Profiles of members of the Board of Governors and co-opted members of its committees (at 8 October 2026)

Governors

Jo Adey

As a serving Royal Navy officer, during her 30 year career Jo has specialised in all aspects of learning and development, in particular how to meet the organisation's strategic skills requirements with a motivated and adaptable workforce. Currently Commander Maritime Reserves, Jo has worked for all three Services and the Ministry of Defence across the training and personnel domains in roles centred around the importance of people and their through-life development. She has a MSc in Training Management & Consultancy and an MA in Defence Studies and is a Chartered Fellow of both the Chartered Institute for Personnel & Development and the Chartered Management Institute.

For more than a decade, Jo has combined her career with wider community activities supporting young people to realise their potential through 1-2-1 mentoring, volunteering through Inspiring the Future, and working with the Sea Cadets.

Jo originally joined the Royal Navy Reserves whilst completing a BSc in Agriculture & Environmental Science at Newcastle University and continues to be committed to the environment and sustainability, as well as finding time for keeping chickens and guinea pigs at home with her husband in Hampshire.

Jo joined the Board in May 2026 and is a member of the Quality & Standards Committee.

Chris Brown

Professor Chris Brown is an internationally recognised education leader, researcher and public servant. He is Professor of Education and Head of Southampton Education School at the University of Southampton, where he leads teaching, research and partnerships focused on improving educational practice and outcomes.

Chris has over twenty years' experience working across education, policy and leadership in the UK and internationally. He has advised governments, schools and organisations on how evidence, ideas and innovation can be used to strengthen education systems and support social mobility. His work has influenced practice in schools, universities and public services across Europe and beyond.

Alongside his academic role, Chris brings extensive governance and strategic leadership experience, including oversight of large budgets, staff teams and complex organisations. He is committed to widening opportunity, supporting high-quality education and skills development, and ensuring education plays a central role in building a fairer, more informed society.

Chris was appointed to the Board of Governors in 2026 and is a member of the Quality & Standards Committee.

Rebecca Bunting

Professor Rebecca Bunting is an experienced senior leader in UK higher education with a distinguished career spanning more than four decades. Most recently she was Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of the University of Bedfordshire and before that held the same role at Buckinghamshire New University and the role of Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Portsmouth.

Professor Bunting's research and publications are in the field of English and language development. She was a founding Director of the Higher Education Academy and its successor, Advance HE, and led national and international education and training projects for English Language Teaching. She has chaired several national and regional committees in the higher education sector in relation to learning and teaching, widening participation, social mobility, strategy, leadership, and research.

At a regional level she has been influential in developing approaches to skills and employability, having been a member of two Local Economic Partnership boards, and she established sector leading Civic University Agreements in Bedfordshire.

Professor Bunting has governance experience at University, College and School level. She joined the Board in February 2026 and was appointed Co-Vice Chair of Governors and Chair of the Curriculum, Skills and Stakeholders Committee in October 2026.

Matt Chinn

Dr Matt Chinn is a former Government Scientist and Senior Civil Servant who has worked in Defence and Security for over 33 years. He has a PhD in Chemistry and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry. Before retiring in 2025 from his most recent role as Director of Science Operations and Research at the Animal Plant Health Agency, Matt was the Chief Delivery Officer for the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory. He was responsible for leadership and delivery of >4,000 scientists and engineers and a £1B annual budget and had a range roles in four Government departments - all relating to delivery of scientific research to protect the UK's Defence and Security.

Matt was previously seconded to the UK Defence Academy as the Head of the Technology and Business Faculty, responsible for delivery of a comprehensive STEM curriculum to 17,000 civilian and military students.

Matt is a fully qualified deer manager with over 20 years voluntary experience training others and currently manages deer on an estate in Hampshire. Keen on many aspects of self-sufficiency, he has also been a vegetable grower for over 20 years and proactive member of his local allotment.

Matt was appointed to the Board of Governors in 2026 and is a member of the Curriculum, Skills & Stakeholders Committee.

Gareth Davies

Gareth's career has focused on ensuring commercial organisations attend to their customers' needs. He has developed, set up and run customer-facing operations in the UK, and rolled out customer-centric business practices world-wide.

Helping to deliver good governance in providing public benefit, Gareth has been a Board member and Trustee of three major charities and two public sector organisations. Being particularly committed to causes which help to give people power over their own lives, he has also helped to found three community initiatives.

Gareth was appointed to the Board of Governors in 2021 and is Chair of the Audit Committee.

Sarah Duckering

Sarah was appointed a governor in 2024, having previous served as a co-opted member of the Curriculum, Skills & Stakeholders Committee.

Sarah is Executive Director of Research, Knowledge Exchange and Commercialisation Services at the University of Hull, leading the department that provides strategic insight and supports activities that underpin the ambitious growth targets for research and innovation at the university. Until April 2024, Sarah was the Director of Research and Innovation Services at the University of Portsmouth. Sarah's areas of knowledge cover working with partners to solve problems in fields as diverse as health and medical technologies, space, creative and digital, security, heritage and clean growth.

Sarah is also a Board Member of Portsmouth Creates. She has a degree in Geography and an MBA from Henley Management College. Starting her career in the NHS, she has worked in the Higher Education sector for many years in a variety of managerial and strategic roles. She is passionate about the role for universities in making a difference to the economy and society.

Sarah is a member of the Curriculum, Skills & Stakeholders Committee.

Janine Emm

Janine joined the Board of Governors as an employee of Sparsholt College Services Ltd (a subsidiary of the College) from January 2020 and is a member of the Resources Committee.

During the 20 years that Janine has worked for the College Group, she has gathered a wide range of experience through her varied job roles in both academic and business support areas, at Andover College and Sparsholt College. Janine is currently the Central Services and Premises Office Supervisor.

Janine is dedicated towards the success of the College, its good reputation for educating students, and in supporting all staff/departments in the provision of quality pastoral care, accommodation and teaching facilities. She is also an advocate of the positive contributions that all staff make to ensure students achieve well, feel safe, are respected for their diversities, and have equal opportunities. She is a member of the Equality & Diversity Working Group and Health & Safety Working Groups and liaises with various departments and a range of key contractors. She also has a strong interest and involvement in the many environmental initiatives that the College embraces.

Tegan Hall

Tegan was appointed HE Student Governor from May 2026 and is a member of the Quality & Standards Committee. Tegan is studying a Foundation Degree in Marine Conservation and Ecology.

Paula Jordan

Recognised by HR Magazine as one of the top 40 most influential HR practitioners, Paula is an Executive Coach, HR Consultant and NED. A former FTSE 250 Chief People Officer and Executive Committee Member, she has extensive experience in the construction, financial services, professional services and telecoms sectors. She is a NED at Human Capital Consultancy 10Eighty and continues to work with McCarthy Stone as a Trustee of the McCarthy Stone Charitable Foundation.

Paula is a regular panellist and contributor to thought leadership debates on responsible business, governance, employee engagement, the people-focused leader and COVID and is passionate about making a real difference to individuals and organisations using her skills and experience to balance the conflicting needs and desires of key stakeholders and the environment, challenging appropriately and supportively.

Paula joined the Board of Governors in 2022 and is chair of the Remuneration Committee and a member of the Governance & Search Committee and Resources Committee.

Phoebe Lisle

Phoebe was appointed FE Student Governor (Andover campus) from July 2026 and is a member of the Quality & Standards Committee. Phoebe is studying A 'levels in Business, Media Studies and Graphic Design.

Lesley Lloyd

Lesley is an experienced Chair, NED and CMO who focusses on driving strategic business growth and performance for listed and private enterprises across industries, including significant international experience. Her formative career was spent with global FMCG and Pharmaceutical organisations, managing a total of twenty brands over this period, including the launch of six new brands that each became number one in their sector. Then, as a Strategy Consultant with PwC, Lesley delivered board-level corporate strategy and marketing engagements for leading telecommunications, technology, media, financial services, oil and gas clients working across the globe. More recently as an interim CMO, she worked with B2B/B2C industry leaders and niche brands across a wide range of sectors/geographies, to improve standards of professionalism and to develop and help implement environmental sustainability strategies.

Lesley is an experienced Chair/NED with over twenty years in the charity/not for profit arena, including ten years in the university sector, where she served on several committees: Audit & Risk, Resources and as Chair of the Sustainability Committee. She provides rigorous oversight and advice on Corporate Strategy, ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance), Risk Management and Marketing.

Lesley also serves on the board of Community Alcohol Partnerships (CAP), is a mentor to CEO's, CMO's, students, graduates and senior executives with board aspirations, and volunteers with several local charities.

Lesley was awarded the Freedom of the City of London in 2021.

Lesley was appointed to the Board of Governors in 2026 and will be a member of the Audit Committee.

Jonathan Loretto

Jonathan has more than 25 years of experience in the global consulting industry in Europe, North America, and APAC, working with clients in telecommunications, banking, utilities, and other sectors to innovate and deliver major transformational business programmes. Currently an advisor for Mastek and the Bank of England, Jonathan's former executive roles have seen him lead in strategic service development, Cyber, AI, IoT and Blockchain with firms such as GFT, HSBC, IBM, Capgemini, and EY.

Education has always been one of his passions and, alongside his business career, Jonathan has shared his knowledge as a visiting lecturer and student mentor. He is a passionate supporter of a range of social impact activities, concerning sustainability, equality, and climate change, and has championed the integration of non-neurotypical adults into productive business roles.

Jonathan and his family live near Winchester.

Jonathan was appointed to the Board of Governors in 2024 and is a member of the Quality & Standards Committee.

Julie Milburn

Julie was appointed Principal & Chief Executive of Sparsholt College from 1 August 2020. Julie joined the College in July 2018 as Deputy Principal Curriculum and has over 20 years' experience in further and higher education, with previous management and teaching roles at Farnborough College, Newbury College and East Durham & Houghall College.

Julie has a background in Sports Science and has extensive professional expertise in the design and delivery of curriculum, quality improvement and safeguarding. Julie attributes her work ethic to her background in sports, having competed to a high standard in swimming prior to injury and places strong emphasis on the benefits of both physical activity and mental wellbeing on the health of her workforce and student community.

Julie is a member of the Curriculum, Skills & Stakeholders, Resources, Quality & Standards and Search Committees of the Board of Governors. Julie is also Chair of Andover Town Football Club Limited and Westley Enterprises Limited and Chief Executive of Sparsholt College Services Limited, all subsidiaries of the College.

Matt Ridout

Matt Ridout studied Game and Wildlife management at the college. After working in industry, he returned to the college in 2008 as an instructor/technician in the Land and Wildlife department, looking after the game management facilities at the college. He later became a lecturer and is currently course coordinator for the Technical Certificate and Advanced Technical Extended Diploma in Land and Wildlife (Game).

Matt has worked within the residential support team as a warden since 2008. From 2015 until 2026, he represented first Sparsholt Business Support and subsequently Academic colleagues on the college's Informing & Consulting Employees Group.

He has close links with his industry and is keen to provide industry-ready learners that will be successful and promote high standards in the Land and Wildlife industry.

Amanda Rowley

Amanda was the Headteacher at The Wavell School before joining the Board in September 2023. Amanda began her career as a teacher of French and Spanish in a large 11-18 school in Newcastle Upon Tyne, followed by roles at schools in Essex and Hampshire and two years as Acting Head of Languages at the Institute of Languages, University of Sydney. During her 18 years as Headteacher, Amanda oversaw growth of the school roll from 850 to 1020, including the development of a Special Needs Resource Provision, investment in development of the school estate, and achievement of several national standards.

Amanda has also worked with the MoD and DfE on the national working party, SCISS (Service Children in State Schools). She was on the Working Party which helped attain the Pupil Premium for Service Children. She has also been a representative on various Hampshire Standing Committees: Admissions Forum; Chair of Resources and Performance Standing Cttee; Hants School Forum and the Carbon Management Group. Locally in Rushmoor, she has been a member of the Education Improvement Partnership (EIP) and the Local Children's Partnership (LCP) Steering Group. She is a Trustee of the charity Reading Force, which supports service families through literacy programmes especially during parental deployment, and a member of the Independent Advisory Panel to the Defence College of Logistics, Policing and Administration, headquartered at Worthy Down.

As a life-long learner, Amanda is keen to develop her knowledge about the Further Education sector and feels the future of the planet lies in agriculture. She is very keen to support those who share this belief and who are committing their working lives to the development of the science and technology required.

Amanda joined the Board in 2023 and was appointed Co-Vice Chair of Governors and Chair of the Quality & Standards Committee in 2024. Amanda is also the Lead Governor for Safeguarding and SEND.

Nick Shorter

Nick was appointed Chair of Governors from August 2026, having joined the Board of Governors in 2024 and previously served as Co-Vice Chair of Governors and Chair of the Curriculum, Skills & Stakeholders Committee.

Nick is Chief Executive of Velcourt Group Limited a specialist UK-wide land-based services and farming company. As CEO of the Group's largest subsidiary Velcourt Ltd, Nick also leads its extensive UK operations in arable, fresh produce, livestock, and dairy farming. Nick joined Velcourt Ltd in 2001 with a degree in Agricultural Science and through his roles at the company has contributed to and led the significant growth of farming businesses and agronomy advisory services. As a main board director of Velcourt Group Limited, Nick also has a governance and chairing role for subsidiary companies supplying management and consultancy to the game, stewardship, and forestry industries.

Nick is a staunch supporter of land-based colleges and the skills and entry they provide to students from all backgrounds into employment in the rural sector, responding to the challenges of an ever more complex dynamic of environment, food production and land use.

Nick is a fellow of the Society of Agriculture and in 2024 was awarded the IAgrM farm management award for outstanding career contribution to the advancement of farm management. He is also a member of the BASIS (agronomists) professional register. He has been based in Hampshire since 2009 and lives near Andover with his wife and children.

Nick currently chairs the Resources Committee and Governance & Search Committee and is a member of the Remuneration Committee.

Jonathan Simm

Jonathan is a Chartered Accountant with over 30 years' experience in corporate finance and private equity. An experienced Chair and non-executive director, he has worked across a range of sectors including defence, semi-conductors, manufacturing, retail and care services. He currently chairs a Southampton-based port services business with operations around the UK and is a non-executive director of the commercial subsidiary of a maritime archaeology charity.

Jonathan has lived in Hampshire for the past 25 years and has a keen interest in the countryside and wildlife conservation. He is currently establishing a wildflower meadow and reconnecting hedgerows at his home near Stockbridge. A long-time dog owner, he enjoys spending time outdoors with his Cocker Spaniel and Cockerpoo and has a developing interest in bee keeping.

Jonathan joined the Board in October 2026 and is a member of the Resources Committee.

Noemi Wall

Noemi is an insurance professional with over 25 years' experience in Non-Life insurance within the Lloyd's of London market. After 15 years working as an underwriter for various Lloyd's Syndicates, Noemi set up her own consultancy in 2012 providing expert advice to numerous managing agents specialised in trade credit, political risks, and political violence insurance. Noemi has worked extensively with financial institutions and trade finance professionals in Europe and internationally.

In 2018 Noemi obtained an MSc in Risk and Finance from the University of Southampton and is currently a member of the Institute of Risk Management.

Through her work and her studies Noemi has developed a keen interest in risk management and wants to deploy her knowledge to enable the success of organisations through careful identification, understanding, management and mitigation of risks. She is passionate about sustainability and the need to develop novel business models that incorporate ambitious but credible environmental goals in corporate strategic objectives.

In February 2021 Noemi joined the board of Beazley Furlonge Limited, UK subsidiary of Beazley plc, a FTSE 100 company, as Non-Executive Director. More recently she was named Senior Independent Director and is a member of the Risk Committee and the Audit Committee.

Noemi was appointed to the Board of Governors in 2024 and is a member of the Audit Committee, Remuneration Committee and a director of Westley Enterprises Limited, a subsidiary of the College.

(There is a current vacancy for a FE Student Governor - Sparsholt.)

Co-opted Committee Members

Gemma Baker

Gemma joined the Quality & Standards Committee as a co-opted member in September 2024.

Gemma has been Area Director South East & Senior Policy Lead for Ofsted Inspection at the Association of Colleges (AOC) since 2018, having moved to the AOC as Director of Strategy in 2013 from her role as Head of Adult Learning at Newbury College.

Gemma has been in the sector since 2001, starting her career as an English Lecturer and Manager in a number of large London colleges.

Gemma has been a FE and Skills Ofsted inspector since 2016 and is Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Sector Leader at the Education Training Foundation (ETF). Gemma also mentors undergraduates and postgraduates on Degrees/Masters in Education at the University of Greenwich.

As an Andover College alumni (1994-1996), a regular AoC visitor and a Hampshire resident, Gemma knows the Sparsholt College Group well.

Neil Hopkins OBE

Neil was, from 1993 to 2013, the principal of Peter Symonds College, Winchester, then the largest sixth form college in the country. After retiring from that role, he was contracted at various times as an adviser to the national Sixth Form and FE Commissioners, and as Executive Director, then Policy Adviser, of the Maple Group of high-performing sixth form colleges. He was also a trustee of the Royal Artillery Centre for Personal Development (RACPD), and a member of a multi-academy trust in Farnborough. He is still a governor of Testbourne School.

In a lifetime working in education, Neil has taught in schools and colleges in areas as diverse as Salford and Rutland. He spent many years on the boards of the Association of Colleges and of UCAS, the university admissions organisation, as well as being a council member of the Association of School and College Leaders. He has a first degree in Mathematics and a Master's degree in Education. He was awarded an OBE in 2014, for services to education.

Neil served on the Board of Governors from 2013, becoming Chair of Governors in 2018. He agreed to extend his term of office until July 2026 to support the orderly succession and appointment of a new Chair. From September 2026, Neil joined the Quality & Standards Committee as a co-opted member.

David Rees

David has been a co-opted member of the Curriculum, Skills & Stakeholders Committee since May 2024.

Growing up on the Gower peninsula, David always had passion for wildlife and the environment. Leaving school at 17 to attend Sparsholt College, David successfully completed both the Gamekeeping and the Game, Wildlife & Habitat management courses. This has led to over 30 years working and gaining experience, skills and knowledge in the land-based sector, particularly wildlife management and conservation, legal liabilities, ecology, forestry, and commercial renewable energy developments where environmental mitigation and enhancement is crucial.

David currently works as a Specialist Advisor for Environment and Recreation for National Resources Wales's renewable energy delivery team. Previously organisations he's worked for include the Butterfly Conservation and Forestry Commission Wales. David maintains a keen interest in deer and wildlife management, woodland management and rural land based industries and is also a Trustees for Gwent Wildlife Trust. In his spare time, David likes to go surfing and kayaking with his family around the Gower and West Wales coasts.

Robin Sharpe

Robin has been a co-opted member of the Audit Committee since June 2024.

Robin is an experienced finance and operations leader specialising in high-growth software companies, with a particular passion for open-source technology. He notably led the global operations for Elastic, a premier platform for search-powered solutions, from an early stage (as one of the first dozen employees) through to its public listing on the NYSE, and onwards with workforce of 2,500 across 30+ countries.

Robin is a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and lives close to Winchester.

Sally Thompson

Sally was co-opted to the Curriculum, Skills & Stakeholders Committee in May 2024.

Sally transferred to Hampshire County Council in April 2024 in the position of Head of Business, Commercial and Skills, a role she had held at the EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership since January 2023. Before joining the EM3, she was Economic Development Manager at Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

Sally brings a wealth of experience to the committee having previously founded and led, as chief executive, Business South which brought together cross-sector businesses and stakeholders from across Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Dorset, Sussex and Surrey to influence the commissioning of a Master Plan for the regeneration of Southampton City Centre. Prior to this, Sally, who has won Wessex Businesswoman of the Year, facilitated the creation and development of a marine cluster on the Isle of Wight and a composites cluster in the Solent region, and more recently was the Project Manager for the heritage-led regeneration of Ryde High Street, a collaboration between Historic England, Isle of Wight Council and Ryde Town Council.

Carl Whatley

Carl was co-opted to the Audit Committee in September 2025.

Carl is the Head of Finance & Revenues at Test Valley Borough Council. He has worked for the Council since 2001 in a range of finance-related roles, including Internal Audit and Accountancy positions. He was appointed as CFO and section 151 officer (the officer with statutory responsibility for a Council's finances) in 2021.

Carl's role, as part of the Council's Management Team, includes direct responsibility for areas such as budgeting and budgetary control, financial reporting, internal audit, risk management, local taxation & housing benefits and the Council's Customer Services team. He regularly reports to the Council's various committees on these matters. Wider leadership responsibilities include service development and transformation as well as being a figurehead for embedding the Council's core values and behaviours.

Carl is a fellow member of the Chartered Institute of Certified Accountants.