HSU HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

Independent Governors Candidate information brochure 2026



A welcome message from the Chair

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for considering the role of Independent Governor (NED equivalent) at Health Sciences University (HSU). This is an exciting time to join the Board, at a pivotal stage in the University's growth and development. You will play a central role in the future direction of one of the UK's most dynamic specialist institutions.

HSU is a distinctive university operating at the intersection of education, clinical practice and research. Since Health Sciences University was established in 2024 following the merger of two long-standing health education institutions, we have grown our national and international footprint, developing our multi-campus offer in Bournemouth, London and Reading. Against a challenging sectoral backdrop, we have also built the partnerships, infrastructure and financial resilience needed for the next exciting phase of growth. We are particularly proud to have risen to 8th nationally for Health Professions in the latest Guardian University Guide, from 37th just two years ago.That's where you come in.

Our Board provides strategic guidance and independent oversight to an ambitious Executive Leadership Group. Its work is collective: governors bring a range of professional and lived experience, testing evidence, supporting good governance and holding the Executive to account. We are seeking two Independent Governors with complementary expertise: one with a strong finance and accountancy background, who may also be considered as a future Chair of the Finance & Performance Committee, and one with experience relevant to the work of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee.

You do not need previous higher education experience to make a valuable contribution. But you will need sound strategic judgement, curiosity, integrity and a commitment to HSU's mission and values, plus a good sense of humour and collective endeavour. If you're up for the challenge, we can't wait to meet you.

Warm regards

Jordan

Jordan Cummins
Chair of the Board of Governors

The opportunity at a glance

Appointments	Two Independent Governors
Committee opportunities	Finance & Performance Committee, including a potential future Chair; and Audit & Risk Assurance Committee
Priority expertise	Finance and accountancy; and audit, risk and assurance
Commitment	Approximately 12 to 16 days each year
Meetings	Usually in person in Bournemouth or London, with occasional remote meetings
Remuneration	Unremunerated; reasonable expenses reimbursed
Closing date	30 November 2026

About Health Sciences University

Health Sciences University was established in July 2024, evolving from AECC University College and strengthened through the integration of the University College of Osteopathy. The University was formally launched in October 2024 when Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal was installed as its inaugural Chancellor.

HSU is a specialist institution focused on health sciences education, research and clinical practice. Across Bournemouth, London and Reading, we offer more than 30 courses spanning allied health, sport and exercise sciences, psychology and mental health, chiropractic, osteopathy, and healthcare leadership and management. Our wider offer includes apprenticeships, accredited continuing professional development and masterclasses.

As a CQC-registered provider, HSU has advanced clinical infrastructure supporting more than 15 clinical services. These include rehabilitation, diagnostic and student-led training services delivered alongside NHS, private and third-sector partners. This integrated model connects education with practice and research, and helps us respond to the changing needs of the health and care workforce.

Our vision

To be a leading specialist health sciences university providing excellent education, clinical care and applied research, recognised nationally and internationally as a centre of excellence.







Our Mission

To create a healthier society through education, research and clinical care.

Our Values

Collaborative, Ambitious, Professional, Inclusive and Outstanding.

Our values describe not only what we seek to achieve, but how we work together. Governors are expected to reflect these values in Board discussion, decision-making and engagement with the University community.

Our strategic priorities

HSU is reviewing its future strategic direction. The current strategic aims provide the framework for the University's work:

- Provide an outstanding student experience and deliver excellent graduate outcomes.
- Support expansion and development of the health workforce through demand-led, high-quality education and training.
- Provide excellent patient-centred and multidisciplinary clinical, rehabilitation and diagnostic services.
- Become a first-choice partner within specialisms for research and innovation in the health sciences.
- Act as an anchor university for knowledge exchange and economic development within our communities.
- Create a diverse, inclusive and sustainable environment that supports our people and develops our activities, spaces and facilities.

The Board and the role of an Independent Governor

The Board of Governors is the University's governing body. Acting collectively, it has ultimate responsibility for the University's strategy, performance and sustainability. The Board determines strategic priorities, oversees institutional performance and delegates responsibility for operational delivery to the Vice-Chancellor.

Independent Governors are expected to:

- Contribute to the development of strategy and satisfy themselves that agreed priorities are being delivered.
- Scrutinise performance, financial plans, risk and the use of University resources.
- Hold the Executive to account through constructive, evidence-based challenge.
- Ensure the University meets its legal, constitutional and regulatory obligations.
- Exercise independent judgement while sharing collective responsibility for Board decisions.
- Act in the best interests of the University and uphold the Nolan Principles, HSU's governing documents and the CUC Higher Education Code of Governance.
- Build effective relationships with fellow governors, the Executive and the wider University community.
- Participate in induction, development, appraisal and Board effectiveness activity.

What we are looking for

We are seeking to appoint two Independent Governors. All Governors contribute collectively to the work of the Board, but candidates are invited to indicate which of the following opportunities most closely aligns with their skills and experience. Candidates may express an interest in either opportunity, or both.

Opportunity 1:

Independent Governor and potential future Chair of the Finance & Performance Committee

The Finance & Performance Committee provides oversight of the University's financial sustainability and performance, strategic planning, estates and capital investment, organisational performance and growth.

Candidates interested in this opportunity should be able to demonstrate experience in one or more of the following areas:

- Senior finance, accountancy or commercial leadership.
- Financial planning, budgeting, forecasting and long-term sustainability.
- Investment appraisal, business case evaluation and financial modelling.
- Commercial development, partnerships, income generation or organisational growth.
- Estates strategy, capital programmes, treasury management or pensions governance.
- Chairing senior-level discussions and enabling effective, evidence-based decision-making.

The successful candidate will provide strategic insight, help the Board understand the financial implications of decisions and offer constructive challenge on financial performance and long-term sustainability. One successful candidate may also be considered for appointment as Chair of the Committee.

Opportunity 2:

Independent Governor and member of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee

The Audit & Risk Assurance Committee supports the Board by providing oversight of risk management, internal control, governance, regulatory compliance and internal and external audit arrangements.

Candidates interested in this opportunity should be able to demonstrate experience in one or more of the following areas:

- Internal or external audit and assurance.
- Enterprise risk management, internal control or assurance frameworks.
- Governance, regulatory compliance or professional standards.
- Information governance, data protection or cyber security.
- Working in higher education, healthcare, the public sector or another highly regulated environment.

The successful candidate will help the Board understand key institutional risks, assess the assurance provided by management and external advisers, and support effective governance and control.

Person specification: essential criteria for all candidates

All candidates should be able to demonstrate:

- Senior-level experience in a complex organisation and confidence operating at strategic or Board level.
- An ability to absorb complex information, identify the key issues and ask clear, constructive questions.
- Independent judgement, sound decision-making and the confidence to challenge respectfully.
- Experience of contributing to strategy, governance, oversight or organisational decision-making.
- A collaborative approach and the ability to contribute beyond an individual area of expertise.
- High standards of integrity, openness and accountability.
- A commitment to HSU's charitable purpose, mission and values.

Who we hope to hear from

We want the Board to draw on a broad range of perspectives and experience. Applications are welcomed from candidates in the private, public and third sectors, and from those whose professional or lived experience may be less commonly represented in university governance.

Previous experience as a governor or trustee is helpful but is not essential. A structured induction and ongoing development will be provided. What matters most is the ability to think strategically, contribute independently and work constructively as part of a collective Board.

Time commitment and ways of working

Annual Commitment	Approximately 12 to 16 days, including preparation and attendance.
Board meetings	Normally four to six meetings each year.
Committee meetings	Normally three or four meetings each year, depending on committee membership.
Additional commitment	One successful candidate may also be considered for appointment as Chair of the Finance & Performance Committee. This would involve an additional time commitment, with Committee Chairs normally attending six to eight meetings each year.
Other activity	Briefings, development sessions, appraisal, occasional University events and engagement with the wider University community.
Location	Meetings are typically held in Bournemouth or London. Some meetings or briefings may be remote.
Term of office	Independent Governors are appointed for a three-year term and may be reappointed for a second term, in accordance with the University's Articles of Association.

Candidates should consider whether they can give the role sufficient time, including reading papers in advance and remaining available for occasional business between scheduled meetings.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

HSU is committed to equality of opportunity and inclusive working practices. We welcome applications from all backgrounds and want the Board to reflect the communities served by the University. Reasonable adjustments will be made throughout the recruitment process, and information can be provided in an alternative format on request. Reasonable travel expenses for attending an interview will be reimbursed.

How to apply

Please submit the following by 30 November 2026:

- A current CV setting out your career history, responsibilities and relevant achievements.
- A supporting statement of no more than two sides of A4. Please indicate whether you are applying in relation to the Finance & Performance opportunity, the Audit & Risk Assurance opportunity, or both. Your statement should address the prompts below.

Your supporting statement should explain:

- Why you are interested in joining HSU at this stage of its development.
- The skills and experience you would bring to the Board.
- How your experience aligns with your preferred committee opportunity, or both opportunities.
- An example of how you have provided strategic oversight, constructive challenge or assurance in a senior, Board, trustee or comparable setting.
- What attracts you to HSU's mission, values and charitable purpose.
- Details of two professional referees and a brief explanation of how they know you. Referees will not be contacted without prior consent.

Applications to	Emma Charles, University Secretary, c/o GovAdmin@hsu.ac.uk
Informal enquiries	Please contact Emma Charles at GovAdmin@hsu.ac.uk
Closing date	30 November 2026
Interviews	December 2026 / January 2027
Expected start	January / February 2027

All candidates will be asked to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest. Any declaration will be considered as part of the appointment process.

Selection process

Applications will be assessed against the published person specification. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview with an appointment panel. The Board of Governors will have final approval.

The appointment will be subject to the University's normal eligibility, due diligence and approval requirements.

Further information

https://www.hsu.ac.uk/about/our-approach/governance/











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HSU HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY