



Queen Margaret University
EDINBURGH

QUEEN MARGARET UNIVERSITY
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
LAY MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY COURT

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PREFACE

Thank you for your interest in the University Court of Queen Margaret University.

The University Court, which is the University's governing body, is seeking to appoint to a number of vacancies in its independent (Lay) membership. Those appointed will take up their positions in October 2019.

Set out in the pages that follow are the key responsibilities of the role of Lay Member of Court, together with a description of the qualities and experience being sought in candidates for appointment.

If you share our values and vision and are able to subscribe to the commitments set out in this document, we would welcome your application warmly.

For an informal discussion on this role, please contact Irene Hynd at ihynd@qmu.ac.uk or tel: 0131 474 0525.

Irene Hynd
University Secretary
Secretary to the University Court
February 2019

1 THE UNIVERSITY

1.1 History

Queen Margaret University can trace its origins to the foundation in 1875 of the Edinburgh School of Cookery, an institution that operated throughout mainland Britain, pioneering the training of teachers in nutrition, public health and domestic science.

Under our previous title of Queen Margaret College, our courses were accredited by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) from 1975 to 1992. We raised the majority of our programmes to Honours degree level and developed our research activities throughout that period.

We were granted taught degree and research degree powers by the Privy Council in 1992 and 1998 respectively, and the title 'Queen Margaret University College' in 1999.

We achieved full University title in 2007, the year in which we also relocated to our campus just outside the City of Edinburgh, at Musselburgh. The first complete university campus to be built in Scotland in a generation, the campus was designed with a brief to place students at the centre of the learning environment.

1.2 Vision, Mission and Strategic Direction

Our strategic plan focuses on our vision for 2025, the date by which it will be 150 years since the institution that is now QMU was established.

The Strategic Plan is designed to enable us to fulfil our potential as a university of ideas and influence. It sets out how we aim to further develop our existing academic flagships and create new ones; how we can excel in research, teaching KE, outreach, internationalisation and entrepreneurship; and how we can achieve our aim of being a University without borders as well as a community without barriers. Our Strategic Plan is accessible electronically at:

<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/our-strategic-plan/>

Our *Vision* is to be a university of ideas and influence.

Our *Mission* is to foster intellectual capital with a theoretical and practical focus, giving students and staff the confidence to make a real difference to the world around them.

We are known not only for excellent, relevant teaching, research and knowledge exchange but also for the care and respect we give our students, staff and partners. As a thriving campus university we strive to create a community without borders, helping to improve people's lives locally, nationally and internationally. We are ambitious and enterprising, and, in everything we do, we are committed to social justice.

In pursuit of our Vision and Mission, we hold to the following values and aspire to be:

- Ambitious, confident and inspiring to instil staff and students with a sense of belonging to the QMU community.
- Committed to social justice, recognising equality and diversity in all that we do.
- Excellent in research, teaching and knowledge exchange.

- Supportive and enterprising.
- Focussed on meeting the needs of students, staff, employers and our communities.
- Committed to all forms of sustainability.
- A University without borders that embraces partnership working with the local, national and international communities.

Research continues to be central to our strategy. The vitality of our research culture promotes synergy between research, knowledge exchange, teaching and other activities, enhancing each individual element of our work.

Our performance in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) results announced in December 2014 validated our strategic approach to research, with over 58% of our overall research being rated as world leading or internationally excellent. We are placed 2nd in the UK and 1st in Scotland for the proportion of research in Speech and Language Sciences classed as internationally excellent or world leading (92%). We are ranked 1st in Scotland for the quality of publications in Communication, Cultural & Media Studies. We are now producing three times as many world leading publications as we did in 2008, and have moved up 49 places (since the Research Assessment Exercise 2008) into the top 100 UK higher education institutions (HEIs) for research excellence (89th).

International competitiveness in research is fundamental to our Knowledge Exchange strategy, which is based on the translation of excellent research to the Scottish indigenous SME base. Our particular offering is that our research in food and drink, rehabilitation sciences, creative industries and hospitality and tourism is accessible and has a direct economic, cultural and societal impact for Scotland. Our aim is to understand society and enhance it, to connect local and international perspectives, to engage the public and external stakeholders and to make significant contributions to policy, planning and development.

We are committed to widening participation amongst students who have previously been inhibited from entering Higher Education for social, economic or cultural reasons but also to taking active steps to maximise their persistence and success. We have adopted a definition of 'under-represented groups' that has extended beyond that of the narrow Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) national indicator and have developed a range of initiatives to increase the participation and retention of those from a broad range of non-traditional groups.

Our widening participation and retention strategy seeks to increase student numbers from non-traditional groups, including those that are: first generation to go to Higher Education; from low progression schools; reside in communities in the lowest 20% and 40% of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (MD20); articulating students from Scotland's Colleges, disabled students, or those who are Care Leavers.

The latest figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), published in July 2018, show that we have the 3rd highest graduate employment rate of any Scottish university, and 14th highest employability rate amongst all UK higher education institutions. 97.1 % of those graduating from a full time undergraduate degree course at QMU go on to employment or further training within six months of graduating. The Scottish university sector average is 95.2%.

2 GOVERNANCE AT QMU

2.1 The University Court

Every higher education institution in the UK is headed by a governing body, which is responsible for overseeing the institution's activities, determining its future direction and fostering an environment in which the institutional mission is achieved and the potential of all learners is maximised. The governing body ensures compliance with the statutes and provisions regulating the institution and its framework of governance. Subject to these, it takes all final decisions on matters of fundamental concern to the institution.

The Court is the governing body of Queen Margaret University, established by the Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh (Scotland) Order of Council 2007 which came into force on 1 April 2007.

The University is a company limited by guarantee (Company Number SC007335) and a charity (Scottish Charity No. SC002750) registered with the Office for Scottish Charities (OSCR). Court members are consequently Directors and also Charitable Trustees.

Details of the powers and governance framework of Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh can be viewed at: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/university-court/>

The Court is responsible for carrying out the objectives of the University, ensuring the financial sustainability of the University and approving the strategic plan. In addition, the Court is responsible for monitoring the University's compliance with the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance (2017).

The Court is supported by a number of committees, including the Finance & Estates Committee, Audit and Risk Committee, Nominations Committee and Senior Management Remuneration Committee. The Health and Safety Committee and the Equality and Diversity Committee also report to Court.

The Court delegates to the University Senate responsibility for the academic work of the University and for the conferring of degrees and other awards. Operational management is delegated to the University's senior management team under the leadership of the Principal and Vice Chancellor.

An important aspect of the Court's work is establishing and monitoring systems of control and accountability, including financial control, and reviewing the performance of the University.

Court approves the mission and strategic vision of the University, its long-term business plans, key performance indicators (KPIs) and annual budgets, and ensures that these meet the needs of stakeholders.

The Court also appoints the Principal of the University and has in place arrangements for monitoring their performance.

The Chair provides leadership to the Court and works closely with the Principal and Vice-Chancellor. The Principal and Vice-Chancellor is responsible for providing advice on strategic direction and for the management of the institution, and is the designated officer in respect of the use of Scottish Funding Council funds.

2.2 Court Membership

Committed Court members are crucial to the University's success. Court members are drawn from a range of backgrounds and professions, and include elected staff and student members.

The Court is currently made up of:

- The Chair of Court.
- Between 11 and 15 lay members, who bring with them skills and experience of value to the University.
- The Principal and Deputy Principal.
- Three staff members, two of whom are elected by staff, one who is appointed by Senate, and
- The Student President and one other Students' Union office-bearer.

The membership of the Court is in the process of being revised to take into account the provisions of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016. With effect from autumn 2019, the membership will be supplemented by two members who have been appointed by being nominated by a trade union from among the academic staff and from the support staff of the University.

Profiles of current Court members may be found at: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-our-staff/court/>

3 ROLE OF LAY MEMBER OF COURT

3.1 Key Responsibilities

Court members are expected to play an appropriate part in ensuring that the necessary business of the Court is carried on efficiently, effectively, and in a manner appropriate to the proper conduct of public business. They are expected to make rational and constructive contributions to debate and to make their knowledge and expertise available to the Court as opportunity arises.

Members have a responsibility for ensuring that the Court acts in accordance with the instruments of governance of the University and with the University's internal rules and regulations, and to seek advice from the Secretary in any case of uncertainty.

Court members must make a full and timely disclosure of personal interests to the Secretary in accordance with the procedures approved by the Court. They must, as soon as practicable, disclose any interest which they have in any matter under discussion and accept the ruling of the Chair in relation to the management of that situation, in order that the integrity of the business of the Court and its Committees may be and may be seen to be maintained.

Court members have particular legal responsibilities for the University which is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity.

Court members may be appointed by the Court to at least one Committee of the Court and are expected to play a full part in the business of all Committees to which they are appointed. The expected time commitment for Court members is set out below.

Court members may also be asked to act as advocates on behalf of the University. This may include a role in liaising between key stakeholders and the University, or in fund-raising.

3.2 Attributes and Qualities

Court members commit to conducting themselves in accordance with the nine principles of public life in Scotland, which includes Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, Leadership, Public Service and Respect. Independent (Lay) members hold office for a fixed term, normally 3 years (but members are eligible to serve a second term), and they exercise their responsibilities in the interests of the University as a whole rather than as a representative of any constituency. They agree to abide by the University Court's Code of Conduct and must complete a Register of Interests form annually.

3.3 Person Specification

Court appointments take account of personal and professional skills and experience in the context of the overall composition of the Court. Currently, we are particularly interested to hear from individuals who have specific expertise in the fields of accountancy (preferably chartered), health, and estates or property development, particularly if this expertise has contributed to success within a higher education context (desirable but not essential). Applicants with other specialist knowledge are welcome to apply. You will have a strong, personal commitment to Higher Education, its governance and the values, aims and objectives of Queen Margaret University.

You will have experience as a member of committees/boards or experience of operating at a strategic level in a professional role. Consideration will be given also to individuals who demonstrate the capacity to develop the required knowledge once they are in the role.

You will have the ability to act fairly and impartially in the interests of the University as a whole, using independent judgement, and maintaining confidentiality as appropriate. You will have the ability to act as an ambassador and represent the University to the wider community and to operate as a member of a team.

You will be an excellent communicator with appropriate negotiation, presentation and influencing skills.

You will be supportive of the University's ethos, mission and values, and be committed to equality, diversity and inclusivity.

We are committed to equality and diversity and would welcome applications that reflect the breadth and diversity of the community we serve.

4 TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

4.1 Remuneration

The role of Lay member of Court is unremunerated but reasonable travel and subsistence expenses will be reimbursed for attendance at Court and Committee meetings, for business conducted on behalf of the University, or duties carried out at the request of the Court. The rates of expenses claimable are the same as for members of staff under the University's financial procedures. Directors and Officers Liability Insurance is in place.

4.2 Commitment

The likely overall time commitment required of Court members averages between 10-15 days per year. The Court meets on at least 5 occasions per academic year, and has a two-day Away Day on campus in the spring, which may involve an overnight stay. Court members may meet individually with the Chair or Vice-Chair once or twice a year, and may be required to attend sub-committee meetings three or four times a year. There is background reading associated with each of these meetings. In addition to the requirements set out above, Court members are invited to attend events held by the University, including the annual graduation ceremony in early July, professorial lectures, social and celebratory events,

5 HOW TO APPLY

If you share our values and vision, are able to subscribe to the commitments set out above, and consider you meet the person specification, we would like to hear from you.

Queen Margaret University is committed to ensuring that its Court represents the staff, students and community which it serves. As such, we would welcome applications that reflect the breadth and diversity of those communities, and that would further enhance the diversity of the Court.

Applications are invited in the form of:

- A current CV or description of work and other relevant experience.
- A supporting statement highlighting how your skills and experience match the role specification.
- The names of two referees who may be contacted.

You are also asked complete and return an Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form. Please note that this form will be used purely for monitoring purposes. The form will be separated from your application and will not form part of the selection process.

The closing date for applications is **Friday, 29 March 2019**. Applications should be submitted:

By post to: Irene Hynd, University Secretary, Queen Margaret University, EH21 6UU

By e-mail to: ihynd@qmu.ac.uk

For an informal discussion on this role, please contact Irene Hynd, University Secretary at ihynd@qmu.ac.uk or tel: 0131 474 0525.



Queen Margaret University
EDINBURGH

MEMBERS OF QUEEN MARGARET UNIVERSITY COURT

Role Description

- a) Court members commit to conducting themselves in accordance with the nine principles of public life in Scotland, which includes Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, Leadership, Public Service and Respect.
- b) Members exercise their responsibilities in the interests of the University as a whole rather than as a representative of any constituency. They agree to abide by the University Court's Code of Conduct and complete a Register of Interests form annually.
- c) Court members are expected to play an appropriate part in ensuring that the necessary business of the Court is carried on efficiently, effectively, and in a manner appropriate to the proper conduct of public business. They are expected to make rational and constructive contributions to debate and to make their knowledge and expertise available to the Court as opportunity arises.
- d) Members have a responsibility for ensuring that the Court acts in accordance with the instruments of governance of the University and with the University's internal rules and regulations, and to seek advice from the Secretary in any case of uncertainty.
- e) Court members must make a full and timely disclosure of personal interests to the Secretary in accordance with the procedures approved by the Court. They must, as soon as practicable, disclose any interest which they have in any matter under discussion and accept the ruling of the Chair in relation to the management of that situation, in order that the integrity of the business of the Court and its Committees may be, and may be seen to be, maintained.
- f) Court members have particular legal responsibilities for the University which is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity.
- g) Court members may be appointed by the Court to at least one Committee of the Court and are expected to play a full part in the business of all Committees to which they are appointed.
- h) Court members may be asked to represent the Court and the University externally, and will be fully briefed by the University to enable them to carry out this role effectively.
- i) Court members may also be asked to act as advocates on behalf of the University. This may include a role in liaising between key stakeholders and the University, or in fund-raising.

- j) The likely overall time commitment required of Court members averages between 10-15 days per year. The Court meets on at least 5 occasions per academic year, and has a two-day Away Day on campus in the spring, which may involve an overnight stay. Court members may meet individually with the Chair or Vice-Chair once or twice a year, and may be required to attend sub-committee meetings three or four times a year. There is background reading associated with each of these meetings.
- k) In addition to the requirements set out above, Court members are invited to attend events held by the University, including the annual graduation ceremony in early July, professorial lectures, social and celebratory events,
- l) Court members are not remunerated for their work as Court members, but are encouraged to reclaim all travelling and similar expenses incurred in the course of University business via the Secretary pursuant to the University policy on this issue. Directors and Officers Liability Insurance is in place.

Person Specification

- a) Members should demonstrate a strong, personal commitment to Higher Education, its governance and the values, aims and objectives of Queen Margaret University. Lay members of Court should have experience as a member of committees/boards or experience of operating at a strategic level in a professional role.
- b) Members should have the ability to act fairly and impartially in the interests of the University as a whole, using independent judgement and maintaining confidentiality as appropriate. Members should have the ability to act as an ambassador and represent the University to the wider community and to operate as a member of a team.
- c) Members should be excellent communicators with appropriate negotiation, presentation and influencing skills.
- d) Members should be supportive of the University's ethos, mission and values, and be committed to equality, diversity and inclusivity.

LINKS TO KEY INFORMATION SOURCES

- 1 Court Members' Handbook (including governance structure)
<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/university-court/>
- 2 Senior Officers
<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/chancellor-vice-chancellor-and-senior-management-team/>
- 3 Membership of Court
<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/university-court/>
- 4 Strategic Plan
<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/our-strategic-plan/>
- 5 Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC)
<http://www.sfc.ac.uk/funding/outcome-agreements/outcome-agreements-2018-19/queen-margaret-oa2018-19.aspx>
- 6 Annual Report and Accounts
<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/finance/>
- 7 Internal Audit Report on Governance Arrangements
<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/media/6222/qmu-he-governance-final.pdf>
- 8 Standing Orders
<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/media/5428/appendix-11-court-standing-orders-october-2015.pdf>
- 9 Court Statement of Primary Responsibilities
<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/media/5437/appendix-20-qmu-court-statement-of-primary-responsibilities.pdf>
- 10 Scottish Code of Higher Education Governance
www.scottishuniversitygovernance.ac.uk/
- 11 Financial Memorandum with the Scottish Funding Council
<http://www.sfc.ac.uk/governance/institutional-finance-governance/institutional-finance-governance.aspx>