HULL COLLEGE

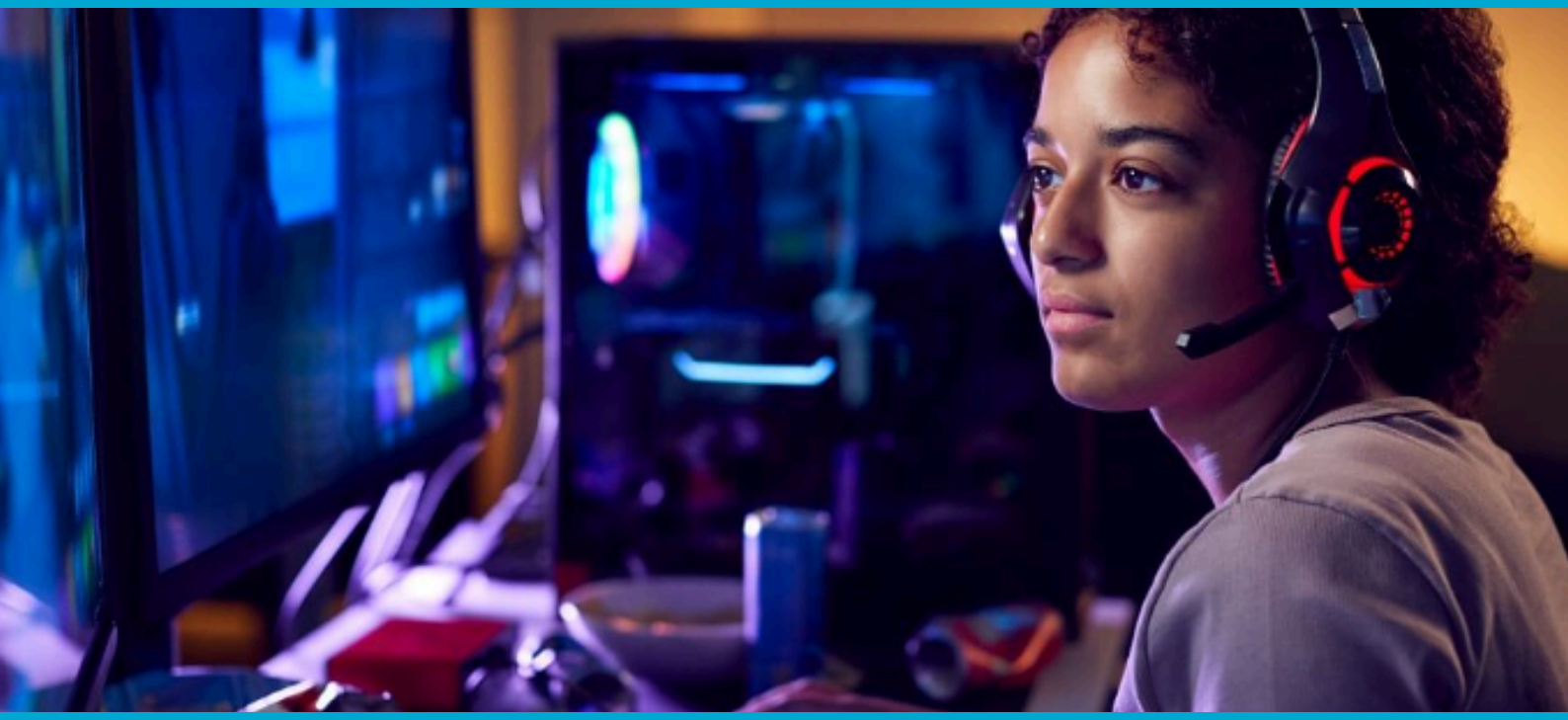
Candidate Brief for the Chair of Corporation



FEA EXECUTIVE SEARCH →


HULL
COLLEGE

Welcome



Dear colleague,

Chair of Corporation

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Chair of Corporation at Hull College. This is an exciting time to join us. Over recent years, Hull College has undergone an extraordinary transformation. We have faced significant challenges, made difficult decisions and worked tirelessly to rebuild confidence, strengthen our foundations and restore our place at the heart of the city. Today, we are an ambitious, award-winning college with a growing national reputation for innovation, inclusion and educational excellence. We are proud of how far we have come, but we are even more excited about where we are going.

Our strategic plan, Fearless by Design 2025-28, sets out a bold vision to become a world-class, sector-leading institution, inclusive by design, brilliant by standard and trusted to shape futures in Hull and beyond. It reflects our belief that education changes lives and that Hull College has a vital role to play in the social and economic future of our city and region.

Strong governance has been central to our journey, and it will be just as important to our future success. We are fortunate to have an excellent, committed and highly skilled Board of Governors who share our ambition and care deeply about the College, its people and the communities we serve.

We are now looking for an exceptional Chair who can build on these strong foundations, lead the Board with confidence and integrity, and help us realise the next chapter of our ambition.

For me, the relationship between the Chair, the Chief Executive and the Governance Professional is particularly important. I believe strongly in the value of an effective triumvirate, built on mutual trust, openness, professional respect and a shared commitment to doing what is right for the College. Each brings a distinct perspective and responsibility, but together we can create the conditions for excellent governance, constructive challenge and confident leadership.

I am looking for a Chair who will be a trusted critical friend, someone who is willing to challenge my thinking, offer a different perspective, provide support when it matters and work collaboratively without losing the independence that effective governance demands. Someone who understands the distinction between governance and executive leadership, and who can bring out the very best in an already excellent Board.

This is also an opportunity to be an ambassador for Hull College and for further education more widely. Our ambitions extend beyond our classrooms. We want to influence the future of skills, strengthen partnerships with employers and civic leaders, champion innovation and ensure that our learners have every opportunity to succeed.

Above all, we want someone who believes in the power of education and shares our commitment to the people of Hull. Someone with the courage to think differently, the judgement to make difficult decisions and the humility to recognise that great leadership is always a collective endeavour.

We are not looking for someone simply to oversee what we have achieved. We are looking for someone who will help us shape what comes next.

If you share our ambition, our values and our belief in what Hull College can become, we would be delighted to welcome your application.

We have appointed FE Associates to support us with this important appointment. Prior to submitting an application, interested parties are advised to arrange an initial conversation with our recruitment partner, by emailing Elle.Hurst@fea.co.uk, to discuss the role.

Dr Debra Gray CBE
Principal and Chief Executive
Hull College



ALL ABOUT HULL COLLEGE

WE DATE FROM 1861 AND HAVE SERVED THE CITY OF HULL FOR 162 YEARS. WE HAVE EDUCATED GENERATIONS OF HULL CITIZENS THROUGH 16 WARS, 27 PRIME MINISTERS, 1 BLITZ, 5 CITY WIDE FLOODS AND OVER 3000 NAKED BLUE PEOPLE.



It is a college with incredible heart, a fighting spirit and amazing people. We have been serving our city for generations, educating nearly two centuries of artists, builders, engineers, nurses, police officers, chefs, entrepreneurs and business owners.



For some of our younger students we are their first and best choice, for others we are their second chance at education and the creation of a new career direction, for some we are an opportunity to professionally upskill.... And for others we are their last chance at making a difference to their lives and the lives of their children.

Our youngest student is 3 months old in our nursery and the oldest is in their 70's. We educate new arrivals to the city fleeing war and oppression and those for whom Hull and East Riding have been home for generations.



We take all of these responsibilities seriously, for our students, for our communities, for our businesses and for our region.

Hull College is committed to building a truly inclusive workplace where everyone feels valued and supported.

External Governance Review

As detailed in the DfE's External Governance Reviews: Guide for FE College Corporations and Designated Institutions, it is a requirement that all Further Education Corporations undertake an External Governance Review every 3 years.

The External Board Review (EBR) for Hull College, conducted between December 2023 and May 2024, evaluated the Board's effectiveness across three core dimensions: Composition, Structure, and Interaction.

The review found that Hull College's governance is robust, with significant strengths in leadership quality and business acumen.

However, the Board needs to focus on enhancing ethnic diversity and student engagement to ensure it fully represents and serves the community.

Key recommendations include recruiting a student governor, improving the diversity of the Board and enhancing the scrutiny of risk management practices.

The overall conclusion is that Hull College's Board is highly effective, making a consistently positive impact on the College's strategic goals and outcomes.



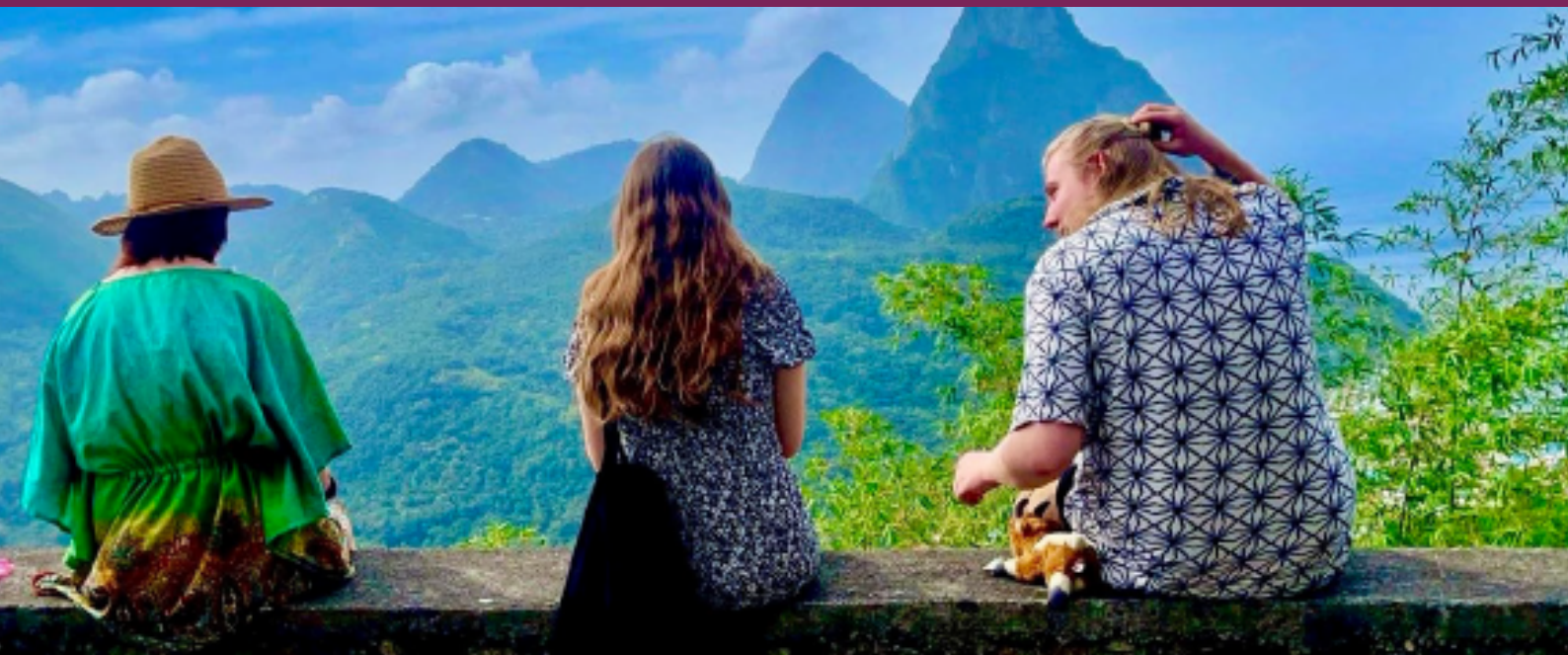












Role Description

Appointment

The Chair shall normally be elected by the Board at the last Corporation meeting of the relevant calendar year and the appointment shall be made for a period determined by the Corporation, in accordance with all statutory procedures, including the Instrument and Articles of Government and the Standing Orders.

Role Summary

The role of the governing body Chair is fundamental to its success. The Chair is responsible for providing effective leadership of the Corporation Board in the discharge of its duties, in accordance with the Instrument and Articles of Government and the periodic review of the educational character.

The Chair will provide the leadership to ensure that:

- the Corporation of the College (the 'Board') delivers highly effective governance for the College, fulfilling the highest standards of corporate governance at all times
- the Board functions as a unit and works closely with the Senior Executive Team to achieve the College's strategy and objectives
- accountability is maintained for the effective and efficient use of resources, and safeguarding the college students, staff, assets and estate
- the Board offers appropriate challenge and support to the Senior Executive Team
- as Chair, support, advice and guidance is provided to individual governors to assist their effective contributions to collective governance
- governors are supported as powerful ambassadors for the College in the wider community as well as to students and staff.

The Chair will develop strong working relationships with key stakeholders, including employers, local authorities and with Chairs of neighbouring colleges and other educational institutions.



Responsibilities

- To continue to develop the board of governors which has strategic oversight of the organisation.
- To ensure that the Board meets its external accountabilities and fulfils its duties in determining the College mission, setting and monitoring corporate objectives, articulating the College's vision, and maintaining and developing its ethos.
- To understand and focus on the main strategic issues bearing on the College, keeping always as a lodestone the College's responsiveness to the students, employers and communities it serves.
- To work with the Board and Executive in setting the educational character of the College; ensuring that students and the skills needs of the local economy are central to decision-making processes, with performance measures in place to drive up quality and standards, thereby enhancing the rates of retention and success.
- To strive to ensure that all discussions, decisions, judgements and actions are underpinned and informed by the 'seven principles of public life' established by the Nolan Committee.
- To serve as the principal ambassador for the College, bringing enthusiasm and energy in promoting the College's best interests and reputation, by representing the College at external meetings, presentations, conferences in local, regional and national settings.
- To lead the Board of the organisation in the effective and efficient fulfilment of its duties and responsibilities, as laid down in the Instrument & Articles of Government, the Financial Memorandum and the Audit Code of Practice.
- To provide strong leadership for the Board and to chair its meetings, ensuring that business is conducted efficiently, effectively and in a timely manner ensuring that matters are debated fully, so that all Governors have opportunities to engage and contribute.
- To ensure, in liaison with the Principal and the Director of Governance, that appropriate issues are brought before the Board.
- To ensure that the discussions and decisions of the Board are properly summarised and recorded in the minutes as well as following up actions to be taken.



Responsibilities (cont'd)

- To exercise any specific authority delegated by the Board and to act on the Board's behalf between meetings or, where necessary, in emergencies, in accordance with Standing Orders.
- To build a team of governors with the right skills for the successful oversight of the college.
- To develop a productive working relationship between the Chair, the Principal, the Director of Governance and the Senior Postholders, based on a full understanding of the role of the Board in the governance of the College and the difference between governance and management.
- To ensure that there is an active succession plan in place which fosters good governance and opportunities for individual governor development as laid out in the Code of Governance.
- To delegate effectively, to provide opportunities for governor development and making best use of governors' areas of expertise.
- To lead and to contribute to the annual self-assessment of governance.
- To ensure that the College's agreed procedures are followed in any matter of staff discipline which falls to the Board to determine.
- To discuss with the Director of Governance, where necessary, any matters relating to an individual Member's attendance, performance or conduct, and to agree on such action as should be taken.
- To be willing to attend any necessary and appropriate professional development, whenever practicable.
- To act as critical friend to the Principal in matters upon which they wish to confer and, where appropriate, to offer both general and specific support to the Principal where strategic, major or contentious issues are concerned.
- To lead the process of appointing, and setting the terms and conditions for, the Chief Executive/Principal/Accounting Officer and other designated senior postholders.
- To be responsible for the annual appraisal of the Principal and the Director of Governance.
- To promote good working relations between members and staff through regular dialogue and engagement in specific College activities such as Student or Staff Awards events.





Personal Qualities

The qualities required of the Chair of the Board are:

- a strong personal commitment to Further Education and the values, aims and objectives of the College
- be available to attend induction/training/events organised by the College and other bodies
- a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as Chair and member of the Board
- political awareness and an understanding of the economic, social and political dynamics of the region
- strategic vision and good, independent, judgement
- be willing and confident to challenge and engage others in debate
- honesty and integrity
- skills of networking, influencing and advocacy
- an understanding of the importance of and a commitment to equality and diversity
- respect for confidentiality
- financially astute.









How to Apply

We have retained FE Associates to support us in finding an outstanding individual to inspire excellent practice across our organisation. The application process is outlined below.

1

Initial Discussion

Prior to submitting an application, interested parties should arrange an initial conversation with our FE Associates lead consultant, by emailing **Elle.Hurst@fea.co.uk**, to discuss the role before the closing date.

2

Recorded First-Stage Teams Interview

Once it is agreed for you to proceed with an application, the lead consultant will schedule a first-stage interview via Teams with you which will take place before the closing date and will be recorded. Once this interview has been scheduled, you should submit your application.

3

Apply Online

Please visit **www.fea.co.uk/job/hull-chair** and complete the registration form to be able to submit your CV and supporting statement and access the online equality and diversity form at Step 2: Submitting your application.

4

Shortlisting and Invitation to Interview

After the closing time/date, our lead consultant will send all applications and recorded first-stage discussions to the College for shortlisting. Once the shortlist has been agreed, candidates will be notified by the lead consultant and shortlisted candidates will be invited to a formal interview/selection process with the College.

5

Safer Recruitment and Due Diligence Checks

Applicants are advised that, as part of the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education, colleges/training providers are advised to make arrangements for an online search as part of due diligence on shortlisted candidates. The searches are aimed to assist in identifying things said or done that may harm the organisation's reputation or make the candidate unsuitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Where a cause of concern arises from the online search, a risk assessment will determine whether the concern is of such a nature that it is appropriate to exclude a candidate from the process or whether a clarification discussion, before or during an interview, is needed.

Key Dates

Closing date for applications: 9am on Wednesday 13 January 2027.

Interviews to take place on Monday 1 February 2027.

HULL COLLEGE



Thank you for your interest

in joining Hull College's Governance Team

To discuss the role, contact FEA's lead consultant Elle.Hurst@fea.co.uk

www.hull-college.ac.uk

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