

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Council Election 2026

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

Lorna BOWLING

My relationship with York spans almost two decades: I studied my undergraduate degree here from 2008–2011 and have worked at the University for 14 years in Widening Access. This has given me a deep understanding of the University's culture, values and role within the wider community, alongside an appreciation of the opportunities and challenges facing higher education.

My work is rooted in my commitment to equality of opportunity. I believe everyone should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential and be valued for their experiences, perspectives and contributions. I would bring this commitment to Council, ensuring decisions reflect the diverse experiences of our staff community and those we serve.

I would offer the perspective of a Professional Services staff member; a role I am proud to hold and believe is fundamental to the University's success. I would use my voice constructively to offer this in strategic discussions, while considering the University as a whole. My approach is collaborative, curious and respectful. I value constructive disagreement, evidence-based decision making, confidentiality, integrity and collective responsibility.

My experience has required me to build relationships across organisational boundaries, understand perspectives and bring people together around shared objectives. I would use this experience to contribute to Council's deliberations, the University's public reputation and community engagement. Evidenced recently when I shared my personal and professional journey in an Alumni Voices article.

I believe collaborative leadership will enable change so that success and opportunity reach every part of our community, reflecting our Community without Limits.

I recognise the responsibility of Council membership and am committed to the Nolan Principles. I would continue developing my understanding of higher education governance, including the CUC Higher Education Code of Governance.

Ultimately, I am standing because I believe passionately in York. I would be proud and privileged, as an elected colleague, to use my experience and voice to help the University navigate challenges, embrace opportunities and create an environment where staff, students and our wider community can thrive.

Rachel COLLINS

I am submitting my candidacy for University Council, as my diverse experience across the higher education sector and deep commitment to the University of York uniquely equip me to support Council's vital governance remit.

I would relish the opportunity to support shaping York's strategic vision, ensuring financial sustainability, and safeguarding its academic excellence. My career has spanned both academia and professional services, providing a holistic understanding of how a university thrives.

As a former lecturer at two other UK institutions and external examiner at a third, I bring an external perspective and an eclectic understanding of the higher education landscape. I have first-hand experience of the pressures facing academic teams and the intricacies of maintaining high student experience standards. I can provide informed, constructive challenge regarding the Council's oversight of long-term academic plans and cross-institutional benchmarking.

In my current role as Head of York for Life, I lead our alumni engagement strategy and delivery including coordination of York's Alumni Advisory Board. Every day, I champion York's public good mission, cultivating lifelong relationships that compliment philanthropic support, diversifying our financial sustainability. Working to deliver an instrumental component of the University of Opportunity initiative, I deeply understand our institutional identity and the essential role our global community plays in our future resilience.

I am dedicated to asking insightful questions, ensuring robust accountability, and championing policies that support the best interests of our diverse communities. It would be a privilege to serve on Council, bringing my dual lens as a former academic and current institutional advocate to help steward York's future.

Chris GOODMAN-BOWEN

Hello

My early career plans failed miserably when it became apparent, I couldn't be a Welsh International Rugby player - mainly because I can't catch a ball! However, undeterred, I channelled that determination into a career with the police. While my rugby dreams faded, my policing career was thankfully more successful, attaining the rank of Chief Superintendent before retiring.

So, now that I've got your attention, why should you vote for me to be one of the Professional Services Reps?

Over nearly three decades, I gained extensive governance, strategic and accountability experience - serving as a Trustee of the Police Superintendents Association and Chairing both Adult and Child Safeguarding Boards, in addition to the Force Scrutiny and Governance meetings. Outside of work, I've served as Chair of Governors at an Alternative Provision Free School in Leeds, Vice-Chair at my children's primary school, and was a National Council Member of Round Table Great Britain and Ireland.

So, why do I want to be your Professional Services Rep on Council?

The answer is simple, and it's the same reason I joined the University of York in the twilight of my career: to help the young people of today become the leaders of tomorrow, firmly aligning with our ethos as a university for the public good.

As Head of Campus Safety, I work daily, alongside hundreds of Professional Services staff to keep our community safe. But beyond operational safety, I want to use my experience to ensure that as the Council makes long-term strategic decisions, the diverse insights, expertise, and real-world perspectives of Professional Services staff at all levels are genuinely heard. Driven by values of integrity, inclusivity, and collaboration, I will ensure our collective voice shapes York's future.

If you want a representative with the curiosity to question, the courage to challenge, and the governance experience to deliver an impactful outside perspective, then please vote for me!

Thank you.

Suzanne HINDMARSH

As Biological Services Facility Manager with 20 years of higher education experience, I am nominating myself to bring a grounded, multi-departmental perspective to the University Council. Progressing from a junior technician to facility manager provides me with an authentic, frontline understanding of the operational realities, infrastructure dependencies, and cultural dynamics across our Professional Services staff.

Council requires strategic oversight, risk management, and regulatory accountability. Locally, I hold ultimate responsibility for strict Home Office compliance, managing complex legal frameworks under ASPA, and navigating unannounced audits. This demands robust risk mitigation and proven financial stewardship; evidenced by my recent BSF business case which delivered over £53,000 in annual savings, demonstrating my ability to balance facility needs with those of the wider institution. These oversight capabilities, combined with my experience managing large capital projects, will directly support Council's stewardship of university assets and reputation.

My daily work is inherently collaborative, cutting across academic and professional directorates including Biology, HYMS, Estates, Stores, and IT. Furthermore, as an active member of the Technical Leadership Group and through regular partnerships with managers across Horticulture, Teaching, Archaeology, Environment and Geography teams, I maintain a broad view of our institutional landscape. I understand how high-level strategies filter down to impact diverse service teams on the ground.

Well-versed in committee governance and ethical stewardship through my seat on the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB), I am fully committed to York's mission of public good, financial

sustainability, and equality. I would be privileged to represent Professional Services as a member of the University Council, offering a calm, thoughtful, and pragmatic voice to support the university's future direction.

Tom KNEVITT

In November 2019, weeks into my time here as staff, I broke my nose tripping into the Heslington Hall steps. Our Professional Services community took it in their stride: a new starter in HR put work on pause to keep me company; first-aiders got me straight to the hospital; the cleaning team hid the blood; my manager kept checking in to make sure I was being looked after (then told me off for turning up the next day). (Sorry, Annie.)

That above-and-beyond care set the tone of what followed, and I've tried to uphold it in every role I've held here. Whether supporting crisis comms through Covid-19, student recruitment through sector instability, or staff engagement through the HR and Finance Transformation Programme, I've been consistently in awe of the talent and energy we put into everything we do.

Administrators, coordinators, managers, officers – we're surrounded by colleagues for whom such generosity comes naturally, and we're at our best when we can learn from these collective efforts. To that end, I'm still trying to create new ways to celebrate staff (like the york.ac.uk/transform hub), share perspectives with warmth and good humour, and include each other on journeys throughout major moments of change.

I've reached out recently to hundreds of you, asking how we can build similar feedback loops into Council discussions, and explain the complex implications of strategic thinking before decisions hit our inboxes. As expected, you've outdone yourself with your ideas – and I'd love to hear others. If you have any thoughts, let me know. If we've never said hello, Slack me a hello.

Above everything, make sure you vote for someone, and nudge people to do the same; the more representation, the better. If you give me your trust, I'll carry your insights, concerns, questions and stories into the room where the biggest conversations happen, and turn up every day to connect us further. That much, at least, I can promise. After all, I really have bled for this place.

Phil LANG

I am standing for election to University Council because I believe the University makes its best decisions when academic and professional services expertise are valued equally at the strategic table.

Having worked in higher education for many years, including at York since 2018 as Placements Manager, I collaborate extensively with students, academic colleagues, professional services, employers and external partner organisations. Working especially closely with both the Department of Biology and central Careers & Placements has given me a broad, grounded perspective on how the University works. I have also lived overseas for a number of years and am strongly committed to York's internationalisation goals.

During my time at York, I have led initiatives including mentor schemes and podcasts, and am proud to have helped expand the GenerationResearch project from seven to over 50 studentships. These projects reflect my commitment to widening participation, creating opportunities for students from all backgrounds, and building lasting partnerships across research and industry. They have also reinforced the importance of collaboration between groups. The University is at its strongest when working across multidisciplinary boundaries, as it does with GenerationResearch, and in the Bioscience Technology Facility, YSBL and the highly successful Biochemistry and Neuroscience programmes.

If elected, I will bring a kind and constructive approach to Council. I am prepared to ask probing questions and offer constructive challenge, while recognising Council's responsibility to act in the best interests of the University as a whole. I want to be an approachable Council member who listens to colleagues across the University and ensures professional services perspectives are part of discussions about strategy, resources and organisational change. I will also champion fair reward and recognition for professional services colleagues, particularly those in middle-grade roles whose career pathways are often less visible than academic promotion routes.

York faces significant challenges, but it is also a university with exceptional people and huge potential. I have really enjoyed working here and would be proud to bring a collaborative professional services perspective to Council.

Karen MADDISON

As a first-generation university student, a working mother, and a staff member of 12 years, I offer a grounded, multi-layered perspective on the University's mission. Serving as Land and Buildings Manager, I hold clear practical insight into our operations, campus assets, and internal culture. I am applying to the University Council to contribute this experience alongside my practical governance expertise.

Governance Qualities & Strategic Insight

- **Governance Experience & Financial Oversight:** Having served 8 years as a school governor—including chairing the Finance Committee—and 4 years chairing the national AUDE Estate Management Group, I have practical experience finding solutions to financial challenges and achieving the impossible through my determination to succeed.
- **Objectivity & Strategic Scrutiny:** In my day-to-day role, I assess risk, asset performance, and data to inform decision making. I would bring this objective, evidence-based scrutiny to Council, offering independent judgment on strategic decisions as a staff member with a property background.
- **Integrity & Balanced Dialogue:** Guided by openness, and honesty, I value constructive, measured debate. I aim to question assumptions thoughtfully without being adversarial, respecting confidentiality and upholding collective responsibility for Council decisions.
- **Communication & Sector Engagement:** My dual perspective as an operational property professional and a working mum supporting family to receive a University education enables me to bridge staff, student, and management viewpoints, contributing constructively to discussions and public messaging.

I welcome the opportunity to bring steady judgment, sector knowledge, and a strong personal commitment to the work of the University Council.

Kate MOORES

As a member of Professional Services, I am standing for University Council to support and represent staff from across the organisation. I believe that the best workplaces are those built on collaboration and respect, where the voices from across the organisation are amplified and decision-making is inclusive. I have a clear sense of my own values and how I bring those into my work: fairness, empathy and diligence. My role at York is focused on devising and implementing communications approaches which support York's research strategy. I have built strong relationships with colleagues across the University and am known for my ability to 'join the dots,' making connections between projects or people that have helped move initiatives on and to think strategically, understanding the priorities and keeping focused on the goal.

Prior to working here, I built my career first in the national museums sector, and then at a large and complex charitable organisation, working on high profile proactive and reactive communications strategies. In those roles, I advised on reputational risk, communications strategy and briefed senior leaders, and sat on various committees and advisory groups.

Through this kind of work, I have gained an interest in governance, accountability and the role of reputation. I have built influencing skills and learnt to be a trusted 'critical friend,' who is up for asking questions that help unpack complex topics or prompt a further interrogation of the matter at hand. I am always curious about the things I don't know, or don't align with my perception of the world.

If elected, I will bring these values and skills to the Council, and I see it not just as an opportunity to broaden my own contribution to the University but to remind the Council of the people – internally and externally – who aren't in the room.

Lisa WOODS

Having moved to York to join the University, my family and our four dogs quickly discovered what a special place North Yorkshire is. It remains one of the best decisions we have ever made, and I am proud to call it home.

I bring more than 30 years of leadership and operational experience, including over 20 years working in universities and 11 years in airport management at Heathrow, with experiences ranging from leading large operational teams, delivering major IT transformation and change programmes to snow-clearing operations at Aberdeen Airport.

In my current role, I lead a wide range of frontline and support services, including cleaning, facilities, campus safety, student accommodation, landscape, transport and mail along with our commercial teams in catering, sport, print, retail, conferences and the university nursery. Collectively this gives me a practical understanding of the day-to-day experiences of our students, faculty and professional services staff, as well as an insight into the operational challenges and opportunities facing the University. Equality, diversity and inclusion is a particularly important part of my leadership. I have worked hard to challenge the traditional workplace norms, create opportunities for under-represented groups and introduce practical changes to policies and working environments.

In terms of governance experience I am a Director of several of the University subsidiary companies, an Independent Board Member of USA Netball and former chair of Yorkshire Netball. I have carried out voluntary work in various sectors including the American Red Cross, the U.S. Small Business Administration and as a mentor in Texas elementary schools.

Finally, I don't claim to have all the answers to the questions that Council faces. However, if elected I would bring an approachable, independent and pragmatic perspective along with a genuine commitment to professional services staff and to the University.
