

Appendix 1

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Consideration should be given by institutions and the Government to the processes of training and continuing professional development of council members, so that they may discharge their duties in a more informed manner. The identification of candidates should be made with regard to a skills template which each institution should draw up and keep under review. Induction should be undertaken by both the UGC, with regard to sector-wide issues, and by each institution in respect of individual institutions.

Recommendation 2

In order to ensure that the fiduciary responsibilities of council members strike an appropriate and sustainable balance between institutional autonomy and public accountability the UGC should create a mechanism to explore, drawing upon international good practice, the establishment of a written accountability framework on which the vice-chancellor / president and the council report annually.

Recommendation 3

Council has a vital role in strategic planning, the latter seen as a process which clearly sets out institutional priorities and forms the basis of the council's assessment of institutional performance. In order to discharge this role each university should draw up a set of key performance indicators which are timely and relevant and which allow council to assess the progress towards the priorities agreed in the strategic plan.

Recommendation 4

The oversight of risk management, whereby the council is satisfied that major institutional risks – both financial and reputational – have been clearly identified and are being effectively managed, is an irreducible responsibility of council. Each council should therefore draw up a risk register which is reviewed at least annually and, ideally, more frequently.

Recommendation 5

Each council should publish a scheme of delegation which sets out the sub-structure of its committees and includes the mechanism whereby council is satisfied that the related managerial oversight of university activities is being effectively handled, including appropriate delegation and reporting mechanisms.

Recommendation 6

The UGC should undertake a review of university governance on a regular basis, ideally every five years.