



Royal College
of Surgeons
of England

Candidate Pack for the Executive Director of People, Culture and Governance



Welcome

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Executive Director of People, Culture and Governance at the Royal College of Surgeons of England. RCS England has been a cornerstone of professional excellence for over two centuries, representing tens of thousands of surgeons, dental professionals, trainees and students across the UK and internationally.

This is an exceptional moment to be joining us. With a strong executive team in place and a new strategy being developed for launch in 2026, we are shaping a modern, progressive College - one that honours its proud heritage while building for the future.

As one of four Executive Directors, this role will sit at the heart of that transformation. It brings together our people, culture, governance, and heritage functions to create a more unified, connected organisation, one in which every colleague, volunteer, member and visitor feels a genuine sense of belonging and purpose.

You will already be an established executive leader with a proven track record of shaping high-performing cultures, leading complex change and delivering through others. You will bring confidence in navigating governance and organisational design at scale, with the emotional intelligence and authenticity to inspire trust across a diverse community. Ideally you could come from a people and culture and governance background and we are open to people from a diverse range of professional backgrounds. Above all, you will share our belief that people and culture are central to achieving excellence, and you will have the strategic vision to translate that belief into tangible impact.

The College's culture is in a strong place, but we know that excellence requires continual attention. This role will be central to that journey, enabling us to build capability, deepen engagement, and model inclusive leadership in everything we do. It is also a rare opportunity to influence the way a historic institution connects with people today, from our staff and volunteers to the surgeons and dental professionals we serve.

If you are excited by the opportunity to work at the intersection of heritage and innovation to help define what a truly modern professional body can be then we would be delighted to hear from you.

Best wishes,

Jackie Weller
Chief Executive

About us

The Royal College of Surgeons of England (RCS England) is a world-leading professional membership body and registered charity founded to advance the art and science of surgery. Our purpose today remains firmly focused on improving patient care and supporting the surgical profession at every stage of its journey.

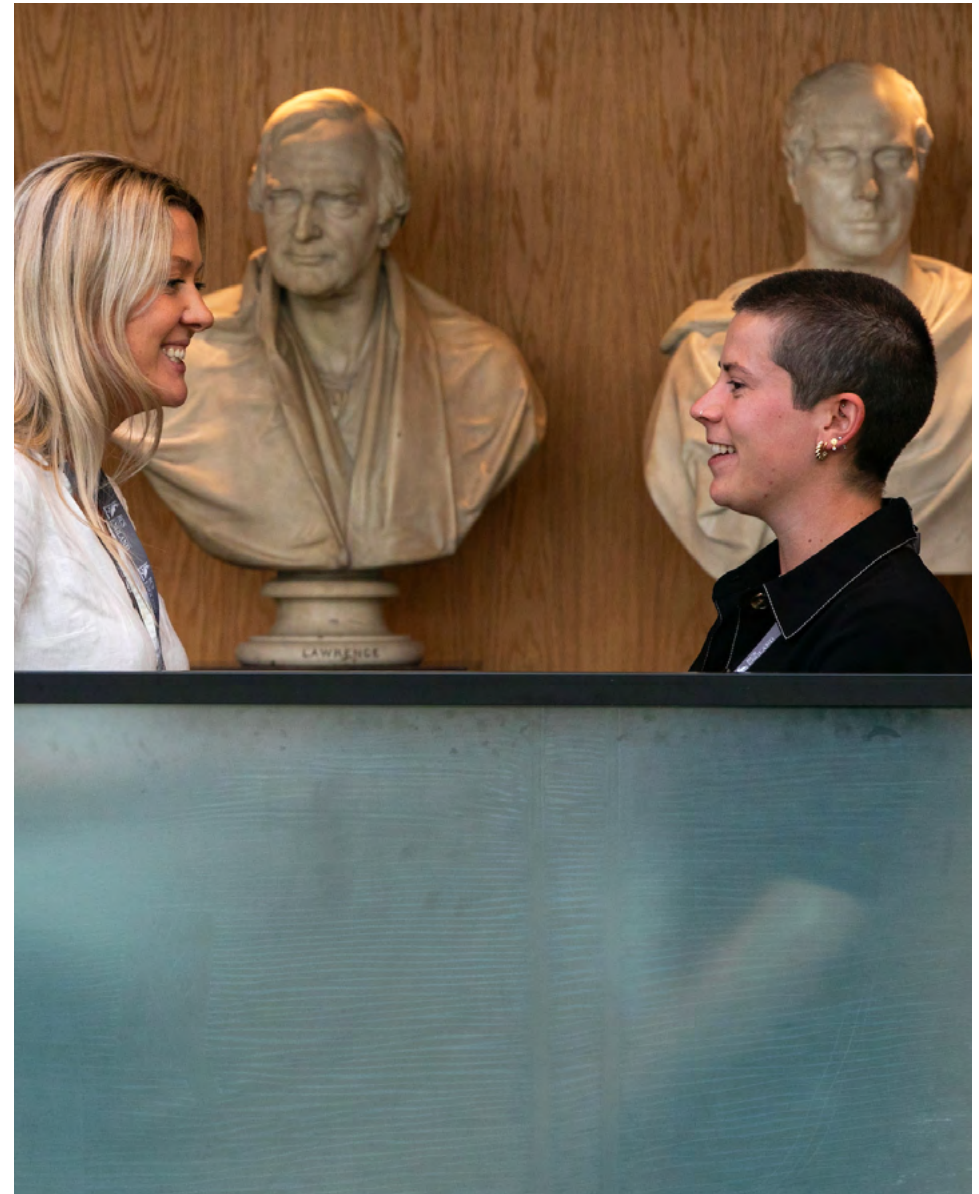
We represent a diverse community of more than 30,000 members in the UK and around the world, including surgeons, dental professionals, trainees, students and the wider surgical care team. Our staff of over 300 colleagues, working alongside more than 1,100 volunteers, deliver a wide portfolio of education, training, assessment and support.

Education and training remain central to our role. Each year, we deliver hundreds of courses to thousands of participants, supported by an extensive faculty of expert practitioners. Our examinations define the standards of surgical training in the UK, while our continuing professional development programmes and fellowships equip surgeons and surgical leaders to thrive throughout their careers.

Alongside training, our charitable purpose extends into research and advocacy. In 2022/23, we raised nearly £5 million for surgical research and learning initiatives, awarding fellowships that promote innovation in areas such as robotics, clinical diversity and global health. We also play a significant role in influencing healthcare policy. Our leadership engages directly with government, the NHS and regulators to shape the national agenda, and our authoritative voice is regularly cited in the media, helping to inform public understanding of surgical issues.

To learn more about our organisation, please use the links below.

- [Annual Report](#)
- [Current Strategy](#)
- [Our Commitment to Diversity](#)
- [Our Commitment to Sustainability](#)



Our Vision

We want to see excellent surgical care for everyone.

Our Mission

We will achieve our vision by enabling our members, in all their diversity, to deliver excellence in everything they do.

Our Values

Collaboration - We embrace our collective responsibilities working collaboratively and as one college.

- We work together, using our collective expertise and experience to effect positive change
- We are open, honest and transparent, straightforward in our language and actions, acting with sincerity and delivering on our commitments
- We take our responsibilities to each other, to patient care and to the environment seriously and we act with this in mind across our work

Respect - We value every person we come into contact with at the College as an individual, respect their aspirations and commitments in life, and seek to understand and meet their physical and wellbeing needs.

- We treat everyone we meet with kindness and integrity and we seek to promote these behaviours in others
- We actively seek a range of views and experiences across our work, and we listen to, and make everyone feel, a valued part of the team

Excellence - We aspire to excellence and success. We share learning from our experiences, apply feedback into practice, and commit to continual improvement.

- We work hard to be the best at what we do, recognising and celebrating effort and achievement, and reflecting on our work, so we can learn and improve
- We value and invest in research, education and training to drive excellence and put improvements in surgical practice, dentistry and patient care at the heart of our work
- We always seek to learn and discover more, valuing knowledge and scientific evidence, basing our decisions on insights, fact and experience

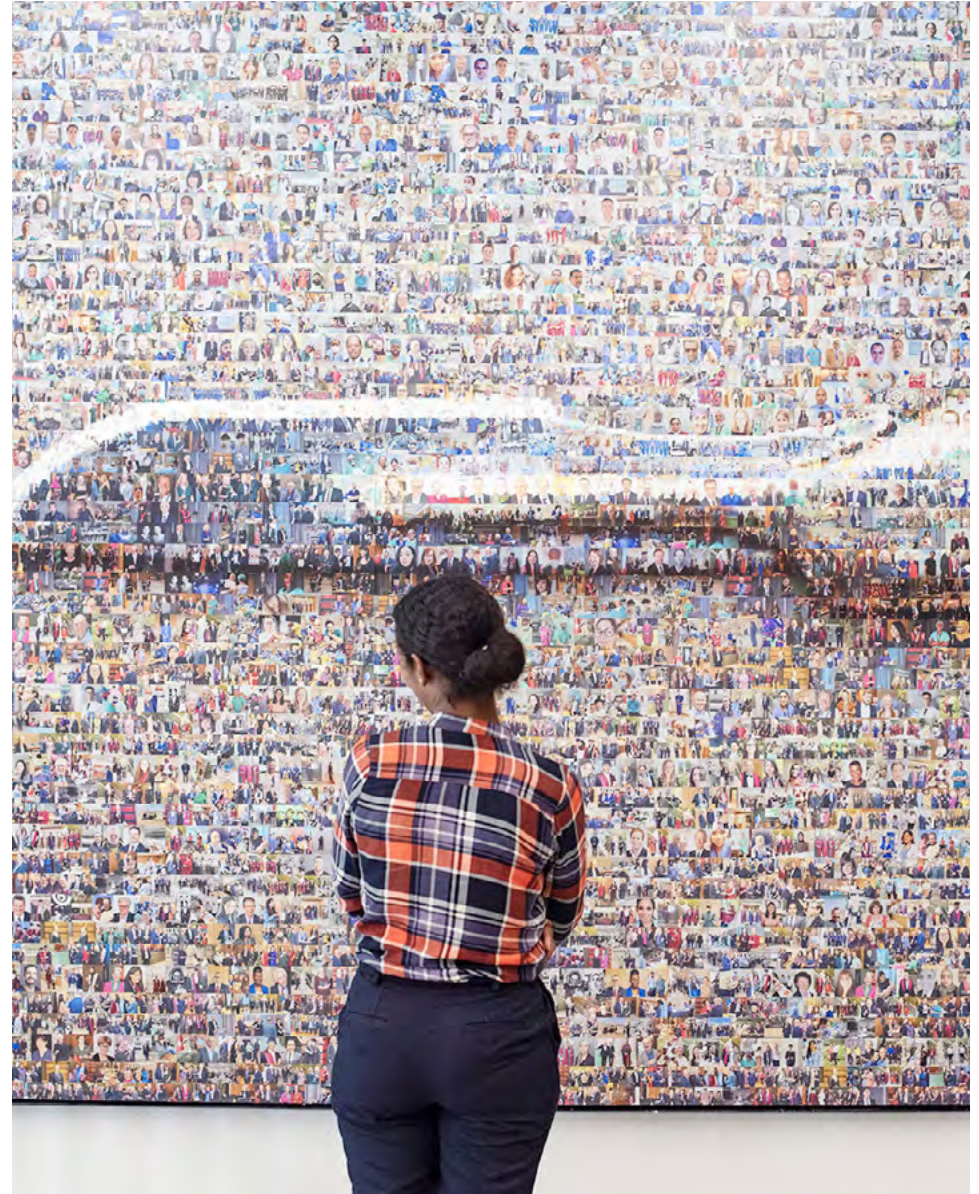


Diversity and Inclusion

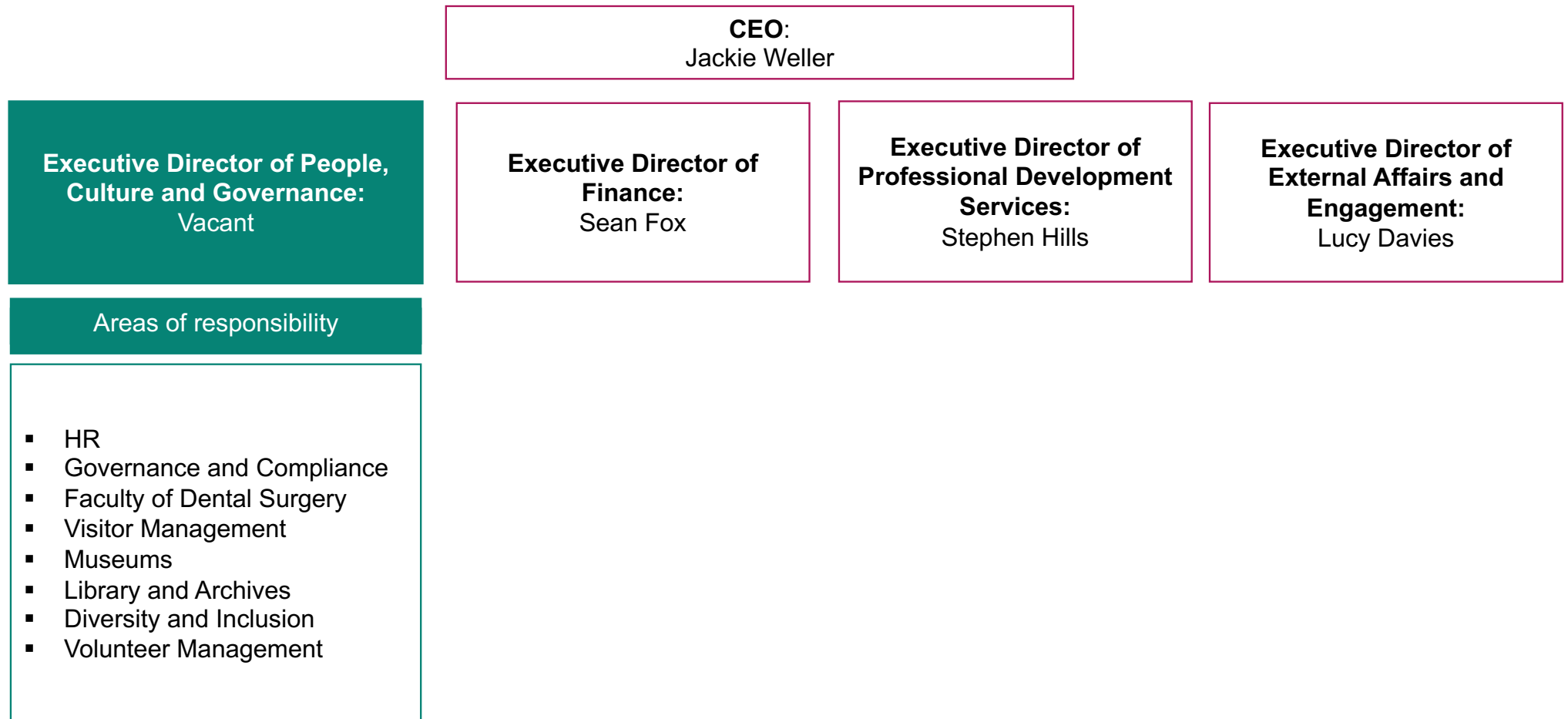
At RCS England, we believe we are only as good as the people we hire. We know that the people we hire come from all walks of life and with that comes different perspectives. Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging are at the heart of everything we do.

Our commitment to fostering an inclusive environment is evident through the active engagement of our employees in the Staff Council, where their voices play a crucial role in shaping work life for everyone within the College. Additionally, our staff networks cultivate a strong sense of belonging, while social clubs create a vibrant community spirit. We actively encourage our team members to openly share their professional and personal experiences, contributing to the evolution of our mindset and organisational culture.

We firmly believe that embracing diversity goes beyond a moral obligation; it serves as a catalyst for both individual and collective growth. Our unwavering dedication ensures that our profession and the College lead the way in advancing patient care for future generations. However, we recognise that achieving this goal demands a collective effort. That is why we are on the lookout for individuals like you. Your unique talents and diverse experiences, acquired through both life and work, are invaluable contributions that will enhance and complement our existing team. Join us on this journey towards a more inclusive and pioneering future in healthcare.



Organization chart



Job description

Job title: Executive Director, People, Culture and Governance

Reports to: Chief Executive

Responsible for: People and Culture, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Volunteer Management, Governance; Faculty of Dental Surgery, Museums, Library and Archives, Visitor Management

Role purpose:

As one of four Executive Directors forming the College's collective corporate leadership alongside the Chief Executive, this role holder works in close partnership with the President, Officers, Trustees and Council to deliver exceptional experiences across every aspect of the organisation.

This strategically reimagined position unifies People, Culture and Governance functions spanning HR, DEI, volunteer management, governance, FDS, museums, library and archives, and visitor management under cohesive leadership.

It is an investment in breaking down traditional silos and creating an integrated approach where every interaction matters, whether with employees, volunteers, visitors, or stakeholders.

The postholder will drive the College's inclusive agenda through strategic vision and operational excellence, ensuring that anyone engaging with the organisation as a team member, collaborator, or member of the public encounters a culture that genuinely values their contribution and prioritises their experience.

Accountable for the effective leadership of all directorate staff, the Executive Director will deliver ambitious annual objectives that transform every touchpoint from recruitment and onboarding to public engagement and governance, embedding a unified people centred culture throughout the College.

Main responsibilities:

Corporate Leadership and Executive Accountabilities

- Lead college wide strategic projects and foster a unified "One College" culture focused on delivery and growth, inspiring staff to achieve the College's vision while building trust with Council and Board Members.
- Provide strategic leadership to create efficient, value for money services and embed a strong performance culture through effective target setting and robust management systems.
- Challenge and support fellow Executive Directors and leaders to develop high performing teams, driving accountability and excellence across the organisation.

- Engage as an active member of the Executive Director Team, contributing to collective leadership, strategic decision making, and across college governance.
- Contribute to College wide business planning, budget oversight, and cost improvement initiatives.
- Share accountability for identifying, mitigating, and monitoring organisational risks, ensuring adherence to governance standards and regulatory requirements.

Directorate Leadership and Strategic Responsibilities

- Provide strategic direction and leadership for HR, DEI, Volunteer Management, Governance, FDS, Museums, Library and Archives, and Visitor Management, ensuring these functions are aligned to deliver organisational impact, foster an inclusive culture, and enhance stakeholder experience across all touchpoints.
- Lead the preparation and management of directorate budgets, ensuring optimal allocation of resources to maximise people development, cultural transformation, and public engagement while supporting long term sustainability.
- Drive directorate business planning and implement improvement plans that deliver measurable outcomes in employee engagement, volunteer retention, visitor satisfaction, and governance effectiveness.
- Identify, assess, and manage directorate specific risks, implementing mitigation strategies and monitoring controls to ensure compliance with employment law, safeguarding requirements, data protection, governance standards, and regulatory obligations.

People and HR Leadership

- Lead the development of a comprehensive people strategy aligned with organisational priorities.
- Provide strategic leadership for all HR functions.
- Lead organisational development initiatives that build capability, enhance productivity, and support cultural transformation across all directorates.
- Ensure HR services deliver high quality, responsive support that enables managers to lead effectively and staff to perform at their best.
- Oversee compliance with employment law and best practice HR standards, maintaining policies and procedures that protect both staff and the organisation.

Culture & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

- Drive the College's inclusive agenda by developing and implementing comprehensive DEI strategies.
- Lead organisational culture change initiatives that break down silos, enhance cross functional collaboration, and build a connected, high performing workplace that reflects the College's values
- Develop and monitor DEI metrics to ensure progress and compliance with regulatory requirements.

Volunteer Management and Engagement

- Drive a strategic direction for volunteer engagement by developing and implementing a comprehensive volunteer strategy that aligns with College priorities.
- Oversee end to end volunteer lifecycle management including attracting high calibre professional volunteers.
- Lead the establishment of governance structures and support systems for volunteer committees and working groups, while monitoring volunteer satisfaction and impact to coordinate good practice and continuously enhance volunteer experiences across all College activities.

Governance Leadership

- Provide strategic leadership for governance functions, ensuring the College maintains the highest standards of corporate governance and regulatory compliance.
- Ensure the Trustee Board, Council, and committees are provided with high quality governance services including meeting administration, decision making processes, and records management.
- Ensure compliance with Charity Commission requirements, company law, and governance best practice standards.
- Lead governance reviews and improvements, ensuring structures and processes remain fit for purpose.

FDS

- Represent FDS on strategic planning, ensure corporate governance compliance, represent the Faculty at external meetings, and manage organisational performance and risk.
- Manage the Faculty budget, oversee service agreements and funded partnerships.
- Ensure dental representation is embedded in membership growth initiatives, communications and marketing strategies, publications and awards processes, and Patient and Lay Group engagement.

Museums, Library and Archives

- Oversee strategic direction for the College's heritage assets, ensuring the Museum, Library, and Archives contribute to the College's mission and public benefit.
- Support and enable Directors to ensure collections are preserved to professional standards, regulatory compliance is maintained.
- Support and enable Directors to ensure the development and implementation of strategies for collection development, digitisation, public engagement, and innovative approaches to showcasing surgical history.
- Support and enable Directors in securing external funding and partnerships to support collection care, development, and public programmes.
- Develop and monitor metrics to measure the impact and value of heritage services.

Visitor and Experience Management

- Lead the transformation of visitor experiences across the College, developing and implementing strategies that optimise space utilisation, enhance accessibility, and ensure every interaction reflects the college's values and commitment to excellence.
- Oversee front of house operations to deliver professional, welcoming, and efficient service for all visitors; ensure health and safety compliance and risk management; and drive continuous improvement.
- Integrate visitor management with broader customer service goals to create seamless experiences across all touchpoints, and develop commercial opportunities.

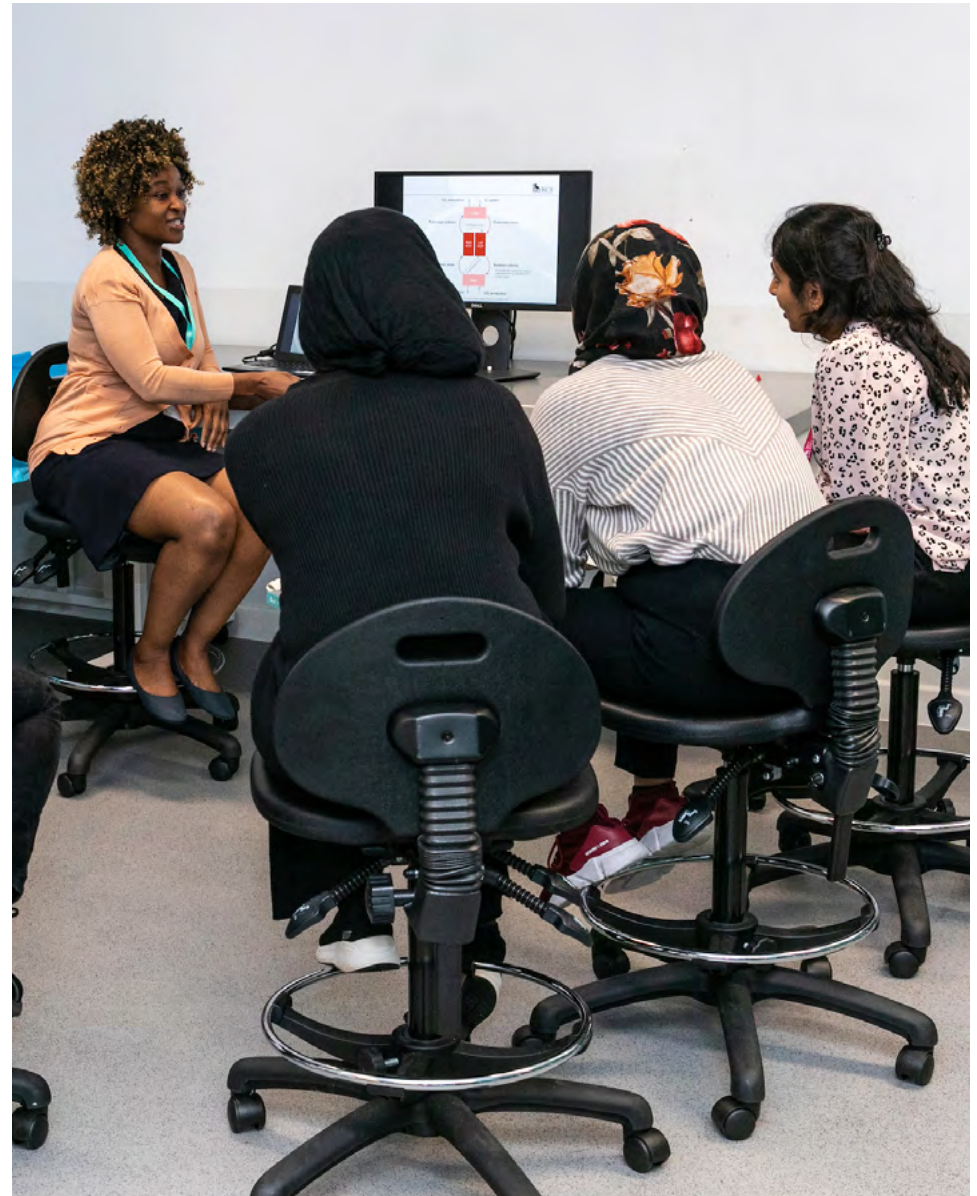
The post holder will be expected travel throughout the UK and possibly overseas and make overnight stays. There will also be a requirement to attend some meetings and events out of normal office hours.

This job description will be subject to review in the light of changing circumstances and may include other duties and responsibilities as may be determined. It is not intended to be rigid or inflexible but should be regarded as providing guidelines within which the individual works.

Person specification

Knowledge and experience

- Substantial senior management experience with evidence of making high-level strategic decisions affecting organisational operations beyond immediate areas of expertise, role modelling and empowering inclusive leadership.
- Proven experience working as a strategic People and Culture leader at executive level, covering talent management, organisational development, employment law, and HR systems with data-driven decision-making.
- Demonstrated capability leading multi-functional directorates, promoting and embedding a strong performance culture and building strong relationships with senior stakeholders across complex organisational structures both internally and externally.
- Significant experience of successfully leading strategic change, with strong change management understanding, and experience of working with specialist colleagues to assess change impacts and ensure effective and sustainable implementation. Experience of supporting large-scale technology transformation within an organisation is an advantage.
- Strong charity governance expertise with experience supporting Boards of Trustees conducting governance reviews.
- Proven ability to develop and implement DEI strategies that deliver measurable cultural change and regulatory compliance. Evidence of leading organisational culture change initiatives that break down silos, enhance cross-functional collaboration, and build a connected, high-performing, values led workplace.
- Comprehensive knowledge of safeguarding, GDPR, health and safety legislation, and policy implementation.
- Educated to degree level or equivalent.
- Professional qualification in HR/governance, or related field, or equivalent senior leadership experience in complex functions.



Skills and Abilities

- Ability to deliver strategic leadership on achieving first-class services within a value-for-money framework
- Ability to work collaboratively with fellow Executive Directors, ensuring business and stakeholder needs are consistently integrated and acting as a trusted advisor to colleagues in relation to People, Culture and Governance issues.
- Proven ability to develop and motivate teams, with high emotional intelligence and the ability to inspire people behind a values driven vision.
- A compelling communicator, fluent, clear and concise in both oral and written communication, including perceptiveness and presentation skills in formal, informal and public settings.
- Proven ability to influence, convince and negotiate with others in a way that results in acceptance and agreement.
- Highly numerate, with the analytical skills to use data and insight to inform planning and decision making, improve processes and assess impact.

The post holder will also need to demonstrate the following values

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The Royal College of Surgeons of England is an Equal Opportunities Employer. We are open to all talent and we actively ensure that all qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment without regards to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.



Terms of appointment

Salary

The salary for this role is c£120,000 per annum on a full-time permanent basis.

Location

Hybrid: 2-3 days in London.

Our excellent benefits package includes:

- 27 days paid holiday + bank holidays and up to 4 college closure days over the festive period & other leave entitlements (carers leave, fertility treatment leave, etc.)
- Hybrid and flexible working
- Enhanced contributory pension scheme
- Equal access to enhanced parenthood leave
- A range of staff and peer networks
- Employee health and wellbeing committed (Healthcare cash plan, menopause friendly, disability confident employer, mental health first aiders, EAP etc.)
- Retail discount platform
- Sabbatical and volunteering opportunities
- Variety of learning and development opportunities

Further information around our benefits can be found [here](#).



How to apply

We hope you will consider making an application. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/rcs-exe-dir-people-culture-governance/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the knowledge and experience criteria.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Closing date:	9.30 Monday 1st December
Preliminary interviews:	early w/c 15th December
Final Panel interviews:	w/c Monday 12th January 2026

