Governance

Increasing the effectiveness, capability and diversity of higher education governance
Universities are increasingly complex, global organisations operating in a fast-moving environment. Good governance is a critical component of institutional success – and even survival. We offer a portfolio of sector-focused services that catalyse, stimulate and drive improvement in the leadership, governance and management of UK higher education.

Our governance services are designed and delivered in close collaboration with a wide range of sector partners, including the Committee of University Chairs, Universities UK, GuildHE, the National Union of Students, the Quality Assurance Agency, and the Association of Heads of University Administration.

At the heart of our governance portfolio is specialised support, development, training and external evaluations for higher education governors, governing bodies and governance professionals across all parts of the UK. Our experts work with individuals, institutions and the sector as a whole. We support all types of provider, including research-intensive universities, large teaching universities, small and specialist institutions, alternative providers and further education colleges.

“Excellent input from high quality speakers in a forum that enabled reflection and debate”.
Participant on Leading the Board
Our governance services

**Governor Development Programme**

“High quality presentations and good networking opportunity”
Participant on Being an Effective Governor

Regularly updated and refreshed in response to the dynamic challenges facing the sector, the Governor Development Programme is a tailored national training programme designed to support and develop governors from across UK higher education.

“An informative and comprehensive guide to what to expect as a new governor and how you can make an impact”
Participant on Toolkit for Governors

The range of specialised events we offer covers such topics as:
- Leading the board (for chairs, vice-chairs or sub-committee chairs)
- Joint workshops for chairs of governing bodies and vice-chancellors
- Women onto boards
- Students as governors
- Staff as governors
- Making governance work
- A toolkit for governors
- Governors in Scotland and Wales – reflecting the differences within the home nations
- Governors in small and/or specialist institutions
- A range of key thematic issues including academic governance, internationalisation, higher education finance and the Prevent Duty

“A thoroughly enjoyable day, informative and insightful with much learned from networking as well as the presentations”
Participant on Student, Staff and New Governors, Scotland

Taking part in the Governor Development Programme provides a unique opportunity to network and share best practice.

**Chatham House discussions**

We provide forums for the exploration and discussion of topical and sometimes sensitive issues. Led by experienced governors and governance professionals, our programme of 90-minute Chatham House discussions covers a diverse range of topics, including:
- Vice-chancellor recruitment
- Financial sustainability
- Efficiency in higher education
- Academic governance
- Diversity
- Trustee responsibilities
- The Prevent duty

**External reviews of governing body effectiveness**

The higher education code of governance recommends that higher education governing bodies periodically commission an external review of their effectiveness.

Drawing upon an unrivalled pool of governance experts with experience from within and beyond higher education, including relevant practice from other sectors and internationally, we offer a range of expertise in the delivery of these sensitive and important reviews. We recognise the diversity of the sector by making sure our reviews are customised to the characteristics and context of each institution – so reviews can range from facilitated workshops to a full data-driven comparative exercise.

We also have unique access to benchmark data through our Governing Body Evaluation Tool. This uses qualitative and quantitative measures to capture the performance and impact of governing bodies, which in turn enables insightful comparative analysis with other institutions.

**Online training**

Run over five weeks, in partnership with the University of York, Rethinking Governance takes around two to three hours a week and provides both an introduction for new governors and an opportunity for more experienced governors to consolidate their knowledge. It encompasses governance in higher education and comparative analysis between higher education governance and approaches in other sectors, such as health and charities.
Bespoke development and training

We support in-house development and training by designing and delivering training for governing bodies that can be offered as part of an away-day, as an adjunct to a full meeting or as a dedicated session.

We regularly facilitate workshops, strategic away-days and other events with the board or council, drawing upon our knowledge and understanding of the higher education landscape and practice in the sector, and bringing external objectivity to the deliberations.

Bespoke events are tailored to the needs and priorities of each governing body, and we build the content and delivery around its specific requirements.

“We would recommend wholeheartedly to fellow governors and will look out for other days in the future”
Participant on Toolkit for Governors

Development programme for clerks and secretaries

In addition to our extensive support for individual governors and full governing bodies, we also deliver professional development programmes for clerks, secretaries and other staff in the governance community. These programmes combine detailed policy intelligence about governance within and outside higher education, support for working with the chair and vice-chancellor/head of institution, supporting effective boards, and professional development and progression through action learning.

“This programme is by far the best professional development I’ve undertaken in my career. Its mix of theory and practice, class discussion and action learning sets has made it an engaging, thought-provoking and inspiring programme.

It has provided a supportive and good humoured environment to reflect on the practice of governance”.
Participant on the Clerks and Secretaries Programme

Governance publications and resources

We regularly publish and produce resources for governors. On our website we host a range of materials, including our Governance Briefing Notes, a Self-Assessment Tool for governors, our Resource Bank, our Governor Dialogue series and our Equality and Diversity Toolkit for governors (in partnership with the Equality Challenge Unit).

These resources include the popular Getting to Grips series of guides, specifically written for governors. Topics include Finance, Procurement, Being a New Governor, Information and Technology, Academic Standards, Quality and Student Experience, Internationalisation, Research and Knowledge Transfer, Audit, Estates and Infrastructure, Human Resource Management and Risk Management. New guides and updates to existing materials are regularly developed - new publications due throughout 2017 include The Governor as Trustee and The Efficiency Agenda in Higher Education.

Staying on top of the key issues

Keeping up to date of developments relevant to higher education governance can be a real challenge. So we provide a range of services to help governors navigate the dynamic policy environment of UK higher education:

• Governance News Alerts, highlighting topical and emerging issues of interest for the governance community. To receive our Governance News Alerts as they are posted, register at governance@lfhe.ac.uk.

• A monthly bulletin on governance, which provides a summary of the news alerts and other information added to the governance section of the Leadership Foundation website during the previous month.

• The Governance JISCmail forum for those supporting governors and governance in HEIs to discuss issues and ask questions of their contemporaries. To join the list, please register at governance@lfhe.ac.uk.

For more information

To find out more or to make an enquiry about our services please contact Aaron Porter (associate director governance): aaron.porter@lfhe.ac.uk

www.lfhe.ac.uk/governance