEW

- Those applicants invited for interview will meet with the Appointment Committee for a traditional interview which will explore each candidate's qualities, attributes, and experience to determine whether they can demonstrate that they fulfil the criteria for the role.

ELECTION

- The final stage of the process involves an online election between those individuals declared as candidates following interview. As prescribed in the HE Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, candidates must confirm their intention to stand in an election and there must be more than one candidate before an election will be held. The appointment can only be made following a contested election. The electorate comprises all students, staff and Court members of the University, and voting in the election will take place over a four-day period.
- Candidates will have the opportunity to set out an election message including a brief CV which will be distributed by the University to all electors, and candidates will also be expected to attend an open meeting with staff and students to take questions and set out how they will approach the role.
- The election will take place in March 2023.
- The election is won by the candidate who secures a simple majority of the votes cast. The winning candidate will be appointed Chair of Court under the terms set out above and with a start date agreed by Court and the candidate.



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