

# Becoming a Governor at UHBW: Frequently asked questions

## I am interested in being a Governor. What/who are Governors?

The elected governors represent the views of patients, staff and members of the public when key decisions are made at the Trust. Governors are responsible for appointing the Chair and the Non-executive Directors of the Trust, and one of their main duties is to hold the Non-executive Directors to account for the performance of the Board of Directors.

## What do I need to do to become a Governor?

You need to be a Foundation Trust member and 16 years old or over. It's free and simple to join as a member, and you can find out how at [www.uhbw.nhs.uk](http://www.uhbw.nhs.uk). You will then need to be eligible to stand for one of the constituencies that are up for election. Our Council of Governors page at [www.uhbw.nhs.uk](http://www.uhbw.nhs.uk) has up-to-date information about governor elections when they are running.

## Can I attend a Council of Governors meeting to find out more about what they do?

Yes, they are all public meetings and open to anyone to attend. The agenda and papers are also published on the Membership section of the Trust website.

## Do Governors get paid?

No. Foundation Trusts are not allowed to pay Governors a wage. However, Governors can claim travelling and other expenses incurred by Governors in the course of their duties. We have an expenses policy which defines the process and procedures.

## Do I need to have any previous experience?

No you do not need to have any previous experience as a Governor.

## Do I need to have any qualifications?

No. You do not need to have any qualifications. You should have an interest in the NHS and our hospitals, have the time, energy and enthusiasm to represent the views of others, and a desire to shape the quality of healthcare in and around Bristol.

## Will I receive any training?

Yes. If you are elected we will find out about your individual skills and knowledge when you start as a Governor and we will try to provide you with any support that you need.

## How much time will I have to give?

Many of our current Governors will tell you how much they enjoy the role but that the time commitment should not be underestimated. For public governors, we suggest a time commitment of **one to two days per month** to attend meetings (during office hours) and other events, to read papers and reports for meetings and to join in with membership engagement activities.

## How long is a Governor's term of office?

A term of office is generally three years.

## Do I have to give notice if I want to stop being a Governor?

You can stop being a Governor at any time by giving notice in writing to the membership office.