**COMMITTEE OF UNIVERSITY CHAIRS**

**Chair Support Survey 2017**

The data analysed in this report utilises the 77 responses from the CUC’s Chair Support Survey. This equates to 59% of the total CUC membership. From this point onwards, all percentage figures refer to the percentage of survey responses, not to the overall membership. Where necessary, data has been adjusted for ease of analysis, for example data relating to time spent in the Institution has been converted from days to hours when necessary (and vice versa) with days being treated as 7 hour working days. Questions that were left blank have been listed in the data as No Response (N/R). It should be noted that the data provided was produced by estimations by respondents, who were asked to provide figures reflecting their time commitments as Chair.

**Question 2** – How many members sit on the Governing Body/Council of your institution. **2a** - How many are lay members

As can be seen in figure 1, the size and composition of governing bodies vary across member institutions. The range of the data varies from 12 to 32 members, and we can see there is a clear

**Figure 1*.*** *Number of governing body members and lay members. Please note that there is some overlap in this figure, and data will be provided in Appendix 1.*

correlation between the number of lay members compared to total members. There are a few outliers however. From this we can see that across the sector, the composition of boards varies greatly.

**Question 3** - Do you believe that in the last few years that expectations of governing bodies have increased, stayed the same or reduced?/ **Question 4** - Do you believe demand on governing bodies will increase, remain the same or decrease over the next few years?

**99% of respondents believed that responsibilities had increased. 95% believed they would increase further.**

Overwhelmingly, 76 respondents believed that the responsibilities of governing bodies had increased in the last few years, whereas only 1 responded that they had remained the same. No responses stated that they had decreased. A similar pattern of responses is apparent in Question 4, where 73 respondents believed that the demands will increase in the future. 4 respondents believed that they would stay the same.

**Question 5** - On average, how much time a month do you believe you spend on institutional business?

**Figure 2**. *Time spent on institutional business per month in hours*

From the responses gathered, it is clear that on average amount of time spent on institutional business is between 21 and 42 hours a month.

**Question 5.a** - How much time a month is spent with the Vice-Chancellor?

**Figure 3.** *Time spent with the Vice-Chancellor per month*

**Question 5.b** - How much time a month is spent with the Registrar/COO?

**Figure 4.** *Time spent with the Registrar/COO per month*

**Question 5.c** – How much time a month is spent with the Council Secretary?

**Figure 5***. Time spent with the Council Secretary per month*

It should be noted that the number of no responses for this question is higher as a number of institutions have the role of Registrar and Council Secretary occupied by the same person.

**Question 6** - On average, how many days do you spend in the institution a month?

**Figure 6.** *The number of days spent in institution per month.*

As mentioned in the introduction, we asked the respondents to give rough figures. Some of the data above in figure 6 represents the minimum number of days in some cases.

The average number of days per month is 4. However there is a considerably wide range amongst the responses. Several members stated that this number can vary depending on when in the Committee cycle the month falls.

**Question 7** – Does your institution offer any of the following facilities/support to help you fulfil your duties?

 **7.1.** Dedicated office space/ **7.2.** Use of a hot desk on demand.

19% of respondents had access to dedicated office space. 64% had access to a hot desk on demand. Interestingly, 17 members had no access to either dedicated office space, or a hot desk.

**7.3.** A named personal assistant/ **7.4.** Other secretarial support.

Of those who responded, 35% had a named personal assistant. 62% had other forms of secretarial support. 17 members had no secretarial support provided by their institution. It is unclear whether the institution did not offer these services or whether they were not needed due to the Chairs other roles. Some respondents did state that they would like a named PA however.

**7.a.** Does your institution provide access to equipment such as:

**7.a.1**. A laptop – 16% Yes

**7.a.2.** An iPad or equivalent tablet – 36% Yes

**7.a.3.** Mobile phone – 92% No

**7.a.4.** Printer – 25% Yes

Provision of technology is variable. A small number of institutions provide laptops, whereas a higher number provide Tablets, perhaps due to lower costs, portability and being more suited for use by Committee members (easier to read papers etc.). It is expected that most members would have laptops for personal use. Those who have a mobile phone provided are in the minimum.

**7.b.** Do they assist with expenses incurred by:

**7.b.1.** Travel – 86% Yes

**7.b.2.** Accommodation – 74% Yes

**7.b.3.** Phone – 83% No

**7.b.4.** Subsistence – 45% No

**7.b.5**. Conferences – 74% Yes

**7.b.6** Subscriptions – 53% No

The majority of members have their travel and accommodation expenses covered for them by their institution. They also have their conference expenses covered too. However, almost half are not offered help with subsistence costs, and slightly more than half are not offered help with their subscriptions. Interestingly more members are offered assistance paying their phone expenses than are provided phones (8 and 5 respectively).

**Question 8.** Is there other support that you wish national organisations provided directly to chairs?

A large number of responses simply stated there was nothing more that they could think of that could be provided to Chairs.

There were a number suggestions however:

* Succinct updates on key issues
* Policy issues and shared knowledge
* Briefings on current UK political developments as recently launched by Universities Wales
* Searchable databases on educational matters so we can do our own comparative research
* A monthly email/online digest of HE news focussed on UK but also with details of significant changes in other nations
* Daily HE news digest on regulatory/policy matters
* Establish a standard of support across the sector
* More time to exchange experience at Plenaries
* Access to independent legal advice as standard across the sector
* Briefing papers on national issues and relevant government policy

**Question 9.** Is there any other support you wish your institution provided to you?

**The majority of institutions are highly accommodating with regards to Chairs’ requests for support.**

Those respondents who stated no for items in **Question 7** often stated that although they do not receive it, this is due to the fact they do not require that form of support. Their institution would provide it if asked to. Others stated they did not need it due to it being available in one of their other roles.

Suggestions and comments provided included:

* Secretarial support
* Clearer university organograms with names and contact details of all senior staff
* Paying for the THE
* More assistance in identifying, planning, providing and assessing development needs of external members
* Dedicated office support/space for directors
* Chairs should receive a small stipend or honorarium to help cover misc. costs

**One response stated ‘Not at the moment - though if the burden of governance increases then I would review that.’**

**Question 10.** Does your institution provide opportunities and support for continuing professional development for the Chair and the Board? Specifically:

**10.1.** Access to online courses – Yes 58%

**10.2.** Attendance at Leadership Foundation (LF) courses and seminars – Yes 87%

**10.3.** Attendance at Funding Council and other national body conferences – Yes 90%

**10.4.** Attendance at external training courses – Yes 73%

**10.5.** In house development sessions – Yes 78%

It seems that most institutions support the ongoing development of their Chairs, either through online courses, internal or external training or through attendance of sector events. One respondent stated that they had no training offered whatsoever.

**Appendix One**

Total members and lay members

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| Total members | Lay members |
| 12 | 9 |
| 14 | 9 |
| 14 | 10 |
| 15 | 11 |
| 15 | 11 |
| 25 | 16 |
| 15 | 12 |
| 15 | 10 |
| 16 | 10 |
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| 24 | 18 |
| 24 | 16 |
| 24 | 9 |
| 24 | 13 |
| 25 | 14 |
| 25 | 13 |
| 25 | 14 |
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| 25 | 18 |
| 25 | 13 |
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| 26 | 18 |
| 26 | 15 |
| 26 | 14 |
| 26 | 20 |
| 29 | 15 |
| 32 | 16 |
| N/R | N/R |

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