



# UCAS TRUSTEE DIGITAL & TECHNOLOGY

CANDIDATE PACK

UCAS



## LETTER FROM THE DEPUTY CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee on the UCAS Board. We are delighted that you are considering this influential role at what is both a challenging time for the UK higher education (HE) sector, but also one rich with opportunity.**

UCAS is an independent charity which provides the nation's shared undergraduate admissions service. Our mission is to ensure that 'all who could benefit from higher education, do'. Every year, more than one million people register with UCAS.com to begin exploring their higher education options, with more than half a million of those accepting a place at university or college by the end of the cycle in autumn.

We are embarking on an ambitious and exciting five-year digital transformation programme to support the delivery of our new strategy – **UCAS' Next Chapter**. We are therefore seeking to appoint a Trustee with a background and skills in digital and technology, with first-hand experience of large digital-led business transformations.

You will work with a diverse Board, comprising of people with leadership roles in higher and further education, including serving Vice-Chancellors and principals from higher education providers across the UK, as well as independent trustees who bring specialist experience such as digital, data and finance.

You will find UCAS to be a trusted and expert-led medium-sized charity, which combines a national and international reach with tangible impact on hundreds of thousands of students every year.

The two intertwined and inseparable ambitions at the heart of our new strategy see us focusing on supporting the sector to increase participation and student success, and on delivering increasing value to the sector in our role as the national admissions service. These ambitions guide everything we do.

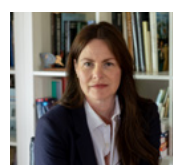
In the following pages you will find information about our work, values, and structure, as well as our strategic plans for the future. You will also find specific details of our requirements and information about how to apply for this unique role.

Please do get in touch if you would like further information.



**Professor James Miller FRSE**

University Principal and Vice Chancellor,  
University of the West of Scotland  
Deputy Chair, UCAS Board of Trustees



**Dr Jo Saxton CBE**

Chief Executive, UCAS



## ABOUT US

**UCAS (the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) is a mission-driven, independent charity that acts as the UK's shared undergraduate admissions service. Each year, UCAS supports over a million students to explore the life-changing opportunities higher education provides. At the heart of our work is a firm commitment to breaking down barriers to participation, ensuring that all who could benefit from higher education, do.**

UCAS has proudly served the UK higher education sector since 1993, delivering admissions services to over 350 universities and colleges. Since that point, UCAS has supported nearly 15 million students to gain an undergraduate place at one of the UK's universities and colleges.

Every year UCAS manages almost three million applications from over 750,000 people. UCAS serves a diverse range of students from all backgrounds with wide ranging motivations – each year, almost half of UCAS applicants are UK 18-year-olds and 1 in 5 are from outside of the UK.

UCAS generates an annual income of around £57m and employs 550 members of staff. To support the charity in realising its ambitions, UCAS has a trading subsidiary – UCAS Media Limited – which gift-aids profits back to the charity. This allows us to deliver initiatives such as the removal of the application fee for students in receipt of Free School Meals, directly benefiting over 40,000 students in its first year and which will be expanded next year to support care leavers.

The UK's higher education offering is world-class, and it is only right that all students, regardless of their background, can benefit from it.

Our research, however, highlights persistent equity gaps in Higher Education. Each year over 400,000 students registered with UCAS do not go on to apply – an issue that disproportionately affects disadvantaged and underserved groups. UCAS' new strategy – our Next Chapter – is focused

on using our reach, data and insights, and new technology to support the sector in increasing participation, whilst delivering additional value to the UK's higher education providers.

The first strand of our digital transformation programme, personalisation, is a strategic initiative focused on building a core capability to unify customer data across UCAS' systems. This will enable the delivery of personalised experiences across multiple channels with earlier and more effective interventions reducing the number of drop-offs and improving outcomes.

Alongside personalisation, two other priority programmes – digital resilience and admissions transformations – will deliver enhancements to ensure UCAS services remain secure, resilient and recoverable, and address legacy system constraints to enable greater agility, operational efficiencies and future service transformation.

The UCAS Board is therefore seeking to appoint a new trustee with significant experience of large-scale business led technology transformation, core systems modernisation and/or legacy systems migration, and a deep understanding of cyber prevention, detection and recovery. This is an exciting opportunity for an exceptional person to help ensure UCAS delivers for its beneficiaries and customers against its charitable objectives, and our vision that 'all who could benefit from higher education, do.'



## OUR CULTURE

**In recent years UCAS has invested in its workforce, increasing its capacity, capabilities and driving a culture of high performance to enable delivery of its ambitions.**

UCAS encourages diversity in its Board, Committees, leadership team, and colleagues alike, and takes its commitment to high performance, personal development, and personal wellbeing very seriously.

In its recent staff survey, 82% of UCAS colleagues would recommend it as a great place to work. Furthermore, 86% say they are proud to work for UCAS and 88% say managers genuinely care about their teams' wellbeing.

Although UCAS promotes flexibility in its ways of working, it places great emphasis on the quality and robustness of its environmental, social, and corporate governance framework, as befits an organisation that delivers a nationwide service.

UCAS is shaped by its values which underpin the new strategy:

Beneficiary and Customer Centricity, Accountability, Trust and Expertise.



## OUR GOVERNANCE

**UCAS is governed by a Board of Trustees made up of a balance of senior leaders from higher education backgrounds, as well as independent trustees.**

Our Board is supported by four committees and an advisory Council. The committees – Audit and Risk, Finance, Nominations, and People and Remuneration – are supported by co-opted committee members, who have been selected and appointed based on their specific skills, experience, and expertise.

UCAS Council's members are made up of our beneficiary classes and groups that represent their interests. The role of the UCAS Council is to provide advice and insight, especially in relation to undergraduate admissions, to the UCAS Board and provide feedback on the organisation's performance to inform our strategic direction.

UCAS Media Limited is governed by its own board which comprises of Trustees of the UCAS Board, Executive Directors and non-Executive Directors appointed based on their specific skills and expertise.

UCAS is led day to day by the Chief Executive and the rest of the Executive Team, supported by a wider Senior Leadership Group.



## THE ROLE

**The UCAS Board is seeking to appoint a trustee with a digital and technology skill set, who ideally has previous non-executive/trustee experience. The trustees provide strategic guidance and scrutiny and are accountable for ensuring that UCAS' strategy demonstrably meets its charitable objects and delivers public benefit to its beneficiaries. The Board of Trustees also has oversight of the commercial subsidiary UCAS Media, in line with charity law.**

UCAS is looking for an outstanding individual to make a significant contribution to the organisation and its beneficiaries. Those wishing to express an interest are encouraged to read the latest [annual report and accounts](#) and review some of our **publications** which shine a light on pertinent issues in education and skills.

## TERM AND COMMITMENT

**Trustees are appointed for a fixed term of up to four years, and this can be renewed for a further period of between one and four years as determined by the UCAS Board.**

The appointment is without remuneration, but reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

The Board is required to meet regularly to discharge its duties and currently meets with a mix of virtual and in-person meetings (primarily in Cheltenham or London) at least four times a year.

The successful candidate, if in possession of the requisite skills and experience, may also be asked to support one of UCAS' Committees and/or the UCAS Council to further support the contribution they are able to make to UCAS.

The total commitment would equate to between 10-15 days per annum.



## PERSON SPECIFICATION

**The Board is looking for a Trustee with experience of digital led business transformation, who has an understanding of the non-executive role and is driven to support UCAS' mission of seeing all who could benefit from higher education doing so.**

### KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

- ▶ First-hand experience of delivering large-scale digital led business transformation, including legacy systems migration and transformation (ideally in core systems modernisation via a phased modular rebuild approach).
- ▶ An understanding of the challenges, risks and trade-offs involved in end-to-end transformation delivery.
- ▶ Experience operating at a senior level within a commercial organisation that delivers API-driven products and services, with a strong understanding of platform-based business models, digital ecosystems, and technology-enabled value creation.
- ▶ Experience of harnessing digital innovation, including AI or emerging technologies, to improve operational efficiency and customer experience.
- ▶ Knowledge of personalisation and digital marketing technology implementation, ideally using customer data platform e.g. Salesforce DataCloud, and data analytics platform e.g. Databricks.
- ▶ Strong understanding of business performance, financial management, and risk oversight to ensure long-term sustainability and value for money.
- ▶ Proven ability to contribute to strategic direction and exercise sound, independent judgement within a complex organisation, ensuring effective governance accountability.
- ▶ Non-Executive Director experience, ideally, or experience as a senior leader working closely with Boards and an understanding of Board-level accountability for cyber risk, incident response and assurance, with the ability to both support and challenge a highly experienced team.
- ▶ Effective communicator with the ability to influence and build productive relationships across diverse and complex stakeholder groups.
- ▶ Awareness of the modern regulatory environment.
- ▶ Strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. Champions equality of opportunity.
- ▶ Acts ethically, with the highest levels of integrity, independent, and confidentiality.



## HOW TO APPLY

Anderson Quigley (AQ), a search and selection company, are assisting UCAS on this appointment.

Apply through: [andersonquigley.com/job/aq3489/](https://andersonquigley.com/job/aq3489/)

Applications should consist of:

- ▶ A full CV
- ▶ A letter of application (maximum two pages) outlining your motivation for applying and how you feel your skills and experience can add value to the Board in line with the Person Specification
- ▶ Details of two referees (we will not approach without your consent)

For an informal conversation about your application, please contact:

- ▶ Helene Usherwood, Senior Partner at Anderson Quigley on [helene.usherwood@andersonquigley.com](mailto:helene.usherwood@andersonquigley.com) or **+44(0)7719 322 669**
- ▶ Elyse Turner-Pearce, Consultant on [elyse.turner-pearce@andersonquigley.com](mailto:elyse.turner-pearce@andersonquigley.com) or **+44(0)7808 648 559**.

Closing date: **Friday 27 March 2026**.



## EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

**UCAS is committed to equality, and values diversity in its workforce, and on its Boards and committees.**

UCAS welcomes and encourages applications from all candidates, in line with the Equality Act 2010. It would particularly welcome expressions of interest from minority and under-represented groups, as it strives for better equality and diversity on its Boards and committees. All information you send UCAS will be kept secure, in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

## GDPR PERSONAL DATA NOTICE

According to GDPR guidelines, UCAS is only able to process your sensitive personal data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent.