



Role Description for the Chair of the Corporation, the Vice Chair and the Chairs of Committees

Chair 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 Chair's main function is to provide leadership to the governing board in carrying out its responsibilities.

The relationship between the Principal and the Chair is very important in order to ensure that the chair 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 Chair'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 Chair 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 chair'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 chair 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 Chair

The role of the Vice Chair is to support the Chair and act in the Chair'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 Chair is not present.

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

Chairs of Committees

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

The role of the committee Chair is vital to the effective governance of the college, which operates through a framework of sub-committees. The committee chairs 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 chairs are an important source of support for the chair and principal, and of advice and development for all governors, particularly for new members.

Governance in practice

