



Procedure for Appointment and Operation of Established Chair Selection Committees

1. Approval Process to create a New Established Chair Approval

It is the responsibility of the School wishing to create and appoint to a new established chair to formally seek the approval of the Head of College, outlining in full, the reasons for and financial implications of such a request. Full discussion and relevant debate should take place at this point, which will help to support and inform the request to appoint and ensure all relevant views and comments are incorporated as appropriate.

Once agreement has been reached, a request to create a new chair must go to Central Management Group (CMG). This would usually be in the form of a short paper outlining the case for the creation of the Chair. Following agreement at CMG, a Resolution will then be drafted to formally establish the chair.

The recruitment process can commence as soon as CMG approval has been granted and should be in line with relevant and current authorisation processes. These processes should normally be completed prior to advertising, however in exceptional cases the processes can run concurrently.

Proposals to establish a new Chair can occur at any point throughout the year and, ideally, in line with any planning or budgetary cycle.

2. Approval Process to appoint to an Existing Established Chair

When an established Chair becomes vacant or is about to become vacant, the School should discuss with the Head of College whether or not to fill the Chair in its current form. Full discussion and debate should take place with all appropriate views sought. The Head of College may extend any consultation to persons outside the University and to any other body which may have an interest in the Chair.

Before starting the recruitment process, the Head of Court Services should be contacted to check that a Resolution exists that establishes the Chair. It is helpful at this stage to confirm the patronage of the Chair with the Head of Court Services and its title. This information is also published on the [Governance website](#) and is updated on an annual basis. Following this, the appropriate approval to recruit must be obtained in line with relevant and current authorisation processes. This should normally be done prior to advertising to fill the Chair, however in exceptional cases this can run concurrently.

3. Recruitment Process to appoint a New Established Chair or an Existing Established Chair

Once authorisation/approval to recruit has been obtained, the School making the Chair appointment should provide relevant details (including advert, further particulars and proposed attraction strategy) with regard to the Chair and also the composition of the Special Committee (the selection panel) to the Secretary to the Special Committee. These should be approved by the Head of College and by the Principal. This can take place at an early stage but must have happened **prior** to the commencement of the advertising and selection process.

If necessary, the above approval and recruitment stages can proceed concurrently, subject to the understanding that, if at any stage the case is not approved, then the entire process will be brought to an end and should be reported to the appropriate governing committees. It is important that the Patronage of the Chair has been checked with the Head of Court Services. For example, for Curators of Patronage or Regius Chairs, the Head of Court Services will need to be involved in taking this forward from advertising stage onwards.

If at interview stage there is a justification to appoint an additional Chair, the Head of Court Services should be contacted to ensure that a Resolution can be drafted or other actions taken to implement the decision. This could involve seeking CMG approval for a new established chair or approval from Promotions Committee for a new Personal Chair.

4. Amendment to Chair Title

If there is a requirement for the Chair title to be amended, a new resolution setting out the amended title requires to be drafted and approved by Court. The Head of Court Services should be informed of the Chair title and the Patronage of the Chair checked, so the required process can be initiated. In some circumstances an amendment to the Chair title may require CMG approval, particularly where the change refers to naming the Chair after an individual or an organisation.

5. Special Committee

Proposals as to the role and composition of the Special Committee should be forwarded by the Secretary to the Special Committee to the Principal's Office via the Head of College and discussed as required.

a) Composition

The Special Committee will normally include:

- the Principal or representative (Chair of the Special Committee);
- the Head of the appointing College;
- the Head of the appointing School;

- appropriate representation from the appointing School and/or other collaborating Schools/Centres reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the role (normally two representatives);
- Head of another School (preferably whose subject area has relevance to the Chair being appointed to) - *for recruiting Chairs in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*; and
- two outside assessors who, by reason of their eminence or experience, can make a special contribution to the process of selection.

The Secretary to the Committee will also be in attendance.

Note: It is not desirable for Special Committees to have more than 8 members, though this number may occasionally have to be exceeded where an organisation external to the University has a funding or contractual interest in the Chair.

Any proposals as to composition of the Committee should be in line with the principles of Equality and Diversity as well as fully representing the interests of other areas in the School or College. Careful consideration should be given to the skills, standing, experience and relevancy of those appointed to the special committee, ensuring they are the best individuals to source and select the very best candidates.

Wherever possible panel members should have knowledge of recruitment and equality legislation and good practice. It is also recommended that at least one member of the Selection Committee has completed the Recruitment Selection and the Law and eDiversity in the Workplace online training courses.

b) Role and Responsibilities

The Committee, and in particular the Head of College and Head of School, should also give due consideration to the most effective method of attracting the best candidates and by which media i.e. Search Committees, Executive Search advertising placement etc. Particular attention should also be paid to the best means of attracting excellent international candidates within the international marketplace.

The Further Particulars documentation, and other relevant paperwork, will usually be drawn up by the relevant subject area or Head of School in consultation with the Head of College. The same will apply for the wording and format of any advert.

In some special circumstances the Committee may have a role in approving such documentation although this is rare.

c) Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained throughout the entire process and it falls to the membership of the Special Committee to decide on the degree of confidentiality

that will be observed in respect of applications for the Chair, so that accurate information on the matter can be included in the Information for Candidates.

As a general rule, the names of all candidates for Chairs shall normally remain confidential to the members of the Special Committee. However, on occasion, the Special Committee may decide, before the Chair is advertised, that the names and the curricula vitae of the candidates will be made known to academic members of the School, on the understanding that all such information is confidential to the members of the School and to the Special Committee. On no account must any references received be circulated outside the Special Committee.

Any identified conflicts of interest should be recognised and managed appropriately. Any panel member who has a conflict of interest should declare this to the Chair of the Selection Committee at the earliest opportunity before the interviews take place. The Chair of the Selection Committee will need to make a judgement as to whether the individual should remain part of the process or be replaced. In these circumstances, refer to the University policy on [Conflict of Interest](#).

6. Advertising (General)

Where approval has been obtained to appoint at Chair level in a particular area of specialism or strategic interest, the opportunity must be advertised initially on the University job website to ensure fairness and transparency. Further information can be found on the University's website [here](#) or by contacting the relevant College HR team.

7. The Recruitment and Selection process

Each College has its own practice for recruiting and selecting Established Chairs and each has its own named member of staff who acts as Secretary to the Special Committees. These colleagues can provide full guidance and advice on all stages of the process. The relevant team must be contacted prior to any recruitment exercise-taking place.

College	Contact Details
Science & Engineering	HR.Scieng@ed.ac.uk
CAHSS	CAHSSChairCommiteeSecretary@ed.ac.uk
MVM	School Administrator for relevant area

They can also provide guidance and assistance in all matters related to recruitment and selection.

Further general guidance on recruitment policy and practice can be found on [the HR website](#).

8. Review

This procedure was jointly agreed by HR and Colleges in October 2010 and was updated in August 2013. Updates to formatting and web links were made in December 2017. This document will be reviewed in 2024.

9. Relevant Links

[Guidance and Criteria for the Award of the Title of Personal Chair](#)

[List of Resolutions founding Established and Personal Chairs](#)

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

[Executive Search](#)