

NELSON AND COLNE
COLLEGE

The Corporation of Nelson and Colne College

Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members

Approved by the Corporation on 3rd July 2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Code is intended as a guide, to indicate the standards of conduct and accountability which are expected of Governors, to enable them to understand their legal and ethical duties and to assist them both in carrying out those duties and in their relationship with the Corporation and Principal as the Chief Executive. This Code therefore is aimed at promoting effective, well informed and accountable college governance, and is not intended to be a definitive or authoritative statement of the law or good practice.
- 1.2 In addition to this Code, Governors are recommended to familiarise themselves with the source documents listed in the Schedule.
- 1.3 If a Governor is in doubt about the provisions of this Code or any of the source documents, the Clerk should be consulted and, if necessary, professional advice should be obtained. However, ultimate responsibility for the appropriateness of conduct as a Governor of the College and for any act or omission in that capacity rests with the individual Governor.
- 1.4 This Code applies to every committee or working party of the Corporation and to every subsidiary company or joint venture of the College to which Governors may be appointed.
- 1.5 By accepting appointment to the Corporation, each Governor agrees to accept the provisions of this Code.
- 1.6 Each Governor by accepting the provisions of this Code agrees that any breach of the Code by them may lead to the termination of their appointment as a Member in accordance with clause [10] of the Corporation's Instrument and Articles of Government.

2. INTERPRETATION

In this Code:-

“Code of Good Governance”	means the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges issued by the AoC Governors’ Council in March 2015
“College”	means Nelson and Colne College
“College Mission Statement”	means the statement referred to at clause 3 of this Code or such other mission statement as may be agreed by the Board of Governors from time to time
“College Core Values”	those Core Values set out at clause 3 of this Code or such other core values as may be agreed by the Board of Governors from time to time, for example in a Public Value Statement;

“Board of Governors” and ‘Governing Body”	means the further education corporation which was established for the purpose of conducting the College
“Corporation Member” “Chair”, “Principal” and “Clerk”	means respectively the Member of the Corporation of the College, the Chair of the Corporation, the Principal/Chief Executive of the College and the Clerk of the Corporation
“EFA”	the Education Funding Agency or any successor body
“Foundation Code”	the English Colleges' Foundation Code issued by the Association of Colleges in November 2011
“Secretary of State”	the Secretary of State for Education
“SFA”	the Skills Funding Agency or any successor body; and words importing one gender import any gender.

3. AIMS AND VALUES

- 3.1 Governors are expected to promote the core purposes and aims of the College as set out in the vision, mission and statement of values set out below.

Mission

To deliver the highest quality, relevant, education and training to young people and adults in College, in community settings and in the workplace. To encourage and support all to overcome any barriers, to be ambitious and to achieve.

Vision

“Be the best version of you”

Values

Our Vision and Mission will be delivered by ensuring that staff and students alike demonstrate our values, which are:

Expanding horizons

We excel together

Always learning

You matter

- 3.2 The College Mission Statement, together with the corporate objectives of the College agreed by the Governing Body from time to time, seek to encapsulate the core purposes and aims of the College. Governors should have due regard to these purposes and aims

when conducting the business of the Governing Body and considering the activities and proposed activities of the College.

3.3 The Governing Body recognises its obligations to all those with whom it and/or the College have dealings, including students, employees, suppliers, other educational institutions and the wider community. In particular, the Governing Body is committed to:

3.3.1 having close regard to the voice of the learner;

3.3.2 combating any discrimination within the College on the grounds of the characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 ("the 2010 Act") and promoting equality in accordance with its duty under the 2010 Act;

3.3.3 upholding the principles set out in the College's Code of Conduct and Student Charter, copies of which are available from the Clerk; and

3.3.4 engaging with the community which the College serves in order to understand and meet its needs and

3.3.5 observing its duty under the Education (No.2) Act 1986 to take reasonable steps to ensure freedom of speech for members of the College community and visiting speakers and its duty under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have regard to the need, when exercising its functions, to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

3.4 The Governing Body is also committed to ensuring that it conducts its business in accordance with the highest ethical standards as set out in more detail in this Code.

4. DUTIES

4.1 Governors are in the position of charity trustees and as such owe a fiduciary duty to the College. This means that they should show it the highest loyalty and act in good faith in its best interests. Each Governor should act honestly, diligently and (subject to the provisions appearing in **clause 9** of this Code relating to collective responsibility) independently. The actions of Governors should promote and protect the good reputation of the College and the trust and confidence of those with whom it deals.

4.2 Decisions taken by Governors at meetings of the Governing Body and its committees must not be for any improper purpose or personal motive. Decisions taken must always be for the benefit of the College, its students and staff and other users of the College and must be taken with a view to safeguarding public funds. Accordingly, Governors must not be bound in their speaking and voting by mandates given to them by other bodies or persons (including the bodies that elected them).

4.3 Governors must observe the provisions of the College's Instrument and Articles of Government and in particular the duty to give immediate notice to the Clerk should they become disqualified from continuing to hold office and also the responsibilities given to the Governing Body by the College's Articles of Government. Those responsibilities, including a list of "reserved" responsibilities which are so important that they must not be delegated, are set out in **Appendix 3**.

- 4.4 Governors should comply with the Standing Orders and terms of reference of the Governing Body and its committees to ensure that the Board of Governors conducts itself in an orderly, fair, open and transparent manner. Governors must keep those Standing Orders and terms of reference under periodic review.
- 4.5 Governors should also have regard to the different, but complementary, responsibilities given to the Principal as the College's Chief Executive. The responsibilities given to the Principal by the College's Articles of Government are set out in Appendix 4. Whereas it is the Governing Body's function to decide strategic policy and overall direction and to monitor the performance of the Principal and any other senior post holders, it is the Principal's role to implement the Governing Body's decisions, and to manage the College's affairs within the budgets and framework fixed by the Governing Body. Governor's should work together so that the Governing Body and the Principal as Chief Executive perform their respective roles effectively.
- 4.6 Governors should refer to the Clerk for advice relating to the governance functions which are set out in **Appendix 4** and have regard to the Clerk's independent advisory role.

5. **STATUTORY ACCOUNTABILITY**

- 5.1 Governors are collectively responsible for observing the duties set out in the Financial Memorandum which the College has entered into with the SFA and the Funding Agreement which the College has entered into with the EFA as a condition of receiving public funds. A summary of some of the more important requirements of the Financial Memorandum and of the Funding Agreement with the EFA is set out in **Appendix 5**.
- 5.2 Although the SFA is the main provider of funds to the College, Governors should note that they are also responsible for the proper use of income derived from other sources, such as the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the European Union (EU) and for the control and monitoring of expenditure of such income, in order to meet the requirements of the relevant funding body and public audit. Where funding is received directly from HEFCE the College will have a memorandum of assurance and accountability with HEFCE which sets out the basis on which such funding is provided. Where HEFCE funding is received indirectly via a collaboration with a HEFCE funded institution such funding will be subject to obligations contained in the memorandum of co-operation between the College and that institution.
- 5.3 As accounting officer for the SFA, its Chief Executive is directly responsible and accountable to Parliament for ensuring that the uses to which the SFA puts its funds are consistent with the purposes for which the funds were given and comply with the conditions attached to them. The Principal, as accounting officer for the College, is also directly responsible and accountable to Parliament, through the Committee of Public Accounts, for the effective stewardship by the College of public funds. The Principal may be required to appear before the Committee of Public Accounts, alongside the SFA's Chief Executive, to give an account of the use made by the College of such funds. The Governing Body is accountable to Parliament for ensuring the financial health of the College, and to the Courts for ensuring that the College is conducted in accordance with the Education Acts and the general law.

6. PUBLIC SERVICE VALUES

Although further education corporations are classified as part of the private not for profit sector for government accounting purposes, they remain public bodies in many legal contexts. In particular, public service values are at the heart of the further education service. High standards of personal and corporate conduct, based on the principles set out in **Appendices 1 and 2** of this Code, and the recognition that students and other users of the College's services come first, are a requirement of being a Governor, and should underpin all decisions taken by the Governing Body.

7. SKILL, CARE AND DILIGENCE

A Governor should in all his or her work for the College exercise such skill as he or she possesses and such care and diligence as would be expected from a reasonable person in the circumstances. This will be particularly relevant when Governors act as agents of the College, for example, when functions are delegated to a committee of the Governing Body or to the Chair. Governors should be careful to act within the terms of reference of any committees on which they serve.

8. POWERS

Governors are responsible for taking decisions which are within the powers given to the Governing Body by Parliament under sections 18 and 19 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, as amended. A summary of those powers is set out in **Appendix 3**. If a Governor thinks that the Governing Body is likely to exceed its powers by taking a particular decision, he or she should immediately refer the matter to the Clerk for advice.

9. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

9.1 Like other persons who owe a fiduciary duty, Governors should seek to avoid putting themselves in a position where there is a conflict (actual or potential) between their personal interests and their duties to the Governing Body. They should not allow any conflict of interest to arise which might interfere with the exercise of their independent judgement.

9.2 Governors are reminded that under the College's Instrument of Government and the general law they must disclose to the Governing Body any direct or indirect financial interest they have, or may have, in the supply of work to the College or the supply of goods for the purposes of the College, or in any contract or proposed contract concerning the College, or in any other matter relating to the College or any other interest of a type specified by the Corporation in any matter relating to the College, or any duty which is material and which conflicts or may conflict with the interests of the Governing Body.

9.3 If an interest of any kind (including an interest of a spouse, partner or business associate of a Governor or of a close relative of the Governor or his or her spouse, partner or business associate) is likely or would, if publicly known, be perceived as being likely to interfere with the exercise of a Governing Body's independent judgement, then:-

9.3.1 the interest, financial or otherwise, should be reported to the Clerk;

- 9.3.2 the nature and extent of the interest should be fully disclosed to the Governing Body before the matter giving rise to the interest is considered;
- 9.3.3 if the Governor concerned is present at a meeting of the Corporation, or any of its committees, at which such supply, contract or other matter constituting the interest is to be considered, he or she should:-
- 9.3.3.1 not take part in the consideration or vote on any question with respect to it and shall not be counted in the quorum for that meeting; and
 - 9.3.3.2 withdraw from that Governing Body or committee meeting where required to do so by a majority of the Governors or committee present at the meeting.
- 9.4 For the purposes of **clause 9.3** "close relative" includes but is not limited to a father, mother, brother, sister, child, grandchild and step-father/mother/ brother/sister/child.
- 9.5 Where it is proposed that the Corporation should grant a member a financial interest (such as a contract for the supply of goods or services) the Corporation must observe the requirements of the Charities Act 2011. The Corporation may wish to take legal advice before granting such an interest to a member.
- 9.6 Governors must not receive gifts, hospitality or benefits of any kind from a third party which might be in breach of the Bribery Act 2010 and the College's anti-bribery policy and the College's policy on receiving gifts, or be seen to compromise their personal judgement or integrity. Any offer or receipt of such gifts, hospitality or benefits should immediately be reported to the Clerk.
- 9.7 The Clerk will maintain a Register of Governor's Interests which will be open for public inspection. Governors must disclose routinely to the Governing Body all business interests, financial or otherwise, which they or persons associated with them may have, and the Clerk will enter such interests on the Register. Governors must give sufficient details to allow the nature of the interests to be understood by enquirers. Governors should inform the Clerk whenever their circumstances change and interests are acquired or lost. In deciding whether an interest should be disclosed, Governors should have regard to the meaning given to "interest" in **clauses 9.3** and **9.5** of this Code.

10. **COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY**

- 10.1 The Governing Body operates by Governors taking majority decisions in a corporate manner at quorate meetings, including meetings held by telephone or video-conference and by alternative methods such as written resolutions, in all cases only if so provided for in the Instrument and Articles. Therefore, a decision of the Governing Body, even when it is not unanimous, is a decision taken by the Governors collectively and each individual Governor has a duty to stand by it, whether or not he or she was present at the meeting of the Governing Body when the decision was taken.
- 10.2 If a Governor disagrees with a decision taken by the Governing Body, his or her first duty is to have any disagreement discussed and minuted. If the Governor strongly disagrees, he or she should consult the Chair and, if necessary, then raise the matter with the Governing

Body when it next meets. If no meeting is scheduled, the Governor should refer to the power of the Chair or of any five Governors under the College's Instrument of Government to call a special meeting and, if appropriate, exercise it, requesting the Clerk to circulate the Governor's views in advance to the other Governors. Alternatively, as a final resort, the Governor may decide to offer his or her resignation from office, after consulting the Chair.

11. OPENNESS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

11.1 Because of the Governing Body's public accountability and the importance of conducting its business openly and transparently, Governors should ensure that, as a general principle, students and staff of the College have free access to information about the proceedings of the Governing Body. Accordingly, agendas, minutes and other papers relating to meetings of the Governing Body are normally available for public inspection when they have been approved for publication by the Chair.

11.2 There will be occasions when the record of discussions and decisions will not be made available for public inspection; for example, when the Governing Body considers sensitive issues or named individuals and for other good reasons. Such excluded items will be kept in a confidential folder by the Clerk, and will be circulated in confidence to Governors save for those Members who have a conflicting interest in the particular sensitive matter. Some confidential items are likely to be of a sensitive nature for a certain period of time, for example information relating to a proposed commercial transaction or collaboration with another institution. The Governing Body should specify how long such items should be treated as confidential or, if this is not possible, such items should be regularly reviewed to consider whether the confidential status should be removed or whether the public interest in disclosure outweighs that confidential status and the item made available for public inspection. When considering such issues the Governing Body must also consider the College's publication scheme issued under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

11.3 However, staff and student Governors have no right of access to minutes dealing with matters in respect of which they are required to withdraw from meetings under the College's Instrument of Government.

11.4 It is important that the Governing Body and its committees have full and frank discussions in order to take decisions collectively. To do so, there must be trust between Governors with a shared corporate responsibility for decisions. Governors should keep confidential any matter which, by reason of its nature, the Chair or members of any committee of the Governing Body are satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis.

11.5 Governors should not make statements to the press or media or at any public meeting relating to the proceedings of the Governing Body or its committees without first having obtained the approval of the Chair or, in his or her absence, the Vice Chair. It is unethical for Governors publicly to criticise, canvass or reveal the views of other Governors which have been expressed at meetings of the Governing Body or its committees.

12. COMPLAINTS

12.1 In order to ensure that the affairs of the College are conducted in an open and transparent manner and that the College is accountable for its use of public funds but also to its

employees, its students and the community it serves, it is important for there to be appropriate complaints procedures in place and for these to be well publicised. Governors are reminded of their specific responsibility under the Articles of Government to make rules specifying the procedures in accordance with which employees may seek redress of any grievances relating to their employment, of the importance of having formal complaints procedures in place to handle issues raised by students, former students and third parties and of the legal requirement to have a whistle blowing procedure in place.

12.2 Under the SFA's Financial Memorandum with colleges, students, employers and other third parties have a right to make a complaint to the SFA in respect of the College or of any of its decisions, and this right is referred to in the College's relevant complaints and disciplinary procedures. Copies of these procedures can be obtained from the Clerk. Governors in particular are reminded that under the SFA's Procedure for dealing with complaints about Providers of Education and Training (October 2015) the SFA:

12.2.1 can investigate complaints about quality or management of learning provision, undue delay or non-compliance with published procedures, poor administration by the Provider, equality and diversity issues (except where there is a more appropriate mechanism for dealing with the matter through the court or tribunals or other organisations), health and safety concerns (unless these are matters for the Health and Safety Executive) and complaints made by learners following HE courses in FE colleges;

12.2.2 will not investigate complaints about examination results or curriculum content where a more appropriate form of redress would be the examining body or Ofqual, individual employment issues, contractual disputes, matters which are the subject of legal action or complaints about higher education courses in colleges (which should be referred to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator).

13. **ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS**

A high level of attendance at meetings of the Board of Governors (either in person or by electronic means; or through response to written resolutions) is expected so that Governors can perform their functions properly.

14. **GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT**

14.1 The Board of Governors shall seek to ensure that all Governors are appointed on merit, in accordance with an open selection procedure carried out by the Board of Governor's Search Committee, and are drawn widely from the community which the College serves so as to be representative of that community. The Board of Governors should have regard to the provisions relating to the membership of the Board in the College's Instrument of Government, the need to combat discrimination and to promote equality, and the need to make available a range of necessary skills and experience to ensure that the Corporation carries out its functions under the College's Articles of Government.

- 14.2 Governors must obtain a thorough grounding in their duties and responsibilities by participating in the College's governance induction and training programmes, including regular refresher workshops.
- 14.3 In order to promote more effective governance, Governors will carry out an annual review of the performance by the Board of Governors of its duties and responsibilities, as part of a continuing and critical process of self-evaluation.

SCHEDULE 1

List of source documents

1. the College's Instrument of Government;
2. the College's Articles of Government;
3. the Standing Orders and terms of reference of the Board of Governors and its committees;
4. the Financial Memorandum entered into by the College with the SFA [and the Funding Agreement entered into by the College with the EFA];
5. the College's Mission Statement and corporate objectives;
6. the College's Strategic Plan;
7. the College's policies that extend to Corporation members, including the College's policies on equal opportunities, the anti-bribery policy as required by the Bribery Act 2010, the College's policy on receiving gifts and hospitality, the College's policy on safeguarding learners and the College's policy on preventing people being drawn into terrorism;
8. the principles laid down by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (Nolan Committee) for those holding public office, namely:
 - selflessness;
 - integrity;
 - objectivity;
 - accountability;
 - openness;
 - honesty; and
 - leadership.

An extract from the report of the Nolan Committee setting out these Principles in more detail is set out at **Appendix 1**;

9. the Post-16 Audit Code of Practice 2016 to 2017 issued by the SFA and the EFA;
10. the English Colleges' Code of Good Governance;
11. the Good Governance Standard for Public Services published by the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services (Good Governance Standard). An extract from the Good Governance Standard setting out the six core principles of good governance is set out at **Appendix 2**;

Appendices 1 (the Seven Principles of Public Life), **2** (Six Core Principles of Good Governance), **3** (Responsibilities of Governors), **4** (Responsibilities of the Principal and Clerk), **5** (Financial Memorandum of the SFA) and **6** (Powers of the Governing Body) are attached to this Code for reference.

AS A GOVERNOR OF NELSON AND COLNE COLLEGE I AGREE TO OBSERVE THIS CODE OF CONDUCT TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITIES.

Dated:

SIGNATURE:.....

NAME:.....

APPENDIX 1

The Seven Principles of Public Life

The following is an extract from the Second Report of the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life, May 1996:

SELFLESSNESS

Holders of public office should take decisions 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.

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 official duties.

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.

ACCOUNTABILITY

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

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.

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.

LEADERSHIP

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

APPENDIX 2

Six Core Principles of Good Governance

The following is an extract from the Good Governance Standard for Public Services published by the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services, January 2005:

1. **Good governance means focusing on the organisation's purposes and on outcomes for citizens and service users**
 - 1.1 Being clear about the organisation's purposes and its intended outcomes for citizens and service users;
 - 1.2 Making sure that users receive a high quality service;
 - 1.3 Making sure that taxpayers receive value for money.
2. **Good governance means performing effectively in clearly defined functions and roles**
 - 2.1 Being clear about the functions of the governing body;
 - 2.2 Being clear about the responsibilities of the non-executives and the executive, and making sure that those responsibilities are carried out;
 - 2.3 Being clear about relationships between the governors and the public.
3. **Good governance means promoting values for the whole organisation and demonstrating the values of good governance through behaviour**
 - 3.1 Putting organisational values into practice;
 - 3.2 Individual governors behaving in ways that uphold and exemplify effective governance.
4. **Good Governance means taking informed, transparent decisions and managing risk**
 - 4.1 Being rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken;
 - 4.2 Having and using good quality information, advice and support;
 - 4.3 Making sure that an effective risk management systems is in operation.
5. **Good governance means developing the capacity and capability of the governing body to be effective**
 - 5.1 Making sure that appointed and elected governors have the skills, knowledge and experience they need to perform well;
 - 5.2 Developing the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluating their performance, as individuals and as a group;
 - 5.3 Striking a balance, in the membership of the governing body, between continuity and renewal.

6. **Good governance means engaging stakeholders and making accountability real**
- 6.1 Understanding formal and informal accountability relationships;
- 6.2 Taking an active and planned approach to dialogue with accountability to the public;
- 6.3 Taking an active and planned approach to responsibility to staff;
- 6.4 Engaging effectively with institutional stakeholders.

APPENDIX 3

Summary of Main Responsibilities of Governors under the Articles of Government

Under the College's Articles of Government the Governing Body shall be responsible:

- (a) for the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution and for oversight of its activities;
- (b) for publishing arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students on the determination and periodic review of staff and students of the educational character and mission of the institution and the oversight of its activities;
- (c) for approving the quality strategy of the institution;
- (d) for the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the Corporation and for safeguarding their assets;
- (e) for approving annual estimates of income and expenditure;
- (f) for 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 as a member of staff;
- (g) for setting a framework for the pay and conditions of service of all other staff; and
- (h) for setting the policy by which the tuition and other fees payable to the College are determined (subject to any terms and conditions attached to grants, loans or other payments paid or made by the SFA).

"Senior Post" means the post of Principal and such other senior posts if any as the Board of Governors may designate for the purposes of the Articles.

Responsibilities which must not be delegated

The Articles of Government prohibit the Governing Body from delegating the following:-

- (a) the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution;
- (b) the approval of the annual estimates of income and expenditure;
- (c) the responsibility for ensuring the solvency of the institution and the Corporation and the safeguarding of their assets;
- (d) the appointment of the Principal or holder of a senior post;
- (e) 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 as member of staff);
- (f) the modifying or revoking of the Articles of Government;

- (g) the consideration of the case for dismissal, of the Principal, the Clerk or the holder of a senior post unless such function is delegated to a committee of members of the Corporation; and
- (h) the power to determine an appeal in connection with the dismissal of the Principal, the Clerk or the holder of a senior post unless such power is delegated to a committee of members of the Corporation.

The Governing Body may, from time to time, resolve to add other functions which must not be delegated to this list of "reserved" responsibilities.

APPENDIX 4

Summary of main responsibilities of the Principal under the Articles of Government

Under the College's Articles of Government the Principal shall be the Chief Executive of the College and shall be responsible for:

- (a) making proposals to the Governing Body about the educational character and mission of the institution, and for implementing the decisions of the Governing Body;
- (b) the determination, of the institution's academic activities and the determination of its other activities;
- (c) preparing annual estimates of income and expenditure, for consideration and approval by the Governing Body, and the management of budget and resources within the estimates approved by the Governing Body;
- (d) the organisation, direction and management of the institution and leadership of the staff;
- (e) the appointment, assignment, grading, appraisal, suspension, dismissal, and determination, within the framework set by the Governing Body, 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
- (f) maintaining student discipline and, within the rules and procedures provided for within these Articles, suspending or expelling students on disciplinary grounds and expelling students for academic reasons.

Summary of main responsibilities of the Clerk under the Articles of Government.

Under the College's Articles of Government the Clerk shall be responsible for advising the Corporation with regard to:

- (a) the operation of its powers;
- (b) procedural matters;
- (c) the conduct of its business; and
- (d) matters of governance practice.

APPENDIX 5

Summary of Main Provisions of the Financial Memorandum with the Skills Funding Agency

Purpose

The SFA has issued a revised version of the financial memorandum for further education colleges, together with a version for sixth form colleges that recruit adult students. The EFA has issued a funding agreement for further education colleges that provide EFA funded education for those under 19. These documents came into force on 1 August 2015.

Format

The form of the documentation varies because of the different legal basis on which the SFA and EFA fund provision. The SFA provides funding under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 on the basis of grant – in aid. Such grants are provided subjects to conditions set out in the Financial Memorandum. The EFA provides funding under the Education Act 2002. Such funding is not limited to provision by grant – in aid so the appropriate document is a Funding Agreement which is contractual in nature. The Funding Agreements which EFA will provide to colleges are broadly similar in nature to those that EFA has with academy schools.

The Financial Memorandum applies to all SFA funded FE colleges, with only the financial annexes differing between institutions, unless there is a particular need for special provisions specific to a particular institution.

The EFA Funding Agreements are structured in two parts. In the version of the EFA funding agreement for general FE and specialist colleges, this material is omitted, since EFA will take assurance from the equivalent provisions in these colleges' Financial Memoranda with SFA. For the same reason, the version of the Financial Memorandum which is now provided by the SFA to sixth form colleges omits those provisions which are central to the financial accountability arrangements, e.g. those setting out the responsibilities of the governing body and of the accounting officer, the requirement to provide information, and the requirements in relation to financial reporting and audit. This is because the SFA will rely on equivalent provisions in the sixth form colleges' Funding Agreements with the EFA.

In practice, if a general FE college, receiving funding from both SFA and EFA, were to get into serious financial or quality difficulties, there would be liaison between the two funding bodies and regulatory action would be co-ordinated by the lead funding body, i.e. the SFA (for general FE colleges) and the EFA (for sixth form colleges).

There follows a commentary on the main provisions of the SFA Financial Memorandum for further education colleges.

Definitions

It should be noted that references to public funds include funds provided by HEFCE as well as those provided by the SFA.

Responsibilities of the Governing Body and the accounting officer

The Financial Memorandum recognises that a Corporation is an independent body responsible for managing the college and ensuring its financial viability. However, the Corporation must inform the SFA of any transaction that could jeopardise the college's financial viability and must also be able to demonstrate that all transactions achieve value for money for funds provided under the financial memorandum.

The Governing Body must appoint an accounting officer (expected to be the chief executive/principal of the college). There must be an accounting officer in place at all the times and the SFA must be informed of the accounting officer's name and position and who will discharge their various responsibilities if they are absent from the college for an extended period.

The accounting officer takes personal responsibility, which is not delegable, to ensure compliance with the Financial Memorandum and conditions of funding. The accounting officer may be required to appear before the Public Accounts Committee on matters relating to the Corporation's use of funds.

The accounting officer must advise the Governing Body if at any time in his/her opinion any action under consideration by the governing body is incompatible with the Financial Memorandum. If the governing body resolves to continue with such action the accounting officer must inform the SFA.

Allocation of funds

The SFA will allocate funds to the Corporation annually provided that it is satisfied that the Corporation is financially viable and able to deliver education of a reasonable quality meeting the needs of learners and employers and the Corporation has met the previous year's conditions of funding. The Corporation is free to spend its funding as it sees fit provided it fulfils the conditions of funding but funds must not be used to deliver provision in respect of which the Corporation has already received other funding, public or otherwise, unless agreed by the SFA. The SFA can require assurance that delivery of provision complies with the Financial Memorandum and can require, at the College's cost, evidence to support payment claims.

Capital transactions

The Corporation must manage its property with regard to good practice guidance in the FE sector. It is no longer necessary to obtain approval of the SFA to the disposal of land or buildings which had been acquired or developed with the help of capital grants from the SFA or previous associated bodies, but the SFA must be notified in writing of such transactions and reserves the right to require repayment of some or all of the associated grant.

Financial reporting

The SFA specifies the information to be contained in the Corporation's financial statements. Audited financial statements must be provided to the SFA within five months of the Corporation's year end.

The Corporation must have an effective policy on risk management. The Corporation must notify the SFA in writing if at any time there is a risk to the college's solvency and viability.

Audit

The Corporation must appoint an audit committee and arrange to provide internal and financial statements audit, including regularity audit, in accordance with the Post-16 Audit Code of Practice 2016 to 2017.

The Corporation must investigate and report to the SFA all significant cases of fraud or suspected fraud.

Payment to employees on termination of employment

The Corporation must demonstrate that any payments made to employees on the termination of their employment are regular, secure value for money and avoid spending funds on settlements where disciplinary action would have been more appropriate. Where employment claims are brought by a senior post holder it should take appropriate professional advice on any proposed settlement and the terms of the final agreement should be agreed by the Governing Body and brought to the attention of the financial statements auditors.

Provision of data on learners and staff and of information

A college must supply learner data in accordance with SFA requirements.

The SFA reserves the right to request information from the Corporation in order to exercise his responsibilities. The Corporation must inform the SFA in writing of the vacating or filling of the positions of Chair of the governing body, Principal and Clerk. The SFA has the right to share information provided by the college, for example with Parliamentary bodies.

Conditions of funding

The detailed requirements in relation to each learning programme are set out in the SFA Funding Rules 2016-17. The maximum value of funds for each learning programme re set out in Appendix 1 to the financial memorandum. The SFA reserves the right to reduce the overall maximum value for each learning programme by giving three months' notice. This can be done without the need to give a reason, although if the SFA did so it would lay itself open to a legal challenge based on the argument that it had done so unreasonably. A new condition from 2015-16 is that a college must provide evidence that it has worked in partnership with the LEP to ensure its provision takes account of the LEP's priorities. The SFA reserves the right to impose additional conditions where he/she considers it necessary to secure the delivery of education and training of a reasonable quality or to require the Corporation to address concerns about its financial viability.

Sub-contracted provision

SFA considers extensive sub-contracting of provision to be a significant risk factor for colleges. It requires colleges to make a Declaration of Subcontractors bi-annually and comply with requirements set out in the Funding Rules. These include requirements in relation to the form of the legally binding sub-contract which must be put in place. From the 2015-16 memorandum onwards, where a college has sub-contracts in aggregate worth more than £100,000 per year it must obtain an annual report from its external auditors providing assurance on its arrangements for managing the sub-contractors and provide SFA with an auditor's certificate that a report confirming satisfactory assurance has been received.

Repayment of funds

In the case of a breach of the conditions of funding the SFA reserves the right to require repayment of all or part of the funds.

Raising Standards, Feedback and Complaints

The college must deliver the funded provision to an acceptable standard of quality and comply with the Performance Management Rules published by the SFA. There is a set procedure for dealing with inadequate provision which may lead to issue of a Notice of Concern or ultimately a Notice of Withdrawal of Funding. The college must inform the SFA if it is sanctioned by an awarding body. It must also notify the SFA of the date of the feedback meeting following an inspection by Ofsted so that SFA can send a representative to the meeting. If a Notice of Concern is issued the college's ability to start new learners on a programme may be suspended. The SFA may invite a college to discuss with it if considers that there is a significant risk that a college may become financially inadequate over a three year period. If the college's response is inadequate the SFA may ask the college to undertake a financial or structural review. Such a "request" may be made a condition of funding. If it is made a condition and the condition is not complied with the SFA may issue a Notice of Concern or of Withdrawal of Funding.

Colleges are expected to have acceptable procedures for gathering and acting upon feedback and complaints from learners and/or their representatives and employers and the wider community. These must be made available to those who may wish to complain. Where a complaint is not resolved satisfactorily the complainant must be informed of their right to complain to the SFA.

Additional matters

The Financial Memorandum incorporates a number of other clauses on compliance matters such as health and safety, equal opportunities, data protection and freedom of information, and State Aid.

Interpretation

Nothing in the Financial Memorandum shall require the Corporation to act in a manner which would cause the Corporation to cease to be a charity.

Colleges need to familiarise themselves with the detailed content of the new financial memorandum

and funding agreement in the versions applicable to their type of college. However, despite the presentational differences in the documentation, colleges will find that the substance of the requirements that they need to meet is largely unchanged.

APPENDIX 6

Summary of the Statutory Powers of the Governing Body

PRINCIPAL POWERS

Under section 18(1) of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 a further education corporation may:

- (a) provide further and higher education;
- (b) provide secondary education suitable to the requirements of persons who have attained the age of 14 years, or provide secondary education or participate in the provision of secondary education at a school (subject to the consultation with the appropriate local education authority); and
- (c) supply goods or services in connection with their provision of education.

These powers are known as the Corporation's "principal powers".

SUPPLEMENTARY POWERS

Under section 19 of the 1992 Act the Corporation may do anything which appears to it to be necessary or expedient for the purpose of or in connection with the exercise of any of the principal powers conferred by section 18 of the Act, including in particular the following powers:

- (a) to acquire and dispose of land and other property;
- (b) to enter into contracts, including in particular:
 - (i) contracts for the employment of teachers and other staff for the purposes of or in connection with carrying on any activities undertaken in the exercise of the Corporation's principal powers; and
 - (ii) contracts with respect to the carrying on by the Corporation of any such activities;
- (c) to form, participate in forming or invest in a company or become a member of a charitable incorporated organisation;
- (d) to borrow such sums as the Corporation thinks fit for the purposes of carrying on any activities it has power to carry on or to meet any liability transferred to it under sections 23 to 27 of the 1992 Act (i.e. when the College achieved its corporate independence on 1st April 1993) and, in connection with such borrowing, the power to grant any mortgage, charge or other security in respect of any land or other property of the Corporation;
- (e) to invest any sums not immediately required for the purposes of carrying on any activities the Corporation has power to carry on;
- (f) to accept gifts of money, land or other property and apply it, or hold and administer it on trust for, any of those purposes;

- (g) to do anything incidental to the conduct of an educational institution providing further or higher education, including founding scholarships or exhibitions, making grants and giving prizes and
- (h) to provide advice or assistance to any other person where it appears to the Corporation to be appropriate for them to do so for the purpose of or in connection with the provision of education by the other person

The Corporation may also provide facilities of any description (including boarding accommodation and recreational facilities for students and staff and facilities to meet the needs of students having learning difficulties) which appear to be necessary or desirable for the purposes of or in connection with the carrying on of the principal powers.

The powers conferred by section 19 of the 1992 Act are known as "**supplementary powers**".

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