

# Candidate Brief



Council of Deans of Health

Trustee

AC0401

**April 2025**

**Managing Director**  
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## Contents

1. Welcome letter from Professor Alison Machin, Chair
2. About the Council of Deans of Health
3. Job Description and Person Specification of the Trustee
4. Location, Time commitment and Expenses
5. Timeline, Application Process and How to apply
6. Diversity Monitoring

## Welcome from Professor Alison Machin Chair



Dear Candidate,

I'm delighted that you have expressed an interest in applying for the role of Trustee for the Council of Deans of Health. I hope this recruitment pack gives you the information you need to understand the role requirements and what undertaking the role would involve. You can find more information about us on our website:

<https://councilofdeans.org.uk/about/>.

The Council of Deans of Health is a membership organisation and charity representing over 100 UK universities and colleges engaged in education and research for nursing, midwifery, and the allied health professions. At any one time, our members educate around 200,000 current and future professionals and carry out research that improves the population's health and wellbeing.

Our Board of Trustees is responsible for oversight of the administration and management of the Council, which is led by the CEO who is accountable to the Board. This includes setting and monitoring the implementation of the Council's strategy, and ensuring its financial sustainability and its compliance with legal requirements. The Board of Trustees will play an important role in taking forward the Council's strategy, overseeing the continued growth of the Council and ensuring its financial sustainability.

We are looking for a new trustee with a range of skills and different life experiences gained from a broader background and wider discipline to join our energetic board. The successful candidate will need to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of charity law and regulation.

If this is a role that interests you, we would very much like to receive your application. You can find all the details on how to apply further along in this brief.

For a confidential conversation with Thewlis Graham Associates, who are supporting us with this recruitment, please contact Sarah Thewlis, Managing Director via email: [applications@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:applications@thewlisgraham.com). Sarah will be happy to discuss this opportunity with you.

Yours sincerely

Professor Alison Machin  
Chair, Council of Deans of Health

## 2. About The Council of Deans of Health

The Council represents over 100 UK universities engaged in education and research for nursing, midwifery, and the allied health professions. At any one time, our members will educate around 200,000 current and future professionals and will carry out research that improves the population's health and wellbeing.

Operating as a multi-professional organisation at the heart of policy and political debate, we aim to lead policy at national and UK level, promoting the essential contribution of our members to health and social care.

Our members are based in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Channel Islands and Gibraltar. We operate as a charity, registered across the UK.

We are committed to working in partnership, strengthening membership engagement and intelligence gathering to influence policy UK-wide for high quality education and research

### Our Vision

Our vision is that governments in the UK are committed to quality education and research and a sustainable healthcare academic workforce, in order to safeguard and improve the health and wellbeing of the public.

### Our Mission

We, on behalf of the UK university healthcare education sector, advance and promote healthcare education and research for the public benefit, through influencing Government policy and connecting our members.

### Our Values

We are inclusive  
We are innovative  
We are impactful

### Our Strategic Aims

We influence policy across the UK, promoting the essential contribution of our sector.

We offer excellent services to our members creating sustainable sector networks.

We advance healthcare education and research by strengthening our sector and organisation.

For more information, read our [Council Strategy 2025](#).

Following extensive engagement with members, Trustees, staff and stakeholders, the Council is currently finalising a new strategy to run from 2025-2030, due to be agreed in June 2025.

## Strategic Policy Groups

Strategic Policy Groups (SPGs) are a way for members to feed into the Council's policy work. Each aligns with a key policy aim in the Council 2025 strategy. Each SPG is headed by a Chair with a member of the Council's staff attached to it to facilitate and focuses on one key area of strategic interest. The SPGs help shape Council policy in their policy areas including feeding into briefings, submissions and calls for evidence. SPG meetings are largely held online, with the possibility of face-to-face meetings where agreed. The number of meetings will vary between groups but are held at least quarterly, some meetings may be required with short notice and regular attendance at meetings is an expectation of membership.

The current SPGs are:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Regulation
- Innovation and Pedagogy
- Research

## Policy

The Council's policy work is focused on specific areas including research, regulation, sector sustainability, innovation and pedagogy, and equality, diversity and inclusion. The Council also works on sustainable funding, public affairs and data.

## Governance

### Membership

The Council of Deans of Health is made up of over 100 member universities in the UK engaged in education and research for nursing, midwifery and the allied health professions along with 5 associate members.

Each member organisation has two representatives, who are senior staff with strategic responsibilities for nursing, midwifery, and/or allied health professions. Normally the representatives are at dean or head of school (or equivalent) level, but a number of our members also have more senior university roles, such as pro-vice-chancellor.

Our membership is institutional, eligibility is defined in our [membership criteria](#).

### Governance

The Council's governance is provided by a Board of Trustees comprising six independent trustees, six trustees drawn from the Council's membership and the Chair.

### **3. Job Description and Person Specification of the Trustee**

#### **Main purpose of the role**

1. The Board of Trustees is responsible for oversight of the administration and management of the Council, which is led by the CEO who is accountable to the Board. This includes setting and monitoring the implementation of the Council's strategy, and ensuring its financial sustainability and its compliance with legal requirements.
2. Trustees must always act in the best interests of the Council and take decisions collectively that they believe will best advance the Council's charitable purposes.
3. The Board of Trustees will play an important role in agreeing the next phase of the Council's strategy, overseeing the continued growth of the Council and ensuring its financial sustainability.

#### **Role and support in organisation**

4. Accountable to: The chair of the board of trustees, other trustees and the membership as a whole.
5. Liaises with: Other trustees, the chair of trustees, the Council's senior staff team, committees and standing groups, members and wider stakeholders as required.
6. Works within a team of: The board of trustees of the Council.
7. Remuneration: The role is voluntary (expenses paid in line with the Council's expenses policy).

#### **Key responsibilities**

8. As part of their shared responsibility trustees are required to:
  - Contribute to the overall strategic direction of the Council, including assurance that the Council's strategy is being delivered and overseeing the development and implementation of an annual corporate plan to deliver that strategy.
  - Ensure the Council complies with its governing document (its Articles of Association), company law, charity law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.

- Be satisfied that the Council is acting in furtherance of its objects when making decisions and that those decisions are taken in the best interests of the Council.
- Oversee the Council's financial management with the overall aim of achieving financial sustainability.
- Safeguard the organisation and advise on diversification of income to support the Council's development.
- Engage as required with the Council's members, standing groups and other stakeholders, including groups from the four nations of the United Kingdom.
- Support and uphold principles of good governance including regular attendance at meetings during which valid contributions and constructive challenge are provided.
- Engage and contribute to any of the Council's committees of the Board and other groups and bodies as required.
- Work effectively and collaboratively with the Chair and other Board members in providing support and effective scrutiny to the Council's senior staff team.

### **General qualities and experience required of the Trustee**

9. The trustees of the Council are expected to:
  - Demonstrate a commitment to understanding the Council's business, the sector context and wider policy issues across the four nations of the UK;
  - Act as an ambassador for the Council;
  - Demonstrate excellent communication skills and an enabling, inclusive approach;
  - Recognise the importance of good governance in a significant not for profit charitable entity;
  - Think strategically and offer advice, guidance, support and constructive challenge to oversee the effective delivery of the Council's strategic objectives;

- Have a track record of collaborative working in an organisation with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders;
- Ideally, have experience at senior management or board level in other organisations and preferably some experience of charity governance in the education/higher education sector.

***The Board has recently undertaken a skills audit and at this point we are particularly seeking candidates with knowledge and understanding of charity law and regulation.***

10. Evidence of these qualities and experience will be sought through either the application, formal interview or both.. As well as demonstrating that candidates possess these qualities, the Board will take into consideration the overall skills mix on the Board and seeks to create a Board with a range of experience and perspectives, as well as a strong collaborative ethos.

### **Appointment and timescales**

11. Nominations for the role will be assessed by the Council's Nominations and Remuneration Committee against this role description and the board skills matrix adopted.
12. The recommended candidate(s) for the trustee roles then follow the relevant appointment process. In the case of independent (appointed) trustees they will be presented to the Board and the successful candidates will be appointed by the Board to take up office from 1 August 2025.
13. Trustees will be appointed for an initial three-year term and may be re-appointed or re-elected (as applicable) at the end of that term, subject to a maximum term in office of not more than nine consecutive years.
14. A trustee may be removed from office prior to the end of his or her term under the conditions set out in the Council's Articles of Association.

### **Statement on diversity**

15. We are looking for people who can act as advocates for the Council of Deans of Health and who will be committed to our vision, mission and approach. Our approach to diversity supports everything else we are committed to do and we expect all our



Board members to demonstrate a personal commitment to diversity. We are an equal opportunities employer.

16. We are looking to increase the diversity of our Board as we aspire to be more representative of our colleagues and the people we serve. We also know that people from different backgrounds bring perspectives and skills that create fresh ideas, thinking and approaches which make the way work is undertaken more effective and efficient.

17. All new Board members will be offered a full induction as part of the onboarding process.

## 5. Location, Time commitment and Expenses

**Location:** Attendance at 4 board meetings (mainly online but with 1-2 in London) each year, and in-person attendance at the Board strategy day.

You may also be required to attend the Council's annual general meeting and any other general meetings. Some Trustees also sit on the Board's Nomination and Remuneration Committee.

There may also be additional requirements upon appointment and periodically thereafter for training days in the Council's office in central London.

**Remuneration:** This is a voluntary unpaid role. Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed.

*If you have read all this information and still have a query, for a confidential conversation with Sarah Thewlis, Managing Director of Thewlis Graham Associates, please contact us on via email [applications@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:applications@thewlisgraham.com).*

## 6. Timeline, Application Process and How to Apply

### Timeline

Dates	Activity
Tuesday 20 May 4pm	Applications close.
Friday 23 May and W/C 27 May	Thewlis Graham consultant interviewing of interested candidates – online.
25 and 27 June	Council of Deans of Health interviews.

### Application Process

Thewlis Graham Associates will acknowledge all applications. These will be assessed against the criteria in the Role and Responsibilities sections and Person Specification and the people who best meet these will be invited for interview with Thewlis Graham Associates. These will be held online.

Those candidates not invited to interview will be advised by email.

Longlisted candidates will also be advised by email. After a consultation between the Council of Deans of Health and Thewlis Graham Associates, a shortlist will be drawn up and shortlisted candidates invited for interview with the recruitment panel. These will be online also. All candidates will be informed of the outcome following this date.

### How to Apply

To apply for this position, please complete the three steps below, emailing your documentation to [applications@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:applications@thewlisgraham.com) quoting reference AC040I.

1. Your CV in Word format only.
2. A covering letter containing:
  - A personal statement which fully addresses the criteria listed in the role and responsibilities section.
  - Answers to the following questions, illustrating your responses with examples or evidence from your own life experiences – these could be from your working, volunteering, community, or personal life:
    - Why are you interested in joining the Council of Deans of Health specifically? (300 words)
    - What knowledge, skills and experience have you gained in your life that you would bring to our Board? (500 words)

- How would you make a difference to Council of Deans of Health? (200 words)
- Your availability for the time commitment required.
- The name, job title, organisation, email address and mobile number of two professional referees (Please note referees will not be approached without your prior permission).
- Confirmation that you are not disqualified under the Charities Act.

3. Please complete the Diversity Monitoring form, please see link below

**Please ensure that you include your mobile phone number and email address in your application.** Do not hesitate to contact Sarah Thewlis by email: [applications@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:applications@thewlisgraham.com) if you have any queries. ***If you would prefer to receive this candidate brief in a more accessible format, please contact us.***

## 7. Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring

Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring is independent of the recruitment process but please do complete your form as Thewlis Graham Associates is committed to monitoring and analysing diversity and inclusion information so that we can ensure that our processes are fair, transparent, promote equality of opportunity for all, and do not have an adverse impact on any particular group.

The link to this form is here: [click here](#). If you have any problems with this, please contact Lizzy on: [lt@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:lt@thewlisgraham.com).

Any information provided on this form will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used for statistical purposes only. It will not be seen by anybody directly involved in the selection process. No information will be published or used in any way which allows any individual to be identified.

Thank you