

CUC

Committee of University Chairs

Appointment of

CEO

March 2025

Saxton Bampfylde

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A message from the Chair

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive at CUC.

CUC is a membership organisation with a mission to enhance education across the UK through the provision of support and guidance to University Chairs.

Over the past decade, CUC has developed into a successful organisation which supports our members through a range of face-to-face and virtual activities to discuss key issues facing the sector, provide guidance and information, and share best practice. We also share key publications on governance issues, including the CUC Code of HE Governance which members are required to adopt, and an annual survey of Vice Chancellor salaries.

The Higher Education sector faces significant challenges and opportunities in the coming years, and we are now seeking an outstanding leader who can build on our current strengths, cultivate strong engagement among our members and develop our voice as stewards of the longer-term public interest.

As well as continuing with the provision of advice and information to members, the successful candidate will be responsible for driving enhanced engagement with our members. They will be able to deploy very limited resources strategically in order to maximise CUC's ability to positively influence the HE sector across the UK. They will be able to speak for our members to the most senior stakeholders, including government departments, regulators and other sector bodies partners. The quality of the relationships they build with these stakeholders will be absolutely critical to our success.

This position offers an outstanding opportunity to operate at the highest profile at the heart of one of the most important sectors in the country, and to make a significant difference to Higher Education during a period of substantial change.

I very much look forward to hearing from you if you feel that you are the right person for this challenge, and thank you again for your interest in our organisation.

Very best wishes, Nicola



Nicola de longh
Chair



About CUC

The Committee of University Chairs (CUC) is the representative body for the Chairs of UK Universities. We are a charitable organisation which promotes the highest standards of governance across the UK Higher Education sector.

The CUC works with the UK Higher Education sector and stakeholders to support the advancement of education, governance excellence and the effective stewardship of HE Institutions. We bring together the Chairs of governing bodies to share information, experience and advice on University governance issues in a supportive environment, and we work with members and sector bodies to develop their working knowledge and skills through development activities and publications.

Specifically we:

- provide information and guidance on best practice in Higher Education governance. The CUC is responsible for producing the Higher Education Code of Governance alongside a collection of supplementary publications to guide Chairs when considering arrangements at their individual institutions. This includes providing benchmarking information on sensitive topics such as executive pay
- promote effective stewardship of HEIs, ensuring proper and effective use of stakeholder funds
- engage with other bodies in the sector to influence governance policy decisions in the long term public interest
- support the continuous professional development of Chairs (and their governing bodies) to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities at the highest level, for example:
 - providing a source of peer-to-peer support for Chairs;
 - encouraging collaboration between Chairs where possible and desirable;
 - informing Chairs of developments affecting Higher Education;
 - facilitating discussions between Chairs on key issues affecting Higher Education providers to enhance understanding and improve their effectiveness;
 - liaising with other bodies on issues arising from the core concerns of governing bodies to develop its programme of education, learning and development;
 - explaining the importance of accountability to stakeholders and society.

About CUC

Everything we do is guided by our values



Excellence



Integrity



Sustainability



Inclusivity



Innovation &
Growth



Community

Our partners

The CUC's operating model is based on strong and collaborative relationships with members and stakeholders across the Higher Education sector. We work with a wide range of organisations and professionals to guide and develop our thinking on behaviours that will facilitate governance excellence, and thereby support the long-term success and sustainability of UK Higher Education Institutions.

We encourage our members to:

- contribute their distinctive experience, knowledge and perspective to improve University governance, and
- help raise the profile of Higher Education

and its wider contribution to societal and economic growth, by presenting their views to the UK government and governments in the devolved nations.

The CUC believes the strength of the sector lies in its ability to work across boundaries of all kinds to ensure successful student outcomes and facilitate research. We believe that excellence in learning, teaching and innovation lies at the heart of driving economic growth across the UK.

For more information about our partners, please visit <https://www.Universitychairs.ac.uk/about-us/partners/>





The role

We are seeking an outstanding leader who can build on our current strengths, cultivate strong engagement among our members and develop our voice as stewards of the longer-term public interest. The successful candidate will drive an engaging, influential, and member-led organisation, developing and implementing a proactive strategy for the next 5 years whilst maintaining the high quality of existing member services.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Develop and articulate a compelling strategic vision for the CUC in response to the changing Higher Education landscape
- Position the CUC as a respected voice in national policy discussions on University governance
- Anticipate, recognise and respond to emerging sector challenges and opportunities
- Lead strategic initiatives across the four nations, recognising their different regulatory environments
- Provide strategic leadership in the

development and oversight of all CUC publications, including the Code of Governance, Senior Staff Remuneration guidance, and Audit Committee handbook.

Member Engagement and Support

- Continue to deliver high-quality member services including plenaries, webinars, round table discussions, action learning sets, and the New Chairs dinner
- Oversee the refreshed Code of Governance (due 2025) and the annual VC salary review
- Develop strategies to better understand and respond to members' needs at a more granular level
- Enhance member engagement and demonstrate the organisation's value proposition
- Support the development of regional groups and address the increasing demand for support across the UK
- Attend and occasionally chair CUC events including plenaries, new Chairs inductions, virtual briefings, and committee meetings.

The role

External Relations and Influence

- Represent University Chairs in discussions with government departments, regulators and other stakeholders
- Effectively communicate the critical role of University governance in ensuring sector effectiveness
- Showcase examples of best practice in University governance
- Build collaborative relationships with key stakeholders across the higher education sector
- Develop CUC's voice in policy discussions, particularly around efficiency, economic growth, and widening participation
- Represent the CUC on key sector bodies, which may include the Association of Heads of University Administration Executive Committee, the Higher Education Quality Council, the Employers Pension Forum, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator Board, and the Universities UK Free Speech Group.

- Maintain regular liaison meetings with the Departments for Education, Office for Students, Scottish Funding Council, Medr and other bodies
- Establish and maintain constructive and impactful relationships with CEOs of key sector organisations including Universities UK, Advance HE, UCEA and OIA.

Organisational Management

- Ensure the organisation remains agile and responsive to changing needs
- Champion diversity, access, and inclusion within the organisation and across the sector
- Manage communications and media engagement effectively
- Oversee day-to-day management of the team, ensuring efficient and effective deployment of limited resources
- Develop and/or provide oversight of CUC Committee papers, role modelling good governance.



Person specification

Essential Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Strategic Leadership

- Proven track record of strategic thinking and delivery in a challenging environment
- Understanding of membership organisations and how to build effective engagement.

Influence and Representation

- Demonstrated ability to influence at the highest levels
- Experience in policy development and advocacy
- Ability to represent diverse member interests to key stakeholders
- Credibility to engage effectively across the Higher Education sector and beyond
- Confidence in public speaking and media engagement.

Communication and Engagement

- Outstanding communication skills, both written and verbal
- Ability to build and maintain relationships with diverse stakeholders

Leadership Qualities

- Collaborative approach to leadership
- Focus on diversity, access and inclusion
- Resilience and adaptability in managing change
- Ability to delegate effectively while maintaining appropriate oversight.

Sector Knowledge

- Strategic knowledge of the higher education sector, or the willingness to learn
- Understanding of governance frameworks and regulatory environments, or the ability and motivation to learn

- Awareness of the challenges and opportunities facing University governance, or the ability and motivation to learn
- Some understanding of current Higher Education policy issues and debates

Desirable Attributes

- Previous leadership experience in a membership or representative organisation
- Established reputation among key higher education stakeholders
- Understanding of University funding mechanisms and efficiency challenges
- Experience in public relations and media engagement
- Knowledge of the different Higher Education regulatory environments across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales
- Experience in developing effective member engagement strategies
- Experience contributing to or leading cross-sector collaborative projects.



Terms of Appointment

We are looking for an individual who will work full-time or a minimum of 0.8 FTE.

Location

The role will be performed virtually, but the successful candidate must be willing to travel extensively throughout the UK to build and maintain collaborative relationships.

Salary

A competitive salary package is available, commensurate with the successful candidate's experience and qualifications.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.

How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to CUC on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **IBSQA**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Tuesday 1st April 2025**.

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.



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