

# Highlands College Governor Role description

## Role of a College Governor

To contribute to the work of the Governing Board in ensuring high standards of achievement and well-being for all young and adult learners in the college by:

- ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction
- holding leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils
- monitoring the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

## Activities

As part of the governing board team, a Governor is invited to:

1. Contribute to the strategic discussions at Governing Board meetings which determine:

- the vision and ethos of the college
- clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets for the college
- whether all students, including those with special educational needs and Jersey Premium, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- oversight of the college's budget, including the expenditure of the Jersey Premium allocation, ensuring robust plans are in place to enable all pupils to receive maximum benefit from the allocated money
- the college's staffing structure and key staffing policies
- understanding of the nature of Safeguarding children and adults in the college, with provision to step in where there is an allegation concerning the Principal

2. Hold leaders to account by monitoring the college's performance. This includes

- agreeing the outcomes from the college's self-evaluation process and ensuring they are used to inform the priorities in the college development plan
- considering all relevant data and feedback provided on request by college leaders and external sources on all aspects of the college performance
- asking challenging questions of Senior Leadership Team based on first-hand evidence, data, and external reports where possible; asking 'expert' board members such as the CYPES representative and/or reading research beyond the Principal's report where appropriate
- ensuring senior leaders have developed the required policies and procedures, as well as a schedule of regular reviews, and the college is operating effectively according to those policies
- listening to and reporting to the college's stakeholders: students, parents, staff, and the wider community, including local employers, within the guidelines from the Principal.

3. Ensure the college staff have the resources and support they require to do their jobs well, including the necessary expertise on business management, external advice where necessary, effective appraisal and CPD (Continuing Professional Development), and suitable premises with impactful use of resources.

4. When required, serve on panels of governors to:

- meet with prospective applicants for appointing senior staff at the request of CYPES (and other senior leaders as requested by the Principal or nominee)
- hear appeals about student suspensions and complaints

5. The role of a governor is largely a thinking and questioning role, not a doing role.

A governor does NOT:

1. write college policies.
2. undertake audits of any sort - whether financial or health & safety - even if the governor has the relevant professional experience.
3. spend much time with the students of the college - if you want to work directly with students, there are many other valuable voluntary roles within the college. Consider surveying students on a specific topic that will support the work of the college and governing body.
4. fundraise - the governing board should consider income streams and the potential for income generation, but not carry out fundraising tasks. If appropriate, governors should seek clarity in their roles as trustees.
5. undertake classroom/workshop observations to make judgements on the quality of teaching - the governing board monitors the quality of teaching in the college by requiring data from the senior staff and from external sources. However, governors may wish to accompany teaching staff on learning walks to gain supported, focussed, first-hand experience in the classroom and discuss the findings with teachers/leaders.
6. do the job of the college staff; if there is not enough capacity within the paid staff team to carry out the necessary tasks, the governing board need to consider and suggest how to rectify this

As you become more experienced as a governor, there are other roles you could volunteer for which would increase your degree of involvement and level of responsibility (e.g., as a chair of a committee). This role description does not cover the additional roles taken on by the chair, vice-chair, and chairs of committees.

To perform this core role well, a governor is expected to:

- get to know the College, including visiting the college occasionally during college hours and in agreement with the Principal, and gaining a good understanding of the college's strengths and weaknesses
- attend induction training and regular relevant training and development events
- attend meetings (full Governing Board meetings and committee meetings) and read all the papers before the meeting
- act in the best interests of all the college students
- behave in a professional manner, as guided by the Principal and/or CYPES and the Nolan Principles.

*(Adapted from a document prepared by Lesley P Stagg, CYPES Governance Adviser, August 2020)*