

University of Plymouth

Statement of Primary Responsibilities: Board of Governors

The University of Plymouth's mission of 'advancing knowledge, transforming lives' depends upon effective Board leadership which collectively ensures the delivery of its objects, the setting of its strategic direction and the upholding of its values.

The primary responsibilities of the Board of Governors are:

- 1. Safeguarding and promoting the vision, mission and values of the University with responsibility for:**
 - i. Ensuring that the University's vision, mission and values are clearly stated and can be understood and recognised by students and other stakeholders.
 - ii. Upholding the values of the University and ensuring that it complies with the Instrument and Articles (its Governing documents).
 - iii. Ensuring decisions relating to these responsibilities are made in the best interests of the University, its students and other key stakeholders whilst reflecting the University's regional, national and international role.
 - iv. Acting in a manner consistent with the vision, mission and values of the University.

- 2. Determining the strategy and structure of the University with responsibility for:**
 - i. Contributing to and approving the University's mission and strategic vision, through approval of the strategic plan, and the business plans and financial forecasts designed to support the achievement of the mission and vision.
 - ii. Ensuring that appropriate supporting strategies are in place in relation to key areas such as estates, finance and human resources.

- 3. Ensuring the University operates in an effective, responsible and accountable manner with responsibility for:**
 - i. Monitoring the University's performance against approved strategies, using key performance indicators benchmarked wherever possible against competitor institutions, and making available the outcomes of that monitoring.
 - ii. Ensuring that appropriate systems of control and accountability are in place to secure the solvency of the University and the safeguarding of its assets, including financial and operational controls and risk management procedures, and that such systems are subject to audit.
 - iii. Ensuring the University holds diversity and equality as positive values in its policies and practice.
 - iv. Appointing the Vice-Chancellor as head of the University and putting in place suitable arrangements for monitoring his/her performance; the Board is also responsible for the remuneration and conditions of service of the Vice-Chancellor and for processes whereby s/he may be suspended or dismissed if necessary.
 - v. Approving the University's senior management structure.

- vi. Ensuring the University has systems in place to meet its legal obligations in relation to the employment of staff, charity law, equality and diversity, health and safety and procurement.

4. Ensuring the effective functioning of the Board of Governors with responsibility for:

- i. Ensuring that the Board specifies, in role descriptions, the particular responsibilities of and powers delegated to:
 - Identified Board members such as the Chair
 - Board sub-committees
 - Any other individuals with responsibility for specific activities
- ii. Acting in a manner agreed by the Board when representing the Board.
- iii. Operating in a manner that maintains the distinction between the Board's responsibilities for governance with the executive responsibilities of the Vice-Chancellor and his/her executive team for executing strategy.
- iv. Ensuring that the University and its key stakeholders have a clear understanding of the Board's role.
- v. Ensuring the Board has an appropriate range of skills and experience on which to draw in order to help the University to continue to progress and fulfil its mission and vision.
- vi. Constructively considering advice received from the executive team so that decisions are taken in the University's best interests.

5. Ensuring that the University meets its charitable objectives, with responsibility for:

- i. Acting at all times in the best interests of the University
- ii. Approving a public benefit statement for inclusion in the annual financial statements
- iii. Maintaining awareness of the roles and responsibilities of charity trustees

6. Within the context of this statement, the University has identified that individuals appointed to membership of the Board should possess a balance of the following qualities:

- i. To be committed to the vision, mission and values of the University.
- ii. To be constructive about other Governors' opinions in discussions, and in response to staff members' contributions at meetings.
- iii. To operate effectively as part of a team, contributing to collective decisions and standing by them.
- iv. To be able to analyse complex information and when necessary, challenge constructively.
- v. To be able to think independently and draw on experience from other sectors/institutions for the benefit of the University.
- vi. To be able to respect boundaries between executive and governance functions.
- vii. To be able to maintain confidentiality on sensitive information and that which is commercially confidential, demonstrating integrity and tact.
- viii. To be able to think strategically and support the formulation of long term strategy for the University.
- ix. To be able to commit adequate time to prepare for and attend Board meetings and to undertake any other appropriate engagements/activities.