

# Candidate Brief

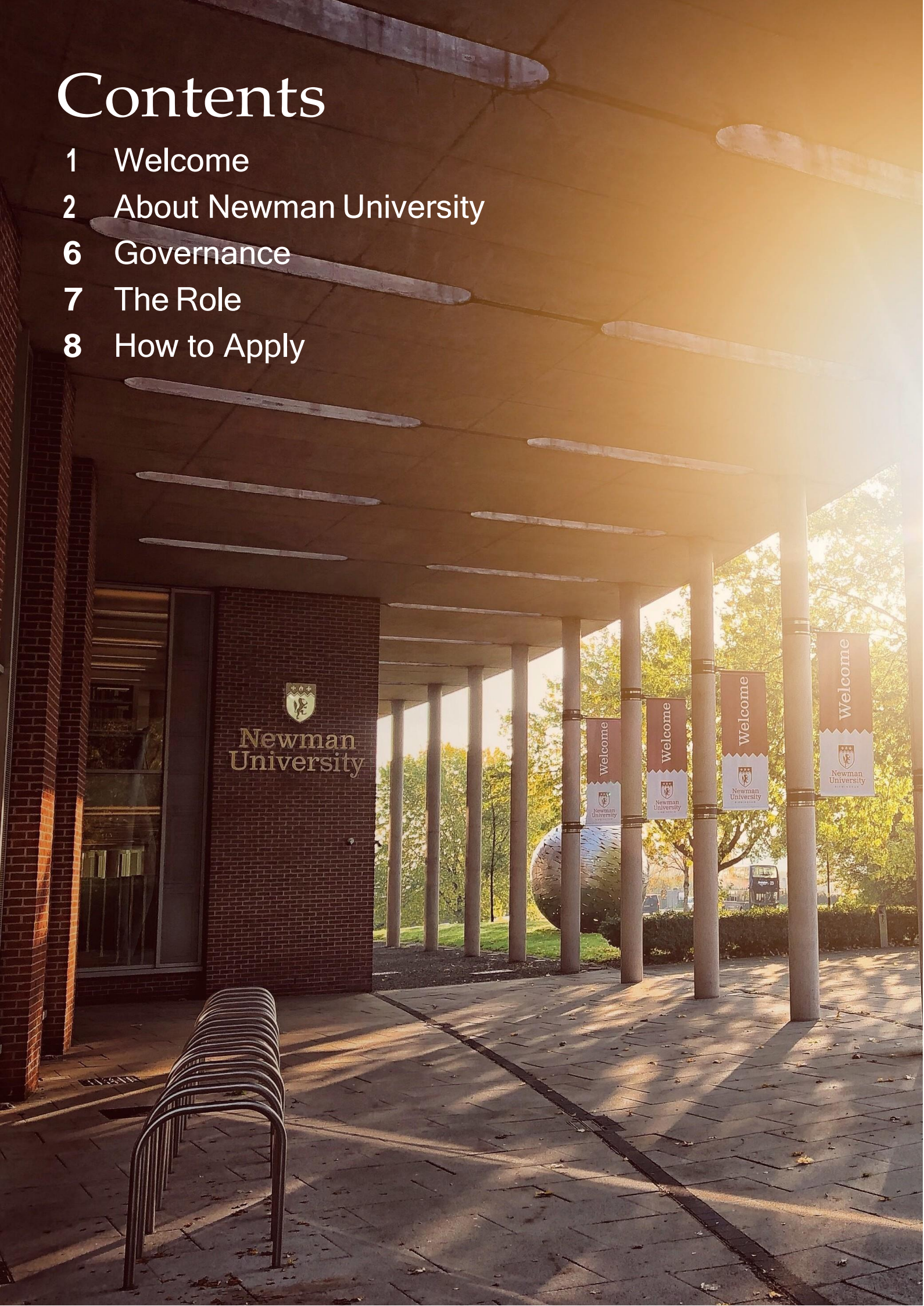
**University Council Member  
(Trustee, Director and Governor)**





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# Welcome

On behalf of the Council and the University community, we thank you for your interest in Newman University.

We are a distinctive, successful University based in South-West Birmingham and built on Catholic foundations and with a multidisciplinary curriculum offer, we are able to provide a personalised student experience, continually listening to our students to improve and shape their university experience.

Newman University welcomes and serves people of every faith and of no declared faith. The majority of our staff and students are not Catholic. They are united by our values: respect for others, social justice and equity.

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.

Newman is very proud of its diverse community and wants to see the fantastic diversity of its student population reflected in our Council. Given our richly diverse student community, we are particularly interested in hearing from applicants from groups currently under-represented on the Council (Board). This includes: people of colour, people from a Muslim or Sikh background, individuals under 40 years of age and applicants with expertise in digital technology. Applications are welcome from individuals of any race, sex, disability, religion, belief, age, or sexual orientation who can demonstrate a commitment to the work of Newman University

The information that follows is detailed, because there is a rich story to tell about Newman University. We hope that it is useful as you consider whether the opportunity to be part of our governing body is right for you.

There is a set of guidance notes to assist when completing the application. If you wish to have an informal discussion about the role, please email Andrea at [a.j.bolshaw@newman.ac.uk](mailto:a.j.bolshaw@newman.ac.uk). Andrea can also put you in touch with other Council members as an opportunity to get a greater insight into the role. First, we encourage you to look at the website where there are clips of members talking about their experiences.

Thank you for your interest in joining us.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mary Hare".

**Chair of Council**



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrea Bolshaw".

**Clerk to the Council**

## **Newman University: distinctive by name and nature**

### **A strong sense of community**

On Newman's single campus, students and staff have an unrivalled opportunity to work together and develop new skills and learning through our student-staff partnerships. The university welcomes staff and students of all faiths and no professed faith. Students and staff repeatedly speak of belonging to the Newman community, supported by rich cultural diversity and mutual respect for different faiths and traditions.

### **A distinctive University**

Built on Catholic foundations and inspired by our patron, St John Henry Newman, we are committed to the principles of social justice and to creating a community in which students are empowered to grow and succeed.

Newman has around 2,800 students. Teaching both undergraduate and postgraduate courses, we constantly exceed sector averages for recruitment from under-represented and disadvantaged groups including mature students, disabled students, students from low participation neighbourhoods and first generation HE students. A greater percentage of staff at Newman have a formal teaching qualification than at most universities with 90% of our academic staff qualified against the UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in HE. Subjects are generally taught in small cohorts,

in an interactive style encouraging participation and active learning. We are located in a quiet residential area, Bartley Green, situated on the south-western edge of Birmingham, in a tranquil and focused learning environment.

### **Student Satisfaction and much more**

The recent 2019/20 NSS showed Newman University to be 1st amongst the Birmingham universities for overall student satisfaction, and 2nd overall in the West Midlands. Additionally we are in the top 10 of all UK universities for timely feedback on work, on our assessment and feedback, the opportunities to study ideas and concepts in depth, and to have listened to students and communicated feedback effectively. A significant strength, highlighted by the NSS is the quality of the relationships between staff and students.

### **Our Vision**

To be a University based on Catholic values that continues to grow in academic distinction and strives always to enhance its sense of community.

### **Our Mission**

To serve our diverse communities by making high quality, globally connected education accessible to all those who are able to benefit from it, as well as engaging in research, scholarship and professional practice that informs our learning and teaching and has a positive impact on society.





## Our Values

- We champion and give voice to the Catholic traditions of education, equality and social justice.
- We respect and value all contributions, recognising that we are a single community, inspired and united by our shared vision and mission.
- We place student learning and welfare at the centre of all we do and we offer a nurturing environment for all students.
- We are ethical, honest and humane. In difficult situations we will seek to work with understanding, kindness and compassion.
- We recognise and embrace the power of community and build respectful relationships that help us excel.
- A mission of service motivates us, seeking the common good with care and love.

## Our Strategic Objectives

Our strategic objectives set out goals for the University:

- To transform students' lives
- To work in partnership with our students
- To grow our institution
- To nurture our staff
- Add to knowledge and cultivate wisdom
- Serve our diverse community and the wider world

## Our Community

People from under-represented groups make up the large majority of our student population. Our success in widening participation has implications for the challenges faced by many of our students as they progress through university; for example, social and economic pressures, family and other on-going commitments, and lack of family experience of higher education. However, our students also bring a diverse wealth of lived experience with them and this has implications for the nature and ethos of Newman's teaching approach, learning environment and student support provision. Our pedagogy of partnership seeks to ensure we teach and learn with our students, working together to make a difference in and for our community.

The Students' Union is a vital part of the Newman community, pro-actively engaging in community activities, and working alongside academic and professional support services staff.

Around 90% of our students are classified as 'commuter students', with those from disadvantaged groups more likely to be living at home. Staying at home and studying locally, our students are strongly differentiated by ethnicity and social background.





## Student Employability

Work placements taken by all students are also an important part of Newman's degree programmes; they allow students to develop their skills and to use the abilities, they have acquired in real-world settings. This experience makes Newman graduates highly sought after by graduate employers, 83% of graduates were in employment or unpaid work 15 months after graduation (GOS survey 2019).

## How the University is Organised

The University has two faculties and a smaller Graduate School:

- Faculty of Education
- Faculty of Arts, Society and Professional Studies.
- The Graduate School

In addition to a growing Foundation Year, Newman's portfolio covers a range of arts, education, humanities and social science areas at foundation degree, undergraduate degree and postgraduate levels

## The Faculty of Education

The Faculty of Education offers a range of undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing professional development courses leading to a broad range of careers in education and associated professions. We offer initial teacher education programmes leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) for the early years, primary and secondary levels in mainstream

education and these are available through our undergraduate, postgraduate and school direct programmes of study. Our full and part-time undergraduate courses include Early Childhood Education and Care and Studies in Primary Education.

Newman University instils a passion for learning; our strength lies in experienced and passionate staff that form strong relationships with our students and many partners.

The Faculty of Education works in close partnership with schools, settings and organisations in the areas of mentoring, work placements, curriculum consultancy and research. Our partnership links enable us to offer mentoring and work placements that enrich trainees' knowledge, experience and opportunities. We also share knowledge and resources in a number of ways - from commissioned research and evaluation projects to providing training and support in schools. In addition, the Birmingham Catholic Primary Partnership offices are based on campus a short walk from Saint Mary's Chapel and the success of their work can be seen in the outstanding and innovative provision across Catholic schools in the Midlands.

## The Faculty of Arts, Society and Professional Studies (FASPS)

Based on Newman University's Catholic principles and values of social justice the Faculty of Arts, Society and Professional Studies



mission is to deliver transformational education and research that is inclusive, promotes free thinking, inspires excellence and innovation to enable individuals, groups, communities and organisations to realise their full potential and achieve their aspirations.

The Faculty offers a range of academic and professional programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. It works across a number of sectors including Arts, Business, Health, Humanities, Law and Criminology, Psychology, Social Care and Sport. As part of the commitment to widening participation the Faculty also offer a number of Foundation Year programmes to enable students to study a preparatory year as part of their journey into Higher Education.

Experienced staff within the Faculty come from a number of academic and professional backgrounds and ensure teaching is informed by current practice and up to date research. The Faculty promotes a sense of community and fosters strong relationships with students and stakeholders.

The Faculty of Arts, Society and Professional Studies works with a number of businesses to offer students a variety of work placement opportunities. This supports students to further develop and apply their skills and knowledge within the work place to prepare them for life after University and to succeed within their chosen careers.

## Research

With a distinctive commitment to transformational impact, Newman University maintains its mission to make a positive difference to individuals and communities through excellent research and scholarship.

Scholarly work is undertaken across a wide range of academic and professional disciplines and attracts external funding from many national and local government sources, as well as from local businesses. Research links with other colleges and universities, at home and abroad, have been established in a number of areas. Students at all levels are consistently involved in research.

Newman University aspires to be recognised regionally, nationally and internationally for the quality of its research and scholarship. Our vision for research is underpinned by the University's core values as outlined in our Strategic Plan.

Building upon the positive outcome of the REF in 2014, we focus investment on proven areas whilst enabling early-career researchers to develop their capacity.

In the latest Research Excellence Framework (2014) Newman entered a significant proportion of its academic staff, with much of the work submitted rated as Internationally Excellent, and three areas classified as World-Leading. Research is an important part of scholarly activity at Newman; indeed, one of the great benefits to undergraduate students at Newman is that they are taught by research active staff passionate about sharing with students the new knowledge they generate. The ethos of a scholarly community espoused by John Henry Newman is alive within Newman University, therefore the development of early career researchers, as well as supporting established readers and professors, is an important aspect of Newman's research strategy.

Newman has five research centres, of which the Newman Institute for Leadership in Education is most prominent within the Faculty of Education.



# Governance

The governing body of Newman University is the University Council, which determines the educational character and mission of the university, oversees all of its activities, and appoints its top leaders.

Council works closely with the Vice-Chancellor and the University's leadership to establish Newman University's strategy and to ensure that the strategy is delivered in a way that preserves the institution's character and stability.

The delegation to the Vice-Chancellor is extensive. The Council sees its role not as a shadow managerial group but as a source of counsel, challenge and support to the Vice-Chancellor and the University Leadership Team. The current Council is diverse in gender, age, and background – members bring experience in business, law, accountancy, higher education, school education, public service, and communities of faith. Student and staff members participate actively in Council debates.

The Archbishop of Birmingham is a member of Council ex officio; the Chair of Council is a Roman Catholic layperson.

The Senate, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, is a centre for academic leadership in the University and operates under a delegation from the University Council. The effective working relationship between the Senate and Council is characterised by an annual joint meeting.

The Senate is responsible for the development and oversight of the academic work of the University, including the maintenance and enhancement of academic standards.





# The Role: Council Member

## **Responsibilities of Council Members**

The role of a governing body in a Higher Education institution today is important and significant. The Higher Education and Research Act (2017) enshrines the governing body's responsibility in law. Newman University Council is responsible for:

1. The determination of the education character and mission of the University and for overseeing its activities
2. The effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the University and for safeguarding its assets
3. Approving the annual estimates of income and expenditure
4. The appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of the holders of senior posts
5. Setting a framework for the pay and conditions of service of all other staff.

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

The Council has nineteen members of whom the Archbishop of Birmingham and the Vice-Chancellor 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 practicing Catholics. There are two Council members who are also members of staff and one member who is a student.

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.

More information about our existing Council members and our Articles of Governance can be found on our Council webpage: [www.newman.ac.uk/knowledge-base/about-the-university-council](http://www.newman.ac.uk/knowledge-base/about-the-university-council).

## **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. It is important that those involved as Members of Council observe the Nolan Principles of Public Life.

Council Members should be able to bring external experience in education, industry, commerce, public service or the professions to the deliberations of the Council. 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.

# Council Apprenticeships

## Background

The pipeline of Non-Executive Director/Trustee roles today lacks diversity. Board positions can often be closed off to people who may lack board or governance experience. We recognise the need for diversity in the boardroom and want to be part of developing a wider pool of candidates for board-level positions. We believe and know that the talent is out there and we want to create that opportunity.

We aim to do this by widening the pool of Board-ready talent and developing tomorrow's Board members today. Offering apprentice positions within the Newman University's Council becomes part of a practical solution to the perceived lack of board-ready, diverse candidates. As an organisation, our vision is to play a leading part of making this happen.

We identify and place high-calibre diverse candidates as 'Council Apprentices' on our Council for one year, allowing them to gain first-hand experience through observation of the workings and dynamics of a board. Apprentices emerge with the practical experience, self-confidence and understanding necessary to further qualify them to take on board roles. Furthermore, they develop their network with existing board members.

## Expectations of Council Apprentices

- You will be expected to attend all Council meetings, including the Annual General Meeting or any extraordinary meetings. You may also need to attend committee meetings (for example, Audit and Nomination committees) and be asked to attend the annual Council Strategy Days. You may also be offered an induction programme at the start of your apprentice year
- You will be expected to have read all Council/committee papers ahead of the relevant meetings. This may well take several hours. Ensure you are fully prepared so that you extract maximum value from your observations at the actual meeting.
- You will be expected to listen and observe. You may answer questions addressed to you but you must not speak unless invited to do so. You are there purely for the purpose of education in the running of and the responsibilities and duties of the Council.
- Apprentices will be assigned a mentor for their 12-month period. The mentor will, typically, run through any questions you may have about what happened in the meeting once it is concluded or there may be a more general de-brief over lunch. These questions should be about procedure and not about content.
- You will be required to sign a form agreeing to observe the strict rules on confidentiality and disclosure at all times and in all conversations.
- In addition, a Council Member will be assigned before each Council meeting to go through the papers with the apprentice. As each Council member brings their own expertise and experience to the role, it is valuable to see how the Council papers are viewed through different lenses, and how this lends itself to the dynamic of Council meetings



# How to apply

An application form is available at the following website address: [https://www.newman.ac.uk/about-us/governance/the-university-council/#blueprint\\_3](https://www.newman.ac.uk/about-us/governance/the-university-council/#blueprint_3)

We recommend that you consult that guidance provided with the application form and the Council website for further information.

Please submit a short curriculum vitae (max. 2 pages) together with the application form.

The University is an Equal Opportunity Employer and we operate the Disability Confident Employer Standard which amongst other things guarantees an interview to disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria of the job specification.

Please submit your application to [a.j.bolshaw@newman.ac.uk](mailto:a.j.bolshaw@newman.ac.uk)







Your opportunity  
Your community  
**Your university**



[newman.ac.uk](http://newman.ac.uk)



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