



Department
for Education

Social Work England

Chair Recruitment Information Pack

Welcome from the Secretary of State

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of Social Work England.

Social Work England is the specialist regulator of all social workers in England. Established by the Children and Social Work Act 2017, its key purpose is to protect the public and to raise standards across the social work profession, so that people receive the best possible support whenever they might need it in life.

We are seeking to appoint a Chair who will play a vital role in ensuring the quality of social work and social work standards. The chair will make a strong contribution to delivery of government key reforms for social work as set out in [Stable Homes Built on Love](#), and [Next Steps to put People at the heart of Care](#). For children's social care, these will bring changes to the standards which will underpin the Early Career Framework and the professional registration of a new workforce sector - Children's home staff. For adult social care, this will include ensuring social workers who play a crucial role in assessing and supporting people with multiple complex needs, including homelessness and mental ill health, are equipped to support those who will most benefit from social work support.

You will have a proven track record and excellent strategic thinking capability, as well as exceptional ability in leadership and driving positive change. Forging an effective working relationship with the Chief Executive and board members will be key. The role will engage in constructive and collaborative relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders, partners, and service users across the sector to support the work of the organisation.

This will be a challenging and demanding, yet exceptionally rewarding role. It will offer the successful candidate a unique and exciting opportunity to deliver future government policy for the social work profession and continue to develop Social Work England over the next 3 years. Your input will make a real and tangible contribution to raising standards in social work practice, to protecting the public and in turn enhance the status and standing of the social work profession.

Thank you once again for your interest in this role. If you have the skills and experience we are seeking, we look forward to hearing from you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gillian Keegan', with a long, sweeping tail extending to the right.

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

Introduction

Social Work England

Social Work England is a Non-Departmental Public Body of the Department for Education. The Secretary of State for Education is ultimately accountable to Parliament for Social Work England's expenditure and performance. Social Work England is overseen as a regulator by the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) who provide Parliament with annual reports on the performance of the regulators it oversees and challenges decisions about the fitness to practise of health and care professionals if they are insufficient to protect the public.

About the role

The Chair of Social Work England is appointed by the Prime Minister for a term of up to 3 years. The Chair is a part time non-executive role and integral to the success of Social Work England. The chair will work closely with the Chief Executive in delivering Social Work England's Corporate Strategy 2023-2026 and support the development of future regulatory policy and strategy. The chair will establish credibility with partners and stakeholders at all levels.

Role of the Chair

- You will: Work closely with Ministers and government officials to drive forward a clear strategic direction for Social Work England, taking it into the next phase of its critical work, providing advice to the Secretaries of State for Education and Health and Social Care on areas within Social Work England's remit, as and when requested.
- Support and challenge the Chief Executive on the effectiveness and performance of Social Work England, ensuring good governance, monitoring progress against objectives, ensuring the regulator is discharging its statutory duties in line with government policy, and continues to drive quality in social worker standards through a range of activities, in a way which minimises bureaucracy wherever possible.
- Provide outstanding leadership to Social Work England, to manage change effectively, ensuring the regulator maintains a committed and high performing workforce.
- Lead and manage the Social Work England board. Make recommendations to Ministers on the appointment of board members, ensuring that board membership reflects the diversity of the UK, and the social work profession, ensuring high standards of propriety and robust financial management across Social Work England.
- Build highly effective working relationships with the Secretaries of State for

Education and for Health and Social Care, and with other government departments, senior officials from the Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care, the Professional Standards Authority and other regulators. Working together on common areas of interest to promote Social Work England's role and its activities.

- Represent Social Work England in public debate and maintain its reputation as a trusted, knowledgeable and independent regulator, able to report independently on standards and regulation.
- Respond proactively to the direction of Government policy and strategy, including the Government's plans to reform children's and adult's social care set out in [Stable Homes Built on Love](#) and [Next Steps to put People at the Heart of Care](#).

The Chair will provide strategic direction and a clear focus to ensure compliance with Social Work England's core regulatory functions and statutory responsibilities, which include:

- maintaining an efficient fitness to practise system;
- improving standards for courses of initial education and training;
- promoting professional standards for social workers, including standards of proficiency, conduct and ethics, and Continuing Professional Development which promotes continuing fitness to practise;
- maintaining a register of social workers;
- maximising the benefit of workforce data to support practice improvement whilst maintaining a focus on the effective delivery of core regulatory functions, and
- working closely with other regulators, for example to address operational challenges

Criteria for the role.

We are looking for a chair with experience at a senior organisational level who is able to command respect across all sectors within Social Work England's remit and lead Social Work England through their next phase of delivery.

Applicants will be assessed against the following criteria.

In your application, as well as sharing your C.V. with us, you must demonstrate clearly how you meet each of the following essential requirements of the post (max 300 words per criteria – if this is exceeded only the first 300 words will be considered).

Essential criteria

- An understanding of current policy direction and strategy including the Government's plans to reform social care set out in [Stable Homes Built on Love](#) and [Next Steps to put People at the Heart of Care](#).
- Substantial experience of leading a high performing Board that sets strategic direction and provides robust challenge to the organisation.
- Experience of / an understanding of regulation or regulated environments.
- Ability to promote and oversee the highest standards of corporate governance.
- A track record of risk management; and managing and improving organisational performance at a strategic and board level.
- An excellent communicator, with strong influencing skills, the ability to challenge constructively and show diplomacy with key stakeholders at all levels, including with ministers.

Desirable criteria

- Sound judgement with the ability to think strategically, act decisively and resolve complex problems, whilst being sensitive to the wider context in which they are working.
- Understanding of the financial, structural, and people dimensions of leading an organisation.
- Experience or a good understanding of health, social work, social care or other relevant public services
- Understanding of the direction of government policy
- Ability to lead a multi-disciplinary team.
- Ability to deal with ambiguity and uncertainty.

How to apply

The closing date for applications is 1700 hrs Monday 4th September.

In order to apply you will need to [create an account](#) or [sign in](#) or create an account on the 'Apply for a public appointment' website.

Once you are logged into your account click on 'apply for this role' and follow the on screen instructions. To apply all candidates are required to provide

- A Curriculum Vitae (CV)

- A completed Application Form, demonstrating clearly how you meet each of the essential requirements of the post with a maximum of 300 words per criteria (if this is exceeded, only the first 300 words will be considered).
- A Diversity Monitoring Form
- Information relating to any outside interests or reputational issues.

Guidance on what to include in your CV/ application and tips for applying can be found in the corresponding sections in the candidate information pack and on the public appointments website. [Public appointments – Gov.UK](#)

- Candidate Application Form, you must demonstrate clearly how you meet each of the essential criteria. We will ask you to check and confirm your personal details to ensure your application is accurate.

You will also have the opportunity to make a reasonable adjustment request or apply under the disability confident scheme before you submit your application.

You will also be required to make a declaration related to standards in public life and ensuring public confidence in your application.

The Department will undertake due diligence checks on all applicants/ . Due diligence checks will include social media and internet searches. Information obtained through these checks will be considered as part of the selection process.

If you are unable to create an account and apply online please contact:
SWE.SPONSORTEAM@EDUCATION.GOV.UK

Applications must be received by 1700hrs on Monday 4th September 2023.

The Advisory Assessment Panel reserves the right to only consider applications that contain all the elements listed above and that arrive before the published deadline for applications.

Term of appointment

The Chair is appointed by the Secretaries of State for Education and Health. The terms and conditions of the post are determined by the Secretary of State for Education

Location: Social Work England's headquarters are based in Sheffield. It is anticipated that the Chair will be required to spend time both in London and Sheffield.

Time requirement: Up to 80 days per year (an additional 20 days are available by agreement should they be required).

Term: The appointment is based on a fixed term of 3 years commencing 1 March 2024

Remuneration: £450 per day

Expenses: Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed by Social Work England in line with its expenses policy.

Pension: As a statutory office holder, you are not entitled to any benefits or remuneration other than the fee set out above.

Other: An induction will be provided by the Department for Education

Diversity and equality of opportunity

The Department for Education is committed to making appointments on merit by fair and open process. Applications are particularly welcomed from people with disabilities, members of minority ethnic groups and women.

Eligibility

You cannot be considered for this role if:

- you are disqualified from acting as a company director (under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986);
- have an unspent conviction on your criminal record;
- your estate has been sequestrated in Scotland or you enter into a debt arrangement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 17) as the debtor or have, under Scots law, granted a trust deed for creditors;
- you are prohibited from teaching or from working with children;
- you have received a prison sentence or suspended sentence of three months or more in the last five years;
- you are subject to a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order;
- in certain circumstances, those who have had an earlier term of appointment to another public body terminated;
- those disqualified under S128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008; and
- those who have been removed from trusteeship of a charity.

When you apply, you should declare if:

- you are, or have been, bankrupt or you have made an arrangement with a creditor at any point, including the dates of this.
- you are subject to a current police investigation.

You must inform the sponsor department if, during the application process,

your circumstances change in respect of any of the above points.

When you apply you should also declare any relevant interests, highlighting any that you think may call into question your ability to properly discharge the responsibilities of the role you are applying for. You should also declare any other matters which may mean you may not be able to meet the requirements of the [Code of Conduct of Board Members](#) (see Outside interests and reputational issues section below)

If you need further advice, please contact publicappointments.applications@education.gov.uk.

Conflicts of interest

Applicants are required to declare any business interests, positions of authority or other connections with organisations that may be relevant to Social Work England. If you are invited for an interview, the selection panel will expect to discuss interests that may affect the independence or perceived independence required for this role.

Political activity

In accordance with the recommendations of the Committee on Standards in Public Life and the 'Governance Code on Public Appointments' (para9.2) candidates must declare any significant political activity in the past five years. This information will be used for monitoring purposes and the successful candidate's information in this regard may be released into the public domain.

Standards in public life

Members are expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct and are required to adhere to the code of conduct for board members. www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-conduct-for-board-members-of-public-bodies

Principles of public life

All applicants for public appointments are expected to demonstrate a commitment to, and an understanding of, the value and importance of the principles of public service. The seven principles of public life are:

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their

family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life

How to complain

Please contact the Department for Education's Public Appointments team if you would like to make a complaint regarding your application at PublicAppointments.DFE@education.gov.uk.

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

If you are not content with our response, please contact the Commissioner for Public Appointments at publicappointments@csc.gov.uk.

Further information on complaints can be found on the Commissioner for Public Appointment's website:

publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk.

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. We particularly encourage applicants from

underrepresented groups, 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 we 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. We are recognised by leading diversity organisations for promoting diversity in the workplace.

We want to ensure 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 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. We are committed to embedding this principle into our recruitment and public appointments and expect all our 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

We are a member of the Government's Disability Confident scheme and have achieved Disability Confident Leader status, signifying our role as champions of the scheme. We use the Disability Confident symbol, along with other like-minded employers, to show our commitment to good practice in employing people with a disability.

We ask that all applicants complete an anonymised Diversity Monitoring Form used for gathering data only in order to ensure departments are recruiting from the widest possible pool. The information you provide is held by the Public Appointments team and not shared with the selection panel.

