

Professional Services Staff Member Election 2020

Gillian Richardson

The opportunity we have collectively as a University to make the world a better place is limitless. However it is a reality that our resources to support this are not. Sound, representative and transparent management and decision making regarding our people, finances, spaces and systems is key to enabling the success of our Strategy 2030. Confident that my experience, skillset and approach will positively contribute to this, I wish to apply to the role of Professional Services member of Court.

An Honours graduate in Finance and Accountancy, I qualified with the Chartered Institute Management Accountancy through a traineeship with a global company. Since then I worked in diverse central services roles and operational delivery units in the private sector, local authority, a charity and, for the past seven years, in Higher Education, at the Universities of Glasgow, Stirling and, from December 2018, Edinburgh, as a Director of Professional Services in one of our largest Schools. Understanding the very different priorities and competing demands areas can face has affirmed my belief that governance structures must be fit for purpose operate with transparency and strive to liberate and enable people to deliver strategic objectives.

I am passionate about continuous improvement and have extensive experience transforming central service functions¹ and full end-to-end lifecycle support² to realise new ways of working, which are enabled by people, technology and operating procedures. Delivering services that meet users' needs, are consistent (not uniform), scalable and directly contribute to achieving strategic outcomes remains a key priority for me.

I strongly believe that failure to prioritise and recognise the value in building and nurturing relationships across and outwith the organisation leads to missed opportunities. That is why I continue to attribute my career successes to date as not solely my own, but those of the teams I have joined, led and built. As teams have often stretched beyond the boundaries of those I have direct responsibility for, I have relied on my leadership approach and highly developed influencing skills to create a collegial environment. I have been told that colleagues appreciate my methodical, dispassionate and positive approach to each challenge and opportunity; characteristics which I am certain would serve me well in the context of Court.

I am proud to be a member of Professional Services at the University and I would relish the opportunity to make a positive and meaningful contribution as a member of Court.

¹ Project Manager/Service Manager: IT Business Application Support Service, Renfrewshire Council

² Finance Systems Manager/Programme Manager: Transforming Research Management, University of Glasgow

Footnote:

While committed to my work life and ambitious in all I take on, I work to live and not vice versa. My life beyond the University involves the people I love, the outdoors, yoga and an obsession with food. Having recently built a house with my Fiancé, it has been rewarding to apply a number of my work skills to my personal life and navigate my own internal battles regarding limitless opportunity versus the very real constraint of budget and space.