Chair's Commissions

In November 2014 the Political Studies Association of the United Kingdom announced its intention to establish two new Chair's Commissions as a strategic tool through which to undertake a fundamental review of how the PSA operates in terms of memberships groups, the educational journey, member services and a host of other issues. Traditional funding models for learned societies are changing, the higher education environment is increasingly complex and the services and support structures provided to members must evolve accordingly. The role of the Chair's Commissions is to examine the strategic future of the PSA in order to provide new options and new opportunities. This is based on the need to increase the visibility, professionalism and ambition of the PSA. The response to the call for nominations was tremendous and the Executive Committee would like to thank all those members of the profession who so generously offered to contribute their time, energy and experience. Such was the explosion of support for this initiative that the initial plans to have three-person commissions have now been developed so that each commission has up to fifteen members.

Table 1. Commission Members

Reaching-Out	Adding Depth
Dominic Byatt, Oxford University Press **[Chair]**	
Paul Tobin, University of York **[Vice Chair]**	Ailsa Henderson, Edinburgh University **[Chair]**
Claire Sutherland, Durham University **[Vice Chair]**	Ana Juncos, Bristol University **[Vice Chair]**
Paul Cairney, University of Stirling	James Sloam, Royal Holloway **[Vice Chair]**
Peter Shipston, Hill House School, Doncaster	Andrew Glencross, University of Stirling
Felicity Matthews, University of Sheffield	Rosie Sheridan, Sage
Phil Sooben, Deputy Chief Executive of the ESRC	Rob Dover, Loughborough University
Suzanne Derks-Van Damm, University of East Anglia	David Boucher, Cardiff University
Darren Lilleker, Bournemouth University	Alfred Moore, Cambridge University
Titus Alexander, Democracy Matters	Phil Catney, Keele University
Carl Gladwell, St Catherine's School, Guildford	Margaret Arnott, University of West of Scotland
Joanna McKay, Nottingham Trent	Jonathan Brunert, BBC
David Wendelken, Harrow School	Thomas Elston, Oxford University
Jess Garland, Sussex University	Samuel Powers, Sussex University
Richard Kelly, Manchester Grammar School	
James Ludley, Secretariat to the Commission	
	Danielle Bailey, Secretariat to the Commission
Lead & Link Trustee: Dr Rosie Campbell, Vice Chair of the PSA	

The commissions are broadly representative of the membership of the PSA in terms of their being members from a wide range of sub-disciplines, from 'new' and 'old' universities, from all stages of the academic career ladder and there are also several non-academic members whose role is to question basic assumptions, to underline the scale of the challenges ahead and to help commission members see opportunities where other learned societies might see threats. However, commission members have not been appointed to represent any one single community or organisation. The core focus is on the strategic future of the PSA and how it can best promote the study of politics in a changing world. Detailed position statements for each commission will now be distributed to commission members and a timetable of events and meetings will be arranged. These will run throughout 2015 and the hope is that both commissions will 'think big' when it comes to reflecting upon the past, present and future of the PSA. Significant resources in terms of finances and personnel have been put in place and the Vice Chair of the PSA, Rosie Campbell, will be responsible for liaising with the commissions on behalf of the Executive Committee. The Commissions will be active and visible over the next twelve months and everyone – members and non-members, teachers and students, political scientists and scholars from any other disciplines – should feel encouraged to engage with them.