University of Sheffield | University Secretary's Office

Induction and development of members of Council

Introduction

In order to develop an understanding of the complex environment in which the University operates, all members should participate as appropriate in training and development events provided by the University or other bodies. New members of Council are expected to participate in the induction arrangements made by the University.

This document describes the induction materials, meetings and events available to new members of Council, as well as mandatory training for staff that lay members of Council should also complete, but is also relevant to existing members. To minimise the risk of information overload, we have structured the document in terms of a timeline, and also indicated which items are strongly recommended and which are suggested. We recognise that the needs of individual members will differ, and we are happy to work with members to provide an induction programme tailored to their requirements. An initial meeting with the Secretary to Council and Head of Governance is recommended, in order to discuss an appropriate programme and the support to be provided. The Governance Team in the University Secretary's Office will then facilitate meetings and visits on behalf of members.

1. Upon appointment

1.1 Letter of appointment

New members receive a letter of appointment notifying the period of appointment, dates of Council meetings and short biographical details about other members. The letter also provides the following documents/urls:

- Role and responsibilities of members of Council (document)

- Induction and development of members of Council (document)

- Committee of University Chairs' Higher Education Code of Governance (document)

- Details of AdvanceHE's Governor Development Programme (document)

- Register of Interests (including 'fit and proper person declaration' for the Office for Students (OfS)) (form to complete)

- Skills Matrix (form to complete)

- Council Bio/Who's Who (form to complete)

- Mandatory Training, particularly relating to Health & Safety, IT and Equality,

Diversity & Inclusion

1.2 Strongly recommended

(a) Meeting with the Chair of Council

(b) Meeting with the other Pro-Chancellors and Treasurer

(c) Meeting with President & Vice-Chancellor (to include discussion of institutional strategy and objectives, risks and opportunities)

(d) Meeting with the Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor

(e) Meeting with the University Secretary

(f) Campus tour with the Director of Estates & Facilities Management

(g) Further reading (all available via the University's Governance web pages http://www.shef.ac.uk/govern/council/induct):

    (i) Governance of the University

- Council Regulation setting out the powers and functions of Council; Council Scheme of Delegation
- Council membership and Council Who's Who
- University Strategic Plan
- Annual Report and Financial Statements

    (ii) External publications

- Office for Students Regulatory Framework
- Office for Students terms and conditions of funding for higher education institutions

    (iii) Supplementary Training

- Introduction to Implicit Bias

1.3 Suggested

(a) Further reading (available via the University's Governance web pages http://www.shef.ac.uk/govern/council/induct):

    (i) Governance of HEIs

- Michael Shattock, *Managing Good Governance in Higher Education* (Open University Press 2006) (available from University Library)

    (ii) Governance of the University

- University Charter, Statutes and Regulations of Council, particularly Regulation III: Scheme of Delegation
- University committee structure
- Committee memberships and terms of reference
- Minutes of recent meetings of Council

- Council Effectiveness Review Reports and Action Plans

(iii) About the University

- University facts and figures

- Undergraduate and postgraduate prospectuses

2. 3-6 months following initial appointment

2.1 Strongly recommended

(a) Meetings with Chief Financial Officer, to include financial governance and decision making, and Chief Operating Officer

(b) Meetings with the Vice-Presidents for Education, Research & Innovation, Partnerships & External Engagement and Advanced Manufacturing Group

(c) Attendance at AdvanceHE's Governor Induction/Development Programme events. Note that AdvanceHE runs additional events specifically designed for student and staff governors

2.2 Suggested

(a) Meetings with one or two Vice-Presidents & Heads of Faculty (combined if wished with a visit to the Faculty/meeting of a Faculty Executive Board)

(b) Further reading (all available via the University's Governance web pages http://www.shef.ac.uk/govern/council/induct):

(i) Governance of the University

- University Strategy Delivery Plans (Education, Research, Innovation & One University)

- Other major strategy documents, e.g. Finance, Estates, People, IT

- Information on financial control and governance

- Information on risk management

- The opportunity to discuss Council meeting agendas and papers with the University Secretary/Head of Governance

(ii) External publications (all available via the University's Governance web pages http://www.shef.ac.uk/govern/council/induct):

- AdvanceHE governance web pages (a website designed specifically for governors of HEIs, with links to a range of resources, including the Getting to Grips series of guides covering: Audit; Finance; Human Resources; Estates & Infrastructure; Risk; Academic Standards; Quality & the Student Experience, Research & Knowledge Transfer; Internationalisation).

- Governing bodies, equality and diversity: a handbook for governors of HEIs

3. Ongoing

3.1 Regular updates

(a) All members of Council will routinely receive:

- President & Vice-Chancellor's messages to staff and blog (by email)
- University Executive Board (UEB) minutes (email notification including url)
- Overview, the University's monthly online staff newsletter (email notification)
- Periodic Council updates on matters of importance/interest (by email)
- Council members' contact details (updated annually)

(b) Members of Council may also wish to join the University's daily media monitoring bulletin and receive media releases (by email). Please contact governance-admin@sheffield.ac.uk.

3.2 Departmental visits

We aim to use a variety of venues for Council's business meetings, to give members the opportunity to visit different parts of the University and meet relevant members of staff. Where appropriate, a tour of the building or facility will be provided immediately before the Council meeting.

We are happy to arrange for individual members of Council to visit departments and/or meet with heads of professional services or academic departments, research centres etc. Please contact governance-admin@sheffield.ac.uk.

3.3 Pre-Council Lunch/Post-Council Dinner

Several of Council's business meetings each year will be preceded or followed by informal topic-based discussion over lunch or dinner, often including an external speaker and members of University staff.

3.4 Council away day

A Council away day takes place annually in June. This event provides an opportunity for extended update and debate on key strategic issues and is attended by members of UEB as well as Council.

3.5 Annual evaluation (Effectiveness Questionnaire)

A questionnaire circulated annually in July seeks members' comments on the operation of Council during the previous academic year, and also asks members to provide an assessment of their role as a governor and the extent to which their skills and experience are being appropriately used. Members are also invited to specify any further induction or developments needs they may have.

3.6 Other University committees

Members are encouraged to serve as representatives of Council on other University committees, such as those covering Audit & Risk Assurance, Finance, Equality & Diversity, Education and Research & Innovation. The Council

Nominations Committee meets annually to consider appointments and members are welcome to express interest in a particular area at any time, including through the annual evaluation exercise (see 3.5 above).

We are happy to arrange for individual members of Council to attend, as observers and with the agreement of the Chair, a meeting of a committee of Senate or Council. Please contact governance-admin@sheffield.ac.uk.

3.7   AdvanceHE's Governor Development Programme

Members of Council are recommended to attend relevant events provided by AdvanceHE, particularly its Governor Development Programme. Details of these events are also shared with Council periodically. Fees and expenses will be met by the University and members wishing to attend are asked to contact governance-admin@sheffield.ac.uk who will make the necessary booking.

4.   Other relevant information

4.1   Useful bookmarks

(a)   University: Home page: http://www.shef.ac.uk/

Council web pages: http://www.shef.ac.uk/govern/council

UEB web pages: http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ueb/

(b)   External

Office for Students (OfS): https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/

Department for Education (DfE):
https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education

AdvanceHE: https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/

Times Higher Education: http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/

4.2   Contacts

Day-to-day support for Council is provided by the University Secretary's Office. General enquiries may be addressed to: governance-admin@sheffield.ac.uk Individual contact details are as follows:

Jeannette Strachan
Interim University Secretary
(E) University.Secretary@sheffield.ac.uk
(T) 0114 222 1211

David Swinn
Head of Governance
(E) d.swinn@sheffield.ac.uk
(T) 0114 222 1213

Matthew Borland
Senior Governance & Policy Officer
(E) m.borland@sheffield.ac.uk
(T) 0114 222 1201

Edward Smith
Senior Governance Officer
(E) e.p.m.smith@sheffield.ac.uk
(T) 0114 222 1206

Kate Sullivan
Senior Governance Officer
(E) kate.sullivan@sheffield.ac.uk
(T) 0114 222 1202

Kathryn Clements
Senior Governance Coordinator
(E) kathryn.clements@sheffield.ac.uk
(T) 0114 222 1716

Address:
University Secretary's Office
University of Sheffield
First Floor, Arts Tower
12 Bolsover Street
Sheffield
S3 7NA