

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

PROTOCOL FOR SENIOR VICE-PRINCIPAL/VICE-PRINCIPAL APPOINTMENTS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The roles of Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal are normally fixed term appointments for an initial period of up to five years, renewable subject to satisfactory performance for a period of 3 years or more, with the total period of appointment being a maximum of 8 years. The initial appointment period will follow a recruitment process of advertisement, application, presentation(s) and interview as outlined in 2 below.
- 1.2 Following the approach outlined in the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance it is recommended that normally the Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principals serve no more than two terms. Exceptions to this may be where a Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal serves three terms (for example a period of 3 years, followed by 3 years, followed by 2 years), but still a maximum of 8 years in total.
- 1.3 Senior Vice-Principals/Vice-Principals will be set appropriate targets and will be assessed against the agreed objectives through the annual review process. Renewal of appointment will not be automatic and the process detailed at 3 below should be followed to review whether a continuation is appropriate. Normally, the Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principals will be a senior member of academic staff and will have had experience in a formal leadership role such as Head of School or equivalent. At the end of the appointment as Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal the individual will return or be appointed to a role specified in their contract of employment.

2. Initial Appointment Process

- 2.1 Normally, six months prior to the conclusion of the current Senior Vice-Principal's/Vice-Principal's appointment, the Principal will instigate a review of the requirements of the role for the replacement appointment. An external advertising process shall be instigated and undertaken in line with the University's policy on Recruitment and Selection of Staff, inviting applications from both internal and external candidates.
- 2.2 The recommended composition of the Selection Committee for Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal appointments is included at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 Members of the nominated Selection Committee shall be invited to be involved in the recruitment process from the earliest stages and shall be invited to contribute to the completion of the recruitment documents.
- 2.4 As part of the selection process shortlisted candidates shall be asked to make a presentation to Senate and participate in focus groups with Heads of School and Professional Services Directors. Feedback from those in attendance shall be provided to the Selection Committee for consideration as part of their final decision.
- 2.6 Following this recruitment process, the successful candidate shall be offered an initial appointment as Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal for up to 5 years.

3. Renewal of Term of Office.

Step 1

- 3.1 An appropriate review of performance in role is undertaken. This will involve an assessment of progress in achieving performance targets, including a review of the previous annual review documentation.

- 3.2 The Principal (normally 6 months prior to the end of the term of office) should discuss with the Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal the process to be undertaken to consider the potential of continuation in the role. This will include establishing if the Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal is interested in continuing for a further term of office.

Step 2

- 3.3 The Principal will review the requirements of the role, and the main requirements/objectives for the next term of office.

Step 3

- 3.4
- a) Normally, subject to satisfactory performance, achievement of previously agreed targets and a positive response from the Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal in relation to continuation in post, the Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal will be asked to prepare a brief written report (max. 2 pages A4), outlining their achievements to date and future targets to be achieved during a further term of office.

Or

- b) Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal confirms that they do not wish to be considered for a further term of office and the appointment concludes at the agreed end date of the first term.

Step 4

- 3.5 Subject to 3.4 a) above the Principal will seek feedback from all members of the University Management Group (UMG) regarding the performance of the Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal.
- 3.6 The Principal will normally write (by email) to all members of the UMG announcing that the initial term of office is coming to an end, and invite feedback in relation to the performance of the Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal and specifically any views regarding the possibility of a further term of office.

Step 5

- 3.7 Members of the UMG will be encouraged to write to or meet 1:1 with the Principal to discuss their comments.
- 3.8 All staff should be confident that any comments are entirely confidential and that any feedback by the Principal to the Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal will be anonymised.

Step 6

- 3.9 Once complete the Principal will prepare a brief report summarising the outcome of the feedback. This feedback will inform the decision as to whether the current Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal should be extended for a further term. However, the decision will ultimately require a balance of objective evidence (eg documented through annual review) and the management needs and expectations for the University as determined by the Principal. In reaching a conclusion the Principal will consult, in the case of Vice-Principals with Senior Vice-Principal, the University Secretary and the Director of People, and in the case of the Senior Vice-Principal. with the University Secretary and the Director of People.

Step 7

- 3.10 The Principal will advise the Senior Vice-Principal/Vice-Principal of the University's intention to renew or not renew the appointment, normally not less than three months prior to the expiration of the appointment.
- 3.11 Human Resources will then confirm the associated contractual arrangements.

Selection Committee for Senior Vice-Principal

All selection committees for appointing Senior Vice-Principal positions will be convened by the Principal and will normally include participation by External Assessors (if advertised externally) and a member of the University Court.

Senior Vice-Principal

Principal
University Secretary
Vice Principal
1 x Director
1 x Head of School
AUSA Student President
2 x External Assessors +
2 x Members of University Court

- + *It is the normal expectation that External Assessors will attend the Selection Committee where there is an external appointment process. In the event that the External Assessors are unable to attend in person, written comments will be sought instead*

Selection Committee for Vice-Principal

All selection committees for appointing Vice Principal positions will be convened by the Principal and will normally include participation by External Assessors (if advertised externally) and a member of the University Court.

Vice-Principal

Principal
Senior Vice Principal
University Secretary
1 x Director
1 x Head of School
AUSA Student President
2 x External Assessors +
2 x Members of University Court

- + *It is the normal expectation that External Assessors will attend the Selection Committee where there is an external appointment process. In the event that the External Assessors are unable to attend in person, written comments will be sought instead*