

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

20 February 2026

Paid appointment with Chatham House: Application under the Business Appointment Rules from Owen Jenkins CMG, former Director General for the Indo-Pacific, Middle East and North Africa at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

Thank you for submitting an application for advice under the Business Appointment Rules (the Rules) to the Civil Service Commission (the Commission) on behalf of **Owen Jenkins CMG**, formerly Director General for the Indo-Pacific, Middle East and North Africa at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The application is for a paid, part-time role as a **Research Director at Chatham House**. Further detail on the content of the application is in the Annex. The Commission's advice is required as Mr Jenkins is a former civil servant at SCS Pay Band 3. His last day of service was 30 November 2025.

The purpose of the Rules is to protect the integrity of the government. They aim to avoid any reasonable concerns that: a civil servant may be influenced in their official duties by the risk of reward; a civil servant may improperly exploit access to information; and an organisation may gain an improper influence through the employment of a civil servant.

The Commission's advice¹ is that the appointment should be made subject to the following conditions:

1. Privileged information – Mr Jenkins should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of himself or the persons or organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to him from his time in office.
2. Lobbying – For two years from his last day in office, until 30 November 2027, Mr Jenkins should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK government or its arm's length bodies on behalf of Chatham House (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients). He should also not use, directly or indirectly, his contacts in the government and/or civil service to influence policy, secure business/funding or otherwise unfairly advantage Chatham House (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and

¹ See [Advice under the Business Appointment Rules](#) for details applying to all advice issued by the Civil Service Commission.

clients).

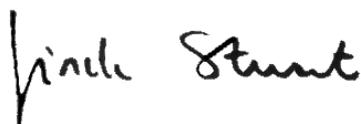
3. Bids and contracts – For two years from his last day in the civil service, until 30 November 2027, Mr Jenkins should not provide advice to Chatham House on a bid or contract relating to the UK government or its arm's length bodies.

Mr Jenkins and Chatham House confirmed to the Commission his intention to fully comply with the lobbying ban that applied to him. Chatham House also confirmed its understanding of, and adherence to the remaining conditions that apply to Mr Jenkins' role.

The Rules set out that civil servants must abide by the Commission's advice. It is Mr Jenkins' personal responsibility to manage the propriety of any appointment and to understand any other rules and regulations he may be subject to in parallel with the Commission's advice.

Mr Jenkins must seek advice if he proposes to extend or otherwise change his role with the organisation. Once this appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, the letter will be published on the Civil Service Commission's website.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gisela Stuart". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gisela Stuart

First Civil Service Commissioner

Annex A: The application

Applicant assessment

1. According to its website, Chatham House is an independent policy institute and a forum for debate and dialogue on how governments can develop secure, sustainable, prosperous, and just societies around the world. It states that it receives discretionary support from its membership and through philanthropic gifts, and funding for its research and other activities from governments, the private sector, and charitable foundations.
2. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) maintains a corporate membership with Chatham House, granting departmental staff access to a range of resources. These include attending events, utilising Chatham House's publications, and engaging with the organisation's research programmes and various decision-makers.
3. Mr Jenkins confirmed his role will not involve lobbying of government. He did state, however, that it will likely involve engagement with the FCDO and international divisions of other government departments in order to understand and analyse British foreign policy and ensure that the institution's research and analysis is robust and relevant.
4. Mr Jenkins will be one of four Research Directors collaborating closely with the Director of Chatham House. In this role, he will:
 - Guide the organisation's research and oversee three major regional programmes: Africa, Middle East and North Africa, and Asia-Pacific.
 - Provide intellectual direction for the programmes' research, reports, and convening, and line-manage the respective programme directors.
 - Manage the programmes' budgets and assist with fundraising.
 - As an Executive Leadership Team (ELT) member, lead on research priorities, publications and agreeing budgets. ELT members also ensure high standards of research and professional conduct.
5. Mr Jenkins stated he applied for an openly advertised position.
6. As a former Director General at the FCDO, Mr Jenkins was responsible for strategy and delivery across five geographical directorates and overseas networks. His oversight included managing significant operational and Official Development Assistance programme budgets for the 2024-25 financial year. He provided organisational leadership on the FCDO Board and Executive Committee, ensuring collective responsibility for the department's long-term strategy. He also led cross-civil service strategy on regions and government

priority delivery while conducting personal diplomacy with senior external contacts.

7. Mr Jenkins stated he was not responsible for any policy, regulatory or commercial decisions specific to Chatham House in his last two years in the civil service.

Correspondence with Chatham House

8. Chatham House confirmed its understanding of, and adherence to the Commission's advice and the conditions imposed on Mr Jenkins' appointment. The company confirmed his role will not constitute lobbying nor involvement in initiating engagement with government.

Departmental assessment

9. The FCDO stated that Mr Jenkins was not involved in decisions specific to Chatham House, commercial or otherwise. The department also stated that he would not have been exposed to privileged information that could be commercially valuable to Chatham House. The FCDO said Mr Jenkins did not have access to information regarding any competitors of the organisation.
10. The FCDO stated that Mr Jenkins attended a dinner discussion and had occasional contact with Chatham House at events it was present at. They noted that he had no involvement in grants or regulatory work affecting Chatham House.
11. The FCDO recommended the standard conditions.

CSC analysis

12. *Risk of reward.* As a former Director General at the FCDO, Mr Jenkins was responsible for the strategy and delivery of various departmental programmes and their operational budget. The FCDO also confirmed Mr Jenkins had some contact with Chatham House, though stated that he was not involved in any specific policy, regulatory, or contractual decisions affecting the organisation during his time in office. Furthermore, Mr Jenkins applied for the role via an advertised post. Therefore, the risk of the appointment being a reward for decisions made in office is limited.
13. *Access to information.* As a former Director General at the FCDO, Mr Jenkins would have access to high-level information on the department's long-term strategy. The FCDO stated that Mr Jenkins was not privy to any sensitive or commercially valuable information about competitors of Chatham House, nor

did it identify any specific information that could provide an unfair advantage to the organisation. However, the Commission noted that Mr Jenkins' seniority would have provided him with privileged insight into the FCDO's policy and strategic thinking. While Chatham House is an independent policy institute, it operates in a competitive environment, competing for funding, grants, and corporate memberships (including from the FCDO). As such, access to FCDO thinking may provide a strategic advantage over other research bodies. This risk is highlighted by Mr Jenkins' statement that his role will involve engagement with the FCDO to ensure the institution's research is 'robust and relevant'. However, the Commission considered that the risk associated with this privileged insight is broad, and therefore sufficiently mitigated by the standard condition preventing the use of privileged information.

14. *Improper influence.* As a former Director General, Mr Jenkins has a network of contacts and influence at the highest levels of government. Chatham House operates in a competitive environment for funding, and the FCDO maintains a corporate membership with the organisation. The Commission considered that using his senior contacts to tailor research to the FCDO's needs risks being viewed as cultivating a commercial relationship, and could be perceived as lobbying. However, the Rules allow for communication as a routine part of the role where such activity would not be improper. The lobbying ban serves to remind Mr Jenkins that while he may use formal channels, he must not use his privileged access or senior contacts to influence policy or secure funding outside of them. The Commission considered it significant that Mr Jenkins stated that his role will not involve lobbying, and that he and Chatham House confirmed to the Commission his intention to fully comply with the lobbying ban that applies to him.