

THE ROLE AND DUTIES OF GOVERNORS

Whilst some membership categories are subject to nomination or election by various bodies, it is essential that it is recognised that these members are not filling a representative role on behalf of these organisations. All members are full members of the Corporation, and are expected to act in the best interests of the Corporation at all times, irrespective of their nominating body. The Governors operate full collective responsibility and all members are expected to adhere to this principle. In order for the Governors to perform their role effectively, the composition of the Board will, as far as possible, ensure a wide spread of experience in a range of sectors, reflect the geographical catchment area of the College, and provide a reasonable gender balance, and an ethnic make up appropriate to the community.

The broad responsibilities of the Corporation and the Principal are laid down in the College's Articles of Government. The Articles state that the Corporation shall be responsible for:

- the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the College, and for oversight of its activities
- approving the quality strategy of the institution
- the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the College and for safeguarding of its assets
- approving annual estimates of income and expenditure
- the appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of the pay and conditions of the holders of senior posts and the Clerk to the Corporation
- setting a framework for the pay and conditions of service for all other staff

Within this framework, the role of the Governors, both individually and collectively, is to

- provide a commitment to supporting the College in its mission
- supply a broad perspective to assist in the College's strategic development
- represent the local and wider community in setting the direction for the College
- supply the insight and experience from a range of expertise to bear on the College's activities

- set goals for the College and to monitor their achievement

In practical terms, these formal descriptors can be widened to include

- provision of leadership, direction and supervision of the organisation
- ensuring financial integrity and management accountability
- appointment of the Principal and senior staff
- determining a framework for the pay and conditions of employment for all staff
- complying with the legal liabilities of the employer, including Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities regulations
- setting academic direction and targets
- reviewing achievements against objectives
- approving capital expenditure on buildings and equipment
- maintaining a public profile for the College and representing the College within the community
- reviewing the Board's own composition, profile and performance

Governors are non-executive and while the Principal will consult with the Corporation on issues such as educational strategy and mission of the College and the annual estimates of income and expenditure, the Principal as Chief Executive is responsible for the day to day management and running of the College

Skills required of Governors

Corporation members should ideally have significant experience in one or more of the following areas:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| ➤ management | ➤ financial or management accounting |
| ➤ Education provision | ➤ local/regional government and the community |
| ➤ estates management | ➤ legal services |
| ➤ public relations/ media | ➤ personnel management |

As an institution operating largely on public funds, the College expects both Governors and staff to adopt the values and principles laid down by the Nolan Committee on Standards for Holders of Public Office:

1 Selflessness

Holders of public offices should take decision solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

2 **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their duties.

3 **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

4 **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate.

5 **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.

6 **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

7 **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The Corporation normally meets every two months. Meetings take place on a Friday afternoon, usually lasting about three hours. Corporation members are encouraged to serve on one or two of a range of committees addressing particular areas of work. Most of these committees meet at 5.00pm, but frequency depends on business need. As a general rule, Governors should expect to be invited to at least one meeting per month.

The Governors have set a target for all members to maintain attendance at 85%.

The Instrument of Government stipulates that 'every member of the Corporation shall act in the best interests of the Corporation and accordingly shall not be bound in speaking or voting by mandates given by any other body or person'. In the role of Governor, therefore, members are not delegated representatives, and are required to act independently of any other interests.

All Governors are required to agree to disclose personal interests, and to adhere to a code of conduct based upon the values and principles listed above.

In considering nominations of potential new Governors, the Search Committee will be looking for someone with the following qualities:

- Commitment to education and training.
- Commitment to the College's mission, role and corporate aims
- Knowledge and experience (current/recent) relevant to the responsibilities of the Board, and to the work of at least one of its Committees or major areas of work (e.g. Curriculum, Finance, Quality, Estate Management, Audit, Equal Opportunities, Strategic Planning and Marketing)
- Knowledge and experience (current/recent) that is complementary or additional to that already available to the Board through its current membership.
- Knowledge (recent/current) of the local environment (educational, community, social, business etc).
- Acceptance of and commitment to equal opportunities.
- Availability and willingness to attend meetings of the Board and at least one of its Committees on a regular basis, with adequate preparation.
- Availability and willingness to attend development events.
- Absence of commitment to any organisation operating in direct competition with the College unless otherwise agreed with the Corporation.

