

Governance

Strategic Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Strategic Advisory Groups (SAGs) have been established as part of Advance HE's consultative approach to actively engage members in shaping the activity and future direction of the organisation to ensure that Advance HE meets the needs of members. This will involve:
- Reviewing and shaping Advance HE's priorities within each relevant area;
 - Identifying current and emerging strategic issues, challenges and opportunities to inform the future work of Advance HE;
 - Considering the implications of thematic areas of work for each relevant area; and
 - Advising Advance HE on implementing an integrated approach maximizing the synergies between the areas of equality, leadership, governance and education.

2. Duties

- 2.1 The Governance SAG are responsible for:
- a) Contributing to good governance of the sector;
 - b) Providing strategic advice and insight regarding the current provision and future development of support for governance effectiveness by Advance HE, to meet the needs of members and stakeholders;
 - c) Identifying current and emerging strategic governance issues, challenges and opportunities including for collaborative working, across sectors and in a global context;
 - d) Providing scrutiny to Advance HE's priority plans for governance, offering critical challenge and advice as required; and
 - e) Ensuring connectivity to other areas of HE policy and practice such as leadership development and equality, diversity and inclusion.
- 2.2 To consider any other governance related matters as may be referred to it by Advance HE's Board and sub-committees.

3. Membership

- 3.1 The maximum number of members will be 18 members drawn from Advance HE member institutions, strategic partners and nominated organisations, to provide a range of skills and perspectives on governance in practice in higher education. Other members may be appointed for their specific skills and experience.

3.2 Ideally, membership will comprise:

- 1 x active or recent student union CEO (given charity governance experience, interface with institutions and understanding of HE)
- 1 x College-based HE member representative – governor or staff
- 1 x Chair of a specialist provider member
- 1 x Secretary from an international member
- 2-3 x Governors (including Chairs or Chairs of Committees) from member institutions with corporate, health or charity governance expertise/experience (ideally one being a Chair or member of Audit committee)
- 1 x academic governance expert – i.e. Provost/Registrar
- 2 x active or recent student governors
- 1 x active governance researcher
- 2 x CUC member Chairs, one of which is a member of the Executive
- 3 x AHUA (one to be from Executive)
- 1 x Committee of the Chairs of Scottish Higher Education Institutions (CSC) Chair

3.3 Members will be appointed for a two or three year term of office. All members will be reviewed at the end of each term to ensure fresh and diverse perspectives.

3.4 The Governance SAG will require specific skills and expertise as outlined in the person specification (**annex A**).

3.5 Members will be appointed by responding to a call for expressions of interest for membership made by Advance HE to eligible parties as and when roles are available. The selection of members will be made by Advance HE's Chief Executive's Group in conference with the Governance SAG Chair.

3.6 The Governance SAG Chair will be appointed from within the membership by members of the Chief Executive's Group.

3.7 The Advance HE Executive Director for Membership, Innovation and Development will lead on all Strategic Advisory Groups. Other Advance HE staff will be invited to attend as appropriate.

4. Meetings

4.1 The Governance SAG shall meet remotely two times each academic year (once per term).

4.2 Secretariat support will be provided by Advance HE.

Next review date: August 2023

Annex A

Governance Strategic Advisory Group

Person Specification

Experience and Expertise

- Successful track record of leading and / or managing in complex organisations (including student leadership)
- High level of understanding of HE in a variety of contexts
- Appreciation of the HE policy landscape in particular relation to the importance of governance
- Experience of Board and committee work
- Commitment to the values and principles of Advance HE
- Highly developed interpersonal and communication skills
- Ability to understand complex strategic issues, analyse and resolve difficult problems
- Sound independent judgement, common sense and diplomacy

Diversity of Perspective

In selecting members, consideration will be given to having diversity of perspective through ensuring the following:

- A mixture of knowledge of types of HEIs (e.g. Small and specialist, research intensive etc.)
- Representation from the 4 UK nations
- Representation from different mission groups and sectors
- Representation from non-UK countries covering International members
- A mixture of understanding of staff and student issues
- Diversity of protected characteristics
- A range of understanding governance from student, secretary, governor and Chair roles