



## **Revised Process and Job Description for Appointment of Heads of School**

The role of Head of School occupies a central position in the leadership structure of the University. It carries with it a significant set of accountabilities for which s/he is responsible, through the Head of College, to the Principal and, ultimately, the University Court. These include a shared responsibility for College and University interests as well as statutory and legal responsibilities. Equally importantly, the role embodies a set of responsibilities to, and for, all staff and students in the School including ensuring that their 'voice' (or sometimes, voices) are heard and heeded in both College and University processes and that the development of the School, in human and academic terms, is fostered and supported.

The following principles must be applied in all Head of School appointment processes:

1. Information, in writing, about the Headship including the formal 'role' description and information about the appointment procedure will be made available to all staff in the School. Additional information relevant to the role in that particular School may also be made available.
2. All members of academic staff in the School will be provided with the opportunity to express an interest in being appointed to the position. This invitation will be in writing. No member of staff may be considered for appointment to the Headship of a School without his or her knowledge and permission.
3. External advertising as well as internal advertising of new Headship roles ensures that the successful candidate is and is seen to be the most able candidate for the role. External and internal advertising will be automatically considered in all cases and is expected to be the norm. However it is acknowledged that there may be rare occasions where after careful consideration a Head of School role is not advertised externally (e.g. in a very small school where budget constraints would make it difficult to fund an external appointment) provided that there are suitably skilled and qualified applicants within the School.
4. For externally and internally advertised Headship roles the guidelines for the establishment and composition of Special Committee's for Chair appointments (with the exception of the inclusion on the Committee of the current Head of School) must be followed. At least one member of the Selection Committee must be selected in accordance with principle 6 below.
5. Where the appointment is advertised internally only the appointment procedure will involve a selection committee of ideally no more than five members although the size and nature of School will be a factor in determining the size of the Committee. It will include the Head of College or his/her nominee and one member of University staff from outwith the School, nominated by the Head of College and approved by the Convener of People Committee. At least one

member of the Selection Committee must be selected in accordance with principle 6 below.

6. To ensure that staff in the School have opportunity for involvement, the committee will contain one or more members directly elected by the staff within the School. It is for the College/School to propose the number of such members, the 'constituencies' from which they might be drawn and by which they are elected, and also to organise any election. In so doing, it is important to ensure that an appropriate balance is achieved which reflects the size and shape of the School while avoiding the creation of a committee which is too large to operate effectively. Elected members will consult with all staff in their 'constituency' about the requirements which they see as important in the Head of School position and its holder, and ensure that these views are taken into account by the selection committee.
7. In the case of externally and internally advertised appointments the Principal or an alternative member of the Committee nominated by the Principal will chair the Committee. For appointments which are advertised internally only, the Head of College or an alternative member of the Committee nominated by the Head of College will chair.
8. Heads of School will be expected to retain a role in teaching and/or research as an integral part of their role throughout their term of appointment. This will be in addition to providing overall academic leadership within the School.
9. The time commitment to be devoted to different aspects of the Head of School role and any additional support to be provided over the duration of the appointment, e.g. additional research or technical support, cover for teaching commitments and/or administrative support will be discussed and agreed between the Head of College and the incoming Head of School and documented as part of the appointment process.
10. All new Heads of School will be offered appropriate support for their development
11. Appointment as a Head of School will normally be for a period of five years, with the possibility of variation for management reasons. A Head of School may resign the headship role during their term of office by giving 3 months' notice to the Head of College. Similarly the Head of College may require a Head of School to step down from the role by giving 3 months' notice. Appointments may be extended for a second term of up to five years (see point 13 below)
12. Where an external appointment is made, the initial period of appointment to the Head of School role will be 5 years as is the case with an internal appointment. The underlying academic appointment will be open-ended.
13. In the event that a Head of School wishes to remain in post beyond the initial five year term the decision on whether to offer an extension will rest with the Head of College, who will make this decision taking into consideration; performance in the role and achievement of agreed objectives during the initial

term, the view of colleagues within the School (elicited through a 360 appraisal process or similar), the needs of the School/College in the light of future plans/anticipated challenges.

14. Head of Schools will be eligible for time to refresh their academic teaching and research activity in the form of special study leave of up to one year at the end of their term of office or at an appropriate point during their term of office, e.g. between an initial and an extended period of appointment, as agreed with the relevant Head of College.
15. Consolidation (or part consolidation) into salary of the Head of School allowance for Heads of School demitting office will be routinely considered by the relevant Head of College on the basis of performance and achievements in the role and will normally be dependent on the demitting Head of School taking on specific agreed leadership responsibilities which are of benefit to the wider University. Where appropriate Heads of College will submit recommendations to the Principal for consideration and approval.

## **2. Head of School – Role Profile**

The role of the Head of School is to:

- provide academic leadership, develop appropriate plans and ensure delivery of School objectives, in particular, for teaching and research which are aligned with and develop in line with overall University and College strategies.
- responsible for the management of the School and all of its people and financial resources,
- oversee compliance with legal, financial, health and safety, and equality and diversity regulations and reporting requirements.
- play a key role in the leadership and the development of the University encouraging collaborative working between Schools and departments across the University and acting as an ambassador for the School, College and University with external stakeholders.

### **Key Result Areas**

- A. Provide strategic leadership in learning and research developing a shared vision for the School that embodies agility and flexibility allowing the School to respond appropriately to changes in internal and external context.
- B. Create a positive and collegiate environment that promotes and supports equality, diversity and inclusion and places emphasis on open communication, where all students and members of staff are engaged and their contributions are encouraged and recognised.
- C. Contribute to the development of College and University plans and develop the School plan in line with overall College and University strategy. Set and monitor goals and performance standards to optimise the use of all of the School's financial and people resources, in support of School, College and University objectives, where necessary, ensuring corrective action is taken.

- D. Where change is needed, lead through effective communication of the vision for the School, ensuring staff understand and embrace the need for change and their role in contributing to the goals of the School, College and University.
- E. Champion the development of constructive working relationships between the School and colleagues in other parts of the University, in order to facilitate mutual understanding and effective joint working.
- F. Fulfil an ambassadorial role for the School, College and University, working with relevant School colleagues and professional support units to facilitate, establish and maintain productive relationships with external stakeholders to maximise any available opportunities. External stakeholders are likely to include academic collaborators, alumni, donors, industry and commercial partners.

### **Context of the Role**

- Responsible to the Head of College
- One of 20 Heads of School providing senior academic leadership in the University
- A member of the College's academic leadership group
- Also has significant relationships with:
  - i. Principal and Senior Vice-Principal,
  - ii. Other Heads of School,
  - iii. College Registrar and other members of the College Management team,
  - iv. Heads of Support Services and the Heads of Support Groups,
  - v. Assistant and Vice-Principals,
  - vi. Relevant organisations external to the University.

### **3. Head of School – Selection Criteria**

#### **Essential [Where required, training will be provided to support the successful candidate in developing the required skills]**

- Strategic vision and the ability to provide academic and management leadership across the range of disciplines present within the School and lead the development and delivery of a strategic plan for the School.
- A consultative approach to management combined with executive decision making ability.
- Ability to take a College/University wide perspective and collaborate with other Schools/Colleges to achieve University objectives.
- Proven track record in research and/or teaching in areas relevant to the School.
- Preparedness to develop further leadership and management skills
- On an Academic contract which will not terminate prior to the end of the proposed period of appointment.

**Desirable**

- Ability to develop plans and set and monitor objectives.
- Knowledge of financial management.
- Understanding of student affairs e.g. Personal Tutor system, role of student welfare committees.
- Chairing or convening committees at University or College level (or equivalent for external applicants).
- Representing the School on College wide bodies or the College on University wide bodies (or equivalent for external applicants).
- Representing the Institution externally or working with with external bodies e.g. academic collaborators, alumni, donors, industry and commercial partners.

**Approved by University Court on 26 September 2016**