



Department  
for Education



Oak  
National  
Academy

# Non-executive member of the Board

## Candidate information pack



# WELCOME



## Thank you for your interest in becoming a non-executive member of the Board of Oak National Academy. We are looking to recruit a minimum of six high calibre individuals to the Board.

A high-quality curriculum is hugely important, as it enables children from all backgrounds to receive the best education possible. Every child should benefit from a broad, ambitious, knowledge-rich curriculum, taught by highly skilled teachers. This is essential to the task of spreading opportunity and levelling up. It is crucial that every school has a well-designed and well-sequenced curriculum, which ensures children build knowledge in a broad range of subjects before going on to specialise after the age of 16, developing the skills for further education and training.

So, building on the success of Oak National Academy's work during the pandemic, the Government has established a new Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), working independently of government and collaboratively with the education sector. It will work with thousands of teachers to co-design, create and continually improve packages of optional, free, adaptable digital curriculum resources and video lessons.

These optional resources will align with the curriculum in England, helping teachers deliver a high-quality curriculum. This sector-led approach will draw on expertise and inputs from across the country, involving teachers, schools, trusts, subject associations, national centres of excellence and educational publishers. A collection of stretch materials will also be developed, aimed at pupils across the UK.

We are seeking to appoint high calibre Board members who can shape the direction of this new NDPB as it establishes itself in the sector, helping to achieve its objectives. Offering support and challenge to the leadership team, Board members will be central to supporting executive decision-making and providing strong strategic direction.

My Department is seeking applicants who have exceptional leadership skills and significant experience and expertise to contribute to Oak's successful pursuit of its mission: to improve pupil outcomes and close the disadvantage gap by supporting teachers to teach and enabling pupils to access a high-quality curriculum.

This is an exciting moment to shape the Board as, under the leadership of its new Chair, it works to establish the new NDPB as a high performing, well respected sector organisation that maintains a 'by teachers for teachers' approach, contributes to the growing understanding of curriculum best practice, is strategically aligned with, but operationally independent from, government, and delivers excellent value for money.

My Department is focused on equality of opportunity and I am committed to ensuring that public appointments better represent the views of the communities which they serve. I particularly encourage applicants from under-represented groups, those based outside London and the South East and applicants who have achieved success through non-traditional educational routes.

If you want to support Oak National Academy in delivering its aim to support schools and teachers deliver a high-quality curriculum, and you have the skills and experience we are seeking, I hope that you will apply.

If you wish to have an informal and confidential discussion about this appointment, please contact Josh Beattie, Oak National Academy Sponsorship Team Lead, at [josh.beattie@education.gov.uk](mailto:josh.beattie@education.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely,

**Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP**  
Secretary of State for Education



**Building on the Government's 2014 reforms to the National Curriculum, a new NDPB to empower teachers, embed best practice and enrich schools' approaches to curriculum has been established. The NDPB will exemplify high-quality curriculum design to support teachers across England with their lesson planning and teaching.**

Oak National Academy was created in April 2020 by a consortium of volunteers from the education sector as a rapid response to the coronavirus pandemic, which led to schools being closed to the majority of pupils. Since its launch, more than 40,000 online resources have been developed, with video lessons in a broad range of subjects from Reception up to Year 11. Specialist content for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is also available. Building on this success, we have established Oak as a new NDPB, working independently of government and collaboratively with the education sector.

Oak National Academy:

- Works with schools, teachers, and the wider education system across England to create, develop and support the use of free, optional, high-quality and knowledge-rich full curriculum packages that are available to teachers and pupils through a robust, accessible digital education platform.
- Provides a national contingency for remote education should it be needed in the event of disruption.
- Will oversee the sharing of new, improved resources, that will be created through partnerships with a diverse range of educational suppliers, selected through an open procurement process.
- Will provide a package of connected stretching materials for teachers and pupils through the same digital education platform that is available across the four nations and draws on content and expertise from all areas of the UK.
- Aims to establish itself as a high performing, well respected sector organisation that: maintains a 'by teachers for teachers' approach; contributes to the growing understanding of curriculum best practice; is strategically aligned with, but operationally independent from government; and delivers excellent value for money.

Curriculum design is complex, and we want Oak to share the very best practice so that teachers can draw inspiration from examples of evidence based, carefully sequenced curriculum design that can be used or adapted as required. This will help reduce workload so that teachers can concentrate on delivering lessons, creating new resources only when there is a reason to do so.



# ABOUT THE ROLE

**The Oak National Academy Board provides governance to the organisation. It provides leadership and direction to the executive, setting strategic aims and standards. It comprises at least five and not more than nine non-executive members, including the Chair. The Chief Executive and Operations Director are also Board members.**

Board members will collectively:

- Support the new NDPB to establish itself effectively and build a positive reputation across the education sector.
- Work together to develop a successful strategy which ensures that the NDPB has a positive impact and achieves its objectives as agreed with the Secretary of State.
- Monitor performance against agreed targets.
- Ensure that the Board operates within the limits of its authority, including in accordance with the code of conduct for Board members of public bodies and abiding to conditions relating to the use of public funds. This includes being politically impartial and consideration of conflicts of interest.
- Ensure that high standards of corporate governance are observed at all times.
- Participate in and/or chair committees of the Board, as required by the Chair.

The Chief Executive is responsible for developing and implementing the strategy and aims of the organisation, in close consultation with ministers, the Chair and the Board. They also serve as the Accounting Officer, being responsible to parliament for safeguarding public funds and ensuring value for money for the taxpayer.

In line with Oak National Academy's Articles of Association, the Secretary of State can appoint up to five Board members, including the Chair. The Board can co-opt up to an additional four board members; candidates must be approved by the Secretary of State.

There will be a minimum of four board meetings per year. Board meetings will be held flexibly either virtually or in person where this is beneficial. Meetings are held between normal working hours, Monday to Friday. Meeting length will vary according to the agenda but meetings are usually between 2-3 hours in duration.



# EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The Department for Education is focused on equality of opportunity and is committed to ensuring that public appointments better represent the views of the communities which they serve.

Applications from under-represented groups are encouraged, as well as those based outside London and the South-East and applicants who have achieved success through non-traditional educational routes.

In 2018 the Department launched a five year strategy to create a department where everyone is able to bring their whole self to work and where honesty, challenge and innovation are encouraged and valued. The Department is recognised by leading diversity organisations for promoting diversity in the workplace. The Department wants to ensure that any appointee to the Department's Arm's Length Bodies is committed to promoting diversity, in its broadest possible sense. This will include embedding a commitment to the principles of levelling up and championing opportunity for all across the organisation, helping to ensure that the organisation is one in which a genuinely diverse range of views can be expressed, without fear or favour.

## CHAMPIONING SOCIAL MOBILITY

The Department champions social mobility in all its policies and is committed to opening up opportunities for people from all backgrounds, all socio-economic classes and all regions of the UK. The Department is committed to embedding this principle into its recruitment and public appointments and expects all its leaders, including in Arm's Length Bodies, to take action to attract and retain staff from all backgrounds, while also supporting them to progress within their careers.

## DISABILITY CONFIDENT

The Department is a member of the Government's Disability Confident scheme and has achieved Disability Confident Leader status, signifying its role as a champion of the scheme. Along with other like-minded employers, the Department uses the Disability Confident symbol to show its commitment to good practice in employing people with a disability. The Department asks that all applicants complete an anonymised Diversity Monitoring Form used for gathering data only in order to ensure that it is recruiting from the widest possible pool. The information you provide will be held by the Public Appointments team and not shared with the selection panel.



# WHO WE'RE LOOKING FOR

We are aiming to recruit at least six high calibre individuals to join the Oak National Academy Board. Most importantly, we are looking for experienced, strategic, pragmatic and collaborative individuals with the skills necessary to support Oak to establish itself successfully within the education sector.

Board members need to be able to shape the strategic direction of the organisation and to provide relevant challenge and guidance to Oak's executive team. You will be expected to support Oak's aims and objectives and act as ambassadors for the organisation.

We will be recruiting at least one Board member into each of the following positions:

- Serving primary teacher
- Serving secondary teacher
- Curriculum expert

We are also looking for additional Board members with experience and skills in the following areas:

- Digital/technology
- Finance
- HR

Candidates should specify on their application the position(s) for which they wish to be considered and set out their relevant experience as part of their application.

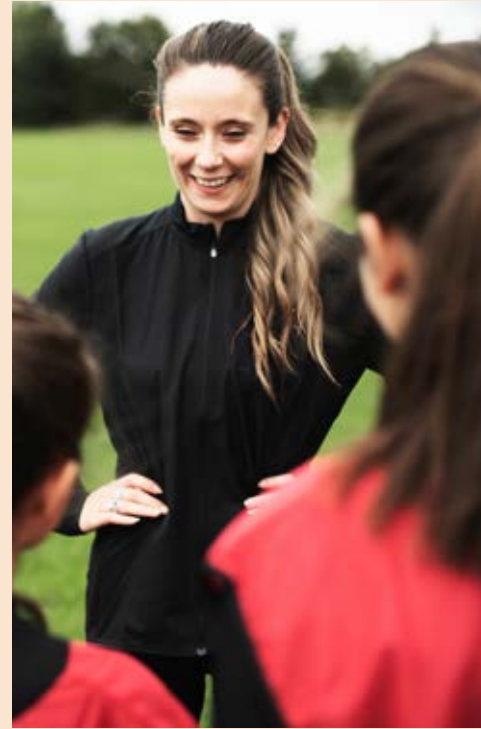
The successful candidates must be able to demonstrate the following **essential** criteria:

- The ability to think strategically, independently and in an evidence-based way.
- A commitment to the aims of Oak National Academy and its role in ensuring that pupils have access to a high-quality, knowledge-based curriculum.
- Exceptional communication skills to support the ability to build effective relationships at senior level and/or between organisations.
- Experience and knowledge in at least **one** of the following areas: experience of primary or secondary school leadership; experience of designing, implementing or advising on a knowledge-rich, evidence-based curriculum; experience of leading innovation and use of new technologies; senior leadership experience in finance or HR (not necessarily via a functional finance or HR role); working with government; risk and assurance.

*Please note that candidates will be expected to demonstrate relevant experience for each position for which they wish to be considered.*

In addition, the following is **desirable**:

- The ability to drive forward the work of an organisation at non-executive level, with a successful track record in the public, voluntary or private sectors of ensuring that strategic objectives are achieved.



# HOW TO APPLY

**Please submit your application by the date shown on the advert.**

Information on the timetable for this campaign, selection process and the Advisory Assessment Panel can be found on the Centre for Public Appointments website: [Search and apply – Apply for a public appointment – GOV.UK \(apply-for-public-appointment.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Please submit the following documents by email to: [Oak.PUBLICAPPOINTMENTS@education.gov.uk](mailto:Oak.PUBLICAPPOINTMENTS@education.gov.uk) and Stephanie Macwilliam at [stephanie.macwilliam@education.gov.uk](mailto:stephanie.macwilliam@education.gov.uk).

1. A candidate application form.
2. A completed evidence template - you will need to demonstrate clearly how you meet each of the essential criteria (max 300 words per criterion – if this is exceeded only the first 300 words will be considered).
3. A CV no more than two sides of A4 in Arial font 12.
4. A diversity monitoring form.

Please include 'Oak National Academy Board application' in the subject box and submit each document as a separate attachment.

The Department is happy to accept applications in alternative formats from applicants who, for reasons of disability, may find it difficult to fill in our standard form.

If you would like to have a chat with us about reasonable adjustments, please contact us at: [Oak.PUBLICAPPOINTMENTS@education.gov.uk](mailto:Oak.PUBLICAPPOINTMENTS@education.gov.uk)

Please note the following:

- The Department cannot accept applications submitted after the closing date.
- Applications will be assessed solely on the documentation provided; please refer to the advert and checklist above to ensure you have provided everything requested.
- Applications will be acknowledged upon receipt.
- The Department cannot provide feedback at application stage; feedback will only be given to candidates unsuccessful following interview.
- If a large number of applications is received, a preliminary sifting exercise will be conducted. You should be aware that in this situation, your application might not be considered in full by all the members of the panel.
- For successful candidates invited to interview, the cost of a standard travel ticket to the venue will be reimbursed. If the interview cannot be attended in person, a remote option will be available.



# TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

The initial appointment will be for a period of three years, commencing in November 2023.

The Secretary of State may recommend that the appointment be renewed at the end of the first period of office, subject to consistently good performance. There should therefore be no expectation of automatic reappointment. The maximum total term is 9 years.

## Time requirement

Board members are expected to commit no more than 20 days per annum to carrying out their duties. This time commitment is expected to be used flexibly, i.e. Board activities may amount to more than two days in one month and less in another.

## Remuneration

£300 per day for a maximum time commitment of 20 days per annum.

## Location

Remote with travel to London or other locations as required.

## Expenses

Reasonable expenses properly and necessarily incurred will be reimbursed in line with Oak National Academy's expenses policy.

## Pension

The posts are not pensionable.

## Conduct and Standards in Public Life

Members of the Board are expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct and are required to adhere to the code of conduct for Board members and demonstrate a sound understanding of and commitment to the principles of public life. The code of conduct and principles of public life can both be found here:

[Code of conduct for board members of public bodies – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/671222/code-of-conduct-for-board-members-of-public-bodies.pdf)

[The Seven Principles of Public Life – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/671222/seven-principles-of-public-life.pdf)

## Eligibility

These are non-executive public appointments by the Secretary of State for Education and are subject to routine security clearance.

## Disqualification for appointment

There are circumstances in which an individual will not be considered for appointment. They include:

- Anyone who has received a prison sentence or suspended sentence of three months or more in the last five years.
- Anyone who is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order.
- In certain circumstances, those who have had an earlier term of appointment to another public body terminated.
- Anyone who is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986.
- Anyone who has been removed from the trusteeship of a charity.

## Conflicts of interest

You should note particularly the requirement to declare any conflict of interest that arises in the course of Oak National Academy's business and the need to declare any relevant business interests, positions of authority or other connections with organisations relevant to the business of Oak National Academy. If the selection panel is concerned that such interests may affect the independence or perceived independence required for these roles, they will discuss their concerns with you if you are invited for interview.

## Political activity

In accordance with the recommendations of the Committee on Standards in Public Life (the Nolan Committee), candidates must declare any significant political activity in the past five years. This information will be used for monitoring purposes. If your application is successful, the information may be released into the public domain.



# PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

In 1995, the Committee on Standards in Public Life defined seven principles which should underpin the actions of all who serve the public in any way.

## **SELFLESSNESS**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

## **INTEGRITY**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

## **OBJECTIVITY**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

## **OPENNESS**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

## **HONESTY**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

## **LEADERSHIP**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.



## **HOW TO COMPLAIN**

Please contact the Department for Education's Free Speech team if you would like to make a complaint regarding your application at [fos.BILLTEAM@education.gov.uk](mailto:fos.BILLTEAM@education.gov.uk)

We will acknowledge your complaint upon receipt and respond within 15 working days.