



Role Description for the Chairman of the Corporation, the Vice Chairman and the Chairmen of Committees

Chairman of the Corporation

The Governing Board fulfils its duty as a collective decision-making body based on majority decisions by those present at meetings. The Chairman's main function is to provide leadership to the Governing Board in carrying out its responsibilities. The relationship between the Principal and the Chairman is very important in order to ensure that the Chairman is kept informed about the College between meetings and that the views of the Governing Board are represented to the Principal so that business can progress.

The Chairman's relationship with the Clerk is also important to facilitate the smooth and efficient operation of the Governing Board's business and to support Board members' development needs.

The main duties of the Chairman include: -

- Chairing Governing Board and relevant committee and other meetings
- Calling special or additional meetings where necessary
- Exercising a casting vote at meetings
- Ensuring the Governing Board's focus on major strategic issues
- Making sure that there is a supportive working relationship between governors and managers through continuous dialogue with the Principal
- Maintaining awareness of the distinction between governance and management
- The appraisal of the Principal
- The appraisal of the Clerk and maintaining a three-way dialogue with the Clerk and Principal
- Ensuring regular self-appraisal of the Governing Board's performance
- Fostering effective governance through leadership and good practice
- Developing the governing board as a team, encouraging representation of a variety of skills
- Acting as a spokesperson and ambassador for the College

- Checking that actions are followed up between meetings and acting on behalf of the Governing Board between meetings where prior approval of the governing board has been given, including the signing and sealing of relevant College documents - any Chairman's action should normally be agreed in advance and must be reported to the next meeting
- Leading on arrangements for selecting a new Principal, and ability to suspend from duty, or refer to a special committee for dismissal, a designated senior post holder.

The personal characteristics of an effective Chairman include:

- integrity
- ability to influence without domination
- decisiveness with an insistence on getting things done
- capacity for understanding, thinking and reasoning
- authoritative - but being engaging and respectful at the same time
- capacity to engage others in debate
- capacity to challenge
- ability to 'steer' not 'row' and to recognise the difference
- ability to take a financial overview.

Vice Chairman

The role of the Vice Chairman is to support the Chairman and act in the Chairman's absence. This means more than stepping in to chair occasional meetings, but to maintain a strategic overview and be prepared to lead with authority on key issues when the Chairman is not present.

The same personal qualities that make an effective Chairman, make a good Vice Chairman. There is an expectation that the Vice Chairman would be part of the succession planning arrangements for the appointment of the Chairman. There is an expectation that upon the expiry of the term of office of the Chairman or a decision by the Chairman to step down, that the Vice Chairman would, subject to the approval of the Corporation, succeed to the position of Chairman.

Chairs of Committees

The Corporation will appoint Chairmen of committees whose terms of office will be reviewed with committee membership. Where a committee has external co-opted members, the Chairman will normally be a member of the Governing Body. A committee may also appoint a Vice Chairman.

The role of the Committee Chairman is vital to the effective governance of the College, which operates through a framework of sub-committees. The Committee

chairmen work with the relevant member of the Executive Team and the Clerk and, as well as steering their Committee, serve as a link between the committees and full Governing Board. In addition, committee chairmen are an important source of support for the Chairman and Principal, and of advice and development for all governors, particularly for new members.

Governance in practice

