



Department  
for Education



Oak  
National  
Academy

# Chief Executive of Oak National Academy

## Candidate information pack



# WELCOME



## Thank you for your interest in becoming the Chief Executive of Oak National Academy (Oak).

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 that 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.

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 National 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 an outstanding individual with senior leadership experience and education sector expertise, including in the design and delivery of an evidence-informed, knowledge-rich curriculum, and the benefits of this for pupils and teachers. This is a unique and exciting opportunity to ensure that the new NDPB achieves 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.

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 help 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 role, please contact Jenny Oldroyd/ Stuart Miller, Directors of Curriculum and General Qualifications Directorate ([Jobshare.OLDROYD-MILLER@education.gov.uk](mailto:Jobshare.OLDROYD-MILLER@education.gov.uk)).

Yours sincerely,

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



## Thank you for showing interest in the role of Chief Executive of Oak National Academy.

Oak was first established as a response to the pandemic by teachers and those working in the education sector in April 2020. It provided remote education for millions of pupils at a time of unprecedented need. It supported hundreds of thousands of teachers with flexible resources to ease their workload.

Truly made by teachers, for teachers, it was an impressive example of the resourcefulness and talent of the teaching profession, and a testament to what can be achieved when we come together for the good of young people.

Recognising its status as a national asset, in September 2022, Oak transitioned to become an independent public body. We are now an Arm's Length Body of the Department for Education, with a purpose to improve pupil outcomes and close the disadvantage gap by supporting teachers to teach, and pupils to access a high-quality curriculum.

We have a hugely talented team of teachers and educational professionals, technology and product experts, school support and operations specialists.

We're now looking for a permanent Chief Executive to lead the team, strategy and culture of the organisation into our next chapter.

This is a hugely exciting opportunity, not only to cement Oak's role as a vital support for schools, but to make a lasting difference to teachers and pupils across the country.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely,

**Sir Ian Bauckham CBE**  
Interim Chair, Oak National Academy

**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's Board is currently being recruited through an open competition.

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.

Oak's [framework agreement](#) sets out its strategic aims.



# ABOUT THE ROLE

**The Chief Executive of Oak National Academy is a full-time executive role providing leadership and management to Oak.**

The Chief Executive will work closely with the Board to ensure that Oak achieves its objective of advancing education for the public benefit, improving pupil outcomes and closing the disadvantage gap by supporting teachers to teach, enabling pupils to study and reducing teacher workload. The Chief Executive will oversee the performance and effectiveness of Oak and will be Accounting Officer for the organisation, responsible for fulfilling its duties in relation to managing public money.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Executive will be responsible for:

- The overall leadership, management and staffing of Oak, including the recruitment, development, and management of the senior team
- Alongside the Oak Board and Ministers, setting Oak's strategy and direction
- Serving as Oak's Accounting Officer. As Accounting Officer, the Chief Executive will be personally accountable to Parliament for safeguarding public funds and ensuring value for money for the taxpayer
- Maintaining an effective working relationship with the Chair and Board to help inform Oak's decision-making process, with consultation on all significant, strategic or potentially contentious issues as they arise. This will ensure that the organisation operates effectively and efficiently, within its remit, and meets its objectives for the education sector; and that all activities are conducted both lawfully and ethically. The Chief Executive will be an executive member of the Board
- Acting as the public face and senior spokesperson for the organisation, building and sustaining powerful networks across the education and technology sectors
- Setting and modelling the company's culture, values, and behaviour
- Ensuring the long term financial sustainability of the organisation and managing risk across the organisation



# EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

**The Department 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.**

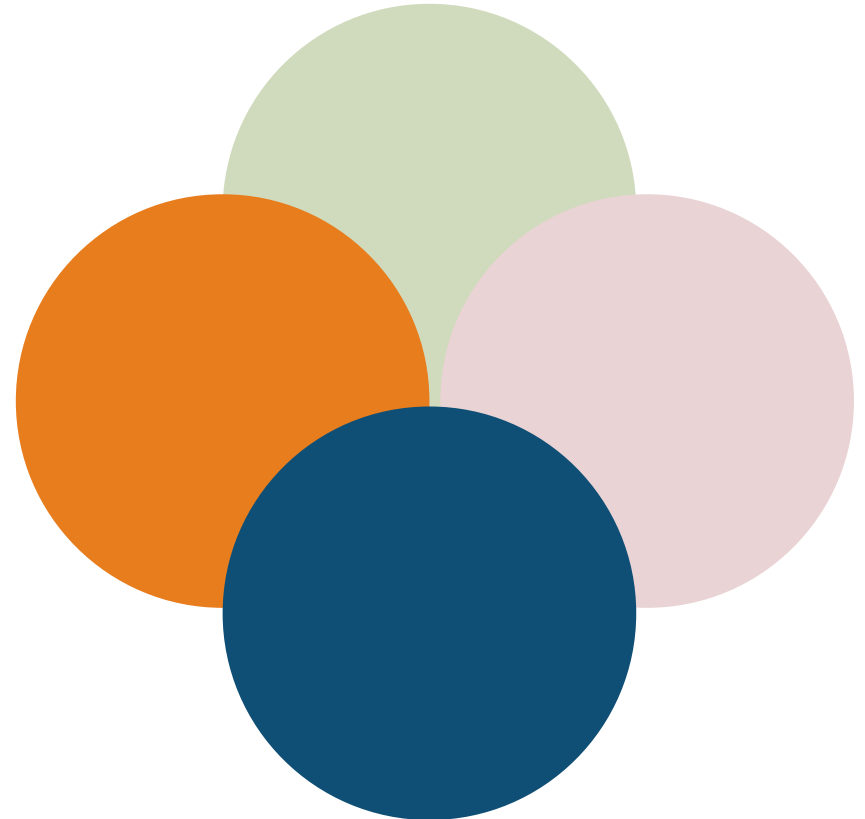
The Department for Education has a strong culture of inclusion and diversity and it wants to encourage applications from people with a diverse range of backgrounds and educational routes. In 2018 the Department launched a five year strategy to create a department where everyone is able to bring their 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 of 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 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

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

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

- Proven track record of operating successfully in a senior leadership role, including the delivery of major projects – demonstrating the ability to play a key role in the leadership of the English education system and to provide strong and inspirational leadership to Oak and to the wider education sector
- Education sector expertise, including in design and delivery of an evidence-informed, knowledge-rich curriculum, and the benefits of this for pupils and teachers
- The ability to navigate the political landscape skilfully, and a good understanding of the government's educational reform programme
- The ability to communicate effectively with, and command the respect and inspire the confidence of, Ministers, Parliament, education leaders and the Oak board and staff, as well as of students, teachers and parents; including the ability to represent Oak effectively in the media

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

- Experience of leading an organisation, its staff and culture
- Experience of successful leadership in the edtech sector
- Skilled in collecting, analysing and using qualitative and quantitative data to inform continuous improvement



# HOW TO APPLY

**The closing date for applications is: 11.00pm 6 April 2023.**

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 \(apply-for-public-appointment.service.gov.uk\)](#)

The panel will be chaired by the interim Chair of the Oak Board, who will make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the Board's behalf.

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 Chief Executive 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)

- 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 appointment will be on a full-time basis for a period of five years. The contract is expected to commence in January 2024. At the end of this term, an extension may be considered subject to satisfactory performance.

## Remuneration

The Chief Executive will receive a basic salary of up to £120,000 per annum.

Remuneration is taxable and subject to Class I National Insurance contributions.

The Chief Executive may also be eligible for a non-pensionable, non-consolidated, discretionary performance-related bonus for exceptional performance each year.

## Location

Oak does not have any designated office space so the Chief Executive will work remotely, but occasional travel to London and other locations will be required.

## Pension

The Chief Executive will have the opportunity to access the NEST pension scheme, with employer contributions of 11%.

## Annual Leave

Annual leave is 28 days per annum, rising by 1 day per year for each year of service to a maximum of 31 days. 3 days of annual leave is required to be used between Christmas and New Year.

## SICK LEAVE

Remuneration will be available for absences on sick leave. The paid entitlement to sick leave will be subject to length of service.

## STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE

The Chief Executive will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct and candidates will be asked to confirm that they have a sound understanding of and commitment to the principles of public life.

[The Seven Principles of Public Life – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

## DISQUALIFICATION FOR APPOINTMENT

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

- People who have received a prison sentence or suspended sentence of three months or more in the last five years
- People who are the subject of 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 trusteeship of a charity

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Candidates should note the requirement to declare any conflict of interest that arises in the course of Oak business and the need to declare any relevant business interests, positions of authority or other connections with organisations relevant to the business of Oak. If the selection panel is concerned that such interests may impact on the independence or perceived independence required for this role, they will discuss their concerns 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.