

GOVERNORS' HANDBOOK

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Section One – Governors’ Handbook

College Governance Statement of Principles

1 Principles

1.1 Background

This document sets out the principles underpinning Solihull College and University Centre Corporation’s work.

College governance concerns the work and responsibilities of the Corporation and its immediate relationships with College senior managers, auditors, inspectors and regulators, and with the College’s stakeholders, which include students, staff, employers, government agencies and the local community. The College’s Corporation seeks to uphold the highest standards of openness and accountability.

The Corporation sets the framework of policies and strategies within which the College’s managers operate and then monitor these operations or delegates monitoring functions to a Committee, as appropriate. For their period of office, Governors hold the College in trust on behalf of the local community, ensuring that it serves the needs of the community effectively and that the College remains in good shape to meet the needs of future generations of students.

The Corporation agreed, in February 2015, to change the governance structures, to reduce the number of committees and to carry out the majority of work at full Corporation level, so that all Governors are familiar with all governance matters and time can be spent on key strategic discussions, while ensuring agility in being able to address opportunities that may arise.

1.2 Strategic Planning

The strategic planning process begins in January each year, at the Governors’ Development Day. An initial review of the Mission, Vision and Values is followed by a discussion about sector changes and market intelligence, which then informs the future direction. This discussion is informed by the College Self-Assessment Report (SAR), completed in the autumn term, and the College Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). Thereafter, the strategic direction is considered at a Corporation meeting in the spring term. The overarching direction approved providing the framework for the development of sub-strategies that are presented to, and approved by, Governors during the summer term. In July the Strategic Plan and the Financial Plan are approved, which underpin the annual priorities, budget and Executive Management Team (EMT) targets for the subsequent year.

1.3 Corporation Structure

The structure is based on the principle of having at least 2 Corporation meetings per term, which will be focused on agreed key themes. This will provide opportunities to discuss key issues in depth and enable Governors to hold management to account through robust challenge.

Significantly important matters will be included on all agendas, to ensure prominence and close scrutiny throughout the year. In 2020/21 the key issues for the College is to oversee recovery following the COVID-19 crisis, ensure financial stability and plan for an Ofsted inspection.

1.4 Corporation Business

The indicative Cycle of Business is drafted for the year by the Clerk. Three committees are being maintained to ensure continued scrutiny, challenge and control for key issues:

- **Audit Committee** (*condition of funding to have an Audit Committee*) will scrutinise and monitor risk, controls and compliance. Reports will be submitted to the Corporation, as appropriate;
- **Remuneration Committee** will monitor and review senior post holder[s] and senior management structures, terms and conditions and performance;
- **Search and Governance Committee** will monitor and scrutinise membership, skills and performance of the governing body. It will also advise on governance matters.

“The Corporation has the authority to establish committees for any purpose or function other than those assigned in these Articles to the Principal or Clerk and may delegate powers to such committees; the Chair or, in the Chair’s absence, the Vice-Chair(s); or the Principal.”
(Article 4 of the Instruments & Articles of Government).

The number of members of a committee and the terms under which they are to hold and to vacate office, shall be decided by the Corporation. Committees will have clear Terms of Reference.

The Corporation may not delegate to committees any matters listed in Article 9.

1.5 Special Interest Groups

The Corporation can appoint Governors to Special Interest Groups, which are activity-based. The Group will be formed by Corporation approval and will include Governor member(s). There will be a clear objective and focus, Terms of Reference and there will a short-term timeframe for the Group. Notes will be kept of each Group meeting and submitted to Corporation for information, along with a followed by a full report, as required. Groups should not be set up without the approval of the Chair of the Corporation. Where appropriate, external advisers will be invited to join Special Interest Groups to provide specialist advice.

1.6 Tendering Group (section 9 Financial Regulations) –

A Group will be established to manage contracts, as set out in Financial Regulations. Core membership is defined as the Principal, Vice Principal Finance and the Chair of Governors (or delegated member). Another member of EMT or other staff or experts may join the group, dependent on the tender being undertaken. The Group will approve tender process initiation and contract award, in line with the Financial Regulations. All 3 members will sign the standard tender sheet and this will be communicated to the Corporation at the next available opportunity.

2 Projects and Bids

Since the introduction of flexibilities and freedoms there have been new opportunities in the FE sector. Part of the rationale for changing the governance structure was to ensure that these opportunities can be explored efficiently and effectively along with new projects and bids, in the best interests of the College. To underpin this, clarity has been sought regarding the process for approving and reporting new projects and bids. The Financial Regulations have been updated to require business plans / due diligence for such projects, with all those over £100,000 being reported to the Corporation.

Financial Regulation 3.3:

“New ventures are defined as any substantial arrangement entered into for business purposes, whether for extending the College’s provision or of a commercial nature. Before proceeding with new ventures or projects, thorough business planning and due diligence will be undertaken.

All new ventures or projects (capital or revenue) over £5,000 must be approved by EMT and reported to Corporation

Any project (both capital and revenue which is either over £100,000 or which could expose the College to significant financial or other risk shall be reported to the Corporation termly.”

New projects and bids of this nature will be reported to the Corporation at each meeting as a standing item.

3 Areas of Special Interest

Role Description for Governors with Special Interest

The Corporation will identify some Governors with special interests for key areas of the College and this will include:

- Safeguarding/PREVENT/Young Carers
- Finance
- Health and Safety
- Learner Voice and Equality and Diversity, including Careers
- Higher Education
- Apprenticeships

It is anticipated that the Governor with special interest in the above areas would chair a relevant meeting of a Special Interest Group, meet with the manager(s) responsible regularly and attend key in-house meetings, as appropriate.

Section Two – Governors’ Handbook

Instrument of Government

C O N T E N T S

- 1 Interpretation of the terms used**
- 2 Composition of the Corporation**
- 3 Determination of membership numbers**
- 4 Transitional arrangements**
- 5 Appointment of the members of the Corporation**
- 6 Appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair**
- 7 Appointment of the Clerk to the Corporation**
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Interpretation of the terms used

1 In this Instrument of Government

- (a) any reference to “the Principal” shall include a person appointed by the Corporation to act as Principal;
- (b) “the Clerk” means the Clerk to the Corporation;
- (c) “the Corporation” means any further education corporation to which this Instrument applies;
- (d) “the institution” means the institution which the Corporation is established to conduct and any institution for the time being conducted by the Corporation in exercise of its powers under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992(1);
- (e) “this Instrument” means this Instrument of Government;
- (f) “the CE of Skills Funding” means the Chief Executive of the Education and Skills Funding Agency
- (g) “Education and Skills Funding Agency member” means a member of the Corporation appointed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency under section 11 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000(2);
- (h) “meeting” includes a meeting at which the members attending are present in more than one room, provided that by the use of video-conferencing facilities it is possible for every person present at the meeting to communicate with each other;
- (i) “necessary skills” means skills and experience, other than professional qualifications, specified by the Corporation as appropriate for members to have;
- (j) “parent member”, “staff member” and “student member” have the meanings given to them in clause 2;
- (k) “the previous Instrument of Government” means the Instrument of Government relating to the Corporation which had effect immediately before 1st January 2008;
- (l) “the Secretary of State” means the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, as appropriate.
- (m) “staff matters” means the remuneration, conditions of service, promotion, conduct, suspension, dismissal or retirement of staff;
- (n) “the students’ union” means any association of students formed to further the educational purposes of the institution and the interests of students, as students;
- (o) a “variable category” means any category of members whose numbers may vary according to clauses 2 and 3.

2 Composition of the Corporation

- (a) Subject to the transitional arrangements set out in instrument 4, the Corporation shall consist of:
 - (i) Size of the Corporation with effect from 1st March 2020; up to eighteen members who appear to the Corporation to have the necessary skills to ensure that the Corporation carries out its functions under article 3 of the Articles of Government;
 - (ii) the Principal of the institution, unless the Principal chooses not to be a member;
 - (iii) at least one and not more than three members who are members of the institution’s staff and have a contract of employment with the institution and who have been nominated and elected as set out in instrument (3), (4) or (5) (“staff members”); and
 - (iv) up to two who are current students at the institution or who have left the institution within the last academic year (“student members”).
- (b) Where the Corporation has decided or decides that there is to be one staff member; the member may be a member of the academic staff or the non-academic staff and shall be nominated and elected by all staff.

1 1992 c.13.

2 2000 c.21.

- (c) The appointing authority, as set out in instrument 5, will decide whether a person is eligible for nomination, election and appointment as a member of the Corporation.

3 Determination of membership numbers

- (a) Subject to instrument 2 and the transitional arrangements in instrument 4, the number of members of the Corporation shall be that decided by the Corporation.
- (b) The Corporation may at any time vary the determination referred to in instrument 2 and any subsequent determination under this paragraph provided that:
 - (i) the number of members of the Corporation, shall not be less than twelve or more than twenty one; and
 - (ii) the numbers of members of each variable category shall be subject to the limit which applies to that category set out in instrument 2.
- (c) No determination under this clause shall terminate the appointment of any person who is already a member of the Corporation at the time when the determination is made.

4 Transitional arrangements

- (a) Where, following the last determination under the previous Instrument of Government, the membership of the Corporation does not conform in number to that determination:
 - (i) nothing in instruments 2 and 3 shall require the removal of members where the previous Instrument would not have required their removal; but
 - (ii) the Corporation shall ensure that any new appointments are made so that its composition conforms to the determination as soon as possible.

5 Appointment of the members of the Corporation

- (a) Subject to instrument 2 the Corporation is the appointing authority in relation to the appointment of its members.
- (b) If the number of members falls below the number needed for a quorum, the Secretary of State is the appointing authority in relation to the appointment of those members needed for a quorum.
- (c) The appointing authority may decline to appoint a person as a staff or student member if:
 - (i) it is satisfied that the person has been removed from office as a member of a further education corporation in the previous ten years; or
 - (ii) the appointment of the person would contravene contained in the Articles of Government or Standing Orders concerning the number of terms of office which a person may serve, provided that such rules make the same provision for each category of members appointed by the appointing authority; or
 - (iii) the person is ineligible to be a member of the Corporation because of instrument 8.
- (d) Where the office of any member becomes vacant the appointing authority shall, as soon as practicable, take all necessary steps to appoint a new member to fill the vacancy.

6 Appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair(s)

- (a) The members of the Corporation shall appoint a Chair and a Vice-Chair from among themselves. The Corporation can appoint up to two Vice-Chairs for example when there are major projects or periods of increased College business or other circumstances deemed appropriate by the Corporation.

- (b) Neither the Principal nor any staff or student member shall be eligible to be appointed as Chair or Vice-Chair or to act as Chair in their absence.
- (c) If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from any meeting of the Corporation, the members present shall choose someone from among themselves to act as Chair for that meeting.
- (d) The Chair and Vice-Chair shall hold office for such period as the Corporation decides.
- (e) The Chair or Vice-Chair may resign from office at any time by giving notice in writing to the Clerk.
- (f) If the Corporation is satisfied that the Chair is unfit or unable to carry out the functions of office, it may give written notice, removing the Chair from office and the office shall then be vacant.
- (g) If the Corporation is satisfied that the Vice-Chair is unfit or unable to carry out the functions of office, it may give written notice, removing the Vice-Chair from office and the office shall then be vacant.
- (h) At the last meeting before the end of the term of office of the Chair, or at the first meeting following the Chair's resignation or removal from office, the members shall appoint a replacement from among themselves.
- (i) At the last meeting before the end of the term of office of the Vice-Chair, or at the first meeting following the Vice-Chair's resignation or removal from office, the members shall appoint a replacement from among themselves.
- (j) At the end of their respective terms of office, the Chair and Vice-Chair shall be eligible for reappointment.
- (k) Section (j) above is subject to any rule contained in the Articles of Government or Standing Orders concerning the number of terms of office which a person may serve.

7 Appointment of the Clerk to the Corporation

- (a) The Corporation shall appoint a person to serve as its Clerk, but the Principal may not be appointed as Clerk.
- (b) In the temporary absence of the Clerk, the Corporation shall appoint a person to serve as a temporary Clerk, but the Principal may not be appointed as temporary Clerk.
- (c) Any reference in this Instrument to the Clerk shall include a temporary Clerk appointed under section (b) above.
- (e) Subject to instrument 14, the Clerk shall be entitled to attend all meetings of the Corporation and any of its committees.
- (e) The Clerk may also be a member of staff at the institution.

8 Persons who are ineligible to be members

- (a) No one under the age of 18 years may be a member, except as a student member.
- (b) The Clerk may not be a member.
- (c) A person who is a member of staff of the institution may not be, or continue as, a member, except as a staff member or in the capacity of Principal.

- (d) Paragraph (c) does not apply to a student who is employed by the Corporation in connection with the student's role as an officer of the Student Voice Executive or similar student voice role.
- (e) Subject to paragraphs (6) and (7), a person shall be disqualified from holding, or from continuing to hold, office as a member, if that person has been adjudged bankrupt or is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order, an interim bankruptcy restrictions order or a bankruptcy restrictions undertaking within the meaning of the Insolvency Act 1986(3), or if that person has made a composition or arrangement with creditors, including an individual voluntary arrangement.
- (f) Where a person is disqualified by reason of having been adjudged bankrupt or by reason of being the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order, an interim bankruptcy restrictions order or a bankruptcy restrictions undertaking, that disqualification shall cease;
 - (i) on that person's discharge from bankruptcy, unless the bankruptcy order has before then been annulled; or
 - (ii) if the bankruptcy order is annulled, at the date of that annulment; or
 - (iii) if the bankruptcy restrictions order is rescinded as a result of an application under section 375 of the Insolvency Act 1986, on the date so ordered by the court; or
 - (iv) if the interim bankruptcy restrictions order is discharged by the court, on the date of that discharge; or
 - (v) if the bankruptcy restrictions undertaking is annulled, at the date of that annulment.
- (g) Where a person is disqualified by reason of having made a composition or arrangement with creditors, including an individual voluntary arrangement, and then pays the debts in full, the disqualification shall cease on the date on which the payment is completed and in any other case it shall cease on the expiration of three years from the date on which the terms of the deed of composition, arrangement or individual voluntary arrangement are fulfilled.
- (h) Subject to instrument 9, a person shall be disqualified from holding, or from continuing to hold, office as a member if—
 - (i) within the previous five years that person has been convicted, whether in the United Kingdom or elsewhere, of any offence and has received a sentence of imprisonment, whether suspended or not, for a period of three months or more, without the option of a fine; or
 - (ii) within the previous twenty years that person has been convicted as set out in sub-paragraph h(i) and has received a sentence of imprisonment, whether suspended or not, for a period of more than two and a half years; or
 - (iii) that person has at any time been convicted as set out in sub-paragraph (a) and has received a sentence of imprisonment, whether suspended or not, of more than five years.
- (i) For the purpose of this regulation there shall be disregarded any conviction by or before a court outside the United Kingdom for an offence in respect of conduct which, if it had taken place in the United Kingdom, would not have constituted an offence under the law then in force anywhere in the United Kingdom.
- (j) Upon a member of the Corporation becoming disqualified from continuing to hold office under instruments 5 or 8, the member shall immediately give notice of that fact to the Clerk.

9 The term of office of a member

- (a) A member of the Corporation shall hold and vacate office in accordance with the terms of the appointment, but the length of the term of office shall not exceed four years.
- (b) Members retiring at the end of their term of office shall be eligible for reappointment, and clause 5 shall apply to the reappointment of a member as it does to the appointment of a member.
- (c) Paragraph (2) is subject to any rule or bye-law made by the Corporation under article 19 of the Articles of Government concerning the number of terms of office which a person may serve.

10 Termination of membership

- (a) A member may resign from office at any time by giving notice in writing to the Clerk.
- (b) If at any time the Corporation is satisfied that any member
 - (i) is unfit or unable to discharge the functions of a member; or
 - (ii) Has been absent from meetings of the Corporation for a period longer than six consecutive months without the permission of the Corporation, the Corporation may by notice in writing to that member remove the member from office and the office shall then be vacant.
- (c) Any person who is a member of the Corporation by virtue of being a member of the staff at the institution, including the Principal, shall cease to hold office upon ceasing to be a member of the staff and the office shall then be vacant.
- (d) A student member shall cease to hold office—
 - (i) at the end of the student's final academic year, or at such other time in the year after ceasing to be a student as the Corporation may decide; or
 - (ii) if expelled from the institution, and the office shall then be vacant

11 Members not to hold interests in matters relating to the institution

- (a) A member to whom paragraph (2) applies shall –
 - (i) disclose to the Corporation the nature and extent of the interest; and
 - (ii) if present at a meeting of the Corporation, or of any of its committees, at which such supply, contract or other matter relating to the institution is to be considered, not take part in the consideration or vote on any question with respect to it and not be counted in the quorum present at the meeting in relation to a resolution on which that member is not entitled to vote; and
 - (iii) withdraw, if present at a meeting of the Corporation, or any of its committees, at which such supply, contract or other matter relating to the institution is to be considered, where required to do so by a majority of the members of the Corporation or committee present at the meeting.
- (b) This paragraph applies to a member who has any financial interest in:
 - (i) the supply of work to the institution, or the supply of goods for the purposes of the institution;
 - (ii) any contract or proposed contract concerning the institution; or
 - (iii) any other matter relating to the institution; orhas any other interest of a type specified by the Corporation in any matter relating to the institution.

- (c) This clause shall not prevent the members considering and voting upon proposals for the Corporation to insure them against liabilities incurred by them arising out of their office or the Corporation obtaining such insurance and paying the premium.
- (d) Where the matter under consideration by the Corporation or any of its committees relates to the pay and conditions of all staff, or all staff in a particular class, a staff member:
 - (i) need not disclose a financial interest; and
 - (ii) may take part in the consideration of the matter, vote on any question with respect to it and count towards the quorum present at that meeting, provided that in so doing, the staff member acts in the best interests of the Corporation as a whole and does not seek to represent the interests of any other person or body, but
 - (iii) shall withdraw from the meeting if the matter is under negotiation with staff and the staff member is representing any of the staff concerned in those negotiations.
- (e) The Clerk shall maintain a register of the interests of the members which have been disclosed and the register shall be made available during normal office hours at the institution to any person wishing to inspect it.

12 Meetings

- (a) The Corporation shall meet at least twice in every term, and shall hold such other meetings as may be necessary.
- (b) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5) and to clause 13(4), all meetings shall be called by the Clerk, who shall, at least seven calendar days before the date of the meeting, send to the members of the Corporation written notice of the meeting and a copy of the proposed agenda.
- (c) If it is proposed to consider at any meeting the remuneration, conditions of service, conduct, suspension, dismissal or retirement of the Clerk, the Chair shall, at least seven calendar days before the date of the meeting, send to the members a copy of the agenda item concerned, together with any relevant papers.
- (d) A meeting of the Corporation, called a “special meeting”, may be called at any time by the Chair or at the request in writing of any five members.
- (e) Where the Chair, or in the Chair’s absence the Vice-Chair, decides that there are matters requiring urgent consideration, the written notice convening the special meeting and a copy of the proposed agenda may be given within less than seven calendar days.
- (f) Every member shall act in the best interests of the Corporation and shall not be bound to speak or vote by mandates given by any other body or person.

13 Quorum

- (a) Meetings of the Corporation shall be quorate if the number of members present is at least 40% of the total number of actual members.
- (b) If the number of members present for a meeting of the Corporation does not constitute a quorum, the meeting shall not be held as a Corporation meeting and no decisions will be made. However, an informal discussion can take place with written notification at the next Corporation meeting.

- (c) If during a meeting of the Corporation there ceases to be a quorum, the meeting shall be terminated at once as a Corporation meeting and no decisions will be made. However, an informal discussion can continue with written notification at the next Corporation meeting.
- (d) If a decision is required and the Corporation meeting cannot be held or cannot continue for lack of a quorum, the Chair may call a special meeting as soon as it is convenient.

14 Proceedings of meetings

- (a) Every question to be decided at a meeting of the Corporation shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast by members present and entitled to vote on the question.
- (b) Where, at a meeting of the Corporation, there is an equal division of votes on a question to be decided, the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
- (c) A member may not vote by proxy or by way of postal vote.
- (d) No resolution of the members may be rescinded or varied at a subsequent meeting unless consideration of the rescission or variation is a specific item of business on the agenda for that meeting.
- (e) A member of the Corporation who is a member of staff at the institution, including the Principal, shall withdraw:
 - (i) from that part of any meeting of the Corporation, or any of its committees, at which staff matters relating solely to that member of the staff, as distinct from staff matters relating to all members of staff or all members of staff in a particular class, are to be considered;
 - (ii) from that part of any meeting of the Corporation, or any of its committees, at which that member's reappointment or the appointment of that member's successor is to be considered;
 - (iii) from that part of any meeting of the Corporation, or any of its committees, at which the matter under consideration concerns the pay or conditions of service of all members of staff, or all members of staff in a particular class, where the member of staff is acting as a representative (whether or not on behalf of a recognised trade union) of all members of staff or the class of staff (as the case may be); and
 - (iv) if so required by a resolution of the other members present, from that part of any meeting of the Corporation or any of its committees, at which staff matters relating to any member of staff holding a post senior to that member's are to be considered, except those relating to the pay and conditions of all staff or all staff in a particular class.
- (f) A Principal who has chosen not to be a member of the Corporation shall still be entitled to attend and speak, or otherwise communicate, at all meetings of the Corporation and any of its committees, except that the Principal shall withdraw in any case where the Principal would be required to withdraw under paragraph (5).
- (g) A student member who is under the age of 18 shall not vote at a meeting of the Corporation, or any of its committees, on any question concerning any proposal:
 - (i) for the expenditure of money by the Corporation; or
 - (ii) under which the Corporation, or any members of the Corporation, would enter into any contract, or would incur any debt or liability, whether immediate, contingent or otherwise.

- (h) A student member shall withdraw from that part of any meeting of the Corporation or any of its committees, at which a student's conduct, suspension or expulsion is to be considered.
- (i) In any case where the Corporation, or any of its committees, is to discuss staff matters relating to a member or prospective member of staff at the institution, a student member shall:
 - (i) take no part in the consideration or discussion of that matter and not vote on any question with respect to it; and
 - (ii) where required to do so by a majority of the members, other than student members, of the Corporation or committee present at the meeting, withdraw from the meeting.
- (j) The Clerk:
 - (i) shall withdraw from that part of any meeting of the Corporation, or any of its committees, at which the Clerk's remuneration, conditions of service, conduct, suspension, dismissal or retirement in the capacity of Clerk are to be considered; and
 - (ii) where the Clerk is a member of staff at the institution, the Clerk shall withdraw in any case where a member of the Corporation is required to withdraw under paragraph (5).
- (k) If the Clerk withdraws from a meeting, or part of a meeting, of the Corporation under paragraph (10), the Corporation shall appoint a person from among themselves to act as Clerk during this absence.
- (l) If the Clerk withdraws from a meeting, or part of a meeting, of a committee of the Corporation, the committee shall appoint a person from among themselves to act as Clerk to the committee during this absence.

15 Minutes

- (a) Written minutes of every meeting of the Corporation shall be prepared, and, subject to paragraph (2), at every meeting of the Corporation the minutes of the last meeting shall be taken as an agenda item.
- (b) Paragraph (1) shall not require the minutes of the last meeting to be taken as an agenda item at a special meeting, but where they are not taken, they shall be taken as an agenda item at the next meeting which is not a special meeting.
- (c) Where minutes of a meeting are taken as an agenda item and agreed to be accurate, those minutes shall be signed as a true record by the Chair of the meeting.
- (d) Separate minutes shall be taken of those parts of meetings from which staff members, the Principal, student members or the Clerk have withdrawn from a meeting in accordance with clause 14(5), (6), (8), (9) or (10) and such persons shall not be entitled to see the minutes of that part of the meeting or any papers relating to it.

16 Public access to meetings

The Corporation shall decide any question as to whether a person should be allowed to attend any of its meetings where that person is not a member, the Clerk or the Principal and in making its decision, it shall give consideration to clause 17(2).

17 Publication of minutes and papers

- (a) Subject to paragraph (2), the Corporation shall ensure that a copy of:
 - (i) the agenda for every meeting of the Corporation;

(ii) the draft minutes of every such meeting, if they have been approved by the Chair of the meeting;

(iii) the signed minutes of every such meeting; and

(iv) any report, document or other paper considered at any such meeting

shall as soon as possible be made available during normal office hours at the institution to any person wishing to inspect them.

(b) There shall be excluded from any item made available for inspection any material relating to:

(i) a named person employed at, or proposed to be employed at, the institution;

(ii) a named student at, or candidate for admission to, the institution;

(iii) the Clerk; or

(iv) any matter which, by reason of its nature, the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis.

(c) The Corporation shall ensure that a copy of the draft or signed minutes of every meeting of the Corporation, under paragraph (1), shall be placed on the institution's website, and shall, despite any rules the Corporation may make regarding the archiving of such material, remain on its website for a minimum period of 12 months.

(d) The Corporation shall review regularly all material excluded from inspection under paragraph (2)(d) and make any such material available for inspection where it is satisfied that the reason for dealing with the matter on a confidential basis no longer applies, or where it considers that the public interest in disclosure outweighs that reason. Be better to say if an item is requested but has previously been identified as confidential – the confidential status will be reviewed prior to decision to disclose. We identify at the end of a report how long a report should remain confidential and who from.

18 Copies of the Instrument of Government

A copy of this Instrument shall be given free of charge to every member of the Corporation and at a charge not exceeding the cost of copying or free of charge to any other person who so requests a copy, and shall be available for inspection at the institution upon request, during normal office hours, to every member of staff and every student.

19 Application of the Seal

The application of the seal of the Corporation shall be authenticated by:

- (a) the signature of either the Chair or of some other member authorised either generally or specially by the Corporation to act for that purpose; and
- (b) the signature of any other member.

Date of First Approval	March 2006
Date of Last Approval	10 December 2020
Approval/Review Body / Bodies	Corporation (Search and Governance Committee)
Review interval (years)	Periodic
Date of next review/approval	2023

Section Three – Governors’ Handbook

Articles of Government

C O N T E N T S

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- 2 Conduct of the institution**
- 3 Responsibilities of the Corporation, the Principal and the Clerk**
- 4 The establishment of committees and delegation of functions generally**
- 5 The Search and Governance committee**
- 6 The Audit Committee**
- 7 Access to committees by non-members and publication of minutes**
- 8 Delegable and non-delegable functions**
- 9 Appointment and promotion of staff**
- 10 Rules relating to the conduct of staff**
- 11 Academic freedom**
- 12 Grievance, suspension and disciplinary procedures**
- 13 Suspension and dismissal of the Clerk**
- 14 Financial matters**
- 15 Co-operation with the CE of the Skills Funding Agency’s auditor**
- 16 Internal audit**
- 17 Accounts and audit of accounts**
- 18 Rules and bye-laws**
- 19 Copies of Articles of Government and rules and bye-laws**
- 20 Modification or replacement of the Instrument and Articles of Government**
- 21 Dissolution of the Corporation**
- 22 Change of the College Name**

1 Interpretation of the terms used

In these Articles of Government:

- (a) any reference to “the Principal” shall include a person acting as Principal;
- (b) “the Articles” means these Articles of Government
- (c) “Chair” and “Vice-Chair” mean respectively the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Corporation appointed under clause 6 of the Instrument of Government.
- (d) “the Clerk” has the same meaning as in the Instrument of Government;
- (e) “the Corporation” has the same meaning as in the Instrument of Government;
- (f) “the CE of the Education and Skills Funding” means the Chief Executive of the Education and Skills Funding Agency;
- (g) “parent member”, “staff member” and “student member” have the same meanings as in the Instrument of Government;
- (h) “the Secretary of State” means the Secretary of State for Education, as appropriate.
- (i) “senior post” means the post of Principal and such other senior posts as the Corporation may decide for the purposes of these Articles;
- (j) “the staff” means all the staff who have a contract of employment with the institution;
- (k) “the students’ union” has the same meaning as in the Instrument of Government.

2 Conduct of the Institution

The institution shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Instrument of Government, these Articles, any rules or bye-laws made under these Articles and any trust deed regulating the institution.

3 Responsibilities of the Corporation, the Principal and the Clerk

- (1) The Corporation shall be responsible for the following functions:
 - (a) the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution and the oversight of its activities;
 - (b) publishing arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students on the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution and the oversight of its activities;
 - (c) approving the quality strategy of the institution;
 - (d) the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the Corporation and safeguarding their assets;
 - (e) approving annual estimates of income and expenditure;
 - (f) the appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of the pay and conditions of service of the holders of senior posts and the Clerk, including, where the Clerk is, or is to be appointed as, a member of staff, the Clerk’s appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of pay in the capacity of a member of staff; and
 - (g) setting a framework for the pay and conditions of service of all other staff.
- (2) Subject to the responsibilities of the Corporation, the Principal shall be the Chief Executive and Chief Accounting Officer of the institution, and shall be responsible for the following functions:
 - (i) making proposals to the Corporation about the educational character and mission of the institution and implementing the decisions of the Corporation;
 - (ii) the determination of the institution’s academic and other activities;
 - (iii) preparing annual estimates of income and expenditure for consideration and approval by the Corporation, and the management of budget and resources within the estimates approved by the Corporation;
 - (iv) the organisation, direction and management of the institution and leadership of the staff;
 - (v) the appointment, assignment, grading, appraisal, suspension, dismissal and determination, within the framework set by the Corporation, of the pay and conditions

- of service of staff, other than the holders of senior posts or the Clerk, where the Clerk is also a member of the staff; and
- (vi) maintaining student discipline and, within the rules and procedures provided for within these Articles, suspending or expelling students on disciplinary grounds or expelling students for academic reasons.
- (3) The Clerk shall be responsible for the following functions: -
- (i) advising the Corporation with regard to the operation of its powers;
 - (ii) advising the Corporation with regard to procedural matters;
 - (ii) advising the Corporation with regard to the conduct of its business; and
 - (iv) advising the Corporation with regard to matters of governance practice

4 The establishment of committees and delegation of functions generally

- (a) The Corporation may establish committees for any purpose or function, other than those assigned in these Articles to the Principal or Clerk and may delegate powers to:
- (i) such committees;
 - (ii) the Chair, or in the Chair's absence, the Vice-Chair; or
 - (iii) the Principal.
- (b) The number of members of a committee and the terms on which they are to hold and to vacate office, shall be decided by the Corporation.
- (c) The Corporation may also establish committees under collaboration arrangements made with other further education institutions or schools (or with both), and such joint committees shall be subject to any regulations made under section 166 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006(4) governing such arrangements.

5 The Search and Governance Committee

- (a) The Corporation shall establish a committee, to be known as the "Search and Governance Committee", to advise on:
- (i) the appointment of members (other than as a staff or student member);
 - (ii) such other matters relating to membership and appointments as the Corporation may ask it to.
 - (iii) such other matters relating to governance procedures and practice.
- (b) The Corporation shall normally not appoint any person as a member (other than as a staff or student member) without first consulting and considering the advice of the Search and Governance Committee.
- (c) The Corporation may make rules specifying the way in which the Search and Governance Committee is to be conducted. A copy of these rules, together with the Search and Governance committee's terms of reference and its advice to the Corporation, other than any advice which the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis, shall be published on the institution's website and shall be made available for inspection at the institution by any person during normal office hours.
- (d) The Corporation shall review regularly all material excluded from inspection under paragraph (3) and shall make any such material available for inspection where it is satisfied that the reason for dealing with the matter on a confidential basis no longer applies, or where it considers that the public interest in disclosure outweighs that reason.

6 The Audit Committee

- (a) The Corporation shall establish a committee, to be known as the "Audit Committee", to advise on matters relating to the Corporation's audit arrangements and systems of internal control.
- (b) The Audit Committee shall consist of at least three persons and may include members of staff at the institution with the exception of those in senior posts, and shall operate in accordance with any requirements of the CE of the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

7 Access to committees by non-members and publication of minutes

The Corporation shall ensure that:

- (a) a written statement of its policy regarding attendance at committee meetings by persons who are not committee members; and
- (b) The minutes of committee meetings, if they have been approved by the Chair of the meeting, are published on the institutions website and made available for inspection at the institution by any person, during normal office hours.

8 Delegable and non-delegable functions

- (a) The Corporation shall not delegate the following functions:
 - (i) the determination of the educational character and mission of the institution;
 - (ii) the approval of the annual estimates of income and expenditure;
 - (iii) the responsibility for ensuring the solvency of the institution and the Corporation and for safeguarding their assets;
 - (iv) the appointment of the Principal or holder of a senior post;
 - (v) the appointment of the Clerk, (including, where the Clerk is, or is to be, appointed as a member of staff, the Clerk's appointment in the capacity of a member of staff); and
 - (vi) the modification or revocation of these Articles.
- (b) The Corporation may not delegate:
 - (i) the consideration of the case for dismissal, and
 - (ii) the power to determine an appeal in connection with the dismissal of the Principal, the Clerk or the holder of a senior post, other than to a committee of members of the Corporation.
- (c) The Corporation shall make rules specifying the way in which a committee having functions under paragraph (1) shall be established and conducted.
- (d) The Principal may delegate functions to the holder of any other senior post other than:
 - (i) the management of budget and resources; and
 - (ii) any functions that have been delegated to the Principal by the Corporation.

9 Appointment and promotion of staff

- (a) Where there is a vacancy or expected vacancy in a senior post, the Corporation shall:
 - (i) normally advertise the vacancy nationally; and
 - (ii) appoint a selection panel consisting of:
 - at least five members of the Corporation including the Chair or the Vice-Chair or both, where the vacancy is for the post of Principal; orthe Principal and at least three other members of the Corporation, where the vacancy is for any other senior post.
- (b) The members of the selection panel shall
 - (i) decide on the arrangements for selecting the applicants for interview;
 - (ii) interview the applicants; and
 - (iii) where they consider it appropriate to do so, recommend to the Corporation for appointment one of the applicants they have interviewed.
- (c) If the Corporation approves the recommendation of the selection panel, that person shall be appointed.
- (d) If the members of the selection panel are unable to agree on a person to recommend to the Corporation, or if the Corporation does not approve their recommendation, the Corporation may make an appointment itself of a person from amongst those interviewed, or it may require the panel to repeat the steps specified in paragraph (2), with or without first re-advertising the vacancy.
- (e) Where there is a vacancy in a senior post or where the holder of a senior post is temporarily absent, until that post is filled or the absent post holder returns, a member of staff

- (i) may be required to act as Principal or in the place of any other senior post holder; and
 - (ii) if so required, shall have all the duties and responsibilities of the Principal or such other senior post holder during the period of the vacancy or temporary absence.
- (f) The Principal shall have responsibility for selecting for appointment all members of staff other than -
- (i) senior post holders; and
 - (ii) where the Clerk is also to be appointed as a member of staff, the Clerk in the role of a member of staff.

10 Rules relating to the conduct of staff

After consultation with the staff, the Corporation shall make rules relating to their conduct.

11 Academic freedom

In making rules under article 11, the Corporation shall have regard to the need to ensure that academic staff at the institution have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without putting themselves at risk of losing their jobs or any privileges which they may enjoy at the institution.

12 Grievance, suspension and disciplinary procedures

- (a) After consultation with staff, the Corporation shall make rules setting out:
- (i) grievance procedures for all staff;
 - (ii) procedures for the suspension of all staff; and
 - (iii) disciplinary and dismissal procedures for
 - senior post-holders, and
 - staff other than senior post-holder

and such procedures shall be subject to the provisions of articles 3(1)(e), 3(2)(e), 9(1)(d), 9(1)(e).

- (b) Any rules made under paragraph (1)(b) shall include provision that where a person has been suspended without pay, any appeal against such suspension shall be heard and action taken in a timely manner.
- (c) Any rules made under paragraph (1)(c)(i) shall include provision that where the Corporation considers that it may be appropriate to dismiss a person, a preliminary investigation shall be conducted to examine and determine the case for dismissal.

13 Suspension and dismissal of the Clerk

- (a) Where the Clerk is also a member of staff at the institution, the Clerk is to be treated as a senior post holder for the purposes of article 13.
- (b) Where the Clerk is suspended or dismissed under article 13, that suspension or dismissal shall not affect the position of the Clerk in the separate role of Clerk to the Corporation.

14 Financial matters

The Corporation shall set the policy by which the tuition and other fees payable to it are determined, subject to any terms and conditions attached to grants, loans or other payments paid or made by the CE of Education and Skills Funding Agency.

15 Co-operation with the CE of Education and Skills Funding Agency's auditor

The Corporation shall co-operate with any person who has been authorised by the CE of Education and Skills Funding Agency to audit any returns of numbers of students or claims for financial assistance and shall give any such person access to any documents or records held by the Corporation, including computer records.

16 Internal audit

- (a) The Corporation shall, at such times as it considers appropriate, examine and evaluate its systems of internal financial and other control to ensure that they contribute to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of the Corporation's resources.
- (b) The Corporation may arrange for the examination and evaluation mentioned in paragraph (1) to be carried out on its behalf by internal auditors.
- (c) The Corporation shall not normally appoint persons as internal auditors to carry out the activities referred to in paragraph (1) if those persons are already appointed as external auditors under article 18(3).

17 Accounts and audit of accounts

- (a) The Corporation shall
 - (i) keep proper accounts and proper records in relation to the accounts; and
 - (ii) prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year of the Corporation.
- (b) The statement shall:
 - (i) give a true and fair account of the state of the Corporation's affairs at the end of the financial year and of its income and expenditure in the financial year; and
 - (ii) comply with any directions given by the CE of Education and Skills Funding Agency as to the information to be contained in it, the manner in which the information is to be presented, the methods and principles according to which it is to be prepared and the time and manner of publication.
- (c) The accounts and the statement of accounts shall be audited by external auditors appointed by the Corporation in respect of each financial year.
- (d) The Corporation shall not appoint persons as external auditors in respect of any financial year if those persons are already appointed as internal auditors under article 17(3).
- (e) Auditors shall be appointed and audit work conducted in accordance with any requirements of the Education and CE of the Skills Funding Agency.
- (f) The "financial year" means the first financial year and, except as provided for in paragraph (8), each successive period of twelve months.
- (g) The "first financial year" means the period from the date the Corporation was established up to the second 31st July following that date, or up to some other date which has been chosen by the Corporation with the CE of Education and Skills Funding Agency's approval.
- (h) If the Corporation is dissolved:
 - (i) the last financial year shall end on the date of dissolution; and
 - (ii) the Corporation may decide, with the CE of the Education and Skills Funding Agency's approval, that what would otherwise be the last two financial years, shall be a single financial year for the purpose of this article.

18 Rules and bye-laws

The Corporation shall have the power to make rules and bye-laws relating to the government and conduct of the institution and these rules and bye-laws shall be subject to the provisions of the Instrument of Government and these Articles.

19 Copies of Articles of Government and rules and bye-laws

A copy of these Articles, and of any rules and bye-laws, shall be given free of charge to every member of the Corporation and at a charge not exceeding the cost of copying or free of charge, to any other person who requests a copy and shall be available for inspection at the institution upon request, during normal office hours, to every member of staff and every student.

20 Modification or replacement of the Instrument & Articles of Government

- (a) Subject to paragraph (2), the Corporation may by resolution of the members, modify or replace its instrument and articles of government, after consultation with any other persons who, in the Corporation's view, are likely to be affected by the proposed changes.
- (b) The Corporation shall not make changes to the Instrument or Articles of Government that would result in the body ceasing to be a charity.

21 Dissolution of the Corporation

- (a) The Corporation may by resolution dissolve itself and provide for the transfer of its property, rights and liabilities.
- (b) The Corporation shall ensure that a copy of the draft resolution to dissolve the Corporation on a specified date shall be published at least one month before the proposed date of such resolution.

22 Change of the College's Name

- (a) The College can apply to change its name with the approval of the Secretary of State, following full consultation with stakeholders.

Date of First Approval	March 2006
Date of Last Approval	10 December 2020
Approval/Review Body / Bodies	Corporation (Search and Governance Committee)
Review interval (years)	Periodic
Date of next review/approval	2023

Section Four – Governors’ Handbook

Standing Orders

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1 Scope

These Standing Orders govern the conduct of the Corporation's business and its Committees and supplement the Instrument and Articles of Government.

2 Responsibilities of the Corporation

- (a) The responsibilities of the Corporation are set out in the Articles of Government.
- (b) Article 3 states that the Corporation shall be responsible for:
- The determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution and for the oversight of its activities
 - Publishing arrangements for obtaining views of staff and students on the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution and the oversight of its activities;
 - The approval of the institution's quality strategy
 - The effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the Corporation and for safeguarding their assets
 - The approval of annual estimates of income and expenditure
 - The appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of the pay and conditions of service of Senior Post Holders and the Clerk
 - Setting a framework of pay and conditions for all other staff.
- (b) Governors shall act in accordance with the principles of public life set out in the Nolan Report (1995), promote the interests of the College and act as ambassadors on its behalf.

3 Membership and Composition of the Corporation

The Corporation comprises 18 Governors with a mix of skills and experience that underpin the work of the Corporation and its committees. This will include Governors from business, industry, education (inc. HE, FE, schools and skills training), local authority and other public and third sector bodies.

- one elected Staff Governors from 1st July 2020
- up to two Student Governor[s]
- the Principal (ex officio)

4 Chair & Vice Chair(s)

- (a) With the support of the Clerk, the Chair shall ensure the Corporation fulfils its duties and responsibilities as set out in the Instrument and Articles of Government.
- (b) The Vice Chair(s) shall act for the Chair in his/her absence.
- (c) The Chair and Vice Chair(s) of the Corporation shall be elected on an annual basis by the Corporation. With the exception of the Principal and Staff and Student Governors, all other Governors are eligible to stand for election.
- (d) The Chair and Vice Chair(s) are eligible for re-election. The number of consecutive terms of office for the Chair and Vice Chair(s) is usually limited to four. (ie four 1-year terms.)
- (e) The Election of the Chair and Vice Chair(s) or Committee Chair will usually take place at the last meeting of the Corporation prior to the end of each academic year. The annual term of office will thus run from 1st August to 31st July of the following year.
- (f) The Chair and Vice Chair(s) shall exercise any specific authority delegated by the Corporation.
- (g) If there are matters of significance to be dealt with which are too urgent to wait for the next scheduled meeting of the Corporation, the Chair, in consultation with the Principal and the Clerk, may call a special meeting of the Corporation.
- (h) Exceptionally, the Chair has delegated authority to act on any issue which is both urgent and important which would normally be dealt with by the Corporation (or where powers have been delegated) the relevant Committee, where action cannot wait until the next scheduled meeting of the Corporation or Committee and where it is not possible to

convene a quorate special meeting. In exercising this authority, the Chair should consult with the Vice Chair(s), the Principal and the Clerk and such other members of the Corporation or Committee available at the time. Any decisions or actions taken should be reported as soon as practicable to a quorate meeting of the Corporation or relevant Committee.

- (i) The Chair and Vice Chair(s) shall promote high standards of integrity and probity and maintain the trust and support of the Corporation, the Executive Management Team and develop an effective working relationship with the Principal and the Clerk based on a mutual understanding of the responsibilities and authority that each role carries.
- (j) The Chair and Vice Chair(s) shall promote the self-assessment of performance by the Corporation and its Committees and the establishment of appropriate performance indicators.
- (k) The Chair and/or Vice Chair(s) shall undertake an annual appraisal of the Principal.
- (l) The Principal and the Chair and/or Vice Chair(s) shall undertake an annual appraisal of the Senior Post Holder(s) other than the Principal.
- (m) The Principal and the Chair shall undertake an annual appraisal of the Clerk.
- (n) The Chair, in conjunction with the Clerk, shall ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the appointment, appraisal, discipline, suspension and dismissal of Senior Post Holders.

5 Committees

- (a) The Corporation shall establish a Search and Governance Committee, a Remuneration Committee and an Audit Committee and may establish such other Committees or Groups as it may from time to time decide.
- (b) The Corporation will approve Terms of Reference for each Committee which will determine their role, composition and areas of responsibility and which will be reviewed by the Corporation periodically.
- (c) The Corporation will appoint the members and Chair / Vice-Chair of each Committee, and review these annually.
- (d) Subject to matters reserved for decision by the Corporation, as set out in the Articles of Government, the Corporation may delegate decision making powers as it sees fit to a Committee, the Chair or the Principal in a Scheme of Delegation, which will be reviewed periodically.
- (e) The minutes for all Committee meetings and notes of Groups will be submitted to the Corporation by the Clerk at the earliest opportunity.

6 Appointment of Governors & Terms of Office

- (a) The Corporation is the appointing authority for any member of the Corporation.
- (b) The Corporation will consider the advice of the Search and Governance Committee before recruiting any person as a member of the Corporation or its Committees. Any advice to the Corporation from the Search and Governance Committee is publicly available, through publication of the minutes.
- (c) The advice of the Search and Governance Committee is not required for the appointment of an elected staff or student member or for the appointment of the Principal as a member.
- (d) The usual term of office for Governors (except the Principal and the Student Governor) is four years. An alternate term of office may be considered if circumstances warrant it.
- (e) The Nolan Committee recommended that, as a general rule, Governors should not serve more than eight consecutive years in office. However, Nolan emphasised that this is not a prescriptive maxim and that it is more important to ensure all appointments and re-appointments are made openly and on the basis of merit.
- (f) Accordingly, when considering the re-appointment of a Governor after two 4-year terms of office, the Search and Governance Committee should consider whether there are any special circumstances or needs which warrant a term of office of no longer than one further year and the term of office recommended should be the last term of office served.

- (h) External members will usually be appointed for a four year term of office. A shorter term of office may be considered if circumstances warrant it.
- (i) Governors and external members shall be eligible for re-appointment. All such re-appointments are subject to recommendations by the Search and Governance Committee. Before proposing a re-appointment, the Search and Governance Committee will evaluate the contribution made by an existing Governor / external member.
- (j) Governors and external members may resign at any time by advising the Clerk to the Corporation in writing.
- (k) Governors may resign membership of a Committee at any time, without prejudice to their membership of the Corporation.
- (l) Governors will have an administrative induction to the Corporation, which includes completion of eligibility information and an enhanced DBS check. The administrative induction process should be completed within 3 months from appointment date and failure to do so may result in suspension of membership.

7 Leave of Absence Policy and Procedure for Governors

In exceptional circumstances Governors can request a period of leave of absence from the Corporation, while still maintaining their membership following the period. It is intended for use where a Governor's other commitments are likely to preclude his / her attendance at three or more meetings (including Corporation and Committee meetings).

7.1 Leave of Absence Procedure:

- (a) A Governor wishing to request a leave of absence from the Corporation should make an application in writing to the Clerk, outlining the period of leave requested and reasons for the request. The Governor will remain a member of the Corporation, but will not be required to attend. Therefore, their term of office will remain unchanged and they will not be counted in attendance data.
- (b) The Clerk will contact the Governor to seek any further information required.
- (c) The Clerk will communicate the request to the Chair of the Corporation and Chair of Search and Governance Committee and will present the request to the Search and Governance Committee for recommendation to Corporation.
- (d) If the request is approved by the Corporation the following arrangements will apply:
 - The approved period of leave of absence will be defined. In the first instance the maximum period of absence will be six months. At the end of this period the situation will be reviewed and unless there are exceptional circumstances the Governor would be expected to resign from the Corporation, if unable to return as a full member.
 - Where a leave of absence is considered, the impact on skills and experience on relevant Committees and/or the Corporation will be reviewed and where necessary additional expertise may be required, through the appointment of an external member.
 - During the agreed period of absence the Governor will continue to receive all Committee and Corporation papers, as appropriate. The Governor will be free to submit comments or queries on any papers circulated, which will be communicated to the relevant Chair, who will exercise discretion in feeding such comments into a debate.
 - The Governor may attend any meetings during the leave of absence if this is possible, but will not have voting rights during that period.
 - The Governor will not be included in attendance data for the period of the leave of absence.
 - The Clerk will write to the Governor to confirm the decision of the Corporation and the arrangements relating to the period of absence.
 - If the request is not approved by the Corporation the Chair will discuss the options with the Governor and the matter may be referred back to the Corporation for consideration. The Clerk will write to the Governor to confirm the decision of the Corporation and any subsequent decisions.

8 Quorum

- (a) For a Corporation meeting to be quorate, there must be attendance of 40% of the actual membership rounded up.
- (b) The quorum for Committee meetings shall be determined by the Corporation in each Committee's approved Terms of Reference and shall not, in any case, be fewer than two.
- (c) If the number of Governors or committee members assembled for a meeting does not constitute a quorum, or ceases to constitute a quorum during the course of a meeting, the meeting shall not be held or continued as a Corporation meeting and no decisions will be made. However, an informal discussion can continue with written notification at the next Corporation meeting.
- (d) In these cases, the Chair of the meeting may convene a special meeting as soon as may be conveniently arranged.

9 Meetings

- (a) The Corporation shall meet at least twice in every term and shall hold other meetings as may be necessary. At least one meeting of the Corporation each year will be held at each of the campuses.
- (b) The frequency of meetings of Committees established by the Corporation shall be set out in their approved Terms of Reference, and shall not be less than one meeting in each academic year.
- (c) The Clerk to the Corporation will prepare an advance timetable of Corporation and Committee meetings for the approval of the Corporation.
- (d) The Clerk to the Corporation will prepare an advance Cycle of Corporation and Committee Business for the approval of the Corporation.
- (e) The Clerk to the Corporation will, in conjunction with the Chair / Committee Chair and Principal, and with due regard to the approved Cycle of Business, prepare, in advance, an agenda for each meeting.
- (f) Governors should forward any items for inclusion on an agenda to the Clerk to the Corporation.
- (g) The Clerk to the Corporation will release written notice of meetings, distributing agenda and supporting papers, at least seven calendar days in advance of the meeting.

10 Conduct of Meetings

- (a) The Chair, or in his absence the Vice Chair(s), shall preside at each meeting of the Corporation.
- (b) In the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair(s) (or, in the case of a Committee meeting, the Committee Chair), members present shall agree one of their number to act as Chair for the meeting.
- (c) The Principal, Staff or Student Governor may not act as Chair of the Corporation or a Committee meeting.
- (d) In conjunction with the Clerk, the Chair of the meeting will ensure the efficient conduct of the business of Corporation and Committee meetings including following established procedures and reporting appropriately the business of committees.
- (e) Attendance at each meeting shall be recorded by the Clerk. Any Governor/member absent from meetings for a period longer than six consecutive months without permission may be removed from office.
- (f) The agenda for the meeting shall determine the order in which business is conducted unless the meeting agrees otherwise.
- (g) The Chair of each meeting shall approve minutes of the meeting prior to their general circulation.
- (h) Ordinarily Governors will attend meetings at the College. However, it will be permissible for members to take part in meetings via electronic methods, such as Teams or tele-conferencing. Where this is the case, they will be considered as an attendee, but it will be

noted that they took part remotely. In exceptional circumstances it will be possible for meetings to be completely online. This will be agreed by the Chair, as appropriate.

11 Decision Making

- (a) The Chair of the meeting will encourage active debate of issues, ensure that members have an opportunity to contribute and ensure that decisions taken are properly recorded by the Clerk and reported.
- (b) Resolutions shall usually be reached following discussion and debate leading to a consensus. A formal vote is not usually taken. However, a vote on any decision can be requested by any Governor or committee member present.
- (c) Voting shall be by way of a show of hands, unless two or more of the members present request a secret ballot, which will be administered by the Clerk. There may not be voting by proxy or by post. Where there is an equal division of votes on any issue, the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
- (d) All resolutions are collective and individual Governors and Committee members will stand by these, even if they were not reached unanimously.
- (e) A resolution of the Corporation or a Committee may not be rescinded or varied except by a specific item of business on an agenda of a subsequent meeting.
- (f) A Student Governor who is under the age of 18 shall not vote (whether at a Corporation or Committee meeting) on any proposal for the expenditure of money, or to enter into any contract, or to waive any debt or liability by the Corporation.
- (g) Ordinarily decisions will be made at Corporation or Committee meetings, as appropriate, however, on occasion it may be possible to allow decisions to be made via email communication. Where a decision is required outside of a meeting, the Clerk may email all Governors and a response is required by at least 40% of the current membership. This method of decision making would be agreed in advance and the decision normally ratified at the next Corporation or Committee meeting and would occur infrequently.

12 Withdrawal from meetings

- (a) A Student Governor shall withdraw from that part of any meeting (Corporation or Committee) at which his / her conduct, suspension or expulsion is to be considered.
- (b) Where the Corporation (or any Committee) is to discuss matters relating to a member of staff or a prospective member of staff, the student shall take no part in the discussion and shall not vote in respect of it and shall withdraw from the meeting.
- (c) A Staff Governor shall withdraw from that part of any meeting where matters relating to any individual member of staff, who is hierarchically senior, are to be considered and shall withdraw from that part of any meeting at which staff matters relating solely to that member of staff are to be considered.
- (c) The Staff and / or Student Governor(s) may be asked to leave a meeting, where the matter under discussion is considered confidential by the Chair. These matters may relate to specific individual or groups of staff or students at the College and where the discussion could be deemed commercially sensitive and/or potentially damaging to the reputation of the College. Where a matter is to be considered of this nature, the Chair of the Corporation or relevant Committee will communicate in writing prior to the meeting with the staff and/or student members and they may be asked to withdraw during the discussion.

13 Access to Information and Meetings

- (a) The College aims to demonstrate that it is open and accountable in the conduct of its business and in its decision making.
- (b) All agendas, reports, minutes and other documents and all proceedings of the Corporation and its committees shall be available for inspection following a meeting unless a decision has been taken at that meeting to classify them as confidential, the reason for this being noted by reference to the criteria set out in section 13 above.

- (c) Copies of all papers not classified as confidential are available as part of the College's Publication Scheme. Copies of the Schedule of Meetings and confirmed minutes of meetings of the Corporation are available for inspection on the College website [link to the governance pages of the College's website](#). These documents will remain on the website for a minimum of twelve months.
- (d) The Corporation shall publish, on the College website, rules specifying the way in which the Search and Governance Committee is to be conducted, including the Terms of Reference and its advice to the Corporation (normally via published minutes), unless it is deemed confidential, in accordance with the criteria at 3 above.
- (e) Attendance by the public or media / press at meetings of the Corporation and its Committees is not generally allowed, except by invitation, following a majority decision of the Corporation.
- (f) Attendance by staff and/or students (other than Staff / Student Governors and members of the Executive/Senior Management Teams usually in attendance) is allowed at the discretion of the Corporation/Committee Chair, in consultation with the Principal, following a written application to attend, at least seven days prior to the date of the meeting in question.
- (g) The College has published and will periodically review a Publication Scheme in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). The Publication Scheme provides a complete guide to the information routinely published by the College and sets out a description of the classes or types of information published. Full details of the Publication Scheme, and how to obtain information, are available from the College website – [link to the Policies section of the College's website](#). In line with the College's Publication Scheme, information can be produced in other formats upon request (e.g. audio, Braille etc).
- (h) The College aims to comply fully with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and ensures that sensitive and personal data is controlled appropriately and is subject to the proper consents.

14 Confidentiality

Confidentiality of personal and sensitive information is observed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Confidentiality of other information is maintained in accordance with the provisions within the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which allows for certain information to be withheld from publication or qualified. This includes information where a public interest test may apply.

Categories for determining confidentiality are:

- Personal information relating to an individual (or an individual post holder)
- Information provided in confidence by a third party who has not authorised its disclosure
- Financial or other information relating to procurement decisions, including information relating to the College's negotiating position, during the course of those negotiations.
- Information relating to the negotiating position of the College in employment relations or other contractual matters, during the course of those negotiations
- Information relating to the financial position of the College where the Corporation is satisfied in good faith that disclosure might harm the College or its competitive position
- Legal advice received from, or instructions given to, the College's legal advisors
- Information planned for publication in advance of that publication and/or
- Information not otherwise covered above, but considered to be commercially sensitive

15 Confidential Matters of the Corporation and its Committees

When minutes or reports are deemed confidential the report writer or Committee should complete the following information to indicate confidentiality requirements:

Confidential Item

Confidential Item:

Reason:

Timescale (when will the item cease to be confidential or when should this be reviewed?)

Who is the item confidential from?

16 Codes of Conduct and Ethics

- (a) All Governors and Committee members are expected to adhere to the provisions of the Staff & Governors' Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics, which will be periodically reviewed by the Corporation.
- (b) Where it appears that the Staff & Governors' Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics may have been breached by a member of the Corporation or its Committees or where there is inappropriate behaviour by a Governor (including external members) the following actions will be taken:
 - The Governor in question will be suspended from the Corporation and/or Committee until the issue has been investigated. The procedure for conducting such an investigation will be determined by the Corporation. The Governor will be asked not to attend meetings or to come into College until the matter is resolved.
 - A letter explaining the breach or claim and procedure to be followed will be sent to the Governor in question by the Chair of the Corporation;
 - The Governor will be invited to meet with the Chair and Principal and where it is found that the breach or claim has occurred the matter will be communicated to the Search and Governance Committee, who will agree appropriate action. A recommendation that the Governor is removed from the Corporation and/or Committee(s) may be made.

17 Payment of Expenses

Governors receive no remuneration or benefits but are entitled to claim certain expenses. These arrangements are set out in the approved **Policy Statement of Expenses for Staff and Governors**, which will be reviewed periodically by the Corporation.

18 Use of the Seal

See Financial Regulation 19.

19 Professional Advice

- (a) The Corporation may pass a resolution at any time to take independent professional advice on any issue concerning the exercise of its powers.
- (b) Governors, collaboratively or individually, may also obtain independent professional advice. The arrangements for so doing are set out in the approved **Procedure for Seeking Independent Professional Advice**, which will be periodically reviewed by the Corporation.

20 Complaints

- (a) The Corporation has approved, and will periodically review, a **Policy for Handling Complaints** made against it.
- (b) The Clerk to the Corporation shall act as the point of contact for any complaint that is made against the Corporation or an individual member of the Corporation.
- (c) The Chair of the Corporation shall act as the point of contact for a complaint made against the Clerk to the Corporation.

21 Interests

- (a) Governors, external members, the Principal, members of the Executive and Senior Management Team, the Clerk to the Corporation, other College managers with financial responsibilities and other staff, as appropriate, are required to complete a disclosure of

interests form as part of the Management Representation process. The Register of Interests for Governors and staff is updated, at least, annually.

- (b) The Register of Interests for Governors and staff is retained by the Clerk to the Corporation and is available for inspection on the College website and during office hours at the Blossomfield Road Campus, Solihull.
- (c) Declarations of Interests will be included on the agenda for all meetings (whether Corporation or Committee). Where an interest is financial, no part shall be taken in the consideration or vote on this matter.
- (d) Governors/Committee members should not allow any conflict of interest to arise which might interfere, or be perceived to interfere, with their independent judgement.

22 Interpretation/Waiving

Any provisions of these Standing Orders may be waived, if circumstances so warrant, by resolution of the Corporation.

23 Review

The Corporation will periodically review its Standing Orders and in any event, not less than once every three years.

Date of First Approval	March 2006
Date of Last Approval	10 December 2020
Approval/Review Body / Bodies	Corporation (Search and Governance Committee)
Review interval (years)	Periodic
Date of next review/approval	2023

Governor Induction, Training and Development Plan

Introduction

The College recognises the need to ensure that, collectively, Governors have the necessary skills and understanding to fulfil their responsibilities within the Instruments and Articles of Government. A Skills Audit is conducted biennially to identify, collectively, skills gaps on the Corporation and its committees, but also to inform individual training plans for each member. It is extremely important that members have a minimal level of training and experience in each of the required skills. The levels identified in the Skills Audit are:

Qualifications	Experience
Professional/Formal Qualification or Training	Extensive experience/knowledge - more than 10 years working experience
CPD – Short Course Training	Reasonable experience/knowledge - less than 10 years working experience
Little or no training in the area	Limited experience/knowledge - through working role, but not direct experience of this area
	None

Governors are expected to undertake training during their role to ensure a minimum level of qualification of CPD – Short Course Training and it is anticipated that their experience will grow each year that they are in role, underpinned by briefings and in-house development opportunities.

Skills Areas

Governance and Education

Skill Area	No of Governors with Expertise	Opportunities
Governance	All Governors should have CPD/ Reasonable Experience level or above	Induction CPD with ETF AOC briefings/newsletters. FE Week. TES articles.
National, regional or local government agenda for education and skills	All Governors should have CPD/ Reasonable Experience level or above	Induction CPD with ETF Annual briefings at Gov Development Sessions will add to experience and knowledge. AOC briefings/newsletters. FE Week. TES articles.
Further Education sector-education and skills	All Governors should have CPD/ Reasonable Experience level or above	Induction CPD with ETF Annual briefings at Gov Development Sessions will add to experience and knowledge. AOC briefings/newsletters.

FE Week.
TES articles.

Higher Education Sector	All Governors should have CPD/ Reasonable Experience level or above	Induction In-house College briefings and external speaker briefings at GDDs [Governor Development Days]
Teaching, Learning and Assessment	All Governors should have CPD/ Reasonable Experience level or above	Induction CPD with ETF
Curriculum Planning/Development	All Governors should have CPD/ Reasonable Experience level or above	Induction CPD with ETF
Safeguarding	All Governors should have CPD/ Reasonable Experience level or above	Mandatory Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ EduCare Safeguarding L2 ■ Home Office PREVENT Annual College briefing

Management, Business and Finance

Skill Area	No of Governors with Expertise	Opportunities
Strategic Planning & Monitoring	All Governors should have CPD/ Reasonable Experience level or above	CPD with ETF GDD sessions. AOC briefings/newsletters. FE Week.
Quality Assurance	All Governors should have CPD/ Reasonable Experience level or above	CPD with ETF
Financial Planning and Monitoring	Corporation All Governors should have CPD/ Reasonable Experience level or above with at least 3 qualified accountants on the Corporation Audit Committee at least 2 qualified accountants and at least 1 member with expertise in audit	Induction CPD with ETF
Education Management & Non-teaching		Induction with EMT members. Briefings and agenda items From College managers. GDDs
Human Resources or Personnel Management	Corporation All Governors should have CPD/ Reasonable Experience level or above with at least 1 member with qualification/expertise in HR. Audit Committee At least 1 member with expertise in Health and Safety	Induction EduCare Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Equality and ■ Health and Safety College briefings.

Remuneration Committee
At least 1 member with HR expertise

Law/Legal Expertise

Corporation
All Governors should have CPD/
Reasonable Experience level or above
with at least 1 member with
qualification/expertise in law.

Induction
In-house College briefings
and external speaker
briefings at GDDs

Audit Committee
At least 1 member with expertise in
FE legal context

PR and Marketing

General expertise required.

Induction
In-house College briefings
and external speaker
briefings at GDDs

**Capital Projects and
estates experience**

General expertise required.

Induction
In-house College briefings
and external speaker
briefings at GDDs.

This Plan sets out the range of mechanisms used to satisfy Governors' training and development needs.

Induction, Training and Development

The following will contribute to the continuing training and development of Governors:

1. Induction Programme – there is a full induction programme for all governors – see list of areas covered below. Each new Governor will meet a member of the EMT to discuss their specific areas, to provide FE sector context and how the College fits in that context and manages the key area. Each Governor will bring their own specific expertise and knowledge, so each Governor is invited to have a further meeting with members of EMT where they identify areas for continued development following induction.
2. Governor Development sessions – two per annum – these will focus on key developments in the sector and/or key strategic issues relevant to the College/Corporation. These may include presentations by College managers or specialist trainers.
3. Briefings will be delivered by senior staff at the College occasionally to provide information about key areas and to ensure on-going updating regarding new developments and requirements.
4. Presentations at Corporation and/or Committee meetings by College Managers or specialist trainers on a specific topic or theme or as part of an agreed item of business.
5. The Education Training Foundation (ETF) offer a range of CPD opportunities for Governors, and many can be undertaken online. Further, there are other providers like EduCare that can provide more general CPD opportunities.
6. Seminars/conferences by government departments, funding bodies and other training providers active in the sector to which members will be invited and encouraged to attend.
7. Informal meetings between members of the Corporation and members of the Executive Management Team (EMT) on a group or individual basis.
8. Distribution of FE sector and Association of Colleges (AOC) newsletters and other publications etc by the Clerk.
9. Occasional visits/presentations by sector representatives.

10. Distribution of Marketing Update and other internal communications.
11. Opportunities to visit areas of the campus, especially where this is relevant to the business being considered
12. Participation in whole College events, such as Open Days, Development Days and Awards Evenings and other enrichment events, to which Governors will be invited to attend.

As part of the periodic self-assessment exercise Governors will consider their individual and collective training needs. If necessary, this will lead to the organisation of tailored training events to support the identified needs as well as inform the activities outlined above. The Clerk to the Corporation will maintain records of the training needs identified, the training and development provided as well as participation.

The College recognises that the role of governor is voluntary and consequently the ability of Governors to attend events in addition to scheduled meetings will vary according to individual circumstances, however, it is important to address training needs to ensure increased understanding and knowledge of the College and sector.

Induction Programme

Programme	EMT Member
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overview & further education generally ▪ Government priorities ▪ Strategic direction of the College [Strategic Plan] ▪ LEPs –and regional / national context ▪ Governors' Dashboard - contents ▪ Tour of College 	<p>Chair to the Corporation and Principal</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Curriculum map ▪ Funding ▪ Student data ▪ International students / activities ▪ Sub-contracting ▪ Apprenticeships 	<p>Principal</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PMR ▪ Financial Regulations ▪ Funding streams ▪ Audit and Risk ▪ Health & Safety ▪ <i>Property Strategy</i> 	<p>Vice Principal - Finance</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Human Resources ▪ Safeguarding / PREVENT ▪ Student Services inc. Careers ▪ Student Conference ▪ Student Voice / Student Conference ▪ Equality & Diversity ▪ Marketing 	<p>Vice Principal – HR & Student Services</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality Calendar and processes ▪ Curriculum provision and Inspection Framework ▪ Self-Assessment Report [SAR] ▪ Quality Improvement Plan [QIP] ▪ Target-setting ▪ Progress monitoring 	<p>Vice Principal Quality & Curriculum</p>

- Governor involvement / engagement
- Student Voice
- Higher Education

- Board Assurance Framework
- Internal Audit
- Risk management
- Data Protection
- Data Protection – GDPR
- Incident Management/Disaster Recovery
- Sustainability

Director of Risk Control & Compliance

- Governance – overview
- Management and Governance
- IT: Devices/ BoardEffect/ Governors' Dashboard access/ College email

Chair of the Corporation and

Clerk to the Corporation

Standing Orders – Appendix 2

Vacancy Management and Appointment Procedures

- 1 When a vacancy on the Corporation occurs, or is predicted, the Search and Governance Committee will consider the balance of skills and experience of existing members to identify any gaps. The Responsibilities of the Corporation and the Skills, Knowledge and Experience Matrix will be cross-referenced against current skills to identify gaps. Where existing skills information is of insufficient currency, a skills audit of existing members will be undertaken.

- 2 The College actively promotes equal opportunities and the Search and Governance Committee will consider other factors such as age, gender, ethnicity and disability as well as the extent to which the Corporation reflects the communities served by the College.
- 3 The Committee will identify those skills and experiences and any other factors that should be prioritised when filling particular vacancies.
- 4 The Search and Governance Committee will consider a range of recruitment strategies. Some or all of these strategies may be used in relation to particular vacancies, as appropriate. These include
 - advertisement in the local, regional and national press and through governance organisations and networks, as appropriate
 - advertisement on the College web site,
 - issuing mail shots or circulars
 - seeking personal recommendations from existing members and others known to the College
 - approaching specific individuals or organisations that may offer the skills and experiences sought by the Corporation.
- 5 All prospective members will be provided with an Information Pack.
- 6 All prospective members will be invited to submit a curriculum vitae or profile setting out their skills and experiences and other attributes and this will be cross referenced with the person specification and skills audit. The prospective member may be invited for an interview with the Principal and Chair and/or Governors, as appropriate. The Search and Governance Committee will consider the information provided and determine whether the prospective member potentially offers a 'match' with the skills/experience/other factors specified. A reference for each prospective candidate will be obtained.
- 7 Those prospective members potentially offering a match with the specified criteria may be invited to meet with one or two Governors, including the Principal, with the Chair and/or Vice Chair(s). The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the role of Governor and to explore with the applicant how she/he may contribute to the Corporation and fulfil the skills, experience and any other factors specified.
- 8 The Search and Governance Committee will make a recommendation to the Corporation on appointment.
- 9 In the case of re-appointment, following the expiry of a term of office, the Search and Governance Committee will consider the skills and experience of the member, the contribution made and the member's attendance record before making a recommendation to the Corporation.
- 9 Where the member is appointed due to a specific office that they hold (for example, an elected councillor) but ceases to hold this office during their term of office as a Governor he/she shall continue as a member of the Corporation until 31st July of that year or until such time as a replacement is appointed by the Corporation, whichever is the sooner.

Standing Orders – Appendix 3

Appointment of Governing Body Member Person Specification and Role Description

Person Specification

The Governing Body is seeking people who can demonstrate the following:

Personal Attributes

- A commitment to education and lifelong learning and to the role of Solihull College as the principal provider of educational opportunity in its locality and as a key contributor to the regional economy.
- An ability to work positively with others and debate issues, whilst maintaining a constructive atmosphere.
- An ability to adopt a strategic perspective.
- An ability to listen to other viewpoints and express ideas in a clear manner.
- A commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities.

Skills / experience

- Management experience, preferably at a strategic level in a medium sized or large organisation.
- Experience of team, partnership or other collaborative working.
- Some vacancies may require specialist expertise in, for example, audit/accountancy; financial management; human resource management; law; property and estates matters. This is to ensure that the Governing Body has a balance of skills and experience. The Responsibilities of the Corporation (attached) provides further information of the key areas of expertise.

Time Commitment

- An ability to attend 10 full meetings of the Corporation a year, each lasting 2–3 hours and usually commencing at 5.30pm. There will also be preparation for the meeting, which will include reading the reports in relation to the agenda that are distributed one week in advance of the meeting;
- An ability to be appointed to Committees of the Corporation and attend 3-4 additional meetings a year, each lasting 1–2 hours. The Corporation now has 3 committees: Audit, Search and Governance and Remuneration;
- An ability to take part in ad hoc Special Interest Groups that are established by the Corporation to consider specific projects;
- A willingness to identify an individual area of specific interest and become the link with that area by visiting or receiving information to enable you to understand the area in more detail;
- A willingness to participate in at least two half-day Governor Development events per year. These normally take place on a Saturday morning; and
- A willingness to take part in induction and other training. The induction process will include induction meetings with the Chair and Clerk and senior managers to discuss HE and FE provision at the College, as well as, financial and compliance requirements. Further, it will be expected that the administrative induction process is completed within 3 months, including the completion of the DBS process.

Eligibility

- Requirement to complete DBS (Criminal Record Check) documentation upon appointment and provide certificate when received
- An ability to sign a Declaration of Eligibility
- A willingness to declare any financial, business or personal interests which could be perceived as likely to affect judgement in relation to any aspect of the College's business.
- A willingness to be bound by the College's Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct for Staff and Governors.

Role Description

As part of their collective corporate responsibility, Members of the Governing Body are expected to:

- determine and review the educational character and mission of the College
- publish arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students on the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution and the oversight of its activities;
- approve the quality strategy of the institution
- ensure there are effective means for monitoring whether the College is fulfilling its mission and ensure on-going solvency of the College and safeguard its assets
- approve annual estimates of expenditure and income
- oversee the appointment, grading, dismissal and the pay and conditions of Senior Post Holders and the Clerk

- set a framework of pay and conditions for all other staff.

In addition Governors are expected to:

- Act in accordance with the Seven Principles of Public Life as set out in the Nolan Report on standards in public life.
- Attend and actively participate in the meetings of the full Governing Body and its Committees
- Contribute to the College's strategic development and the strategic planning processes of the Governing Body and its Committees, including offering specialist knowledge, advice and expertise in order to add value to the work of the College.
- Develop an understanding of the context in which the College and the further education sector operates and help to position the College so that it responds effectively to change for the benefit of students, staff and the local and regional economies.
- Support the decisions of the Governing Body on the basis of collective corporate responsibility.
- Promote the College's best interests in all the communities it serves.
- Participate in the periodic reviews of effectiveness of the Governing Body.
- Participate in the periodic reviews of skills and training needs.
- Participate in any training and development events as arranged from time to time.

Student Governor Appointment Process

Composition of the Corporation

The Corporation has resolved to have up to two members who are students at the institution. One Student Governor will be on an HE programme and, normally the other student will be on an FE programme of study. The Student Governor(s) will, normally, be appointed by the Corporation on the recommendation of the appointment panel. However, where appropriate, the Student Presidents for HE and FE will be invited to undertake the role of Student Governor, where a vacancy exists.

Student Governor Appointment

In 2013 Corporation agreed to an appointment process for the Student Governor. This process is managed by the Student Enrichment Team, who communicate the process to students. Students are asked to submit an application with their CV, based on the Person Specification below.

Interviews will include two or three from the following: Governors, the Vice Principal HR and Student Services, Director of Student Services and Equality and the Clerk to the Corporation.

Timing

The appointment processes will usually take place during the Autumn Term. It is anticipated that a Student Governor would be formally appointed by the Corporation at its December meeting. Although these timings may change.

Term of Office

The term of office of the Student Governor will be for four years, but will expire at the end of the academic year in which he / she ceases to be a student or upon resignation if this is sooner.

Membership and Attendance at Meetings

The Student Governor is a member of the Corporation and is expected to attend all meetings.

Training and Induction

The training and induction needs of the Student Governor will be identified on appointment. Attendance at relevant Student Governor Training courses will be encouraged. A mentor scheme is also in place to support the Student Governor in their role.

Student Governor Person Specification: Essential

- Commitment to Solihull College, as a learner, but also in terms of promoting and contributing towards its future
- **Desirable:** Involvement in your community
- Commitment to education and lifelong learning.
- **Desirable:** Involvement in other similar roles at school or in the College, ie Course Rep.
- Experience of team, partnership or other collaborative working.
- An ability to work with others and discuss or debate issues
- **Desirable:** An understanding of what it means .to think strategically
- Commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities.
- **Desirable:** Work experience, where you have had to offer customer service, actively listen to others etc.
- A mature approach to honouring your commitments. For example, attending as many meetings as you can and if unable to attend, offering your apologies.
- A respectful approach to other Governors, particularly, in relation to operating the mentor scheme.
- Act within the spirit of collective responsibility.
- To ensure all matters considered are treated in relation to 'collective responsibility', ie no discussion to take place outside meetings about different opinions expressed or comments made by individual Governors.
- An ability to respect confidentiality.

Staff Governor Appointment Process

Background

The Instrument and Articles of Government require Corporations to include at least one and not more than three Governors who are members of staff of the institution and nominated by other members of staff.

The Determined Membership of the Corporation includes one Staff Governor who is usually appointed for a four year term of office.

Eligibility

All members of staff (lecturers, managers and support staff) who are directly employed by the College are eligible. Individuals working at the College who are consultants, employed by agencies or other third parties are not eligible.

Staff will be notified of the nomination and election process and the relevant timescales by the Clerk to the Corporation.

Nomination

Nominations should be received in the appropriate form issued by the Clerk to the Corporation.

Election

In the event of more than one nomination an election will be organised by the Clerk to the Corporation. All eligible staff, including those nominated, will be entitled to vote only once.

The Clerk to the Corporation will arrange for votes to be counted. The nominee receiving the most votes will be declared the Staff Governor, subject to formal appointment by the Corporation.

Attendance at Meetings

The Staff Governor is a member of the Corporation.

Section Five – Governors’ Handbook

Scheme of Delegation

1 Responsibilities of the Corporation

1.1 The Corporation sets the strategic and operational framework within which the Principal will manage the College. The Corporation will monitor performance and compliance and hold the Executive Management Team to account to achieve the College’s Strategic Plan.

1.2 The responsibilities of the Corporation are set out in the Articles of Government

Article 3 states that the Corporation **shall** be responsible for:

- The determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution and for the oversight of its activities.
- Publishing arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students on the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution and the oversight of its activities.
- The approval of the institution’s quality strategy.
- The effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the Corporation and for safeguarding their assets.
- The approval of annual estimates of income and expenditure.
- The appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of the pay and conditions of services of Senior Post Holders and the Clerk.
- Setting a framework of pay and conditions for all other staff.

1.3 Article 9 states that the Corporation **shall not** delegate the following:

- The determination of the educational character and mission of the institution.
- The responsibility for ensuring the solvency of the institution and the Corporation and for safeguarding their assets.
- The approval of annual estimates of income and expenditure.
- The appointment or dismissal of the Principal or a Senior Post Holder.
- The appointment or dismissal of the Clerk.
- The modification or revocation of the Articles.

2 Delegations

The Corporation has delegated the following responsibilities to the Principal and to its Committees, as set out in their Terms of Reference.

2.1 Remuneration Committee

- Consider, review and recommend at least annually, the remuneration, related benefits and other terms and conditions of the Principal and other designated Senior Post Holders.
- Consider, review and recommend, at least annually, the remuneration, related benefits and other terms and conditions of the Clerk to the Corporation including for any other employment role, which the Clerk may also fulfil at the College.
- The recommendation as to whether pre-established performance goals and objectives for the Principal and other Senior Post-Holders and the Clerk have been achieved at the end of the relevant period.

2.2 Audit Committee

The Audit Committee is required by the Joint Audit Code of Practice not to have any executive authority.

2.3 Search and Governance Committee

The Search and Governance Committee currently has an advisory role and the Corporation would not usually appoint business, co-opted or community Governors without the advice of the Search and Governance Committee.

2.4 Principal

Subject to compliance with the Tuition Fee Policy approved by the Corporation, the Principal can determine tuition fees and other fees, subject normally to an annual review.

The Principal has the power to hear appeals against dismissal by staff other than Senior Post Holders (NB In accordance with the Instrument and Articles, the Principal has the authority to delegate the power to dismiss staff to another Senior Post Holder).

Day to day management of senior postholders (except the Principal) is delegated to the Principal in relation to approval of expenses, timing of holiday and employment/engagement externally to the College, whilst employed by the College.

2.5 Chair & Vice Chair

The Chair and Vice Chair can exercise any specific authority delegated by the Corporation. Exceptionally, the Chair has delegated authority to act on any issue which is both urgent and important which would normally be dealt with by the Corporation, where action cannot wait until the next scheduled meeting of the Corporation and where it is not possible to convene a quorate special meeting of the Corporation. In exercising this authority, the Chair should consult with the Vice Chair, the Principal and the Clerk and such other members of the Corporation available at that time. Any decisions or actions will be ratified at the next Corporation meeting.

Section Six – Governors’ Handbook

Committee Terms of Reference

Audit Committee

1 Membership

- 1.1 The Committee shall be appointed by the Corporation and consist of:-
 - Four Corporation members, excluding the Chair of the Corporation and the Principal.
 - Two external members, with relevant financial and/or audit experience.
 - The Committee must include at least one person (whether a member of the Corporation or not) with relevant financial or audit experience.
- 1.2 A quorum shall be two Corporation members.
- 1.3 The members and Chair of the Committee shall be appointed by the Corporation on an annual basis and may be reviewed by the Corporation from time to time. Independence shall be maintained when appointing members to the Committee.

2 Attendance at Meetings

- 2.1 The Principal, the Deputy Principal, Vice Principal Finance, the Director of Risk, Control and Compliance and / or other officers of the College responsible for the College’s internal control, risk management, control and governance processes and a representative of the Internal Audit Service (IAS) and Financial Statements Auditors (where appropriate), shall normally attend meetings at the invitation of the Committee. The Committee shall have the power to invite such other persons to attend meetings as may be desirable and necessary.
- 2.2 Other Corporation members shall have a right of attendance.
- 2.3 The Committee may, when satisfied that it is appropriate, meet with its Auditors without the Principal, the Vice Principal Finance, or other officers or Staff or Student Governors in attendance.
- 2.4 The Committee has the authority to co-opt external members with relevant financial and auditing experience. The Committee must be clearly seen to be independent of the College executive management.
- 2.5 The Clerk to the Corporation shall be Clerk to the Committee.

3 Frequency of Meetings

- 3.1 Meetings shall be held not less than three times a year. The Internal or Financial Statements Auditors may request a meeting if they consider that one is necessary, by liaising with the Clerk to the Corporation.

4 Authority

- 4.1 The Committee is authorised by the Corporation to investigate any activity within its terms of reference. It is authorised to seek any information it requires from any Corporation member, any Committee of the Corporation, any employee of the College, the Internal Auditor, Financial Statements Auditor, from subcontractors and other third parties. All parties are directed to co-operate with any request made by the Committee.
- 4.2 The Committee is authorised by the Corporation to obtain outside legal or other independent professional advice and to secure the attendance of outsiders with the relevant experience and expertise if it considers this necessary.

5 Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Committee shall be:-

- (a) to advise and provide an annual opinion to the Corporation on the adequacy and effectiveness of the College's assurance arrangements including internal control systems and risk management, control and governance processes, and securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money).
- (b) to advise the Corporation on the appointment, remuneration, re-appointment or dismissal of the Internal Audit Service (IAS) and the Financial Statements Auditor (FSA), and their terms of engagement.
- (c) to advise the Corporation on the scope and objectives of the work of the Internal Audit Service (IAS), the Financial Statements Auditor (FSA) and the Funding auditor (where appointed)
- (d) to consider and advise the Corporation on Internal Audit assignment reports and annual reports and on control issues included in the management letters of the Financial Statements Auditor, (including their work on regulatory audit) and the Funding Auditor (where appropriate) and management's responses to these
- (e) to monitor, within an agreed timescale, the implementation of agreed recommendations relating to internal audit assignment reports, internal audit annual reports, the Funding auditor's management letter (where appropriate) and spot-check reports (where appropriate) and the management letters of the Financial Statements Auditor
- (f) to establish, in conjunction with College management, relevant annual performance measures and indicators and to monitor the effectiveness of the Internal Audit Service (IAS) and Financial Statements Auditor (FSA) through these measures and decide, based on this review, whether a competition for the price and quality of the Audit Services is appropriate
- (g) to consider and advise the Corporation on the audit strategy and annual internal audit plans for the IAS
- (h) to produce an annual report for the Corporation. The report should incorporate any significant matters arising from the work of the IAS, the Funding Auditors (where appropriate) and the Financial Statements auditors and refer to:
 - a summary of work undertaken by the Committee during the year;
 - any significant issues arising up to the date of preparation of the report;
 - and significant matters of internal control included in the reports of the audit and assurance providers;
 - the committee's view of its own effectiveness and how it has fulfilled its terms of reference
 - the committee's opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the college corporation's audit arrangements, its framework of governance, risk management and control and its processes for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness
 - submit the annual report to the Corporation before the statement of corporate governance and internal control in the annual accounts is signed.
- (i) to ensure effective co-ordination between the IAS, the Financial Statements auditor and Funding Auditor (where appropriate) including whether the work of the Funding auditor (where appointed) should be relied upon for internal audit purposes
- (j) to be informed of all additional services undertaken by the IAS, the Financial Statements Auditors and the Funding auditors (where appointed) and to assess how independence and objectivity were safeguarded
- (k) to recommend the Annual Financial Statement to the Corporation for approval (*see appendix 1 for further details for the process*)
- (l) to receive and advise the Corporation on any relevant reports from the National Audit Office, Skills Funding Agency, HEFCE or other appropriate body, and where appropriate, the management's response to these
- (m) to consider and, if appropriate, investigate, or commission investigations into, any complaints relating to alleged fraud, bribery or other financial irregularity or malpractice at the College in accordance with the College's procedures and ensure that all allegations of fraud, bribery and irregularity are properly followed up
- (n) to consider, receive reports and, if appropriate, commission investigations into concerns raised in accordance with the Corporation's approved Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy, and ensure that all allegations of fraud, bribery and irregularity are properly followed up

- (o) to seek to ensure that the IAS is adequately resourced and has appropriate standing within the Corporation
- (p) to provide advice on such internal control systems, risk management, control and governance processes, as the Corporation may request from time to time
- (q) as part of the College's risk management framework, to advise the Corporation on health and safety, disaster management, business continuity, data protection and insurance arrangements and bring any matters of concern to the attention of the Corporation. Keep under periodic review policies and plans in respect of these and receive monitoring reports, at least annually.
- (r) to consider and recommend to the Corporation the College's Annual Risk Management Report.
- (s) review how governance operates, making recommendations to Corporation to improve processes, as appropriate.

6 Reporting procedures

- 6.1 The Clerk to the Committee shall circulate minutes of the meetings of the Committee to the Corporation.
- 6.2 The Committee shall provide a written report of its work to the Corporation and the Accounting Officer, annually or more frequently, if necessary.

Arrangements for Financial Oversight and Compliance by the Corporation

The Corporation has collective responsibility for:

The effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the Corporation and for safeguarding their assets. (Education Act 2011)

Financial Oversight - Governance

Financial oversight and compliance are seen as extremely important elements of the role of the Corporation and arrangements are place to ensure collective responsibility, as well as, detailed deep dive opportunities to ensure robust financial oversight. The Corporation maintains a clear strategic direction in terms of ensuring the College remains solvent, ensures effective and efficient use of resources and ensures value for money, as well as, maintaining a strong performance monitoring process in-year. There is a shared focus on finance and quality at Corporation meetings to ensure there is a good balance between these two key elements of College business.

The Corporation operates a Carver model of governance, with 3 committees: Audit, Remuneration and Search and Governance. The key elements of College business are addressed at full Corporation meetings that focus, alternately on Finance and Resources and Curriculum and Quality – this allows time for governors to focus on key matters and to have full commitment, knowledge and understanding by all members to these key aspects. To allow additional opportunities to carry out deep dives, however, the structure allows a range of opportunities for governors to interrogate and challenge information at a deeper level. In relation to financial oversight this will be through:

Special Interest Groups and Pre-Corporation meetings – Special Interest Groups are set up for specific matters, for example, property developments, investment considerations and to oversee implementation of financial issues following merger. These Groups are attended by governors with expertise and those with interest in the matter for consideration and report through to the Corporation. This allows for detailed discussion and clear recommendations for the Corporation. Further, to allow deeper level discussions with regard to 2 key stages in the year, there is a Pre-Corporation finance meeting prior to approval of the budget and three-year financial plan, as well as, the year-end financial statements.

Governor(s) with special interest in finance – the Corporation ensures that there are always at least 3 qualified accounts who are members of the Corporation. These members take a special interest in financial matters and will meet with senior managers to discuss matters in more detail and challenge the detailed content of financial monitoring reports

Audit Committee – the Audit Committee meets 3 times a year to oversee the integrity of financial and related processes and systems and to monitor risk and compliance. The Committee has terms of reference that are reviewed annually. Its role is to monitor the processes and controls in place to ensure solvency, effective and efficient use of resources and value for money. The Committee is also responsible for providing annual assurance to the Corporation that the controls in place are adequate to meet the Corporation's collective responsibility above.

Annual Audit Committee/Corporation meeting – the annual meeting takes place in November and is primarily for presentation and approval of the Members' Report and Financial Statements. The meeting is split into 2 sections: an Audit Committee, followed by a Corporation meeting. However, all members of the Audit Committee and Corporation attend both sections of the meeting.

The meeting was merged for the following reasons:

1. All Audit Committee and Corporation members have a closed session (EMT and the Principal withdraw) with the Internal and External Auditors at the beginning to hear, first-hand any concerns or issues that the Auditors may have.
2. During the first section of the meeting the Audit Committee receive:
 - Financial Statements Management Letter
 - Internal Audit Annual Report
 - Strategic Risk Register
 - Audit Committee Annual Report and Statement of the Accounting Officer

All Corporation members hear the presentations by the External Auditors and EMT regarding the end of year processes and assurances and can ask questions, as appropriate.

3. The Audit Committee members, collectively (including External Members), are asked to agree that assurance has been adequate throughout the year and through the year-end reports to provide Corporation with confidence to receive and approve the Members' Report and Financial Statements.
4. Approval of the Members' Report and Financial Statements and the Letter of Representation are approved by the Corporation and signed as part of the meeting.

Clear guidelines are set out in the policy structure, with key documents being reviewed on a regular basis and communicated to all Corporation members:

- Instrument and Articles and Scheme of Delegation
- Financial Regulations and Procedures
- Anti-Fraud Bribery and Corruption Policy, Procedure and Strategy
- Whistle-blowing Policy

Remuneration Committee

1 Membership and Committee Arrangements

The Committee shall comprise at least three, and up to five, Corporation members as follows: Chair and/or Vice Chair of the Corporation, Chair of the Audit Committee; and other members of the Corporation who have appropriate experience, except the Principal, or staff or student members.

Where the Chair of a Committee has a conflict of interest, the Vice-Chair of the Committee will act as a member of the Remuneration Committee or a member of the Committee will be nominated, as appropriate. A quorum shall be two members.

The Committee has the authority to co-opt external members with relevant experience and expertise. The Chair of the Committee shall be the Chair of the Corporation.

2 Attendance at Meetings

The Principal shall normally be invited to attend meetings of the Committee to give advice except where his/her remuneration package or performance is being reviewed or determined. The Committee may invite other Senior Post Holders to attend meetings when necessary.

Other Corporation Members shall also have a right of attendance save that the Committee may exclude staff and student members.

The Clerk to the Corporation shall be Clerk to the Committee.

3 Frequency of Meetings

Meetings shall be held at least once per year, usually during the Autumn term.

4 Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Committee shall be to :

- (a) Consider, review and recommend, at least annually, the remuneration, related benefits and other terms and conditions of the Principal and other designated Senior Post Holders.
- (b) Consider, review and recommend, at least annually, the remuneration, related benefits and other terms and conditions of the Clerk to the Corporation including for any other employment role which the Clerk also fulfils at the College.
- (c) Consider and recommend to the Corporation for approval performance targets and objectives for the Principal and other designated Senior Post Holders.
- (d) The Committee shall evaluate annually the specific remuneration packages of the Principal, other Senior Post Holders and the Clerk against:
 - pre-established performance goals and objectives and;
 - an appropriate peer group.

For that purpose the Committee will review and assess performance target goals and objectives established before the commencement of the relevant period and determine whether such goals and objectives have been achieved at the end of the relevant period.

- (d) The Committee shall advise the Corporation on the outcome of any negotiations and financial settlements reached in the event of the early termination of the employment of the Principal or any other Senior Post Holder and the Clerk in accordance with the Framework and Procedure for Terminating Contracts of Employment by Agreement approved by the Corporation.

5 Reporting procedures

The Clerk to the Committee shall circulate minutes of the meetings of the Committee to the Corporation, which shall be received in confidential session.

Search & Governance Committee

1 Membership and Committee Arrangements

The Committee shall comprise at least three Corporation members, including the Chair and/or Vice Chair and the Principal and one external members.

A quorum shall be three members.

The Members and Chair of the Committee shall be appointed by the Corporation on an annual basis and may be reviewed by the Corporation from time to time.

2 Attendance at Meetings

The Committee shall have the power to invite such persons to attend meetings it considers desirable and necessary.

The Clerk to the Corporation shall be Clerk to the Committee.

3 Frequency of Meetings

Meetings shall be held at least once a year.

4 Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Committee shall be to :

- (a) To advise the Corporation on the appointment of business and public members, with due regard to any performance indicators approved by the Corporation for the filling of vacancies.
- (b) To evaluate the contribution made by existing members, before proposing their re-appointment, in accordance with the approved Policy Statement for the Appointment of Governors.
- (c) To monitor, review and advise the Corporation on its composition and membership and that of the Corporation's committees.
- (d) To advise the Corporation on the appointment of future Corporation Chairs and Vice-Chairs, as appropriate.
- (e) To periodically consider the findings of a skills audit, undertaken to establish the range of skills and experience of members of the Corporation, and to determine any criteria for particular vacancies.
- (f) To periodically review the Role Description, Person Specification, Responsibilities of the Corporation and Skills, Knowledge and Experience Matrix for Members of the Corporation.
- (g) To periodically review the Policy Statement on the Appointment of Governors and recommend any changes to the Corporation for approval.
- (h) Monitor and review the attendance of Governors and make recommendations to the Corporation on a performance indicator for attendance.
- (i) Keep under review the guidance on Disclosure and Barring checks for Governors and advise the Corporation on whether such a check should be included in the Governor appointment process, including an assessment of risk. Note current guidance:
- (j) To consider and inform Corporation of good governance practices to promote improvement in governance processes.
- (k) To review, develop and recommend to the Corporation all governance policies and procedures.
- (l) To review amendments to the Instrument and Articles of Governments, before referring them to the Corporation for ratification.

5 Reporting procedures

The Clerk to the Committee shall circulate minutes of the meetings of the Committee to the Corporation.

Section Seven – Governors’ Handbook

Procedure for Handling Complaints against the Corporation

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Corporation is accountable for its decisions and needs to ensure that it fulfils its legal duties, acts within its powers and acts reasonably at all times. The Code of Ethics and Conduct sets out the expectations of individual members of the Corporation.
- 1.2 A complaint may be made against the Corporation, a Corporation member, including the Principal/CE, if the complaint relates to their role as a Corporation member or the Clerk to the Corporation.
- 1.3 The Clerk to the Corporation will act as the point of contact for any complaint that is made against the Corporation or an individual member of the Corporation.
- 1.4 The Chair of the Corporation will act as the point of contact for a complaint made against the Clerk to the Corporation.
- 1.5 A complaint may be received from an individual or an organisation.

Complaints must relate to:

- The performance of the Corporation, a member, or the Clerk to the Corporation, of the functions respectively allocated to them under the Articles of Government of the College;
- The exercise by the Corporation of its powers; and/or
- Any other alleged breach or non-observance of the duties of the Corporation. Individual members or the Clerk to the Corporation under the Instrument or Articles of Government of the College, its Code of Ethics and Conduct
- for the members or the Financial Memorandum with the Skills Funding Agency or the Funding Agreement with the Education Funding Agency.

2 Procedure

- 2.1 Complaints against the Corporation or a member of the Corporation should be made in writing and sent to the:

Clerk to the Corporation
Solihull College & University Centre
Blossomfield Road
Solihull
B91 1SB

(A complaint against the Clerk to the Corporation should be made in writing and addressed to the Chair of the Corporation at the same address.)

- 2.2 The complainant should state the nature and grounds of the complaint (see 1 above) and provide any supporting details or documentation. The complainant should also state the remedy he/she is seeking.
- 2.3 The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the complaint usually within seven working days.
- 2.4 The Clerk will advise, without delay, the Chair of the Corporation that a complaint has been received and its nature. (Where the complaint relates to the Chair, the Vice Chair will be advised).

- 2.5 The Chair and the Clerk will determine the nature of the complaint and agree how it will be investigated. This may be by the Clerk, the College's Audit Committee; one or more Corporation members; or an external person who has substantial experience of college governance; provided in each case that they have not been involved in the matters subject to complaint.
- 2.6 The investigation may include production of written statements, interviews or appropriate actions. Where individuals are invited for interviews they may be accompanied by a colleague, or appropriate adult. The investigator may refer issues to the Corporation's auditors or other independent advisers, as appropriate.
- 2.7 A written report will be provided regarding the outcome of the investigations. Both the complainant and the Corporation will receive a copy of the written report normally within 28 working days of the complaint being referred to them.
- 2.8 Where the complaint relates to an individual member of the Corporation, that individual will be advised that a complaint has been received.
- 2.9 The Clerk will keep the Chair (or Vice Chair) informed of the progress of the investigation and the resolution of the complaint.
- 2.10 A written report will be considered at the next Corporation meeting as well as any possible action or remedy that may be required.
- 2.11 If a complaint remains unsatisfied following implementation of the procedure, a complainant may wish to write to the Education and Skills Funding Agency, Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry CV1 2WT.

Whilst we aim to meet all deadlines please note that this may not always be possible, particularly if the complaint is received outside of term time. Any potential delays will be communicated to the complainant.

Section Eight – Governors’ Handbook

Procedure for Seeking Independent Legal Advice

Introduction

The purpose of the procedure is to establish a formal mechanism whereby governors, collectively or individually, may obtain professional advice.

Under the procedure, Governors shall have the right to take advice on any matters concerning the exercise of their powers and responsibilities. Such matters shall include advice on their legal, accounting and regulatory duties, but shall exclude advice to individual Governors concerning their own personal interests in relation to the Corporation.

The procedure is in addition to, and does not displace, the inherent power of the Corporation to decide to take independent professional advice by passing a resolution to that effect.

The Corporation needs to ensure that the Clerk is independent of College management and the procedure also confirms the capacity of the Clerk to obtain independent professional advice, where appropriate.

Procedure

A Governor who proposes to seek advice under this procedure shall, in the first instance, confirm with the Clerk whether the Corporation has already obtained advice on the issues raised.

In the event that the Governor is not satisfied with the advice already obtained, written notice should be given to the Clerk. The notice must contain a summary of the issues on which advice is sought and where independent advice is requested, (i.e. not from the Corporation’s usual advisors), the names of the advisors it is proposed to instruct, together with an explanation of the reasons for this and an estimate of costs.

The Clerk will, without delay, provide a copy of the notice to the Chair of the Corporation and the Principal. The Chair, in consultation with the Principal, will determine whether to authorise payment for such advice, within ten working days.

The Clerk will, without delay, notify the requesting Governor in writing whether the costs for the advice will be paid by the Corporation and if not, give brief reasons.

Any advice, which is obtained under this procedure, shall be made available to all Governors.

Where the Clerk believes there is a need to obtain independent advice, for example, in relation to the interpretation of the Instruments and Articles of Government, the Chair and the Principal will be notified in writing, giving reasons and an estimate of costs involved.

Any expenditure incurred under this procedure will be reported to the Corporation, without delay.