

Lead Consultant

Jo Johnston Director of Recruitment

The Organisation

As one of the leading college groups in the further education sector, with 15,000 students, five distinct college brands, nine campuses and nearly 1,000 staff, The Bedford College Group (TBCG) is extremely complex and diverse. At the time of appointing FE Associates to support them with the search for their next CEO, TBCG were also in the process of bringing Central Bedfordshire College into the group structure. TBCG has benefitted from very stable leadership of a number of years and the outgoing CEO had served for over 20 years, making him the longest serving CEO in the sector.

The Brief

Once appointed to this campaign, we worked very closely with the board-appointed committee to build a clear and precise picture of the board's requirements. We held an on-site workshop with 5 board members, the Director of HR and the Director of Governance to fully explore the group's current position, its ambitions for the future and the skills, experiences and qualities of their next CEO.

Given the scale and complexity of the organisation, it was clear that the appointment of an experienced CEO was the board's preference. In addition, the committee felt that it was important that the individual had a recognised profile as a leader, commanded respect from across the system and had a clear focus on excellent learner outcomes and financial strength.

The Selection Process

Armed with a clear sense of the group's requirements, our team conducted a targeted, search-based recruitment campaign to identify leaders from across the education system who could deliver the ambitions and strategic priorities of TBCG. Our search process focused on leaders from FE, HE and the wider education sector, systems leaders and education business leaders.

Following an initial attraction exercise, we were able to identify a list of potential candidates and conducted our own discussions with these individuals. Those candidates considered most appropriate were offered the opportunity to meet informally with the Chair and Vice Chair of the corporation, prior to submitting an application.

Chief Executive Officer
Competitive salary and benefits





Following the announcement of the retirement of our current CEO, The Bedford College Group is seeking a new CEO (starting on 1 January 2024) to lead us successfully into the future. This is a major sector appointment as the Group is one of England's largest further education colleges. The new CEO will need to bring their impeccable professional standing and experience to deliver our strategic priorities.

Located at the southern part of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, the Group's ambition is to be both a regional and national FE leader taking advantage of the substantial local growth opportunities available. In doing so, the Group will not only emphasise excellence in everything it does but remain a values-driven institution supporting its local communities and employers and with a strong commitment to quality, diversity and inclusion.

We have appointed FE Associates to support us with this crucial appointment. Prior to submitting an application, interested parties are advised to contact Jo.Johnston@fea.co.uk to discuss the role before the closing date.

Closing date:
9am Thursday 9 March 2023

Interview dates:
Monday 27 and Tuesday 28 March 2023

For more information visit www.fea.co.uk/tbcg-ceo/

We received seven applications and five of those applicants were shortlisted and invited to the two-day assessment and selection process which involved governors, stakeholders, college staff and students. Prior to interview, candidates also took part in a technical exercise on finance and risk, and the outcomes were presented to the corporation as part of the deliberation process.

The Outcome

Following the selection process, the corporation appointed Yiannis Koursis OBE to the role of Chief Executive Officer. Yiannis joined TBCG in November 2023 from Barnsley College.