



University  
Hospital  
Association



# Teaching & University Hospital Status

The voice for  
better healthcare

# A powerful collective force for change



## About us

UHA is the unified voice of university hospitals. We're bringing both experts and organisations together, to create a national forum that allows members to share best practice.

We translate the research, education, experiences and concerns of our members into a powerful collective force for change. We inform both government policy and the wider world to deliver better patient outcomes and ultimately improve the health of the UK.

## University hospitals

It is recognised that identifying an NHS provider as having teaching and/or university status denotes it as an important national teaching and research resource and helps its ability to recruit and retain the best staff.

This document sets out the circumstances under which it would be appropriate for an NHS provider to consider including the word "university" in its name and how to do so. It also sets out how NHS trusts can apply to be identified as having a "significant teaching commitment".

## Identifying as a university hospital trust

UHA represents university hospital trusts' unique interests in partnership with other national bodies.

### NHS Trusts

Legislation requires that the Secretary of State for Health approve any amendments to an NHS trust's Establishment Order, including a change to the name to include the word "university". In reaching this decision, he or she will first seek advice from Department of Health officials, who require that any application to change the name of an NHS trust has the prior explicit, written support of NHS Improvement, the NHS trust in question and the local medical and/or dental school.

In addition, it has been agreed between the Department of Health and the University Hospital Association (UHA) that any NHS trust seeking to include the word "university" in its title will be required to have applied for UHA membership and for UHA to have agreed that the terms of its membership have been met. The most current membership criteria (developed in conjunction with the Medical Schools Council and agreed with the Department of Health) are at Annex A.

UHA is the key leadership body across the UK promoting the tripartite interests of university hospitals: service, teaching and research. It represents university hospital trusts' unique interests in partnership with other national bodies.

### NHS Foundation Trusts

NHS foundation trusts are not required to seek external approval of any proposed name changes. To effect a name change, a foundation trust needs to make an amendment to its constitution, for which the foundation trust would require the approval of more than half of the members of both the foundation trust's council of governors and its board of directors voting in favour of the change (section 37(1) of the National Health Service Act 2006, as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012). Foundation trusts are required to adhere to NHS England's NHS identity guidelines and should discuss any proposed name change with NHS Improvement.

When consideration is being given to including the word "university" in its name, given the commitments and responsibilities this entails, it is recommended that foundation trusts apply the same standards that are applied to NHS trusts. This means that a foundation trust should only consider including the word "university" in its title if it has applied for and meets the criteria for membership of UHA as set out in Annex A.

At least one member of the hospitals council of governors must be appointed by the university.

## Having a significant teaching commitment

### NHS Trusts

The National Health Service Act 2006 states that the first NHS trust order made in relation to an NHS trust must specify that "where the NHS trust has a significant teaching commitment, a provision to secure the inclusion in the non-executive directors....a person from a university with a medical or dental school specified in the order". If an NHS trust supports medical or dental training or research, it can apply to the Department of Health for an amendment to its Establishment Order to recognise this status.

There is no definition of what constitutes a "significant teaching commitment" and an NHS trust seeking such designation is not required to meet the full requirements of UHA membership to be considered to have a "significant teaching commitment". However, in developing its advice to ministers on whether the designation should be granted, Department of Health officials look to written support from the associated medical and/or dental school confirming that the trust meets the key principles contained in Annex A.

If an NHS trust's Establishment Order is duly amended, it will be required to include among its non-executive directors one from the associated medical and / or dental school.

If an NHS trust has a significant teaching commitment in other clinical professions, the parties involved may wish to enter into a similar arrangement to foster partnership working at board level. It will not be possible, however, for this to be formally designated in the trust's Establishment Order.

### NHS Foundation Trusts

There is no equivalent legal provision for a foundation trust to be designated as having a "significant teaching commitment" specifically. If any of a foundation trust's hospitals includes a medical or dental school provided by a university, however, at least one member of the council of governors must be appointed by that university. The foundation trust may choose a representative of that university or any other institution with which it works in partnership as a non-executive director (NHS Act 2006).

*Department of Health, NHS Improvement, University Hospital Association (formerly Association of UK University Hospitals), Medical Schools Council September 2017*

## Annex A

- 1 **In terms of research:**
- a. The Trust shall have in place with the University a Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Working for Effective Research Governance;
  - b. The Trust shall demonstrate that it is working collaboratively with the Faculty to develop an agreed joint research strategy;
  - c. There shall be evidence of significant research activity within the Trust, much of which will involve collaboration with University staff. This will include:
    - i. A core number of University principle investigators (minimum of ten University staff with honorary contracts) to be based on site;
    - ii. The research output to be REF returnable;
    - iii. For Trusts in England, an average Research Capability Funding of at least £100k average p.a. over the previous two years.
- 2 **The Faculty and University Hospital shall maintain strategic links and a close working relationship, which shall include:**
1. University representation on the Trust's Local Awards Committee for considering nominations for Clinical Excellence Awards;
  2. University representation on the Trust's Advisory Appointments Committees for Consultant posts;
  3. Board membership of a non-Executive Director from the Faculty;
  4. The Trust's Chief Executive attending formal meetings with the Faculty Dean's Advisory Committee.
- 3 **The Trust shall provide for the University practice placements for undergraduate medical students and for students from at least one other healthcare profession**  
(*dentistry, nursing, or one or more of the allied health professions*).
- 4 **The Trust shall provide for undergraduate students appropriate library facilities, IT facilities with Internet access, and teaching facilities. There may be integrated provision for postgraduate and undergraduate education.**
- 5 **The Trust shall have a Lead Placement Contact approved by the Faculty of Medicine, to be responsible for undergraduate education, for each of the professions for which it provides placements.**
- 6 **The Trust must be able to demonstrate to the University that it provides high quality clinical education. This will require evidence of the following:**
- a. Flexibility:
    - i. Flexibility in light of any changing needs of the Faculty in respect of undergraduate education;
  - b. Appropriate human resources:
    - i. Ability on part of Trust staff to deliver the curriculum and assessments determined by the Faculty;
    - ii. Provision by Trust staff of appropriate student supervision as agreed with the Faculty. This may involve staff from a range of professions and grades;
    - iii. The participation by core Trust teaching staff in appropriate training;
  - c. A collaborative working partnership:
    - i. The availability of Trust staff to provide teaching and supervision and to respond to student queries and problems in a timely manner;
    - ii. Collaboration between Trust staff and University staff, for example, regarding curriculum development;
    - iii. Full cooperation by Trust staff in monitoring and evaluating the quality of education provision, and in facilitating student evaluation;
    - iv. The readiness of Trust staff to respond to feedback from students and the Faculty;
    - v. Evidence of action by trust on Faculty quality assurance measures;
  - d. Resources:
    - i. Provision of appropriate support staff, equipment and accommodation for Lead Placement Contracts;
    - ii. Provision for students of access to lockers and appropriate facilities;
  - e. For Trusts in England, evidence of compliance with:
    - i. The Learning and Development (LDA) between the Trust and Health Education England;
    - ii. The Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Trust and the Faculty.

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