



ASSOCIATION
OF COLLEGES



Furthering Education Our Promise to Members



Welcome

Thank you for your continued support of the Association of Colleges (AoC).

The sector is strongest when we work together. As a member of AoC, you are part of the largest voice for the further education sector in England. We use this to represent you and your students' interests.

AoC is the national voice for colleges and exists to promote and support their interests. Everything we do is aimed at helping colleges deliver their purpose and to make an impact. We believe that every community should be supported by a strong and successful college, which develops students, delivers relevant skills, and supports stronger communities, social justice, employers and the economy.

This booklet outlines what you can expect from us as a member. By being open and transparent in our work, you will receive exceptional value for your subscription fee. You will be able to hold the Board and executive to account and support our success. Whether it is through challenging the Government on critical decisions or lobbying Ministers on funding issues, we will work on your behalf to help you and your students flourish and to build the reputation and respect that we all deserve.

We look forward to continuing to work on your behalf.



David Hughes
Chief Executive



Carole Stott MBE
Chair



Alison Birkinshaw OBE
President

AoC Vision

Great colleges transforming lives and communities and meeting employer needs through teaching and learning for student success.

AoC Mission

To champion and support the sector by enhancing colleges' reputation, leading policy thinking, influencing decision-makers and advising colleges.

Our promise to you

As your representative body, we will:

- » Influence Government and local and national policymakers to create the environment for strong and sustainable colleges at the heart of the economy.
- » Provide high-quality, professional support, advice and intelligence to meet the needs of every member.
- » Champion and enhance the reputation of colleges and students.
- » Be open and transparent, working with, and for, all members.
- » Provide all members with a seamless service that is professional, proactive and responsive across the whole organisation.

Our strategic aims

We have set four clear strategic aims which will be the focus of our work in the future:

1. Set the agenda for positive policy changes.
2. Develop a high profile and strong reputation for colleges.
3. Deliver expert support, advice and intelligence for members.
4. Develop a strong, sustainable, ambitious and transparent representative body for members.

How we will achieve this

We will:

- » Work with you in developing policy and enhancing the profile and reputation of colleges.
- » Set clear long-term priorities for our work with robust measures and accountability processes through our governance structure.
- » Work in partnership with a range of other organisations that can support and add value to our work.
- » Maintain a team of professional and skilled people across the country to provide you with the services and support you need.
- » Communicate openly and transparently in our work, making sure you are kept up to date with expert, timely and relevant information.

Policy and Public Affairs

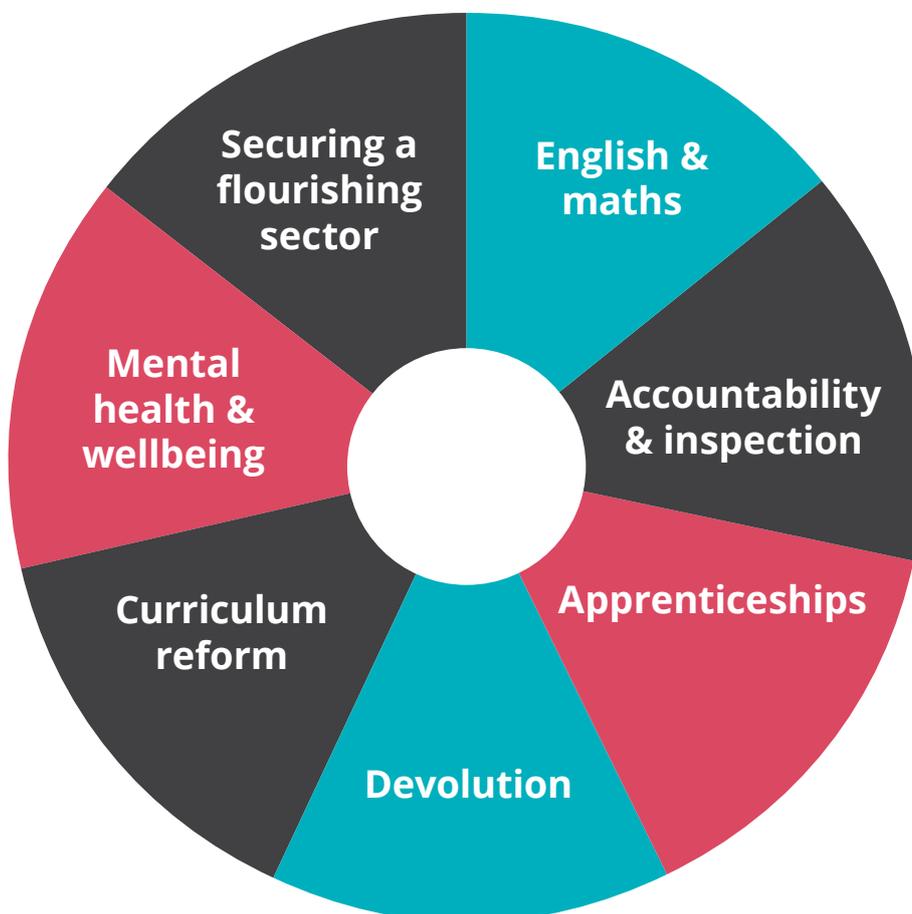
Our aim is to set the agenda for positive policy change.

We will do this by:

- » Engaging you to influence policy developments through our National Policy Groups and seeking members influence through our networks and other connections.
- » Representing your interests with Government Ministers, MPs, officials and key local and national industry players and employer representatives.
- » Ensuring you are kept up to date with the latest intelligence and policy development through clear communications.
- » Developing strong partnerships with key local and national bodies.

Clear priorities

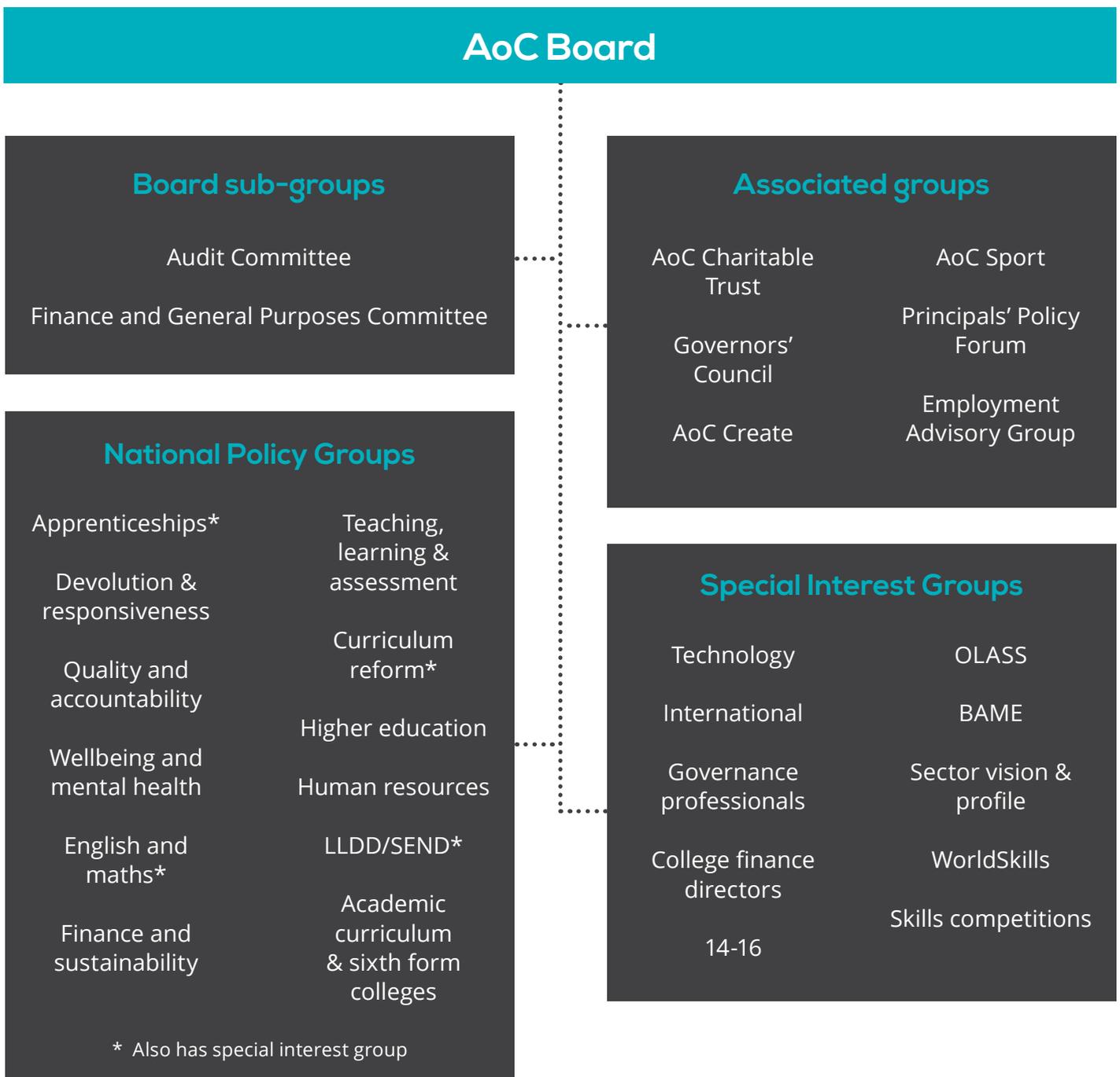
In partnership with members, we will identify clear priorities for the college sector. These will establish both short-term and long-term goals for policy development and inform the way AoC represents members. The priority areas established are:



National Policy Groups

We have established a range of National Policy Groups, covering each of our priority areas, which will form the basis of the policy development. Around half of all members are represented on these, with all regions and types of colleges represented. You will be kept informed of discussions and outcomes of the groups via regular updates.

These groups will report regularly into the AoC Board, which will maintain oversight. In addition, we will run a number of short-term task and finish groups which will focus on specific areas. There will also be special interest groups, which provide the opportunity for consideration of specialist areas including international work and technology.



Engagement opportunities

Alongside our groups, members will have regular opportunities to engage in policy development. This will be achieved through discussions at regional networks, our conferences and events and through formal and informal consultation opportunities. Members will also have the opportunity to feed into AoC's campaigns and responses to Government.

National representation

AoC has an excellent track record of influencing policymakers. We will build on our successes and strengthen this area. Through clear priorities, formed and agreed by the policy groups, we will have long-term plans to influence and set the agenda to secure a strong, sustainable sector for the future. We will maintain and develop relationships with Ministers, MPs and key industry players and employer representative bodies. You will have the opportunity to regularly meet and engage with these directly through our events.

We will support colleges in gaining representation on appropriate and relevant strategic boards, providing data, evidence and case studies as needed. AoC will also ensure the role of colleges is recognised and that our members are engaged with stakeholders both geographic (such as Northern Powerhouse or Midlands Engine) and thematic (such as Health Education England).

Local representation

At a local level, AoC will facilitate members' involvement in the influencing of local opinion formers, politicians and partners. To do this effectively, we will gather local intelligence and information to inform AoC services and representation. We will support colleges to ensure that members are represented at key partnerships at a local level.

Our influencing voice is never stronger than when we speak together. As such, we will make sure that every member is fully engaged in our influencing work, keeping you up to date with our national representation work and providing opportunities for you to engage with your local MP.

Research and partnerships

To help build our research and influencing capability, we will develop partnerships with think tanks, employer bodies and research organisations to strengthen the intelligence available to members. Alongside this, we will seek to work in partnership with other sector bodies and seek common ground to build our influencing work.

AoC will also provide access to resources through engagement opportunities both locally and nationally with potential funders.

Member Services

Our aim is to deliver expert support, advice and intelligence for members.

We will do this by:

- » Providing professional and confidential advice and support to principals, their teams, chairs and governors in areas including governance, HR, inspections and funding.
- » Providing networking opportunities through our local forums for principals, governors and senior managers.
- » Providing professional, high-quality local support for colleges through our Area Directors and support teams.
- » Ensuring members are kept up to date via regular, relevant communications.

Local support

Our Area Directors will provide dedicated support to colleges locally. The team will:

- » Support principals and colleges at a local level.
- » Represent and support college involvement with key regional partners, stakeholders and regulatory bodies
- » Engage regularly with colleges and ensure views are fed into the wider AoC and policy development.
- » Facilitate member's involvement in effective influencing of local decision makers, opinion formers, politicians and partners.
- » Support members in self organising, regional and sub-regional networks and groups.

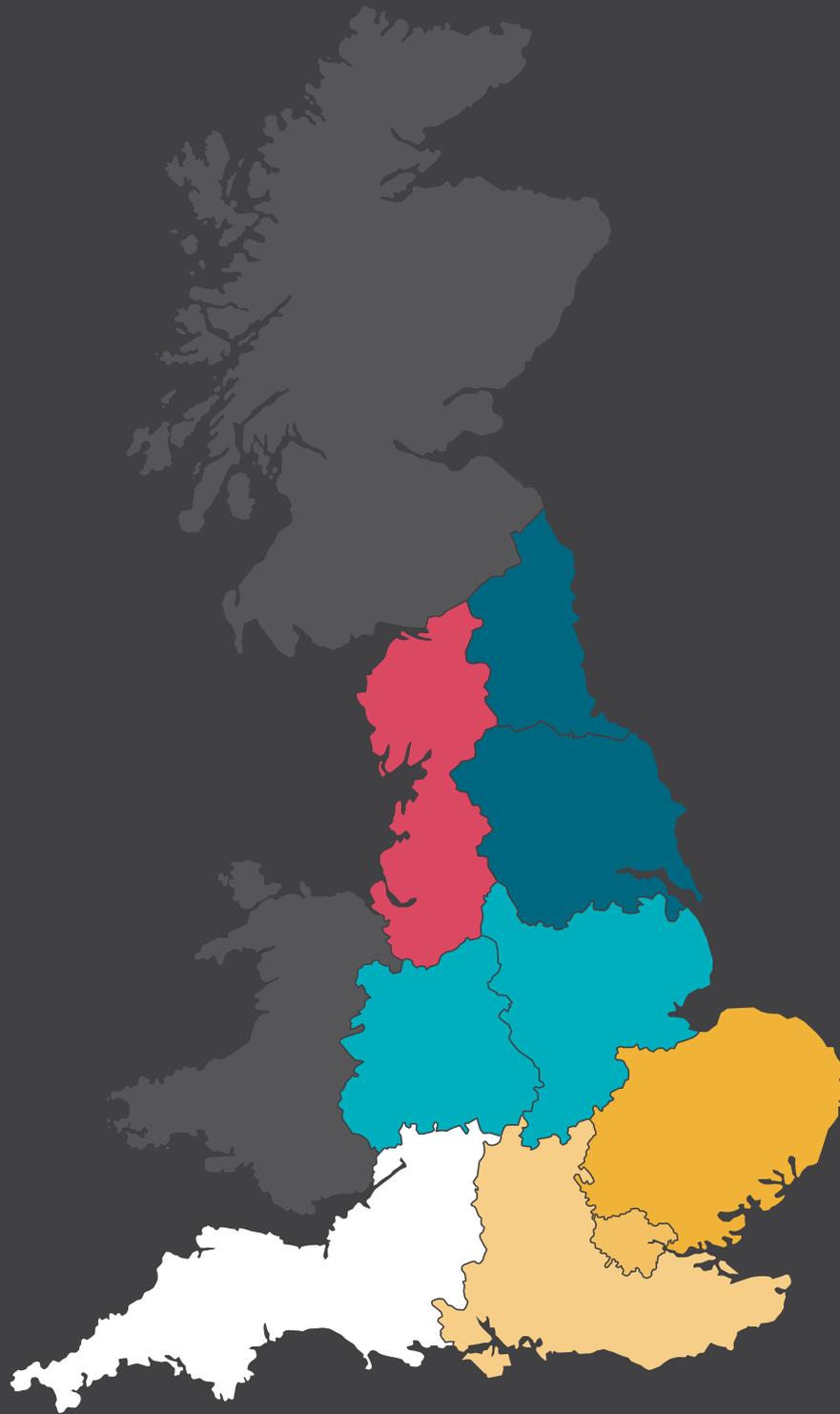
The team will work closely with principals and senior teams. As and when required, an AoC Director will attend and contribute to Board meetings and college strategic events. In addition, a local Area Director will arrange to meet with all newly appointed principals to outline the role of AoC and the support available.

Local networks

We will provide senior leadership teams with the opportunity to network and share common interests in a number of core forums, provided at a regional level:

- » Principals' and chairs' forum
- » Finance director's network
- » Quality and curriculum network
- » Governance network
- » Governance professionals' network
- » HR professional's network

AoC will support in the organisation of additional area/regional networks to become self-sustaining through the academic year. We will also provide timely thematic events as policy or practice dictates.



Governance

AoC provides services, support and guidance specifically for clerks, chairs and governors. This includes a dedicated advice service where you can receive information on any aspect of governance including policy, funding, law and best practice. This also includes the organising and delivering of governor induction materials, policy seminars and webinars on critical issues.

In addition, AoC provides the opportunity for governors and clerks to meet both locally and nationally to share best practice. The Governors' Council and Governance Professionals Group influence policy and services as a consultative forum for policymakers.

AoC also delivers projects and programmes for governors with support from the Department for Education and the Education and Training Foundation.

Employment advice service

AoC is working in partnership with Irwin Mitchell to provide an employment advice service. Members have access to a dedicated advisory service covering day-to-day HR and employment law issues. This is available via:

Phone: 0333 0100319

Email: aocemployment@irwinmitchell.com

HR teams will also have access to dedicated briefings, advice sheets and templates which can be used.

In addition to the employment advice service, we will also continue our benchmarking surveys for colleges. We will also continue to act as the employers' representative in national pay negotiations. Each year, we will work with members and trade unions to identify a recommended pay offer for colleges.

Communications

Members will be provided with the latest intelligence and information through our briefings and website. This offers reliable and up to date knowledge, with the latest from Government departments and agencies. Principals and chairs will be directly sent the highly-regarded Chief Executive's Letter each week, which details the latest discussions with politicians and departments on critical issues.

All members of college teams are able to access this information through an individual member-only account.

Staff members can register online or email membership@aoc.co.uk and they will receive access to all our online information and support, as well as receiving our briefings direct to their inbox.

Alongside this, AoC also provides a media and communications advice line for colleges who are facing difficulties. This offers support for principals and marketing/communications teams who need advice on dealing with media.

Phone: 0207 034 9979

Email: comms@aoc.co.uk

Specialist support

AoC provides specialist local and national support on key specialisms for colleges. This includes:

- » Providing support running up to, and during, Ofsted inspection.
- » Maintaining and developing tools and support for finance professionals.
- » Holding local events, as necessary, to respond to changes in policy and other hot topics.

Professional Services

Our aim is to develop a strong, sustainable, ambitious and transparent representative body for members.

We will do this by:

- » Providing a simple and transparent fee structure.
- » Working efficiently to provide excellent value for money for members.
- » Offering a clear member offer, with additional paid-for opportunities.

Fees

Subscription fees are the most difficult area for any membership organisation. For simplicity, AoC fees are set at 0.1% of college income, based on audited accounts from the previous years. To assist in financial planning for members, fees will be fixed for three years from 2017 to 2020. A cap in the fee level is in place for larger colleges.

Back-office support

AoC's professional services team will oversee the back-office functions for AoC in order to ensure the organisation is lean and continues to offer value for money.

Projects

To supplement membership fees, AoC secures funding from Government agencies and other organisations to deliver a range of projects to support the sector. Projects vary in duration, scale and topic but can include:

- » quality improvement initiatives;
- » college workforce support;
- » development programmes;
- » research pieces;
- » capacity building developments; and
- » international enterprises.

Project outcomes are disseminated to the sector; ensuring good practice is shared and brought together. These help raise the profile of the sector, prepare colleges for government changes and ensure better outcomes for students. A large majority of our projects offer opportunities of funding and involvement for colleges. Last year we gave over £1.8 million to colleges through projects.

Paid-for services

In addition to our core membership offer we have a range of well-established, specialist services which can be tailored to the specific needs of colleges. Building on the knowledge and expertise within our membership body we provide high-quality, value for money services which include:

- » Leadership recruitment and succession planning through our executive search service.
- » Coaching for leaders.
- » Interim management support.
- » Digital recruitment campaigns through our specialist jobs board, AoC Jobs.
- » Consultancy support for your organisational requirements particularly through change and transformation.
- » Governance support, additional to our core offer.
- » People development through training courses, workshops and in house training events.
- » Tailored conferences on critical issues for colleges, including the AoC Annual Conference and Exhibition.

These are additional paid-for services working with our members to increase capacity and capability for sustainability, resilience and change. The revenue from these services is invested back into AoC and the impact and outcomes of our work is shared across the sector.

AoC Sport

AoC Sport is the lead organisation for college sport and physical activity. Offering a range of specialist advice, training and events, we champion a whole-organisation, cross-curricular approach to sport and physical activity. AoC Sport offers regional networks to enable colleges to work together to promote health and wellbeing in FE.

AoC Sport is also responsible for overseeing leagues, cups and regional tournaments in a range of sports including badminton, cricket, football, rugby and netball. Each year a National Championships is held, the largest annual student sporting event in the UK, with around 1,800 college students taking part.

Boosting the reputation of the sector

Our aim is to develop a high profile and strong reputation for colleges.

We will do this by:

- » Championing the success of colleges and students through our communications work and our award schemes.
- » Working with colleges to develop the reputation of the sector.
- » Highlighting the impact of colleges on students, communities and employers through our communication channels.

Awards and AoC Charitable Trust

We have exceptional students and colleges across the country and we champion their successes through our award schemes.

AoC's Charitable Trust recognises the impact of colleges. The long-standing Beacon Awards highlight the breadth and quality of education in colleges throughout the UK. This increases the understanding of colleges' contribution to their communities' economic and social development.

Alongside this, the Gold Awards celebrate the achievements of former further education and sixth form students who have gone on to achieve excellence in their chosen field. Winners of the awards include Oscar-winning actor Colin Firth and multi-Paralympic gold medallist Hannah Cockroft.

In addition, our Student of the Year awards celebrate the achievements of current college students and apprentices.

Reputation and profile

In partnership with members, AoC will highlight the role of colleges throughout the year. We will work closely with the media and stakeholders to promote the activities of colleges and the impact on students, communities and employers.

Throughout the year, we will provide the opportunities for colleges to come together to help our campaigning and promotion work. We will utilise external events to develop this, including National Apprenticeship Week, Festival of Learning and International Women's Day.

Your representation

As a member-focused organisation, you are represented through the AoC Board and Regional Committees.

Regional Committees operate across the country. They provide the opportunity for policy discussion and feedback from regional representatives on national bodies and will also consider feedback from the National Policy Groups. This provides the opportunity to feedback and provide any regional flavour needed for the groups' work. The Regional Committees will be key in developing strategies to influence local decision makers.

AoC Board membership



Carole Stott MBE
AoC Chair
Chair, Bath College



Alison Birkinshaw OBE
AoC President
Principal and Chief Executive
York College



Stephen Barnes
Chair
Nelson and Colne College



Colin Booth OBE
Principal and Chief Executive
Leeds City College



Meredydd David OBE
Principal
Reaseheath College



Natalie Davison-Terranova
Principal and Chief Executive
Bishop Auckland College



Steve Frampton MBE
Principal
Portsmouth College



Nigel Leigh OBE
Principal
Stephenson College



Gerry McDonald
Principal and Chief
Executive
New City College



Corienne Peasgood
Principal
City College Norwich



Paul Phillips CBE
Principal and Chief
Executive
Weston College



Jatinder Sharma OBE
Principal and Chief Executive
Walsall College



Atholl Stott
Chair
RNN Group



Elly Tobin
Principal
Joseph Chamberlain College



Yana Williams
Principal and Chief Executive
Hugh Baird College



David Hughes
AoC Chief Executive



Peter Brophy
AoC Chief Operating Officer
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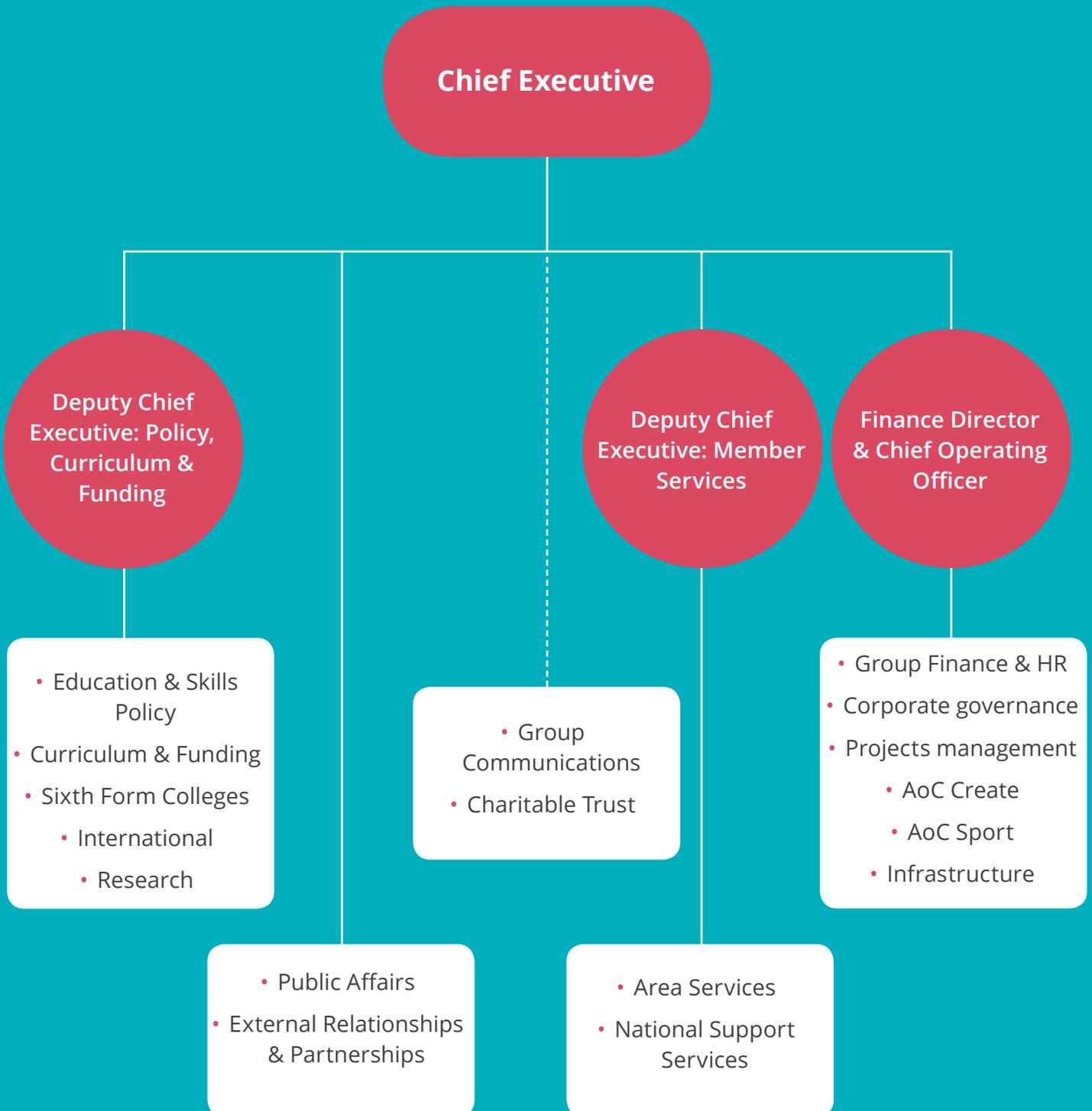


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AoC Structure





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