



Non Executive Director

ABE Global is an award-winning, internationally-recognised, Ofqual accredited, and not-for-profit awarding organisation which seeks to promote access to inclusive economic opportunity, everywhere.

About ABE

Founded in 1973, ABE is an Ofqual-accredited awarding body specialising in business, entrepreneurship, and leadership qualifications. Over the past 50 years, we've built a global footprint, making a tangible difference in the lives of young people across Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Caribbean, and the UK.

We may be a small organisation, but our impact is huge. Operating in over 30 countries, ABE works in complex and often challenging environments, supporting socio-economic development through high-quality, accessible education.

Our core offering includes Level 3 to Level 5 vocationally-related diplomas, delivered through a network of 100+ accredited colleges and training providers. But we're more than just an awarding body—our work extends to: university progression pathways, quality assurance services, partnerships with top-tier schools, NGOs, ministries, and employers.

We believe in equal access to opportunity—everywhere. Whether it's giving young entrepreneurs the skills and confidence to start businesses, supporting girls' education, or building talent pipelines for employers, our mission is clear: to empower individuals, transform communities, and drive economic progress through education.

In 2023, ABE became a wholly owned subsidiary of The Institute of Leadership, marking an exciting new phase in our journey. This partnership combines ABE's expertise in global assessment with the Institute's renowned leadership development and membership network.

But we're operating in a world that is increasingly complex, volatile, and dynamic. As we navigate these challenges, our commitment to expanding opportunity and empowering learners is stronger than ever.

Why Join Our Board?

As a Board Member, you'll play a key role in shaping ABE's future—helping us expand, innovate, and continue making a difference where it matters most. If you believe in the power of education to change lives and want to be part of an organisation that blends impact with innovation, we'd love to hear from you.

The world is changing—so are we. Join us in ensuring learners everywhere have the skills, knowledge, and confidence to shape a brighter future.



Message from the Chair

Thank you for your interest in joining ABE as a Non-Executive Director.

This is a significant appointment, offering the chance to shape our future at a pivotal and dynamic time and to have an impact on strategies and initiatives that will ultimately affect the education and lives of thousands of young people all over the world. While the role will be challenging, I firmly believe you will also find it deeply rewarding.

Our vision drives everything we do, and we are actively embarking on a process to strengthen that vision and our values and to put in place the strategies and environment that will help us achieve it. Collaboration is key - with our staff, our partners at The Institute of Leadership and with all our stakeholders and regulators worldwide. As we evolve new ways of working, we are building new and stronger partnerships across global markets to enhance our impact. Our talented, dedicated team are at the heart of our success. Their expertise and commitment underpin our reputation as both an outstanding awarding body and a great employer.

I look forward to receiving your application and warmly welcoming you to ABE. Your skills and insights will undoubtedly help us reach new heights.

Nicola Rylett-Jones
Chair of the Governing Body
ABE Global

Role Summary

As a Company Director and as part of the Governing Body, you will play an active part in the following:

- Ensuring effective governance and compliance with Ofqual regulations and the requirements from other UK and international regulators
- Ensuring that ABE meets its legal obligations while overseeing its commercial and operational effectiveness, providing strategic support and constructive challenge as needed
- Exercising reasonable care, skill, and diligence in the performance of the duties of a Company Director
- Offering advice to the Managing Director and supporting senior leadership in areas of your knowledge and expertise
- Serving on oversight committees, leveraging your industry expertise to provide scrutiny, constructive challenge, support and inspiration to ABE's leadership
- Attending board and committee meetings as required, providing engaged leadership and acting as a dependable resource for the Managing Director
- Advocating for ABE within your professional networks to enhance its reputation and opportunities
- Regularly reviewing strategy and goals and adding value to the strategic development process, monitoring ABE's performance against objectives
- Continuously assessing the quality and reliability of financial, legal, and other information presented to the board
- Supporting the Chair in evaluating the Managing Director's performance and reviewing their remuneration and terms of service
- Assisting the Chair and Managing Director in senior leadership recruitment, panels, and disciplinary processes as required
- Championing special projects and initiatives at board level as requested by the Chair or Managing Director
- Aligning ABE's vision and activities with The Institute of Leadership, ensuring both companies' purpose and strategies remain in harmony, whilst providing independent judgement and maintaining an ethical wall of separation to mitigate any conflicts of interest.

- Providing a safe access point to the board for whistle blowers
- Helping to ensure ABE's long-term sustainability through fostering sound financial stewardship and robust strategic controls; reviewing and evaluating external and internal risks and opportunities, ensuring appropriate risk management, business continuity, and contingency measures are in place
- Upholding ABE's values by promoting equality and diversity among staff and stakeholders
- Building a constructive relationship with the Chair and other Non-Executive Directors, offering them your expertise and support
- Promoting the highest standards of corporate governance and best practices, ensuring adherence to ABE's articles of association and relevant legislation

Senior Officers of an Awarding Body

As Non-Executive Directors of an Ofqual accredited awarding organisation, Board members will fulfil the role and requirements of Ofqual Senior Officers according to the published Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition and shall uphold the highest standards of integrity and probity, adhering to the fit and proper persons test.

Specifically, a Senior Officer may be unsuitable for this role by virtue of:

- any criminal convictions held by him or her
- any finding by a court or any professional, regulatory, or government body that he or she has breached a provision of any legislation or any regulatory obligation to which he or she is subject
- any proceedings in bankruptcy or any individual financial arrangement to which he or she is or has been subject
- any disqualification from holding the directorship of a company or from public office, or;
- any finding of malpractice or maladministration, in relation to a qualification (whether a regulated qualification or a qualification which is not regulated), to which he or she is or has been subject.

Applicants are encouraged to read the Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition which are available on the Gov.UK website before applying.

Person Specification

The Non-Executive Director (NED) is a board-level governance role, providing strategic insight, independent challenge and support to the executive team, and helping to steward ABE's mission, reputation and long-term sustainability.

ABE Board members must have a proven track record of leadership and personal achievement and will have had previous non-executive (NED) and/or Trustee experience.

We are particularly keen to hear from you if you have career experience and knowledge in the academic and/or awarding-organisation technical expertise area, especially in one or more of the following profiles:

1. Academic / Awarding-Body and HE Standards Specialist

- Current or very recent practitioner-level experience in qualifications/assessment design, quality and standards, and regulatory compliance in awarding-body or higher-education (HE) contexts.
- Understanding of international education markets and frameworks, ideally including experience with Ofqual/other regulators and higher-education pathways.
- Able to advise on product portfolio, assessment validity and future regulatory trends, helping the Board to anticipate regulatory and market shifts.

2. Commercial Growth and Market Development Leader (International Education/Adjacent Sector)

- Track record of driving commercial growth, partnerships and new markets in international education or closely related services.
- Strong commercial acumen in pricing, channel/partner strategies and product-market fit, complementing existing turnaround and financial oversight skills on the Board.
- Experience in digital-enabled business models and scalable partnership approaches would be advantageous.

3. Digital / Data / Cyber and ESG-aware Governance Specialist (optional co-opted or advisory)

- Expertise in digital strategy, data governance and/or cyber security in an organisational context, to strengthen oversight of technology-related risks and opportunities.
- Familiarity with ESG expectations in education or professional bodies, including how ESG considerations intersect with qualifications, markets and stakeholder expectations.

Experience and Skills

- Strong understanding of corporate governance practices, including board responsibilities, regulatory compliance processes, and ethical leadership
- Strong financial literacy, including the ability to read and interpret financial statements, assess financial risks, and contribute to budgeting and financial decision-making
- Strong communication skills, able to paint credible pictures and to challenge and critique positively, calmly and effectively
- Proven experience in strategic planning and execution at a senior level, such as previous roles as a Managing Director or senior executive
- Experience in identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks, including a strong grasp of regulatory and compliance risks
- Politically astute – able to interpret relevant current issues, global trends, and public policy developments and to understand the implications for ABE
- Experience of working in complex and challenging international contexts will be desirable and a high degree of cultural sensitivity and empathy is essential
- Experience of, and a keen interest in, the development and delivery of education
- Working experience and knowledge of awarding bodies is essential.



Personal qualities

- An inquiring and curious mind
- Self-confidence
- A supportive and collaborative nature with the ability to inspire, energise, and enthuse
- Strong communication and listening skills
- A team player
- High level of emotional intelligence and self-awareness
- Strong interest in business education, international development, and social impact
- Fully supportive of equal opportunities and minority interests
- A substantial and current professional network.

Commitment and compensation

This role is UK-based - applicants must be eligible to live and work in the UK. You must have sufficient time and commitment to fulfil the role which may require 20- 30 days per year in order to prepare for and attend:

- Scheduled Board meetings (usually in-person), including from time-to-time, Board meetings with The Institute of Leadership Trustees
- Committee meetings, as applicable (usually online and occasionally in-person)
- Training and seminars
- Strategy development days
- Interview panels for senior leadership roles, and other panels as required.

Some additional hours may be needed in the course of the annual cycle in order to fully support the Board's agenda.

Directors Remuneration

The role of an NED is largely voluntary but, in recognition of your time and contribution, ABE pays £6,000 per annum gross (paid monthly), plus expenses in line with ABE's Expense Policy.

This fee is for services to ABE and for fulfilling the commitments outlined above and in the Director Agreement.

Non-Executive Directors are not employees of ABE or The Institute of Leadership.

Appropriate training and guidance in the role will be provided.



Application process

To apply, please provide your latest CV and a cover letter (of no more than two A4 pages, 12pt font) outlining your professional experience, what you have to offer as a NED and why you are interested in joining the Board of ABE.

Please email your application to HR Manager, Gillian Macfarlane, at GillianM@abeuk.com.

Key Dates

Deadline for applications: 10th May 2026 at midnight, UK time

Shortlisting: 19th May 2026

Interviews: First week of June (in person, Central London)

Appointment starts: July/August 2026

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If any assistance is required at any stage of the recruitment process, or if you have any questions about accessibility, please contact the HR Manager so that we may support and work with you to meet your needs.

Interviews will take place at a Central London location.

Applicants must have the legal Right to be a Company Director in the UK.



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