Governor Development Programme
Development programmes + conferences and events 2020–21

Development to support all Governors, including Student and Staff Governors, board Chairs and those with oversight for governance of HE providers.
Governor Development Programme (GDP)
The only national training programme for members of higher education councils, boards and courts.

The GDP programme consists of a range of different events tailored for governors or board members with varying levels of experience, skills, roles or responsibilities on a higher education board. For the 2020-21 the events will be a mix of both online and face to face.

There are events for those who are new to higher education, more experienced governors and other events which focus on specific issues such as finance or the student experience. Other events are tailored to governors who hold specific roles such as chair of the board or clerk to the board, others who find themselves on the board because of other roles they hold (student governors and staff governors) or those based in specific jurisdictions such as Wales and Scotland where there are specific issues that concern them.

The GDP has been running for over a decade with over 800 participants a year, and is widely regarded as the gold standard to support all governors and governance professionals in higher education. Whether it is helping new governors to “hit the ground running”, provide further development opportunities to more experienced governors, or support governors who are looking to take on a chair role in future, the GDP provides an invaluable space to learn, network and share intelligence with governors at other institutions.

The programme brings together expert speakers from across and beyond the higher education sector. Speakers for the 2020/21 programme include representatives from the national regulators (Office for Students, HEFCW, Scottish Funding Council) from the major representative bodies including Universities UK and GuildHE, as well as experienced University Secretaries, clerks, Vice-Chancellors and chairs who share their experience and expertise under the Chatham House rule. The programme itself is shaped by a steering group with representation from across the sector including CUC, AHUA, UUK and GuildHE.

For the academic year ahead, the events will be a mix of both online and face to face. We look forward to welcoming you.

Aaron Porter
Associate Director, Governance

Governance is concerned with ensuring accountability, control and scrutiny; approving future direction, institutional strategy and mission; measuring and monitoring institutional performance; and appointing and ensuring the effectiveness of the head of the institution and the senior management team.

Aaron Porter
GDP Programme Lead

The programme is convened by Aaron Porter who is able to draw upon his own rich higher education board experience.

He is currently the chair of the BPP University board, a governor at Goldsmiths University, chair of a specialist higher education provider in London, was previously on the council of the University of Leicester and has led over 20 board reviews across the sector. He has also served as a non-executive director on the boards of UCAS, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), and was a previous President and chair of trustees for the National Union of Students (NUS).

Outside of higher education he has served on the Board of Endsleigh Insurance, has held non-executive roles in the pensions and healthcare sectors and is governor of primary and secondary schools in the London Borough of Croydon.
Services for governors and governance professionals

Governor Development Programme

With over 800 participants last year, GDP provides an opportunity for Governors to hear from sector experts, to network with peers from other institutions and to explore in detail key issues impacting the sector and institutions.

Over the last few months our teams have worked hard to adapt and successfully deliver our GDP events remotely to continue to support those working in governance related roles in higher education.

The GDP portfolio is designed to support all Governors, including Student and Staff Governors, board Chairs and those with oversight for governance of HE providers. Events are also tailored to the policy landscape and the distinct circumstances in each home nation.

GDP benefits institutions through better informed and equipped Governors and supports:

+ individuals thinking about joining a governing body
+ induction and orientation
+ developing the effective skills for those on the board
+ more tailored support for more experienced Governors, Chairs of sub-committees and the full board.

Governor’s Pathway

To help you to find the programme or event that best suits your needs, our Governor’s Pathway describes which stage of development each is aimed at.

- Thinking about becoming a Governor
  - We have events and guidance to support those thinking about becoming a Governor and help with their Governor applications.

- New Governor
  - Student Governor, Governor Induction Event, Role and Responsibilities of Staff Governors, Scotland New Governors.

- Developing Governor
  - Governance Conference 2020
  - Scottish Governance Symposium
  - Governance in Wales

- Experienced Governor / Chair
  - Chairs Development Programme
  - Leading the Board Governance Conference 2020
Governance Programmes

Student Governor

- **09 Sep 2020**
- **27 Jan 2021**
- **ONLINE**

For new and returning Student Governors.

The Student Governor is split into two separate digital events. The events can be booked separately and are standalone but we strongly recommend that participants are booked on both sessions, this also attracts discounted prices.

Day one will take place on 9 September 2020 and will equip incoming Student Governors with the skills to thrive in their new role as well as providing an update and networking space for returning Student Governors.

Day two will take place on 27 January 2021 and will allow new and returning student governors to reflect on their year to date, provide further skills development and network mapping as well as preparing them for their end of year.

**Find out more, visit:**
advance-he.ac.uk/student-governor

Induction to Higher Education Governance for new Governors

- **15 Oct 2020**
- **ONLINE**

For new Governors (staff, independent and new governance professionals).

This one-day virtual event has been designed to provide an opportunity for new Governors to come together to understand their roles and responsibilities as members of the governing body. We will consider the policy landscape, the delineation between governance and management and consider how best to hit the ground running as an effective Governor.

**Find out more, visit:**
advance-he.ac.uk/governor-induction-event
Governance Professionals in HE

For Clerks and Secretaries, their deputies and other members of professional service teams who support the operation of academic or corporate governance.

Clerks, Secretaries and Directors of Governance and their teams who support institutional governance play a central role in ensuring quality academic and corporate governance of institutions. Their knowledge, expertise and capabilities are key factors in enabling efficient and effective governance. This five-month digital programme provides a unique and vital opportunity for HE institutions to advance the knowledge and insights of those in roles focused on governance and to build useful and long standing professional networks of benefit at an individual and institutional level.

Find out more, visit: advance-he.ac.uk/governance-professionals

Role and Responsibilities of Staff Governors

For new and continuing Staff Governors and those considering whether they would like to become a Staff Governor.

This one-day virtual event will consider the role of Staff Governors and how they can best make an effective contribution to the work of the governing body. Staff Governors provide a direct link between the staff of the institution and the governing body, yet a balance must be struck as they are not acting as a representative of the constituency from whom they have been elected or appointed.

As Governors, they should act in the best interests of the institution and accept collective responsibility for the decisions agreed by the governing body. Independent Governors may also look to Staff Governors as a source of information to help their understanding of the institution, and to gain insights into how it operates.

The event will look at the importance of building good relationships with other members of the governing body, explore how difficult issues can be raised, and the balance between supporting and challenging the executive.

Find out more, visit: advance-he.ac.uk/staff-governors

"The role of Clerk/Secretary can at times feel like a lonely one as there is often only one of us in each institution. For that reason the Clerks and Secretaries Network event is a fixture in my annual development calendar. I value the opportunity to hear from sector practitioners and theorists and to discuss pertinent issues with others who are also looking for answers or can offer a solution."

Delegate, Clerks and Secretaries Network Event
Clerks and Secretaries Network Event

13 May 2021

For Registrars, Clerks, Secretaries and governance professionals.

Governing bodies and senior management teams depend on professional staff, including Clerks and Secretaries to manage the changes required to meet the needs of an evolving operating environment.

Secretaries and Clerks are pivotal to board success. This event provides those new and continuing in the role an opportunity to work together on issues critical for their own professional contribution and that of their governors.

The event will consist of presentations from leading figures in governance and breakout sessions which are designed to enable discussion and the sharing of emerging practice on key areas of change in institutional governance.

Find out more, visit: advance-he.ac.uk/clerks-secretaries-network

Chairs Development Programme

TBC

For Chairs of the Board, whether new to the role or planning ahead for a future Chair role in HE.

This programme is a dedicated development opportunity and a ‘thinking space’ for incoming and recently appointed chairs to explore their role, and to support them in developing their practice as chair of the board/council.

It has been designed to support Chairs develop their skills as the role of the governing body in the governance of HE faces increased scrutiny, as higher education institutions adapt to the implications of Covid-19 as well as the evolving tensions and pressures in the external political, financial and policy landscape.

As well as creating a strong, supportive cohort with other participant Chairs, the programme will focus on the latest policy and practice, and behavioural dynamics and relationships, such as developing and building productive relationships between the Chair, Vice-Chancellor, and Board Secretary, between members of the board, and with the Executive, and Senate. There is also a strong focus on the professional development of the Chair, the origins and exercise of authority, diversity and unconscious bias, and the ‘shadow side’ of leadership and potential derailment.

It comprises a 24 hour residential, as well as two separate development days in the following months.

Find out more, visit: advance-he.ac.uk/governor-development-programme-gdp/chairs-development-programme
This year, our virtual conference will focus on the theme ‘Transforming Governance for a new normal’. This is the must attend event for:

- Chairs of Governing Bodies
- Independent, student and staff members of governing bodies
- Vice-Chancellors their Executive staff who regular engage and interact with governing bodies
- Governance professionals and their support teams.

Our sector inhabits a dynamic and extremely challenging environment – this is our ‘new normal’. The conference offers the first opportunity since the advent of Covid-19 for those with key roles in the governance of our sector to come together, share learning and exchange perspectives. The conference will combine live plenary sessions, live Q&A and participative workshops.

The key themes of the 2020 conference include:

- driving diversity into the Board room, the challenge our sector has still to address
- the role of governance in a new normal – establishing a new paradigm for governance in an era where Covid-19 never goes away
- devising new strategies that will be resilient in a time of prolonged and unprecedented turbulence
- looking beyond the sector to listen to and learn from others
- keeping up to date about the latest developments in sector guidance and good practice.

What to expect from an online conference

We will be using our new virtual conference platform – used for our Teaching and Learning Conference (over 450 delegates). Attendees will enjoy live-streamed keynote sessions and panel discussions, access to content after the event as well as a virtual exhibition and networking space where attendees can interact with each other.

Find out more, visit: advance-he.ac.uk/governance-conference-2020

With speakers including:

Lord Simon Woolley CBE
Founder and Director of Operation Black Vote and Chair of the government’s Race Disparity Unit’s advisory group

Michael Queen
Chair of the Committee of University Chairs and Chair University of Surrey

Nicola Owen
Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) at Lancaster University

Professor Eunice Simmons
Vice-Chancellor at the University of Chester

The speakers were excellent and it was pitched just right.”
Governance Conference 2019 delegate

Professional Development Programmes

For those in executive teams, our Senior Leadership Programme and Top Management Programme include aspects of governance ensuring that the executive team and the board are able to work well together.

Find out more, visit: advance-he.ac.uk/strategic-leadership-programme
advance-he.ac.uk/top-management-programme
Supporting the Nations

Scottish Governance Symposium

21 May 2021

For Governors of Scottish HE providers and members of the professional support teams who work with Governors.

The Scottish Governance Symposium will provide a state of the nation view on governance in HE, with a particular take on the emerging impact of the legislation on governance in Scottish HE institutions, considering progress on outcome agreements and a wider analysis of the funding landscape. We will hear from leaders in the sector, as well as court members and there will be opportunities to network and share practice.

Find out more, visit: advance-he.ac.uk/scottish-governance-symposium-2021

Governance in Wales

28 Apr 2021 ONLINE

For Governors and governance professionals in Welsh HEIs.

Our Governance in Wales event reflects the shared identity and diverse needs of the Welsh HE sector. The day will provide an opportunity to explore topical features of governance in the Welsh HE landscape, allowing attendees to explore issues and challenges and respond to the latest developments. The event will include live-streamed keynote presentations and virtual break-out sessions covering a range of areas to allow participants to explore issues of concern and share good practice.

Find out more, visit: advance-he.ac.uk/governance-in-wales

GDP New Governors of Scottish HEIs

20 Oct 2020 ONLINE

For new and Student Governors of Scottish HE institutions and FE colleges offering HE programmes in Scotland.

Learning about the distinctive features of the role of court members in Scottish HE can be daunting for those stepping into the role, even for those with extensive experience in other areas. This virtual event offers an opportunity for those new to the position to examine these facets, exchange good practice and network with peers from other institutions.

The event also represents the first steps for new governors, whether they are stepping into governance for the first time or have been a Governor in another sector and need to know more about the specifics of governance for HE in Scotland.

Find out more, visit: advance-he.ac.uk/scotland-new-governors
Services for governing bodies

Supporting tailored improvements in HE governance

We know that every provider of higher education is different and the requirements upon you will be different as a result.

Whether you subscribe to the HE Code of Governance by CUC, the corporate governance Code or another; whether you are regulated by the Office for Students in England or operate under another system, we work with you to evaluate the effectiveness of your governance in context and offer wider support and development.

We can provide tailored services to universities, private providers or further education colleges offering HE to ensure that Governors and governance professionals have the resources they need to promote good governance in their institutions. Our consultants offer a range of expertise in the delivery of these sensitive and important reviews from a range of settings.

We recognise the diversity of the sector by making sure our reviews are customised to the characteristics and context of each institution whether you are in the UK, Ireland or further afield – so reviews can range from facilitated workshops to a full data-driven comparative exercise delivered on location or remotely to suit your requirements.

An example of this is the specific approach we developed to fulfil the requirement of the Code of Good Governance for Scotland’s colleges to have externally-facilitated effectiveness reviews.

Find out more, visit: advance-he.ac.uk/governance-consultancy

Governance resources and information

In partnership with experts from the sector, agencies and funders, we produce a range of resources to ensure that Governors and governance professionals have everything they need to promote good governance in their institutions.

Our resources are available to help with a range of challenges that Governors and those supporting good governance face. These may be about understanding the distinctive way the system of governance works in HE for new Governors, or disseminating the latest news and research to those who have been in their positions for some time. They include briefing notes, toolkits and practice notes.

Resources

- Governance Effectiveness Framework
  Find out more

- Diversity Principles Framework
  Find out more

- Board Recruitment Framework
  Find out more

- Guidance to Support the Induction of New Governors
  Find out more

- Getting to Grips Guides
  Find out more

- Governance Briefing Notes
  Find out more

- Governor Dialogues
  Find out more

- Board Vacancies Portal
  Find out more
Advance HE enables excellence in higher education, helping it shape its future.

Within the UK and globally, Advance HE supports institutions in the areas of excellence in education, transformative leadership, equity and inclusion, and effective governance. This is delivered through membership benefits (including accreditation of teaching, equality charters, research, knowledge and resources), programmes and events, Fellowships, awards, consultancy and enhancement services, and student surveys.

Advance HE is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales no. 04931031.
Registered as a charity in England and Wales no. 1101607.
Registered as a charity in Scotland no. SC043946.
The Advance HE logo should not be used without our permission.