



Edge Hill
University

University of the Year

CREATIVE
EDGE

Applicant Information Pack
Chair of Audit & Risk Committee

Welcome



Thank you for your interest in joining Edge Hill University as our next Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee.

This is an exciting moment in our University's journey, and we are delighted that you are considering contributing to our future.

Edge Hill is an award winning university with a proud past and an ambitious outlook. Our outstanding campus, set in the heart of the North West, reflects both our heritage and our commitment to providing an exceptional environment for learning, research, and innovation.

This is a period of both change and opportunity. Developed by our new Executive team, and enabled by our strong financial foundations, we are preparing to set a new strategic direction for 2026–2031, Our Connected Futures. This strategy will keep us firmly anchored in our mission of creating opportunity through knowledge, whilst ensuring we become ever more people centred, place based, and future focused. Above all, we remain deeply rooted in the North West and committed to the communities we serve.

We benefit from a highly engaged and committed Board of Governors who provide strategic leadership, robust oversight, and stewardship of the University's academic and cultural mission.

As we look ahead, we are determined to build on our already strong governance systems and processes. The challenges facing the sector are significant, but so too are the opportunities. We are committed to ensuring that our governance enables the University to respond with confidence, agility, and integrity.

Joining us as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee means playing a central role in shaping this next chapter. If you share our values, our ambition, and our belief in the transformative power of education, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Mark Wilkinson
Chair-Elect of the Board of Governors

About the University



Founded in 1885 and gaining University Title in 2006, Edge Hill University is a multi-award-winning University based on a 160-acre campus in Ormskirk, Lancashire. An educational community, providing high quality teaching, support, and transformational opportunities; it's a place where students discover ideas, attain subject knowledge, and achieve their full potential.

The University has over 14,000 students studying at both undergraduate and postgraduate level and employs more than 2,000 staff.

Edge Hill's significant success in achieving its mission is recognised by a range of awards including Educate North's University of the Year 2020/21. It is one of the select few to have held the coveted Modern University of the Year title (2022), awarded by the Times and Sunday Times; and the UK University of the Year (2014) awarded by Times Higher Education.

It was ranked in the UK Top 35 universities (Guardian University Guide 2024), 5th in the UK (Uni Compare 2026) and is a Top 4 North West Institution (Complete University Guide 2025). It is also the safest campus in the North West according to the same guide. In 2024, it was the first University to achieve Ofsted Outstanding for all phases of its Initial Teacher Training provision under the new Inspection Framework.

Edge Hill has expertise in supporting students from non-traditional higher education backgrounds, with the University winning the 2023 Educate North Social Mobility Award for widening access and participation. 70% of Edge Hill's undergraduate students have at least one widening participation characteristic.

The University has invested £350m in the campus over the last two decades. Construction has recently finished on a new £17.4m Life Sciences Building alongside a £35m investment in brand new accommodation and a Students' Union building which opened at the beginning of October 2024. The University is continuing its journey and diversifying its portfolio of courses to include Politics, Economics, Mathematics and Physics in 2025 and 2026.



The University's researchers are addressing some of society's most pressing problems today and providing expertise to develop solutions and enact change. And there is a strong commitment to sharing that new knowledge through Knowledge Exchange and partnership working and through a significant number of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships.










From promoting inclusive societies and encouraging wellbeing for all, nurturing creativity and innovation, to tackling some of the world's biggest challenges to secure a sustainable future, Edge Hill's research builds new partnerships, enhances understanding and enriches lives. 62% of the University's research was classed as 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent' in the 2021 Research Excellence Framework.

In 2025/26 we will be launching our exciting new Strategic Plan. Governors will play a key role in supporting the success of this Plan. as it seeks to become a top-30 UK HEI by the end of this decade.





The University in Numbers

<div>Top</div> <div>4</div>	<p>Top four in the North West in the Complete University Guide 2025.</p> <div></div>	<div>Gold</div> <div>rated</div>	<p>Gold for Student Experience, and Silver overall in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) run by the Office for Students.</p> <div><div>Overall: Silver Student experience: Gold Student outcomes: Silver</div><div>Teaching Excellence Framework</div></div>	<div>Ofsted</div> <div>Outstanding</div>	<p>Ofsted outstanding across all three initial teacher training age phases.</p> <div></div>
<div>Best</div> <div>in the UK</div>	<p>1st in the UK for accommodation, voted for by students in the Uni Compare UK rankings 2025.</p> <div></div>	<div>96.9%</div>	<p>96.9% of our students are employed or in further study within 15 months of graduating, according to Graduate Outcomes data released 2024.</p> <div></div>	<div>World</div> <div>leading</div>	<p>More than half of Edge Hill's research is classed as 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent' in the Research Excellence Framework</p> <div></div>
<div>3rd</div>	<p>3rd in the UK for University Facilities in the Whatuni Student Choice Awards 2025.</p> <div></div>	<div>13</div> <div>successive years</div>	<p>Campus is recognised as one of the UK's best green spaces (Green Flag Award for 13 successive years (2024))</p> <div></div>	<div>Modern University of the Year</div> <div>2022</div>	<p>Modern University of the Year (The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2022)</p> <div></div>



Strategy

The University is coming to the end of its 2020-2025 strategic planning cycle and the appointment of new governors offers an opportunity for you to shape the next Strategic Plan, taking the University towards its 150th anniversary in 2035.

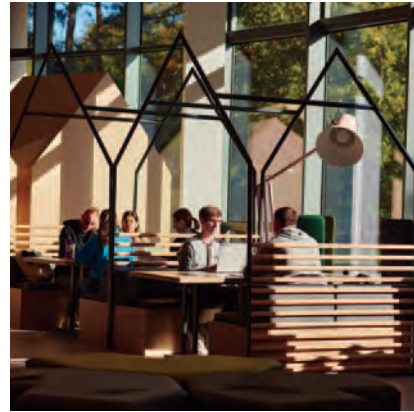
The University is ambitious for its students, its staff and the region and the next strategy will reflect its aim to be recognised as a top 30 UK higher education institution by the end of this decade.

University Mission Statement

*In Scientia Opportunitas
(through knowledge, opportunity)*

This simple, founding mission sits at the heart of what the University strives to achieve. Edge Hill seeks to provide an intellectually stimulating, creative and inclusive environment for its community. Teaching and learning of the highest standard, supported by pure and applied research of international significance, will provide a firm foundation for its graduates and other stakeholders in a rapidly changing world. Knowledge and understanding, a global perspective, and a life-long capacity to learn and adapt are the surest ways of securing the individual's, and the nation's, future.





Values

Edge Hill's core values lie in its wholehearted commitment to its students, staff and stakeholders, and the University's constant efforts to continue to improve. The University's approach is inclusive; celebrating diversity and tirelessly striving to enhance the transformational life opportunities that an outstanding education provides.

The University is committed to being financially, socially and environmentally sustainable, seeking always to reinvest its resources to enhance: the student experience (including graduate employability); research capacity; engagement with the public and third sectors, business and the region; and a commitment to its local communities.

The current strategic plan (2021-2025) highlighted the University's commitment to:

- Provide an outstanding student experience, underpinned by high quality learning and teaching, and further develop our strong sense of community.
- Continue its measured investment in the campus and facilities to further enhance what is already an outstanding environment for learning and living.
- Continue to build research capacity, and further develop research in cognate fields which have a demonstrable impact on disciplines and society.
- Further strengthen its links to employers and the region, and enhance student employability and self-employment.
- Selectively establish additional national and international partnerships to enrich university life, deepen understanding, and benefit the region, the UK economy and society.

Future Strategy

The University has a strong and enduring commitment to continuing to enhance the student experience, in all its forms and for the quality of that experience to be recognised in positive student outcomes and satisfaction measures.

As the University completes the next phase of strategic planning by the end of 2025, it does so with clear aims that the University Executive will shape and lead. The focus of the strategy will be on delivering:

- the best possible outcomes for all students and graduates
- income growth and diversification of the business model
- digital transformation and operating efficiency
- financial sustainability, to continue to generate surpluses for further investment



The Board of Governors



The Board of Governors oversees the educational character and mission of the University and has specific responsibilities for financial probity and the effective use of resources.

In common with many other higher education institutions, Edge Hill is classified as an exempt charity, regulated by the Office for Students (OfS). Governors are trustees of the charity and must ensure that Edge Hill meets its charitable objective and continues to deliver public value.

The Board comprises independent, staff and student governors, all of whom have equal status. The University's Vice-Chancellor is an ex-officio member. The Board is supported by **Audit & Risk, Finance, Governance & Nominations, and Remuneration Committees**. Committees undertake detail-oriented work on behalf of the Board, with all matters of strategic importance reserved for the Board.

Culture Framework

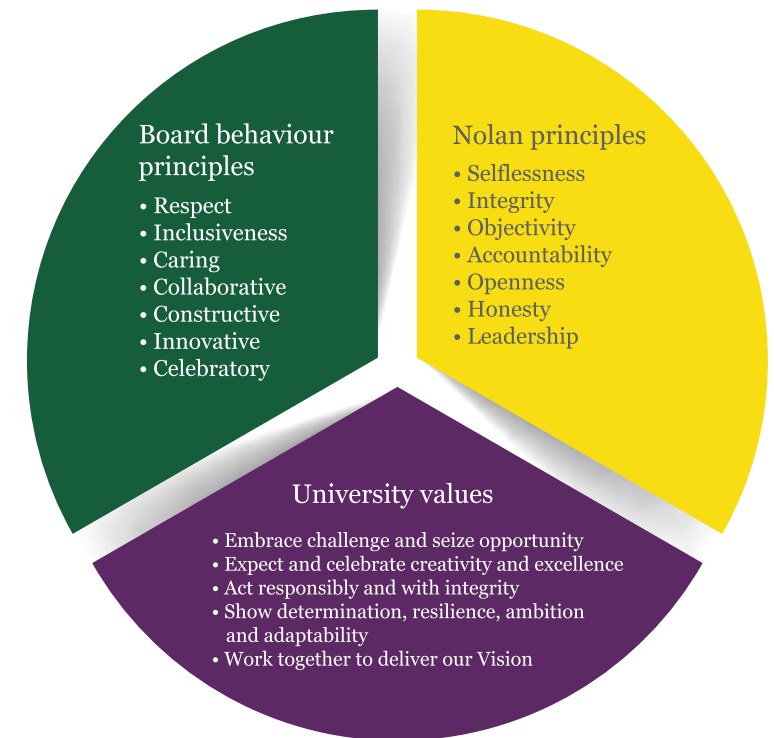


The Board's purpose is to act as guardians of the University – to build on its past, and to protect and enhance its future – and, in doing so, to be the most effective Board that it can be, acting in the best interests of the University's stakeholders. An effective culture supports the Board to achieve this purpose.

The Board Culture Framework focuses on the ways we, individually and collectively, discharge our responsibilities. As such, it is about defining, embedding, and consistently demonstrating (and regularly reviewing) appropriate behaviours.

An effective culture is an ongoing endeavour, and we continually review our practices.

The Board's values



About the role

We are interested in all applicants who believe that they can add value as a Board member.

The Audit & Risk Committee supports the Board of Governors by undertaking detailed work on the University's assurance and control environment. It plays a key role in seeking and testing assurance on risk management, governance, internal controls, and value for money. The Committee comprises independent members of the governing body with relevant skills and experience, and meetings are normally attended by University officers and internal and external auditors. The Committee usually meets four times a year, typically on the afternoon before Board meetings (eight per year). In line with best governance practice, the Committee has adopted the CUC HE Audit Committee Code of Practice, and its **terms of reference** are available on the University's website. The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee will also sit on the Governance & Nominations committee which meets 1-2 times per year or as and when there is business.

We believe that an effective board includes difference in the skills, expertise, background, race, gender and other qualities of individual governors. It is important that our Board represents our EHU community and we particularly welcome applicants from underrepresented groups. You can read more about our inclusive approach in our **Board Diversity and Inclusion Statement**.

Accessibility

We want our governors to bring their best selves to their governing role. We are committed to promoting inclusivity and will always strive to meet the needs of governors to effectively perform their duties. You are not required to declare any protected characteristics, but we would encourage you to **inform the Clerk** if we can make reasonable adjustments to make the application process more accessible for you. All information will be kept in confidence.

Benefits of being a governor

There are many benefits to being a governor at Edge Hill. If appointed you will:

- Shape the future of a thriving University committed to high-quality teaching and research which opens opportunities for all.
- Refine your boardroom skills and executive presence. The skills you develop as a trustee of our large and complex organisation will be invaluable to your professional development and are transferable to many corporate and public settings.

- Be part of a vibrant and inclusive board including members from a wealth of backgrounds.
- Attend formal and informal events to celebrate the University's successes. There may be opportunities to represent the Board at national awards ceremonies.
- Participate in a comprehensive induction programme during your first year. This is bespoke to each individual governor meaning that, whether you are an experienced trustee or a first-time board member, you receive the information you need to reach your full potential.
- Be supported to undertake professional development at each stage of your governance career. This includes opportunities to undertake external training provided by sector partners.
- Have access to guidance and ongoing support from a professional Secretariat function.

While the role is not remunerated, governors are eligible for reasonable expenses paid in line with our Financial Regulations.



The person



The Person

Key attributes expected of all governors are:

- Strong alignment with Edge Hill's values and mission
- Vision and commitment
- Strategic awareness
- Critical listening and evaluation skills
- Ability to challenge and ask probing questions
- Analytical and problem solving abilities
- Integrity to act without self-interest and make decisions based on evidence
- Ability to work within a framework of collective decision-making in the best interests of the Board and the University
- Awareness of standards in public life, public accountability and a determination to abide by them

In addition to the above, we would expect our Chair of Audit & Risk Committee to possess the following qualities:

- Recent experience relevant to the Committee's business (in accountancy, finance, audit or risk)
- Brings the experience and confidence to contribute immediately at Board level
- Ability to form positive and productive relationships with key stakeholders
- Ability to challenge in a constructive and supportive way
- Intellectual curiosity and professional scepticism
- Balanced and ethical approach
- Robustness of character
- Sufficient time to undertake the role

Edge Hill University is committed to increasing diversity and maintaining an inclusive culture. If you meet our criteria, we welcome your application regardless of your age, ethnicity, race, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, social demographic or whether you live with a disability. Reasonable adjustments will be supported wherever possible to minimise barriers to participation.

Our Expectations

In common with many other institutions, this is a voluntary role, though reasonable travel expenses will be paid. All governors are expected to:

1. Prepare for, and attend, Board and committee meetings. Board meetings normally last no longer than 2.5 hours and Committee meetings 2 hours. **The schedule for 2025-26 is available on our website.** Not all governors attend committees. Committee attendance is agreed on an individual basis, in view of governors' skills and expertise.
2. Contribute actively and constructively to the work of the Board. Meetings will normally be undertaken in-person, though may be held online. All papers will be circulated via the Board's electronic portal, and a basic level of digital literacy will be required in order to engage with the role.
3. Undertake additional responsibilities, as required. For example, Governors may occasionally be called upon to support Appeals Panels.
4. Commit to induction and ongoing development.
5. Adhere to the Board's values and the Nolan Principles of public life.
6. Continue to be a fit and proper person and declare any conflicts of interests. We will ask you to complete our fit and proper person test once your application has been shortlisted. All governors are asked to renew this assurance on an annual basis throughout their tenure.

How to apply

To be considered for a role on our Board (for three years in the first instance), your application should include:

- an up-to-date CV
- a supporting statement that addresses the criteria in the person specification and outlines your motivation for applying. The statement should be no longer than 2 pages of A4.

Please tailor your application to the role, explaining why you meet the criteria and what you feel you could contribute to our Board and the University.

Our recruitment partner, Trustees Unlimited, will be handling all applications.

Please submit your application to applications@trustees-unlimited.co.uk.

Deadline for applications: Monday 26th January 2026

Interviews will be held: Week commencing 9th February 2026

You may also contact Melissa Baxter at Trustees Unlimited if you have queries about any aspect of the appointment process, need additional information or wish to have an informal and confidential discussion. She can be contacted on 07789985229 / melissa.baxter@trustees-unlimited.co.uk.

The University will respect the privacy of any initial approach or expression of interest in this role, whether formal or informal.

Accessibility Statement

Edge Hill University is proud to be a Disability Confident employer and is committed to building disability confidence and support within our staff and student community.

If you require adjustments to this application process and/or these documents in an alternative format, please contact Melissa Baxter, Trustees Unlimited melissa.baxter@trustees-unlimited.co.uk.

If you have comments that would support us to improve access to documentation, or our application processes more generally, please do not hesitate to contact us via: BoardofGovernors@edgehill.ac.uk.

Data Protection and Privacy

Please visit the following link to find more information about the use of personal information provided by candidates to Edge Hill University: edgehill.ac.uk/departments/support/ig/data-protection.

Appendix: Edge Hill in Action



The University's stunning, vibrant and green campus is in the heart of the North West of England, nestled within the market town of Ormskirk in Lancashire, with the lively cities of Liverpool and Manchester within easy reach.

Edge Hill occupies an important place in the region. Its geographical position means it faces three Combined Authority areas: Greater Manchester, Liverpool and Lancashire. These areas comprise the heart of our core market. The University is therefore well placed to seize the opportunities presented across this diverse area, and beyond. Governors will play a critical role in navigating this geography, and growing the University's status as one of the region's premier civic and anchor institutions.



A new Life Sciences building, costing £17.4m, aims to support our next generation of researchers and students, boosting the University's capabilities in Biomedical research in areas such as neurobiology, cancer, genetic skin conditions and ageing.

The brand-new £8.5m Students' Union facility revitalises the campus with flexible spaces for day and night-time events and dedicated areas for retail and food and drink outlets. It also provides a new base for additional student support facilities.

The public realm is improved too, with places to meet and relax or enjoy experiences such as outdoor cinema and food markets. The Ormskirk Campus is a stunning place to live, work and study.

In addition to the Ormskirk Campus, the University has satellite campuses at St James' in Manchester city centre, Aintree Hospital and Alder Hey Children's Hospital.

The Campus

The Campus Masterplan has seen over £350m invested in the physical fabric of the campus over the last two decades, with a new building opening each year since achieving University status in 2006.

In September 2024, the latest £52m Central Campus redevelopment was completed, comprising a Life Sciences Building to support cutting-edge STEM research and teaching, a new Students' Union facility and 248 new ensuite rooms.

The University's award-winning accommodation guarantees first-year students a room on-site so they can immerse themselves in campus life, and the quality of the guaranteed accommodation offer has led to a string of awards and nominations for the University, including being named first in the UK for accommodation (Uni Compare 2025) and winning the award for Creating the Best Student Home at the first annual ASRA Awards 2024.



Tech Hub

The £13m Technology Hub houses a microbiology suite and the CAVE (Computer Augmented Virtual Environment), the UK's first superimmersive 3D virtual environment.



Clinical Skills

Opened in 2019, the Clinical Skills and Simulation Centre provides innovative facilities which replicate real-world health, social care and medicine environments.



Graduates Court

One of the award-winning Halls of Residence on campus. Creating a home away from home where our students can thrive.



Catalyst

The £27m Catalyst building, opened in 2018, houses the University's 24/7 library and Careers and Student Services functions.



Main Building

The first building on the Ormskirk site, which opened on 2 October 1933. Whilst the building retains many of its original features it has been refurbished to incorporate modern teaching spaces and award-winning accommodation.



The Sports Centre

Edge Hill Sport is home to the Sports Centre, Fitness Suite and Swimming Pool, as well as courts, pitches and a running track.



Creative Edge

Creative Edge provides a variety of specialist facilities including TV, recording, animation, photographic and radio studios.



The Arts Centre

The Arts Centre provides entertainment in The Studio Theatre and Rose Theatre, as well as a variety of suites and recital spaces purpose-built for the creative arts.



GeoSciences

GeoSciences houses industry-standard laboratories, purpose-built for physical geography and geo-technical engineering.

The Student Experience



Edge Hill University is deeply committed to delivering an outstanding student experience. This commitment is at the heart of its enviable culture and ethos and is evident in the way in which it is put into action with demonstrable passion and creativity.

The University's culture is strongly student-centred with a close partnership with students to ensure its strategies, policies and procedures are designed with students at their centre.

The integrated approach to the student experience recognises the equal importance of high-quality teaching, underpinned by research and scholarly activity, and personalised support. There is a focus on the provision of excellent physical and digital resources and an emphasis on the role of extracurricular opportunities for personal development for all students.



I've been really impressed with the teaching and learning facilities. I find

Discover More, which is part of the University website, a great resource. The search engine makes it easy to find the right information and research for my studies."

Eziekhal Masango, BA (Hons) Education and English



The University works hard to ensure students are retained, satisfied and successful by creating an environment which provides a high-quality experience for all students and delivers:

- An educationally rewarding experience
- A welcoming, community experience
- A positive experience in a supportive environment
- An enhanced experience that extends beyond study

The investment in the physical environment demonstrates a commitment to create the most effective formal learning spaces, and to provide an environment that is welcoming and supportive to maximise student engagement and wellbeing.

“The first time I visited the campus for an open day, I just had a gut feeling that it was the place for me, it felt like home. I love the greenery and the lakes on the campus and the whole place had a very friendly atmosphere.”

Hannah Gafa, MBChB Medicine



An Educationally Rewarding Experience

Edge Hill staff are committed to ensuring students participate in an educationally rewarding experience. High quality, practice-based and research-informed teaching and learning is at the heart of this commitment. Edge Hill is home to students who are motivated and engaged and a staff of academics and professionals who are dedicated to helping students succeed. The University has outstanding teaching, learning and research facilities and programmes are informed and delivered by staff who are engaged in cutting edge teaching and research activity.



A Welcoming, Community Experience

The Edge Hill community ethos is based on respect, dignity, understanding and inclusivity. Fostering a culture that appreciates difference and diversity is dependent on everyone playing their part in creating a welcoming community; one where students and staff are engaged, communicate openly and honestly and unacceptable behaviour is challenged.

“My main goal was to bring more awareness to the challenges faced by adopted and care-experienced individuals. We all strive to make life better for our fellow students.”

Lily-Joy Lancashire, Student Advisory Panel member



A Positive Experience in a Supportive Environment

The University ensures that students are able to engage with a range of staff who will support their academic, personal and professional development as well as their emotional and physical health and wellbeing, from before they enrol and beyond graduation. Students are assigned a personal tutor who will act as a single point of communication and referral.

Edge Hill continuously seeks to improve the support on offer by listening to the views of others in a thoughtful and considerate manner and responding to them in a respectful way.



An Enhanced Experience that Extends Beyond Study

At Edge Hill, students, staff and the Students' Union work in partnership to ensure each student's experience is positive and impactful beyond study. The social, cultural, sporting and recreational opportunities provided by the Students' Union and University are an essential part of the experience on offer.

Staff are committed to students' personal development, including employability and outstanding student outcomes with graduate attributes and employability skills embedded throughout the mainstream curriculum.



Research & Knowledge Exchange



The University's researchers are addressing some of society's most pressing problems today and providing expertise to develop solutions and enact change.

From promoting inclusive societies and encouraging wellbeing for all, nurturing creativity and innovation, to tackling some of the world's biggest challenges to secure a sustainable future, Edge Hill's research focuses on building new partnerships, enhancing understanding and enriching lives.

Through its research agenda, the University's work has a growing global reach and influence whilst seeking to gain a clearer view of the world that will shape new opportunities and create true social impact.

The University has made exceptional progress in research and knowledge exchange output and capacity over the course of the previous two REF cycles. Our recently appointed Vice-Chancellor, Michael Young will continue to lead the development and trajectory of the University's research agenda, to accelerate impact and grow research income.



**Professor
Ardhendu Behera**
Professor of Computer Vision
and Artificial Intelligence

Edge Hill Professor Ardhendu Behera is leading research on how artificial intelligence may help early diagnosis of severe health conditions

The Professor of Computer Vision & AI, and fellow researchers, have featured widely in the media for their work with ‘Robbie the Robot.’ It learnt to recognise symptoms of dementia by watching *Emmerdale* – studying the facial expressions and body language of Ashley Thomas, a character with the condition

The team hopes that robots could help diagnose dementia within 10 years and be used to monitor those living with it to help reduce strain on the health service.

Professor Behera is also leading research into how AI could tackle pancreatic cancer. It’s currently one of the deadliest forms of the disease, as symptoms tend to appear once the cancer is too advanced to treat.

“This is a data-driven approach that aims to find out whether it is possible to use AI to signal that there are links between risk groups and those who have already been diagnosed. Using routinely collected data, the AI can identify the possible predictors of pancreatic cancer and will screen out people at high risk.”

His latest research will see him use AI to potentially save lives on the modern battlefield. Project ATRACT, which stands for A Trustworthy Robotic Autonomous system to support Casualty Triage, will see the development of a flying drone that can assist and speed up triage in the critical post-trauma minutes that shape battlefield survival chances. It has received over £1m in funding from the Engineering and Physical Science Research Council (EPSRC) and also involves PhD Research Projects.





Dr Adjanie Patabendige
Senior Lecturer
in Biomedical Science

Senior lecturer in Biomedical Science, Dr Adjanie Patabendige, is helping us better understand the barrier that protects the brain from blood-borne toxins and pathogens, including what conditions can affect it and the long-term impacts.

In a first for Edge Hill, the Academy of Medical Sciences awarded £100,000 of Springboard funding to a project led by Dr Patabendige, looking at how to prevent cardiovascular diseases damaging the brain. This includes atrial fibrillation – a common heart condition twice as likely in people over 55 – which is linked to a higher risk of stroke, dementia and cognitive decline.

"The funds will support my research group at Edge Hill to study the blood-brain barrier using a new model developed using patient data. Eventually, we will use what we learn to identify health risks in patients earlier to improve their treatment and perhaps prevent problems from developing in the first place."

And during her PhD, Dr Patabendige developed a porcine model mimicking the brain barrier. It's now widely used by academics and pharmaceutical companies for drug screening and functional studies.





Professor Greg Irving
Professor of Primary Care

A new research project led by Professor Greg Irving, has been awarded £2.5m by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) to expand research into children and young people's mental health.

The project, designed to engage with local health, public health and social care systems, will focus on St Helens, Knowsley and Wigan, and the wider North West, where there are large numbers of people living with mental health conditions, limited local mental health research and low participation in mental health research studies

By working closely with local communities more people will have the opportunity to take part in mental health research, improving diversity in research studies, which in turn will lead to better treatment and support for the children and young people who need them most.

Professor Greg Irving said: "Children and young people in the North West face considerable mental health challenges."

"Anxiety and depression rates exceed national averages, hospital admissions for mental health conditions among under-18s and self-harm rates in the region are among the highest in the country, primary and secondary care services are overwhelmed and efforts to improve community mental health services for this group are hindered by financial constraints and service cuts."

The project, supported by University of Liverpool, University of Manchester and the NIHR North West Coast Applied Research Collaboration, will establish a Centre of Excellence for mental health asset-based community interventions, serving as a hub for pioneering interventions and providing essential support to tackle complex mental health challenges in the North West and beyond.

The £2.5m award will significantly strengthen Edge Hill University's international standing in mental health research, adding to existing sector-leading expertise.





Professor Vicky Karkou
Professor of Arts & Wellbeing

Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), part of UK Research and Innovation, this innovative Arts and Wellbeing research project involves significant collaborative working to scale up place-based arts initiatives that support the mental health of children and young people (CYP).

The Arts4us project is a £2.5M AHRC funded project in collaboration with integrated care systems and community organisations. It focuses on the mental health of young people aged 9 to 13, a group at significant risk of developing mental health problems while transitioning from childhood to adolescence. The project will create an easy-to-use digital platform where evidence-based local arts activities can be made accessible for children and young people (CYP), their families and relevant organisations and services.

CYP will act as co-researchers maximising the benefits of arts activities that support their mental health. They will work jointly with community partners, health services and academic institutions to develop evaluative frameworks, digital material and good arts-based practice that will support the mental health of CYP in the North West.

The project is coordinated by the University's Research Centre of Arts and Wellbeing which has developed over the last decade as an active research group which is engaged in interdisciplinary research activities in the form of research projects, publications, events and masterclasses.

Research methodologies celebrate creative and arts-based methods next to verbal accounts of lived experiences and standardised methods of measuring change, allowing for diverse types of evidence to emerge that speak about different aspects of the work to different audiences. The centre draws expertise from across faculties, championing interdisciplinary research.



The Staff Experience



The success of Edge Hill University is built upon the dedication and talent of its people.

The University is committed to creating an environment where innovation, collaboration, and personal growth are not just encouraged but ingrained in the culture. Working with the leadership of the institution, the board plays a pivotal role in shaping its future, working alongside an increasingly diverse and dynamic community that strives for excellence.



A Strategic Commitment to Inclusion and Wellbeing

The University is proud of its impressive progress on the wellbeing and inclusion agenda, as reflected in its Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan. As part of Edge Hill's commitment to equity, the University aligns with frameworks such as Athena Swan, ensuring a fair, inclusive, and supportive workplace for all. Edge Hill has an enviable reputation for its comprehensive well-being support and innovative engagement tools. The University encourages a culture where staff feel valued and empowered to perform at their best.



Career Pathways and Professional Development

Edge Hill University is committed to investing in its staff, with a clear focus on long-term career development. Staff have access to a wealth of tailored leadership development programs, as well as structured progression routes. Engagement in the University's coaching and mentoring is also growing, ensuring every individual has the tools they need to thrive in their roles.



Exemplary Employee Value Proposition (EVP):

The University recognises the importance of supporting its staff with a highly competitive EVP, including:

- Generous pension schemes, with leading contribution rates.
- Substantial holiday entitlements, far exceeding industry norms, to support work-life balance.
- Locally managed agile working arrangements, ensuring staff can balance personal and professional commitments.
- Comprehensive health and well-being resources including a robust Employee Assistance Programme, industry leading benefits platform, mental health support and on-campus facilities and initiatives that promote physical activity and wellness.

