

NEWMAN UNIVERSITY

Appointment of Members of Council

Notes for Guidance

1 Introduction

Newman University was founded as a College of Higher Education in 1966 and is a generalist institution with a strong specialism in education. Providing inclusive higher education to all who can benefit, it actively promotes access and participation through strong student support. Based on the Christian values of respect for others, social justice and equity, Newman builds on its Catholic foundation to provide high quality learning, teaching and research which enable its graduates to make a positive contribution to the world.

Newman was granted the power to award its own taught degrees in 2007 together with the title of University College. In 2013 following a change in the criteria, Newman applied for full university status and became Newman University. A wide range of undergraduate, postgraduate, and foundation degrees are now offered.

The University has circa 3000 full time and part time students and is situated on the outskirts of Birmingham in Bartley Green. A substantial estate development programme has been underway to transform the largely 1960s built campus into a modern and stimulating learning environment. A new Library and Entrance building designed by Birmingham Architect, Glenn Howells was opened in September 2011.

Further information about the University is available on the website www.newman.ac.uk

2 The Council

Newman University is a charitable company limited by guarantee and its governors are directors and members of the company with limited liability.

The Council has nineteen members of which the Archbishop of Birmingham and the Vice-Chancellor & Principal of the University are ex-officio. There are fourteen external independent members having experience in the provision of education or in an industrial, commercial or professional arena. Nine of these members must be practising Catholics. There are two Members elected by the staff of the University and one by students.

The Chair of the Council is elected from amongst the external members by the whole Council. There is also a Vice Chair, again elected from the external members, who acts in the absence of the Chair.

3 Responsibilities of Council Members

The role of a governing body in a Higher Education institution today is important and significant. The Council is responsible for:

- i The determination of the education character and mission of the University and for overseeing its activities
- ii The effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the University and for safeguarding its assets
- iii Approving the annual estimates of income and expenditure
- iv The appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of the holders of senior posts
- v Setting a framework for the pay and conditions of service of all other staff

4 Required Profile for Council Members

Council Members have a duty to observe the highest standards of corporate governance which includes ensuring and demonstrating integrity and objectivity in the transaction of business and, wherever possible, following a policy of openness and transparency in the dissemination of their decisions. Members need to "question intelligently, debate constructively, challenge rigorously, decide dispassionately and they should listen sensitively to the views of others, inside and outside meetings of the governing body" (Committee of University Chairs – Guide for Members of Higher Education Governing Bodies in the UK).

Council Members should be able to bring substantial external experience in education, industry, commerce, public service or the professions to the deliberations of the Council. Applications are welcomed from persons of any race, sex, disability, religion or belief, age and sexual orientation who can show a commitment to the work of Catholic higher education.

The role of a Member offers significant career/personal development opportunities and the prospect of making a major contribution to the management of a dynamic educational organisation.

5 Meetings

Members are expected to attend four formal meetings of the Council per year usually held on a weekdays (some at 4pm) at Newman University. The meetings are lengthened to include pre-meeting/briefing sessions. There is also a strategic away day with overnight stay arranged for Members to give further thought to some of the main issues. Members are also encouraged to become active in the University community by attending the Graduation Ceremony and other social events.

The Council undertakes its detailed work through a number of committees – Finance and General Purposes, Audit, and Nominations. Members may be asked to serve on these committees which will require additional attendance at the University.

6 Appointment of Council Members

Members will be appointed by recommendation of the Council's Nominations Committee. Applicants will be invited for an informal meeting with the Committee and a tour of the University which will enable them to find out more about the role and the University. This will be followed by a more formal interview.

Council Members (except for the Archbishop, the Vice Chancellor & Principal and the Student Governor) are appointed for a period of three years. Retiring Members can be re-appointed but cannot serve for more than three consecutive terms of three years. Written notice to the Clerk to the Council of one month is required to resign from the Council.

7 Remuneration

The post of Council Member is a voluntary one but reasonable travelling and accommodation expenses will be met by the University. Refreshments during the meetings and lunch afterwards are provided by the University.

8 Ethos

The current members of the Council particularly want applicants to know that new Members are warmly welcomed. The contributions of all Members are much appreciated.

9 Additional Information

Additional information can be obtained from the Clerk to the Council, Andrea Bolshaw, on 0121 476 1181 ext 2211 or a.j.bolshaw@newman.ac.uk. Please return the application form to the Clerk to the Council at Newman University.