Independent Lay Members of Council – Role Profile
University of Bradford

Voluntary, with expenses paid
12–15 days per annum

For people with purpose. It starts in Bradford.

The opportunity

At Bradford, we connect education with the world of work and research with the challenges people face. Our teaching is shaped with industry, giving students practical experience and opportunities to build their careers. Our researchers work with communities and partners to improve health, tackle environmental challenges and develop technologies that change lives.

Underpinning this is a belief in people's potential and a commitment to helping them succeed, whatever their starting point. Our record reflects that commitment: Bradford has ranked first on the Higher Education Policy Institute's Social Mobility Index for five consecutive years.

We are seeking two Independent Lay Members to help us build on these strengths and shape the University's future, supporting its long-term success and its contribution to students and society.

The role

Council is the University's governing body, and its members serve as governors and charity trustees. Working with Council colleagues and senior leaders, you will bring independent judgement and an external perspective to its decisions.

Your responsibilities will include:

- Helping shape the University's strategy and long-term priorities.
- Overseeing delivery of the strategy, financial sustainability and institutional performance.
- Scrutinising major proposals and providing constructive challenge and support to the Executive.
- Upholding high standards of governance, integrity and accountability.
- Acting as an ambassador for the University through your professional and wider

Essential criteria

- Significant leadership experience at executive, board, partner, director or equivalent level.
- Strategic thinking, sound judgement and confident decision-making.
- The ability to challenge constructively while working collaboratively.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- High standards of integrity and professionalism.
- A commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- The ability to operate effectively in complex and fast-changing environments.
- For the relevant vacancy, significant senior-level expertise in either legal and regulatory matters or estates and facilities.

Desirable criteria

- Experience of higher education or another complex, regulated organisation.
- Previous governance experience, for example as a trustee, non-executive director or member of a governing body.
- Experience of financial oversight, audit and/or risk management.
- An understanding of education, social impact and public service.

Expertise we are particularly seeking

For this recruitment round, candidates must demonstrate significant senior-level expertise relevant to one of the two vacancies:

- Legal and regulatory: a senior legal background, with experience of advising on legal, regulatory, compliance and governance matters in a complex organisation.
- Estates and facilities: senior experience of estates strategy, facilities management, capital development and/or major infrastructure projects.

Key responsibilities

- Contribute to strategy and major institutional decisions.
- Monitor delivery of the University Strategy.
- Bring independent judgement and external insight.
- Uphold integrity and good governance.

- Oversee financial sustainability, performance, and risk.
- Scrutinise proposals and challenge constructively.
- Attend and contribute actively to Council and committee meetings.
- Complete induction and development.
- Promote the University through external networks.

Inclusion matters

Diversity of thought, experience and background strengthens governance and decision-making. We particularly welcome applications from women and people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, who are currently under-represented on the University Council.

Applications are welcomed from all suitably qualified candidates, regardless of protected characteristic or socio-economic background.

Time commitment and terms

- Council typically meets seven times each year through a combination of in-person and online meetings.
- Members are expected to serve on at least one Council committee.
- The anticipated commitment is approximately 12–15 days per annum.
- The role is unremunerated; reasonable travel and subsistence expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with university policy.
- The initial term is three years, with the possibility of reappointment in accordance with university governance arrangements.
- A comprehensive induction and ongoing development programme will be provided.