

NCUK

THE UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM

Non-Executive Director (Finance)

Candidate Information Pack (December 2023)

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Advert

Role: Non-Executive Director (Finance)

Compensation: The role attracts a taxable, non-superannuable fee of £3,200 per annum, paid quarterly (and subject to an inflationary increase effective from the anticipated start date for this position).

Time commitment: Our Board members are expected to prepare for and attend four Board of Directors meetings annually, and to take part in at least one sub-committee of the Board, normally involving two additional meetings per year. The postholder for this finance specialist role will be asked to chair our Business Assurance Committee (which is similar in remit to a Finance, Audit and Risk Committee).

Location: Our head offices are located in Manchester. Board meetings vary between online, physical meetings in Manchester and physical meetings in London.

NCUK is a unique provider of pathways programmes through which international students can gain access to UK Higher Education. We are a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Northern Consortium, a charity founded by UK universities. Over our 30-year history we have supported the progression of over 40,000 international students to our partner universities and we have a well-established reputation for delivering high-quality educational programmes and associated services.

We came through the Covid-19 pandemic in a strong position but we recognise impact that the pandemic, changing trends in international student migration and changing attitudes towards modes of study continues to have on the market higher education pathways. We are in the early stages of implementation of a new strategy for sustainability and growth, and in the later stages of a digital transformation programme which is already having a positive impact on ways of working and our market potential.

We are seeking to recruit a Non-Executive Director (NED) to join our Board of Directors with specific skills and experience in finance. We are particularly interested in applications from people with:

- prior experience as a NED;
- senior experience in strategic financial management and audit, ideally in UK higher education;
- experience as an employee or NED in a small and medium enterprise (SMEs) or an ability to adapt their experience to suit oversight of an SME.

In order to make a full contribution to our Board, it will be important to ensure that individuals are free from conflicts of interest or that any potential for actual or perceived conflict of interest can be easily managed.

How to apply

We are managing this recruitment process directly. If you have any queries or would like further information regarding the position, please contact alan.white@ncuk.ac.uk for an informal conversation.

The closing date for applications is **17:00 (BST) on Friday 22 December 2023.**

Applications should consist of:

- A full CV, including the names and email address of two referees (referees will not be approached prior to interview).

- A covering letter (maximum of 2 pages) setting out your interest in the role and details of how you match the experience criteria of the person specification.

Key dates

- Closing date for applications is 17:00 (BST) on Friday 22 December 2023
- First stage interviews will be held remotely in early January 2024
- Final interviews are likely to be held in person in London or Manchester in late January 2024.

Board of Directors meetings are diarised until the end of the 2023/24 academic year as follows:

- Thursday 01 February 2024
- Thursday 02 May 2024
- Thursday 01 August 2024

About NCUK

NCUK is a unique organisation. A consortium of leading international universities, NCUK provides overseas students with guaranteed access to universities through our pathway qualifications. More than 40,000 students have successfully progressed to NCUK universities worldwide by completing our qualifications. Our qualifications combine the highest of academic standards with exceptional language, study and cultural skills, and are currently delivered in more than 30 different countries across four continents. NCUK is a trading subsidiary of the Northern Consortium, a registered educational charity.

What we do

NCUK develops and maintains academic qualifications that prepare students for entry to university. The company also provides university application support services which assists NCUK students in progressing to university following the completion of their course.

NCUK licences delivery of its academic qualifications to Delivery Partners, and we currently have 100+ Delivery Partners across 30+ countries. NCUK's Delivery Partners have an average of around 30 students and our largest partnership, the Sino British College (SBC) in Shanghai, has over 1500 students registered on NCUK qualifications.

Academic Qualifications

NCUK currently offers the following qualifications:

- The NCUK International Foundation Year (IFY) is a modular qualification that prepares students for first-year entry to a wide range of bachelor degree courses. Students take a combination of three modules appropriate for their intended degree course and one of NCUK English for Academic Purposes for proof of English where needed.
- The NCUK International Year One (IYOne) in Business, Engineering and Law are first-year undergraduate degree level equivalent qualifications that articulate into the second year of selected undergraduate degree courses at NCUK Universities. The IYOne can be combined with the IFY to form a 2+2 study programme.
- The NCUK International Year Two (IYTTwo) in Business is a second-year undergraduate level equivalent qualification that articulates into the third year of Business undergraduate degree courses at select NCUK Universities. The IYTTwo in Business can be combined with the IFY and IYOne to form a 3+1 study programme.
- The NCUK Master's Programme (MP) provides specialised English for Academic Purposes (EAP) training and an introduction to the research skills needed for success at Master's level.

NCUK Universities

NCUK has developed partnerships with a 45+ universities worldwide, including the original 10 founder members of the Northern Consortium as well as additional universities in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the USA, the Caribbean and Malaysia. These NCUK Universities are the primary progression destinations for students completing NCUK qualifications.

In addition to these universities further agreements are in place with other international universities.

NCUK Staff

NCUK employs approximately 50 permanent staff and buys in services from around 75 external contractors, particularly for academic development and examination activities.

Most of the staff are based in the UK, predominantly in Manchester, with a small team based in a representative office in Beijing, China as well as other members of staff being situated in various locations in the Asia region.

Context and Purpose of the Role

NCUK's Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) support the company's success by bringing independence, impartiality, experience, specialist knowledge and personal qualities to the Board and providing external oversight and constructive challenge to the Executive, through meetings of NCUK's Board of Directors, which is normally convened four times a year.

As a NED you will be asked to contribute to the governance of the company across the following areas:

- Strategic direction
- Digital transformation
- Operational performance
- Business improvement and development
- Communications
- Academic quality
- Compliance
- Appointments and remuneration
- Risk

Your individual contribution will vary dependent on your own skills and experience. These will be assessed upon your appointment, and from time to time thereafter.

Responsibilities

Statutory Responsibilities

Non-Executive Directors of NCUK Ltd are required to undertake statutory the duties of Directors as defined in the Companies Act 2006 which are summarised below:

1. To act within your powers as a Director and in accordance with the company's constitution;
2. To promote the success of the company;
3. To exercise independent judgement;
4. To exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence;
5. To avoid conflicts of interest;
6. To not accept benefits from third parties;
7. To declare interest in proposed transactions or arrangements;

Additional Responsibilities

8. To attend meetings of NCUK's Board of Directors and prepare adequately for those meetings;
9. To scrutinise the performance of the company and its Executive against its agreed KPIs, goals and objectives;

ROLE DESCRIPTION

10. To ensure that you are satisfied with the quality and integrity of information provided to the Board;
11. To ensure that you are satisfied that systems of financial control and risk management within the company are robust and defensible;
12. To provide constructive challenge with respect to strategy, budgets, business plans and risk management;
13. To offer advice and insight to the Board and the Executive based on your knowledge, skills and experience;
14. To behave in accordance with NCUK's Conflict of Interest Policy;
15. To develop and maintain sufficient knowledge of NCUK's business, and its context, to be able to act with reasonable care, skill and diligence as a Director.

EXPERIENCE / KNOWLEDGE	ESSENTIAL (✓)	DESIRABLE (✓)
Previous employment in a senior leadership role	✓	
Experience of providing external organisational oversight as a NED, charitable Trustee or as an external auditor		✓
An understanding of the market for international higher education		✓
Specialist knowledge of strategic financial management and audit, ideally in UK Higher Education	✓	
PERSONAL QUALITIES OR STYLE	ESSENTIAL (✓)	DESIRABLE (✓)
Excellent communication and interpersonal skills	✓	
Able to challenge and engage in constructive discussion and debate	✓	
Excellent attention to detail	✓	
Culturally aware and committed to equality and diversity	✓	
Scrupulous and committed to maintaining commercial confidentiality	✓	

VISION, MISSION, VALUES

<h2>Agile</h2>  <p>We respond to market demand proactively and creatively to maximise quality, reputation and impact.</p>	<h2>Bold</h2>  <p>We believe in our capabilities and innovate to achieve ambitious goals.</p>	<h2>Committed</h2>  <p>We are committed to the pursuit of quality for our partners, students and the business.</p>	<h2>Expert</h2>  <p>We are experts in our field, and confidently apply our deep sector knowledge to realise our mission.</p>	<h2>Driven</h2>  <p>We are committed to our goals in the long term, and are dedicated to progressing towards them each day.</p>	<h2>Connected</h2>  <p>We are dedicated to building a global NCUK community with a shared vision for success.</p>
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