



Governor Recruitment, Development and Succession Planning Policy

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01	New Policy	March 2023
02	Policy reviewed with only minor amends which do not materially impact the document and therefore the Equality Impact Assessment carried out in February 2023 still applies.	March 2025

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Governor Recruitment, Development and Succession Planning Policy

1. Purposes of the policy

The Board is committed to achieving the following:

- Ensuring an effective and fully functioning Board to ensure high quality governance of the College.
- Recruiting governors from a range of different backgrounds and skillsets to ensure the Board is able to address the challenges of FE governance.
- Equality of opportunity.
- Diversity of thought.
- Reflecting the local community.

This is embedded through the College values:

- Respect Others - We are kind and considerate to everyone.
- Take Responsibility - We act honestly and do what we say we'll do.
- Have courage - We give things a go and stand up for what is right.
- Be Creative – We are open minded and explore new ways of doing things.
- Work Together – We value our differences and learn from each other.

In terms of succession planning, the Board is committed to:

- Providing development for existing governors to enable them to put themselves forward for Chair or Vice-Chair roles.
- Building a broader range of potential candidates by linking to local or national networks and communities which represent or include groups who are underrepresented.
- Engaging with employers and professional organisations, particularly where specialist skills or experience are needed.
- Inviting interested individuals to join a Committee to gain insight and experience in advance of any application to become a governor.

The Board is the appointing body, and will seek to ensure that all governors are appointed on merit, and in accordance with an open selection procedure undertaken by the Governance Committee. For Staff and Student Governors, governors will be appointed via their peers, subject to Board approval.

2. General

With the exception of Staff and Student Governors, governors shall only be appointed by the Board following a recommendation from the Governance Committee.

All appointments shall be made in accordance with the Instrument & Articles of Government.

The procedure for filling vacancies shall be based on an open and transparent process and the application of all general principles of equality of opportunity including relevant discrimination legislation.

3. Re-appointment

Towards the last 6 months of a governor's term of office, governors will be asked to confirm their intention to be considered for re-appointment, where eligible – (eligibility is set out within the Instrument and Articles).

Where a governor does wish to be re-appointed, this will be considered by the Governance Committee who will then make a recommendation to the Board for re-appointment, where considered to be appropriate.

As part of the consideration, the Governance Committee will consider:

- The governor's skills, knowledge and experience.
- The governor's contribution.
- The length of the governor's prior term.

Where a governor does not wish to be re-appointed, the process for recruiting a governor will begin.

4. Succession Planning

All governors are asked to provide as much notice as possible with their intention to resign mid-term, however the College ask for a minimum as follows:

- Chair of Corporation Board – 6 months
- Vice-Chair of Corporation Board – 3 months
- Committee Chair – 3 months
- Governors – 1 month

This is to allow succession planning to ensure continuous effective governance and a fully functioning Board, however the Board appreciate that there may be circumstances which don't allow for such notice.

When considering succession planning, consideration will be given to the development of existing governors and the promotion of the current membership.

Chair of Corporation

When the Chair of the Corporation comes towards the end of their term (where they are unable to be re-appointed) or notes their intention to resign from their position / role of the Chair, the Board will be notified and expressions of interest will be sought for the role from those eligible.

Where there is more than 1 expression of interest, interviews will be arranged by the Governance Committee, with a recommendation submitted to the Board for approval. There may also be instances where an independent member is asked to sit on the panel.

Where necessary, the Board may agree to recruit additional Board members prior to the appointment of the Chair. The Governance Committee will be responsible for overseeing the process, agreeing a short-list, where required, and arranging interviews. The Governance Committee will then submit a recommendation to the Board for the position of the Chair.

Where a vacancy becomes available and there are no nominations from governors, the Board will consider its next steps which may include external advertisement of the role and / or the use of external recruitment agencies to assist with the vacancy.

Where a vacancy becomes available and there is a gap between the Chair vacating the post and the implementation of a new Chair to the post, the Vice-Chair will be asked to deputise.

The full Board will approve the appointment of the role of Chair.

Vice-Chair of Corporation

When a Vice-Chair of the Corporation comes towards the end of their term (where they are unable to be re-appointed) or notes their intention to resign from their position / role of Vice-Chair, the Board will be notified and expressions of interest will be sought for the role from those eligible.

Where there is more than 1 expression of interest, interviews will be arranged by the Governance Committee, with a recommendation submitted to the Board for approval.

Where necessary, the Board may agree to recruit additional Board members prior to the appointment of the Chair. The Governance Committee will be responsible for overseeing the process, agreeing a short-list, where required, and arranging interviews. The Governance Committee will then submit a recommendation to the Board for the position of the Chair.

Where a vacancy becomes available and there are no nominations from governors, the Board will consider its next steps which may include external advertisement of the role and / or the use of external recruitment agencies to assist with the vacancy.

Where a vacancy becomes available, and there is a gap between the Vice-Chair vacating the post and the implementation of a new Vice-Chair to the post, an experienced governor will be asked to deputise.

The full Board will approve the appointment of the role of Vice-Chair.

Chair of Committee

When the Chair of a Committee comes towards the end of their term (where they are unable to be re-appointed) or notes their intention to resign from their position / role of Chair of Committee, all Committee members (where eligible) will be given the opportunity to nominate themselves.

The Governance Committee may need to review the membership prior to expressions of interest being sought to ensure there are sufficient Committee members in post.

Where a Committee has Co-opted members, those members may wish to put themselves forward to be considered as a new recruit as a Corporation Board Governor and if they wish, the Chair of the Committee. These instances will be considered by the Governance Committee to ensure the Co-opted member adds to the skills makeup of the Board as a whole, ahead of seeking Board approval.

Where a vacancy becomes available and there are no nominations from the Committee, the Board will consider its next steps which may include opening up the nominations to the remaining Board members and / or external advertisement of the role and / or the use of external recruitment agencies to assist with the vacancy.

Where a vacancy becomes available, and there is a gap between the Chair of a Committee vacating the post and the implementation of a new Chair of Committee to the post, an experienced Committee Member will be asked to deputise.

The full Board will approve the appointment of the role of Chair of Committee.

5. Self-Assessment

The Board undertakes an annual self-assessment process which includes individual self-reflection. As part of the process, each governor is asked to participate within a meeting with the Chair and / or Vice-Chair, and as part of this conversation there will be the opportunity to discuss development and future aspirations in relation to their role as a governor.

6. Skills Matrix

Governors will be asked to complete a skills matrix on an annual basis to allow the Governance Committee to ensure effective and appropriate Corporation Board and Committee Membership. This information (along with the annual Board Self-Assessment) will aid recruitment of future governors and identify any training needs.

7. Identifying Vacancies

The Governance Committee monitor governors' terms of office and membership on an ongoing basis.

Where a vacancy arises, the Committee will review the following ahead of any recruitment exercise:

- The current status of the Board skills audit.
- The Board diversity profile.

8. Advertising Vacancies

Independent and Co-opted Governors

The Governance Committee will consider and agree the best approach to advertise vacancies. This may include advertisements on the College website and social media and / or the assistance of external recruitment agencies.

The Board aim to reach a diverse range of people and ensure the process is accessible to all, and aim to ensure the language clearly describes the role, skills required and commitment. Where the Board wish to improve the diversity profile, reference may be given to specific personal characteristics which are desirable to be met to achieve this.

Prospective candidates will be sent relevant information about the role and the College, and will be asked to provide their most recent CV and to complete a Skills Audit.

Staff Governors (Teaching and Support)

Staff Governor vacancies will be advertised to all staff members of Gateshead College staff from either the area of Teaching or Support.

Staff members will be asked to nominate themselves for the role, along with a supporting statement which would be shared with all staff from their relevant area as part of the election process (where required).

Student Governors (16-18 and 19+)

Student Governor vacancies will be advertised to all students of Gateshead College from either the area of 16-18 or 19+.

Student members will be asked to nominate themselves for the role, along with a supporting statement which would be shared with all students from their relevant area as part of the election process (where required).

9. Selection and Appointment

Independent and Co-opted Members

The Governance Committee will agree the interview arrangements, including the interview panel.

The Governance Committee (or Governance Committee Chair) will review applications and create a shortlist of candidates to progress to interview. The purpose of the interview is to confirm that candidates have the specified skills and experience, and that they understand the role and level of commitment and time needed to make a worthwhile contribution to the Corporation. The Director of Governance & Compliance will ensure applicants are eligible.

Interviews will be carried out by a panel of governors with a range of different skills and experience. There may also be instances where an independent member is asked to sit on the panel. There will also be the offer of a tour of the campus and the opportunity to interact with students.

As part of the process, candidates will be asked to declare any conflicts of interest.

Following interviews, the panel will make a recommendation to the Board for approval of appointment (where appropriate). Where interviews are unsuccessful, the Governance Committee can agree a repeat or alternative approach for recruitment.

Staff Governors (Teaching and Support)

Where there is only one nomination, this candidate will be declared elected subject to eligibility and Board approval.

Where there is more than one nomination, an election will take place. All personal statements will be shared with relevant staff members as part of the election. The candidate with the most votes will be declared elected subject to eligibility and Board approval.

In the event of a tie, drawn candidates will be asked to draw lots.

Student Governors (16-18 and 19+)

Where there is only one nomination, this candidate will be declared elected subject to eligibility and Board approval.

Where there is more than one nomination, an election will take place. All personal statements will be shared with relevant students as part of the election. The candidate with the most votes will be declared elected subject to eligibility and Board approval.

In the event of a tie, drawn candidates will be asked to draw lots.

10. Governor Development and Support (including induction)

The Board are committed to ensuring continuous development and support of all governors. This will include internal support offered by the College, and external support via external agencies.

All new governors will be invited to participate in an induction programme which will cover:

- The context of their role, including the legal status and powers of the Corporation Board and their responsibilities as charity trustees.
- The governance structure at Gateshead College.
- The roles of key people within the College (with the opportunity to meet with key staff), and the difference between governance and operational management.
- Important reference documents, such as the Instrument and Articles and the College's strategic plan.
- Ongoing development and support.
- Opportunity for a governor buddy to provide additional support.

Specific Staff and Student Governor Induction training will also be made available.

The Governance Committee are presented with a Board Development plan on an annual basis, and this considers the skills make up of the Board and any topical areas to ensure the Board remain informed.

11. Committee Membership

Committee membership is reviewed by the Governance Committee on an annual basis, and following the appointment of new governors, a discussion will take place regarding their skillset prior to recommending them to join a Committee.

All governors are asked to join at least 1 Committee, with the open invitation to attend Committee meetings throughout the year.

12. Positive Board Behaviours

The Board aim to foster a culture which:

- Empowers everyone to constructively question and challenge.
- Encourages and values independent thinking.
- Welcomes and draws on different perspectives to inform and improve decision making.

To ensure positive Board behaviours, the Corporation Board have approved a Code of Conduct.