

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

24 April 2026

Unpaid appointment with the University of Warwick: Application under the Business Appointment Rules from Sir Philip Barton GCMG OBE, former Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

The Civil Service Commission (the Commission) has considered an application for advice under the Business Appointment Rules (the Rules) from **Sir Philip Barton GCMG OBE**, formerly Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The application is for an unpaid, part-time role as a **Member of the Audit and Risk Committee** at the **University of Warwick**. Further detail on the content of the application is in the Annex. The Commission's advice is required as Sir Philip is a former civil servant at SCS Pay Band 4. His last day of service was 17 February 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 with the University of Warwick should be made subject to the following conditions:

1. Privileged information – Sir Philip 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 the civil service.
2. Lobbying – For two years from his last day in the civil service, until 17 February 2027, Sir Philip should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government or its arm's length bodies on behalf of the University of Warwick (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 the University of Warwick (including parent companies,

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

subsidiaries, partners and clients).

3. Bids and contracts – For two years from his last day in the civil service, until 17 February 2027, Sir Philip should not provide advice to the University of Warwick on a bid or contract relating to the UK government or its arm's length bodies.

The Rules set out that civil servants must abide by the Commission's advice. It is Sir Philip's 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.

Sir Philip 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,



Kate Owen
Chief Executive

Annex A: The application

Applicant assessment

1. The University of Warwick is a public research university.
2. As a Member of the Audit and Risk Committee, Sir Philip will be responsible for:
 - recommending the appointment and fees for both internal and external auditors, while monitoring their performance, independence, and effectiveness;
 - evaluating the University of Warwick's internal controls and risk management frameworks, including specific focuses on data protection, health and safety, and information security;
 - scrutinising annual financial statements and audit reports to ensure compliance with Office for Students requirements and accounting standards;
 - overseeing policies regarding fraud, whistleblowing, and significant losses, ensuring all major findings and irregularities are thoroughly investigated; and
 - ensuring that satisfactory arrangements are in place to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness across all operations.
3. Sir Philip confirmed his role will not involve contact with, or lobbying of, government.
4. As Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Sir Philip was:
 - responsible for overall leadership, management, and performance;
 - the department's Principal Accounting Officer accountable to Parliament; and
 - Head of the Diplomatic Service, leading all UK Ambassadors, High Commissioners, and diplomats globally.
5. Sir Philip stated he has not been responsible for regulatory, funding or any other decisions affecting the University of Warwick at any time in his last two years in the civil service.

The Commission's analysis

6. *Application level.* As a Level 1 application for an unpaid role, the Commission's analysis applies the principle that this category of appointment is generally recognised as posing a lower risk to government integrity.

7. *Risk of reward.* The role as a Member of the Audit and Risk Committee is unpaid. Sir Philip stated he had no involvement in policy development or contractual or commercial decisions affecting the University of Warwick while at the FCDO. Therefore, the risk that the offer was made as a reward for decisions made during his time in office is low.
8. *Access to information.* Sir Philip would have had access to a wide range of information from his former role. This risk is mitigated by the fact that over a year has passed since his last day in civil service, reducing the currency of any information he may still hold. The standard condition regarding privileged information covers any remaining risk.
9. *Improper influence.* As former Permanent Under-Secretary, Sir Philip would have a network of contacts in government that could provide an unfair advantage to the University of Warwick. He has stated there will be no contact with government in his proposed role. The risk of the perception of lobbying the government is mitigated by the standard conditions.
10. *Waiting period.* As an SCS4 official, Sir Philip is subject to a three month waiting period upon leaving government service in taking up any appointments. This is not applicable as it has been over a year since he left the civil service.