

WEST THAMES COLLEGE

CHAIR OF THE CORPORATION ROLE DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Chair of the Corporation
Salary:	Voluntary
Hours:	Approximately 5 hours a week
Responsible to:	Corporation Board

Key Purpose:

The Chair of the Corporation is fundamental to the success of the college as a leadership role that influences and drives decision making and strategy. The Chair ensures the Board fulfils its duties in:

- Setting and communicating the college's educational character, strategy and goals.
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance and quality of the college.
- Exercising effective control to ensure that funds and assets are protected and the financial health of the college is secure.
- Establishing high levels of integrity and ensuring compliance with legal obligations.
- Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard.
- Acting as an ambassador for the college, working with local and national stakeholders to develop relationships and build a better future.

Responsibilities:

The Chair is responsible for providing effective leadership of the Corporation Board and, in association with the Head of Governance, its efficient operation in accordance with the Instrument and Articles of Government and the Corporation's Standing Orders, by:

Strategic and Leadership Responsibilities

- Working with the Board and executive leaders in setting the educational character of the college; ensuring that students and the skills needs of the local economy are central to decision-making processes.
- Ensuring the Board has a good knowledge of the college and has mechanisms in place to obtain and listen to the views of parents, students, and staff.
- Developing strong working relationships with key stakeholders, including employers, local authorities and with chairs of neighbouring colleges, other educational institutions and training providers.
- Serving as an ambassador for the college, bringing enthusiasm and energy in promoting the college's best interests and reputation, by representing the college at external meetings, presentations, conferences in local, regional and national settings.
- Being a first point of contact and playing a leading role in employment matters as required (for example, grievance, disciplinary, capability).

- Attending college events as appropriate and encouraging other governors to do so.

Developing the Team

- Building a team of governors with the right skills and diversity for the successful oversight of the college.
- Ensuring all members of the Board have a thorough understanding of their role and receive appropriate induction and ongoing development as required.
- Ensuring members of the Board act reasonably and in line with the Board's agreed code of conduct.
- Promoting critical self-assessment of the Board performance and participating in an annual Chair's review process.
- Supporting the Head of Governance in the development and delivery of associated self-assessment action plans and any governor development programmes.
- Being willing to attend any necessary and appropriate professional development, whenever practicable.

Operation of the Board

- Chairing the Board's meetings, ensuring that business is conducted efficiently, effectively and in a timely manner ensuring that matters are debated fully, so that all governors have opportunities to engage and contribute.
- Striving to ensure that all discussions, decisions, judgements and actions are underpinned and informed by the 'seven principles of public life' established by the Nolan Committee.
- Working with the Head of Governance and the Principal to plan for Board meetings, ensuring that agendas focus on the Board's key responsibilities and strategic priorities and reducing unnecessary paperwork.
- Collaborating with the Head of Governance to establish effective working procedures and sound committee structures.
- Calling a special meeting of the Board where urgent and significant matters need to be considered before the next ordinary board meeting.
- Having a second or casting vote at meetings of the Board where there is an equal division of votes on an issue.
- Acting on behalf of the Board between meetings on matters delegated by it or on routine matters such as the signing of documents, or in response to approaches from external organisations on issues which do not require approval by the Board.

Responsibilities in Respect of the Principal and the Head of Governance

The Chair is responsible for promoting a constructive and supportive working relationship with the Principal, to assist them in achieving agreed objectives while maintaining a professional relationship at all times. Both post-holders shall meet regularly for consultation and communication, and for the following purposes:

- Briefing of the Chair by the Principal on matters of interest and importance.
- Updating on key events and progress since the previous meeting.
- Informal exploration of differences of opinion as they arise.
- Early warning of problems which may arise for the College.
- The opportunity for informal discussions relating to working practice.

The Chair:

- Shall undertake the annual appraisal of the Principal and ensure that they have access to appropriate opportunities for development and training. The outcomes will be reported to the Board.
- Shall offer both general and specific support to the Principal where strategic, major or contentious issues are involved.
- Shall ensure that the Board fulfils its duty of care to the Principal, including ensuring a safe and secure working environment, a reasonable work-life balance, and support for their wellbeing.
- Shall undertake the annual appraisal of the Head of Governance and report the outcomes to the Board.
- Will be responsible for instigating any disciplinary action against the holders of posts designated as senior posts, should the need arise.

Additional information

The above list is indicative only and not exhaustive. The Chair will be expected to perform all such additional duties as are reasonably commensurate with the role.

Person Specification

Chair of the Corporation Board

	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge/ Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant executive management and leadership experience • Experience of leading successful change programmes in complex organisations • Experience of taking a broad-based view of issues and events and their short and long-term impact through direct experience of working at a senior level • Excellent communication skills to deal effectively with a wide range of people both within the College and with other organisations and individuals • Experience of realising an organisation's commitment to excellence through its strategic aims • An understanding of the education sector and the aims and purposes of further education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant executive management and leadership experience in the education sector, preferably FE/skills • Experience of holding a responsible position on a board, committee or other similar group • An understanding of the legal and regulatory framework in further education
Skills/Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to chair meetings of the Corporation, facilitating discussion by members and enabling efficient determination of actions and decisions • Ability to make a positive contribution to the team, valuing and respecting others' expertise and contribution • Ability to understand and challenge written or verbal reports • Ability to promote our excellent reputation and behave appropriately and professionally in meetings • Ability positively to manage differences of opinion and effect collective responsibility for decision making • Ability to recognise and further develop the diverse talents and contributions of individual Board members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the obligations of charitable trustees
Special Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compelling passion and dedication to improve education and training across areas which the College serves. • Commitment to the College and its role in relation to the communities it serves. • Availability for attendance at meetings and other events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to attend occasional regional meetings with other governors

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsibility for ensuring the promotion and safeguarding the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and for raising any concerns• Willingness continuously to update skills and knowledge• Understanding how to promote equality and diversity within the role• Willingness to work in line with the Nolan Principles of Public Life and Code of Conduct• Willingness to obtain DBS at enhanced level and to provide evidence of the right to live and work in the UK	
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