



Ministry
of Defence



**His Majesty's Commissioner,
Queen Victoria School, Dunblane**

Information Pack for applicant

Closing date: 23:59, 30 January 2025

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Completed applications by 30 January 2025

Indicative Timetable

Please note that these dates may be subject to change.

Closing date	30 January 2025
Short-listing meeting	05 February 2025
Candidate interviews	19 February 2025
Start/provisional date	01 May 2025

Role

Essential Criteria

Candidates must demonstrate all of the following essential criteria:

- Experience in a relevant field (legal/charity law for one of the appointments).
- Experience of critical thinking and demonstrating sound and independent judgement.
- The ability to think creatively.
- The ability to act independently but also make decisions as part of a collective body.
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Trusteeship.

Desirable Criteria

- A relevant professional qualification in your area of expertise.
- An understanding of the needs of children from a Service background.

Introduction from the Chair of His Majesty's Commissioners



Queen Victoria school is unique in the United Kingdom as the only MOD boarding school. As a Board of His Majesty's Commissioners (HMC), we are determined that the sons and daughters of British Service personnel with a Scottish connection receive the best possible education. We believe that education is fundamental to achieving success in life, and that is the aim of the school which we, as Commissioners, seek to support.

If you share these aims, then I would welcome your application as we have a need for people from a diverse range of backgrounds to ensure that the pupils who are our responsibility receive the best possible start in life. I look forward to hearing from you.

Role Description

We are looking to appoint two members/Trustees to join the Board of His Majesty's Commissioners (HMC) for Queen Victoria School (QVS), Dunblane. One of the appointments requires knowledge and experience in law, preferably charity law. All applications will be assessed on their merit and overall benefit to the Board.

This is an exciting opportunity to join a team of Commissioners in a friendly organisation making a difference to the lives of some of the most remarkable children. Support and mentoring can be provided to the successful candidate, particularly those who may be early in their career and/or lacking experience as a Board member.

Key responsibilities of HMC are:

- Strategy. Agreeing, on an annual basis, the strategic priorities for the School's improvement and development; approving appropriate plans and targets to meet these priorities; and ensuring that sufficient progress is made towards the achievement of these plans and targets.
- Education and Safeguarding. Ensuring that pupils receive the highest possible quality of education. They will focus on the key issues of raising standards of achievement, establishing high expectations, promoting effective teaching and learning and promoting and maintaining the military ethos of the School. Ensure that the School complies with all legislative requirements

concerning child protection and pastoral care and ensuring the highest possible standards of pastoral care for pupils, throughout their experience at the School.

- Performance. Reviewing the School Improvement Plan and its implementation. Monitoring performance and ensuring that the School responds promptly to any concerns from stakeholders, for example staff, parents or regulatory bodies. HMC will also approve and keep under review school policies, ensuring regulatory compliance as appropriate.
- Public Funds. Examining the budget set against the needs of the School and making recommendations to higher budgetary authority, as necessary. Also, to lend support to Business Cases for resources when required.
- Support to Staff. Providing support to the Head and staff in achieving the plans and targets set for the School. HMC will act as critical friend, providing the Head and staff with support, advice and information, drawing on their knowledge and experience and by providing the Army's Commander Home Command (CHC) with reports as to the standards being maintained at the School. HMC will encourage the involvement of parents and the military community in support of the School and assist in the resolution of parental complaints, hearing parental appeals against school exclusions, and monitoring the School complaints procedure.
- Staff Appointments. Keeping under review the management structure of the School, with particular input to selection of the School's Senior Leadership Team.
- The Charity Funds, known as the Queen Victoria School Funds (QVSF). HMC are Charity Trustees of the QVSF and discharge their duties as detailed in the HMC Governance Manual. HMC have a duty to authorise an Investment Policy and appoint an Investment Manager.
- Communication. Promoting the mission and activities of the School to a wider audience and acting as a channel for communication between the School, parents and the military community served by the School, and promoting ways of developing and improving that communication.
- Local Engagement. Developing and strengthening the School's role as a resource for learning and development within the local community, including the use of school facilities for extended learning as appropriate and relevant.
- Risk Management. Maintaining a risk register for the School.

The Role of Queen Victoria School (QVS)

QVS is a Ministry of Defence (MOD) funded non-academically selective, fully boarding, co-educational school with a capacity of 277 pupils from the age of 10/11 up to 18. It is part of the MOD family of schools administered by Defence Children Services (DCS), and is the only remaining MOD School in the UK. Although MOD Schools are Tri-Service, management and budgetary responsibility sits within the Army's Regional Command (RC), with DCS, on behalf of all three Services. The School operates under a Constitution and Royal Warrant, first established in the reign of His late Majesty King Edward the Seventh, to provide stability and continuity of education, within the Scottish education system, for the children of regular UK Armed Forces personnel who are Scottish, have served in Scotland or are/have been part of a Scottish Regiment. Individuals without a formal Scottish link may also apply.

Our Curriculum



We follow the Scottish Curriculum. At QVS, this consists of the Junior Phase of education, from P7-S3, followed by the Senior Phase from S4-S6. After sampling a large number of subjects in P7-S2, students choose seven subjects in S3-S4 and five subjects in S5-S6. This maximises flexibility for a small school such as QVS.

Attainment levels are very good. 65% of our S5 students gain three or more Highers, which is far above the national average. Our leaving statistics are excellent, with over 90% of our students leaving with three or more Highers or Advanced Highers. Advanced Highers are now offered in a wide range of subjects and our students have a high degree of success.

We offer a more vocational curriculum and have built strong links with Forth Valley College, based in Stirling.

Our course-choice and options booklets aim to meet the needs of all individuals.

Home from Home



We pay close attention to the particular needs of our pupils, who all have a Service background, through a focus on providing a safe, happy and stable environment in which they can live and learn. Pastoral care is of great importance to us.

The Boarding House system with its pastoral tutorial structure enables staff to provide a planned, yet relaxed, routine essential to the successful development of each pupil.

There are four Boarding Houses - Cunningham, Haig, Trenchard and Wavell. Each House has a House Team led by a Housemaster or Housemistress, a Deputy and an Assistant Housemaster or Housemistress, as well as a Housematron. Cunningham and Haig accommodate boys from S1-S6, Wavell accommodates girls from S1-S6 and Trenchard, which is the junior co-educational House, accommodates girls and boys from P7-S2 along with six senior girls from S5 and S6 who act as prefects and 'big sisters'.

Our pupils from P7-S3 live in rooms for two, three or four pupils and nearly all S4, S5 and S6 pupils have single rooms and the facility for private study.

Each House has its own recreational facilities and the pupils have access to the School's extensive facilities and playing fields.

Ceremonial



Our curriculum is further broadened by the ceremonial aspects of the school and we place high importance on Piping, Drumming and Dancing, as well as Drill.

There are four Parade weekends per annum – Trafalgar, Waterloo, Battle of Britain and Remembrance. The highlight of the year is the end of term Grand Day Parade in June.

Our Learning Environment



Set in nearly 50 acres of glorious Perthshire countryside, QVS boasts excellent academic and sporting facilities. Academically, we benefit from regular technical refreshes to our computing facilities, with all pupils having access to Chromebooks for use during lessons and/or prep to support their learning. Classrooms are furnished with interactive whiteboards, and are stimulating environments for learning. Our purpose-built library is constantly updated with fiction for all ages, as well as reference material to support the curriculum. It also has a computer suite.

We have enviable Technical Education, Science and Music facilities which include Apple Mac computers, Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided Manufacturing equipment, woodworking areas, and a whole host of musical instruments including pipes and drums. In addition, our modern language laboratory gives pupils the opportunity to grow linguistically.

Our sporting facilities include our own indoor swimming pool, state of the art multi-gym, squash and tennis courts, indoor sports hall, and extensive sports fields with running track and flood lit pitches.

The School Theatre seats up to 150 and is regularly used for productions, social functions and presentations. The chapel, built in 1910, as Scotland's memorial to Queen Victoria, is used daily for morning assemblies, Sunday services, and musical events.

QVS is proud of its Combined Cadet Force (CCF), which has sections of the Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force. There is a dedicated CCF building and shooting range to support pupils in developing personal discipline, leadership and responsibility.

With additional features of our ceremonial pipe, drum and Highland dancing corps and Duke of Edinburgh scheme facilities, there are countless opportunities for QVS pupils to learn and thrive.

Visit the QVS website [here](#).

The Role of the Board of HMC

The Schedule to the Royal Warrant vests governance of the School in the Board of HMC. Whilst routinely working in conjunction with RC/DCS, the Board is separately accountable to the Army's Commander Home Command (CHC), to whom the Secretary of State for Defence has delegated overall responsibility for QVS, for the performance of their duties. CHC is the Approving Authority for HMC appointments.

The Ministry of Defence



Who we are

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is made up of 18 organisations: Head Office, four Military Commands, the Defence Nuclear Organisation, UK Space Command and 11 Enabling Organisations.

Head Office provides the Department of State function and political and military strategic direction for the Department. There are four Military Commands that generate military capability and operate it in accordance with Defence policy objectives as directed by Head Office. The three individual service commands are an integral part of their respective Services and the information contained in the sections linked to below covers both the command and the service.

- Navy Command
- Army Command
- Air Command
- Strategic Command

The Defence Nuclear Organisation is a Top-level Budget that manages the portfolio of Defence nuclear programmes.

The UK Space Command is a Joint Command staffed from the Royal Navy, British Army, Royal Air Force, and the Civil Service. It officially formed on 1 April 2021.

MOD is a ministerial department, supported by [25 agencies and public bodies](#). Additional information can be found [here](#).

What we do

We work for a secure and prosperous United Kingdom with global reach and influence. We will protect our people, territories, values and interests at home and overseas, through strong armed forces and in partnership with allies, to ensure our security, support our national interests and safeguard our prosperity.

Terms and Conditions of Appointment

Appointment and tenure of office

Appointments are for the term set out in this advert, with the possibility of re-appointment for a further term, at the discretion of Ministers or the Approving Authority. Any re-appointment is subject to satisfactory annual appraisals of performance during the first term in the post. If re-appointed, the total time served in post will not exceed more than two terms or serve in any one post for more than ten years. The appointment will be for a period of five years. Your annual appraisal performance will be assessed by the Chair of HMC and at Ministerial/Approving Authority discretion. Likely start date 01 April 2024

Status of appointment

You will not become a member of the Civil Service. You will not be subject to the provisions of employment law.

Time commitment

HMC are expected to prepare for and attend three full Board meetings in February, June and October each year. Additional meetings may be held for urgent matters which do not fit with the set calendar of meetings. HMC may also be expected to join a sub-committee or working groups and be involved on an ad hoc basis on other matters, for example to take part in a recruitment panel; attend School events; and general HMC visits. Sub-committees generally meet in advance of the main meetings for a shorter duration. In total, HMC are expected to give up to 10 days of their time to QVS each year, which includes the School's end of term Grand Day in June.

Remuneration, allowances and abatement

There is no remuneration, but reasonable travel and subsistence expenses will be reimbursed in line with Departmental policy.

Pension and redundancy

This is an office holder appointment and does not attract any benefits under any Civil Service Pension Scheme. You will not be eligible for redundancy pay as you are not an employee. No other arrangements have been made for compensation upon termination because an office holder who is appointed for a limited duration would have no expectation of serving beyond that period.

Location

Meetings are usually held at QVS, but occasional travel to other locations may be required. Whilst in-person attendance at meetings is preferred, flexible/hybrid working is equally embraced and we can accommodate remote attendance as required.

Termination of Appointment

The successful candidate(s) may resign at any time by notice in writing to Commander Home Command (CHC), through Chair HMC. Subsequently, CHC can remove you from office if you fail to perform the duties required in line with the standards expected in public office.

Confidentiality

You will be subject to the provisions of the Official Secrets Act and required to exercise care in the use of official information acquired in the course of official duties, and not to disclose information which is held in confidence.

Application and Selection Process

To apply you will need to provide:

1	A Curriculum Vitae	which provides details of your education and qualifications, employment history, directorships, membership of professional bodies and details of any publications or awards
2	A supporting statement in the 'Expression of Interest Form'	explaining how you meet the eligibility criteria. Make sure you refer to the contents of the candidate information pack and provide specific examples which demonstrate proven and demonstrable expertise or ability. Please ensure your full name and the campaign reference number are clearly stated at the top of your CV and additional papers
3	Information relating to any outside interests or reputational issues	Further information below

4	Complete the Expression of Interest Form	including your supporting statement; contact details for two referees “(by providing their details you are giving consent for us to contact them should you be successful at the shortlisting stage)” and any conflict of interest
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The Advisory Assessment Panel (AAP) reserves the right to only consider applications that contain all of the elements listed above, and that arrive before the published deadline for applications.

Overview of the Application Process

How to Apply

Public appointments are made on merit following a fair and open competition process which is conducted in accordance with the Governance Code for Public Appointments. We will deal with your application as quickly as possible and will keep you informed at key stages. We aim to conclude the appointment process within three months of the deadline for applications – this is in accordance with the Governance Code.

The assessment process

1. Ministers are responsible and accountable to Parliament for the public appointments made within their department. As a result, they must be consulted at every stage of the appointments process.
2. An Advisory Assessment Panel (“Panel”) is appointed by Ministers or their delegated Approving Authority to assist them in their decision making. The role of the Panel is to decide, objectively, which candidates meet the eligibility criteria for the role.
3. At the shortlisting meeting the Panel will assess applications against the eligibility criteria and decide which candidates should be recommended for interview. Ministers or the Approving Authority will then be consulted on the Panel’s recommended shortlist.
4. Once the shortlist has been agreed by Ministers or the Approving Authority, you will be advised (by e-mail) whether you have been shortlisted. Those shortlisted will be invited to an interview.
5. The Panel will meet again to interview candidates and determine who is appointable to the role. The names of all appointable candidates are provided to Ministers or the Approving Authority. It is then for Ministers or the Approving Authority to determine merit and decide who should be appointed. In some circumstances, Ministers or the Approving Authority may choose not to appoint any candidates and re-run the competition.

6. The Panel's recommendations will be provided to Ministers or the Approving Authority in a report which details the assessment method used and the outcome of each interview. They will then be asked to agree on the candidate(s) who should be appointed.

7. Once the decision on the appointment has been made, interviewed candidates will be advised of the outcome of their application. Successful candidates will be issued with their Terms & Conditions and a letter of appointment should they agree to take up the position.

Eligibility

Most people can apply for a public appointment. We actively encourage applicants who can bring new talent and fresh perspectives to the services we all care about. Whatever your interests, background, and experience there is an opportunity for you to get involved.

You can be a public appointee alongside your job, as long as you have the time to do both roles. In general, you should have the right to work in the UK to be eligible to apply for a public appointment. There are a small number of specialist roles that are not open to non-British citizens. Any nationality requirements will be specified in the vacancy details

The Government expects all holders of public office to work to the highest personal and professional standards.

You cannot be considered for a public appointment 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.

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: Mr Nigel Cunningham, Secretary to the Board of HMC Commissioners, Tel: 0131 310 2902 or e-mail nigel.cunningham@modschools.org

Security Clearance and Disclosure Scotland checks

The successful candidate will be required to undertake the minimum Baseline Personnel Security Standard checks in line with the Civil Service guidelines. Additional Security Clearance may also be required for certain roles. This will be specified in the vacancy details. Further information on National Security Vetting can be found on the Gov.uk website [here](#).

Applicants must be registered with Disclosure Scotland, Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG), prior to taking up post. These checks, along with any other relevant safeguarding checks, will be arranged through the School. Further information about Disclosure Scotland can be found [here](#).

Equality & Diversity

The Ministry of Defence value and welcome diversity. The appointment will be governed by the Principle of Public Appointment based on merit with independent assessment and transparency of process. Successful candidate(s) will need to demonstrate that they meet the criteria for this appointment.

We encourage applications from talented individuals from all backgrounds and experience across the whole of the United Kingdom. Boards of public bodies/Advisory Committees are most effective when they reflect the diversity of views of the society they serve and this is an important part of the Government's levelling up agenda.

We collect data about applicants' characteristics and backgrounds, including information about people's educational and professional backgrounds, so that we can make sure we are attracting a broad range of people to these roles and that our selection processes are fair for everyone. Without this information, it makes it difficult to see if our outreach is working, if the application process is having an unfair impact on certain groups and whether changes are making a positive difference.

Disability Confident

We are a member of the Government's Disability Confident scheme. We use the Disability Confident scheme symbol, along with other like-minded employers, to show our commitment to good practice in employing people with a disability. The scheme helps recruit and retain disabled people. As part of implementing the scheme, we guarantee an interview for anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the role and who has asked that their application is considered under the scheme. Indicating that you wish your application to be considered under the scheme will in no way prejudice your application. By 'minimum criteria,' we mean that you must provide evidence which demonstrates that you meet the level of competence required under each of the essential criteria, as set out in the job-advert. When you apply you will have the opportunity to select if you would like your application considered under this scheme.

Reasonable Adjustments

Government departments are committed to making reasonable adjustments to make sure applicants with disabilities, physical or mental health conditions, or other needs are not substantially disadvantaged when applying for public appointments. This can include changing the recruitment process to enable people who wish to apply to do so.

Some examples of reasonable adjustments are:

- Ensuring that application forms are available in different or accessible formats.
- Making adaptations to interview locations.
- Allowing candidates to present their skills and experience in a different way.
- Giving detailed information on the selection / interview process in advance to allow candidates time to prepare themselves.
- Allowing support workers, for example sign language interpreters.
- Making provision for support animals to attend.

When you apply you will have the opportunity to request reasonable adjustments to the application process.

Principles of Public Life

Holders of public office are expected to adhere to and uphold the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#).

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 material 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.

Code of Conduct for Board Members

The Government expects all holders of public office to work to the highest personal and professional standards. In support of this, all non-executive board members of UK public bodies must abide by the principles set out in the [Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies](#). The Code sets out the standards expected from those who serve on the boards of UK public bodies and will form part of your terms and conditions of appointment.

Management of outside interests

Holders of public office are expected to adhere and uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life and the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies. Before you apply you should consider carefully:

- any outside interests that you may have, such as shares you may hold in a company providing services to government.
- any possible reputational issues arising from your past actions or public statements that you have made.
- and/or any political roles you hold or political campaigns you have supported which may call into question your ability to do the role you are applying for.

You will need to answer relevant questions in relation to these points when making an application. Many conflicts of interest can be satisfactorily resolved and declaring a potential conflict does not prevent you from being interviewed. If you are shortlisted for an interview, the panel will discuss any potential conflicts with you during that interview, including any proposals you may have to mitigate them and record that in their advice to Ministers or the Approving Authority.

Alongside your own declaration, we will conduct appropriate checks, as part of which we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This may include searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. The successful candidate(s) may be required to give up any conflicting interests and their other business and financial interests may be published in line with organisational policies.

Details of declared political activity will be published when the appointment is announced, as required by the Governance Code (political activity is not a bar to appointment but must be declared).

Application Feedback

We will notify you of the status of your application. We regret that we are only able to offer detailed feedback to candidates who have been unsuccessful at the interview stage.

How to complain

We aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you feel that you have a complaint about the way in which your application has been handled, please contact in the first instance Defence Business Service (DBS) Civilian Personnel Public Appointments Team DBSCivPers-ResPublicAppts@mod.gov.uk. If you are not completely satisfied with the response, please contact the MOD Public Appointments Team at headoffice-publicbodiesandappts@mod.gov.uk

We will acknowledge your complaint upon receipt and aim to provide a response within 15 working days.

Data protection

The Cabinet Office will use your data in line with their privacy policy.

The Ministry of Defence Public Appointments Supplementary Privacy Notice can be found [here](#).

Assessment Advisory Panel

Panel Chair

Mr Ian K Ritchie FRCSEd, Chair of His Majesty's Commissioners (HMC)

Representative of Organisation (Organisation Panel Member)

Commodore (Retired) Eric Fraser CBE RN, HMC

Departmental Official (Department Panel Member)

Ms Beverley Martin, Head Defence Children Services

Independent Panel Member

Mr Robin Pyper, Deputy Rector Dollar Academy

Advisory Assessment Panels (AAP) are chosen by Ministers or the Approving Authority to assist them in their decision-making. These include a departmental official and an independent member. For competitions recruiting non-executive members of a board (apart from the Chair), the panel will usually include a representative from the public body concerned.

AAPs perform a number of functions, including agreeing an assessment strategy with Ministers or the Approving Authority, undertaking sifting, carrying out interviews in line with the advertised criteria and deciding objectively who meets the published selection criteria for the role before recommending to ministers which candidates they find appointable. It is then for the Minister or the Approving Authority to decide who to appoint to the role.

Contact

For additional information regarding this role, please contact:

Mr Nigel Cunningham
School Business Manager & Secretary to the Board of HMC
Queen Victoria School
Perth Road
DUNBLANE
FK15 0JY

Tel: 0131 310 2902

E-mail: Nigel.Cunningham@modschoools.org

