

Board of Governors
Appointment:
Chair of Audit & Risk
Committee



Introduction from the Chair of the Board of Governors

Hello, welcome, and thank you for your interest in becoming a member of the Board of Governors at York St John University.



Across this institution's 185 years of history and impact, there has rarely been such a significant time to be joining us. Amidst so much change and turbulence in the Higher Education sector and society generally, universities need Governors with the experience, wisdom and foresight to guide, shape and support them, helping them navigate new challenges and realise their full potential. By applying for this role, you are stepping up to the opportunity to help thousands of people change their lives through education and contributing positively to the wellbeing, prosperity and progress of our city and region.

I have been the Chair of the Board of Governors since 01 August 2026. I was delighted to take on the role because I share the University's values and sense of purpose in striving for social justice and ensuring that more people of all ages and backgrounds have access to higher education.

The University faces a multitude of choices about its future strategic direction, its priorities, and its positioning in a competitive and complex Higher Education market.

In 2024, York St John launched its University for Social Impact Strategy. As a governor, you will help to guide and inform the way the Board, and especially the sub-committees that support it, monitor and support that strategy. You will help us adapt to an evolving regulatory framework and an emerging policy agenda that blur conventional boundaries of institutional autonomy. You will provide the critical-friend challenge to underpin robust financial reporting, monitoring, and management. Our Board's committees have strong foundations on which these roles can build.

As Chair of Audit & Risk Committee, you will ensure a structured, systematic oversight of the University's governance, risk management, financial reporting, internal control and compliance practices. Providing confidence in the integrity of the University's arrangements for managing these practices through its annual programme of work and deliver independent oversight and reporting to the Board of Governors.

York St John has all the potential to achieve incredible things in the coming years. You could play an important role in making that possible. We look forward to hearing from you.

Justine Andrew

Chair of the Board of Governors



YORK ST JOHN AT A GLANCE

TEF Gold for student experience

TEF Silver for student outcomes – overall TEF Silver

14,000 students studying on our campus in York & London

Over £1.1 million

in scholarships to UK undergraduates

1,100

staff members

83.5%

student positivity score

91%

overall satisfaction for international students

69%

of students from backgrounds underrepresented in higher education

THE TIMES
THE SUNDAY TIMES

**GOOD
UNIVERSITY
GUIDE
2025**

UNIVERSITY
OF THE YEAR
FOR SOCIAL
INCLUSION

84% overall satisfaction for postgraduate research experience

3,312

YSJ students graduated in York & London

58%

of our research is internationally excellent or world-leading

BRONZE Race Equality Charter status

Meet our students

14,000

Students

94%

Full-time

63%

Home

Over 130 different nationalities

57%

Female

63% Undergraduate

32% Postgraduate Taught

5% Postgraduate Research

69% fall into one or more
underrepresented groups in
Higher Education

39% BAME

28% First to go to university in their family

27% First to go to university in their family



About York St John University

When York St John University (originally a Diocesan teacher training college) opened its doors to its first student, Edward Cordukes, back in 1841, nobody could have foreseen just how much the world would change in the years that followed.

Yet even then, our founders seemed determined that York St John should be a place that improved access to education and advocated greater social mobility. 1846 saw the foundation of a female training School, which soon relocated to Ripon to be run by the pioneering Cruse sisters, now honoured by a Civic Trust blue plaque.

In 1974, the two institutions merged to become the college of Ripon & York St John. In 1999, all taught courses were relocated to the York campus and by the end of 2001, all students and staff belonged to a campus called York St John. In September 2005, the college was granted Taught Degree Awarding Powers, becoming York St John University in 2006. Research Degree Awarding Powers were granted in 2015.

The University's London Campus opened in 2018, before moving to East India Dock a few years later. The London Campus hosts a number of our postgraduate and professional courses and strengthens our links with a wide variety of partner organisations and employers.

Today, around 14,000 students from more than 100 countries, alongside 1100 staff, make up our thriving learning and research community in the historic city of York and at our campus in London.

The University is a company limited by guarantee (Company Number: 4498683) and an exempt charity (regulated by the Office for Students). Governors are consequently Directors and also Charitable Trustees.



University for Social Impact Strategy

York St John launched its University for Social Impact Strategy in September 2024.

Our Vision: Through our excellent education and research, we will be a catalyst for change that creates a fair future.

Our Values: At York St John we strive for what we believe in. Our strong values remain unchanged and underpin everything we do. We are:

- Intellectually open, rigorous and curious
- Dedicated to promoting fairness and challenging prejudice
- Always inspiring and supporting each other to succeed

Strategic Aims:

York St John will:

- Celebrate our locations in York and London whilst being global in outlook
- Enrich our research and the experience of students, staff and communities through transformational partnerships
- Be a truly inclusive and equitable organisation
- Collaborate with confident, authentic, resilient, enterprising and professional students and staff
- Offer a future-focused, high-quality academic portfolio with distinctive learning and teaching
- Provide all students with a personalised learning journey underpinned with technology
- Produce conscientious graduates who fulfil future skills requirements both domestically and internationally
- Be a sector leader in environmental sustainability with a whole-university approach
- Innovate through impactful research and knowledge exchange
- Demonstrate local, national and international social impact

Indicators of Success:

- Score consistently in the top quartile of student satisfaction measures.
- Double the scale of our research and innovation.
- Demonstrate students and staff from all cultures and backgrounds feel valued within the YSJ community.
- Evidence increased societal and economic impact.
- Demonstrate an increase in educational equality and opportunities.
- Score consistently above national benchmarks for quality.
- Maintain a resilient financial position.
- Reduce our environmental footprint.
- Empower more students to secure meaningful employment or progress onto further study.
- Maintain successful partnerships domestically and internationally



Leadership and Governance

The Chancellor of the University is BBC presenter, journalist and campaigner Reeta Chakrabarti.

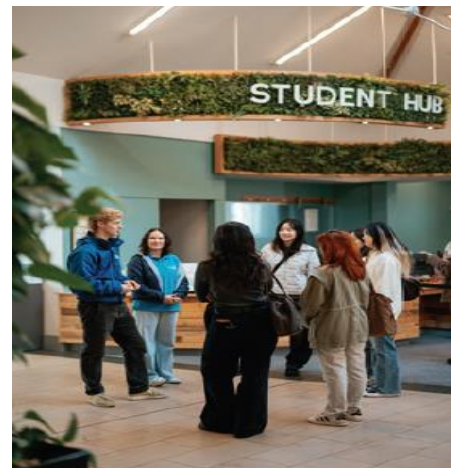
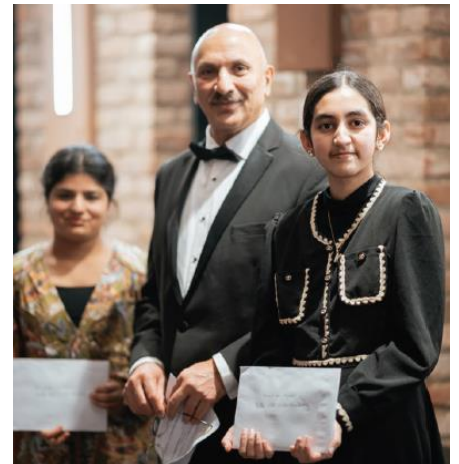
The Board of Governors is chaired by Justine Andrew. The Board has collective strategic responsibility for oversight of the University's activities. Governors are the stewards of the vision and purpose of the University, and constructively hold the University to account for its decisions. This includes statutory responsibilities to oversee various elements of the University's work. The Board has 17 members, bringing together appointed people from different backgrounds, including the public and private sectors, the Church, education, and the voluntary and community sector. It also has representatives drawn from the University's staff, and its student body.

The University's Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive is Professor Karen Bryan OBE. Professor Bryan is the principal academic and administrative officer of the University. She reports to the Board of Governors and is accountable to them for the University's overall progress, public impact and financial sustainability.

To support this role and the operational management of the institution, Professor Bryan chairs the University's Executive Board, which consists of the University Secretary & Registrar, Chief Operating Officer, Pro Vice Chancellor: Education, and Pro Vice Chancellor: Research & International.

The senior team at York St John works closely with leading representative bodies in Higher Education, such as Universities UK, to help shape and inform the voice of the Higher Education sector in policy, political and wider developments.

As a proudly civic university, our leaders also play an active, strategic role in many of the partnerships that steer the direction of York and the wider region. This helps to ensure that the University's decision-making is guided by a broader understanding of the context in which we are operating.





Governor Role Overview

Committed and engaged Governors are crucial to the University's current and ongoing success. Governors are drawn from a range of backgrounds and include both staff and student members.

Time commitment

Governors are expected to attend all meetings of the Board of Governors and of committees of which they are a member, or give timely apologies if absence is unavoidable. The role often entails access to confidential or privileged information which must be treated sensitively.

The commitments of Governors have been divided into two main categories – those that are required and those that are desired, depending on the time available.

The total expected commitment is approximately 20 days per annum.

Required Commitments

- Board of Governors Meetings - three per year
- Board of Governors Discussion Days – two per year
- Meetings with the Chair/Deputy Chair - once or twice per year.
- Committee meetings - three or four per committee per year.
- Background reading associated with the above.

Desired Commitments

- Social events - various (regional events, celebrations, public lectures).
- Graduation – twice per year (November and March).
- External training and information sessions.
- Supporting Board of Governors activities – various (e.g., External and Internal auditor appointments, and Governor recruitment).

Term of Office

Governors are appointed for a three-year term of office. The maximum period of office is three terms (nine years total).

Remuneration

£6000 per annum.

Personal Specification

Governor appointments will take account of personal skills and experience, in the context of the overall composition of the Board of Governors.

Chairs of Committees undertake an additional leadership role to ensure that committee business is conducted in line with their specific terms of reference and the University's mission, vision and values.

Knowledge and Experience

- Experience in business risk management at a senior level.
- Experience in finance, accounting and auditing at a senior level.
- Strong, personal commitment to Higher Education, its governance and the values, aims and objectives of the University.
- Knowledge of developments in the Higher Education sector.
- Experience as a member and Chair of committees/boards.
- Experience of operating at a strategic level in a professional role.
- Demonstrable involvement in striving towards continuous improvement.
- Experience of professional networking on a national and/or international basis.

Skills and Abilities

- Ability to act fairly and impartially in the interests of the University as a whole, using independent judgement and maintaining confidentiality as appropriate.
- Ability to evaluate and monitor the work of the University in a constructively critical fashion without breaching the boundaries between governance and operational management.
- Ability to be an ambassador and represent the University to the wider community.
- Excellent chairpersonship with the ability to encourage inclusion and debate from all committee members.
- Ability to effectively manage conflict and healthy difference of opinion in open forum.
- Ability to foster and promote a collaborative team environment.
- Excellent communicator with appropriate negotiation, presentation and influencing skills.

Personal Characteristics

- Supportive of the University's ethos, mission, values and foundation.
- Enthusiasm for, and commitment to, the role.
- Personal gravitas to provide committee leadership and to support the Chair of the Board of Governors on any local or regional activity.
- Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusivity in practice.

Role description

Overview

- a) The University is a company limited by guarantee (Company Number: 4498683) and an exempt charity (regulated by the Office for Students). Governors are consequently Directors and also Charitable Trustees.
- b) Committed Governors are crucial to the University's current and ongoing success. Governors are drawn from a range of backgrounds and include both staff and student members. Further information about the University, its governance structure and our Governors is available on the [University's website](#).
- c) Governors are expected to play an appropriate part in ensuring that the necessary business of the Board of Governors is carried out efficiently, effectively, and in a manner appropriate to the proper conduct of public business. They are expected to make rational and constructive contributions to debate and to make their knowledge and expertise available to the Board as opportunity arises.
- d) Governors have a responsibility for ensuring that the Board of Governors acts in accordance with the instruments of governance of the University and with the University's internal rules and regulations and should seek advice from the University Secretary and Registrar in any case of uncertainty.
- e) Governors are required to accept collective responsibility for the decisions reached by the Board of Governors. Governors elected, nominated or appointed by particular constituencies may not act as if delegated by the group they represent, and may not be bound in any way by mandates given to them by others.
- f) Governors who are also chairs of Board committees in particular are required to develop good working relationships with the Chair of the Board of Governors and the chairs of the other committees and ensure effective communication and appropriate triangulation of information between the Board of Governors and its committees. Committee Chairs should ensure that significant emerging themes, concerns and risks are brought to the attention of the Board of Governors and, where appropriate, other relevant Committee Chairs in a timely manner.

- g) The Chair of Audit and Risk Committee ensures that the Committee maintains an appropriate balance between assurance and constructive challenge, and that its work remains focused on matters within its remit and does not duplicate the responsibilities of management or other Board committees.

Standards

- a) Governors have a responsibility for ensuring that the Board of Governors conducts itself in accordance with accepted standards of behaviour in public life, embracing selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. They must at all times regulate their personal conduct as Governors in accordance with these standards. As the Chair of Audit and Risk Committee, such personal conduct must be exemplary.
- b) Governors must make a full and timely disclosure of personal interests to the University Secretary and Registrar in accordance with the procedures approved by the Board of Governors. They must as soon as practicable disclose any interest which they have in any matter under discussion and accept the ruling of the Chair in relation to the management of that situation, in order that the integrity of the business of the Board of Governors and its committees may be, and may be seen to be, maintained.
- c) Governors have particular legal responsibilities for the University as a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. Governors' responsibilities as Directors and Charitable Trustees are reflected in the Board of Governors' [Statement of Primary Responsibilities](#).

The Business of the University

- a) Governors have a responsibility for ensuring that the Board of Governors exercises control over the strategic direction of the University, through an effective planning process, and that the performance of the University is adequately assessed against the objectives which the Board of Governors has approved.
- b) The Chair of Audit and Risk Committee will oversee the Committee's oversight of the University Risk Management arrangements; review of the draft annual financial statements, considering the external audit opinion; report annually to the Board of Governors in relation to the effectiveness of the internal control system and advise the Board of Governors on all relevant matters relating to the external auditors. The role holder will also lead the Committee in their review of the internal auditors' audit needs assessment and plan, consider and track the major findings and recommendations from audits and oversee policies on fraud, bribery, anti-money laundering and whistleblowing.

- c) In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chair will ensure that the Committee considers the effectiveness of the University's overall assurance framework, including the relationship between risk identification and appetite, management controls, internal audit, external audit and other sources of assurance. The Chair will ensure that significant weaknesses in assurance, control or risk management, and significant or emerging risks, are appropriately escalated to the Board.
- d) Governors should endeavour to establish constructive and supportive but challenging working relationships with the University employees with whom they come into contact but must recognise the proper separation between governance and executive management and avoid involvement in the day-to-day executive management of the University.
- e) The Chair of Audit and Risk Committee will ensure that the Committee's membership provides an appropriate balance of skills, experience, independence and perspectives to discharge its responsibilities effectively.
- f) The Chair will also ensure that the Committee has the appropriate attendance and contribution from those senior officers, professional advisers and other attendees whose expertise is required for particular items, while ensuring that the Committee remains a committee of Governors and that non-members do not dilute the independence or effectiveness of the Committee's challenge. The Chair will address poor attendance or insufficient contribution where necessary.
- g) Chairs of Committees will be appointed by the Board of Governors to at least one further committee of the Board and are expected to play a full part in the business of all committees to which they are appointed. The Chair of Audit and Risk Committee will not be appointed to the Finance and Capital Development Committee (FCDC), in order to maintain a clear separation between the University's audit and risk oversight and its financial and capital decision-making functions.

The External Role

- a) Governors may be asked to represent the Board of Governors and the University externally and will be fully briefed by the University to enable them to carry out this role effectively.
- b) Governors may be asked to use personal influence and networking skills on behalf of the University.
- c) Governors may be asked to play a role in liaising between key stakeholders and the University, or in fund-raising. They will be fully briefed by the University to enable them to carry out this role effectively. However, this role in particular must be exercised in a carefully co-ordinated fashion with other senior officers and staff of the University.

- d) The Chair of Audit and Risk Committee is encouraged to maintain appropriate external professional and sector networks in order to remain informed of emerging governance, audit, risk and regulatory developments in higher education. This may include participation, where appropriate, in sector networks and groups such as the Committee of University Chairs Audit Chairs' Group, higher education audit chair networks, and auditor-led sector forums. Such engagement should be used to bring relevant external context and good practice to the Committee and Board of Governors, while maintaining appropriate confidentiality and independence.

Miscellaneous

- a) Governors must participate in procedures established by the Board of Governors for the regular appraisal/review of the performance of individual Governors. Chairs of Committees are additionally subject to a review of performance for that component of their role, conducted as one process overall. Governors should attend any induction activities arranged by the University and should participate in appropriate training events.
- b) The Chair of Audit and Risk Committee should ensure that they maintain an appropriate level of current knowledge and understanding of the higher education regulatory, financial, audit, risk and governance environment to enable them to discharge the role effectively.
- c) Directors and Officers Liability Insurance is in place.

How to apply

To apply for the Governor role at York St John University, please send a CV and a personal statement to Kathryn Kendon, University Secretary & Registrar, via gov.compliance@yorksja.ac.uk.

Personal statements should be no more than two sides of A4 and outline why you are applying for the role and what you will bring to the Board of Governors if appointed.

Applicants are encouraged to review the University's key governance documentation, Strategy, and financial statements before applying. These can be found at the following links:

- <https://www.yorksja.ac.uk/policies-and-documents/governance/>
- <https://www.yorksja.ac.uk/about/university-for-social-impact-strategy/>
- <https://www.yorksja.ac.uk/policies-and-documents/finance/>

For any queries or an informal conversation about the role with the Chair of the Board of Governors and/or University Secretary & Registrar, please also contact gov.compliance@yorksja.ac.uk

The **closing date** for applications is 27 October 2026.

Interviews are provisionally scheduled for 10 November 2026.

Thank you for your interest in joining York St John University's Board of Governors.



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YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

