

SOUTH THAMES COLLEGES GROUP CORPORATION

Role description and person specification for Staff Governors

South Thames Colleges Group values its governors' breadth of experience and skills and recognises the contribution that governors make to the success of the College. It also wants its governors to feel that the role they do is rewarding and satisfying. The following role description and person specification have been developed to help ensure that potential governors have a better understanding of the role of governors and the type of person who may be suitable.

All governors, including staff and student governors, carry out the role on a voluntary basis. The College meets reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred by governors in the performance of their duties. These might include travel expenses incurred in attending external training courses or meetings.

A) Duties of a Governor

The duties of the Corporation (Governing Body) are specified in the Instrument and Articles of Government. Collectively, individual governors contribute their professional, specialist and general management skills to the Corporation (and through its committees) in a non-executive role.

A governor is required to be as flexible as possible in the conduct of their responsibilities and duties, ensuring that the balance of oversight of the College and its business is seen as a positive contribution that does not interfere with the day-to-day management of the College. The primary responsibilities of governors are to play an active role in the high level strategic planning process of the College by contributing to:

- Setting the mission and strategic direction of the College;
- The monitoring of the quality of the experience provided for learners and their outcomes;
- The monitoring of financial management and health, including value for money;
- The setting of procedures to ensure the accountability of the chief executive and senior post holders;
- The setting of procedures for governors to assess and monitor risk;
- Ensuring that legislative requirements are fulfilled, such as those for disability, safeguarding, and health and safety.

B) Limitations on Staff Governors

Staff Governors have to withdraw from Governors' meetings when:

- i. Their remuneration, conditions of service, promotion, conduct, suspension, dismissal or retirement are to be considered.
- ii. The appointment of their successor is to be considered.
- iii. When Governors are to consider the appointment, remuneration, conditions of service, promotion, conduct, suspension, dismissal or retirement of any member of staff senior to the staff governor

Where the matter under consideration by the Governors relates to the pay and conditions of all staff, or all staff in a particular class, a Staff Governor-

- i. need not disclose a financial interest
- ii. may take part in the consideration of the matter, vote and count towards the quorum, provided that the Staff Governor acts in the best interests of the Corporation as a whole and does not seek to represent the interests of any other person or body, but shall withdraw from the meeting if the matter is under negotiation with staff and the Staff Governor is representing any of the staff concerned in those negotiations.

C) Staff Governors' Person Specification

In seeking to fill any vacancy, the Corporation endeavours to maintain a balance of skills and experience amongst its membership. Good governance also requires governors to exhibit qualities and behaviours which enable them to work effectively with each other and with the South Thames Colleges Group.

	Details
Commitment to Further Education	Able to demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning and knowledge of the role of South Thames Colleges Group in providing Further Education in Wandsworth / Sutton / Merton / Kingston.
Quality improvement	Able to demonstrate a commitment to quality improvement and ability to analyse and monitor performance data
Commitment to governance	Ability to demonstrate a full understanding and appreciation of the principles of governance, including the seven principles of public life*
Interpersonal and team work	Able to work positively with other governors and management and debate whilst maintaining a constructive atmosphere. Able to accept collective responsibility for the decisions reached by the Corporation.
Staff governor role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to ensure that governors understand the likely impact of their decisions on college staff and other stakeholders (such as students or employers) of whom the staff governor has direct knowledge. • Able to contribute to discussions from an individual perspective, informed by experience as an employee, but always with regard to the interests of the College as a whole
Communication	Able to express ideas/plans in a clear manner and to listen actively to other views. Able to communicate effectively.
Planning and organisation	Able to establish quickly an effective course of action for self and others to achieve goals that can be monitored by realistic performance targets. To be visionary for the future plans of the College Group.
Determination	Able to create the required energy/enthusiasm and commitment necessary to be effective and have the tenacity to overcome obstacles.
Strategic perspective	Able to develop a broad-based view of issues and events and assess their long-term impact on the strategic direction of the college.
Ability and willingness to learn	Able to absorb sometimes complex information and rationalise appropriately. Able to think laterally and arrive at pragmatic solutions. Willingness to listen and learn and committed to continuous improvement
Leadership	Able to demonstrate behaviour and skills that motivate others to achieve, inspire confidence in others to achieve objectives, and respect the views of others.
Ambassador role	Able to act as ambassador for the College in the wider community.
Experience	<p>Staff governors should be able to offer <i>some</i> of the following attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a keen interest in and knowledge of the further education sector • an understanding of the national context in which further education operates and knowledge of the FE sector in the local area • a knowledge of other aspects of education and training provision
Circumstances	<p>Available to attend scheduled meetings of the Corporation and Committees; the time required to attend meetings is reasonably demanding. The time commitment for each governor amounts to approximately 7- 10 days per year.</p> <p>Governors should live within a 30-mile radius of the colleges to enable them to attend meetings and know the communities which the colleges serve.</p>
Equal opportunities and legislative requirements	Committed to ensuring that legislative requirements are fulfilled, such as equal opportunities, disability, safeguarding, and health and safety.
Eligibility	<p>A person is not eligible to be a governor of an FE college if they have been declared bankrupt within the last 3 years or served a sentence for a conviction within the last 5 years or been removed from office as a member of a FE corporation within the last 10 years.</p> <p>All governors are required to agree to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check on appointment and on re-appointment unless the College already holds a DBS check for them.</p>

* See Appendix

c) Term of office

Appointment is for 4 years initially. Staff Governors are deemed to retire from the Corporation upon termination of their service at South Thames Colleges Group.

APPENDIX

The Seven Principles of Public Life

Public concern about the financial probity of members of parliament and other holders of public office led to the setting up in 1994 of the Committee on Standards in Public Life (chaired by Lord Nolan and later Lord Neill). The Committee drew up seven principles of public life as a yardstick against which public service may be measured:

(a) **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

(b) **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

(c) **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

(d) **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

(e) **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

(f) **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

(g) **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.