

UNIVERSITY OF
WESTMINSTER 

CANDIDATE PACK INDEPENDENT GOVERNORS



WELCOME

Dear Applicant

Welcome and thank you for your interest in becoming an independent governor at the University of Westminster.

Some of you will already know Westminster. Others will be encountering us for the first time. I have a long history with the University of Westminster: it began when I was a student here, studying part time as a post-graduate at the Polytechnic of Central London. Later, I became a Lecturer, whilst it was still the Poly, and then I joined the University again in 2021 when I became Chair of the Court of Governors and Pro Chancellor.

Deciding to join Westminster in this capacity was an easy choice for me, its commitment to supporting students from all backgrounds to fulfil their potential was true when I studied here, when I taught here and is still true today.

One of the responsibilities of the Chair of the Court is to create an inclusive culture for the Court and to act as an active advocate for Westminster's commitment to diversity and inclusion. Through this search for new governors, the Governance and Nominations Committee and I want to find people who share our values of being progressive, compassionate and responsible. We want people who will champion our University and our students, who will connect with our academic and professional colleagues and who have the courage and conviction to think differently and dynamically about the future of this fantastic University.

As a governor at Westminster you will be an active participant in shaping the future of the University. You will join a group of governors who themselves bring a broad range of insights, backgrounds and experiences. With them, you will contribute to developing and monitoring the University strategy for our education, employability, research and knowledge exchange endeavours. You will exercise oversight of the strategic use of key resources – our people, our finances and our physical and digital estates. You will be a steward for our institution - valuing our rich heritage and ensuring we remain sustainable, with a reputation as a place where discoveries are made, barriers are broken, diversity is celebrated and where everyone is welcome.

I'm excited that you want to find out more about our University and the role of a governor and I cannot wait to find out more about what you can bring to the Court.



Professor Lynne Berry CBE

**Chair to the Court of Governors and Pro-Chancellor
University of Westminster**



ABOUT US

The University of Westminster has a long and distinctive history. Founded over 180 years ago as London's first polytechnic institution, it has become known for the many ways in which it helps students to realise their full potential, regardless of background.

Westminster's founding values are to be progressive and questioning, with a spirit that reflects our location at the heart of a world city which is home to diverse communities and which has global reach. Serving over 20,000 students, we provide teaching that is practical, relevant and contemporary. Our grounded, holistic education with wide horizons and opportunities helps create graduates who fuel growth and prosperity, and ultimately become good citizens of the world.

As stated in our strategy – Being Westminster 2022-2029 – we are a global university with London energy. Our mission is to help students and colleagues from different backgrounds fulfil their potential and contribute to a more sustainable, equitable and healthier society. Diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity are at the core of how we engage with students, colleagues, applicants, visitors and all stakeholders of the University. We are fully committed to enabling a supportive and safe learning and working environment which is equitable, diverse and inclusive, is based on mutual respect and trust, and in which harassment and discrimination are neither tolerated nor acceptable.

We are a university where discoveries are made, barriers are broken, diversity is celebrated and where everyone is welcome. We are seeking to make the world a more inclusive, sustainable, better and healthier place through our educational, research and knowledge exchange endeavours.

ABOUT THE COURT OF GOVERNORS

The Court of Governors is our governing body and has strategic oversight of all the University's activities. You can read about our current Court of Governors [here](#).

The University benefits from the objectivity, as well as from the skills and experience of all our Governors. Governors are both Directors and Members of the Company – The University of Westminster – and are Trustees of that same charity.

Most Court members are independent, bringing expertise and experience from the public, private and not for profit sectors. The Court also includes two ex-officio members, two academic colleagues, one professional services colleague and two student members. Colleague and student members bring a wealth of insider insights, perspective and experience to the Court, although they do not represent University colleagues or students or a group of colleagues or students.

We provide a professional, open, equitable, respectful and multi-cultural environment for all our members and for those who engage with us through our role at the University. This is underpinned by our values, and we promote and encourage ethical behaviour in the practice of good governance by our members and all colleagues involved in governance across our university.

Some of our achievements in building a responsible, progressive and compassionate governing body include:

- 61% of our governors are female, including our Chair, a Deputy Chair and three out of five Committee Chairs.
- We have reduced our majority ethnic group (White) from approximately 90% to 60% of the membership.
- Just under one-third of our governors are aged below 45 years old.
- Over half of our governors are from one of three different religions.
- Seven out of 18 governors are from our key stakeholder groups – colleagues and students.

We recognise that inclusivity is strength and seek to involve all our governors as active participants in our discussions and decision-making. We acknowledge that we still have work to do to build a Court that reflects our colleague, student and local communities and are investing our time and energy into ensuring our ways of working and processes are inclusive, and engaging proactively with our communities. We will keep driving forward on this journey to become a diverse governing body in the broadest sense of the word.

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Role title Independent Member of the Court of Governors

Reports to Chair of the Court of Governors

ROLE PURPOSE

The Court of Governors is the University's governing body. It is ultimately responsible for the effective conduct of the activities of our university, its strategic development, educational character and mission, and financial health. The members of the Court of Governors are the Directors and Members of the company, and the Trustees of the charity.

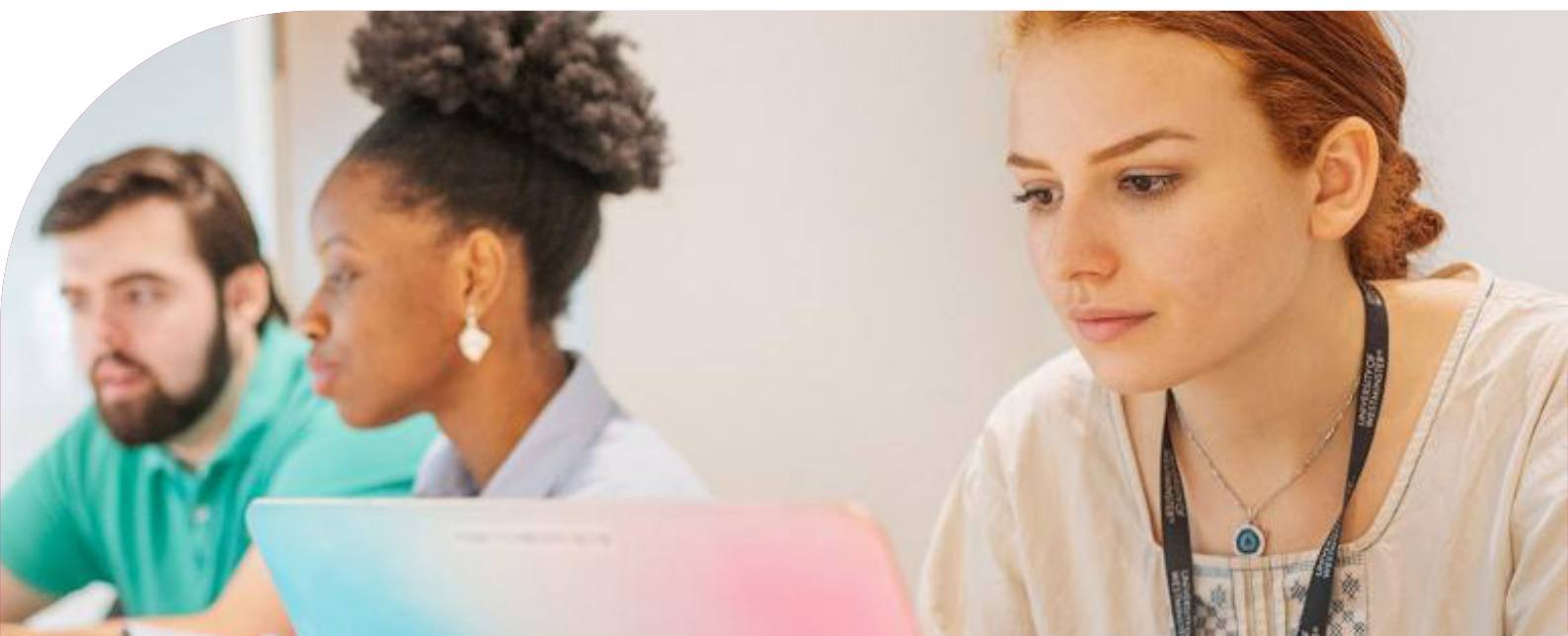
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MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- Attend and contribute to meetings of the Court and its committees; scrutinising proposals, policies and other supporting documentation; contributing to collective decision-making.
- Contribute to the development of the University Strategy and the monitoring and evaluation of the performance and effectiveness of the University against the Strategy and agreed key performance objectives.
- Ensure that the University executive's management of the financial, human, physical and digital resources is efficient and effective for the furtherance of the success of the institution and in accordance with its objects.
- Ensure that the University complies with relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, such as those specified by the Office for Students.
- Act as an ambassador for the University, embodying the University's core values: compassionate; progressive; responsible. Attend and, where appropriate, represent the Court at University graduation ceremonies and other University and external events.
- Attend induction, training and development events as needed to carry out the role effectively.
- Comply with the Court of Governors' Code of Conduct and good governance standards as exemplified in the HE Code of Governance. Observe the seven 'Nolan Principles' of conduct in public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

To find out more about our expectations of Governors, please [click here](#) to download the Governors' Code of Conduct.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

PART ONE

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

- Track record of contributing to the strategic development of organisations of comparable scale and complexity, ideally within a non-executive capacity.
- A background in **at least one** of the following areas of interest is essential for these appointments:
 - deep professional finance experience – we are particularly interested in applicants with experience in Audit and Risk, Pension Funds, or as an Entrepreneur
 - senior strategic experience gained in corporate services, including People, Culture and Inclusion, Legal and Governance, or Property and Estate Management
 - deep professional experience in the strategic use of Digital Technologies
 - Education provision, particularly within a Higher Education context
 - Public Sector leadership
 - senior role in a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory body
 - deep experience in Marketing, Media and Fundraising, and
 - Research and Development.
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of the role of Director and Trustee.

PART TWO

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Ability to establish a constructive, supportive and challenging working relationship with the Vice-Chancellor and other senior colleagues, respecting the proper separation between governance and executive management.
- Highly effective interpersonal skills.
- Exceptional communication, networking and influencing skills.
- Ability to think creatively.
- Able to devote the necessary time and effort to the role.

PART THREE

LEADERSHIP STYLE AND BEHAVIOURS

- Visionary and / or strategic in outlook.
- Maturity of judgement and maintains confidentiality.
- Personally committed to Higher Education and the values, aims and objectives of the University.
- A collegiate approach to leadership.
- Strong and demonstrable personal commitment to diversity and inclusion.



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

REMUNERATION

The role of Governor is not remunerated. Governors are encouraged to reclaim all travelling and similar expenses incurred during University business.

TERM OF OFFICE

Governors are appointed for a period of three years in the first instance. The appointment may be renewed for a second and, exceptionally, for a third three-year term to a maximum period of nine years.

TIME COMMITMENT

It is estimated that the role will involve the equivalent of **seven to ten days per annum**. Court meetings normally take place on Wednesdays; Committee meetings usually take place on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays. Most meetings are held late afternoons and evenings, although the Court's annual away day commences at lunchtime.

In addition to full participation in events and activities of the Court of Governors and designated committee(s) Governors should be able to visit the University and be available as required to discharge the above duties effectively.

There are many opportunities for Governors to join in with a wide range of University events and to observe student activities such as performances and sports. We encourage all Governors to spend some additional time at these events as it adds to the depth of their experience and the enjoyment of the role.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A programme of training and development activities aligned to the University's values is in place for all Governors, including induction and full Court briefings. In addition to these mandatory development activities the Clerk can source suitable development and training to meet individual identified needs. The University reimburses all reasonable costs associated with attending relevant external training and development events.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Directors and Officers Liability Insurance is in place.

The University offers other support for Governors such as ad hoc use of office or meeting space in the University, reasonable clerical support for University business, and use of the Clerk to the Court's postal address and an email address for correspondence relating to University business.

All support is arranged via the Clerk to the Court and other means of support in the role can be considered by request.



HOW TO APPLY

To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/wu-igov/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A covering letter that sets out your motivation for the role and describes the specific experience you can bring to the appointment.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Deadline for applications is Friday 1st November 2024.

RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE

Closing date:	Friday 1st November 2024
Preliminary interviews:	w/c 18th and 25th November 2024
Final Panel interviews:	w/c 13th January 2025 (TBC)

