



## Appointment of **Principal and Vice-Chancellor**

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## About Robert Gordon University

Robert Gordon University (RGU) has a heritage going back 250 years, and it was granted university status in 1992. Today it is a dynamic, modern University with an international reputation for providing high quality education from undergraduate through to PhD level.

Situated on one of the most beautiful campuses in the UK, the University has invested £135 million in recent years to offer state-of-the-art facilities to staff and students. The Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey, published in 2018, quoted RGU as number one in Scotland and top ten in the UK for the quality of our facilities.

Resonating through our culture is the desire to foster collaborative relationships with local, regional and global communities to develop socially responsible citizens and promote ethical behaviour.

## About Robert Gordon University

With more than 16,000 full and part-time students and 1,580 staff members, RGU comprises eleven schools and several administration and support departments which are situated at our Garthdee campus in Aberdeen, including:

- Aberdeen Business School
- School of Applied Social Studies
- School of Computing Science and Digital Media
- School of Creative and Cultural Business
- School of Engineering
- Gray's School of Art
- School of Health Sciences
- The Law School
- School of Nursing and Midwifery
- School of Pharmacy and Life Sciences

- The Scott Sutherland School of Architecture and Built Environment

- The Graduate School

RGU has significant strengths that make it distinctive through the provision of demand-led teaching and research. Key achievements in recent years include:

- Gold ranking in the Teaching Excellence Framework.
- Consistent ranking as the top university in Scotland for graduate employability, and its place amongst the top ten universities in the UK in this area.
- Strong track record of workforce skills development and its position as Scotland's leading provider of Graduate Apprenticeships.
- Development of one of the strongest links with any college in Scotland through the recognition of the North East Scotland College as an associate college.
- Significant track record in knowledge exchange which assists the development and diversification of the regional economy.





## Teaching and Learning & the Student Experience

RGU provides industry-led undergraduate and postgraduate courses leading to highly relevant awards and degrees, proactively engaging with businesses in the development of many of its degree courses and meeting regional and national needs at a time of constant change and development.

Our teaching staff have an outstanding reputation for quality and academic research and our track record in graduate employment is amongst the best in the UK. Our range of degree courses include online degrees as well as traditional taught courses in subjects as diverse as art and design, management and engineering.

The University has been awarded a Gold rating in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), placing it in the top 20 per cent of the best universities in the UK for the quality of its undergraduate teaching and learning.

Consistently ranked among the UK's top universities for graduate employment for many years, recent accolades have included:

- Top university in Scotland for Health Professions, Journalism, Architecture and Pharmacy. Top for graduate prospects – Guardian University Guide 2017.
- The Herald Education Award for Outstanding Business Engagement 2019.
- Ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the UK for universities that do most to boost graduate salaries – The Economist 2017.
- Top university for graduate jobs in Scotland – HESA July 2018.

Our diverse and exciting range of degree programmes are taught in state-of-the-art facilities by specialists who maintain close links with the world of work.

Well-established relationships with professional bodies, industrial organisations, government departments and research institutes ensure that all taught content is relevant and meets industry standards.

Many of our courses enable part-time study, with an increasing number also available via distance learning through the University's online learning environment, CampusMoodle.



## Research

RGU's growing reputation for research reflects our expertise across its eleven Schools, delivering innovative research solutions for business and industry providing economic, societal, environmental and cultural impact.

RGU's research base is characterised by some very high-quality researchers who are distributed across a number of academic disciplines. The University's ambition is to:

- Build critical mass, foster excellence, exploit new research and knowledge exchange opportunities and increase funding by leveraging our existing strengths in key areas.
- Stimulate excellence in interdisciplinary research and knowledge exchange with a societal and economic impact by appointing leading or rising researchers, supporting them with postdoctoral researchers and research students.

- Support the development of researchers, allowing them to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse and global research environment, by providing mentoring, researcher training and open-access publication support.
- Develop further strategic collaborations through national and international academic and industrial research and knowledge exchange alliances.

The Graduate School offers an excellent research environment coupled with internationally recognised supervisors to support a high-quality research student experience. The University hosts a supportive research community providing an environment conducive to high quality student experience and achievement.



## Strategy

The University's current strategy has been developed to reflect the significant strengths RGU distinctive. This is also a time of considerable change for higher education within the country and the strategy aims to address the challenges and opportunities that these changes may present to the University.

The overarching aim is to demonstrate the University's contribution to economic, social and cultural development. This includes extending the reach and relevance of learner opportunities and ensuring a high-quality student experience.

The University will also focus on building on its globally recognised impactful research and strengthening its work in stimulating economic development.

The University has been delivering, and often pioneering, in these areas for years and will now concentrate its efforts on rising to the challenges and opportunities to achieve success in an ever-changing higher education sector.

Moving forward the University will continue to build on its key strengths by:

- Growing the University's privately funded activities to assist in financial sustainability and to develop sufficient surpluses to reinvest in areas of growth.
- Developing the University's course portfolio and digital infrastructure to enable a larger share of growth in off campus student numbers.
- Developing the University's short course provision to address employers' requirements for greater digital literacy and the challenges of the fourth industrial revolution.
- Continuing to widen access to higher education for students from low income backgrounds.
- Investing in growing the University's globally impactful research in strategic areas including sustainable transport, built environment visualisation, industrial biotechnology, smart data and artificial intelligence, and pharmacy practice.

For more information, please visit:  
[www.rgu.ac.uk/rгустrategy](http://www.rgu.ac.uk/rгустrategy)



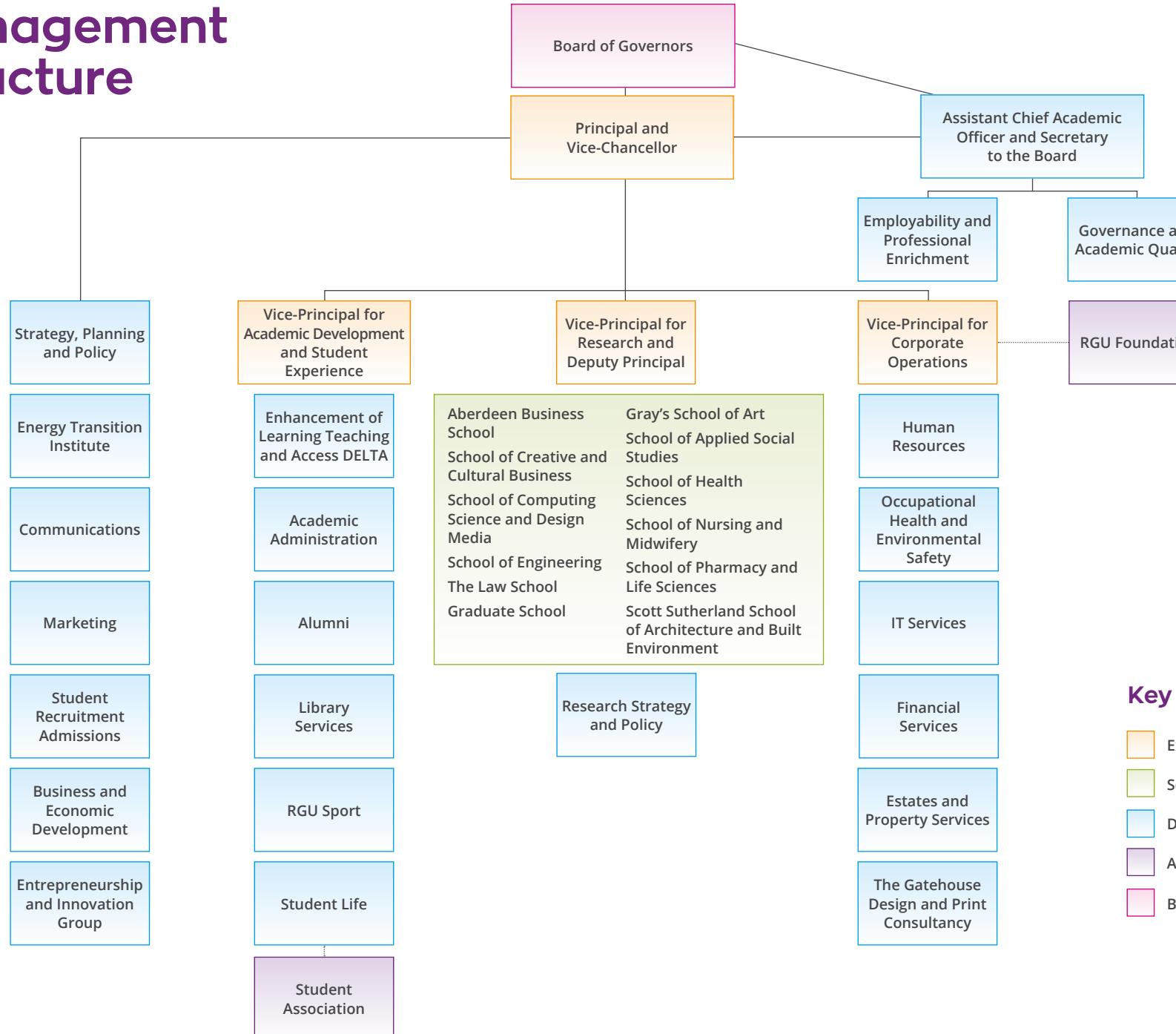
## Governance

The University's governing body is the Board of Governors which is appointed to exercise the functions of management and control although, at an operational level, most of these functions are delegated to the Principal or Vice-Chancellor. It consists of both appointed lay governors from a range of sectors and elected staff and student governors. Their role is to provide strategic guidance to the University's mission in contributing to economic, social and cultural development through the impact of its demand-led educational and research agenda.

The Board of Governors is responsible for the overall strategic direction and governance of the University but also delegates functions relating to the overall planning, co-ordination, development and supervision of the academic work of the University to the University's Academic Council. Both the Board of Governors and the Academic Council are supported by a wide range of standing and short life committees.

The Chancellor is appointed as the titular head of the University and confers degrees, diplomas and other awards, although they have the right to delegate this conferral. The current Chancellor is Sir Ian Wood.

# Management Structure





# Appointment of Principal and Vice-Chancellor

**Reporting directly to the Board the role holder is the Chief Academic and Executive of the University, with overall responsibility for the management of the institution and for its strategic direction.**

**The role of Principal and Vice Chancellor is to determine, propose to the Board and continuously review the long-term vision, structure and direction for the University. To lead in defining and communicating the strategic objectives and plan for the University, and to implement full delivery through their leadership and management. To act as champion for the University in external engagement, and to exercise leadership in local, national and wider debate.**

## Key responsibilities

- Provide clear academic and strategic leadership, encompassing the definition, articulation and successful implementation of the agreed institutional strategy, purpose and mission throughout all elements of the University.
- Lead the further development, communication and delivery of the University's Strategy Map.
- Ensure the on-going success of RGU, working closely with colleagues and stakeholders to deliver the aims, objectives, targets and key performance indicators set out in the business plan.
- Lead the senior team in line with the agreed university culture and values, setting clear and challenging expectations which ensure their collective and individual contribution is maximised and focused on accountability for outcomes.
- Ensure good governance and management especially in relation to academic reputation, people leadership and management, and financial and environmental sustainability.
- Ensure that RGU's values, direction and performance are understood and effectively communicated throughout the University, to both staff at all levels and to the student body, and to external stakeholders, including Alumni.
- Provide information, support and guidance on strategic and operational matters to the Board to enable effective management, performance and governance of the University.
- Be a high-profile, visible leader both internally and externally, acting as an ambassador for the University to promote, safeguard and advance its reputation.
- Represent RGU externally with a variety of stakeholders in the political arena with Scottish, UK and other Governments to ensure that the University's plans appropriately reflect developments in the wider environment.



## The Profile of the Candidate

### Experience and Achievements

- A successful track record of senior leadership within a higher education institution or equivalent environment.
- Strong academic credentials, evidenced through a profound understanding of the sector, personal leadership of relevant functions, which may comprise; academic development, academic quality and enhancement, strategic teaching and learning development, research and consultancy or commercialisation of education.
- Experience of entrepreneurship and effective strategic thinking through enhancing and delivering strategy within a high profile, complex and successful organisation.
- Demonstrable experience of building and leading an effective senior management team.
- A track record of driving and delivering change, recognising the changing and demanding external environment in which the University operates. Proven networking and interpersonal skills, with a track record of successful high-level representation and relationship building across a complex stakeholder map.
- An understanding of the national and global context for higher education, the policy-making process in HE in Scotland, within the UK and internationally, and the interface between academia and industry.

### Personal Qualities

- A commitment to the purpose and mission as set out in the University's current strategy and to the values and culture of the University.
- An outstanding communicator with a deep understanding of people and the ability to actively listen, demonstrate empathy, engage people, engender trust and motivate individuals and teams, and to set a tone for acceptable behaviour throughout the University which is consistent with the University's values and behaviours framework.
- Ability to develop, empower, lead and motivate a strong senior management team, focused on delivery of the strategic objectives of the University, with an ability to translate strategy and plans into achievable outcomes and targets.
- Strong financial and business acumen with proven ability to optimise and manage resources.
- The ability to maintain alignment, direction and focus, to show persistence and resilience under challenge, and to deliver strategic goals through others.
- The personality and presence to represent the University with passion, conviction and influence to a broad range of external audiences, including Government and business leaders.

## The Profile of the Candidate

### RGU Core Behaviours

The 5 RGU Core Behaviours describe the standard of behaviour expected of all employees.

Treat people with respect	Listen to and accommodate other people's views; maintain respect for the individual at all times, in all situations; challenge unacceptable behaviour in others.
Communicate effectively	Keep people informed in a clear and concise manner; listen and respond in appropriate ways; check for and ensure understanding.
Maintain good & productive working relationships	Collaborate and work in partnerships with others and respond positively to such opportunities; build and maintain effective working relationships internally & externally.
Maintain a high personal standard of delivery	Maintain a clear understanding of your role and how it contributes to the wider university goals; agree priorities and manage your workload and time accordingly. Deliver agreed services & outcomes to a high standard.
Look for and implement improved ways of working	Maintain a positive approach to change, improvements and new ideas. Contribute ideas and engage with other people to continually improve working practices.

# Innovation@RGU



You will be happy, set a goal,  
It takes your energy away,

## The Profile of the Candidate

### RGU Leadership Expectations

The Principle and Vice-Chancellor is expected to role model, champion and commit to the agreed RGU Leadership Expectations.

- **Demonstrating strategic commitment:** understanding RGU's strategy and communicating its key principles consistently and with conviction;
- **Communicating RGU's values:** understanding and living out the ethical and principled standards of the University;
- **Representing the University:** showing commitment to RGU in all relevant contexts, inside and outside the institution;
- **Consistently meeting and exceeding targets:** having clear expectations of ourselves and others, with clear priorities and targets, with a determination to overcome challenges and take decisions so as to meet and exceed targets;
- **Building productive relationships:** developing purposeful, positive relationships, partnerships and collaborations that deliver productive outcomes;
- **Showing concern for colleagues and the community:** demonstrating leadership by supporting and assisting others, while also being willing to take difficult and challenging decisions;

- **Engaging with people to demonstrate a "can do-want to do-will do" attitude:** in spite of the ambiguities and uncertainties; encouraging tenacity, enterprise, innovation and risk taking in what we do and how we do it;
- **Managing performance effectively:** continuously reflecting on individual and team performance, recognising and rewarding success and dealing with under-performance in a timely and effective way;
- **Developing and leading successful teams:** understanding what makes an effective, successful team in our context; developing, guiding and supporting individuals in their teams, ensuring teams are focused on outcomes aligned to the agreed strategy and plans;
- **Developing future talent:** seeing developing talent as a core part of the role, engaging in development planning and making available the resources to make such plans a reality.





## Appointment Process and How to Apply

The University will be supported in this appointment process by the executive search firm Perrett Laver.

Enquiries may be made directly to Ilona Motyer at [ilona.motyer@perrettlaver.com](mailto:ilona.motyer@perrettlaver.com) or +44 20 7340 6220.

Applications should consist of a full curriculum vitae detailing academic and professional qualifications and experience, full employment history showing the more significant positions, responsibilities held, relevant achievements and budgets and staff managed, and latest remuneration including any benefits. CVs should be accompanied by a diversity monitoring form and covering letter describing briefly how candidates meet the criteria outlined in the person specification, why the appointment is of interest and what they believe they can bring to the role.

Completed applications should be uploaded at <https://candidates.perrettlaver.com/vacancies/>, quoting reference **4251**. The closing date for applications will be **noon Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019**.

Candidates who are longlisted by the Committee will be invited to first round interview with Perrett Laver in December. Shortlisted candidates will be invited for informal conversations and campus visits in February, followed by formal interview with the Selection Committee on Early March 2020.

The appointment will be made subject to satisfactory references and it is intended that the appointee will take up employment on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.



## About Aberdeen

### Scotland's Third Largest City

With a population of approximately 228,000, Scotland's third most populous city is prosperous and cosmopolitan, outperforming other major cities in the UK in terms of jobs, skills, income and environment.

It is a place that is rich in culture, with a range of museums, art galleries, cinemas and concert venues. With more than 25,000 students, studying at RGU means you'll be part of a lively, vibrant student-friendly city, with great shops, restaurants, international food stores, nightlife and live music.

The City features in the UK top ten of The Good Growth for Cities Index, (PwC, 2018). The index measures the performance of 42 of the UK's largest towns and cities against ten indicators including employment, health, income and skills, housing affordability and environmental factors.

Aberdeen also has the honour of being named the second safest city in the entire United Kingdom in The Alternative UK University City League Table 2017 and the second most affordable city for students in the UK by Natwest in 2017.

Aberdeen is one of the best places to be a student according to top student website Accommodation for Students.

Aberdeen is often referred to by its friendly locals as 'The Granite City', and 'The Silver City with the Golden Sands' because almost all of its buildings are made of the local grey stone, granite, and the city has spectacular sandy coastlines to the east (not to mention some of the UK's highest mountains to the west).

It is far milder here than one might expect for our northern location. The East coast is actually the sunniest area in Scotland, where sunshine hours average around 1,500 per year, ideal for the outdoor and active lifestyle which attracts huge numbers of people to the area throughout the year.

With the Grampian Mountains and Cairngorms National Park right on our doorstep, there are plentiful opportunities for mountain biking, mountain climbing, skiing, snowboarding and white water rafting within easy reach of the city.



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