

**Ealing, Hammersmith, and West London College
FE BOARD**

**STANDING ORDERS FOR THE CONDUCT
OF
BUSINESS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE
BOARD**

To be read in conjunction with the
**Instrument and Articles of Government, Post-16 Audit
Code of Practice and Funding Plan**

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- Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College will now be listed as West London College or WLC
- The Board will be listed as the Board
- The Director of Governance will be listed as the Clerk to the Board

WEST LONDON COLLEGE FE BOARD

STANDING ORDERS FOR THE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD

**To be read in conjunction with the
Instrument and Articles of Government, Post-16 Audit Code of Practice
And Funding Agreement)**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The legitimacy of a Board's actions depends upon compliance with powers and procedures that are established in the Instrument and Articles of Government. Every member of the Board shares responsibility for the proper conduct of its business. The Board must also maintain an agreed record of its meetings and the decisions it has taken.

To assist in this responsibility, Governors are individually and collectively entitled to guidance on procedures. The Clerk to the Board (known as the Director of Governance at WLC) advises on procedures and keeps a formal record of the Board's proceedings.

There is provision in the Articles of Government for the Board to make rules and by-laws for the government and conduct of the College. Such rules, normally referred to as Standing Orders, should be drawn up and agreed by the Board. A copy will be given to each member on appointment and should be the basis on which the Chair of the Board and each of its committees conducts its meeting.

1.2 These Standing Orders supplement the provisions of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the FE and Training Act 2007, Education Act 2011, the Instrument and Articles of Government of West London College, the Post-16 Audit Code of Practice and the Funding Agreement with the funding agencies which at all times are to be regarded as the primary sources of guidance.

1.3 Every member of the Board and of its committees shall be bound by these Standing Orders. They will also adhere to the seven principles of public life as recommended by the Nolan Committee's reports 'Standards in Public Life' and the Members' Code of Conduct.

The Association of Colleges published the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges in 2015¹ and it has subsequently been amended several times.

West London College FE Board adopted the Code of Good Governance on 13 February 2019.

- Members owe a fiduciary duty to the College. This means that they should show it the highest loyalty and act in good faith in its interest.

¹ <https://www.aoc.co.uk/funding-and-corporate-services/governance/governance-resources/code-good-governance-english-colleges>

- Instrument 11 (2) of the Instrument and Articles of Government states that ‘Every member shall act in the best interests of the Board and shall not be bound to speak or vote by mandates given by any other body or person.’

The Board operates by members taking majority decisions at quorate meetings. Therefore, a decision of the Board, even when it is not unanimous, is a decision taken by the members collectively and each individual member has a duty to stand by it, whether or not they were present or agreed with it when it was taken.

It is the responsibility of the Clerk to the Board to interpret the following documents and both to ensure compliance and to advise the Board (or if appropriate the Chair of the Board) if at any time it appears that the Board (or an individual member of the Board) is in breach of or is likely to be in breach of the regulations:

- Funding agreement
- Post-16 Audit Code of Practice
Instrument and Articles of
Government
- Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business and Proceedings of the Board
- Code of Conduct

2.0 MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD

2.1 Composition of Board

The membership of the FE Board of West London College will be determined from time to time by the Board having regard to the provisions of the Instrument of Government, the recommendations of the Search and Governance Committee, custom and practice and the law.

WLC has determined that the number of members of the Board shall be sixteen to include the Principal and Chief Executive, two student and two staff governors. The Board has reserved the right in Instrument 3 of the Instrument and Articles of Government to vary the overall number of governors and also to vary the number of members in each membership constituency. The make-up of the Board will reflect the requirements of the College and will be reviewed annually as part of the annual review of these Standing Orders.

2.2 Appointment of Members

The Board of West London College is committed to ensuring that its membership is drawn from individuals who have the skills, qualifications, knowledge, and experience to provide effective governance of the College. It is also concerned that the membership shall be broadly-based, inclusive and reflect its local community. It will also seek to ensure that its membership is inclusive in terms of the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

The appointment of new members of the Board is overseen by the Search and Governance Committee who will formally nominate and recommend to the Board prospective external

(independent) members in accordance with the Instrument and Articles and its terms of reference. No appointment shall be made without a recommendation from the Search and Governance Committee. The Committee has the authority to advertise vacancies on the Board including using appropriate governor recruitment channels. Applications from suitable new governor candidates will be considered by the Search and Governance Committee which will interview candidates and make recommendations to the Board. Prospective members may be invited into the College for informal discussion prior to formal consideration of their applications by the Search and Governance Committee.

The Search and Governance Committee will regularly review the skills, qualifications, knowledge, and experience of its membership and advise the Board appropriately. The Board will have regard to the need to ensure that its membership possesses adequate skills in respect of finance (including the appointment of at least two members who are qualified accountants), education, particularly further education, audit, legal matters, property matters, and others.

The election of staff governors and student governors is a matter for determination by the eligible members of the respective constituencies.

2.3 Formal letter of appointment of members

The Clerk to the Board shall forward a formal letter of appointment which shall include the length of term of office, any conditions on eligibility attaching to that term of office and an indication of how the Governor should inform the College if he/she becomes ineligible for office at any point. The letter will include a request for acceptance of the appointment to be confirmed in writing, plus other relevant documentation. All new Governors will also undertake an induction.

2.4 Staff Members (normally two members - one teaching and one support staff member)

Two staff members are appointed following separate elections. Nominations are sought from the relevant staff of the College and, in the event of more than one nomination for each vacancy, a secret ballot of all the relevant staff will be held to select the member(s). The Clerk to the Board will make the necessary arrangements to receive the nominations and act as the returning officer for the ballot.

It is important to note a staff governor who has been 'nominated and elected' by college staff and appointed by the Board should not be considered as a staff 'representative'. Instrument 11 (2) of the Instrument and Articles of Government states that

'Every member shall act in the best interests of the Board and shall not be bound to speak or vote by mandates given by any other body or person.'

Staff governors are appointed in their own right first and, foremost, as governors of the College. They are bound by the principle of collective responsibility in relation to decisions of the Board and they share the same duties and responsibilities of members of the Board as defined in the Instrument and Articles of Government.

The elections process is outlined in the document approved by the Board in April 2021.

2.5 Student Members (2)

The student members shall be students of the institution.

Instrument 13 (8) of the Instrument and Articles of Government states that

‘A student member who is under the age of 18 shall not vote at a meeting of the Board, or any of its committees, on any question concerning any proposal:

- (a) for the expenditure of money by the Board; or
- (b) under which the Board, or any members of the Board, would enter into any contract, or would incur any debt or liability, whether Immediate, contingent or otherwise.’

Subject to the above, student governors are also not ‘representatives’ but share the same duties and responsibilities with other member of the Board as described above.

2.6 Principal (1)

The Principal and Chief Executive will be a member of the Board.

2.7 Other Members

Members, other than the Principal, student and staff members, shall be drawn from any areas with relevance to the activities of the institution and where they meet the essential skills, knowledge, qualifications, experience and other factors as determined by the Board.

2.8 Skills Audit

The Clerk to the Board shall conduct an annual skills audit to monitor the current level of skills, qualities, and other relevant attributes of its membership in order to identify any gaps for the guidance of the Search and Governance Committee when next reviewing nominations for any vacancy. The Search and Governance Committee, when reviewing nominations, will give consideration to the skills, knowledge, qualifications, and experience of potential governors, and to the balance of the Board with regard to the nine protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.

2.9 Period of Office

The Term of Office for each category of Board member shall be as follows:

External members 4 years

Staff members 2 years

Student members 1 year

Governors should not normally serve for more than two terms (or a maximum of eight years) except where subsequently undertaking a new and more senior role, for example Chair; however, the Board reserves the right to vary this requirement in exceptional circumstances.

The Board has established a process for the re-appointment of existing Governors at the end of their Terms of Office, subject to them wishing to continue. The Search and Governance Committee shall annually review the contribution of individual Governors against agreed criteria and take this into consideration when recommending Governors for re-appointment.

2.10 Register of Interests

The Board shall maintain and annually update a register of financial and other relevant interests of members. The register will be updated by the Clerk to the Board and will be a public document. The register has been extended to all members of staff who have a level of significant financial responsibility (maintained by the COO). The register should also cover the financial interests of spouses, partners and close relatives of governors. Public access to the register of interests is set out in the College's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme. There shall be free access to the Register to College auditors and members of the Audit Committee and other Board Committees. Members are required to notify the Clerk to the Board of any changes to interests declared as and when they arise.

2.11 Resignation and/or Disqualification of Members

Members may resign at any time but are required to give written notice to the Clerk to the Board. Members retiring at the end of their periods of office are eligible for re-election, subject to the terms of the governor re-election process. The resignation of the Chair of the Board and/or Vice Chair(s) from these roles must be given to the Clerk to the Board in writing.

The provisions whereby members may become disqualified from holding office are outlined in the Charities Act 2011². Members are required to advise the Clerk to the Board should they become ineligible and annually to complete a statement confirming their continuing eligibility to serve as a member of the Board. A member may also become unfit to be a Governor if they are in breach of the Governor Code of Conduct including where there are issues of conflict of interest.

Any member absent from a meeting of the Board for two consecutive meetings, without good reason, shall be contacted by the Clerk to the Board to establish the reasons and whether or not the member wishes to continue. If three meetings are missed, the Clerk shall submit a report to the Board with a full explanation of the absence. Any member not present for six months, without good reason, may be required by the Board to resign. This will be confirmed in writing.

Any person who is a member of the Board by virtue of being a member of staff, including the Principal, or a student member shall normally cease to hold office if he/she ceases to be a member of staff or a student of the Institution or a non-student representing students of the Institution. However, it may be possible for a student member to continue until the end of the relevant academic year, (subject to the terms of the governor appointment & re-election process) if they cease to be a student of the College during their period of office, for example because they interrupt their studies to take up office in the Students' Union.

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/25/part/9/crossheading/disqualification-of-charity-trustees-and-trustees/enacted>

2.12 Codes of Practice

The Board has adopted a Code of Conduct which members are required to sign confirming that they will adhere to the Code. The Board has also adopted the AoC Code of Good Governance for English Colleges.

2.13 Induction and Training

All new governors will be provided with appropriate induction arrangements to enable them to perform their role as governors of the Board. All governors are required to undertake appropriate training which will enhance their effectiveness. Attendance at the induction programme is mandatory for new governors.

The Chair of the Board, in conjunction with the Clerk to the Board, shall be responsible for the appropriate training of all the Governors and shall authorise all individual training requests. All such authorised training requests will be funded from a College Governors' training budget or such other external sources as may be available.

Governors are required to participate in training that the Board may determine to be essential in their role as governors e.g. safeguarding, PREVENT, health and safety etc; such training may be delivered using online facilities.

2.14 Governors' Expenses

Governors do not receive payment for attendance at meetings. However, governors may be reimbursed for any expenses incurred in fulfilling their roles as governors as defined in the governors' expenses policy. This may include child or other caring costs where appropriate. Claim forms, which should be submitted regularly, are available from the Clerk to the Board, together with further details of the scheme. Individual claims shall be authorised by the Clerk to the Corporation and countersigned by the COO, with any claim made by the Chair of the Board authorised by the Chair of the Audit Committee. The scheme for the payment of Governors' expenses shall be reviewed annually but should be in line with the expenses scheme applicable to College staff.

2.15 Performance Monitoring

The Board will assess their performance by means of the agreed self-assessment matrix of activities agreed by the Search and Governance Committee.

The results of the monitoring exercise will be reviewed by the Search and Governance Committee and reported to the Board as part of the overall evaluation of board effectiveness. As necessary, the Search and Governance Committee will make recommendations for improvement actions to the Board. A governance improvement action plan may be developed to improve effectiveness in any areas where there are perceived weaknesses. Training needs identified in the performance review exercise shall inform the plan for governors' training and development in the coming academic year. Arrangements will be established for the appraisal of the board performance include one-to-one meetings between the Chair of the Board and the Chairs of Board Committee and with individual governors.

The Clerk to the Board is required to participate in formal appraisal of their performance, to be conducted by the Chair of the Board.

2.16 Mandates

Members of the Board shall not be bound in their speaking and voting by mandates given to them by other bodies or persons and shall act in the best interests of the Board. The principle of 'collective responsibility' shall apply to all decisions made by the Board i.e. all members of the governing body shall abide by the decision of the majority.

2.17 Professional Advice

Members should contribute to Board meetings on the basis of their broad professional experience but should not offer a professional opinion, which might determine a particular course of action unless voluntarily at his/her discretion he/she considers it reasonable or appropriate to do so. However, any specialist member should alert other members if any acts or omissions may have adverse or unintended consequences and offer guidance as to the need to take professional advice and offer further guidance on any professional advice received. Any formal professional advice required by the Board, on any matter, shall be sought from the College's appointed professional advisers, normally via the Clerk to the Board.

The Clerk to the Board shall have the right to seek professional advice in fulfilment of their responsibilities, as appropriate.

2.18 College Events

A calendar of events shall be periodically circulated which Governors are encouraged to support.

2.19 Gifts and Hospitality

Members of the Board shall not accept any gifts, hospitality, or benefits of any kind from a third party which might be seen as compromising their personal judgement, objectivity, or integrity. Rules around this are included in the College Financial Regulations. Advice should be sought from the Chief Operating Officer and a register will be maintained by the Clerk to the Board and be reported to the Audit Committee.

2.20 Health and Safety Reporting

A detailed report of Health and Safety incidents shall be presented to the Audit Committee annually unless there are any major issues relating to Health & Safety that need to be brought to the attention of the Board at the earliest opportunity.

2.21 Membership information available to the public

A list of the names of members of the Board and its Committees shall be made available via the College website. Addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of members of the Board and its Committees shall **NOT** be made available to third parties. Any person wishing to write to members may do so via the Clerk to the Board.

3.0 BOARD MEETINGS

a) General

- 3.1 All meetings shall be convened by the Clerk to the Board who shall give at least seven calendar days' written notice to members of the appropriate meeting, including agenda and papers to be considered. Where papers are to be circulated late or tabled at the meeting governors shall be notified of this by the Clerk.
- 3.2 The Board shall establish an annual calendar of all normal meetings and its major committees at the start of each college year and shall suitably make public the calendar of meetings.
- 3.3 The Clerk to the Board shall maintain a register of attendances which shall be reviewed by the Search and Governance Committee annually. An attendance performance indicator for members has been set at 75%.
- 3.4 To enable the Clerk to the Board to determine whether a meeting is likely to be quorate, any members knowingly unable to be present at the designated meeting should present their apologies to the Clerk to the Board as early as possible.
- 3.6 The Board has determined that members of the public shall not have access to regular meetings of the Board or its Committees, other than any annual public meeting.
- 3.7 Responsibility for determining who may attend meetings of the Board, other than members, and for the purposes of the Board shall be determined by the Chair of the Board.
- 3.8 The Board may require 'senior post holders' or other managers to attend Board or Committee meetings as appropriate to give advice or make presentations. The specific arrangements for meetings of the board and Board committees will be determined by the Principal and Chief Executive.
- 3.9 A special meeting of the Board may be called at any time by the Chair of the Board or at the request, in writing, of any five members. Whilst normally at least seven days' notice will be given of any such special meeting, lesser notice may be necessary where the Chair or a Vice Chair determines there are matters demanding urgent attention.
- 3.10 Any member in attendance at which an item with which he/she has a financial or other interest is considered, shall declare that interest at the beginning of the meeting and shall not vote on the subject. The declaration will be recorded in the minutes. The member shall not be counted for the quorum present at the meeting in relation to a resolution on which he/she is not entitled to vote.

The Board may require a Governor to retire from that part of the meeting where he/she has declared an interest. Where the Chair to the Board has a conflict of interest, he/she shall be required to vacate the chair to a Vice Chair or any other permissible Governor.

In the event that, due to the declaration of interests of a member or members, a meeting is rendered inquorate, that meeting must be terminated forthwith.

- 3.11 The Clerk to the Board shall not be present at any part of a meeting or meeting to consider the remuneration, conditions of service, conduct, suspension, dismissal, or retirement of the Clerk to the Board and, in these circumstances, the Board shall nominate another member to formally record the minutes of that part of the meeting or meeting. These minutes will normally be treated as confidential and shall not be made available to the Clerk to the Board or to the public.
- 3.12 Where the conditions in 3.11 apply, the Chair of the Board (and not the Clerk to the Board) shall, at least seven calendar days before the date of the meeting, send to the members a copy of the agenda items concerned together with any relevant papers.
- 3.13 In certain other circumstances where staff or student members are excluded from meetings, the minutes of those parts of the meetings shall be treated as confidential and shall not be made available to the staff or student members or to the public.
- 3.14 Members shall appoint a Chair of the Board and Vice Chair(s) normally at the July Board meeting biennially and persons appointed shall hold office for two years up to a maximum of six years. The Principal, any staff member or any student member may not act as Chair or Vice Chair of the Board. The retiring Chair and Vice Chair(s) of the Board shall be eligible for re-appointment, subject to the terms of the re-election process.'
- 3.15 The quorum for meetings of the Board shall be 40% of the membership numbers, excluding vacancies, providing that the number of external governors present shall constitute a majority of those present. A meeting which is not quorate shall not be held. A meeting which becomes inquorate following a member leaving the meeting may continue as a discussion but no resolutions can be passed.
- 3.16 At every meeting of the Board the minutes of the previous meeting shall be taken as an agenda item, normally following apologies, and declaration of interest except where members present determine otherwise. The exception to this is an extraordinary meeting where the minutes will go to the following meeting.
- 3.17 Once any matter is determined by the Board, individual Governors are expected to be bound by the collective decision of the Board.
- 3.18 A "meeting" includes a meeting at which the members attending are present in more than one room provided that, by the use of telephone / video-conferencing or similar facilities, it is possible for every person present at the meeting to hear each other.
- 3.19 If both the Chair and Vice Chair(s) of the Board are absent from any meeting of the Board, the members present shall choose one of their number to act as Chair for that meeting provided that person is not the Principal or a staff or student member.
- 3.20 The agenda for any meeting must set out the business to be transacted clearly. If an item of business does not appear on the agenda, it will be preferable not to introduce it subsequently at the meeting of the Board as a tabled paper or under any other business, unless there is agreement from members. In that event, proper notice will not have been given to Board

members and they will be entitled to object.

b) Proceedings and Rules of Debate

- 3.21 Every question to be decided at a meeting of the Board shall be determined by a simple majority of the votes of the members present and voting on the question by a show of hands unless otherwise determined. It is often the case, however, that the members present are clearly unanimous and thus it will not be necessary to conduct a vote. If a majority of members present and entitled to vote on a particular issue so wish, the vote maybe conducted by secret ballot. It is envisaged that such an arrangement will only be needed in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.22 Where there is an equal division of votes, the Chair of the Board shall have a second/or casting vote.
- 3.23 A member may not vote by proxy or by post.
- 3.24 No resolution (decision) by the Board 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.
- 3.25 The withdrawal of members from meetings of the Board for particular items is dealt with in the Instrument of Government. It should be noted that there is a presumption that all governors, including staff and student governors, are entitled to participate fully in all discussions except where so required under the Instrument and Articles of Government. Instrument 13 (6) states that ‘a member of the Board who is a member of staff at the institution, including the Principal, shall withdraw:
- a) from that part of any meeting of the Board, or any of its committees, atwhich 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
 - b) from that part of any meeting of the Board, or any of its committees, atwhich that member’s reappointment or the appointment of that member’s successor is to be considered
 - c) from that part of any meeting of the Board, or any of its committees, atwhich 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
 - d) if so, required by a resolution of the other members present, from that part of any meeting of the Board or any of its committees, at which staff matters relating to any member of staff holding a post senior to that member are to be considered, except those relating to the pay and conditions of all staff or all staff in a particular class.’
- 3.26 The agenda for a meeting will make clear issues requiring a decision as well as items for information. The reports received by the Board will include a clear recommendation

- 3.27 At any time during a discussion a member may raise a point of order where it is believed that the provisions of the Instrument and Articles of Government and/or the Standing Orders and/or another recognised authority are being ignored. The member raising the point of order will be required to explain the way in which the correct procedure is not being followed. A point of order will be dealt with immediately by the Chair of the Board. The ruling of the Chair of the Board, after the advice of the Clerk to the Board has been obtained, will be final and shall not be challenged further at the meeting.
- 3.28 It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Board, working in collaboration with the Clerk to the Board, to seek the right balance between ensuring that all members have the opportunity to contribute to discussions while avoiding repetition and making sure that the subject before the Board is not forgotten. If members believe that it would be helpful for the efficient conduct of business, one or other of the following motions may be put forward:
- a. that the question now be put; or
 - b. that the Board proceed with the next business
- 3.29 Both motions outlined in paragraph 3.28 require a seconder. If such a motion is carried, it will be acted on without further discussion. The Chair of the Board does have the right, however, to give his/her views before the vote is taken so that an indication may be given as to whether or not the issue has been sufficiently discussed to proceed.
- 3.30 All discussions at meetings of the Board will be conducted through the Chair of the Board.
- 3.31 Members are required to respect the right of others to express their personal views although nothing should be said or done which could bring the Board into disrepute.
- 3.32 Normally members shall not be requested to pass a formal resolution or make any policy decisions without prior consideration of the subject matter by means of an appropriate report and recommendations to the meeting and identification of the subject as an agenda item.
- 3.33 If, in the opinion of the Chair of the Board, any member persistently disregards the ruling of the Chair, or behaves improperly or offensively so as to obstruct the business of the meeting, the Chair may move that the member be not heard further and the motion, if seconded, shall be determined immediately. In extreme cases, the Chair may require a member to leave the meeting
- 3.34 Suspension of Standing Orders may be proposed, normally at the start of a meeting, to allow an emergency debate on any item. Suspension of Standing Orders may only occur with the agreement of the Chair of the Board and a majority of the members present at a quorate meeting.
- 3.35 The Board may, at any time, directly determine any issue which would normally be subject to review by and a recommendation from a Committee of the Board, other than the Audit, Search and Governance and Special Committees where statutory requirements apply.

4.0 COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

4.1 All Board members should participate in Board committees to ensure shared responsibility for College governance and the necessary checks and balances.

Any committee established by the Board, other than a committee established under Article 10 in relation to a) the consideration of the case for dismissal of the Principal, Clerk or other senior post holder; and b) to hear an appeal in connection with the dismissal of the Principal, Clerk or other senior post holder, may include members who are not members of the Board.

a) Statutory Committees

4.2 In accordance with Articles 5 and 6 of the Articles of Government, the Board shall establish the following Committees:

- (i) Search Committee – at WLC known as the ‘Search and Governance’ Committee
- (ii) Audit Committee

4.3 The members of the Audit Committee shall comprise at least three and up to five external governors

The following persons may **NOT** be members of the Audit Committee:-

- The Chair of the Board
- The Principal and other senior post holders
- Members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee
- Staff and student governors
- Members of staff who have significant management, financial or budgetary responsibility

The Audit Committee may appoint, with the approval of the Search and Governance Committee, a co-opted member of the Committee who has relevant skills, knowledge, and experience without reference to the Board.

4.4 In accordance with Article 10, the Board shall establish a committee to consider any case for the dismissal of a senior post holder and make rules specifying the way in which this committee shall be established and conducted, in accordance with Article 16.

b) Other Committees

4.5 The Board is empowered under Article 4(1) to establish a committee of the Board, for any purpose or function (other than those assigned elsewhere in the Articles to the Principal), and may delegate powers to such a committee, the Chair of the Board, or in their absence the Vice Chair or the Principal.

Currently the following additional committees have been established:-

- (i) Curriculum, and Quality Committee
- (ii) Finance and General Purposes Committee
- (iii) Remuneration Committee

The above are considered by the Board to be permanent committees; other committees and working groups may be set up from time-to-time to meet specific requirements of the Board.

c) General Standing Orders for Committees

Election of Chair and Vice Chair of a Committee

4.6 A Chair and Vice Chair shall be appointed to each committee by Board on the recommendation of Search and Governance Committee. The appointment(s)/re-appointment will normally be for two academic years from the first meeting in each academic year.

On the expiry of the term of office, the Chair/Vice Chair shall be eligible for re-appointment, subject to the terms of the governor appointment/re-election process. External members of committees shall not be eligible for appointment as Chair of a committee.

4.7 If both the Chair and Vice Chair of a Board committee are absent from a meeting of that committee, the members of the committee (as long as the meetings remain quorate), who are present shall choose one of their number to act as Chair for that meeting.

The Chair and Vice Chair of a committee may resign their respective position at any time by giving notice in writing to the Clerk to the Board.

Membership

4.8 The membership of all committees shall be as determined by the Board and advised by the Search and Governance Committee. Membership will be reviewed annually.

4.9 Student and staff members shall not be eligible for appointment to the Remuneration Committee.

4.10 Each Board member should also be a member of at least one Committee.

4.11 Any member of the Board who is not a member of a committee shall be entitled to attend that committee only at the express invitation of the Chair of that committee.

4.12 Any member attending a committee meeting by invitation (4.11 above) shall be permitted to speak on any issue only with the permission of the Chair of that Committee and shall not be entitled to vote.

4.13 Senior officers of the College shall attend meetings Committees only in accordance with the requirements of the agenda for each meeting and at the request of the Chair of the Committee or as defined in the appropriate committee terms of reference.

4.14 If at any time the members of a Committee are satisfied that any member of that Committee:

(a) has been absent from meetings of the Committee for a period longer than 6

consecutive months without the permission of the Committee Chair; or

- (b) is unable or unfit to discharge the functions of a member of the Committee
- (c) the Committee may refer this matter to Search and Governance Committee, who by notice to such member, remove may him/her from the Committee provided that this is reported to Board.

Convening Meetings and Quorum

- 4.15 All Committee meetings shall normally be summoned and serviced by the Clerk to the Board who shall notify committee members of the meeting at least seven calendar days in advance together with a copy of the proposed agenda and relevant papers. The time, date and place of the proposed meeting will be notified.
- 4.16 It shall be permissible for the Chair of a committee to convene an emergency meeting of that committee by giving less than seven calendar days' prior notice, if in the reasonable opinion of the Chair there are matters which demand urgent consideration.
- 4.17 A quorum for each committee will be 40%.
- 4.18 A meeting which is not quorate shall not be held. A meeting which becomes inquorate due to the declaration of interests by a member of the Committee in a specific agenda item shall immediately be terminated. A meeting which becomes inquorate following a member leaving the meeting may continue with discussions, but no resolutions can be passed.

Publication of Agendas and Minutes

- 4.19 The Chair of the committee, in conjunction with the Clerk to the Board, is responsible for formulating the agenda for meetings, preferably at least 14 days before the date of the relevant meeting. Timed agendas may be adopted. It is good practice that the Board and its committee adopt standard cycles of business for all meetings; these should be reviewed annually.
- 4.20 Subject to 4.24 below, agenda, papers and minutes of all other committees shall be made available to the public, via the Clerk to the Board, in accordance with the Instrument and Articles of Government.
- 4.21 There may be excluded from any item required to be made available, pursuant to clause 4.25, any material relating to: -
 - (a) a named person employed at or proposed to be employed at the College;
 - (b) a named student at, or candidate for admission to, the College; and
 - (c) any matter which, by reason of its nature, the committee is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis.
- 4.22 A committee shall consider whether any of the items discussed should remain confidential in the minutes and not be made generally available or should be subject to a morerestricted circulation.

- 4.23 At every Committee meeting, the minutes of the last meeting shall be taken as an agenda item and, if agreed to be accurate, shall be signed by the Chair of the committee (or, in his absence, the Vice Chair) as a true record.
- 4.24 Minutes of all committee meetings, approved by the Chair, shall be presented to the Board at the next appropriate Board meeting. The Board may take any necessary action on receipt of the draft or approved minutes.
- 4.25 The minutes of all committee meetings are required to be published on the College website. In the spirit of openness and transparency, draft minutes once approved by Committee or Board shall be published on the website.

Decisions and Voting

- 4.26 Resolutions at meetings of a Committee shall be passed on the basis of a majority decision taken by those who attend and vote at a quorate meeting.
- 4.27 All members of a Committee will comply with the principle of collective responsibility and stand by a decision even if it was not taken unanimously.
- 4.28 In the case of an equality of votes, the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
- 4.29 Members of a Committee may not vote by proxy or by post.

Declarations of Public Interest

- 4.30 Without prejudice to the obligations of members of the Board under the Instrument and Articles, a Committee member who has any financial or other interest in the supply of work or goods to or for the purposes of the College, any contract or proposed contract concerning the College, or any other matter relating to the College and being considered by or relevant to the operation of the committee of which he/she is a member shall:
- (a) disclose to the Board the nature and extent of his/her interest; and
 - (b) if he/she is present at a committee meeting at which such supply, contract or other matter is to be considered, shall not take part in the consideration, or vote on any question with respect to it and shall not be counted in the quorum present at the meeting in relation to a resolution on which he/she is not entitled to vote.
- 4.31 The Clerk to the Board shall maintain a register of all committee members' interests which are disclosed, and such a register shall be made available for inspection by the public.
- 4.32 Members of Committees should not allow any conflict of interest to arise which might interfere, or be perceived to interfere, with the exercise of their independent judgement. Members must make an annual disclosure of potential conflicts of interest.

- 4.33 Members of Committees should not accept gifts, hospitality, or benefits of any kind from a third party which might be seen as compromising their personal judgement, objectivity or integrity.

Terms of Reference

- 4.34 All committees and their members shall comply in all respects with and observe their terms of reference. If a committee is doubtful over the precise scope of its authority or its remit, it should raise the issue with the Chair of the Board or Clerk to the Board in the first instance.
- 4.35 The terms of reference and roles of all committees shall be reviewed at least triennially, and any changes thereto shall be approved by the Board.
- 4.36 The terms of reference of all committees shall be published on the College website.

5.0 GENERAL PROCEDURE FOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

a) Agendas

- 5.1 The Chair of the Board, together with the Principal and Clerk to the Board, is responsible for formulating the agenda for meetings of the Board which shall be agreed preferably at least 14 days before the scheduled meeting of the Board.
- 5.2 Senior College staff and governors are expected to submit papers for circulation with the agenda to the Clerk as early as possible, and not later than 10 days before the date of the meeting, except in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.3 The Board shall adopt an annual business cycle which shall inform the agenda setting process.
- 5.4 The Board shall annually review such items as the application of the Gift Book, College insurances, Students' Union constitution and any other item required by the business cycle, financial regulations, funding agreement, Post-16 Audit Code of Practice or Instrument and Articles of Government.
- 5.5 The Clerk to the Board shall inform fellow senior post holders of regular items from the business cycle and elsewhere due to be reported for forthcoming meetings and shall request production of the relevant reports in a timely fashion.
- 5.6 Individual Governors may request that an item be included on the agenda and shall first contact the Chair of the Board to confirm that the item may be included. Governors should, therefore, consult with the Chair at least two weeks before the date of the meeting if they are considering submitting an item for the agenda.
- 5.7 All items on the formal agenda should indicate which items need to be discussed only and which require decisions to be made. All relevant papers must accompany the agenda. Only in exceptional circumstances should papers follow at a later date or be tabled, this is particularly so if a decision of the Board is required. Miscellaneous papers for information only, and not on the agenda may, however, be tabled.

- 5.8 An executive summary covering paper – where appropriate containing a risk management assessment - will be submitted for all agenda items where a formal decision is required. It is good practice that all papers to be considered by the Board and its committees provide an executive summary of the key issues for the attention of governors.
- 5.9 It is the responsibility of the Clerk to the Board to ensure that all agendas and papers are clearly identified by reference numbers and letters to enable all documents to be filed and easily retrieved if required.
- 5.10 The Committee Chair, together with the Clerk to the Board and the Principal, are responsible for compiling the agenda for committee meetings.
- 5.11 Agendas for meetings of the Board and its committees may include an Any Other Business heading. Such items should normally be notified to the Chair in advance of the meeting. It will normally be the penultimate agenda item. However, no item may be raised under Any Other Business requiring a formal decision of the meeting unless that intention has been clearly signified in the agenda.

b) Minutes

- 5.12 All meetings of the Board and its Committees shall be minuted by the Clerk to the Board or, in the absence of the Clerk, by the appointed minuting secretary. Draft minutes endorsed “Subject to approval” are prepared immediately following the meeting and submitted to the Chair of the Board or relevant committee, and the Principal to ensure accuracy of interpretation.

The Chair of Board or Chair of relevant Committee has ownership of the draft minutes and their approval prior to circulation. Draft minutes will be circulated to all members immediately after the aforementioned approvals.

- 5.13 The minutes shall provide a brief summary of the key elements of any debate including any dissent and shall record any decision or resolution on each item discussed by the Board/Committee. Actions required from the minute, and by whom, will be noted and followed up by the Clerk to the Board.
- 5.14 Under no circumstances may members of the Board take a decision which is not formally minuted at a quorate meeting.
- 5.15 The Clerk to the Board shall maintain a record of actions required following decisions of the Board and major committees and shall regularly report to the Board progress on items outstanding, normally through the report of ‘matters arising’ on the agenda.
- 5.16 The draft or approved minutes of all committee meetings shall be presented to the Board at the next available meeting.
- 5.17 Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must subject themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office. They should also be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. The minutes of Board meetings

being in the public domain should not only record decisions but also the reasons for those decisions. Items should be subject to rigorous challenge and debate and this, together with any major dissent, should be recorded. However, not all opinions expressed by individuals on particular issues, will be recorded. Equally, issues deemed to be confidential to Governors will not be a matter of formal record in the published minutes but may be lodged in the confidential minute book.

- 5.18 When the Board (or one of its committees) decides that an item should be regarded as confidential, that item will be minuted and lodged in the confidential minute book. The published minutes should contain a cross reference to the existence of a separate minute in the main minutes. Unless there are compelling reasons not to do so, the reason for redacting the minute should be recorded in the published minutes of the meeting. Circulation of the confidential minute and papers relating to it will be restricted to the governors entitled to attend that part of the meeting or special meeting concerned and copies will be kept by the Clerk, except where the minute relates to the Clerk, when the minute will be recorded and kept by the Chair or the person appointed under Standing Order 3.11 to act as Clerk.
- 5.19 Instrument 5 of the Instrument and Articles of Government state that 'no resolution of the Governors be rescinded or varied at a subsequent meeting of the Board unless its consideration of the rescission or variation is a specific item of business on the agenda for that meeting'. A resolution, which in this context means any formal decision by the Board, cannot therefore be overturned or varied, for instance, as part of discussions of matters arising from the previous minutes. Not only must the subject appear as a substantive item on the agenda, but also the fact that there is a proposal to vary or rescind a previous decision must be indicated.
- 5.20 The draft minutes of meetings of the Board shall be circulated to all members of the Board and senior management team once agreed by the Chair.
- 5.21 Minutes of the Remuneration Committee are deemed to be confidential and are retained by the Clerk to the Board (or Chair where they relate specifically to the Clerk). The minutes of the Remuneration Committee will be reported to external governors only as part of a confidential session of the governing body.

Minutes of any Committee convened to consider the dismissal of a senior post holder are also deemed to be confidential and are retained by the Clerk to the Board (or Chair where they relate specifically to the Clerk).

- 5.22 Confidential minutes shall not be made available for public or staff scrutiny other than to those staff who are members of the Board subject to 5.18 above. Confidential minutes relating to parts of meetings from which staff members of the Board have been excluded may not be made available for their scrutiny.
- 5.24 Any paper laid before the Board relating to personnel matters including named individuals will normally be dealt with on a confidential basis and will not be made publicly available. Papers and minutes are generally circulated to all members of the Board and members of the senior management team with the exception that staff and student members of the Board may not receive all papers relating to some personnel matters and/or confidential items.

5.25 Board and committee papers and minutes classed as confidential (i.e. not available for public disclosure) shall remain confidential unless the Board decides that information on a particular issue should cease to be classed as confidential. The Board shall review material deemed to be confidential annually and make 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.

6.0 APPOINTMENT, DUTIES SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF THE CLERK TO THE BOARD

a) Appointment

6.1 The Instrument of Government 6 (1) requires that 'the Board shall appoint a person to serve as Clerk to the Board'. The Board is responsible for agreeing the job description for the Clerk, their conditions of service and remuneration for the post.

6.2 The Board shall determine the selection procedure for the post and shall determine an appropriate selection panel.

6.3 Where the Clerk to the Board holds another appointment within the College, it will be necessary to ensure independence of the Clerk from those other duties within the College.

6.4 The Clerk to the Board shall be entitled to attend all meetings of the Board (including meetings of any Committee of the Board) but shall withdraw from that part of any meeting at which their remuneration, conditions of service, conduct, suspension, dismissal or retirement in their capacity as Clerk are to be considered, in which case the members of the Board or committee shall appoint from their number a person to act as Clerk to the Board for the duration of such meeting or part of a meeting.

6.5 The Clerk, if they are a member of staff of the institution, shall also withdraw in any case where they would be required to withdraw under Instrument 14(5) if they were attending as a member of the Board, i.e. when that member of staff is being discussed or their appointment or reappointment including any successor; and, if so required by other members present, from that part of any meeting at which staff matters relating to any member of staff holding a post senior to their own are to be considered.

b) Suspension and Dismissal

6.6 Only the Board may dismiss or discipline the Clerk.

6.7 When the Clerk is also a member of staff they shall be treated as such for suspension and dismissal purposes for this part of the role. This will be without prejudice to any action the Board may take under the terms of any separate appointment as Clerk.

6.8 Where there is any question of discipline or potential dismissal of the then the College's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure for senior post holders will be applied.

c) Duties

- 6.9 As an independent officer of the Board the Clerk has a central role to perform when promoting the effective governance of the Board. It is essential that there is a relationship of trust between Governors and the Clerk. However, it is important that the Clerk is independent of Governors' influence.
- 6.10 The Clerk shall seek to ensure that all Board proceedings are conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Statutory Instrument and Articles of Government and any rules and regulations made thereunder, with the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, the Learning & Skills Act 2000, Education Act 2011 and any amendments, the funding agreement and with the general law.
- 6.11 The Clerk is accountable to the Chair of the Board and to the Board at large in all matters relating to his/her duties as Clerk to the Board. Where the Clerk has an additional role as a staff member of the Corporate Management Team he/she will be accountable to the Principal for all duties other than Clerkship.
- 6.12 No resolution of the Board should be made without the Clerk, or other individual duly appointed as Clerk for that meeting in accordance with the Instrument and Articles of Government, being in attendance at the meeting.
- 6.13 Where the Clerk to the Board has serious concerns and in the interests of the Board he/she considers it necessary to take external legal advice then, provided the Chair and Principal are made aware of the position, he/she is permitted to do so without further authorisation, up to a maximum expense of £2,500 (Two thousand and five hundred pounds).
- 6.14 The Clerk to the Board shall also be authorised to receive independent legal advice when required under normal budgetary arrangements.
- 6.15 The Clerk to the Board shall act independently of any other role he/she may have within the College.
- 6.16 The Clerk shall be subject to an annual appraisal by the Chair (or a Vice Chair or group of Governors) of the Board as well as an annual appraisal by the relevant manager where the Clerk has an additional role within the organisation.

7.0 DELEGATION TO COMMITTEES, CHAIR, VICE CHAIR AND PRINCIPAL

The Board shall make rules specifying the way in which a committee having functions under paragraph (1) shall be established and conducted.

- 7.1 The Board may delegate all other matters and actions to a committee of the Board established for any purpose or function, to the Chair, or to the Principal, as appropriate.
- 7.2 Where the Board has delegated powers to committees, these are clearly identified in the terms of reference for the respective committee.

7.3 All occasions where the Board formally approves that the Chair or Principal shall exercise delegated authority in relation to specific matters will be clearly minuted and any actions arising reported to subsequent meetings of the Board

7.8 The Chair, and/or if he/she is unable to do so a Vice Chair, may take urgent action on behalf of the Board between meetings where the necessity arises. Any such actions will be reported to the Clerk to the Board to record and he/she will in turn ensure that the action is reported as an agenda item at the next Board meeting.

The circumstances under which the Chair or a Vice Chair may act will include: routine action which would not have merited an agenda item and discussion at a Board meeting, for example routine documents; responding to approaches by external organisations; and agreeing to detailed aspects of implementation of matters already agreed by the Board.

Alternatively, the Chair/Vice Chair may take action on matters which she or he judges are too urgent to await the next meeting of Governors. If such urgent matters arise, the Chair has the option to call a special meeting, if necessary on less than the normal 7 days' notice. Chair's action should only be taken if delaying a decision would disadvantage the College or where the principle of the matter is subject to the Board ratifying the decision when it next meets. Every effort should be made to call an extraordinary meeting online if possible.

The Board accepts corporate responsibility for those actions taken by the Chair/Vice Chair outside of a meeting, and within, and subject to, the terms of these Standing Orders.

7.9 Requests for any action under 7.8 above shall only be made, in writing, through the office of Clerk to the Board.

7.10 In the event of a serious allegation against a senior post holder, the Chair (or Vice Chair) may suspend the senior post holder in accordance with the approved Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

7.11 The Remuneration Committee shall act in accordance with the delegated authority of the Board to determine the remuneration and all other terms and conditions of employment of the senior post holder(s).

8.0 KEY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

8.1 The Board will periodically approve, review and monitor key College policies and procedures as appropriate, taking account of its duties and responsibilities as defined in the Instrument and Articles of Government, relevant legislation, the requirements of relevant government departments and agencies and to ensure best governance practice. All key policy statements shall be circulated to Governors.

9.0 BOARD SEAL

9.1 A resolution of the Board is required for any application of the seal.

9.2 The application of the Seal of the Board shall be authenticated by the signature of either the Chair or another member authorised so to do, either generally or specially for that purpose, together with the signature of any other member of the Board, excluding student and staff governors.

9.3 The Clerk will report any application of the seal to the Board at the next meeting.

9.4 The Clerk shall be responsible for the security of the Seal.

10.0 STATEMENTS MADE ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

10.1 Unless otherwise agreed by the Board specifically any statements on behalf of the Board may only be made by the Chair or the Principal and Chief Executive.

10.2 It is the responsibility of the Clerk to the Board to conduct all day-to-day correspondence on behalf of, and involving, the Board.

11.0 COMPLAINTS

11.1 The College has a customer complaints procedure with formal complaints required to be made in writing. Should any complaint in writing be received relating to any governance issue then the Clerk to the Board shall initially refer this for consideration and action by the Chair of the Board.

11.2 The College has in place a Public Interest Disclosure Policy & Procedure (Whistleblowing) which sets out procedures for disclosure.

11.3 The Clerk to the Board shall present an annual report to the Board in respect of complaints received on governance issues.

12.0 AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS

12.1 These standing orders will be reviewed by the Board annually and will be advised by the Search and Governance Committee as appropriate.

12.2 The Clerk shall keep under continuous review the standing orders and shall periodically suggest improvements in the light of changed circumstances, and new and revised legislation. Individual members may also suggest improvements to be incorporated in the document.

12.3 Only the Board may formally approve the Standing Orders and any amendments thereto.

12.4 Each Member of the Board will be issued with a copy of the Standing Orders.

13.0 Relevant Legislation / Regulation

13.1 The following legislation and regulations apply to this policy / procedure:

13.1.1 None

14.0 Related Documents

14.1 The following related documents are relevant to this policy / procedure:

14.1.1 None

15.0 Accountability

15.1 The **Director of Governance** is responsible for the drafting and implementation of this policy.

15.2 He or she is also responsible for ensuring that this document is regularly reviewed and updated – and is the first contact point for managers seeking advice and guidance about the **WLC Standing Orders** or making enquiries about its interpretation.

15.3 All managers are responsible for ensuring that they and their team members follow the requirements set out in this document.

15.4 All employees are responsible for adhering to the requirements set out in this document.

16.0 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

16.1 The College has paid due regard to equality considerations during the preparation and implementation of this Policy.

16.2 These considerations included the potential for any differential negative effect on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership.

16.3 The College's judgement is that there is no such negative effect on those grounds and, consequently, no potential breach of the Equality Act 2010.

16.4 The operation of this Policy and Procedure will be monitored by the Executive Director of People and Organisational Development in order to establish that no unlawful discrimination is taking place and to identify opportunities for the College to enhance equality of opportunity and fair treatment.

17.0 Review

17.1 This document will be reviewed by September 2023.

17.2 The Director of Governance will undertake this review, taking into account the outcomes of the monitoring process, legislative changes and developments in good practice.

17.3 As part of the review, the Director of Governance will seek and consider the views of the College's employees and, where appropriate, of the recognised trade unions.

17.4 The outcome of the review will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team.

18.0 Policy Category

<p>Category [select ONE only]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Business Development, Marketing and Subcontracting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Data Protection <input type="checkbox"/> Equality & Diversity <input type="checkbox"/> Estates / Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Support, Administration and Reception <input type="checkbox"/> Finance <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Safety <input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> IT Services <input type="checkbox"/> Management Information Systems <input type="checkbox"/> People and Organisational Development <input type="checkbox"/> Quality <input type="checkbox"/> Student Services & Safeguarding
<p>Audience [select ALL that apply]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Employees <input type="checkbox"/> Governors <input type="checkbox"/> Learners <input type="checkbox"/> Partners <input type="checkbox"/> Suppliers