

Flysheet, 7 November 2024

The following pages reproduce statements provided by the 5 candidates for the role of Chancellor of the University of Oxford who are going forward to the second round of voting (word limit: 750). Candidates' names and statements are listed here in alphabetical order, but will be presented to the electorate in random order when voting.

The candidates' statements of interest have been reproduced exactly as submitted. Their words and views are their own; no changes or edits have been made beyond those requested by the candidates themselves. The candidates' statements do not reflect the opinions of the University of Oxford, and the University cannot guarantee their factual accuracy.

1. Angiolini, Elish, Lady
2. Grieve, Dominic, The Rt Hon
3. Hague, William, Lord
4. Mandelson, Peter, Lord
5. Royall, Jan, Baroness

1. Angiolini, Elish

The Chancellor is the University's symbolic leader, and I believe that this combination of symbolism and leadership has never been more important than it is today. Our University is a beacon of hope in a polarised world; a byword for excellence across the globe. The extraordinary work that happens here – in teaching rooms, lecture halls, laboratories, and libraries – furthers the material, cultural, and moral welfare of all humanity. Our University's academic mission demands the highest commitment and devotion from its leaders.

For the past thirteen years I have witnessed Oxford's world-leading research helping to protect against illness; break down cultural barriers; alleviate suffering; illuminate history; promote international development; and ease deprivation. I have seen first-hand the truly international scope and reach of what we do, and of who we are.

I joined the University in 2012 when I became Principal of St Hugh's College. Although I am a late arrival compared with many, I quickly came to view it not only with respect but with affection, and I feel it has warmly embraced me in turn. Both College and University have instilled in me a deep admiration for our academic mission and provided a community within which my husband and I have been able to raise our family while delighting in Oxford's academic, pastoral, and cultural life.

More than any other institution I know, Oxford is truly multigenerational, a compact between those yet to arrive, our existing scholars, and our alumni, stretching back through almost ten centuries of history and reaching forward to those not yet born. I have watched with hope our new matriculants arrive to begin their Oxford journeys each Michaelmas; looked on with pride as our finalists leave to continue those journeys in the wider world each Trinity; and celebrated with the graduands and alumni who return every year to renew their connections to our College and University. We shape – and are shaped by – all who pass through our halls.

I have also witnessed first-hand the skill and grace with which our current Chancellor, the Lord Patten of Barnes, has helped us navigate both success and challenge with equanimity. He has elevated the profile of our already distinguished institution, and it is with more than a modicum of nervousness that I hope to follow in his footsteps and build on his illustrious legacy.

The appointment of the next Chancellor is a momentous decision requiring consideration of candidates' leadership qualities, vision for the future, and alignment with the values and traditions of this great University. It comes at a crucial moment in the University's ongoing story, and calls for a profound understanding of how Oxford's distinctive history can be reconciled with the changing imperatives of the modern world without sacrificing our unique institutional qualities.

While our University's history is set, our future must be shaped by each generation, and I believe that the challenges and opportunities of the coming years will be some of the most important we have ever faced. Through all of this, our purpose remains clear: to attract the most brilliant students, tutors, and researchers from across the world, and to maintain an environment in which they can fulfil their intellectual, social, and personal potential. I hope, by example, to continue to make my own small contribution to that noble aim.

I am the Principal of St Hugh's College and have been Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford. I will retire from St Hugh's next year.

I grew up in Govan, Glasgow and qualified as a lawyer in 1983. After a career as a public prosecutor, I became Solicitor General for Scotland in 2001 and Lord Advocate in 2011. In 2023, His Majesty the King appointed me to the office of Lord Clerk Register.

I have chaired a number of public inquiries and I published Part One of my report of the Inquiry into the Murder of Sarah Everard by a serving police officer earlier this year. Part Two of the Inquiry is underway.

Throughout my career, I have focused on protecting the most vulnerable in society, particularly women and children, from the use and abuse of power. I have proudly served as the senior Law Officer to governments from across the UK's political spectrum.

I humbly submit my application to be the next Chancellor of this extraordinary institution.

2. Grieve, Dominic

My career has been at the intersection of Law and politics. I held the office of Attorney General, the principal legal adviser to the UK government from 2010-14, and served as a Member of Parliament for twenty two years 1997-2019, with four years as chair of its Intelligence and Security Committee. My ties to Oxford began with my undergraduate years at Magdalen and were among the most positive experiences of my life, for which I am grateful. I visit Oxford often and take part in some of its academic activities. Recently I was the Reviewer of the Governance of Christ Church Oxford. Contacts with the University have increased my respect and affection for it. It is an institution with a rich history and immense capability for good, both domestically and internationally. As Chancellor, I can help represent the University, enhance its success and contribute to its further development and well-being. I would consider it a great privilege to do so and to give something back for what I have received.

At 68 and still scuba diving and mountain walking, I am confident that I have the energy to do this. I have the time to perform the duties that fall on the Chancellor. My home is in London so I will be readily accessible and available for all the ceremonial functions required, which I will enjoy. More general participation in the life of the University will be easy for me. My experience can provide supportive advice and advocacy for the decision makers of the University, the Vice Chancellor, Council and Congregation. Most of my career has been spent in the art of persuasion and reconciling different viewpoints as well as chairing meetings. As Attorney General I superintended and represented the interests in government of the Crown Prosecution Service whilst respecting and protecting the independence of its decisions. In reviewing the governance of Christ Church I worked in an advisory role for its Governing Body to find practical solutions. In the process I had to get a good understanding of the governance issues facing the University more generally. I am currently on the board of trustees of several charities and chair of one of them and am familiar with the requirements of good charitable governance. This will enable me to carry out effectively the role of Visitor, if necessary, to those colleges whose statutes place this duty on the Chancellor. My involvement with charities has given me experience with the challenges of fundraising and I see helping the University with this as a key part of the role.

Oxford, along with other universities, is navigating its way through a period of change and opportunity. Supporting its development as a centre of research and teaching excellence open to all who can benefit and contribute to it, upholding academic freedom, embracing diversity in all its forms, will be another important part of the role, as will be acting as its advocate to government and others. My extensive experience working on diversity, interfaith and human rights issues is directly relevant. I have provided mentoring and work experience to young people of diverse backgrounds through Operation Black Vote and the Faith and Belief Forum. I contribute to the fellowship programme on ethics in public service of the Westminster Abbey Institute and the Young Muslim Leadership Course at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, of which I am an independent trustee. I am a practising member of the Church of England. I am committed to the principles underpinning human rights, equality and the right to freedom of expression under law and with civility, essential to a place of learning.

I am no longer affiliated to any political Party and have worked co-operatively on a cross-party basis with members of the present UK government and others in British politics, I believe I will be listened to as an advocate for the University to government and Parliament. As a government minister and parliamentary committee chair, I have done diplomatic networking in Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the Middle East. I am partly of French heritage and bilingual. I will be pleased to travel and represent the University abroad to further its interests and am very much at ease in and enjoy diverse environments.

If anyone is interested in further information on my candidacy, it can be found on <https://www.dominic4oxford.com>

Rt Hon Dominic Grieve KC

3. Hague, William

Oxford transformed my life. When I arrived as a 17-year-old from a comprehensive school for an interview at Magdalen, I didn't know a single person in the whole city, and no one in my family had ever been to university. I have never forgotten how Oxford equipped me to take on any challenge in the world.

I have maintained a strong connection to the university ever since. In 1988 I volunteered, through my then employers McKinsey, to advise the university on its desperate needs for funds and plans for an appeal. With an American colleague I presented a plan, not for an appeal but for a Campaign for Oxford, not to raise £50 million as was mooted but £380 million, not to stave off a crisis but to fill much needed posts, renovate buildings, offer scholarships and build for the future, which I am delighted it has gone on to do.

While standing before the heads of the colleges persuading them to share data on their alumni with the university and writing the first draft of a publication I called 'Oxford Today', I could see that one of the world's greatest universities, with a momentous past, has a great future when we all work together. More recently, as an Honorary Fellow of Magdalen I have spent time with undergraduates who are that future, as I have returned regularly to give seminars or lectures on politics or the biographies I have written.

If Oxford asks me to serve as Chancellor, I will embrace that with vigour - although if there are better candidates they should be chosen, and I would strongly support them. In the 42 years since I graduated, I have built relationships across government, diplomacy, literature, science, business and philanthropy. I am ready to open their doors in the service of the university I love.

While parliament has been a big part of my life, I have always striven to reach beyond politics to promote diversity and work across parties. That was true of my proudest legislative achievement, the Disability Discrimination Act, and of my co-founding with Angelina Jolie of the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative, and of my current work as chair of the Royal Foundation of the Prince and Princess of Wales. Core to my beliefs is the need for strong and enduring institutions, as vital bulwarks in the turbulent age now unfolding. As Foreign Secretary, while dealing with crises in the Middle East and Africa, I also created a language school in Whitehall and founded a Diplomatic Academy.

Much of the Chancellor's role is fundraising, ceremonial, or representing the values of the university. I have secured large donations for many causes, speech-making is in my nature and I am not averse to wearing robes. We must embrace modernity while treasuring our history. But it is also vital to give a lead when necessary, keeping the potential of great universities at the heart of public policy. There are at least three major issues for the next decade on which a Chancellor can help.

One is freedom of speech. Oxford should be a place of open debate – as it was for me in the Union – based on learning from the arguments of others. Violence and prejudice should be countered through the rigour of reason, not the comfort blanket of cancellation. Oxford minds should be ready for the great debating chamber of the world, not the echo chambers of the like-minded. I applaud Chris Patten's clear statements on this vital matter.

Second is how the state finances universities. Britain is heading for a crisis over higher education funding. Solutions will be needed, from successive governments, that are affordable to the next generation of students regardless of background.

Third is the need for the UK and its universities to be at the forefront of the fastest period of change in science and technology in the entire history of human civilisation. That is not just a challenge for scientists but for every branch of humanities, medicine and social science too. The recent papers I have co-authored with Tony Blair set out how the country is well-placed but needs to do more, making the most of extraordinary talent in our research, funding it, and welcoming it from all over the globe.

My heart and soul are in Oxford, and if I can help ensure future 17-year-olds have the same opportunity as I did, I offer my service. My website, williamheague.com provides details of my books, articles, interests and past career.

4. Mandelson, Peter

The world we live in is more fractious and challenging than I have ever known. Science, expertise and dialogue are being attacked. Defending Oxford and its commitment to advancing knowledge is more important than ever.

I learned as an undergraduate that progress comes from testing ideas based on rational thought including its ethical considerations. I believe in freedom of expression and in tolerance and respect for others' views. Freedom of speech, although uncomfortable for many of us at times, is fundamental to university life and we must continue to uphold it.

I am putting my name forward as Chancellor following Chris Patten's very successful tenure as I am passionately committed to Oxford, its values, its collegiate system and its remarkable teaching and path-breaking research.

The role of Chancellor is largely ceremonial but also advisory and the Chancellor needs to contribute to the cohesion of the collegiate University including its academic divisions and departments. As an ambassador for the University at home and abroad I would always want to project the University's educational purpose and our understanding of our common humanity, its history and languages, its art and literature.

I benefitted from a state education and was the first in my school and my family to win a place at Oxford. Like thousands of other students, I vividly remember the excitement and trepidation of my first term. I want to see the University continue to attract and welcome the widest possible pool of applicants, from all types of school, while ensuring that Oxford's commitment to excellence is paramount.

In recent years my love of Oxford has made me a frequent visitor, and I have supported the University through my interest in technological innovation and its commercialisation and as a board member of the Ertegun graduate scholarship programme which seeks to create leaders in humanities. If elected I will take great pride in advancing the interests of the University and serving the whole of Oxford's collegiate community for the coming decade.

As I argued when minister for universities in the last Labour government, Britain's national prosperity requires a thriving university sector. I believe that higher education is an essential public investment and I am against the disproportionate shifting of costs onto individual students. I believe this view is shared by the new UK government including the Prime Minister and I will use my longstanding political links to advocate for this approach. But at the same time, as times are tight, the University will also have to raise more money from our worldwide alumni and from philanthropists.

Everything we do must ensure we remain a top-ranking global university, able to attract the very best staff and students. In today's world, an institution's glorious history does not guarantee it can remain ahead in the future. In the USA and increasingly elsewhere, competing universities enjoy huge endowments and philanthropy, enabling them to spend more money on staff, scholarships, post docs and facilities. To help the University, I would be able to draw on my extensive international networks created over three decades as UK Trade and Industry and later Business Secretary and First Secretary of State, as the EU's Trade Commissioner, and as co-founder and chair of the policy advisory firm Global Counsel. As Chancellor, I would put these links at the service of the University, to help rebuild our ties in Europe as well as strengthen them in the US and Asia.

The traditions of the University should continue to anchor us in our long, unique history. While respecting Oxford's extraordinary legacy, the Chancellor should be part of the conversation about the University's future, at a time when the impact of Brexit and past government policies have been very harmful to higher education. I would bring a clear sense of strategy and political judgement, an unwavering commitment to enhance the work and amplify the voice of the University's world class academics, and a proven ability to engage with British and global policy makers, as well as with business and philanthropists.

After a career in government and business, I want to give back to the University that has given me so much and to support the Vice-Chancellor and her team, as well as all of Oxford's 39 colleges. I sincerely hope I have the chance to serve Oxford's extraordinarily talented staff, students and alumni, no doubt with the same excitement and sense of anticipation I had when I first came up to the university, though now better equipped to help the whole university succeed.

5. Royall, Jan

Oxford is a great University and I am proud of being part of this global community of academics, scholars, researchers, students and alumni; proud to have played my part in the University Council and as chair of the Conference of Colleges. My experience as former Leader of the House of Lords was invaluable, bringing together differing voices across the collegiate University for the common good.

As Principal of Somerville College, I live and breathe Oxford. I have a deep, contemporary understanding of the University and its needs – along with the drive, dedication and deep experience of public life to serve as its Chancellor.

In an era of unprecedented challenges, when disinformation, divisive discourse and rapid technological change all impinge drastically on the higher education landscape, the University needs a Chancellor who can support the excellent Vice Chancellor navigate these. The University is founded on tolerance. At Somerville, I have relished the opportunity to lead a college where students, academics, and support staff flourish in an atmosphere of respect. The unique, but fragile, tutorial system is special, a model of dialectical teaching which fosters the free and enlightened discourse crucial to our liberal, democratic society. These are principles that I have defended and espoused in Government and around the world.

The higher education system is under great strain. Oxford and its Chancellor must be part of finding sustainable solutions for the sector. While we are more fortunate than most - thanks to our outstanding research, partnerships and strong endowments - we must raise more money if we are to fulfil our research and academic mission now and in the future.

Philanthropy is key for the growth and wellbeing of the University. I have direct experience of this at Somerville. I have successfully engaged our alumni, and supporters who are not Oxonians, recently securing an eight figure major gift from a philanthropist who champions our values and purpose.

Funding is needed to support our people and their work, and to open a pipeline for new talent and ideas - in every discipline including in the humanities where graduate scholarships have declined exponentially. I celebrate the Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, a great testament to the University's recognition that the humanities are the basis of civilisation.

Finance should never be a barrier to education. I regret that my own teachers told me this was not the place for me, a first-generation student. Education is transformational. Every young person with the academic potential should be given the confidence and opportunity to apply to Oxford, a place where they can belong. We have made huge strides at Somerville in widening participation, welcoming and supporting students wherever they come from. I am particularly proud of having catalysed our recognition as the first College of Sanctuary, subsequently followed by the University's own sanctuary status.

I share the Vice Chancellor's belief that we should think globally and act locally. Understanding that the University and city are mutually dependent, I co-founded the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership, bringing together the University, employers, business, education and community groups to create a more equal and sustainable region.

The collegiate system is complex but thanks to chairing the Conference of Colleges, I understand the dynamics. With complexity comes tension but in Oxford, as when Leader of the House of Lords, I have established a model of inclusive leadership and consensus-building around progressive values that has created significant impact in both spheres.

These are testing times in a fast-changing world. Oxford must retain and enhance its global, national and local reputation. What a joy for the Chancellor to be its strongest advocate! I would be an ambassador for the amazing researchers whose brilliant minds are addressing the world's greatest challenges and opportunities: in cyber security; antimicrobial resistance; AI; governance; energy; food security; the climate crisis and more – driving the economic growth which is crucial for national prosperity. And what a duty for that Chancellor to bring together disparate voices behind a common interest, to secure the University's academic and financial future, and safeguard all that we hold dear about Oxford.

I did not have the good fortune to come to Oxford University as a student, but having embraced its traditions I am passionate about its future possibilities – as a confident, forward-looking institution, based on world-beating research and exceptional people. It would be an honour to support the Vice Chancellor and entire University navigate the challenges ahead, and make sure we continue to be the standard bearer of brilliance and distinction in the future.