



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
NEW UNIVERSITY

EST. 1891



# Independent Council Members

Recruitment Pack

[BNU.AC.UK](http://BNU.AC.UK)

"A university should be a place of light, of liberty, and of learning."  
Benjamin Disraeli



## Welcome from the Chair of Council and the Vice-Chancellor

Thank you for your interest in the role of an Independent member of Council at Buckinghamshire New University (BNU).

BNU is a modern university, with a proud 130-year heritage of transforming our students' lives. Our richly diverse student body has a high proportion of students drawn from ethnic minorities and from areas with low rates of participation in higher education. We build social capital as well as skills and competences to help our students reach their full potential and succeed in their chosen careers and professions. We offer a distinctive, high-quality education coupled with well-developed regional, national and international partnerships. Our staff are adept in using employment-focused and skills-based teaching in a learning community which features small class sizes with highly interactive research-informed teaching and employment-related practice.

This is reflected in the University's current award of Silver in the Teaching Excellence Framework, our excellent student satisfaction results, and significant improvements in our league table position.

The University continued its ascent of the Guardian University Guide, with our 2022 results in the National Student Survey (NSS) playing a strong part in our climb of seven places to rank joint 70th. This was BNU's fourth successive year-on-year improvement in the Guide.

The University also climbed into the top 10 for teaching quality in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023, and into the top 20 for student experience. Reflecting our mission and diverse student body, the University climbed 11 places to 15th for social inclusion and we are proud to have the 11th smallest Black achievement gap among all UK providers

BNU also excelled in the recent Whatuni Awards. The University climbed 43 places this year to rank 11th in the competition for Whatuni 2022 University of the Year. BNU also finished as runners-up for 'Lecturers and Teaching Quality' and ranked in the top ten for Student Support (5th), International (7th), Students' Union (9th), and Career Prospects (10th).

These successes have been built on an impressive and sustained financial performance. Having previously posted deficits in the years 2016/17 to 2018/19, the University embarked on an ambitious strategy, Impact 2022, to deliver financial sustainability and sustained improvements in education, research, and a range of strategic priorities as well as our underlying resource base. Since then the University has delivered impressive performance, producing successive years of financial surplus, some of which we have been able to share with our staff through an annual bonus scheme. In 2021/22, this performance culminated in our best ever financial results, posting a healthy surplus, growing gross income, building cash reserves, and maintaining impressive levels of liquidity. We have produced substantial growth in student numbers, dramatically improved our reputation, and embarked on significant developments in relation to our estate, our digital capability, and our people. All the while, we have made serious and sector-leading commitments on sustainability and corporate social responsibility, building on our inclusive and values-based culture.

In some ways capping these remarkable successes, we were enormously proud last year to announce that Jay Blades MBE is BNU's first Chancellor. Jay is an alumnus of the University, having studied criminology and philosophy, and has frequently praised the University for the support he received to overcome dyslexia. Jay will inspire our students and staff with his passion for education and for social justice. He will work closely with us to develop new and innovative furniture-related courses and facilities and create legacy projects that will provide lasting benefits for our students and local communities.



This is therefore an extraordinarily exciting time to join the University's Council as we complete on the delivery of our Impact 2022 strategy and, inspired by our new Chancellor, commence work on our new and equally ambitious strategy, Thrive 2028. We now aim to build on the transformative work of Impact 2022 to ensure BNU thrives across all areas of delivery and performance. Impact 2022 saw us improve and enrich the student experience through innovative and employment-focused education and realign our professional services in support of our strategic aims. We have made excellent progress in transforming the University, aiming to create an agile and responsive institution, one that prizes high quality customer service, and continues to hold dear our principal aim of transforming the lives of all our students for the better. We have improved student retention and expanded our student recruitment through a vigorous programme of portfolio growth, including a highly successful Foundation Year. Our new strategic will build on these successes creating a University that is highly connected, permeable, inclusive, student- and customer-focused, business-oriented, strategically aligned and impactful.

It is in this exciting context that we are looking to enhance our governance through the appointment of new independent members to join our Council, the University's governing body, with overall responsibility for its mission and success. As we commence our Thrive 2028 journey, Council will have a key role to play in encouraging, supporting, advising and challenging constructively the Vice-Chancellor and senior team in delivering against the University's strategy.

We are seeking enthusiastic and energetic individuals who have a keen interest in higher education and bring key skills of collaboration, communication and commercial acumen. We are particularly interested to hear from individuals with skills and expertise related to:

- Accounting; Finance, including banking and investment;
- Commercial, including mergers and acquisitions;
- Legal, including compliance and regulation
- Higher education sector, including government policy

Additionally, we would particularly welcome individuals with regional connections to Buckinghamshire.

We are seeking individuals who will be ambitious in supporting the University in the delivery of our mission to transform lives through inspiring, employment- and profession-focused education, and enabling our students positively to impact society. We thank you in advance for your interest in joining the University's Council and look forward to hearing from you.



**Maggie Galliers CBE**  
Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council



**Professor Nick Braisby**  
Vice-Chancellor





# OUR HISTORY

The Schools of Science, Art and Technical Instruction were opened.

1893

Tuition was given to ex-soldiers and sailors of the First World War. It was then known as Chepping Wycombe Technical Institute and School of Art.

1920

After the Second World War, increased demand for technical education led to the College of Further Education being opened on a new site in Alexandra Road.

1963

High Wycombe College of Art and Technology merged with Newland Park College of Education to form Buckinghamshire College of Further Education.

1975

The college became one of the UK's new independent Higher Education Corporations.

1989

The college became a polytechnic institute.

1992

Missenden Abbey was purchased by the University.

1995

Buckinghamshire College was awarded University College status by the Government, in recognition of its high standards of teaching, training and research, and became Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College.

1999

University title was achieved and the new name, Buckinghamshire New University was approved, meaning that the institution was now officially a University.

2007

An additional site was established in Uxbridge, west London, providing state of the art theaters for the nursing division.

2009

The Gateway building at the High Wycombe Campus won an architectural award from the Royal Institute of British Architects.

2010

Buckinghamshire UTC was given the go-ahead by the Government. The UTC is jointly led by Aylesbury College and Buckinghamshire New University.

2011

Relaunch of our Aylesbury Campus.

2019

Opening of our campus at Pinewood Studios.

2020

Commencement of the High Wycombe Heart of the Campus Estates Development Programme

2022



# Key facts

## FINANCIAL RESULTS YEAR ENDED 2021-22 £M

Financial results year ended 2021-22	£m
Income:	169.0
Employee costs:	(40.8) (incl. restructuring costs)
Other operating expenses:	(120.7)
Surplus for the Year:	7.6
Actuarial (loss)/gain in respect of pension schemes:	46.3
Total comprehensive income for the year	53.8
Capital Expenditure	6.3

## STUDENT PROFILE 2021-22

Total registered enrolments:	23,568
Full-time undergraduate:	18,310
Part-time undergraduate:	1,807
Total undergraduate:	20,117
Full-time postgraduate:	1,136
Part-time postgraduate:	1,963
Total postgraduate:	3,099
Female: Male (%)	53:47
Non BME: BME (%)	50:50

## STUDENT COMPOSITION BREAKDOWN

BNU:	8,597
Partners (UK):	13,502
Partners (overseas):	1,471
Total:	23,568

## STUDENT AGE GROUPS 2021-22

Age 16-20:	4,239
Age 21-25:	3,463
Age 26-29:	3,909
30+ years:	11,953

## STAFF PROFILE OCTOBER 2022

Permanent staff:	722
Permanent academic staff:	313
Permanent professional service staff:	409
Associate Lecturers:	287
Atypicals:	309
Female: male (per cent):	58:42
Non BME: BME (%)	71:29



# Strategic vision

To thrive  
To grow or develop strongly, vigorously...; To prosper, flourish

Thrive 2028 is designed to ensure the University's relationship with its customers is thriving, that its product base is thriving, that its people thrive, and that its environment thrives, and will make effective, substantial and lasting change to ensure this happens. For each of these four, over-arching pillars, it aims to ensure that the University is better able to compete in the markets in which it operates – that it drives, grows, develops, is successful, healthy and strong.

## Our Four Pillars

SUPPORT STUDENTS TO SUCCEED

DELIVER KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

BECOME A FIT AND AGILE ORGANISATION

SUPPORT OUR PLACES AND OUR PARTNERS



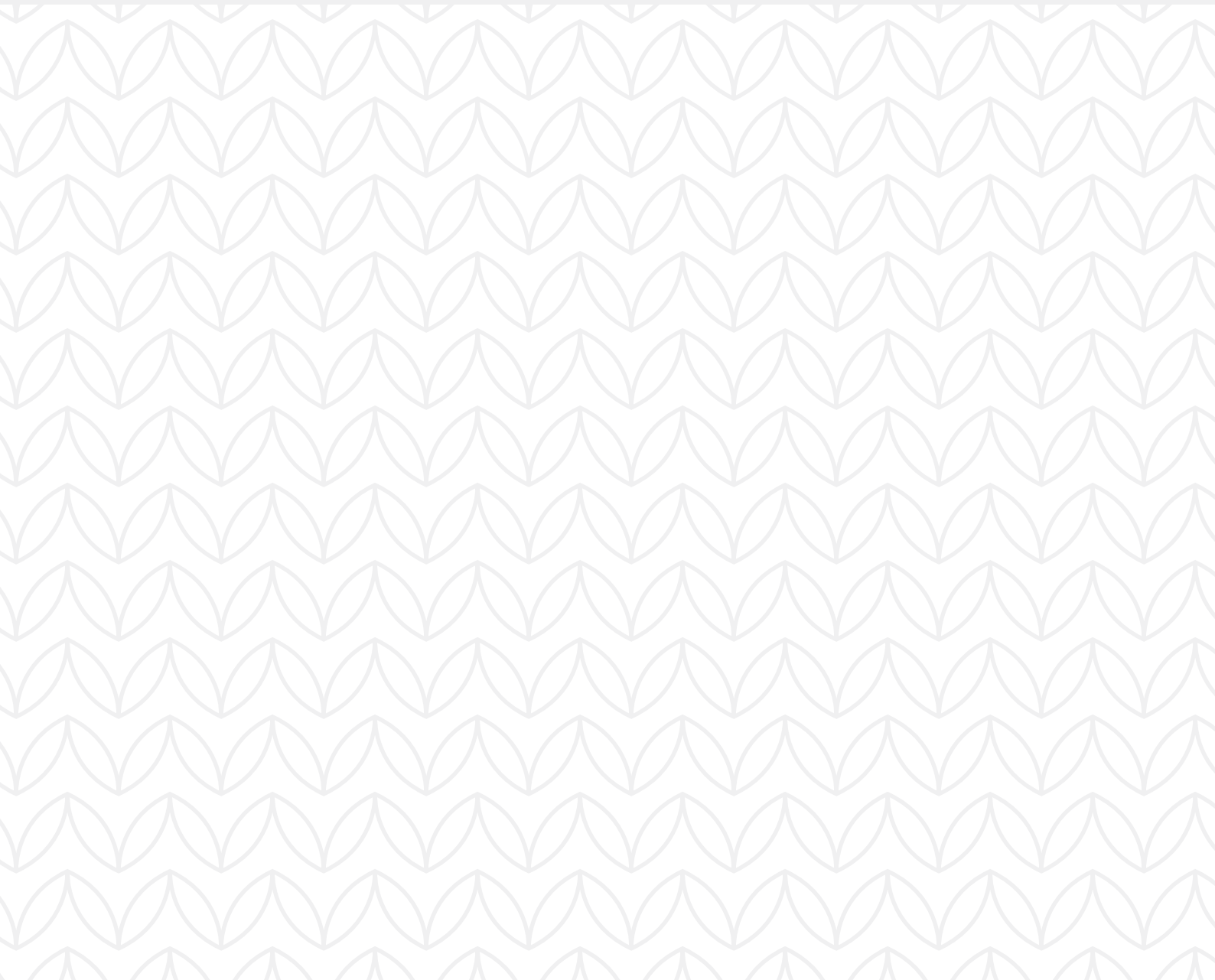
This year our focus has shifted to the new University strategy, which we call Thrive 2028. Thrive builds on Impact 2022 in prioritising innovative and life changing education that is accessible to all learners; expanding the reach of the University working in partnership with learners, communities, partners, employers and the wider society; delivering research and innovation that impacts and enhances lives and society; ensuring the University is a learning organisation that continuously excels and improves organisational effectiveness; and delivering financial sustainability through growth, expansion, and investment.

We will prioritise work in four broad areas:

- Supporting Students to Succeed
- Delivering Knowledge and Skills
- Fit and Agile Organisation
- Supporting our Places and Partners

This will include work on significant, multi-year projects to transform the institution, building on our current success. These are:

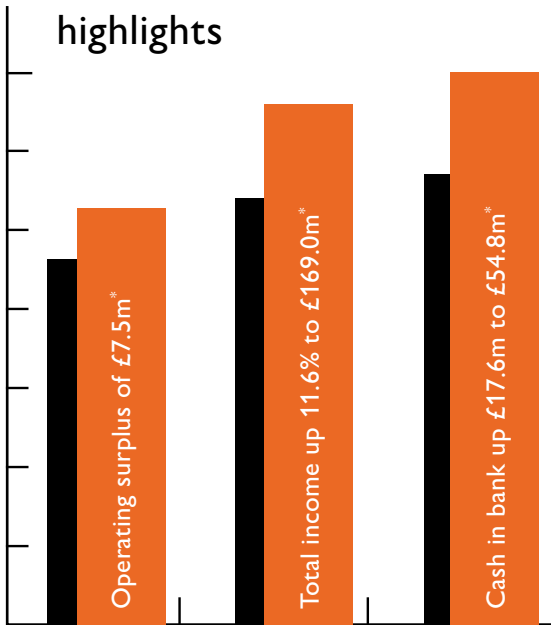
- Student outcomes
- Health and well-being
- Digital
- Sustainability and carbon net-zero
- Academic footprint
- Civic University
- Inclusivity



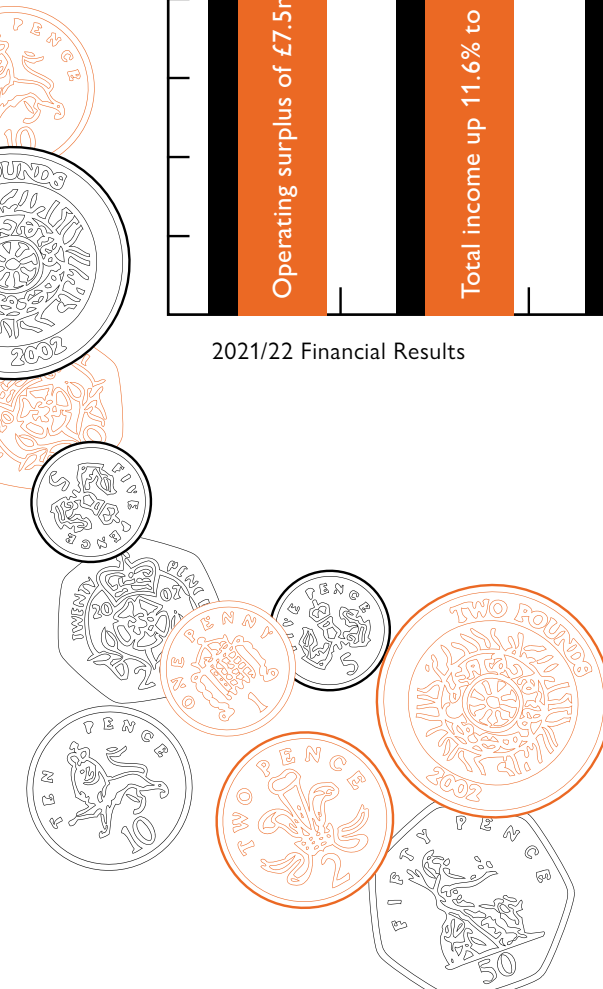


# Our Achievements

## Financial highlights



2021/22 Financial Results



**National Student Survey**

5<sup>th</sup> best university in the UK for overall student satisfaction (NSS - July 2022)



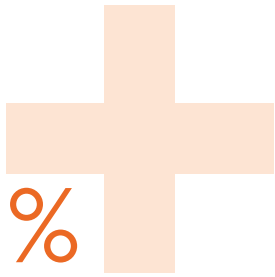
Rose 7 places to rank 70<sup>th</sup> place in the Guardian University Guide 2023, our fourth consecutive improvement in overall position.



- 10<sup>th</sup> for teaching quality
- 19<sup>th</sup> for student experience
- 15<sup>th</sup> for social inclusion



- 5<sup>th</sup> for student support
- 10<sup>th</sup> for career prospects



25% year on year increase in student numbers in 2021/22



University community raised £10,700 for RAG charities: DrugFAM and Roald Dahl's Marvellous Children's Charity.

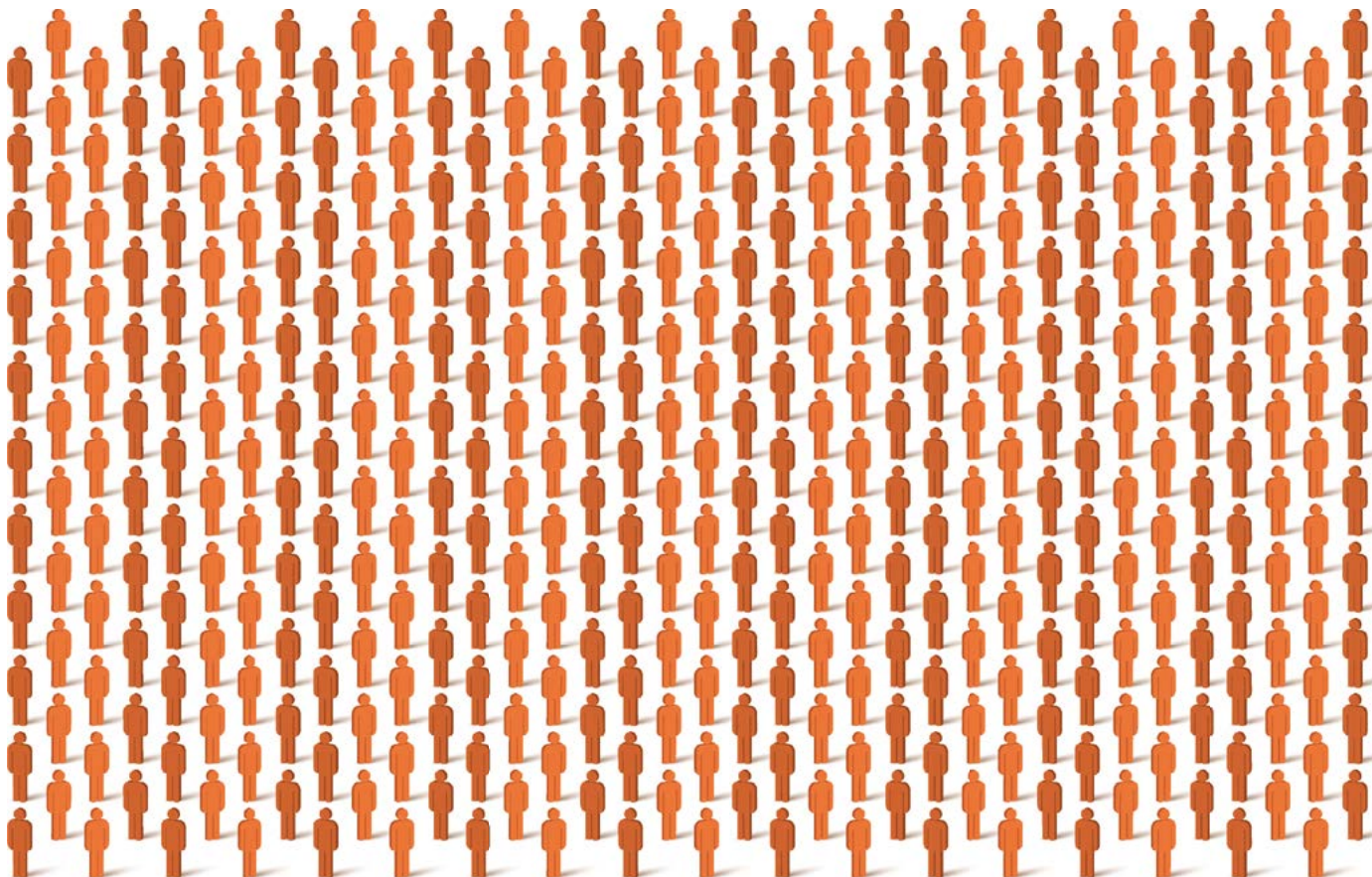


Donations through BNU's give to Refresh initiative to tackle hygiene poverty supported more than 1,000 local families using a food bank.



£1.6m funding for BNU Students' Union to support the best student experience at BNU in 2021-22

2,886 hours of skilled workshops delivered by Students' Union in 2021-22





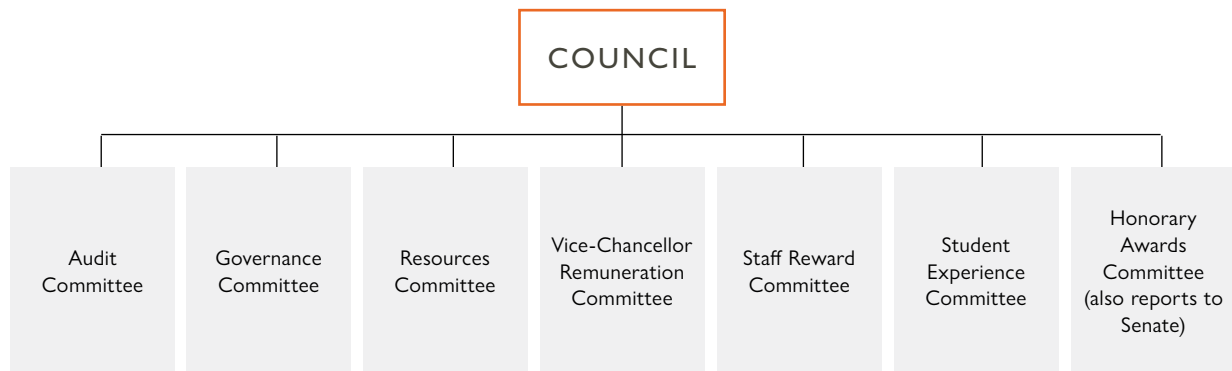
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EDUCATION IS THE  
KINDLING OF A FLAME,  
NOT THE FILLING  
OF A VESSEL.

— SOCRATES

# Council

The Council meets six times per year to debate and discuss issues relevant to the University and the higher education sector in general. The Council has a number of committees and members serve on at least one of these committees. In addition, dependent on availability, members support major University events, for example, Graduation Ceremonies, Professional Lectures or other public events.



The full Council meets six times a year and its committees typically once per term with the majority of meetings being held on the High Wycombe campus either in person or virtually

# Campuses

## HIGH WYCOMBE CAMPUS

Our main campus sits prominently in the centre of High Wycombe and continues to develop in line with the University’s strategic direction. High Wycombe has a vibrant, friendly and inclusive atmosphere. Students benefit from new and evolving facilities that enable them to achieve their potential, both practically and academically.

Over the last few years, we have invested heavily in renovating and expanding the High Wycombe Campus to provide students with cutting-edge resources and facilities.

Our state-of-the-art building, the Gateway, won a RIBA Award in 2010 and comprises a learning resource and technology centre, events hall, gym, sports science laboratory, dance, drama, music and video production studios, a library and meeting rooms.

Bucks Students’ Union is housed on site, along with a student bar, cafés and an entertainment venue. The University has three self-catering halls of residence in High Wycombe which provide 885 single study bedrooms.

The Human Performance, Exercise & Wellbeing Centre opened in 2015 to bring together our existing health and sports provision with new undergraduate programmes. The Centre also houses a sports injury and physiotherapy clinic open to the public, a human performance laboratory and a three-lane running track with motion-capture technology.

In January 2022 the University commenced an ambitious £15m re-development of its High Wycombe campus to create the heart of the campus. This will provide new student social space including a student hub and refreshment facilities.



Visuals of the High Wycombe development







## AYLESBURY CAMPUS

Our newest campus continues our vision of offering education that equips students with the skills that employers are looking for.

The new campus provides access to degree level courses and professional development programmes, allowing individuals to access employer-led education and training locally, and for employers to work in partnership with us to meet their needs.

Based at the head of the Grand Union Canal basin, next to the Waterside Theatre in Aylesbury, the campus includes specialist and general teaching facilities.



## MISSENDEN ABBEY

Missenden Abbey is a dedicated conference and events venue set in ten acres of beautiful grounds in Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire.

This unique part of the Buckinghamshire New University estate is also used as a training facility and hosts BNU-accredited postgraduate and professional short courses.

Missenden Abbey was originally founded in 1133 by a group of Augustinian Canons from Arrouaise in Northern France.

After being forfeited to the crown following the dissolution of the monastery and changing hands a number of times throughout its 800-year history, it became an impressive part of the Buckinghamshire New University estate in the 1990s.

The University has ambitious plans to relaunch Missenden Abbey as a high end boutique hotel providing opportunities for our students to gain valuable work experience on our international hotel management programmes.



## BNU BASED AT PINWOOD STUDIOS

Our small and growing site at the world renowned Pinewood Studios enables our students studying creative courses linked to the film and TV industries to learn right in the heart of this exciting industry.



## UXBRIDGE CAMPUS

Our Uxbridge Campus opened its doors to students in 2009. It is the home of our prestigious nursing and health care practice courses and is based in the centre of Uxbridge. The School of Nursing & Allied Health benefits from the fantastic facilities this campus offers, including an impressive range of specialist medical equipment and high-tech learning facilities such as clinical skills rooms and simulation manikins.

The campus is contained within one building and students enjoy the same friendly and inclusive atmosphere that flows throughout the University. Permanent representatives of Bucks Students' Union are based at Uxbridge, and it also has its own café.

A shuttle bus runs regularly between our High Wycombe and Uxbridge campuses, ensuring students are able to benefit from facilities on both sites.



# Role description

Independent Members of the University's Council should be passionate about contributing to the development of Higher Education and learning.

As a member of Council they play a key role in ensuring that the University continues to pursue its vision and mission, deliver on its Strategic Plan and meets the requirements of its regulator – the Office for Students.

Ideally members will bring experience in two or more of the following areas:

- Knowledge related/aligned to one or more of the University's curriculum areas, partnerships and/or research areas.
- Knowledge and experience from business including managing large and complex commercial organisations.
- Knowledge related to the delivery of education at an operational and/or policy level and/or an in-depth knowledge and senior management experience of the Higher Education sector.

## COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

University governing bodies are entrusted with funds, both public and private, and therefore have a particular duty to observe the highest standards of corporate governance. This includes ensuring and demonstrating integrity and objectivity in the transaction of their business, and wherever possible following a policy of openness and transparency in their decision-making.

Council members are Charitable Trustees and are governed by UK Charity Law responsibilities. The University's Council subscribes to and complies with the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) 'Higher Education Code of Governance' which supports governing bodies to deliver the highest standards of governance and sets out the primary responsibilities of Higher Education governing bodies:

4. the employment of those designated by the Council as Senior Employees and their appointment, grading, assignment, appraisal, suspension, dismissal and determination of their pay and conditions of service
5. setting the framework for the employment, including pay and conditions, of all other employees and contractors
6. corporate policies, regulations and procedures to assure the effective governance of the University and to meet statutory and other legal obligations, including an anti-fraud and anti-corruption policy.

### The Higher Education Code of Governance

The University's Articles of Government, as approved by the Privy Council, detail the responsibilities of the University's Council as being:

1. the determination of the educational character and mission of the University and for oversight of its activities
2. the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the University and the Corporation and, for safeguarding their assets
3. approving annual estimates of income and expenditure

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

Independent Council Members use their skills, knowledge and time to work with the Chair, fellow Council members and the University executive to ensure that the University fulfils its responsibilities.

The power to make decisions and hold staff to account in order to deliver these responsibilities lies with the Council as a whole and not any individual member.

The University seeks a variety of qualities in its independent Council members including involvement in the professions, business and industry at a senior level or with specific expertise which will assist the Council in the fulfilment of its duties.

Individuals will demonstrate the standards expected of appointments to public office and have regard for their role as a charity trustee.

In particular, the University is looking for candidates who:

- have a strong interest and commitment to education and in the range of subject areas which are the focus of the University's work.
- are multi-skilled, with senior status and a good track record, and who are active in their area of work/ profession/influence.
- possess independence of mind: a proven track record of providing clear independent, balanced advice and guidance with the ability to challenge constructively
- have held prominent or senior positions or been Board members within the context of their workplace or profession, have an understanding of corporate governance and will be able to exercise their responsibilities with initiative and discretion.
- possess excellent communication skills with the ability to interpret complex information.
- demonstrate the standards expected of appointments to public office.
- possess excellent interpersonal skills and are committed to working as part of a team with other Council members and senior staff of the University.
- are likely to be working in or engaged with business, commerce, the financial, voluntary or public sector.
- have the ability to think strategically, understand and analyse complex material and engage with issues quickly, debate and contribute to discussions pro-actively and challenge rigorously.

- commitment to the ethos, mission and values of the University, and committed to equality diversity and inclusion.
- act as ambassadors for the University.
- ability to commit to Council meetings

We are seeking enthusiastic and energetic individuals who have a keen interest in higher education and bring key skills of collaboration, communication and commercial acumen. We are particularly interested to hear from individuals with skills and expertise related to:

- Accounting; Finance, including banking and investment
- Commercial, including mergers and acquisitions
- Legal, including compliance and regulation
- Higher Education sector, including government policy

## TIME COMMITMENT

The estimated time commitment for this role is 8 days annually although more time may be required depending on allocated committees and additional responsibilities including chairing duties. In addition members are encouraged to attend University events eg, Graduation Ceremonies.

## APPOINTMENT TERM

The initial term of appointment is four years extendible for a second term up to a maximum of eight years.

## REMUNERATION

This role is non-remunerated. All Council members are able to claim reasonable travel and other expenses incurred whilst undertaking Council duties.





# How to apply

At Buckinghamshire New University equality of opportunity and diversity is at the heart of all we do and fully integrated into our values. Our aim is to create an inclusive environment where everyone thrives and feels a sense of belonging. We welcome applications from different backgrounds and experiences, particularly from underrepresented groups including BAME, LGBTQ+ and disabled candidates. We are a Disability Confident employer and as such you will be given the opportunity to declare a disability as part of the application process. The University is committed to achieving the Race Equality Charter.

For an informal discussion, please contact Ellie Smith, University Secretary and Clerk to the Council at the following email address.

Applications can be made by sending your CV together with a covering letter outlining how your skills and experience fit the person specification to: [ellie.smith@bnu.ac.uk](mailto:ellie.smith@bnu.ac.uk) or by posting to:

Ellie Smith  
University Secretary and Clerk to the Council  
Buckinghamshire New University,  
Queen Alexandra Road, High Wycombe,  
Buckinghamshire, HP11 2JZ

Applications will be considered by the Governance Committee and individuals may be invited to an informal meeting at the University prior to interview.





**High Wycombe Campus**  
Queen Alexandra Road  
High Wycombe  
Buckinghamshire  
HP11 2JZ


**Aylesbury Campus**  
59 Walton Street  
Aylesbury  
Buckinghamshire  
HP21 7QG


**Uxbridge Campus**  
106 Oxford Road  
Uxbridge  
Middlesex  
UB8 1NA

**BNU based at**  
**Pinewood Studios**  
Pinewood Studios  
Pinewood Road  
Iver Heath  
Buckinghamshire  
SL0 0NH


**Missenden Abbey**  
London Road  
Great Missenden  
Buckinghamshire  
HP16 0BD

**Telephone: 0330 123 2023**  
**Email: [advice@bnu.ac.uk](mailto:advice@bnu.ac.uk)**

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