

Neil Bruce OBE

Why I am standing to be chair of the board of Governors of Robert Gordons University:

I have a strong commitment to lifelong learning and this is evidenced by my own journey – from an early age I studied in my personal time to achieve a chartership – with the engineering council and Royal Institute of Naval Architects, followed by a part time MBA. As my seniority increased, I used my position to develop programmes to help the University and schools in Aberdeenshire, hosting school career development sessions in workplaces in the region. This was recognised by the IOD as part of the Scottish government determined to succeed programme and was awarded Director of the Year in 2008.

Over the years, I have developed a strong relationship with RGU, working to support the student programmes as a visiting professor, specifically participating in MBA programme. At AMEC, I initiated programmes to host student teams to connect their studies with industry, with the goal of improving the application of their learning to match the requirements of the workplace.

I am a highly experienced CEO, Chairman, and NED of global businesses operating across a range of sectors. I bring a detailed knowledge of public company governance standards and requirements and am comfortable applying this to the public sector – across strategy, talent and succession planning, alongside audit and compliance best practice.

I bring a deep understanding of international business; I was responsible for AMEC's 35,000 professionals in 30 countries and SNCL's 52,000 professionals in 50 countries - this experience brings an awareness of, and empathy with, the need to understand the cultural, educational and learning differences as well as the legal and regulatory demands, to ensure that the university's values and reputations are matched and enhanced.

I am from the region and am passionate about giving back here - I attended primary school in Portlethen, secondary school in Stonehaven, and spent my early years in industry working on the Shell Brent C offshore development project. I have some long standing and deep rooted local relationships that may help with supporting initiatives that the University may look to develop.

Synopsis of Career/Achievements to date

Experienced CEO, Chairman, NED with 40 years' experience in the Environmental Consulting, Natural Resources, Energy and Infrastructure sectors, leading global businesses, designing strategic acquisitions that build shareholder value, and growing longstanding relationships with government, industry bodies and clients around the world. As CEO of SNCL, we grew the company from 35,000 employees to over 50,000, with annual revenues of C\$12 billion. I refocused the company towards a more consulting, technology driven organisation through the £2.1 bn acquisition of WS Atkins plc, a world leading design, engineering and project management company with 18,000 highly skilled employees. Prior to joining SNCL, I spent 15 years with AMEC plc, a FTSE100, as one of three Executive Directors, latterly as COO. I was responsible for operational delivery of the company's high value consultancy, engineering and project management services, as well as identifying, completing and integrating several acquisitions, including Paragon Engineering and Mactec, an environmental consultancy. I was a non-executive director of Airswift, a PE owned resourcing company.

I am a Chartered Marine Architect, with a master's degree from Newcastle University. I have a strong association with education, particularly related to engineering and people development within industry. I am active as an Honorary Professor at Aberdeen Business School, at The Robert Gordon University, where I was awarded an honorary DBA.

I am a keen supporter of industry development and associated organisations, including former Chairman of the UKTI Oil & Gas Sector Advisory Group, a member of the UK Government's Trade and Economic Growth Board for Scotland. In 2012, I was appointed Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) by The Queen in Her Majesty's New Year's Honours List 2012 for Services to Engineering.