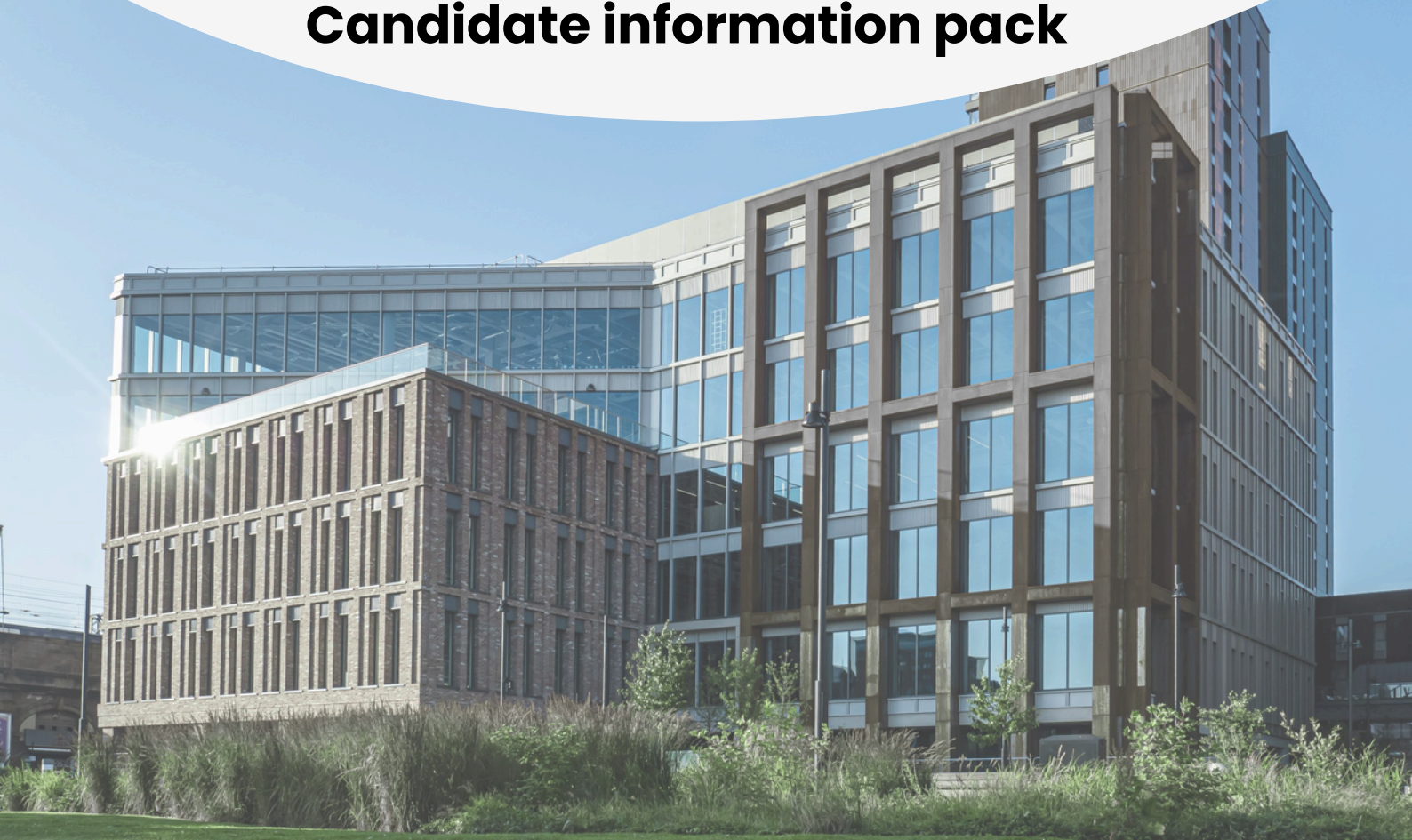




Department
for Education

Non-Executive Chair Student Loans Company

Candidate information pack



ABOUT THE SLC

The Student Loans Company (SLC) is a non-profit making government-owned organisation which was incorporated as a private limited company in 1989, and began operating in 1990. It administers loans and grants to students in colleges and universities in the UK and is entirely government-funded, which means that it also operates within the public sector arrangements for Arm's Length Bodies.

Playing a central role in supporting the higher education (HE) and further education (FE) sectors, the SLC makes timely and accurate payments of maintenance loans to learners and tuition fee loans to HE and FE providers across the UK. The SLC works together with the Department for Education (DfE, England) and the Devolved Governments in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland (the Shareholders). In addition to being subject to the provisions of the Companies Acts, the SLC is required to operate within the limits of a Framework Document between the company and the government.

The SLC has in the region of 10 million customers and manages a loan book worth over £260bn. In the 2023/24 academic cycle there were 1.45 million fulltime undergraduate applications received and processed; c.£25 billion paid in total to students. The SLC employs over 3,300 staff across four sites - Glasgow (Clyde Place and Hillington), Darlington, and Llandudno Junction.

Over recent years, the SLC has developed a successful track record of delivery for customers and government shareholders - meeting the majority of the formal targets set by Government, developing systems to implement new policy, and implementing a significant transformation programme called 'Evolve' which introduced industry standard customer management systems and the first step of developing a 'digital by default' service.

But there is still much to do to lead the technological transformation of the SLC, including replacing old technology, making the best use of customer data, and taking the SLC to the next stage of 'digital by default' services. This further transformation programme is designed to deliver more agile platforms for policy development for Government and reduce the cost to serve customers, thereby delivering value to shareholders and the taxpayer.

Further information about SLC can be found below:

- SLC website: [Student Loans Company](#)
- SLC [Framework Document](#)
- [Annual Report and Accounts 2023-4](#)
- SLC [Corporate Plan 2022-3 - 2024-5](#)



ABOUT THE ROLE

The Sponsor Department (DfE), acting on behalf of the government shareholders, has the responsibility for the selection process to identify appointable candidates for the appointment of the non-executive Chair of the SLC. Appointment decisions are made by Ministers.

The SLC consists of the following Board members:

- a non-executive Chair;
- the Chief Executive (who may not also hold the position of Chair);
- the Deputy Chief Executive;
- the Chief Finance Officer;
- up to eight Non-Executive Directors (NEDs); and
- the Company Secretary

The current group of six NEDs bring together a diverse range of experience including private sector financial services, technology applications, customer services, finance, and organisational development.

The Responsible Minister in DfE (currently the Minister for Skills) writes to the SLC's Chair annually on behalf of all four Shareholders setting out their strategic priorities for the year. This document will form the basis for the Chair's own objectives.

The Chair leads the Board in the delivery of its responsibilities to ensure a stable annual cycle of loans, grants and tuition fees, and to deliver the effective implementation of the SLC's portfolio of change work, including changes to the student finance system agreed with Shareholders. This includes servicing the rapidly growing loan book, informing students and sponsors about student finance, facilitating student finance applications, assessing applications, and paying grants and loans, with a focus on delivering these functions as efficiently as possible. Further digital transformation is essential to deliver these efficiencies and will be integral to the digital platform to deliver the Lifelong Loan Entitlement (LLE) which will transform the post-18 student finance system in England. Together, these will support Government aims to improve access to education and respond to sector needs.

The Chair ensures that the Board receives and evaluates regular and timely information on the SLC's performance against its aims, objectives, performance targets and plans, ensuring appropriate action is in hand to address any areas of underperformance and manage risks appropriately.

Leadership of the SLC Board also includes: leading the SLC and Board strategy; ensuring the balance of skills of the Board members is appropriate; ensuring high standards of corporate governance at all times; performance management of individual SLC Non-Executive Directors; supporting the Chief Executive to cascade Shareholder priorities through the SLC; objective setting and performance management for the CEO; and regular meetings with the Responsible Minister to review SLC performance.

The Chair of the SLC Board has the usual fiduciary duties associated with a director of a UK Company and is also answerable to Ministers. This relationship is one of the primary formal communication channels between SLC and its sponsor department. Further information on the Chair's responsibilities can be found in the SLC [Framework Document](#)

PERSON SPECIFICATION

We are looking for an exceptional candidate who has a track record of leadership at a senior Board level and the credibility and authority to engage with senior officials and Ministers.

Throughout the application and interview stage, candidates will need to demonstrate how they meet all the following essential criteria:

Essential criteria:

- **Leadership:** Demonstrable strategic leadership experience at board level in a complex, evolving, and high-impact environment, including the ability to shape and communicate a compelling strategic vision and advance organisational priorities, with awareness of the broader social, economic and policy context.
- **Judgement:** Evidenced ability to guide effective decision-making at a senior level, particularly in relation to the management of finance and risk. Ability to manage complexity to provide constructive scrutiny and make informed strategic, financial, and business decisions.
- **Communication:** Outstanding communication and interpersonal skills to build inclusive, respectful, and proactive relationships with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders with diverse interests, and offer support, constructive challenge, and assurance.
- **Knowledge and Experience:** A background in the private, public, or voluntary sectors with a track record of delivery on digital transformation, performance, and financial management. An understanding of the government environment and the role of the devolved governments is required, alongside an understanding of the UK financial services context.

Desirable criteria:

- Understanding of effective governance in a regulated public sector environment ideally through experience with HM Government or the wider public sector.
- An awareness of the challenges and opportunities facing the higher education sector including funding and financial sustainability.
- Public sector board level experience (e.g. on the board of a Government Department, Arm's Length Body, or equivalent)



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Board Meetings

The non-executive Chair will be required to lead SLC Board meetings (8 per year), and will also attend some Board Sub-Committee meetings and other ad-hoc meetings as required to fulfil the role. Half of the Board meetings and most committee meetings are held virtually via Teams, with the other half being held face to face, generally Glasgow or Darlington. The Chair will be expected to travel to other meetings from time to time as necessary.

Diversity and Inclusion

As part of the UK Government Opportunity Mission, we are committed to breaking down barriers to opportunity to enable pathways through further and higher education and into employment. The Student Loans Company's enduring purpose is to enable opportunity through the delivery of student finance, supporting millions of people from all backgrounds to access Higher and Further Education.

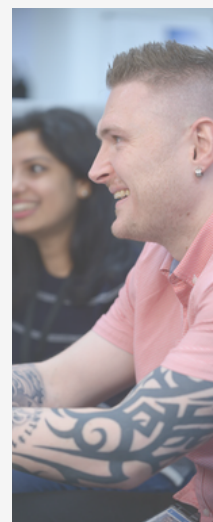
The Department for Education is currently working with the SLC to develop a new faith-sensitive student finance product, known as Alternative Student Finance (ASF). The product will enable access to student finance for those who feel unable to use existing student finance products due to their faith. The Alternative Student Finance product will be compatible with Islamic finance principles and include an alternative to interest. It will operate using the Islamic finance principle of Takaful, to provide a form of group based mutual support. Alternative Student Finance is being designed to ensure that recipients do not suffer any detriment nor experience any advantage, compared to conventional loan borrowers, through choosing to access support via this route.

Boards of public bodies are most effective when they reflect the diversity of views of the society they serve. A diverse Board which is reflective of the range of customers that the SLC serves will help us to ensure that student finance services are accessible and meet the needs of all students and prospective students. We encourage applications from talented individuals from all backgrounds and across the whole of the United Kingdom. We are seeking to run an inclusive selection process in which all applicants have the opportunity to showcase what they could bring to the SLC.

Data collection

As part of the application process, 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.

When you submit your application, your responses are collected by the Cabinet Office and the government department(s) managing your application. The data is used to produce management information about the diversity of applicants. You can select "prefer not to say" to any question you do not wish to answer. **The information you provide will not be seen by the Advisory Assessment Panel who review applications against the advertised criteria and conduct interviews.**



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 essential criteria for the role, set out in the advert, 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.

Due Diligence Checks

Due diligence checks, including referencing, will be conducted on all applicants at the sift stage of the selection process.

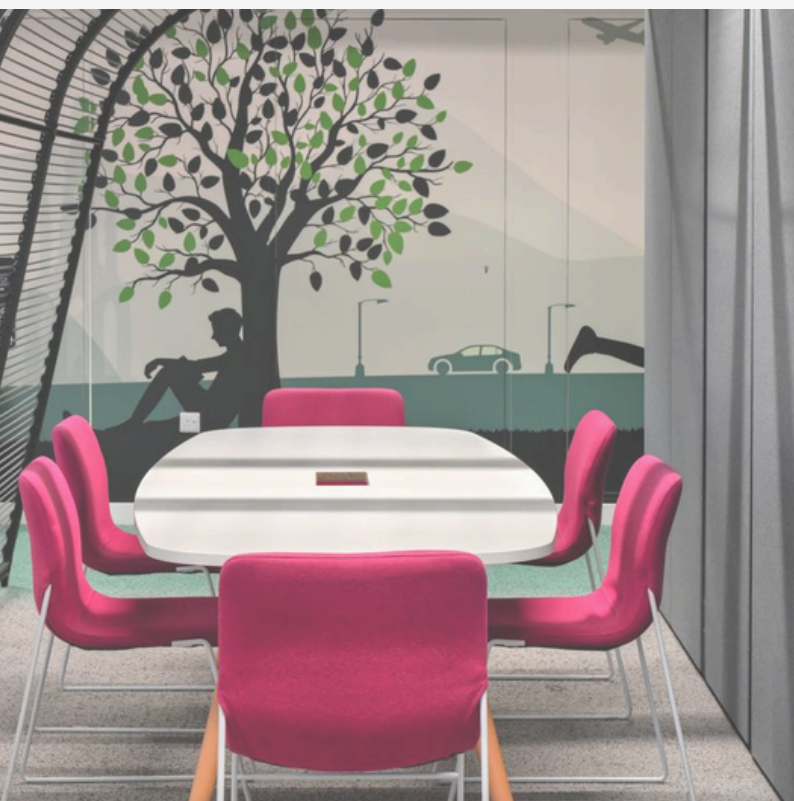
Further Information

If you wish to discuss the role please contact: SLC.SPONSORSHIP@education.gov.uk

We will be holding two webinars hosted by the current SLC Chair, Sir Peter Lauener, on 2 October 2025 at 12-1pm and 7 October 2025 at 6-7pm, to share more information about the role and answer your questions. If you would like to attend this webinar please register here:

[2nd October](#)

[7th October](#)



HOW TO APPLY



In order to apply you will need to [create an account](#) or [sign in](#). 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 supporting statement (2 pages)
- equality information
- information relating to any prejudicial interests or reputational issues

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

Please note the following.

- **We cannot accept applications submitted after the closing date.**
- **Applications will be assessed on the documentation provided. Please refer to the advert and checklist to ensure you have provided the necessary documentation.**
- **We will assess applications based solely on documentation provided. Applications will be acknowledged upon receipt.**
- **Feedback will only be given to candidates unsuccessful following interview.**

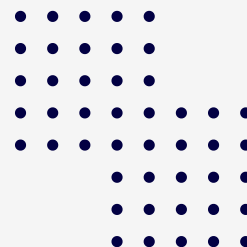
Complaints

Please contact the 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:
<https://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/>



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Location

The SLC Chair will be able to work remotely, attending a minimum of eight SLC Board meetings per year. Meetings are generally held in Glasgow and also on occasion in London, Llandudno Junction, and Darlington. The Chair will be expected to travel to these locations as necessary.

Number of Vacancies

1

Time requirement

We expect the time demand on a non-executive Chair to be around eight days per month but may occasionally increase in exceptional circumstances.

Term

Three year term of appointment. There is a possibility of reappointment for a further three year term, subject to performance.

Remuneration

£59,000 per annum

Expenses

Reasonable expenses for travel and subsistence incurred whilst carrying out the responsibilities of the post will be reimbursed and subject to the Student Loan Company's travel and expenses policy.

Pension

The post is not pensionable.

