Policy for the Appointment of Non-Council members to the Appointments Committee and Non-Statutory Committees of the General Dental Council

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1. Policy Statement

1.1. The GDC is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of Non-Council members to Non-Statutory Committees is conducted in a way that is in line with the values of the organisation.

1.2. Appointments must be made in a way which upholds the Nolan Principles and the Professional Standards Authority principles of a good appointments process (merit, fairness, transparency and openness and inspiring confidence).

2. Purpose

2.1. This document provides sets out the policy and procedure for appointing or re-appointing Non-Council members to the Appointments Committee and Non-Statutory Committees. This document has been designed to ensure that there is a consistent approach when appointing Non-Council members to the Appointments Committee and Non-Statutory Committees of the General Dental Council.

3. Scope

3.1. The responsibility for making or recommending appointments and re-appointments ultimately rests with the Council.

3.2. This procedure covers the appointment of Non-Council members to the Appointments Committee, the Audit and Risk Committee, the Remuneration Committee, the Finance and Performance Committee, and any other Non-Statutory Committee where Standing Orders permit the appointment of a Non-Council member.

3.3. This process does not cover the appointment of members to the Statutory Committees\(^1\). Appointments to the Statutory Committees are overseen by the Appointments Committee\(^2\).

THE APPOINTMENTS PROCESS – PLANNING

4. Who initiates the process?

- The appointments process is commissioned by the Council. GDC staff should monitor membership of the Appointments Committee and the Non-Statutory Committees and plan for when vacancies will arise. As an appointment process normally takes from four to six months to complete, GDC staff should ensure Council is notified well in advance of forthcoming vacancies. Ideally at least six months’ notice should be given.

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\(^1\) The Statutory Committees are as follows: Investigating Committee, Interim Orders Committee, Professional Conduct Committee, Health Committee, Professional Performance Committee and Registration Appeals Committee

\(^2\) The Appointments Committee was established under the GDC (Committees of Council) Rules Order of Council 2009 (SI 2009 No 1813)
5. Re-appointments

5.1. GDC staff should establish how many of the Non-Council members whose terms of office are due to end are eligible and wish to be considered for a further term of appointment. Terms of office for the Non-Council members on the Non-Statutory Committees will be determined by Council but will normally be for no more than four years, with a further renewal permitted for no more than two years.

5.2. Terms of the office for members of the Appointments Committee are normally for four years with the possibility of reappointment for a further four year term provided the member has not served a previous term on the Appointments Committee prior to 1 January 2015.

5.3. The decision whether Non-Council members should be offered an uncontested re-appointment will be informed by the outcome of their appraisal. The GDC will put in place regular and transparent performance assessment processes that will provide the necessary, robust evidence for considering re-appointments. No one can be re-appointed unless they have performed satisfactorily during their current term and it is essential for audit purposes and the investigation of complaints that all performance assessments are fully recorded and documented.

5.4. Non-Council members who will not be invited, for whatever reason, to serve for a further term must be notified once the formal decision has been taken and before any action is taken publicly to replace them.

5.5. The decision to re-appoint must be taken in a timely manner, and in all cases before the current term expires. Where Non-Council members are seeking reappointment, GDC staff should take the opportunity to ask them to update the information on them that is held by the GDC and, as a minimum, the GDC should obtain updated monitoring information and a current declaration of interests to check for any new potential conflicts of interest that may have arisen.

5.6. Where a full term (two year) re-appointment is not appropriate, Council may consider an extension of the current term. Such extensions will be exceptional, for example to provide continuity at a time of significant change in the Committee’s membership, and must not be seen as a means of circumventing the maximum period of membership.

5.7. Extensions must be agreed with the Council in advance, must not normally exceed a year, and should not normally be followed by a re-appointment without open competition, although Council may consider this in exceptional circumstances.

6. The Selection Panel

6.1. The Selection Panel will normally consist of:

- the Chair of Council, or another member of Council nominated by the Chair of the Council for this purpose;
- the Chair of the Committee with the vacancy;
- an independent person who is neither a Council member, Associate nor a GDC staff member, and has experience in recruitment and selection.

6.2. The members of the Selection Panel will decide which of them should chair the panel.

6.3. The Selection Panel will be assisted and advised by the Governance team.
7. Role description and person specification

7.1. A role description and person specification will be produced for every new appointment, which must be finalised by the Selection Panel for the role and approved by the relevant committee.

7.2. The selection criteria must not discriminate unlawfully against any group or groups in society.

7.3. The person specification should set out the experience, personal qualities, professional qualifications, if appropriate, and competencies against which the applicants’ applications will be assessed.

THE APPOINTMENTS PROCESS – PREPARATION

8. Publicising Vacancies

8.1. All appointments must be marketed and/or advertised in relevant media i.e. newspapers, journals or websites, in an appropriate and proportionate way, and will always, as a minimum, be marketed on the GDC website. The Selection Panel will decide whether advertising is necessary or whether it is adequate to market the vacancy through relevant channels. In making this decision the Selection Panel will need to consider what is proportionate in terms of candidate quality and expense, given the nature of the role.

8.2. Marketing and any advertising used, if any, must seek to encourage as diverse a range of applicants as possible.

8.3. All recruitment must be in line with the GDC’s Equality and Diversity Policy.

9. Information Packs

9.1. Information packs must be sent to applicants or be accessible on the GDC website.

9.2. Efforts will be made to provide candidate information in alternative formats, e.g. braille or large print if required.

10. Applications

10.1. Applicants will be required to provide information on any potential conflicts of interest.

10.2. Applicants will be asked to demonstrate how they meet the selection criteria as outlined in the person specification for the role.

10.3. Only applications which reach the GDC (or any recruitment agency which the GDC may commission to carry out work on its behalf) by the closing date will be accepted.

11. Sifting

11.1. During the appointments process, applicants may need to be sifted. This sifting may be undertaken in a variety of ways, for example, by preparing long and then short lists of candidates.
11.2. All sifting processes must:–
   • be approved by the Selection Panel;
   • be based on the person specification which the candidates have been asked to match their skills and experience against; and
   • ensure selection is based on merit.

THE APPOINTMENTS PROCESS – SELECTION

12. Short-listing
   12.1. Short-listing of applicants will be carried out by the Selection Panel.
   12.2. If one or more of the Selection Panel members knows one or more of the candidates, then this fact must be declared (together with the nature and extent of any relationship with a candidate) to the rest of the Selection Panel and recorded. The decision of the Selection Panel Chair will be final on the question of what further action, if any, is required to be taken in order to manage prior knowledge and conflicts of interest appropriately.

13. Interview stage
   13.1. All shortlisted candidates will be invited to take part in an interview, to be conducted by the selection panel.
   13.2. The interview panel will adopt a clear policy on interviewing in order to ensure a consistent approach.
   13.3. When arranging the interview schedule efforts will be made to meet the needs of candidates who may require reasonable adjustments and/or who have accessibility requirements.
   13.4. Interview questions will be based on the competencies outlined in the person specification to ensure consistency throughout the process
   13.5. GDC staff should provide a pro forma interview evaluation form on which the Selection Panel will identify the key interview performance points that influenced the Selection Panel’s decision. Notes will be made by all the interviewers at each interview, and the panel chair will keep a clear and objective record of the panel’s agreed decision and rating of each candidate. Each member of the Selection Panel should sign the agreed panel summary for each candidate. Candidates may, under Data Protection Legislation, request feedback or an account of the process undertaken.

14. Selection
   14.1. Selection of appointable candidates should only be made on merit, on the basis of information provided as part of the selection process.

15. References
   15.1. Appointments will be subject to the provision of satisfactory references, if the selection panel considers references to be necessary.
16. Recommendation to Council
   16.1. The Selection Panel will make a recommendation for appointment to the Council. The appointment will not be confirmed before Council approval has been granted.

17. Informing Candidates and Providing Feedback
   17.1. Following the selection process the aim should be to notify all candidates, successful and unsuccessful, with the minimum of delay.
   17.2. Successful and unsuccessful candidates will be informed of the outcome in writing by letter.
   17.3. Requests for feedback on interview performance will be dealt with by a member of GDC staff, solely using the Selection Panel's agreed records of sift and interview outcomes.

18. Review
   18.1 This document will be reviewed every two years. The Head of Governance will be responsible for the review.
   18.2 The Remuneration Committee will consider any amendments to the policy prior to making a recommendation to the Council for approval.