

Appointment of Independent Governors

Letter from **Craig McWilliam** Chair of the Governing Body

Thank you for your interest in the role of Independent Governor on the Governing Body of the University of Greenwich.

The University of Greenwich is a very special place and is rightly proud of its heritage in providing transformative experiences for students from all walks of life. We are equally proud of our high standards of applied research and enterprise which support economic growth, social impact and sustainability.

Our ambition is to become the best modern university in the UK by 2030. We will achieve this by focusing on student experience and success, investing in our knowledge exchange capability and building on our achievements in applied, impactful research.

The university has made great strides in recent years, including a Gold award in the 2023 Teaching Excellence Framework, the national measure of the extent to which universities deliver an excellent experience and outcomes for their students, and significantly improved performance in the Research Excellence Framework which assesses the quality of UK research in higher education. Despite the financial challenges facing the higher education sector, our history of strong financial performance has provided a solid foundation for achieving our ambitions.

In 2023/24 the university published its first economic and social impact report, setting out the difference we make to our local and national economies. Impressively, we contribute £768 million to the UK economy every year, through activities including student employment and spending. This clear and quantifiable impact is more important than ever, given the backdrop faced by universities.

In recent years, universities in the UK have faced challenges on several fronts. Inflationary pressures have created higher costs; international student recruitment has been impacted by changes to visa requirements and uncertainty over immigration policy;

global conflict has affected students and staff; and we have faced political uncertainty. I am proud that the university's values have guided our response to these difficult times, and it is more important than ever that we have a strong Governing Body to safeguard and guide Greenwich to achieve its ambitions.

We have ambitious plans for our three campuses in London and Kent. We are committed to building successful partnerships, providing sector leading facilities and attracting talent on a global scale.

We are particularly proud of our diverse student and staff body and our commitment to equality, equity and inclusion, which runs through everything that we do.

The Governing Body are the University's directors and trustees, responsible for setting the University's strategic direction, with the executive, and ensuring that our ambitious 2030 strategy to achieve 'Education without boundaries' is fulfilled.

We are seeking two exceptional individuals to join us as Independent Governors to support the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, Professor Jane Harrington, and her team by bringing their insights and experience to bear in helping us to achieve our strategic goals at a time of increasing challenge for the higher education sector.

This is a fantastic time to be joining the university as we continue our journey to becoming the best modern UK university. If you have a drive for excellence, ambition, professional credibility, and share our passion for higher education and its power to create opportunities and change lives for the better, I encourage you to apply for these roles.





Great things about the University of Greenwich

- We have more than 130 years of experience providing quality education.
- We have won five Queen's Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education. These include a prize for our Natural Resources Institute's ground-breaking work to find smart solutions for pest control in the developing world.
- Our Greenwich Campus is based on a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Among our Times Higher Education awards are prizes for Most Innovative Teacher and Outstanding Contribution to Innovation and Technology.
- Nobel Prize winner Professor Charles Kao, pioneer of fibre optics, was educated here.
- We are proud of the diversity of our international student body and our engagement in transnational education. In 2023/24, we had around 17,000 students studying in institutions outside the UK and our students came from 148 different countries.
- 56% of our new students are the first in their family to go to university. 57% of our new students come from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background. Over half of our new students come from some of the most deprived areas in the country
- #2 in London for delivery against UN Sustainable Development Goals (Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024)
- In 2018, we established the University of Greenwich International College (UGIC) in partnership with Oxford International. Located in Greenwich, UGIC is an embedded college which offers an exciting range of courses for international students leading to progression to the university.
- We've a 1st class environment rating from the People & Planet University League for our environmental and ethical performance.
- The university is well positioned for attracting students. QS Best Student Cities named London as the world's most student-friendly city in its 2024 rankings.
- We are constantly improving our buildings and facilities to give our students a better university experience. Recent changes include a new home for UGIC that provides more space for teaching and studying, an eco-friendly heating system on the Avery Hill Campus, and recent purchases of buildings at Medway from the University of Kent. We're developing Devonport House, adjacent to our Greenwich campus, as a new home for Greenwich Business School.
- Our academic staff includes recipients of the prestigious National Teaching Fellowship, which recognises and rewards individual excellence in teaching in higher education.
- We have won two Guardian University Awards for Research Impact, recognising our world-class teaching and research within the higher education sector.
- Our life-saving research includes projects to reduce loss of life during fire evacuations and develop ways to combat pests and diseases.
- Our alumni excel in every walk of life. They range from lawyer Shabina Begum, a campaigner for the empowerment and protection of women, to composer Guy Penwill, a member of a double Oscar-winning special effects team, and Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia and winner of the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize.

At a glance

32,500
UK-based
students

3
campuses
in London and Kent

**Over
half**
of our new students
come from some of the most
deprived areas in the country
(Office for Students access and participation data, 2023)

200⁺
undergraduate
courses

3,052
people
employed
in the local economy

Our **students**
come from
148
different countries

Achievements

1st
Class rating
by the People & Planet
University League
for our environmental
and ethical performance
(People & Planet University League 2023/24)

£768
million
in gross value
contributed to the UK
economy annually
(Economic and Social Impact Assessment Report, October 2023)



Greenwich graduates
are less likely to earn below £27,000
and more likely to earn between
£27,000
and
£32,999
compared to other graduates
(HESA 2022. Data reflects graduates from 2020/21)

1,400
research articles
published
in 2023
(Number of live publications deposited
in the Greenwich Academic Literature Archive)

About the University of Greenwich

Greenwich is one of the largest higher education providers in London, with an annual turnover (2023/24) of £329.5m, around 32,500 UK campus-based students plus a further ca.17,000 students in international partnerships, and around 3,000 staff, with activities across three campuses in Greenwich and Avery Hill (Eltham) in London and at Medway in Kent. The university's strategy to 2030, [This is Our Time](#) sets the vision of being the best modern university in the UK by 2030, with strategic priorities of Student Success, Inclusivity and Culture, Impactful Research and Knowledge Exchange and Connected and Sustainable Campuses. Six sub- and enabling strategies to supplement these core priorities cover [Student Success](#), [Research and Knowledge Exchange](#), [Partnerships](#), [People](#), [Estates](#) and [Digital](#). Our strategy to 2030 defines the University's mission as 'Education without boundaries', which means proactively supporting our students and staff to achieve their ambitions because of, rather than despite, their backgrounds. Underpinning our strategy is our strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in everything that we do.

Greenwich has made significant progress in achieving these objectives. In Student Success, we achieved Gold in the 2023 Teaching Excellence Framework, the national assessment run by the Office for Students (OfS) which measures the extent to which universities deliver an excellent experience and outcomes for their students. Only 22% of eligible institutions received such a rating, with Greenwich being one of six (out of 14) University Alliance institutions and one of three (out of 19) London universities to achieve Gold. In Impactful Research and Knowledge Exchange, the University performed strongly in REF2021, the national assessment of the quality of UK research in higher education, with a significant improvement in research quality and volume across all subject areas, and the number of staff who have significant responsibility for research doubling since the previous Research Excellence Framework (REF) exercise in 2014. Overall, Greenwich improved its ranking in the sector in REF2021 by 25 places based on grade point average, taking the university to 78th place nationally.

We are recognised for our achievements in sustainability. In June 2024 Greenwich was ranked 89th out of 2152 institutions in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, which measure performance against the UN Sustainable Development Goals, making us the fifth highest ranked UK modern institution and the only University Alliance institution in the top 100. In the latest People and Planet league table which ranks universities

by environmental and ethical performance, Greenwich has 'First Class' status and is placed 17th out of 149 universities in the UK and 5th placed in London.

Our progress in Inclusivity and Culture is reflected in a Stonewall Gold Award for our commitment to shaping an inclusive environment for LGBT+ people at work, and being placed 20th in Stonewall's list of top 100 employers in 2023. In May 2024 we were pleased to receive confirmation that Greenwich had received an institutional Bronze award under the Athena Swan charter, a global framework to support gender equality in Higher Education. Our strategy to 2030 sets the goal of eliminating the 'awarding gap' between BAME and white students and removing the gender pay gap.

Our [campuses](#) include Maritime Greenwich, centred on the Old Royal Naval College, a UNESCO World Heritage site, with a spectacular river-side views of Canary Wharf; Avery Hill (also in the Royal Borough of Greenwich), set in parkland in a suburban location; and Medway, formerly HMS Pembroke, another historic Royal Naval site near the Historic Naval Dockyard in Chatham, Kent. Notable recent investments include the award-winning Greenwich Learning and Simulation Centre at Avery Hill, providing excellent simulation-based education to our healthcare students, and the acquisition of buildings at Greenwich and Medway to provide capacity for growth in student numbers. The planned re-development of Devonport House, adjacent to the Greenwich campus, will provide further capacity and a flagship home for our Business School (scheduled for completion in 2027). The Medway campus, operated jointly with the University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church University, is an 'anchor' institution in its region and has seen major investment in student facilities.

The University has historically generated operating surpluses, enabling Greenwich to invest in improving facilities and services for teaching, student life and research. Our turnover grew from £210m in 2018/19 to £329.5m in 2023/24, reflecting strong growth in student numbers. In 2023/24 the group generated a surplus before other gains of £27m, equating to 8.2% of total income.





Leadership and Governance

The Governing Body is responsible for the strategic direction of the university, approving Greenwich's strategy and ensuring that it is fulfilled. The Governing Body currently comprises 15 Governors, including the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer; two Staff Governors; the President of the Students' Union; and 11 Independent Governors. The Governing Body has five committees dealing with Audit and Risk, Finance, People and Governance, Honorary Degrees, and Remuneration, and an Academic Council.

The Governing Body works closely with the University's executive, led by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, Professor Jane Harrington.

The most recent review of governance effectiveness by Halpin Partnership (2022) concluded that Greenwich's governance was "very good" with many areas of 'leading edge' practice", and that the University was fully compliant with the governance requirements of the Committee of University Chairs and the Office for Students (OfS). In a follow-up impact review in 2023, Halpin assessed that the University's governance had moved as a result of implementation of the review's recommendations to being "excellent with most areas being at leading edge". Another governance review is ongoing.

The Role and Commitments

We are seeking Independent Governors who will bring their strategic insight and experience to bear to enable the university to achieve its ambitions in a rapidly changing and challenging higher education environment. The challenges Greenwich faces, in common with other modern universities in London, include uncertainty over future government policy towards higher education funding; the freezing of Home tuition fees; the recent downturn in international student recruitment; competition from other UK HE providers; inflationary pressures; and pension scheme volatility.

Prospective Governors should have the innovative thinking, commercial acumen and freshness of insight that will enable Greenwich to address these challenges and thrive in a period of uncertainty and change.

Person specification

Essential

- Strong strategic insight, excellent commercial acumen and judgement and strong financial skills and understanding;
- A strategic perspective on complex issues;
- Executive-level experience and previous board experience in an executive or non-executive role;
- A real interest in or empathy with the higher education sector;
- Ability to commit the time required by the role and to attend most Governing Body and committee meetings where they are a member.

Desirable

- Candidates with backgrounds in central government/public policy, property, marketing, human resources or senior higher education leadership would be of particular interest given our assessment of the Governing Body's future skills needs.

All Governors are expected to demonstrate:

- An understanding of the importance of collective responsibility and confidentiality in the Governing Body's decision making.
- The ability to question intelligently and debate constructively.
- A commitment to the vision and mission of the university and to our values of being Inclusive, Collaborative and Impactful
- A real interest in the higher education sector and willingness to take an interest in the life of the university by attending events and engaging with a major strategic area.

The University is committed to maintaining and improving the diversity of the Governing Body. Candidates who help to ensure that the diversity of the Governing Body reflects the diverse makeup of the university would be particularly welcome

Time Commitment

The Governing Body normally has five scheduled business meetings and two half-day strategy sessions per academic year. Business meetings (typically 2 hours' duration) are normally held in the early evening at the University's campuses, with most taking place at the Greenwich campus and usually one meeting per year at Avery Hill and Medway. Two Governing Body meetings are preceded by one-hour Development Sessions to develop Governors' understanding of a particular area, and visits to two of the University's faculties are held over the course of the year. The 2024/25 meeting calendar is included in the [Handbook for Governors](#) (p.95).

Independent Governors are expected to serve on one of the Governing Body's major committees (Audit and Risk, Finance or People and Governance) and may be appointed to other committees. The University's Independent Governor Engagement Framework provides an opportunity for Independent Governors to develop their understanding of the University by informally linking Governors to a major strategic area.

Term

Independent Governors are appointed for an initial term of three years and may be re-appointed by the Governing Body for up to two further three-year terms. An Independent Governor who has served their maximum nine year period of office may be appointed to a further term of up to one year where that is in the best interests of the University.

Remuneration

Membership is unremunerated, although expenses reasonably incurred may be reclaimed, and the University funds relevant training and development activities. An annual review of the performance and development needs of Governors is conducted with the Chair.

Further details about the role are provided in the University's [Handbook for Governors](#), which provides extensive background information about the Governing Body and the University.

How to apply

Anderson Quigley is supporting the University of Greenwich with the search for new Governors.

Applicants should submit a full CV and a covering letter of application addressed to the Chair, Craig McWilliam, which addresses the competencies in the person specification and your interest in the University of Greenwich. Please include details of two referees in either your CV or covering letter, though please note that we will not approach your referees without your prior consent and only should you be shortlisted.

For further information, including information on how to apply, please visit <https://andersonquigley.com/job/aq3049/>. The closing date for applications is **Friday 14 February 2025**.

Informal enquiries regarding this opportunity are welcome and should be made to **Helene Usherwood**,

Senior Partner at Anderson Quigley at helene.usherwood@andersonquigley.com or **07719 322 669** or to **Elyse Turner Pearce**, Consultant at elyse.turner-pearce@andersonquigley.com or **07808 648 559**.

Anderson Quigley will conduct preliminary interviews, via Teams during **w/c Monday 03 March and 10 March 2025**.

The final selection process is expected to be held at the University of Greenwich in the week of 12 May 2025 and will be preceded by opportunities for shortlisted candidates to visit the university and meet the Chair of the Governing Body, the Vice-Chancellor and the University Secretary. Details will be updated on the Anderson Quigley website once confirmed.

Process and timing

The recruitment process will be overseen by the University's People and Governance Committee (PGC). Longlisting, shortlisting and final interviews will be conducted by a panel including the Chair of the Governing Body, the Vice-Chancellor, the chair and vice-chair of the PGC and the University Secretary (other Governors may also be co-opted to the process).

The appointment of new Independent Governors must be approved by the Governing Body. We would expect this to take place no later than the Governing Body's meeting on 24 June 2025. The appointments of the successful candidates will commence on or before 1 September 2025, with induction and onboarding commencing following approval by the Governing Body.



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