



Appointment to the Board of The Higher Education Authority

Closing Date: Midnight on 13th January 2016

**State Boards Division
Public Appointments Service
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State Boards.ie operates under the auspices of the Public Appointments Service and is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

The Public Appointments Service (PAS), established under statute in 2004, provides an independent shared service in recruitment, assessment and selection to organisations across the Civil and Public Services. On 30 September 2014, the Government decided that the PAS should also be given responsibility for putting in place an open, accessible, rigorous and transparent system to support Ministers in making appointments to State Boards. Our dedicated website, www.stateboards.ie, is the channel through which the PAS advertises vacancies on State Boards. It is also the means through which accomplished, experienced and qualified people, including people who might not previously have been identified as available for appointment, can then apply to be considered for particular vacancies.

Membership of State Boards

High standards of corporate governance in all State Agencies, whether in the commercial or non-commercial sphere, are critical to ensuring a positive contribution to the State's overall social and economic development.

Members of State Boards are appointed to act on behalf of the citizen to oversee the running of the affairs of state bodies. State bodies must serve the interests of the taxpayer, pursue value for money in their endeavours (including managing risk appropriately), and act transparently as public entities. Members of State Boards, and the relevant management team, are accountable for the proper management of the organisation.

Board members should act on a fully informed basis, in good faith, with due diligence and care, and in the best interest of the State body, subject to the objectives set by Government. In that regard and in accordance with 13.2 of the Guidelines on Appointments to State Boards, "it is advisable that no member of a State Board should serve more than two full terms of appointment or should hold appointments to more than two State Boards."

The [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies](#) provides a framework for the application of best practice in corporate governance by both commercial and non-commercial State bodies.

In order to be an effective contributor on a State Board it is recommended that members should:

- bring independent and objective scrutiny to the oversight of the organisation;
- be prepared to be challenging when necessary while being supportive to the delivery of organisational strategy and objectives;
- be equipped to offer considered advice on the basis of sound judgement and experience;
- be prepared to make a time commitment to their work commensurate with their role.

Appointments to the Board of the Higher Education Authority

Board Meeting Location:	Meetings will generally be in Dublin, but at least one per annum will be held in a higher education institution either in Dublin or outside.
Number of Vacancies:	9 (A Chairperson and 8 Ordinary Members)
Remuneration:	€11,970 per annum for Chairperson and €7,695 per annum for Ordinary Members. (It should be noted that in line with the 'One Person One Salary' principle, no public servant will be entitled to receive remuneration in the form of board fees, save for situations that are statutorily provided for e.g. Worker Directors).
Time Requirements:	6/7 meetings per annum. In addition, membership of one or two standing committees who each meet 4/5 times annually

1. Background:

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) is the statutory funding authority for the universities, institutes of technology and a number of other designated institutions and is the advisory body to the Minister for Education and Skills in relation to the higher education sector. The HEA also has responsibility for the effective governance and regulation of higher education institutions and the higher education system. As such the HEA is the lead organisation for the development of a higher education and research system that meets the needs of Irish society and the Irish economy and is accountable to the Minister for Education and Skills for that leadership. The Department of Education and Skills and the HEA agree an annual service level agreement.

A key aim of the HEA is to create a higher education system that maximises opportunities and ensures a high quality experience for students. The HEA also performs an advocacy role for higher education to students, Government, employers and the general public.

In 2015 the HEA was responsible for the allocation of c €1.1bn exchequer funding to the higher education institutions.

The Irish Research Council operates as a sub-board of the HEA and is responsible primarily for funding early stage career researchers: namely, postgraduate students and postdoctoral researchers. The Council allocates c. €40m in Exchequer and EU funding. In addition the HEA and Council are responsible for c. €8.5m administrative costs.

The HEA and IRC currently employ c. 55 staff but anticipate filling a number of vacancies in early 2016.

Functions and Legislation:

The HEA was established in 1972 and its general functions derive from the following legislation:

- 1971 Higher Education Authority Act;
- 1997 Universities Act;
- 2006 Institute of Technology Act

These functions include:

- Furthering the development of higher education
- Assisting in the co-ordination of the state investments in higher education and preparing proposals for such investment
- Promoting an appreciation of the value of higher education and research
- Promoting the equality of opportunity in higher education
- Promoting the democratization of the structure of higher education
- Promoting the attainment and maintenance of excellence in learning, teaching and research in higher education (from 2006 Act)

Further functions from the 1971 Act include:

- Advising the Minister on the need for the establishment of new institutions.
- Maintain a continuous review of the demand and need for higher education.
- Conduct and publish studies on challenges affecting higher education and research
- Assess amount of state financial provision, both current and capital, which recommends for higher education and research.
- Allocate among Universities, Institutes of Technology and the designated institutions the grants voted by the Oireachtas.

Under the 1997 Universities Act, and the subsequent Institutes of Technology Act 2006 the Higher Education Authority's remit was broadened, and it now carries out an additional number of functions in respect of the higher education sector.

Areas covered include review of:

- Strategic development plans
- Quality Assurance procedures
- Equality and access policies & implementation
- Frameworks for: Salary Departures; Borrowing; payments to staff by Institutional Corporations; Acquisition of Land.

National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030:

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 assigns certain operational responsibilities to the HEA including establishing significant key performance indicators for the sector, engaging in strategic dialogue with individual institutions, and leading and driving the process of structural change.

It is the responsibility of the HEA to ensure that institutional objectives are aligned with national objectives, as set out in the Minister for Education & Skills performance framework, and that performance is measured against these objectives and funding allocations made accordingly.

As part of the implementation of the National Strategy, the HEA provided advice to the Minister for Education and Skills on a system configuration and inter-institutional collaboration in April 2013. In May 2014 the Minister initiated a major programme of structural reform which provides for a new relationship between the State and HEIs. In July 2013 the Minister published the first System Performance Framework for the higher education system and the first Systems Performance Report was published in June 2014.

Further details on the HEA may be accessed on the HEA website - www.heai.ie.

2. Functions of the Board:

The Board is collectively responsible for promoting the success of the HEA by leading and directing the Authority's activities. It provides strategic guidance to the HEA executive team and monitors the activities and effectiveness of management. The HEA has a schedule of matters reserved for the Board. Specifically the Board is responsible for the following:

- Set strategic direction in approving HEA statements of strategy and its implementation through annual work plans
- Approve allocation of exchequer funding
- Approve policy advice
- Approve HEA governance arrangements
- Approve functions assigned to the HEA under legislation

3. Composition of the Board:

The schedule to the HEA Act, 1971 states:

"The members of An tÚdarás shall be a chairman and not more than eighteen ordinary members of whom at least seven shall be academic members and at least seven shall be other than academic members."

The National Strategy made recommendations regarding functions of the HEA and structure of the HEA board. The strategy recommends that the board "should have no more than 12 members", including at least two from outside Ireland. These recommendations are under consideration by the Department of Education and Skills and may give rise to changes in the membership of the board in the medium term. Any changes to the composition of the board will require legislative change.

As provided for under the existing legislative provisions, the Government, on the recommendation of the Minister for Education and Skills, will be appointing a Chairperson and eight ordinary members to the Authority, four of whom will be required to be academic members.

The HEA has the following standing Committees:

- Audit Committee – meets minimum 4 times per annum
- Finance Committee – meets minimum of 4 times per annum
- System Development and Performance Management Committee – meets minimum of 4 times per annum
- Policy and Planning Committee - meets minimum of 4 times per annum
- Joint HEA/IRC Research and Graduate Education Committee - meets minimum of 4 times per annum
- Pension Appeals Committee – convened as required.

Name	Appointed	Position type
Anthony Staines (Prof)	March 6, 2012	Board Member
Bahram Bekhradnia	March 6, 2012	Board Member
Brian Thornes (Dr)	March 6, 2012	Board Member
Declan Walsh	March 12, 2014	Board Member
Gordon Ryan	March 6, 2012	Board Member
Jim Mountjoy (Dr)	March 6, 2012	Board Member

John Hennessy	Jan. 25, 2011	Chairperson
Kevin Donoghue	July 1, 2015	Board Member
Mary Canning (Dr)	March 6, 2012	Board Member
Siobhan Harkin	March 6, 2012	Board Member
Stephen Kinsella (Dr)	March 12, 2014	Board Member

4. Person Specification:

Applications are now invited from suitably qualified applicants with a demonstrable interest in the work of the HEA, for the position of Chair of the HEA Board and the eight other vacancies for ordinary membership.

Having regard to the provisions of the HEA Act and the existing membership, **a minimum of four** of the new ordinary member appointments must be an academic in a higher education institution.

As outlined above, the HEA is currently overseeing a programme of reform in the higher education system and this informs the competencies considered desirable in the composition of this Board.

Applicants **must** have experience that satisfies the criteria in **one or more** of the categories set out at a to g below.

a. Strategic Management:

Significant experience in developing and implementing strategy in a large public or private sector organisation.

b. Finance and audit:

Significant senior level practical experience in finance and audit in a public or private organisation, together with a qualification / membership of a professional body in the area. Previous experience of forensic accounting, membership of an audit committee or administering/auditing a large and complex budget are desirable.

c. Risk, regulation and compliance:

Significant senior level experience in the areas of law, risk management and/or regulation in either a public or private organisation.

d. Human resource management and pension administration:

Significant senior level experience in the areas of human resource management and/or pension administration in either a public or private organisation.

e. Business and enterprise:

Significant senior level experience as a business leader in either the Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) or Multi-National Enterprise (MNE) sectors. The applicant must have experience in one of the following areas:

- i. Recruiting and working directly with Irish and international graduates of higher education institutions, or
- ii. business innovation, and/or
- iii. research.

For **all positions above** it is desirable that applicants have:

- Previous board experience

- Knowledge of the Higher Education sector

f. Academic:

Applicants must, at the time of appointment to the board, hold an academic post, ideally with extensive academic and senior level experience, in an institute of higher education (University, Institute of Technology etc.) either in the State or internationally. It is also desirable that applicants have previous board experience. Appointments under this area of competence will be made with a view to ensuring a balance of national and international expertise on the board.

g. Chairperson:

Applicants must have significant senior management level experience in corporate governance (including strategy, governance and change management) in a large/complex organisation. They must also have previous board experience. Experience chairing a board is desirable.

The Minister shall have regard to the desirability for gender balance on the Board as the Minister considers appropriate and determines from time to time when making appointments.

5. Terms of Appointment:

Appointments to the Authority will be for a period not exceeding five years with the possibility of serving a second term not exceeding five years, subject to:

- The membership of any member of the Board may be terminated by the Minister at any time, on the basis of reasons to be stated by the Minister.
- A member having served two consecutive terms, of whatever length, shall not be eligible for further appointment until a period of two years has elapsed.
- A member of the Board may resign his or her membership of the Authority by notice in writing sent or given to the Minister, and the resignation shall take effect on the day on which the Minister receives the notice.
- Members of the Authority shall, subject to the provisions of this Schedule, hold office upon such terms and conditions as the Minister may, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, from time to time determine. The roles and responsibilities of Board Members are described in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2009 (under review) which is available on the Department's website.
- A Board member shall cease to be a member of the board if he or she is nominated as a member of Seanad Éireann, is elected as a member of either House of the Oireachtas or as a representative in the European Parliament, elected to the European Parliament, or becomes a member of a local authority

6. Submitting your expression of interest:

If you are interested in this position, please review the self-assessment questionnaire which can be found on www.stateboards.ie. Please note that the questionnaire is designed to help you in considering whether to submit an expression of interest - you are not required to submit the questionnaire as part of the application process.

Having considered the general suitability criteria for membership of a State Board, you should consider carefully how your background and experience fits with the specific appointment criteria set out in Section 4 - Person Specification in this booklet.

If you decide that you wish to be considered for appointment, we welcome you submitting your expression of interest via the following link www.stateboards.ie together with your detailed Curriculum Vitae and a cover letter (see Appendix 1 of this booklet for help with the online process).

IMPORTANT NOTE

Please take care when submitting your expression of interest. As the Assessment Panel will generally make its recommendation(s) based on consideration of the documentation which you submit, it is most important that you do the following:

1. Ensure your Cover Letter (and supporting CV) clearly specifies how your particular background and experience meets the requirements of the Board position(s) specified in this booklet, and
2. That you fully answer any supplementary questions which are presented to you as part of our online application process.

This will help ensure that the Assessment Panel is as informed as possible as to the basis for your candidature and why you believe you are a person who could potentially be appointed to this State Board.

7. Assessment Process:

An Assessment Panel (the "Panel") will be convened by PAS to consider and assess the expressions of interest received by the PAS via www.stateboards.ie. The Panel will:

- review and discuss the expressions of interest received against the specific appointment criteria for the role;
- assess potential appointees further, once they meet the specified appointment criteria, by undertaking any or all of the following steps:
 - Consideration of the written applications; and/or
 - Meeting/conference call; and/or
 - Referee checks;
 - Any other selection method deemed appropriate.
- compile a list of people deemed suitable for appointment which will then be sent forward for consideration by the Minister.

If you have any questions regarding the application process please email info@stateboards.ie.

8. Confidentiality:

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts, 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence. All enquires, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside those directly involved in that aspect of the process.

Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from computer records for general statistical purposes.

9. Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003:

For further information on Data Protection please follow the [link](#)

The Public Appointments Service thanks you for your interest in State Board appointments.

APPENDIX 1

Submitting your expression of interest

In order to submit your application, you should take the following steps:

1. Go to www.stateboards.ie.
2. On the bar at the top of the page click on "Available Appointments".
3. This brings you to a page with all our advertised vacancies. Select whichever position you would like to apply for (you are welcome to apply for more than one position if you wish).
4. On the relevant page please click on the "apply for position" button at the bottom of the page
5. This will bring you to a page on www.publicjobs.ie and, if you already have a publicjobs.ie account, will prompt you for your username and password. If you do not have an account you will be asked to create one.
6. Once you input your details you will be brought to a page where there is a prompt in the middle of the page which says "apply here". Click on the link to the online application form beside it.
7. A form will appear on your screen, some of the text boxes will be populated with information from your publicjobs.ie profile (Name, address etc.). You will need to complete the rest of the fields and enter your name and the date at the bottom of the form. Click on "continue".
8. You will then be brought to a screen where you should upload your CV and Cover Letter. These are required documents and your application cannot be processed without them. Once you have selected these and uploaded them, please click on the "submit" button at the bottom of the page.
9. You will receive an e-mail confirmation (to the address listed in your publicjobs.ie profile) to confirm that your application has been submitted.

You must confirm that you do not have any conflicts of interest or legal impediment which would be likely to interfere with your ability to play a full part on the Board. You must also confirm that you can make yourself available to attend meetings and to carry out the duties of a Board member.