



Department
of Health &
Social Care



Human
Fertilisation &
Embryology
Authority

Member of the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority

Information pack for applicants

Closing date: Midday on Monday, 06 September 2021
Reference no: VAC-1739



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Section 1 – The Role

1.1 Role and Responsibilities of a Member of the of the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority

Introduction

Ministers are seeking to appoint seven members to the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority (HFEA).

Roles and Responsibilities of a member

To build and retain public and professional confidence in the regulation of fertility treatment and embryo research and to play a key part in the effective and successful governance of the HFEA.

Specifically, to:

- support the Chair and the Executive in setting the strategic direction of the HFEA, and review this on a regular basis in light of developments in the external and internal environments;
- support the Chair and the Executive in developing the HFEA in-line with the organisation's strategic aims while maintaining a positive, constructive, and appropriate relationship with its stakeholders in both the public and private sector;
- provide an independent view, a substantive contribution, and constructive challenge at Authority meetings and sub committees; and
- monitor the performance of the HFEA's Executive, holding it to account for the delivery of the HFEA's business plan, HM Treasury and Department of Health and Social Care requirements.

We have vacancies for seven members of the HFEA. Three posts are for professional members and four are for lay members.

To be classified as a Professional member you must fulfil one of the following categories:

- is/has been a registered medical practitioner; or
- is/has been concerned with the keeping or using of sperm, eggs or embryos outside the body; or
- is/has been directly concerned with commissioning or funding research involving the keeping or use of sperm, eggs or embryos or who has actively participated in any decision to do so.

A person who would be recognised as a professional cannot apply for a lay post.

Qualities required for the role of a Member

The Department of Health and Social Care values and promotes diversity and encourages applications from all sections of the community. The boards of public bodies should reflect the population they are there to serve. Boards also benefit from fresh perspectives, and we are always keen to encourage candidates with private sector experience to consider applying for our roles.

Essential Criteria

To be considered, you must be able to demonstrate that you have the qualities, skills, and experience to meet all the essential criteria for appointment.

For all 7 roles:

- ability to provide effective scrutiny and challenge to the Executive and to hold them to account for the delivery of performance and the delivery of its strategy;
- ability to think strategically and to exercise sound judgement on complex and sensitive issues;
- have the highest standards of personal propriety in relation to governance, accountability, risk, and financial management.

and have a background or expertise in one of the following areas:

For the 3 professional member roles

- A background as a clinical geneticist and senior level experience in a fertility field or in a field closely related to fertility, or
- A background as a senior nurse or counsellor with senior level experience in a fertility field or in a field closely related to fertility, or
- senior level experience in other areas of women's health and reproductive medicine, such as a GP or an obstetrician-gynaecologist.

For the 4 lay member roles

- a leading biomedical scientist, not working on human embryos, who will draw on their knowledge and experience to provide insights into new biomedical developments and inform Board discussions and Authority decisions; or

- a person with expertise and ideally experience of working with Big Data in healthcare, and an understanding of the specific challenges and opportunities of making the best use of data in public services in the 21st century; or
- a person with expertise in faith issues or medical ethics, could be from a faith, academic, or other background; or
- a person with expertise in medical law, ethics and issues of consent.

Remuneration

- Members will be remunerated at the standard rate of £7,883 per annum.
- Remuneration is taxable, and subject to National Insurance contributions, both of which will be deducted at source under PAYE before you are paid. Remuneration is not pensionable.
- You may claim travel and subsistence expenses, which are properly and necessarily incurred in carrying out your role and responsibilities as a Member of the HFEA, in line with travel and subsistence policy and rates for the HFEA. A copy of the policy and rates can be obtained from the HFEA

Time commitment

2-3 days per month

Location

London

HFEA board meetings take place six times a year on a Wednesday. For 2022, the Authority will meet on the following dates:

- 9 February
- 23 March
- 18 May
- 6 July
- 14 September
- 16 November

Tenure of office

Ministers determine the length of the appointment, will be up to 3 years.

Accountability

Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority Members are appointed by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and are accountable to the Secretary of State via the Chair for carrying out their duties and for their performance.

For further information regarding the role of the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority and the role of a Member please contact: Csenge Gal

Tel: 07707281487

Email: Csenge.Gal@dhsc.gov.uk

1.2 Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority role and responsibilities

Letter from the Chair of the HFEA

Dear applicant,

The [HFEA](#) has been the UK's regulator of fertility treatment and embryo research for 30 years, created to make policy and regulate standards as the fertility sector developed following the birth of the world's first IVF baby, Louise Brown, in 1978.

It is a huge privilege to be a Board member of this internationally renowned and respected organisation and to be able to contribute to policy and licensing decisions in such an innovative and ethically contested area of medicine.

We are a small body with around 70 staff but we monitor global scientific developments which could become patient treatment in the years to come, make policy and advise Ministers, Parliament and Government, alongside our core functions of setting standards, licensing research projects and treatment clinics and maintaining a register of all UK fertility treatments, the largest database of its kind in the world.

We have an ambitious [strategy](#) where our vision is 'regulating for excellence: shaping the future of fertility care and treatment'. This builds on previous years' work and will develop in the context of the last 18 months in which we have managed the fertility sector and our staff through the extraordinary circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Your role as a Board member would be to join us on the [Authority](#) and in committee work as we support pioneering science and fertility medicine but, above all, do our utmost to uphold and improve standards in fertility treatment so that as many people as possible can achieve their much longed-for family. The HFEA is at the heart of creating life, and I am constantly reminded what a privileged role our Board members have and how interesting and rewarding our work is.

Our lay and professional Members bring a huge variety of experience and expertise to their role from genetics, fertility medicine, counselling, life sciences and research, communications

and the media, faith, ethics and the law. If you are successful in your application, you would have the chance to contribute your personal expertise towards our new vision. We want to see everyone receive the best possible care and the right information at the right time. As science and society advance, the HFEA needs to shape and respond to future changes in the legislative landscape and the changing fields of modern family creation, genetics, and artificial intelligence and the use of data.

I have chaired the HFEA since April 2021, and in this short time, I have been impressed at the organisation's reputation as a body that enables innovation to flourish within a robust ethical framework. The breadth of work the HFEA covers means the role of a Member is fascinating and your contribution could make a real difference to many people for years to come.

Julia Chain, Chair

Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority

Role and responsibilities

The [HFEA](#) was established by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 (the 'Act'). The Act sets out prohibitions relating to the creation, use, and storage of human embryos and human admixed embryos, and the use and storage of human gametes.

In 2007, as a result of the implementation of three EU Directives setting quality and safety standards for human tissue and cells intended for human application, the HFEA's remit was extended to cover licensing and regulation of donation, procurement, testing, processing, preservation and distribution of gametes and embryos. The UK's exit from the EU means that this relationship is changing going forward, although the UK's high standards will remain.

The HFEA has the power to license the following activities in the course of providing fertility treatment (for example, in vitro fertilisation (IVF)):

- bringing about the creation of a human embryo outside the body;
- procuring, keeping, testing, processing or distributing human embryos;
- procuring, keeping, testing, processing or distributing gametes;
- using human embryos for training others in embryological techniques;
- ensuring human embryos are in a suitable condition to be used in treatment;
- placing human embryos in a woman;
- carrying out testing of sperm;
- other activities specified in regulations.

The HFEA can also license activities as part of a project of research involving human embryos (and human admixed embryos), provided they are necessary or desirable for:

- increasing knowledge about serious disease or other serious medical conditions;
- developing treatments for serious disease or other serious medical conditions;

- increasing knowledge about the causes of congenital disease or congenital medical conditions;
- promoting advances in the treatment of infertility;
- increasing knowledge about the causes of miscarriage;
- developing more effective techniques of contraception;
- developing methods for detecting the presence of gene, chromosome, or mitochondrion abnormalities in embryos before implantation;
- increasing knowledge about the development of embryos so long as the use of an embryo is necessary.

The HFEA can also grant licences for the procurement and distribution of sperm while providing non-medical fertility services and for the storage of gametes and embryos.

Ethical Safeguards

The Act contains several ethical safeguards; some of which are described here. The principle of informed consent is key in that gametes, embryos and other human tissue, the use of which is governed by the Act, can only be used for treatment or research purposes with the informed and clearly expressed consent of the person(s) providing the tissue. Where such consent cannot be given, in a very limited number of circumstances, use of the tissue can only take place if strict conditions can be met.

The restrictions of the use of human embryos in treatment and research and of particular techniques in assisted reproduction underpin the licensing provisions in the Act.

Clinics must assess the welfare of any child that might be born as a result of treatment, or any existing child that may be affected, as part of the process of determining a patient's suitability for treatment.

Licensing and Inspection

There are currently 136 HFEA-licensed establishments providing treatments, related services, or carrying out embryo research. Every licence designates an individual who has the responsibility under the Act for the proper operation of the establishment and its compliance with the Act, all licence conditions, and the HFEA's [Code of Practice](#). This individual is described as the Person Responsible.

The Act requires the HFEA to carry out an inspection of all licensed establishments at least once every two years. The HFEA inspection team evaluate and monitor:

- premises, equipment, and facilities;
- laboratory processes;
- documentation, including standard patient information;
- the ability of the establishment to provide the services it offers;
- the suitability of the person responsible and staff providing the services.

As part of its licensing function, the HFEA also assesses applications from establishments to use novel or adjusted treatment techniques and to test embryos for the presence of inheritable genetic conditions. [Pre-implantation genetic testing for monogenic disorders \(PGT-M\)](#) is a technique used to screen embryos before implantation, as part of an IVF treatment cycle, to exclude those with a serious genetic condition. The procedure is intended to help couples at risk of passing on a serious inheritable genetic condition to their offspring. None of these activities can take place without the HFEA's prior approval.

Linked to its regulatory functions, the Act enables the HFEA to issue directions and requires it to maintain a [Code of Practice](#) setting out standards of practice for the delivery of treatments, fertility services, and embryo research that all licensed clinics and research centres are required to observe.

Key non-licensing functions

There are a number of functions carried out by the HFEA that are not part of the licensing process but are integral to fulfilling the aims set out in legislation:

Maintaining Registers: The Act requires the HFEA to keep [registers](#), notably one that records every treatment cycle, patient, [gamete/embryo donor](#) and all resulting offspring. The Act also sets out the circumstances in which identifying information held on this register may be disclosed to third parties.

Sharing research information: The administration of a scheme for researchers to apply to receive access to identifying information held on the treatment register where it is not practicable to obtain consent to the disclosure from the persons to whom the information relates.

Providing information: The HFEA has a statutory duty to provide a range of information to stakeholders, including patients and licensed establishments. The HFEA does this by:

- publishing advice and information for patients and the public about fertility treatments and services, including the online Choose a Fertility Clinic guide;
- providing information and guidance for licensed establishments and healthcare professionals on topical issues via bulletins and also Chair's letters;
- responding to individual queries, verbally and in writing, from the fertility and wider healthcare sectors and the public

Further information on the HFEA and what it does can be found at:

<https://www.hfea.gov.uk/about-us/>

Section 2: How to Apply

2.1 Making an application

Thank you for your interest in the appointment of a Member to the HFEA.

To make an application please email your CV, a supporting letter and completed monitoring forms to:

appointments.team@dhsc.gov.uk – please quote ref: VAC - 1739 in the subject field.

If you are unable to apply by email please contact Qasher Mahmood on 0207 972 3085

Applications must be received by **midday on 6th September 2021**.

In making an application please note the following:

Supporting letter

The supporting letter is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria set out in the person specification. It will benefit the Advisory Assessment Panel if you can be clear which particular evidence you provide relates to which criteria. Providing separate paragraphs in relation to each criterion is common practice. Please write all acronyms in full first.

Please ensure your full name, the role to which you are applying and the corresponding reference number for the post are clearly noted at the top of your letter.

Please limit your letter to two pages, and type or write clearly in black ink.

Conflicts of interest

If you have any business or personal interests that might be relevant to the work of the HFEA, and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please provide details in your supporting letter.

If appointed, you will also be required to declare these interests on appointment and they will be entered into a register which is available to the public.

Standards in public life and ensuring public confidence

Given the nature of public appointments, it is important that those appointed as members of public bodies maintain the confidence of the public and Government. If there are any issues in your personal or professional history (including any convictions or bankruptcy) that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment to Ministers or HFEA or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention of the Assessment Panel and provide details of the issue/s in your Supporting letter. In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media and blogs. Due Diligence may be carried out on any publicly available information and shared with the Advisory Assessment Panel.

The panel may explore any issues you declare with you before they make a recommendation on the appointment.

Failure to disclose such information could result in an appointment being terminated, as those who hold public appointments are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of corporate and personal conduct, and are required to subscribe to the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies, as part of agreeing to the terms and conditions of appointment. You can access this document at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/board-members-of-public-bodies-code-of-conduct>

There are also circumstances in which individuals may not be considered for appointment, due to them not meeting certain eligibility criteria for appointment. For further information, please refer to **Section 2.3: Disqualification Criteria**

If you wish to discuss any queries on conflicts, please see the contacts section.

CV

Please ensure your CV includes:

- Your full name, title, home address, personal contact telephone numbers (land line and mobile), personal email address and details of any twitter accounts and LinkedIn accounts including your twitter handle/username.
- Similar contact details for two referees who will support your application. One referee should be the person to whom you are/were accountable in your current/most recent appointment or position of employment. Please indicate the relationship of each referee to you. References will be requested for short-listed candidates prior to interview

- Brief details of your current or most recent post and the dates you occupied this role. Please identify any past or present Ministerial appointments.

Monitoring form

Please complete the monitoring form. Diversity monitoring information will not be seen by the Advisory Assessment Panel assessing your application.

Political activity information is primarily for monitoring purposes only, however if you are shortlisted for interview, this information will be shared with the selection panel. The reason for this is that it is appreciated that such activities may have given you relevant skills, including experience gained from committee work, collective decision-making, resolving conflict and public speaking. If you have had such experience and you consider it relevant to your application for this post, you should also take the opportunity to include it separately in your supporting statement. If possible, you should not, however, identify the relevant political party in your statement.

If you are appointed to this role, please note that any political activity you declare will be published in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Disability Confident Scheme

The Department of Health and Social Care values and promotes diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity for all and to the appointment of disabled people. As part of the Disability Confident Scheme, we guarantee an interview to anyone with a disability who applies under the Scheme and whose application meets the essential criteria for the post.

What do we mean by a disability?

To be eligible for the Disability Confident Scheme you must have a disability or long-term health condition, which could be physical, sensory or mental and must be expected to last for at least 12 months. You do not have to be registered as a disabled person to apply under this scheme.

If you wish to apply under the DCS please complete section E of the Monitoring form and return it with your application.

All applications will be acknowledged by email after the closing date.

For further information regarding the selection process, please contact

Qasher Mahmood

Appointments Team

Tel: 02079723085

Member of the HFEA information pack for applicants

Email: Qasher.Mahmood@dhsc.gov.uk

For further information regarding the role of the HFEA and the role of a Member please contact: Csenge Gal

Tel: 0207 2105001

Email: Csenge.Gal@dhsc.gov.uk

Please quote reference VAC-1739 on all correspondence.

If you choose to apply, we would like to thank you in advance for your time and effort in making an application.

2.2 The Selection Process

The Department of Health and Social Care Appointments Team will deal with your application as quickly as possible and will advise you of the likely timetable at each stage.

Timetable:

- Closing date: Midday on 6th September 2021
- Shortlisting complete: Wednesday 6th October 2021
- Interviews held: Interviews will be held w/c 15th November and 23rd November

The selection panel will be:

- Maria Nyberg (panel chair). DHSC senior sponsor for HFEA
- Julia Chain (ALB representative). Chair of HFEA
- Henrietta Hughes (independent panel member)
- Professor Iqbal Singh (Fourth panel member)

The Independent Panel Members are independent of both the Department of Health and Social Care and HFEA.

The Governance Code on Public Appointments requires all Advisory Assessment Panel members to declare any political activity within the last five years.

The Governance Code on Public Appointments requires all Advisory Assessment Panel members to declare any political activity within the last five years. All panel members have declared that they have not taken part in any political activity within the last five years.

After the closing date for applications:

- The Department of Health and Social Care may commission a pre-assessment of candidate applications which would then be provided to the Panel for consideration and to inform the shortlisting process. By submitting an application, you are agreeing to your application being shared with another party for the purpose of pre-assessment. The pre-assessor and the panel are reliant on the information you provide in your CV and supporting letter to assess whether you have the skills and experience required. Please ensure that you provide evidence to support how you meet all the essential criteria. It is the responsibility of the panel to determine who it believes best meet the criteria for the role, and who will be invited to interview.

Member of the HFEA information pack for applicants

- Interviews will be held w/c 15th November 2021
- The Advisory Assessment Panel will select for interview only the strongest applicants who it feels have demonstrated that they best meet the criteria set out in the person specification. However, if you have applied under the DCS and you meet all of the essential criteria, then you will also be invited for interview
- If you are invited to interview and if you are unable to attend on the set date then an alternative date can only be offered at the discretion of the Advisory Assessment Panel
- The Appointments Team will email to let you know whether you have been invited to be interviewed. Interviews will be conducted either by video/ teleconference or if face-to-face, in central London. We will confirm arrangements to shortlisted candidates in due course
- If invited to interview, the Advisory Assessment Panel may invite you to make a brief presentation at the start of the interview and will go on to question you about your skills and experience, including asking specific questions to assess whether you meet the criteria set out for the post
- The Advisory Assessment Panel will also explore with candidates any potential conflicts of interest or any other issues arising from candidate's personal and professional history which may impact on an appointment decision (see section 2.1 for further details)
- Candidates who the panel believe are 'appointable', will be recommended to Ministers who will make the final decision. Ministers may choose to meet with shortlisted candidates, before or after interview, before making a decision. Candidates should therefore be prepared for a short time gap between interview and a final appointment decision being made. Candidates who have been interviewed will be kept informed of progress
- If you are successful, you will receive a letter from Ministers appointing you as a Member of the HFEA, which will confirm the terms on which the appointment is offered
- **please note that due to the volume of applications that are received it is not possible to routinely provide feedback to those not shortlisted for interview**
- if you apply under the Disability Confident scheme and you are not shortlisted for interview, we can provide a summary of the assessment of your written application, if you choose to request feedback

- If you are unsuccessful at interview, you will be notified by the Appointments Team. We appreciate it takes a lot of time and effort to apply for roles, and prepare for and attend an interview, and that feedback is a valuable part of the process. Following interviews, the letter which confirms the outcome of the appointment process will provide the details of who you may approach for feedback on your interview and application, if you so wish
- For further information on how we will manage the personal information that you have provided to us through your application, see **Section 2.4**

Queries

For queries about your application, please contact Qasher Mahmood on Qasher.Mahmood@dhsc.gov.uk

Standards in public life

You will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct. All successful candidates will be asked to subscribe to the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies, you can access this document at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/board-members-of-public-bodies-code-of-conduct>

Diversity and equality of opportunity

The Department of Health and Social Care values and promotes diversity and encourage applications from all sections of the community.

Governance Code on Public Appointments

The Governance Code on Public Appointments, published by the Cabinet Office, sets out the principles that should underpin all public appointments. The Governance Code can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-code-for-public-appointments>

The Commissioner for Public Appointments

The regulation of public appointments against the requirements of the Governance Code is carried out by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Commissioner provides independent assurance that public appointments are made in accordance with the

principles set out in the Code. The Commissioner is appointed by the Queen and is independent of the Government and the Civil Service. Further information about the role of the Commissioner is available from

<http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk>

If you are not completely satisfied

The Department of Health and Social Care will aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, please contact Steve Howell in the Department of Health and Social Care by emailing Steve.Howell@dhsc.gov.uk

If after receiving a comprehensive response from the Department you are still concerned, you can write to the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Please contact:

The Commissioner for Public Appointments
1 Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ
Tel: 0207 271 8938
Email: publicappointments@csc.gov.uk

2.3 Disqualification from Appointment

There are circumstances in which an individual may not be considered for appointment.

Appointments to the HFEA are subject to disqualification criteria that is set out in the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990.

Para 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to The NHS Counter Fraud Authority (Establishment, Constitution, and Staff and Other Transfer Provisions) Order 2017/958 provides that: A person is disqualified for appointment as the chairperson or a non-officer member of NHS Counter Fraud Authority if he/she holds a position as chairperson, member, officer, governor or director with or is employed by, or contracted in any capacity to provide services to HFEA.

A person is disqualified from being a member if: subject to bankruptcy etc, convicted in last 5 years and sentenced to imprisonment for at least 3 months.

Further advice about Disqualification from Appointment can be provided by contacting Steve Pugh on 0207 210 4350.

2.4 How we will manage your personal information

Your personal information will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. You will not receive unsolicited paper or electronic mail as a result of sending the Department of Health and Social Care any personal information. No personal information will be passed on to third parties for commercial purposes.

When we ask you for personal information, we promise we will:

- Only ask for what we need, and not collect too much or irrelevant information
- Ensure you know why we need it
- Protect it and insofar as is possible, make sure nobody has access to it who shouldn't
- Ensure you know what choice you have about giving us information
- Make sure we don't keep it longer than necessary
- Only use your information for the purposes you have authorised

We ask that you:

- Provide us with accurate information
- Inform us as soon as possible of any changes or if you notice mistakes in the information, we hold about you

If you apply for a post, we will share some of the information you provide with the members of the selection panel for the post to which you are applying, so that your CV and supporting letter can be assessed.

The diversity information you provide will not be used in the selection process and will therefore not be shared with the Advisory Assessment Panel assessing your application at any stage. However, panels may review the political activity response at the interview stage. This in no way acts as a bar to appointment. Further information on this is provided in the attached Monitoring form.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments regulates and monitors appointments to public bodies to ensure procedures are fair. The Department of Health and Social Care is required by the Commissioner for Public Appointments to retain information about the people who apply for public appointments within his remit and make this information available to him for audit purposes, if requested to do so. Information you provide in your application may therefore be made available to the Commissioner for Public Appointments

and the Commissioner's auditors on a confidential basis in order to help fulfil either the Commissioner's formal complaints investigation role or for audit purposes.

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