



Department
of Health &
Social Care



Members of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA)

Information pack for applicants

Closing date: Midday on Tuesday, 26 May 2026

Reference no: VAC-8957



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Section 1 – The Role

Introduction from Julia Chain, Chair of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA)

The HFEA has been the UK's regulator of fertility treatment and embryo research for over 30 years, created to make policy and regulate standards as the fertility sector developed following the birth of the world's first IVF baby, Louise Brown, in 1978. We are one of the few UK wide regulators, overseeing treatment in both the NHS and private sector.

It is a huge privilege to be a Board member of this internationally renowned and respected organisation and to be able to contribute to policy and licensing decisions in such an innovative and ethically contested area of medicine.

We are a small body with around 80 staff, but we monitor global scientific developments which could become patient treatment in the years to come, make policy and advise Ministers, Parliament, and Government, alongside our core functions of setting standards, licensing research projects and treatment clinics and maintaining a register of all UK fertility treatments, the largest database of its kind in the world.

We are mid-way through our strategy for 2025-2028 and you will have an opportunity to help oversee its delivery over the coming year and contribute to the development of our strategic thinking from 2028.

Your role as a Board member would be to actively participate on the Authority and in committee work as we support pioneering science and fertility medicine but, above all, do our utmost to uphold and improve standards in fertility treatment so that as many people as possible can achieve their much longed-for family. The HFEA is at the heart of creating life, and I am constantly reminded what a privileged role our Board members have and how interesting and rewarding our work is.

Our lay and professional Members bring a huge variety of experience and expertise to their role from genetics, fertility medicine, counselling, life sciences and research, communications and the media, faith, ethics, and the law. If you are successful in your application, you would have the chance to contribute your personal expertise towards our new vision. We want to see everyone receive the best possible care and the right information at the right time. As science and society advance, the HFEA needs to shape and respond to future changes in the legislative landscape and the changing fields of modern family creation, genetics, and artificial intelligence and the use of data.

I have chaired the HFEA since April 2021, and in this time, I have been impressed at the organisation's reputation as a body that enables innovation to flourish within a robust ethical framework. The breadth of work the HFEA covers means the role of a Member is fascinating and your contribution could make a real difference to many people for years to come.

Introduction from Catharine Seddon, Member of HFEA.

"For me, the HFEA board serves at the heart of creating life. As NEDS, our job, first and foremost, is to protect people at one of the most vulnerable times of their life: when they

need help to achieve a much longed-for family. In all our work - whether raising standards in fertility care, licensing innovative treatments or making policy in ethically charged areas, I feel a huge sense of responsibility to the public and therefore an equal sense of reward. This Board really matters.”

1.1 Role description and person specification

Role description

Members are required to build and retain public and professional confidence in the regulation of fertility treatment and embryo research and to play a key part in the effective and successful governance of the HFEA.

Specifically, to:

- support the Chair and the Executive in setting the strategic direction of the HFEA, and review this on a regular basis in light of developments in the external and internal environments
- support the Chair and the Executive in developing the HFEA in-line with the organisation’s strategic aims while maintaining a positive, constructive and appropriate relationship with its stakeholders in both the public and private sector
- provide an independent view, a substantive contribution, and constructive challenge at Authority meetings and sub committees
- monitor the performance of the HFEA’s Executive, holding it to account for the delivery of the HFEA’s business plan, HM Treasury and Department of Health and Social Care requirements.

Person specification

The Department of Health and Social Care values and promotes diversity. We encourage applications from talented individuals from all backgrounds and across the whole of the United Kingdom. Boards of public bodies are most effective when they reflect the diversity of views of the society they serve.

We are recruiting 2 new HFEA Members: a Professional Member and a Lay Member.

To be classified as a Professional Member you must fulfil one of the following categories:

- be a registered medical practitioner;
- be concerned with the keeping or using of sperm, eggs, or embryos outside the body; or
- be directly concerned with commissioning or funding research involving the keeping or use of sperm, eggs, or embryos or to have actively participated in any decision to do so

A person who would be recognised as a Professional cannot apply for a Lay post.

We are also seeking one of the new appointees (either the Lay or Professional Member) to also chair a sub-committee of the HFEA board: the Audit and Governance Committee (AGC).

To be considered, you must be able to demonstrate that you have the qualities, skills, and experience to meet all the essential criteria for appointment.

Essential Criteria

For both the Lay and Professional roles:

- a strong career track record of significant delivery at a senior level within the private, public or voluntary sectors
- ability to operate effectively as part of a team on the board of a national public body, where you provide support, challenge and assurance
- sound judgement, with an ability to critically analyse a wide range of information and make evidence-based, strategic decisions
- excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to gain the confidence of colleagues within your organisation and of its stakeholders

In addition, for the Professional member role, you need to be:

- a clinician with senior level experience in fertility medicine and research

In addition, if you wish to be considered for the role of Chair of HFEA's AGC, you must have:

- senior corporate or finance experience (in the public, private or third sectors), with experience of governance, risk management, assurance, and the work of audit and risk committees

Remuneration and status of appointment

Remuneration will be £7,883 per annum, with the AGC Chair receiving £13,137 per annum

Remuneration for this role is treated as income and will be subject to tax and National Insurance contributions, both of which will be deducted at source under PAYE before you are paid.

You can claim reimbursement for reasonable travel and subsistence costs which are properly and necessarily incurred on official business, in line with the travel and subsistence policy and rates of the HFEA. However, these payments are taxable as earnings and will be subject to tax and national insurance, both of which will be deducted at source under PAYE before you are paid. A copy of the policy and rates can be obtained from the HFEA.

This is an office holder appointment and as such it is not subject to the provisions of employment law. You will not be eligible for redundancy pay as you are not an employee. No other arrangements have been made for compensation upon the end of your term of appointment because an office holder who is appointed for a limited duration would have no expectation of serving beyond that period. You will not become a member of the Civil Service and will therefore not attract any benefits under any Civil Service Pension Scheme.

Time commitment

Three days per month

Location

Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA)
2nd Floor, 2 Redman Place
London
E20 1JQ

Upcoming meetings:

1 July 2026
23 September 2026
18 November 2026

Tenure of office

Ministers will determine the length of the appointment, which may be for up to a maximum of 3 years.

The possibility of re-appointment for a further term is at the discretion of Ministers. There is no automatic presumption of re-appointment; each case is considered on its own merits. Merit will take into account a number of factors including, but not restricted to, the diversity of the current board, the balance of skills and experience it needs in the future, and the performance of an office holder during their first term. Office holders would only serve more than two terms or a total of ten years in post, by exception.

Accountability

Members are appointed by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and are accountable to the Secretary of State via the HFEA Chair for carrying out their duties and for their performance.

For a discussion about the role

For further information regarding the role of HFEA and the role of Member please contact:

Name: Jacky Cooper

Tel: 07825450485

Email: jacky.cooper@dhsc.gov.uk

1.2 Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority role and responsibilities

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) is the UK-wide independent regulator for fertility treatment and embryo research. The [HFEA](#) was established by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 (the 'Act'). The Act sets out prohibitions relating to the creation, use, and storage of human embryos and human admixed embryos, and the use and storage of human gametes.

In 2007, as a result of the implementation of three EU Directives setting quality and safety standards for human tissue and cells intended for human application, the HFEA's remit was extended to cover licensing and regulation of donation, procurement, testing, processing, preservation and distribution of gametes and embryos. The UK's exit from the EU means that this relationship is changing going forward, although the UK's high standards will remain.

The HFEA has the power to license the following activities in the course of providing fertility treatment (for example, in vitro fertilisation (IVF)):

- bringing about the creation of a human embryo outside the body;
- procuring, keeping, testing, processing or distributing human embryos;
- procuring, keeping, testing, processing or distributing gametes;
- using human embryos for training others in embryological techniques;
- ensuring human embryos are in a suitable condition to be used in treatment;
- placing human embryos in a woman;
- carrying out testing of sperm;
- other activities specified in regulations.

The HFEA can also license activities as part of a project of research involving human embryos (and human admixed embryos), provided they are necessary or desirable for:

- increasing knowledge about serious disease or other serious medical conditions;
- developing treatments for serious disease or other serious medical conditions;
- increasing knowledge about the causes of congenital disease or congenital medical conditions;
- promoting advances in the treatment of infertility;
- increasing knowledge about the causes of miscarriage;
- developing more effective techniques of contraception;
- developing methods for detecting the presence of gene, chromosome, or mitochondrion abnormalities in embryos before implantation;
- increasing knowledge about the development of embryos so long as the use of an embryo is necessary.

The HFEA can also grant licences for the procurement and distribution of sperm while providing non-medical fertility services and for the storage of gametes and embryos.

Ethical Safeguards

The Act contains several ethical safeguards; some of which are described here. The principle of informed consent is key in that gametes, embryos and other human tissue, the use of which is governed by the Act, can only be used for treatment or research purposes with the informed and clearly expressed consent of the person(s) providing the tissue. Where such consent cannot be given, in a very limited number of circumstances, use of the tissue can only take place if strict conditions can be met.

The restrictions of the use of human embryos in treatment and research and of particular techniques in assisted reproduction underpin the licensing provisions in the Act. Clinics must assess the welfare of any child that might be born as a result of treatment, or any existing child that may be affected, as part of the process of determining a patient's suitability for treatment.

Licensing and Inspection

There are currently 135 HFEA-licensed establishments providing treatments, related services, or carrying out embryo research. Every licence designates an individual who has the responsibility under the Act for the proper operation of the establishment and its compliance with the Act, all licence conditions, and the HFEA's [Code of Practice](#). This individual is described as the Person Responsible.

The Act requires the HFEA to carry out an inspection of all licensed establishments at least once every two years. The HFEA inspection team evaluate and monitor:

- premises, equipment, and facilities;
- laboratory processes;
- documentation, including standard patient information;
- the ability of the establishment to provide the services it offers;
- the suitability of the person responsible and staff providing the services.

As part of its licensing function, the HFEA also assesses applications from establishments to use novel or adjusted treatment techniques and to test embryos for the presence of inheritable genetic conditions. [Pre-implantation genetic testing for monogenic disorders \(PGT-M\)](#) is a technique used to screen embryos before implantation, as part of an IVF treatment cycle, to exclude those with a serious genetic condition. The procedure is intended to help couples at risk of passing on a serious inheritable genetic condition to their offspring. None of these activities can take place without the HFEA's prior approval.

Linked to its regulatory functions, the Act enables the HFEA to issue directions and requires it to maintain a [Code of Practice](#) setting out standards of practice for the delivery of treatments, fertility services, and embryo research that all licensed clinics and research centres are required to observe.

Key non-licensing functions

There are a number of functions carried out by the HFEA that are not part of the licensing process but are integral to fulfilling the aims set out in legislation:

Maintaining Registers: The Act requires the HFEA to keep [registers](#), notably one that records every treatment cycle, patient, [gamete/embryo donor](#) and all resulting offspring. The Act also sets out the circumstances in which identifying information held on this register may be disclosed to third parties.

Sharing research information: The administration of a scheme for researchers to apply to receive access to identifying information held on the treatment register where it is not practicable to obtain consent to the disclosure from the persons to whom the information relates.

Providing information: The HFEA has a statutory duty to provide a range of information to stakeholders, including patients and licensed establishments. The HFEA does this by:

- publishing advice and information for patients and the public about fertility treatments and services, such as [ratings for treatment add-ons](#).
- providing information and guidance for licensed establishments and healthcare professionals on topical issues via bulletins and also Chair's letters;
- responding to individual queries, verbally and in writing, from the fertility and wider healthcare sectors and the public

The HFEA is funded by licence fees, IVF treatment fees and a grant from UK central government with an expenditure of over £7 million.

Further information on the HFEA and what it does can be found at:

<https://www.hfea.gov.uk/about-us/>

Section 2: The recruitment

2.1 Making an application

Thank you for your interest in the appointment of a Member to the HFEA.

The Department of Health and Social Care's Public Appointments Team is managing this recruitment campaign.

In order to apply you will need to [create an account](#) or [sign in](#) on the "Apply for a public appointment" website. This is a central, online recruitment platform managed by the Cabinet Office, which candidates use to apply for public appointments with any government department or a body which they sponsor.

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), we ask that you limit your CV to around 2 pages
- a supporting statement (2-page limit) setting out how you meet the criteria for appointment as set out in the person specification for the role
- equality information
- information relating to any outside interests or reputational issues

Guidance on what to include in your CV/supporting statement and tips for applying can be found in the corresponding sections below and on the public appointment website: [Public appointments - GOV.UK](#).

You will be asked 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 any declarations related to standards in public life and ensuring public confidence in your supporting statement. Further information on this can be found in the relevant section below.

If you are unable to create an account and apply online, or if you have any problems submitting your application online, please contact Karen Dinsdale on 0113 2545625 or Karen.Dinsdale@dhsc.gov.uk

Applications must be received by **midday on Tuesday, 26 May 2026**

The Advisory Assessment Panel reserves the right to only consider applications that contain all of the elements you have been asked to provide, and which are listed above, and that the applications are received before the published deadline.

In completing an application, please firstly note the following information set out below, in relation to:

- Disqualification from appointment
- Conflicts of interest
- Political activity and social media
- Standards in public life and ensuring public confidence.

Disqualification from appointment

The Cabinet Office sets out the following regarding all public appointments:

To hold the role of Member of HFEA you need a right to work in the UK.

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, which includes 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.

The Department of Health and Social Care also requires all those appointed by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to public appointments, to be a fit and proper person, comparable with the requirements placed on board members in the NHS. As a result, in addition to the above, you must:

- be of good character
- have the qualifications, competence, skills and experience which are necessary for you to carry out your duties
- have not been erased, removed or struck-off any applicable register of professionals maintained by a regulator of healthcare or social work professionals. If you are required to hold a registration with a relevant professional body to carry out your role, you must hold such registration and must have the entitlement to use any professional titles associated with this registration. Where you no longer meet the requirement to hold the registration, and if you are a healthcare professional, social worker or other professional registered with a healthcare or social care regulator, you must inform the regulator in question
- be capable by reason of health of properly performing tasks which are intrinsic to your role, after reasonable adjustments are made
- not be prohibited from holding office (for example, as a result of a directors disqualification order)
- within the last five years:

- not have been convicted of a criminal offence and sentenced to imprisonment of three months or more
- not have been un-discharged bankrupt nor have been subject to bankruptcy restrictions, or have made arrangement/compositions with creditors and has not discharged
- not be on any 'barred' list
- not have been responsible for, contributed to or facilitated any serious misconduct or mismanagement (whether unlawful or not) in the course of carrying on a regulated activity or providing a service elsewhere which, if provided in England, would be a regulated activity

In addition, legislation related to HFEA sets out how individuals are disqualified from appointment as a HFEA Member, if they are:

- Are a member of the House of Commons or the NI Assembly
- Are subject to the relevant bankruptcy orders or your estate has been sequestered by a court in Scotland or you have made a composition or arrangement with or granted a trust deed for your creditors in Northern Ireland or Scotland.
- Have been convicted of an offence in the last five years in the UK, the Channel Islands, or the Isle of Man
- Have received a sentence of imprisonment of at least 3 months (whether suspended or not) without the option of a fine.
- You are the chairperson or a non-officer member of the NHS Counter Fraud Authority.

Also, you are disqualified for being appointed as Chair or Deputy Chair of the HFEA if:

- You are, or have been a medical practitioner, registered under the Medical Act 1983
- You are, or have been concerned with keeping or using gametes or embryos outside the body
- You are, or have been directly concerned with commissioning or funding any research involving such keeping or use, or who has actively participated in any decision to do so.

The above is only intended to act as a summary of the legislation and you should consider the relevant sections of the legislation in full, which are attached for your ease at **Annex A** to this document.

When sending your application online, you will be asked to confirm that the information you have provided is true and correct and that you are eligible to apply for a public appointment. As part of this, you will also confirm that you have read any disqualification criteria for the role, and that you are willing to stand down from any other role/s in order to take up the appointment. If you are currently disqualified from appointment, please provide further details in your supporting letter.

For further advice, please contact Karen Dinsdale on Karen.Dinsdale@dhsc.gov.uk

Conflicts of interest

Before you apply you should carefully consider if you or a party related to you have any interests which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed.

When you apply you will be asked to complete, as part of the 'Outside interests and reputational issues' section, information on the following:

- Financial interests
- Employment, appointments and other outside roles
- Personal interests
- Any other relevant interests or activity.

You should declare anything relevant that you think may call into question your ability to properly discharge the responsibilities of the role you are applying for or may be perceived as having scope to do so by a reasonable member of the public.

Interests may include, (without limitation), any outside personal or business interests, any direct and indirect financial interests (such as shareholdings or share options in individual companies), or any positions of employment, other appointments or other positions of authority, that you or any party related to you have and which may influence your judgement in performing your public appointment or may be perceived by a reasonable member of the public as having scope to do so. A 'party related to you' could include for example (but without limitation) a spouse/partner, a business partner, a close family member or a person living in the same household as you.

Further help and examples of the types of things which you may need to disclose will be given to you on the relevant pages when you create your account and application on the public appointments application system (gov.uk website).

Many conflicts of interest can be satisfactorily resolved and declaring a potential conflict does not prevent you from being interviewed.

If you are shortlisted, the Advisory Assessment Panel will discuss any potential conflicts with you during your interview, including any proposals you may have to mitigate them, and can record that in their advice to Ministers. If Ministers wish to appoint you, an offer of appointment may be subject to you giving up any unmanageable conflicts of interest.

If offered the role, you will be required to make a Declaration of Interests, which will need to include mitigations approved by the Department, for managing any potential conflicts of interest. Failure to declare a potential conflict of interest may become grounds for withdrawing an offer of appointment.

You will also be required to keep the Declaration up to date throughout the tenure of your appointment. The requirement to declare interests will also be included in your Terms and Conditions of appointment. Failure to disclose an interest, subject to the interest and the circumstances, may become grounds during the tenure of your appointment, for suspension or termination of your appointment.

Subject to the particular interest, you may also be required declare the interest to HFEA for inclusion on HFEA's published Register of Member Interests.

Political activity and social media

In the same section of your online application, you will also be asked to declare if you have undertaken any political activity for a political party within the last five years and for details of any social media accounts that can be viewed by the public.

Political activity

Political activity information is primarily for monitoring purposes only, however if you are shortlisted for interview, this information will be shared with the Advisory Assessment Panel. The reason for this, is that it is appreciated that such activities may have given you relevant skills, including experience gained from committee work, collective decision-making, resolving conflict and public speaking. If you have had such experience and you consider it relevant to your application for this post, you should also take the opportunity to include it separately in your supporting statement. If possible, you should not, however, identify the relevant political party in your statement.

If you are appointed to this role, please note that any political activity you declare and which meets the criteria for being politically active, as set out in the guidance when applying online, will be published in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments. Political activity is not a bar to appointment, but it must be declared.

Social media

You can provide up to five public social media accounts and will be asked for the full URL of each. If you apply for a public appointment and are shortlisted for interview, DHSC will conduct appropriate checks, as part of which we reserve the right to consider anything in the public domain which may relate to your need to meet the requirements of the role to which you have applied and to hold public office. This may include searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. We ask for information about your social media accounts to make sure these checks are carried out accurately.

Standards in public life and ensuring public confidence

If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment to Ministers or HFEA or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, **it is important that you bring them to the attention of the Advisory Assessment Panel and provide details of the issue/s in your Supporting Statement.**

This should include declaring in your Supporting Statement 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
- there are any previous or pending personal conduct issues where:

- a complaint/personal conduct issue has either been upheld or partly upheld
- an investigation that relates at least in part to your personal conduct, is to take place but it is yet to start, or a similar such investigation is underway, but it is yet to conclude
- a complaint/personal conduct issue is current, but at the time of your application it is yet to be confirmed whether or how it will be investigated further
- there are any possible reputational issues arising from your past actions or public statements that you have made (including through social media and blogs)
- there are any other matters which may mean you may not be able to meet the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies. You can access this document at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/board-members-of-public-bodies-code-of-conduct>

Alongside your own declaration, we will also conduct due diligence checks, as noted above, on information in the public domain. Your declarations and information from our checks will be shared with the Advisory Assessment Panel, who may explore any issues with you as part of assessing your application.

Failure to disclose relevant information requested could result in an appointment offer being withdrawn or the appointment being terminated, as the person appointed to this role will be expected to demonstrate the highest standards of corporate and personal conduct and in line with standards set out in the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies, which includes the Principles of Public Life. As part of agreeing to the terms and conditions of appointment you will be expected to agree to meeting the standards set out in this Code.

CV

We ask that you aim to limit your CV to around 2 pages. Please ensure your CV includes:

- Your full name, title, home address, personal contact telephone numbers (land line and mobile) and personal email address
- Details of your education and qualifications, employment history, directorships, membership of professional bodies and any relevant publications or awards
- Contact details for at least two referees. One referee should be the person to whom you are/were accountable in your current/most recent appointment or position of employment. Please indicate the relationship of each referee to you.
- Brief details of your current or most recent post and the dates you occupied this role, and any past or present Ministerial appointments.

Supporting Statement

The Supporting Statement is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria set out in the person specification. You may want to add the essential and/or desirable criteria set out in the role description as subheadings in your statement and provide evidence underneath these. This will help the Advisory Assessment Panel to see how your skills and expertise relate to the role.

Please also set out details regarding any potential reputational issues (see above guidance on Standards in Public life).

Please ensure your full name, the role to which you are applying and the corresponding reference number for the post are clearly noted at the top of your Statement.

Please write all acronyms in full first, **limit your statement to two pages** and type or write clearly in black ink.

You must inform the department if, during the application and assessment process, your circumstances change in respect to any information that has been or should have been provided by you in your application.

Equality Information

You will be asked to complete questions on equality information when completing your application online. If you have previously created an account, the responses from that previous application will be saved. You will have an opportunity to review and edit your responses before you submit an application.

We encourage applications from talented individuals from all backgrounds and across the whole of the United Kingdom. Boards of public bodies are most effective when they reflect the diversity of views of the public they serve.

We collect equality information, including information about applicants' characteristics and educational and professional backgrounds, so that we can make sure we are attracting a broad range of people to these roles and that our recruitment 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.

The data you provide is used to produce anonymised 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.**

Reasonable adjustments to the application process

We 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 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 additional detailed information on the assessment process to allow candidates time to prepare themselves

- allowing support workers to attend interviews, for example sign language interpreters
- making provision for support animals to attend interviews.

When you complete your application online, you will be given the opportunity to tick a box to request reasonable adjustment(s) to the application process at the “check your answers before sending your application” stage.

Disability Confident Scheme

The Department of Health and Social Care values diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity for all and the appointment of disabled people. We are a member of the Disability Confident Scheme, which helps recruit and retain disabled people.

As part of implementing the Scheme, we guarantee an interview to anyone with a disability whose application meets all the essential criteria in the person specification 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.

What do we mean by a disability?

To be eligible for the Disability Confident Scheme you must have a disability or long-term health condition, which could be physical, sensory or mental and must be expected to last for at least 12 months. You do not have to be registered as a disabled person to apply under this Scheme.

If you wish to apply under the Scheme, please tick the relevant box at the “check your answers before sending your application” stage of your online application.

2.2 The Assessment Process

We will deal with your application as quickly as possible and will advise you of the likely timetable at each stage.

Planned timetable

- Closing date: Midday on Tuesday 26 May 2026
- Shortlisting: Friday 5 June 2026
- Interviews: Tuesday 23 and Thursday 25 June 2026

Advisory Assessment Panel

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

Advisory Assessment Panels perform a number of functions, including undertaking sifting, carrying out interviews and assessing objectively who meets the published appointment criteria for the role. It is then for the Minister to decide who to appoint to the role.

The Advisory Assessment Panel will include:

- Amanda Davies, Deputy Director, Health Ethics, DHSC senior sponsor for HFEA (panel chair)
- Julia Chain, Chair of HFEA
- Professor Gary Crowe, a former Non-Executive Director of the Human Tissue Authority (Independent Panel Member)

Assessment

When the advert has closed, we will commission a pre-assessment of candidate applications which will then be provided to the Advisory Assessment Panel for consideration and to inform the shortlisting process. By applying, you are agreeing to your application being shared with another party for pre-assessment. If they wish to, Ministers can see the full list of candidates and provide their views to the Advisory Assessment Panel ahead of shortlisting.

At the shortlisting meeting the Advisory Assessment Panel will assess applications against the essential criteria. It is the responsibility of the Advisory Assessment Panel to determine who it believes best meet the criteria for the role, and who should be invited to interview. If you have applied under the Disability Confident Scheme and you meet all the essential criteria, then you will be invited for an interview.

If you apply under the Disability Confident Scheme and you are not shortlisted for interview, we can provide a summary of the assessment of your written application, if you choose to

request feedback. However, we regret that due to the volume of applications received, we are only able to offer feedback to other candidates who have been unsuccessful at the interview stage.

If they wish to, Ministers can see the short list of candidates and provide their views to the Advisory Assessment Panel ahead of interviews.

You will be advised (by e-mail) whether you have been shortlisted. Those shortlisted will be invited to an interview. Interviews will be conducted either face-to-face, normally in central London or by video/teleconference. We will confirm arrangements to shortlisted candidates in due course.

If you are invited to interview and are unable to attend on the set date, then an alternative date can only be offered at the discretion of the Advisory Assessment Panel.

The Advisory Assessment Panel will meet again to interview candidates and determine who meets the essential criteria and is therefore appointable to the role. They may share the opening question with you in advance to allow you to prepare your answer. The Advisory Assessment Panel will go on to question you about your skills and experience, including asking specific questions to assess whether you meet the criteria set out for the post. They will also explore with you any potential conflicts of interest or any other issues arising from your personal and professional history which may impact on an appointment decision (see section 2.1 for further details).

Details of the Advisory Assessment Panel's assessment of interviewed candidates are provided to Ministers, including whether they have judged a candidate to be appointable to the role. It is then for Ministers to decide who should be appointed.

Ministers may choose to meet with candidates before making a decision. Candidates should therefore be prepared for a short time gap between interview and a final appointment decision being made. Candidates who have been interviewed will be kept informed of progress.

Once the decision on the appointment has been made, interviewed candidates will be advised of the outcome of their application, including whom they may approach for feedback, if they wish. We appreciate it takes a lot of time and effort to apply for roles, and prepare for and attend an interview, and that feedback is a valuable part of the process.

In some circumstances, Ministers may choose not to appoint and to re-run the competition.

Queries

For any queries about your application status or the selection process, please contact Karen Dinsdale in DHSC's Public Appointments Team:

Email: Karen.Dinsdale@dhsc.gov.uk

If you choose to apply, we would like to thank you in advance for your time and effort in making an application.

You will receive an automated email to confirm your application has been submitted successfully.

Following the closing date, you will receive a further email from DHSC's Public Appointments Team confirming next steps in the selection process. If you have not received your application id reference number within 3 working days of the advertised closing date, please contact us quoting reference VAC-8957.

Governance Code on Public Appointments and the Commissioner for Public Appointments

The Governance Code on Public Appointments, published by the Cabinet Office, sets out the principles that should underpin all public appointments. The Governance Code can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-code-for-public-appointments>

The regulation of public appointments against the requirements of the Governance Code is carried out by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

The Commissioner provides independent assurance that public appointments are made in accordance with the principles set out in the Code. The Commissioner is independent of the Government and the Civil Service. Further information about the role of the Commissioner is available from:

<http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk>

If you are not completely satisfied

The Department of Health and Social Care will aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, please contact Rachael Gingell by emailing rachael.gingell@dhsc.gov.uk

If after receiving a comprehensive response from the Department you are still concerned, you can write to the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Please contact:

The Commissioner for Public Appointments
1 Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ

Tel: 0207 271 8938

Email: publicappointments@csc.gov.uk

Complaints to the Commissioner for Public Appointments must relate to a regulated public appointments process. For further information please see: [Complaints - Commissioner for Public Appointments](#)

2.3 How we will manage your personal information

Your personal information will be held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. You will not receive unsolicited paper or electronic mail because of sending the Department of Health and Social Care any personal information. No personal information will be passed on to third parties for commercial purposes.

When we ask you for personal information, we promise we will:

- Only ask for what we need, and not collect too much or irrelevant information
- Ensure you know why we need it
- Protect it and insofar as is possible, make sure nobody has access to it who shouldn't
- Ensure you know what choice you have about giving us information
- Make sure we don't keep it longer than necessary
- Only use your information for the purposes you have authorised

We ask that you:

- Provide us with accurate information
- Inform us as soon as possible of any changes, or if you notice mistakes in the information we hold about you

The Department of Health and Social Care will process personal data relating to you in accordance with the Department of Health and Social Care data protection policy at [DHSC privacy notice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/60424/dhsc_privacy_notice_-_gov.uk.pdf) and the Cabinet Office's data protection policy for public appointments at <https://apply-for-public-appointment.service.gov.uk/privacy>.

If you apply for a post, we will share some of the information you provide with the members of the Advisory Assessment Panel for the post to which you are applying, so that your CV and supporting letter can be assessed.

The equality information you provide will not be used in the selection process and will therefore not be shared with the Advisory Assessment Panel assessing your application at any stage. However, Advisory Assessment Panels may review the political activity response at the interview stage. This in no way acts as a bar to appointment.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments regulates and monitors appointments to public bodies to ensure procedures are fair. The Department of Health and Social Care is required by the Commissioner for Public Appointments to retain information about the people who apply for public appointments within his remit and make this information available to him for audit purposes, if requested to do so. Information you provide in your application may therefore be made available to the Commissioner for Public Appointments and the Commissioner's auditors on a confidential basis to help fulfil either the Commissioner's formal complaints investigation role or for audit purposes.

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Annex A – Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority

Disqualification

1. Any member of the House of Commons or the NI Assembly is disqualified from also being a member of the HFEA.
2. A person is disqualified from being appointed as chairman, deputy chairman or as any other member of the authority if:
 - (a) they are subject to a bankruptcy restrictions order, an interim bankruptcy restrictions order, a debt relief restrictions order, or an interim debt relief restrictions order; or
 - (b) a bankruptcy order has been made against the person by a court in Northern Ireland, the person's estate has been sequestered by a court in Scotland, or under the law of Northern Ireland or Scotland the person has made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for the person's creditors; or
 - (c) they have been convicted in the last five years in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man of an offence and has had a sentence of imprisonment passed of at least 3 months (whether suspended or not) without the option of a fine.
3. The following persons are also disqualified from appointment as Chairman or Deputy Chairman of the Authority:
 - (a) any person who is, or has been, a medical practitioner registered under the Medical Act 1983 (whether fully, provisionally or with limited registration) or under any repealed enactment from which a provision of that Act is derived
 - (b) any person who is, or has been, concerned with keeping or using gametes or embryos outside the body; and
 - (c) any person who is, or has been, directly concerned with commissioning or funding any research involving such keeping or use, or who has actively participated in any decision to do so.
4. You are disqualified from appointment as the chairperson or as a non-officer member of the NHS Counter Fraud Authority if you are chairperson, member, officer, governor or director with, or you are employed by, or contracted in any capacity to provide services to HFEA

Notice and Termination

5. All members may resign by giving notice to the Secretary of State.
6. The Secretary of State may terminate your appointment if he/she is satisfied that you have been absent from meetings of the Authority for six consecutive months or longer

without the permission of the Authority, or that you are unable or unfit to discharge your functions as chairman, deputy chairman or another member.

Suspension

7. The Secretary of State may suspend you from office when it appears that one of the grounds for termination (due to absence or unfitness) may apply.
8. The Secretary of State must give notice to the member of the decision and the suspension takes effect on receipt by the member of the notice.
9. A notice under paragraph 7 is treated as being received by the member in a case where it is delivered in person or left at the member's proper address, at the time at which it is delivered or left; and in a case where it is sent by post to the member at that address, on the third day after the day on which it was posted.
10. The initial period of suspension must not exceed 6 months.
11. The Secretary of State may review the member's suspension at any time.
12. The Secretary of State must review the member's suspension if requested in writing by the member to do so, but need not carry out a review less than 3 months after the beginning of the initial period of suspension.
13. Following a review, the Secretary of State may revoke the suspension, or suspend the member for another period of not more than 6 months from the expiry of the current period.
14. The Secretary of State must revoke the suspension if at any time they decide that neither of the conditions mentioned in paragraph 6 above are satisfied, or they decide that either of those conditions is satisfied but does not remove the member from office as chairman, deputy chairman or other member of the Authority.