

## CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF THE CORPORATION

### 1. ROLE DESCRIPTION

The Chair leads the Board of the Corporation, playing a central role in shaping the culture of the Board and the ethos and direction of the College, listening to and getting the best out of governors, challenging and supporting the Principal and Chief Executive and her team, and line-managing the Principal and Chief Executive and the Clerk to the Corporation.

The South Essex Corporation Board is a collective body, where all decisions are made by the Board, and the individual contributions of governors are encouraged and equally valued in order to ensure delivery of the South Essex College strategy, and robust oversight of college performance.

Specifically, the role of the Chair is:

1. To provide effective leadership of the Board to ensure that it ~~fulfils~~ fulfils its core duties for:
  - a. articulating ~~the strategy~~ the strategy, mission, vision, values, and ethos of the College
  - b. driving the delivery of the College strategy, setting strategic objectives and monitoring their achievement whilst holding the executive team to account
  - c. establishing and maintaining high standards of integrity
  - d. overseeing the quality of teaching and learning and the student experience at the college in order to foster excellence
  - e. Delivering a sound financial plan, monitoring the financial health of the College and the efficient and effective use of its resources
  - f. assessing the performance of the Principal and Chief Executive and Senior Postholders in achieving its vision and strategy.
2. To develop and promote effective working relationships with the Principal and Chief Executive, the Clerk, and other members of the Executive Leadership Team.
3. To work with the Clerk to ensure the business of the Board is conducted professionally and efficiently, in compliance with the Board's statutory powers and agreed procedures, and in the spirit of a culture of collective responsibility.
4. With the Principal and Chief Executive and Clerk, to set Board meeting agendas to ensure that the Board is exercising strategic oversight and performing its duties in a timely, appropriate and effective way.
5. To conduct meetings to ensure that issues are debated fully, that all governors have a chance to contribute, that clear and appropriate collective decisions are reached, and that business is concluded efficiently.
6. To review draft minutes to ensure that Board discussions and decisions are accurately recorded.

7. To promote the seven Principles of Public Life established by Nolan (Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership) in all business of the Board.
8. To undertake annual one-to-one performance reviews with governors, maintain regular communication with and provide ongoing individual support, to maximise governors' contribution to the Board and drive performance.
9. To participate in an ~~annual Chair's~~ annual Chair's 360-degree appraisal.
10. To promote a critical Board self-assessment process that identifies the steps necessary to strengthen its performance to conform ~~with~~ to the highest standards in the sector.
11. To ensure that the balance of the Board is reviewed with respect to skills sets, and diversity, in consultation with the Search & Governance Committee.
12. To act as a key ambassador for the College, bringing enthusiasm and energy in promoting the College's best interests and reputation both within the college and with external stakeholders.
13. To take a prominent role in any inspection or review of the College by an external inspectorate or other body.
14. To develop a constructive, supportive, and professional working relationship with the Principal and Chief Executive to assist her in achieving agreed objectives. This will include regular meetings to monitor and plan Board business (with the Clerk); explore new strategic opportunities; discuss any potential issues of concern or risks to the achievement of the College's strategic objectives, quality of the learner experience or financial health, and raise any matters relating to performance or working life.
15. To undertake, with other members of the Remuneration Committee, the annual appraisal and mid-year review of the Principal and Chief Executive.
16. To work with the Principal and Chief Executive on arrangements for the annual appraisal of other senior postholders, to ensure timely reporting to the Remuneration Committee.
17. To undertake the annual review of Clerking arrangements, together with other members of the Remuneration Committee.
18. To lead on any future senior postholder recruitment
19. To exercise a second or casting vote where there is an equal division of votes on any decision taken at a Board of the Corporation meeting.
20. To exercise any specific authority delegated by the Board of the Corporation, together with a general delegated authority to act, after consultation with the Principal and Chief Executive, the Clerk, and other Governors as appropriate, on any issue arising which is both urgent and important which would normally be dealt with by the Board but which cannot wait for the next Board of the Corporation meeting. Such action will be reported to the Board for information/endorsement at the next full meeting.

21. To call a special meeting of the Board of the Corporation (if necessary, with less than 7 days' notice) where urgent and significant matters need to be considered before the next scheduled meeting of the Board.



## 2. PERSON SPECIFICATION

Shortlisted candidates should be able to demonstrate the following.

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<b>Knowledge/ Experience and qualities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A passion for and understanding of the FE and HE sector, the aims and purposes of further education and the impact colleges have on the lives of students and the wider community.</li> <li>• Knowledge of Further Education</li> <li>• Significant executive management and leadership experience gained in large, complex organisations.</li> <li>• Financial and commercial acumen.</li> <li>• Ability to promote a board that understands their responsibility for, and the value of challenge, in all matters they consider</li> <li>• Strategic planning and oversight, with the ability to see the big picture and take a broad-based view of issues, risks and impact.</li> <li>• Experience of leading a Board or Committee as Chair.</li> <li>• Upholding good governance principles and processes, gained through holding a position of responsibility on a Board, committee or similar group. An understanding of the difference between governance and management.</li> <li>• Experience of realising an organisation's commitment to excellence through its strategic aims.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A good knowledge of the Further Education and Higher Education sector</li> </ul>

<b>Skills/Abilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exemplary communication skills to deal effectively with a wide range of people both within the College and with other organisations and individuals.</li> <li>• Ability to chair meetings effectively, <del>facilitating</del> <u>facilitate</u> discussion by governors, <del>managing</del> <u>manage</u> differences of opinion, <del>enabling</del> <u>enable</u> effective decision making, and <del>ensuring</del> <u>ensure</u> appropriate and professional conduct in meetings.</li> <li>• Ability to act fairly and impartially in the Governing Body's and College's interests using independent <del>judgement</del> <u>judgment</u>.</li> <li>• Ability and willingness to support and mentor the CEO.</li> <li>• Ability to make a positive contribution to the team, valuing and respecting others' expertise and contribution.</li> <li>• Ability to understand and challenge written or verbal reports and data.</li> <li>• Ability to recognise and further develop the diverse talents and contributions of individual Board members.</li> <li>• Commitment to the principles of collective responsibility and accountability.</li> </ul>	
<b>Special Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedication to improving education and training across the area served by South Essex College, commitment to the College, and its role in relation to the communities it serves.</li> <li>• Ability to give the time commitment that the role requires</li> <li>• Availability for attendance at meetings and other events, including some regional and national meetings.</li> <li>• Responsibility for ensuring the promotion and safeguarding the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults and for raising any concerns.</li> <li>• Understanding of and commitment to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion within the role.</li> <li>• Willingness to continuously develop your skills and knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the South Essex <del>area,</del> <u>particularly</u> <del>area,</del> <u>particularly</u> the economic, educational and socio-economic landscape</li> <li>• Working experience of improving equality, diversity and inclusion within an organisation.</li> <li>• Knowledge of, and commitment to, sustainability within a large organisation.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Commitment to working within the Nolan Principles of Public Life and the SEC Governor Code of Conduct.</li><li>• Willingness to obtain DBS at <u>an</u> enhanced level and to provide evidence of the right to live and work in the UK.</li></ul>	
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### 3. OTHER INFORMATION

#### **Duration of Appointment:**

South Essex College governors are appointed for a four year term of office and can normally serve a maximum of two terms (eight years).

The Chair is appointed for a two year term of office, and is eligible for reappointment up to the end of their term of office as a governor.

#### **Time commitment:**

The total time commitment varies from week to week, according to the governance schedule of business. The current Chair estimates that, the role can require eight to ten days a month. This is spent on a variety of activities, including

1. Attendance at all Board and Committee meetings
2. Meetings with the CEO, including regular meetings on specific issues during their resolution
3. Meeting other local CEOs/Chairs/significant people/council(s)
4. Sector meetings, including AOC conferences, seminars and Chairs' events
5. FE Commissioner/ESFA and other regulators
6. Meetings with the Head of Governance
7. Meetings with governors individually and in groups
8. Reviews of agendas and minutes
9. Investment of time in understanding the sector, the funding regime, financials, regulation and policy changes and how these apply to the governance role
10. Other training/meetings/link governor visits, in line with all board members

Corporation Board and Committee meetings take place at 18.00, generally on a Monday. At present, following the pandemic, the Board is operating a mixed model of face to face and virtual meetings.

The College operates a full Committee structure with four Corporation Board meetings a year, six Policy and Resources Committee meetings, and termly Curriculum and Quality Committee, Audit and Risk Committee and Search and Governance Committee meetings. A committee structure chart is provided overleaf. In addition to the Board and Committee meetings, there are two Board Development Days a year.

There are other occasional daytime and evening commitments, which are planned well in advance, including attendance on link governor visits and student and staff awards ceremonies.

#### **Support Provided:**

The Chair is supported by Melissa Drayson, the college's experienced Clerk, and works closely with:

- other governors, in particular the Vice Chair and the chairs of the Board's main committees:
- Denise Brown, Principal and Chief Executive and the other members of the Executive Leadership Team.

Chairs of FE colleges can access support from the Association of Colleges (AoC), including a useful Weekly Update issued by the AoC Chief Executive, regular Governors' Briefings and a wide range of other material. The Chair will be encouraged to attend regional and national Chairs' meetings and conferences.

There is a very well-regarded development programme for Chairs, organised by the Education and Training Foundation (ETF), in partnership with the University of Oxford's Saïd Business School. We would encourage the person appointed to undertake this programme. The ETF also produces a wide range of online training materials as part its Governance Development Programme.

The chair is appraised annually by the other governors.