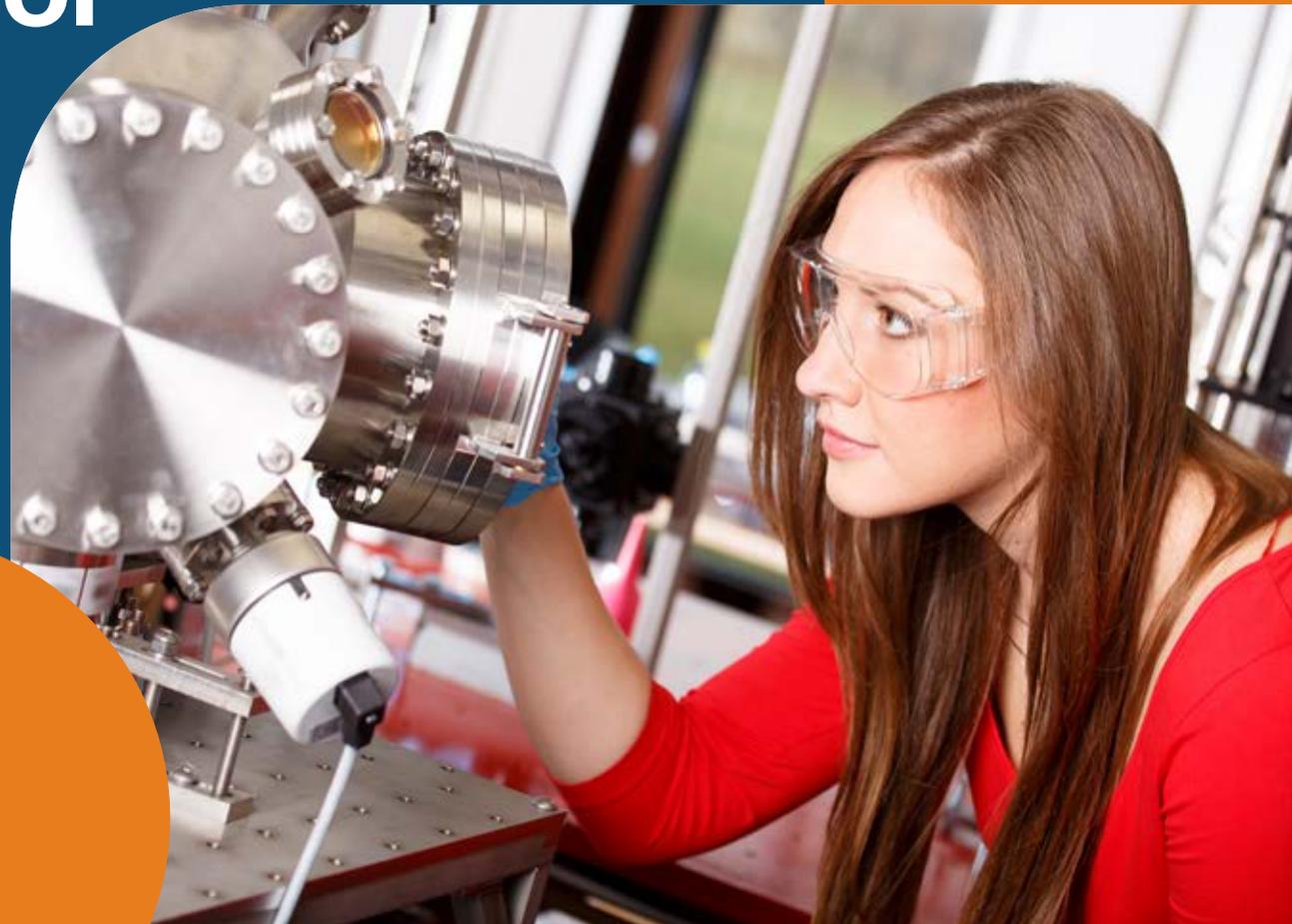




Department
for Education

Further Education Commissioner for England

Information pack



WELCOME



Thank you for your interest in applying to become the next Further Education Commissioner for England.

In this exciting, challenging and high profile role, you will lead the next steps in the work to ensure that further education and sixth form colleges across England are in the strongest possible position to provide an outstanding standard of education and training. As Further Education Commissioner, you will work directly with me, with my ministerial team, with colleges and civil servants, as well as your own dedicated team of Deputy FE Commissioners and Advisers in taking forward this vital work.

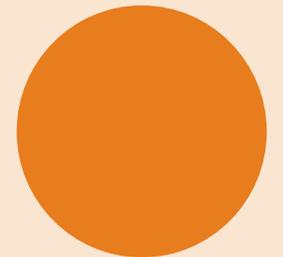
At a critical time for further education, and with the Further Education Reform White Paper due for publication this autumn, you will take the next steps in the outstanding work that has been driven forward by Richard Atkins CBE and Sir David Collins, since the FE Commissioner role was created in 2013. Richard and Sir David have already shown the change that can be effected and the improvements that can be achieved by the FE Commissioner and their team, and I am now looking for the next outstanding candidate to lead this work.

I am looking for candidates with a deep understanding of the FE sector who have an outstanding track record of leadership, delivery and achievement combined with excellent people skills and the ability to drive work with energy, passion and skill.

My Department is focused on equality of opportunity and I am committed to ensuring that public appointments better represent the views of the communities which they serve. I particularly encourage applicants from underrepresented groups, those based outside London and the South-East and applicants who have achieved success through non-traditional educational routes.

If you think you have the requisite skills and experience, and if you share my passion and commitment to ensure that we are able to deliver a world-class further education sector in England, then I look forward to hearing from you.

Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP
Secretary of State for Education



ABOUT THE ROLE

The role of FE Commissioner was created in 2013 as an independent adviser to ministers. The Commissioner is a public appointment by the Secretary of State for Education and reports to the skills minister Gillian Keegan.

The FE Commissioner, working closely with colleagues in the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) supports improvement in our national network of further education and sixth form colleges, as well as working with local authorities, specialist designated institutions and other organisations – to deliver high quality outcomes for learners, and to meet local economic need.

The FE Commissioner leads a team of around 18 deputy FE commissioners and FE advisers, made up mainly of former FE college principals or deputy principals and directors of finance. The structure and role of the team that the FE Commissioner leads has developed continually since 2013, and we expect you as the new appointee to have a pivotal role in shaping the future structure of the function.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

College support and intervention

As FE Commissioner, you and your team will take a key role in working with colleges to improve the quality of education for learners, strengthen financial resilience, improve the quality of leadership and reduce the risk of colleges requiring interventions. You will do so as an integrated part of the Department for Education (DfE)'s overall approach to intervention, within the context of the ESFA case management approach. As such you will work closely with key teams within ESFA, as well as the wider DfE and Ofsted. You will also work alongside broader partners including the Education and Training Foundation, the Association of Colleges, the Sixth Form Colleges Association and other representative groups, as well as with employers and employer representatives.

Our intent as part of our broader reforms to the FE system is that all colleges should move to a regular strategic dialogue with the ESFA, supported by your practitioner expertise as FE Commissioner, around their strategic opportunities and risks and how they most effectively meet local economic and learner need. We intend to further develop recent changes to move beyond a focus on addressing failure, or risk of failure, working with all colleges across the sector to support excellence.

Where necessary, you will undertake formal interventions when serious weaknesses and risk of failure have been identified, including assessing the capacity of the existing governance and leadership to deliver rapid, sustainable improvement, and making recommendations to secure improvement.

You and your team will also be involved in providing advice on the development and/or delivery of programmes such as the College Collaboration Fund (CCF) and the FE capital investment programme, and other future programmes which may have an impact on the FE sector.

You will recruit and deploy national leaders of further education (NLFEs) and national leaders of governance (NLGs) for further education to support college leaders and governors.

Overseeing local improvement and ensuring local skills needs are met

You will play a key role in driving forward the programme of FE reform that the Secretary of State for Education announced in July 2020. You will also be central to ensuring that the right, high quality further education provision is available locally across the country. This currently includes leading structural reviews to examine options for achieving excellent provision where the issues in a local area cannot be solved by looking at individual institutions in isolation. It also includes leading structure and prospects appraisals (SPAs), to assess options around how to change a college's structure and provision where the evidence shows that this is needed. This approach is likely to evolve further in line with our broader FE reform programme, including recommending restructuring provision in a locality encompassing several colleges.

Working with system leaders to bring FE practitioner expertise into government and share best practice across the sector

As FE Commissioner, you will be a key advisor to DfE ministers, providing guidance and advice about the sector directly into government. You will also chair the Principals' Reference Group, made up of leading college principals, who advise ministers regularly on sector developments. You will communicate regularly with the FE sector, sharing news and best practice.

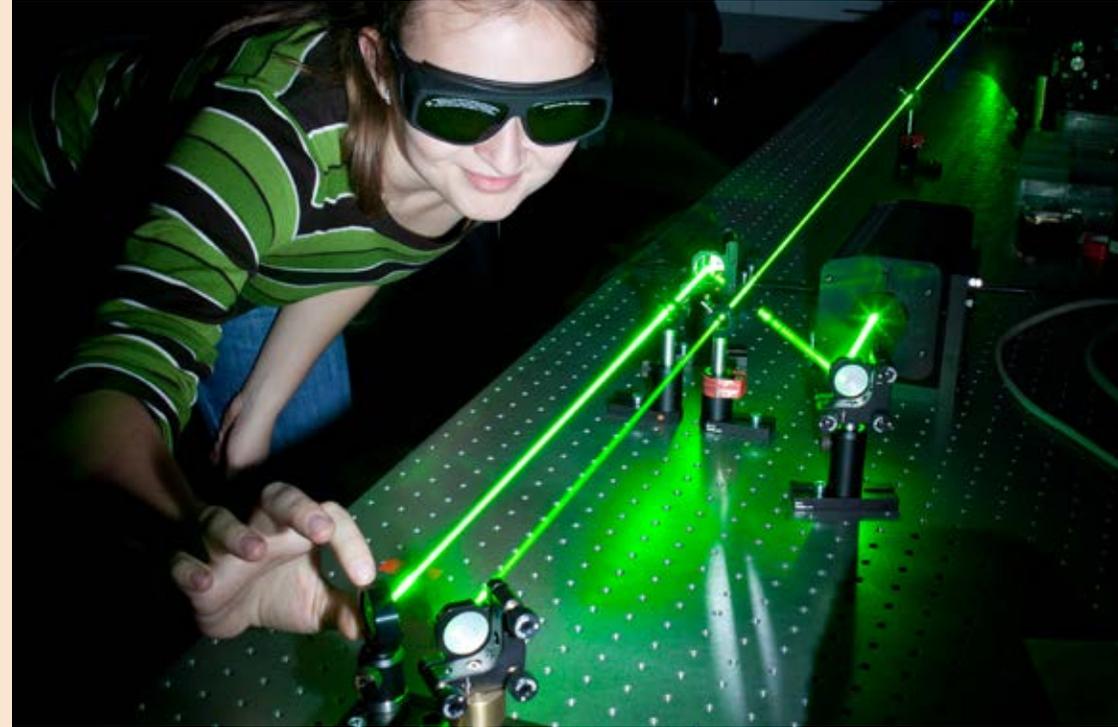


WHO WE'RE LOOKING FOR

Applicants will be assessed against the following criteria. In your application you should demonstrate clearly how you meet each of the following requirements of the post.

We want you to apply if you:

- are or have very recently been an FE sector leader with a national profile and an outstanding and extensive track record of college leadership or leadership of major organisations within the sector;
- can show how you have generated improvement, including financial improvement, across the sector by working with other colleges and providers;
- have exceptional communication skills and the ability to work with, influence, persuade and engage stakeholders at the highest levels, from principals and chairs of FE providers, to ministers and senior civil servants, to employers and employer representatives. This includes sometimes leading challenging and sensitive conversations to secure change;
- have the ability to lead a team of highly experienced FE professionals in taking the appropriate course of action at FE colleges across the country.



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The Department is focused on equality of opportunity and is committed to ensuring that public appointments better represent the views of the communities which they serve. We particularly encourage applicants from underrepresented groups, those based outside London and the South-East and applicants who have achieved success through non-traditional educational routes.

The Department for Education has a strong culture of inclusion and diversity and it wants to encourage applications from people with a diverse range of backgrounds and educational routes. In 2018 we launched a five year strategy to create a department where everyone is able to bring their whole self to work and where honesty, challenge and innovation are encouraged and valued. We are recognised by leading diversity organisations for promoting diversity in the workplace.

We want to ensure any appointee to the Department's arm's length bodies is committed to promoting diversity, in its broadest possible sense. This will include embedding a commitment to the principles of levelling up and championing opportunity for all across the organisation, helping to ensure that the organisation is one in which a genuinely diverse range of views can be expressed, without fear or favour.

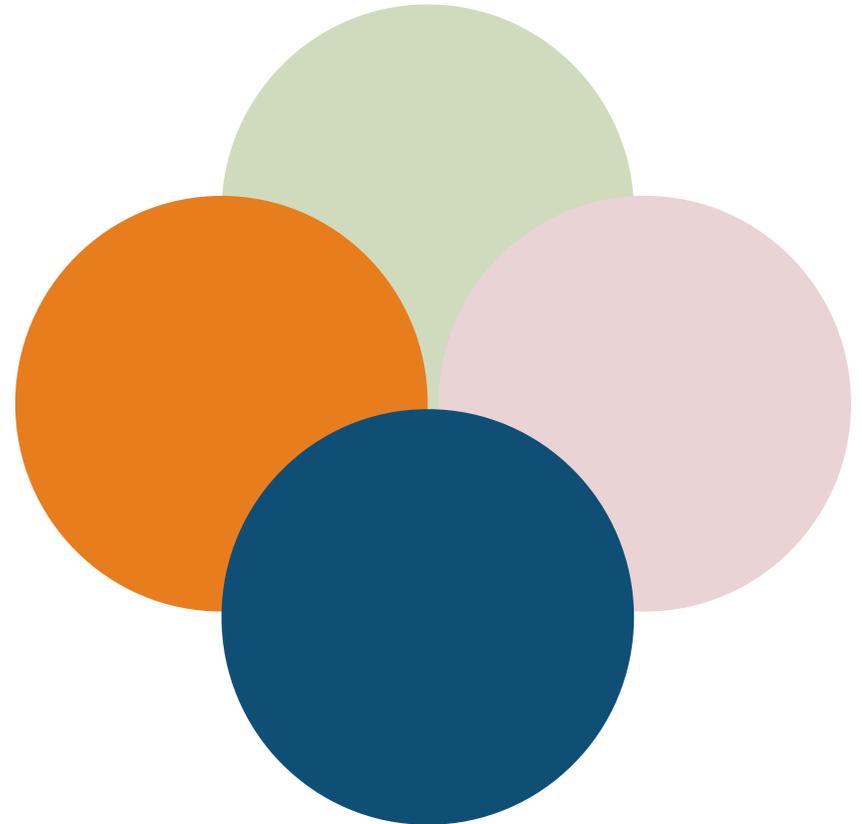
CHAMPIONING SOCIAL MOBILITY

The Department champions social mobility in all of its policies and is committed to opening up opportunities for people from all backgrounds, all socio-economic classes and all regions of the UK. We are committed to embedding this principle into our recruitment and public appointments and expect all our leaders, including in arm's length bodies, to take action to attract and retain staff from all backgrounds, while also supporting them to progress within their careers.

DISABILITY CONFIDENT

We are a member of the Government's Disability Confident scheme and have achieved Disability Confident Leader status, signifying our role as champions of the scheme. We use the Disability Confident symbol, along with other like-minded employers, to show our commitment to good practice in employing people with a disability.

We ask that all applicants complete an anonymised Diversity Monitoring Form used for gathering data only in order to ensure departments are recruiting from the widest possible pool. The information you provide is held by the Public Appointments team and not shared with the selection panel.



HOW TO APPLY

The closing date for applications is: **November 20th at 11.00am.**

Information on the timetable for this campaign, selection process, requisite security clearance, and the Advisory Assessment Panel can be found on the Centre for Public Appointments website: publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Please submit the following documents by email to:
PublicAppointments.APPLICATIONS@education.gov.uk

1. A CV.

2. Candidate application form.

You will need to demonstrate clearly how you meet each of the essential criteria (max 300 words per criteria – if this is exceeded only the first 300 words will be considered).

3. Diversity form.

Please include the vacancy title in the subject box and submit each application document as a separate attachment.

We are happy to accept applications in alternative formats from applicants who, for reasons of disability, may find it difficult to fill in our standard form. If you would like to have a chat with us about reasonable adjustments please contact us at:

PublicAppointments.APPLICATIONS@education.gov.uk

Please note the following:

- we cannot accept applications submitted after the closing date;
- applications will be assessed solely on the documentation provided; please refer to the advert and checklist above to ensure you have provided everything requested;
- applications will be acknowledged upon receipt;
- feedback will only be given to candidates unsuccessful following interview.



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Location

No set location, but the role would require travel throughout England and frequent meetings in London

Time requirement

Four days per week

Term

Two years

Remuneration

£135,000 per annum

Expenses

Reasonable travel expenses will be covered

Pension

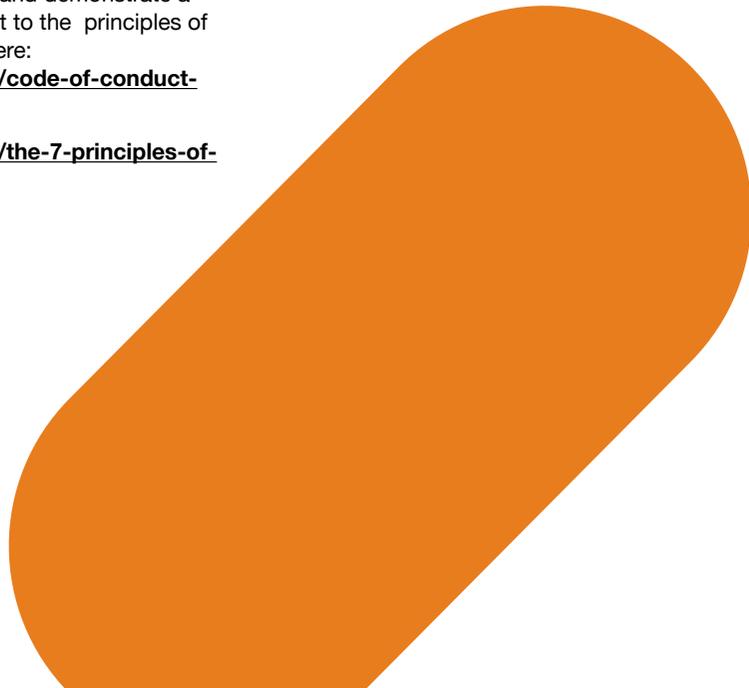
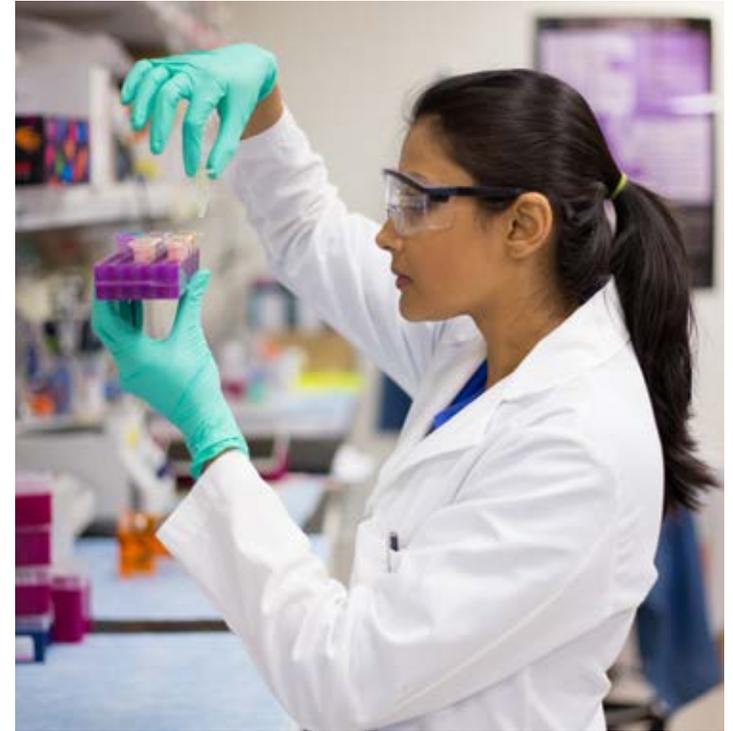
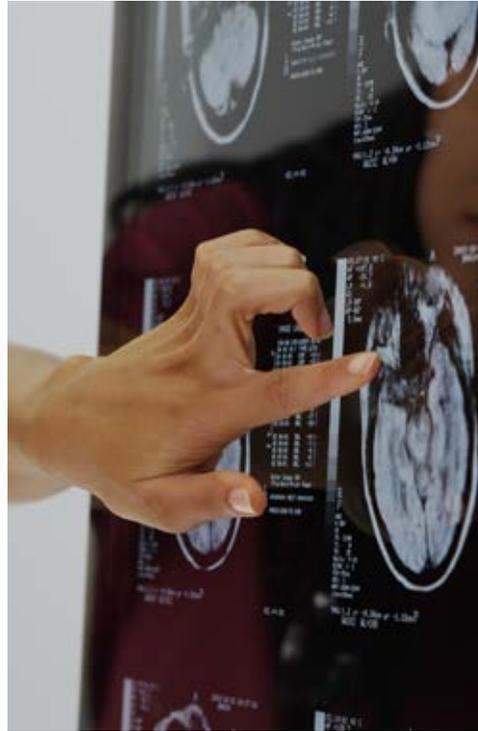
The post is not pensionable.

Other

Members are expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct and are required to adhere to the code of conduct for board members and demonstrate a sound understanding of and commitment to the principles of public life, both of which can be found here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-conduct-for-board-members-of-public-bodies,

www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life.



PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

SELFLESSNESS

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

INTEGRITY

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

OBJECTIVITY

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

OPENNESS

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

HONESTY

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

LEADERSHIP

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.



HOW TO COMPLAIN

Please contact the Department for Education's Public Appointments team if you would like to make a complaint regarding your application at **PublicAppointments.DFE@education.gov.uk**

We will acknowledge your complaint upon receive and respond within 15 working days.

If you are not content with our response please contact the Commissioner for Public Appointments at **publicappointments@csc.gov.uk**

Further information on complaints can be found on the Commissioner for Public Appointment's website **publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk**