

West Suffolk College

Role Description and Person Specification for Student Governor

Role Description

The Corporation is the highest decision-making body in the College and Student Governors are positioned right at the top of the student voice process within the College.

The Corporation is responsible for strategy, finance, estates, human resources, quality and reputation but most importantly for ensuring that all students at the College have a high quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Discussions and decisions at meetings are about the future of the College and its resources, the impact of Government policy and the experience of students.

The role is a worthwhile and rewarding experience for those who want to make a positive difference to the College and, as an equal governor to the rest of the Corporation, has a unique contribution to make.

Any student (sixth form, adult, apprenticeship and/or University Studies) can be a student governor. As independent members of the Corporation, you are not required to represent the opinions of the student body nor work to a specific agenda determined by other students.

Your role is to work with the Corporation on the full range of College activities and to comment in discussions relating to your experience as a student, for example if the discussion is about student recruitment, the governors may well ask the Student Governors to comment on their experience of finding out about the college and the process of enrolment.

You draw on your own experience as a student to work as part of the Corporation to help determine the future direction of the College, approving its quality, strategy and its financial activity. Student Governors are not expected to bring professional skills to the Corporation, rather can provide an invaluable first-hand insight into the experience of being a student.

As with all Governors, Student Governors will be required to complete a declaration of interests about any involvement with outside organisations, as well as criminal convictions that could influence their position on the Corporation. Prospective Student Governors may be interviewed by a panel of current governors.

Commitment

To attend all Corporation meetings (3 per year, at the end of each term) and all Educational Excellence Committees meetings*. **Note: there are two Educational Excellence Committees; you would attend the Committee most applicable to your current course/type of study. If you are a sixth form, adult or apprenticeship student the Committee meets 6 times per year (2 per term). If you are a University Studies student the Committee meets 3 times per year (1 per term). We recognise that you may not be able to attend all meetings depending on your study commitments. These meetings are held both physically and virtually via Teams.*

To attend the Strategic Conferences (in January and May); as well as ad-hoc Strategy sessions, Briefing Strategy Seminars and training sessions via Teams to support you in your role.

All meetings are accompanied by electronic meeting papers housed on GovernorHub. If you do not have a suitable electronic device, the College will provide one to support you in your role. It is expected that you will have read the papers prior to the meetings so that you can contribute to the discussions.

Once appointed you will go through an induction programme to introduce you to the workings of the College Corporation and the legal processes behind it (Instrument and Articles of Government) and be allocated a mentor who will support you in your role.

Specific Responsibilities of the Corporation and the Governors

The core functions of the Corporation are to:

- determine and develop the College's educational character
- set and communicate the College's strategy and goals
- hold the Executive leaders to account for the educational performance and quality of the College, and for the performance of staff
- exercise effective control to ensure that funds and assets are protected, the College remains solvent and its legal obligations are met

The 6 main duties of Governors under charity law are to:

1. Ensure the Corporation carries out its purpose for the public benefit
2. Comply with the Corporation's governing document and the law
3. Act in the Corporation's best interests
4. Manage the Corporation's resources responsibly
5. Act with reasonable care and skill
6. Ensure the Corporation is accountable

Person Specification

The key competencies required are:

- the ability to act in the long-term interest of the students;
- an understanding of and commitment to the College's Instrument and Articles of Government, ethos and values;
- an understand the governance arrangements of the Corporation and its scheme of delegation;
- effective communication skills;
- the ability to make sound judgements;
- the ability and willingness to hold others to account for their professional practice;
- the ability to work as a team;
- able to attend meetings and to contribute to discussions and commit to agreed actions;
- respectful of the views of others and to be open to new ideas and thoughts;
- able to maintain confidentiality;
- able to act with integrity, avoiding any personal conflicts of interest and complying with the Corporation's Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest policy;
- willing to support the College in public and act as an ambassador of the College;
- committed to training and skills development.