

Code of Conduct for the Governing Corporation

Introduction

This Code should be seen as a general guide and supplementary to the Instrument and Articles of Government. The latter will take precedence where any dispute of meaning may occur.

The Code attempts to enable members of the Corporation to undertake responsibilities in a manner which promotes public confidence in it.

Responsibilities

These are described fully in the Instrument and Articles of Government. They specifically include the following, primary responsibilities:

- for the ethos and character of the College
- for the financial viability of the College
- for the pay and conditions of employees
- for the appointment and dismissal of the Principal
- for the appointment and dismissal of the Clerk to the Corporation

Each Governor should also:

- support the aims and objectives of the college and promote the interests of the college and its students in the wider community;
- work co-operatively with other governors in the best interests of the college;
- acknowledge that differences of opinion may arise in discussion of issues but, when a majority decision of the governing body prevails, it should be supported;
- base his or her view on matters before the governing body on an honest assessment of the available facts unbiased by partisan or representative views;
- acknowledge that as an individual governor, he or she has no legal authority outside the meetings of the Governing Corporation and its committees;
- understand that an individual governor does not have the right, other than through the Chair and with the Governing Corporation's agreement, to make statements or express opinions on behalf of the governors;
- resist any temptation or outside pressure to use the position of governor to benefit himself or herself or other individuals or agencies;
- declare openly and immediately any personal conflict of interest arising from a matter before the governors or from any other aspect of governorship;
- respect the confidentiality of those items of business which the Governing Corporation decides from time to time should remain confidential;

- take or seek opportunities to enhance his or her effectiveness as a governor through participation in training and development programmes and by increasing his or her own knowledge of the college;
- give priority, as far as practicable to attendance at meetings of the Governing Corporation and its committees;
- have regard to his or her broader responsibilities as a governor of a public institution including the need to promote public accountability for the actions and performance of the governing body;
- subscribe to the seven principles of public life as set out in the Nolan Committee's second report:

In addition, governors are expected to support the aims and values of the college and corporation policy of openness as detailed below.

Aims and values of the College

The College exists to serve the interests of those students who are able to benefit from the provision which it makes. It is committed to high standards and to the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum supported by strong and effective pastoral and guidance systems. It seeks to be a caring and compassionate community, to develop and involve all staff in the core purposes of the College.

The College recognises that it has the following obligations;

- to its students, in the provision of high quality courses, pastoral support and opportunities to develop as individuals;
- to its staff in the provision of development opportunities and in the opportunities extended to allow participation in the development of the college;
- to the community in the recognition of its diverse nature and the implications this has for the student body and also in the provision of educational opportunities for adults, consistent with the expertise and resources of the College.

The Governing Corporation and its policy of openness

- The Governing Corporation fully accepts that its procedures and activities should be subject to public scrutiny. The nature of this scrutiny will be dependent upon the activity, but may be summarised as follows:
- All activities will be subject to scrutiny by statutory agencies, in particular, representatives of the relevant funding agency and, consistent with their terms of reference, the College's external and internal auditors.
- Items which are deemed to be appropriate and consistent with the Instrument and Articles of Government, will be subject to public scrutiny through the participation in meetings of staff and student representatives and by the availability of minutes to staff, students and members of the public.
- Items will be declared confidential, and thereby exempt from general public scrutiny, on as infrequent an occasion as is consistent with the Instrument and Articles of Government.
- In its recruitment and promotion of staff, the College will not knowingly or deliberately withhold information and will abide by the principles of objectivity and openness.
- In its recruitment and review of students, similar principles will apply as set out above

Collective Responsibility of the Governing Corporation

Both the Instrument and Articles of Government and, in more detail, publications and regulations of current funding bodies, emphasise that College Governance is corporate and that individual members must respect this corporate nature. It is particularly the case that contacts with the press or outside bodies should be the responsibility of the Chairman (or where appropriate of the Principal or Clerk) and public comment on matters arising out of the responsibilities exercised by Governors, should not be made.

Relationship with the Principal

It is important that there exists a clear understanding of the responsibilities which the Corporation cannot devolve, of the responsibilities which are specifically those of the Principal, and of those responsibilities which are shared. In the case of any difference of view on these, the Clerk will advise individual governors or the Governing Corporation or the relevant Committee.