

Council Member application form

**Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of Council.**

You can find out more about Birmingham Newman University on our website: [www.newman.ac.uk](http://www.newman.ac.uk). Further information about the Council and its role is available at: <https://www.newman.ac.uk/about-us/governance/the-university-council/>

You may find it helpful to also read the *Summary Information on the Role of Council and its members* ([Appendix](#_Appendix)) before completing the application form.

Birmingham Newman University is committed to ensuring that all appointments are made in a way that is open, transparent and fair to all applicants. All appointments are made on merit.

**Applicants are asked to complete this application form and submit a curriculum vitae.**

This application form can be completed on your own device; the boxes will expand as you type or you may continue on a separate sheet, if required. Please submit a short curriculum vitae (max. 2 pages) together with the completed application form. Please note that the application is in addition to the information given on the curriculum vitae, not as a substitution for it.

**Please submit the completed application form and curriculum vitae, by email, to the University Council email address:** [**Council@newman.ac.uk**](mailto:Council@newman.ac.uk)**/**

# **Personal details**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Salutation** |  |  | **Home Telephone** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Surname** |  |  | **Mobile Telephone** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Other Names** |  |  | **Email** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Address** |  |  |  |  |

**Do you have any current or previous volunteer/trustee/governor experience?**

Yes

No

(please check appropriate box)

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| If yes, please give details, including names of organisations and dates and explain how this experience supports your application. |
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**Please tell us about your suitability for the role.**

Council Members have a duty to observe the highest standards of corporate governance.

Effective governance requires an organisational culture which gives freedom to act; establishes authorities and accountabilities; and at its core fosters relationships based on mutual respect, trust and honesty (Committee of University Chairs – The Higher Education Code of Governance: <https://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CUC-HE-Code-of-Governance-publication-final.pdf>).

In each section below, please give a brief outline of how your skills, knowledge and experience match each of the requirements. Please give examples wherever possible to support your application.

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| Summarise what particularly interests you about becoming a Council member at Birmingham Newman University.  **Please limit your response to 300 words.** |
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**Knowledge and Experience**

A clear understanding of the role of being a governor and the willingness and the commitment to devote the necessary time, preparation and effort to the proper discharge of the responsibilities of such a role

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| Please outline how you would contribute to the work of the Council, making reference to your specific skills and experience and the qualities required for the role.  Council is particularly interested in hearing from those with experience/expertise in the following areas: legal, digital and IT, and auditing and accounting.  Please provide examples that demonstrate your skills and abilities:   * as a strategic thinker * to demonstrate good judgement * to act with reasonable skill and care * to offer constructive challenge and support judgements * as an effective communicator: clear, concise and able to adapt to the needs of the audience   **Please limit your response to 400 words.** |
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**Skills Matrix**

All applicants are asked to complete a self-assessment of their skills and knowledge.

It is expected that skills and knowledge change over time and in order to focus on the recruiting and development needs of Council, we ask that applicants indicate where they feel their strengths and weaknesses are. The responses are used to ensure a suitable membership and skills balance is maintained on the Council and its committees to support the University and the work of the Council.

**Scoring:**

**1 = limited or now knowledge/skill in this area, and**

**5 = significant expertise/knowledge/skill in this area**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Aspect** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| Knowledge of the principles and practice of good corporate governance, risk management and compliance |  |  |  |  |  |
| Understanding of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of a Governor |  |  |  |  |  |
| Qualifications and / or experience in Finance |  |  |  |  |  |
| Qualifications and / or experience in Audit/public accountability |  |  |  |  |  |
| Qualifications and / or in Estates/property/capital development projects |  |  |  |  |  |
| Qualifications and / or experience in Human resources |  |  |  |  |  |
| Qualifications and / or experience in Mental Health and Wellbeing |  |  |  |  |  |
| Qualifications and / or experience in Legal matters |  |  |  |  |  |
| Qualifications and / or experience in Public Relations and Marketing |  |  |  |  |  |
| Qualifications and / or experience in business and commerce and Enterprise |  |  |  |  |  |
| Qualifications and / or experience in Health and Safety |  |  |  |  |  |
| Knowledge of Equality and diversity and Inclusion |  |  |  |  |  |
| Understanding of Students, Learning and Teaching |  |  |  |  |  |
| Knowledge of the Higher Education sector |  |  |  |  |  |
| Qualifications and / or skills in Information Technology |  |  |  |  |  |
| Qualifications and / or skills in Safeguarding |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Conflict of interest**  **Are there any facts, activities or connections which you feel might be raised in future about your suitability to hold the position of Council member and director of Birmingham Newman University, because they present - or may present - a conflict of interest?** These may include, for example, issues such as personal relationships or membership of organisations or other circumstances. |
| **Reputation of the University**  **Should you be successful in your application, is there anything about your professional or personal history which, if brought into the public domain, might compromise the reputation of the organisation, and call into question that you are a ‘fit and proper person’ for University governance? If so, please give details below.** The guidance notes to this application contain the Office for Students’ definition of a ‘fit and proper person’. Please refer to this definition when completing this section. |
| **Religion**  Birmingham Newman University welcomes staff, students and council members of all religions and none. In keeping with the University’s Vision, Mission, Values and Instrument of Governance, there are some positions on Council designated for Catholic council members.  Do you wish to serve as a Catholic member? If so, please mark the box |
| By checking this box, I confirm I understand and am willing to commit the necessary time, preparation and effort to the proper discharge of the responsibilities of a Council member. |
| **DECLARATION**  I confirm that the information given on this form is correct and understand that any false statement may be sufficient cause for rejection, or if appointed, may subsequently result in the termination of my appointment. I understand that my application information will be stored in manual and electronic files and is subject to the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations.  Signed  Date |

References

#### Please give the name and addresses of two referees, either from within the University or in another organisation where you have served in a similar capacity, and who can comment on your suitability for this role. Should the Nominations and Governance Committee wish to proceed with your appointment following interview, we will contact these referees at this stage. Please note references from relatives are not acceptable.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** |  |  | **Name** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Position** |  |  | **Position** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Organisation** |  |  | **Organisation** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Address** |  |  | **Address** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Telephone** |  |  | **Telephone** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Email** |  |  | **Email** |  |



# **Appendix**

##### Appointment of Members of Council

##### Summary Information

1. **Introduction and Context**

Birmingham Newman University is committed to a Mission of Service integral to which is ‘making higher education accessible to the poor or members of minority groups who customarily have been deprived of it’. All our activities are guided by the values of respect for others, social justice and equity. The University has a stated ambition to be a learning community in which we strongly encourage the full participation of our students in our community; working in partnership with academics and professional staff in a spirit of mutual trust and respect. The pedagogy of partnership is fundamental to the work of the University, and essential to our Strategic Plan objectives of student formation and staff formation.

The University was founded in 1968 as Newman College in order to train teachers for Catholic schools. In less than fifty years the institution has grown from a single-discipline (initial teacher training) college, serving only Catholic schools, to a multi-disciplinary university offering a broad range of undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research qualifications serving a diverse student body.

Catholic schools in the nineteenth century were set up in the poorest areas of major cities to meet the needs of the marginalised and disadvantaged and the mission of the University as a broad based inclusive institution continues that focus on personal development and public service. This is reflected in the portfolio of courses offered and the employment destinations of many of our graduates.

We believe that the demographic profile of our students has implications for the way in which they are taught and supported through and beyond their university career. This includes the support of students who may lack family experience of higher education or traditional social capital.

The University is committed to a holistic vision of education embracing the training of the mind and search for truth. We seek to be inclusive, firmly rooted in the community, cherishing diverse traditions and committed to the common good. Our vision is to be a values-driven university representing an academically excellent community of learning. This underpins the mission to direct our research towards a demonstrable impact on society and to make higher education accessible, and leads to our portfolio having a strong mission for the common and public good via courses that lead to vocational professions. Although beyond the scope of this submission, our provision of postgraduate taught courses also enhances the overall Newman learning community as this provides opportunities for further study to our large body of students with commitments in the local

area. Degree-awarding powers were obtained in 2007 and university status was achieved in 2013.

Birmingham Newman is a small university, with circa 3,000 full and part time students. Colleagues and students work in a close-knit network in a small, geographical vicinity and this promotes the development of a learning community in which students are ‘a name and not a number’.

A £20 million campus 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, were opened in September 2011. In 2017 a new halls of residence and teaching space were opened.

Further information about the University is available on the website [www.newman.ac.uk](http://www.newman.ac.uk) .

##### The Council

Birmingham 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 practising 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.

##### 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. In summary, Birmingham 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

##### Required Profile for Council Members

Council Members have a duty to observe the highest standards of corporate governance. Effective governance requires an organisational culture which gives freedom to act; establishes authorities and accountabilities; and at its core fosters

relationships based on mutual respect, trust and honesty.

(Committee of University Chairs – The Higher Education Code of Governance: <https://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/wp-content/files/2018/06/CUC-HE-Code-of-Governance-publication-final.pdf>

It is also important that those involved as Members of Council observe the Nolan Principles of Public Life: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2) [7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2)

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. AdvanceHE has produced a range of resources to help support and develop individual governors and institutions to maintain effective governance. Further information and guidance is available at: <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/governance> .

Under the Office for Students regulations (<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1094/ofs2018_04.pdf>), Council members must be ‘fit and proper persons’. The Office for Students defines this as follows.

A fit and proper person:

* is of good character
* has the qualifications, competence, skills and experience that are necessary for their role
* is able by reason of their health, after reasonable adjustments are made, to properly perform the tasks of the office or position for which they are appointed
* has not been responsible for, been privy to, contributed to, or facilitated any serious misconduct or mismanagement (whether unlawful or not) in their employment or in the conduct of any entity with which they are or have been associated.

The Office for Students provides the following indicators that a person may not be a fit and proper person:

* disqualification from acting as a company director, or from acting as a charity trustee, as set out in the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 or the Charities Act 2011
* conviction of a criminal offence anywhere in the world
* subject of any adverse finding in civil proceedings, where relevant, including, but not limited to bankruptcy or equivalent proceedings (in the last three years)
* subject of any adverse findings in any disciplinary proceedings by any regulatory authorities or professional bodies
* involvement in any abuse of the tax systems
* involvement with any entity that has been refused registration to carry out a trade or has had that registration terminated
* involvement in a business that has gone into insolvency, liquidation or administration while the person has been connected with that organisation or within one year of that connection
* dismissal from a position of trust or similar
* involvement with a higher education provider that has had its registration refused or revoked by the OfS or has had similar action taken against it by another regulator (this includes, but is not limited to, serving on a board/governing body, having voting rights, being a significant shareholder/owner, serving in a senior position, etc.)

##### Meetings

Members are expected to attend four formal meetings of the Council per year usually held on a weekdays at Newman University. The meetings are lengthened to include pre-meeting/briefing sessions. There are also strategic ‘away days’ twice per academic year 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 Risk, Nominations and Governance, and Remuneration. Members may be asked to serve on these committees.

##### Appointment of Council Members

A recruitment and selection panel will review all applications received by the deadline and will consider the broad range of skills and experience required across the Council as a whole. Those candidates who are shortlisted will be invited to speak to a panel about the role and the contribution they could make to it. Finally, the panel will make a formal recommendation to appoint the successful candidate at the next meeting of Council.

Council Members (except for the Archbishop, the Vice Chancellor 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. Staff Council members are eligible for re-appointment but will not normally serve for more than two consecutive terms.

Written notice to the Clerk to the Council of one month is required to resign from the Council.

##### 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.

##### 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.

##### Data protection

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##### We are collecting your personal information in this application form in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (2018). Data Privacy Notices for Council members can be found on the corresponding University Webpage (see: <https://www.newman.ac.uk/privacy-notices/#blueprint_5>), which gives you further information about how we will process and dispose of your data. You can contact the Data Protection Officer via email at [dpo@newman.ac.uk](mailto:dpo@newman.ac.uk) should you have any questions or concerns about how we process your data.

##### Additional Information

Additional information about the work of the Council and the requirements of the role of a Member of Council can be obtained by contacting the Secretariat ([Council@newman.ac.uk](mailto:Council@newman.ac.uk)).