



## Further Education College Clerk Development and Training Programme Resource Pack

### Module 1 Overview of the Further Education System

For suggestions on how to get the most out of these self-study materials, see the booklet on 'Using the Materials'.

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# Introduction

Welcome to Module 1, which will give you an overview of the further education (FE) system. This module has been developed to support clerks understand the FE sector and provides the background material for the other 12 modules. The module is divided into short sections and each one can be studied independently. For newly appointed clerks, this module will provide a useful introduction to their role and material for briefing new governors.

## Aims

By the end of this module you should be able to:

- explain the current reforms in post-16 education and training and understand how they impact on your college;
- describe the range of provision in post-16 education and training;
- explain the role and responsibilities of governors and the governing body;
- explain the role and responsibilities of the clerk;
- assess your own knowledge and skills and identify your training requirements;
- understand the clerk's responsibilities in ensuring that governors take part in training and development activities;
- explain the clerk's responsibilities for ensuring public access to information about the work of the governing body;
- know where to find more detailed information on particular topics or procedures; and
- play a full part in the work of the governing body.

## Contents

Mark the sections you want to study and tick them off as you complete them.

To do	Done		
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## Working on the self-study activities

These materials have been designed to be used flexibly (e.g. dip in and out for reference; complete in one sitting; work through alone or with others).

Where you need to make notes in response to activity questions, we suggest you do this in a notebook or on separate sheets of loose-leaf paper, and store the information you compile along with the module for future reference. References listed in the further reading section may also be helpful.

## Section 1. Further education overview

This section provides a brief overview of current developments in the 14 to 19 and post-19 further education (FE) and skills sector. It looks at the range of different colleges and training providers, and helps you to access information about your own college. As a clerk it will be important for you to understand the landscape and the environment in which you and your college work.

### Relevant Education Acts

The FE sector is a dynamic responsive service that provides education and training to over four million young people and adults annually. Before 1992 there was no statutory basis for FE; however it can be traced back well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. FE was developed by local authorities as a way of providing adult and community, technical and vocational education and training beyond the compulsory school leaving age; in other words not part of the national education system in schools or universities.

The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 established FE colleges as independent corporations and the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) was set up to fund and oversee the sector. In 2001, following the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the FEFC and Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) were replaced by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) which took over their funding responsibilities and those of Local Education Authorities (LEAs) for adult and community education. The FEFC inspectorate and the Training Standards Council (TSC) were replaced by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI), the latter being absorbed into Ofsted in 2007.

The Education and Skills Act 2008 had the effect of raising the age of participation in education or training – whether at school, college or with an employer - to 17 from 2013 and to 18 from 2015.

In 2009 the [Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act](#) led a machinery of government change which split FE policy between two departments. The Departments for Education (DfE) and Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) share FE funding and policy, with BIS being the formal ‘sponsorship’ department. Since the Coalition Government was formed in 2010 there has been a joint Minister. The Act also created the formation of the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and the Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA) which between them took over the responsibilities of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in April 2010.

Following the 2010 election, the Education Act 2011 led to a series of further changes, including the abolition of the YPLA and the creation of the Education Funding Agency (EFA). The 2011 act also removed much of the statutory guidance around colleges and gave back many of the freedoms of the 1992 Act.

In practice this currently means that general FE and sixth form colleges will be interacting with the EFA for 14 to 19 year old students; with the SFA for apprenticeships and education for those over the age of 19; with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Student Loans Company for students undertaking higher education and those over the age of 24 undertaking level 3 studies; and for their capital funding with the employer-led Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

### Reforms

Both the DfE and BIS have a sizeable reform agenda for post 14 education and skills. The main policies currently are:

- reforming the funding and content of 16 to 19 provision through the introduction of [study programmes](#);

- making sure that students who haven't achieved at least a C in maths and English GCSEs continue studying qualifications in these subjects, as set out in the [conditions of post-16 funding](#);
- introducing a new [funding system](#) based on student loans for learners aged 24+, studying at levels 3 and 4, or for advanced and higher apprenticeships;
- freeing colleges from central government control;
- improving [apprenticeships](#);
- making FE teacher training more professional;
- providing better careers advice;
- introducing a new [traineeships programme](#) to support young people to develop skills for apprenticeships and/or employment;
- introducing the Technical Baccalaureate (TechBacc) performance measure to create a high-quality alternative to the traditional A level route;
- reforming 16 to 19 vocational qualifications, expanding the provision of work experience and [allowing colleges to enrol 14 to 16 year olds](#);
- identifying the best vocational qualifications as either '[Tech Level](#)' or '[Applied General](#)' qualifications endorsed by employers and universities, so young people know which courses have the best prospects;
- introducing significant changes to higher education policy with the principal aim of opening up competition for student places - '[students at the heart of the system](#)';
- strengthening intervention through the creation of the office of the [FE Commissioner](#);
- reducing funding through implementing the 2010 austerity plan for skills funding.

## New developments

BIS is currently consulting on the following reforms, which in turn will lead to further policy change:

[Adult further education: how do we measure success?](#) (August 2014)

[Apprenticeship funding reform in England: payment mechanisms and funding principles](#) (July 2014)

[Future development of loans in further education](#) (June 2014)

[Traineeships: funding reform in England](#) ( June 2014)

## Recent policy documents that shape and impact on further education

'[Skills for Sustainable Growth](#)' (2010) sets out the national skills strategy for England.

'[New challenges, new chances: next steps in implementing the further education reform programme](#)' (2011) set out the policies of the Coalition Government for post 19 education and skills.

'[Rigour and Responsiveness in Skills](#)' (2013) summarises the government's reform agenda.

'[Skills funding statement 2012 to 2015](#)' contains the 2013-14 budget for skills and indicative funding levels for 2014-15 (financial year).

'[Further education \(FE\) college capital investment strategy](#)' (2012) outlines the Government's priorities for investing £550 million in college facilities in the remainder of this Parliament.

'[16-19 Study Programmes](#)' (2014) provides advice on planning and delivering study programmes.

[‘A Dynamic Nucleus: Colleges at the heart of local communities’](#) (2011) gives advice on how colleges can establish better ties with the community.

[The report of the Commission on Adult and Vocational Teaching and Learning](#) (2013) gives advice on how colleges can establish better ties with business and industry.

[‘Professionalism in further education: final report of the independent review panel’](#) (2012) is the report by Lord Lingfield on how the sector can best serve its users’ needs.

[‘Making apprenticeships more accessible to small and medium-sized enterprises: a review by Jason Holt’](#) (2012) is an independent report on apprenticeships and SMEs.

[‘Building engagement, building futures: our strategy to maximise the participation of 16-24 year olds in education, training and work’](#) (2011) sets out BIS and DfE plans for engaging 16 to 24 year olds in education, training and work.

[‘The Richard Review of Apprenticeships’](#) (2012) is Doug Richard’s independent report for the government on the future of apprenticeships.

[‘Traineeships: framework for delivery 2014/15’](#) (2014) gives young people, employers and education and training providers information about how traineeships should work in practice.

[‘Chartered status for the further education sector’](#) (2012) was a consultation on plans for an independent quality scheme for the sector, due to be launched in 2014.

[‘National Careers Service: the right advice at the right time’](#) (2012) explains BIS’ plans to ensure that young people and adults can find accurate information about learning and work.

## Landscape

The FE landscape includes:

- [UK Commission for Employment & Skills](#) (UKCES)
- [National Apprenticeship Service](#) (NAS)
- [Skills Funding Agency](#) (SFA)
- [Education Funding Agency](#) (EFA)
- [Higher Education Funding Council for England](#) (HEFCE)
- [Student Loans Company](#) (SLC)
- [Ofsted](#)
- [Ofqual](#)
- [National Careers Service](#) (NCS)
- [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education](#) (QAA)

At the end of this module you will find a diagram showing how some of these partners interact, as well as a list of acronyms.

## Types of college

Colleges have a variety of titles such as general further education college, college of technology, tertiary college, sixth form college, land-based college, college of agriculture, college of art and design, college of further and higher education, special education college, adult college or just plain college. The titles are

often a consequence of the college's historical development. Schools also now use the word 'college' as part of their title, as do many private organisations, although these are not part of the FE sector.

As at August 2014 there were 335 colleges in England incorporated under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, including 93 sixth form colleges and 242 FE colleges. The first new college under the 1992 Act was opened in August 2014.

Together, they educate 853,000 people aged 16 to 18, including 185,000 taking A Levels; train over one quarter of the total 240,000 apprentices aged 16-18; educate and train 3,280,600 people aged 19 and over; and account for 33% of entrants to higher education and for 11% of those studying at undergraduate or higher national level.

72 independent specialist colleges also draw funding from the government. There are 28 colleges in Scotland, 15 in Wales and six in Northern Ireland. These training materials refer only to English colleges.

## **Participation**

The number of adult learners participating in government-funded FE courses decreased between 2008/09 and 2012/13 with a 6.1 per cent decrease seen in the most recent year. The number participating in full Level 2 courses fell by 5.4 per cent in 2012/13 to a level similar to 2009/10. Achievements in Level 2 courses declined over the last three years whilst full Level 2 achievements increased in 2012/13.

The number of learners participating in Level 3 courses fell between 2008/09 and 2011/12, but increased by 9.5 per cent in 2012/13. Participation in full Level 3 courses increased, now at its highest level. Achievements in Level 3 courses increased in 2012/13 by 9.8 per cent, following a two year decline. Full Level 3 achievements decreased for the second successive year after a period of growth.

Of the 3,280,600 adult learners participating in further education in 2012/13:

- 56.3 per cent were female and 43.7 per cent were male, similar proportions to 2011/12;
- 13.2 per cent declared a learning difficulty and/or disability, an increase of 1.4 percentage points on 2011/12;
- 19.2 per cent were from a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) background (including Mixed, Asian, Black and Other Ethnic Group learners), a decrease of 0.4 percentage points on 2011/12;
- 496,200 benefited from support for the unemployed (those nearest the workforce).

In 2012/13 there were 89,900 offenders aged 18 or over in the prison system participating in learning, a similar volume to 2011/12. 68,400 achieved a learning outcome, a decrease of 4.9 per cent. These offenders were funded via the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) budget.

The statistics produced for 16 to 19 learners are in a different format, so not directly comparable to those for adult learners. 592,400 16 to 18 year olds – 21.7% of the age group – were in general, tertiary and specialist FE at the end of 2013 – a slight fall compared to 2011.

## **Courses and other service provision**

Colleges offer full-time and part-time programmes, including:

- Programmes of study for 16-19 year olds
- English and maths
- Apprenticeships

- Level 2, 3 and 4 academic and vocational
- Higher education (HE) courses usually funded through HEFCE. Some colleges are directly funded for their HE whilst others operate as a franchise from a local HE institution. In 2008, FE colleges were granted the right to apply for degree awarding powers.
- Specialist courses for industry and commerce
- Work-based assessment and collaborative provision with employers
- Specific help for students wishing to improve their basic English and maths skills
- Help for students with special learning needs or particular disability
- Adult and community provision
- Programmes for 14-16 year olds

They are also involved in sponsoring:

- academies and academy trusts
- university technical colleges (UTCs) and studio schools

In addition to courses, colleges may offer consultancy and advice to industry and commerce, and hire out facilities such as halls, rooms and sports facilities to external organisations. Some may have training restaurants or farm shops providing a service direct to the general public. These activities can be a significant source of additional funding and in some cases will be run as separate companies.

The powers of FE corporations are set out in the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and subsequent legislation including the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and the Education Act 2011. It should be noted that colleges can only do those things which legislation specifically empowers them to do. The principal power is to provide education and, whilst legislation allows colleges to do other things, it also says that any other activities they undertake must be clearly related to carrying out their principal powers.

## **Size**

The size of colleges varies. The smallest may take a few hundred students, the largest over 70,000 students. Budgets may vary from about £2 million to more than £210 million. The proportion of funding received from funding agencies will also vary considerably.

## **Partnerships and networks**

Colleges work closely with other local organisations and will be members of various partnerships, including those associated with schools and academies, other colleges, universities, employers and independent training providers and local community and voluntary groups. Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) have taken over some responsibilities. There are currently 39 LEPs across the country and from 2014 they have responsibility for distribution of college capital. More information on this aspect of collaboration is set out in Module 7: Collaboration and partnerships.

## **Information Activity**

### **Information about your college**

Your college is unique. As the clerk you should know:

1. The total number of college students.
2. How many of these are full-time, part-time and apprentices.
3. The main specialisations.
4. How many students have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
5. The annual budget of the college.
6. What proportion of overall funding is received from the Skills Funding Agency or Education Funding Agency. In what ways the overall funding has changed over the last three years.
7. Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP): which organisations are represented.
8. The person on the senior leadership team who has the responsibility to work with the LEPs.
9. Which organisations your college has close links with. Which of these might also be competitors.

Talk to the senior leadership team about their partners.

## **Strategic Activity**

- What has been the impact of government policy on your college?
- What changes have been made to accommodate programmes of study and English and maths?
- How does your college manage its apprenticeship programme?

Discuss these changes with a senior manager in your college. Do you feel your governors have a grip of the changes?

## Section 2. An overview of governance

### The role and responsibilities of governors

FE colleges (FECs) are exempt charities and the chief regulator is the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills. The regulatory framework is set out in the BIS [guide to college governance](#) (2014). The main business of the governing body is to determine the educational character of the college and ensure its overall well-being and financial solvency. The responsibilities of the governing body are set out in the Instrument and Articles of Government which were first set down in 1992 under the Further and Higher Education Act. They were further amended in 2008 and again by the Education Act 2011.

### Changes resulting from the 2011 Education Act

The 2011 Act has relaxed many of the earlier requirements, putting colleges on a similar footing to charities operating within the independent/private sector and reducing the essential components of constitutional documents to a smaller, minimum core. Colleges may now amend or modify their Instrument and Articles subject to a number of qualifications that have given them the ability to take advantage of various new freedoms.

In addition, there a number of new organisation and business models available to FECs (and other providers) and these, in the context of the changing landscape of education generally, will allow colleges to collaborate in different ways with both employers and other education providers, including academies, free schools and university technical colleges.

The Education Act 2011 does not change the principal powers of FECs but, in making changes to their supplementary powers, gives them additional freedom to operate. The key changes to the supplementary powers are:

- the removal of the previous requirement for consent to be obtained before a college could form or invest in a company being used for the provision of education which was wholly or partly publicly funded; and
- the removal of the requirement for consent of the Skills Funding Agency for borrowing and capital transactions.

These legislative changes led to the Office for National Statistics notifying the Treasury that, with effect from 1st April 2012 (when the 2011 Act came into force), FECs would be reclassified to the private sector. The removal of the majority of central controls over colleges' operation and the reliance instead on greater accountability to stakeholders and the law in general has been welcomed, although commentators anticipate a 're-pricing' of the risk associated with lending to FECs as a result. This may mean higher borrowing costs for colleges and, with an individual college's governance and management taking on a greater role, will inevitably mean - as is the case with businesses and charities operating in the private sector - certain institutions will become more attractive to lenders than others.

The position before the 2011 Act was that the FE Corporation would have the power to amend its Instrument and/or Articles subject to consent of the relevant regulatory body. Whilst it has been unusual for individual colleges to exercise this power, a new national standard form has generally been issued every few years after consultation with the sector.

The Act automatically modifies the Instrument and Articles of all FE Corporations and gives an institution a new power further to modify or to replace its Instrument and/or Articles, provided that certain core requirements are complied with. These are that:

- the Instrument must set out: the number of members and eligibility for membership; that staff and students (and, in relation to sixth form colleges, parents of students under the age of 19) must be included as members; and details of appointment of members;
- the Instrument must contain information about the college's procedures, in particular how the college may be dissolved and its property, rights and liabilities transferred;
- there must be a chief executive of the college and a clerk to the governing body;
- the Instrument must set out the responsibilities of both the chief executive and the clerk and of the college itself including, for example, as to the determination (and periodic review) of its educational character and mission, the oversight of its activities, the effective and efficient use of its resources, its solvency and the safeguarding of its assets;
- the college must publish arrangements for views of staff and students to be canvassed;
- the Instrument must allow for a change of name (subject to the Secretary of State's approval);
- the Instrument must set out how both the Instrument and the Articles may be amended (or replaced), although there is a prohibition on any change which would result in the college ceasing to be a charity;
- the Instrument must provide for the Instrument and Articles to be made available (free of charge) to members of the public as well as its staff and students; and
- the Instrument must provide for the authentication of the application of the college's seal.

One of the more significant changes is to permit the corporation to take a decision to dissolve the college. The Act sets out a requirement to publish details of any proposal to do so, together with additional prescribed information, to consult and to take account of the views of those consulted. As mentioned above, the college's Instrument must specify how a resolution for dissolution must be passed and for the transfer of the institution's property, rights and liabilities.

The Act provides that transfers of property, rights and/or liabilities of an FE corporation on dissolution must be to a prescribed body, being one of a list of institutions including, for example, another FE corporation, a sixth form college corporation, a school or academy, a local authority or an HE corporation. Importantly, the consent of the body to whom it is proposed to transfer any such property, rights or liability must be obtained for the transfer to proceed and the recipient institution must either be a charity or subject to a requirement that the property received is only used for exclusively educational charitable purposes.

## **Taking a strategic view**

There is no requirement for colleges to do anything as a result of the Act's changes, unless they choose to do so. However, the Act's changes are part of the Government's vision, set out in '[New Challenges, New Chances](#)' (December 2011), of a dynamic FE sector that will play an important part in the overall drive to achieve a more "user-focused" education and skills system and contribute to economic recovery. Many colleges will be considering whether they can take advantage of the increased operating freedoms to enhance their offering. There is a strong emphasis on collaboration, particularly now that players in the education market as a whole are more varied and, with an increased emphasis on apprenticeships and other skills-specific training, opportunities exist for FECs to build closer relationships with business as well as with other providers of education.

Clearly, colleges now also have the ability to consider, more fundamentally, plans they may have to work in a different way. The new power to dissolve an existing FE corporation will enable consideration of conversion to a different legal form, an obvious example being a limited company, possibly as a vehicle for a joint venture, or as part of a larger group of education providers. There has also been a focus on mutualisation.

The key is for each individual institution to develop a clear view of what that institution is seeking to achieve and, once the strategy is clear, to consider whether it might better be delivered by making a

change or changes which the Act will now permit. What is appropriate for individual institutions will, to a large extent, be dictated by their existing relationships with businesses, other providers and the local environment, as well as the nature of the governors' leadership. Many colleges may decide to continue without making significant changes to their strategy and methods of delivery; others may already be pursuing strategies that necessitate significant and substantial changes.

## Legal responsibilities

Many colleges have decided to retain their existing Instrument and Articles, which have been modified to ensure compliance with new legislation. An example of a modified set of Instrument and Articles can be found on the [Association of Colleges \(AoC\) online Governance Library](#). In brief, the responsibilities of the governing body will normally include:

- setting them periodical reviews of the educational character and mission of the institution;
- overseeing the college strategies or development plan;
- approving the quality strategy of the institution;
- ensuring the solvency of the institution, the effective and efficient use of resources and its sustainability;
- approving annual estimates of income and expenditure;
- appointing, grading, suspending, dismissing and determining the conditions of service of the holders of senior posts and the clerk; and
- setting a framework for the pay and conditions of service for all other staff.

The governing body is also responsible for monitoring its own performance to ensure it operates to a high standard.

[The English Colleges' Foundation Code of Practice](#) (currently being revised) - developed and owned by the sector - is voluntary, but all colleges are encouraged to adopt it. It includes the following statement: *"The governing body should undertake a formal self-evaluation of its effectiveness as frequently as it determines is appropriate, but at least every three years."*

Following the national banking crises of recent years, the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), which is responsible for overseeing the application and implementation of the UK Corporate Governance Code, issued [Guidance on Board Effectiveness](#) in 2011, which provides specific advice on governance to the private corporate sector. Many of the issues raised are relevant to the public sector and to independent college governing bodies, including the importance of making sure that governing bodies rigorously assess their own performance. Sometimes questionnaires can be circulated to members from which the clerk may draw up a summary. Increasingly, however, best practice requires that self-assessment involves an appraisal of individual contributions as well as collective board processes, the use of peer review, and external facilitation.

The legal responsibilities of governing bodies are set out in the Instrument and Articles of Government. Where governors elect to amend these, they must conform with [Schedule 4, part 2 of the Education Act 2011](#) (which in turn refers to Schedule 12). Subject to any such changes, the Instrument will cover membership of the governing body; appointment of the chair, vice chair and clerk; the eligibility of members; and proceedings of meetings. The Articles cover the responsibilities of the governing body, the role of committees, the employment of senior post holders and staff, student matters and audit arrangements. Other responsibilities are agreed with the relevant funding agency as a condition for receiving public funds. A successful college is one that provides a high quality and inclusive educational experience to its students and customers and which is financially secure.

It should also be noted that, as colleges are exempt charities, they are subject to the general requirements of [charities' legislation](#) whilst not having to register specifically as a charity.

Members of college governing bodies are volunteers (apart from the principal if s/he elects to be a governor), and are entitled to expenses for travel and subsistence, subject to college policy. In many respects they can be compared to non-executive members of the board of a public company and there are also similarities with the trustees of voluntary bodies and National Health Service boards. However, while a board of directors is accountable to its owners – the shareholders – a college governing body is accountable to the community it serves and to the government for its use of public funds. The funds allocated will be subject to a formal financial memorandum, which sets out the terms under which the allocations are made.

The Secretary of State has powers to intervene in the affairs of a governing body in certain circumstances, including serious criticism by [Ofsted](#) (the Office for Standards in Education). The office of FE Commissioner was established with the responsibility to intervene and report to the minister with recommendations. These may include a recommendation to undertake a [Structure and Prospects Appraisal](#) although this is not confined to colleges where formal intervention has taken place.

## **The Education and Training Foundation**

Following the recommendations of the Lingfield Review of standards and professionalism in the FE sector, the [Education and Training Foundation](#) was established in August 2013. The Foundation is owned by the sector as represented by the Association of Colleges, the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, with the Third Sector National Learning Alliance and the Association of Adult Education and Training Organisations, through HOLEX (the national network of local adult learning providers) and LEAFEA (London Local Education Authorities' Forum for the Education of Adults).

It has been allocated £18 million for each of 2013-14 and 2014-15 with a commitment of £10 million for 2015-16. The Foundation has four major priorities: professional standards and workforce development; leadership management and governance; research and innovation; and vocational education and training. It has subsumed in part the role of the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS), which was wound up in 2013.

### **Activity**

#### **Differences between a college governing body and other institutions**

1. Write down five key differences between a college and an institution with which you are familiar (e.g. a private sector company, a local authority, a trade union, a school governing body, a board of trustees of a local charity or other public body).
2. What implications might these differences have for the role and responsibilities of college governors?

## Viewpoint

1. These are some of the differences you might have noticed:
  - Colleges are exempt charities and no-one owns them.
  - A college is accountable to the public and largely funded by the taxpayer.
  - A college has a unique legal status set out in the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, as amended, and additionally for sixth form colleges in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.
  - College aims and objectives differ from those of other organisations, e.g. a college's main purpose is to deliver high quality education and training to young people and adults.
  - A community organisation is a voluntary body, often a charity run by a board of trustees, which may have a membership base, represent certain interests, or provide a specific service.
2. These differences have important implications for governors. The skills, expertise and experience of individual governors are crucial for ensuring a successful governing body. It is essential for governors to:
  - clarify their accountabilities;
  - set out clear indicators for measuring the performance of their college and their own performance as a governing body; and
  - recognise the college's key contribution to providing lifelong education and training, which will in the long term benefit UK business and economic performance.

## The composition of the governing body and its committees

The Education Act 2011 has given governors maximum freedom in how they structure the board, including the numbers of committees and membership. The minimum number of members is two, a member of staff and a student, with the addition of parent governors in the case of sixth form colleges.

The Act is silent on committees, so there is no longer a requirement to have a search committee; the audit committee is a requirement of the financial memorandum which sets out the terms on which funding will be made available. In practice most colleges will wish to retain a search or nominations committee and probably a remuneration committee. See Module 13: Governor Recruitment and Succession for more details.

Colleges will also wish to be guided by the relevant governance codes including [The UK Corporate Governance Code](#). [The English Colleges' Foundation Code of Governance](#) was established in 2012 as a voluntary set of standards for governance and has been adopted by many general further education colleges. The code is currently being reviewed.

**Figure 1 Governing body membership**

Category of member	Number of members in each category	
	Minimum	Maximum
Members		Up to 16
Staff	1	3
Students	1	3
Parents	0	2
Principal	1*	1*

\*Note that the principal is normally a member of the governing body but may choose not to be.

The minimum total number of members is two for further education colleges and four for sixth form colleges. However, this would be impractical and the Instrument will include a clause as follows: *“The corporation shall consist of any number of additional members who appear to the corporation to have the necessary skills to ensure that the corporation carries out its functions under the Articles of Government”*. The relevant article will specify the responsibilities of the corporation, the chief executive and the clerk.

In the case of sixth form colleges, there is a requirement for at least one parent governor and the number of general members is reduced to 15. Some former voluntary controlled sixth form colleges may have ‘foundation governors’ nominated from foundations or trusts and other institutions designated to receive further education funding and so may have slightly different governing bodies; but they will be broadly similar to those of other colleges.

Staff, student and parent governors are elected by their constituent groups as required by the 2008 Instrument of Governance. In the case of students and parents, governors may be nominated from the appropriate students’ union or association or parents’ association. Following the passage of the Education Act 2011 governors may alter their Instrument of Government to allow for the appointment of student and parent governors by means other than elections. In any event, the rules for these procedures will be found in the Instrument of Government.

## **Why have a range of membership?**

A balanced membership of the governing body will ensure that it has the benefit of views from the community it serves, from the business community, from its students and staff and other stakeholders as appropriate.

However, governors are not representatives of the organisation or constituency from which they come; in other words they should not act or be seen as delegates. All governors are appointed as individuals, including governors who are elected (e.g. by staff, students or parents). They are required to put the interests of the governing body and the college first. They are not allowed to accept a mandate from any other organisation and may have to declare an interest if certain items are being discussed.

### **Activity**

#### **The membership and composition of your own governing body**

Find out the composition and membership of your governing body. If your college is a former voluntary controlled sixth form college or a designated institution, find out its membership and how governors are appointed. In what ways do you think this membership will have an impact on the operation and work of your governing body?

In answering the question, try to find out why the governing body has decided on which governors to appoint. In what ways does the membership represent the interests of the communities the college serves?

## Viewpoint

The membership allows for a wide range of types of governor. In making membership decisions, the governing body should seek to reflect the local context and type of courses and other services offered by the college. The greater flexibility now given to governing bodies in choosing who to appoint means that they need to pay close attention to the communities they serve and how responsive the college is to their needs. Governing bodies should be business-like but not to the exclusion of wider issues of values and community representation. They must be able to scrutinise effectively the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

A broad range of membership may also mean that the governing body has individual members whose expectations or styles of working differ considerably from each other. Student governors may have limited experience of governance and committee processes. However, a broad representation improves the governing body's capacity to gather information, understand different local interests and communicate with the community it serves. Working as a team is an important aspect of governance; training and development of governors should therefore include opportunities for governors to become familiar with the different viewpoints individual members bring to the board.

## Committees

As previously noted, governing bodies are no longer required to have committees other than the audit committee. Many colleges have moved to 'policy governance' or the 'Carver' model and do not have a committee structure.

A board may set up as many committees as they consider appropriate and members can be drawn from within and outside the governing body and college. In some cases a joint committee may be established with other colleges or schools, for example where collaborative arrangements are being set up. In this case, the requirements of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) must be followed. Some colleges use the title 'co-opted' or 'associate governor' as a way of ensuring succession for the permanent membership of the board.

Procedures will need to be in place to deal with disciplinary matters relating to the chief executive or principal and this will normally involve the creation of a special committee. The governing body must not delegate the following:

- the determination of the educational character and mission of the college;
- the approval of the annual estimates of income and expenditure;
- the responsibility for ensuring the solvency of the college and safeguarding of its assets;
- the appointment or dismissal of the principal or the clerk to the governing body (including the clerk who may also be a member of staff);
- the modification or revocation of the articles.

The **audit committee** advises on matters relating to the governing body's external audit arrangements and systems of internal control. The committee must consist of at least three people, including one person with relevant financial/audit expertise, and may include college employees other than senior post holders. See Module 12: The Audit Committee for more detailed information.

Where established, the **search committee** advises the governing body on the appointment of members other than parent, staff or student members, who will be elected by their constituent bodies. It will be

normal for the search committee to publish its rules and procedures on the college website under the provisions of the college's publication scheme.

A **special committee** of the governing body is required when consideration is being given to the case for dismissal and the power to determine an appeal in connection with the dismissal of the principal, the clerk or other senior post holder. The board is required to make rules specifying the way in which this committee is established and conducted.

## Activity

### How effective are governing body committees?

1. List the committees set up by your governing body and note their remits or terms of reference. Set out three ways in which they report to the governing body.
2. In your view, is it better for a governing body to have a wide range of committees, or would you prefer there to be fewer committees, with more detailed work being allocated to task groups? Give three advantages and disadvantages of both systems.

## Viewpoint

1. Apart from the audit, and where required, special committees, each governing body will vary in the number of its committees, their remits and the way in which they report. Committees might feed back to the governing body through an official written report by the chair, or by an overall presentation made by members of the committee. Some governing bodies may receive only the minutes of committees; others might receive a short report with recommendations or direct advice. Where specific powers have been devolved to committees and decisions made, these should be reported back to the governing body. On occasions a committee will want to refer a decision to the board for formal resolution.
2. There is no right answer to this question. Some governing bodies prefer to set up task or ad hoc groups to deal with specific issues, e.g. a capital project, because it enables individual governors to contribute their expertise on a subject. These groups will be wound up when their task is completed. Others prefer to have standing committees to deal with finance and general purposes, personnel, quality and curriculum or learner engagement matters. Again, the advantage is that governors can become involved in specific aspects of college work and thereby be better informed.

The downside is that committees can be time consuming for the clerk, governors and senior staff and their reports may end up dominating the governing body agenda with matters that some governors have already discussed in detail. Small groups of governors may become overly influential as a result of their committee work, to the exclusion of other members.

Some colleges have moved to a system whereby they only have the required audit committee. The advantage is that the whole governing body is engaged in all key aspects of the college's work. The downside may be that the board needs to meet more frequently and the agenda has to be carefully planned to ensure it is manageable. It is good practice for governing bodies to review their structure and procedures from time to time to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

## The powers of the governing body

The governing body or board – the legal term is corporation – ‘conducts’ the college. The governing body has the power, amongst others, to:

- provide further education and higher education;
- with agreement, provide secondary education to 14 to 16 year olds in school;
- provide an apprenticeship programme;
- supply goods or services in support of the provision of education;
- conduct an educational institution;
- subscribe for or acquire shares in or securities of a company;
- acquire and dispose of assets;
- borrow money;
- invest money;
- apply for degree awarding powers; and
- innovate.

It also has powers to enter into contracts and make other arrangements to support its main powers. The legal power of the governing body resides with the governing body as a whole, not with individual governors. This places constraints on what governors can do:

- as a corporate body, governors should support decisions taken collectively at formal meetings;
- no governor should speak on behalf of the governing body unless specifically authorised by the governing body;
- all governors share responsibility for decisions;
- all governors must respect confidentiality.

## Activity

### The duties and powers of governing bodies

To determine the duties and powers of your governing body, you need to look at your college's Instrument and Articles of Government. As clerk you need to advise where necessary. Drawing on the documents available to you, answer the questions below:

Does the governing body have the power to do the following?	YES	NO
1. Appoint the college principal.		
2. Appoint a vice chair.		
3. Appoint a clerk to the governing body who is also a member of staff.		
4. Ask the principal to act as a temporary clerk in the absence of the clerk.		
5. Invite members of the public to attend a meeting of the governing body.		
6. Authorise payments of travelling and subsistence to governors.		
7. Determine the pay of individual members of staff.		
8. Instruct the principal which courses to run.		
9. Set fee levels for courses.		
10. Determine the success rate levels for the college.		
11. Set up ad hoc groups to advise on estates and quality.		
12. Make minutes of board meetings confidential.		
13. Introduce performance-related pay for senior post holders.		
14. Delegate approval of the annual estimates of income and expenditure to a committee.		
15. Put out to tender the catering contract for the college's catering facilities.		
16. Dismiss a governor for failing to attend meetings for six months.		
17. Appoint the same company to carry out the internal and external audit.		
18. Dismiss the principal.		
19. Dismiss a member of staff.		
20. Decide not to have an audit committee.		
21. Decide not to have a search committee.		
22. Decide not to have a finance committee.		
23. Appoint a governor aged over 70.		
24. Decide to have a governing body with fewer than 12 members.		
25. Decide to appoint a member without the advice of the search committee.		
26. Decide to use video-conferencing for a meeting of the governing body.		

## Viewpoint

Whilst the Education Act 2011 removed the requirements regarding senior post holders, most colleges will continue to have a number of senior post holders and the Instrument and Articles will set out the governing body's responsibilities for their employment. It also states the responsibility to determine the educational character of the college and ensure its solvency.

- Answers to 1,2,3,5,6,10,11,13,15,16,18,21,22,23,24 and 26 are 'yes' – these are the responsibilities of the governing body. Note that the Education Act 2011 removed the requirement to have any committee other than the audit committee (which is a requirement of the financial memorandum).
- Answers to 4,7,8,9,12,14,17 and 20 are 'no'. With regard to question 7, the governing body sets the overall framework for the pay and conditions of staff rather than determining the pay of individual staff. It does, however, determine the pay of senior post holders. Similarly, the governing body sets the overall policy by which tuition and other fees are determined, rather than the actual fees. See Module 10: Finance for further information.
- Question 12 is not straightforward. In general, the governing body must make public the agenda, minutes and documents of every governing body meeting. However, items concerning a named member of staff or student can be made confidential and the governing body can also decide to treat other items confidentially if there are good reasons (e.g. a sensitive business transaction). See Module 3: The Main Statutory Framework for further information.
- For question 19, the dismissal of a member of staff who is not a senior post-holder is the responsibility of the principal, although the person concerned has the right to appeal to the governing body. In the case of a senior post holder or the clerk, only the governing body has the power to dismiss. See Module 11: Human Resources for further information.
- With regard to question 25, if a search committee has been established, its advice must normally be sought before appointing a member except in the case of parent, staff or student members. See Module 13: The Search Committee for further information

## Activity

### Putting legal responsibilities into practice

We can now look at some practical situations where the clerk might need to advise. Read through these examples and note down your responses.

#### Example 1: Corporate decisions

The governing body – after long and serious debate – comes to a decision. However, some governors are still not happy. What can you advise?

## Viewpoint

### Example 1: Corporate decisions

You will explain to the governors that the governing body may on occasion come to a decision with which individuals may disagree. An effective governing body is one where individuals are encouraged to express their views forcibly and with vigour. But assuming everyone has an opportunity to participate and that their views have been heard, then a decision of the governing body should be binding for all governors.

If a governor feels unable to support a decision on a matter of principle, e.g. a decision to open discussions on merging with another college, or selling a college asset, there are several possible steps. You can advise the governor to:

- record their dissent in the minutes;
- ask to have the matter raised as a separate agenda item at the next meeting; or
- as a last resort, resign.

Note that no resolution of the governing body can be overturned at a subsequent meeting unless the matter is a specific item of business. It is not acceptable for a governor to seek to change the decision of the governing body by, for example, airing the disagreement in public, or by lobbying hard to get the decision overturned. The interests of the college and governing body come first.

But if the governor considers that the governing body has acted outside its powers in making a decision, the matter would need to be reported to the Skills Funding Agency or Education Funding Agency, usually through the chair, the principal as accounting officer, or the clerk. This happens very rarely but your college should have a procedure in place, just in case.

In these instances the chair and the principal have an important role to play in making sure that all voices on the governing body have been properly heard and listened to.

## Activity

### Example 2: Monitoring

Between meetings of the governing body, a governor has received data issued by the college which show an increase in the number of students dropping out of some programme areas and a reduction in the success rates. This matter has not been included on the next agenda of the governing body. As clerk, this has been brought to your attention.

## **Viewpoint**

### **Example 2: Monitoring**

On the question of an increase in the numbers of students dropping out and a drop in success rates, the governing body will have set targets for student retention, achievement and success rates as part of its annual cycle of meetings. These targets may have been identified as key performance indicators (KPIs) on which you would expect to have regular progress reports.

If the governor has a concern about an item not included on the agenda, the proper course of action is to raise the matter with the chair or you, as clerk, and ask for it to be included. It is a serious matter if important information is being withheld from a governing body and equally important that all governors are confident of the accuracy of the information they receive. If information is found to have been deliberately withheld or inappropriately amended, the chair should consider disciplinary action.

## Section 3. The role and responsibilities of the clerk – an introduction

This section describes how the clerk is employed and what the clerk's key responsibilities are. If you are a new clerk, it provides you with the opportunity to review your areas of responsibility and identify potential training or development needs.

### Employment of the clerk

The clerk may be described as the professional officer employed by and serving the governing body. The contract of employment will be between the clerk and the corporation. The principal cannot be employed as the clerk. As with senior post-holders, the governing body has direct responsibility for the clerk; it oversees the appointment, grading, suspension and dismissal of the clerk and determines the clerk's pay and conditions. The corporation has direct responsibility for the entire employment of the person who is the clerk if that person also has another post within the college.

Where this is the case, it is usual for the individual to have a single contract of employment but to have separate job descriptions for each post. These should clearly differentiate the responsibilities and accountabilities of the clerk from those of any other post held within the college. The clerk's role may be a full-time or part-time position. It is increasingly common for experienced clerks to service more than one governing body under separate contracts for services.

The clerk's job description should set out:

- your duties and to whom you are responsible;
- arrangements for your appraisal. Normally it is the chair, another governor or a group of governors approved by the governing body who carry out the clerk's appraisal; and
- the amount of time that you are expected to spend on clerkship duties (this will vary depending on the size and nature of the job).

The governing body may decide to appoint a deputy clerk and/or administrator to assist in the clerking duties. The responsibilities of the deputy clerk need to be agreed by the governing body and reflect those of the clerk. It will also be normal for the clerk to have appropriate secretarial support.

### The clerk's responsibilities

The clerk's responsibilities are laid down in the Instrument and Articles of Government for colleges which identify them as advising the governing body:

- with regard to the operation of its powers;
- with regard to procedural matters;
- with regard to the conduct of its business; and
- with regard to matters of governance practice.

In addition the clerk should ensure that the governing body:

- receives and considers appropriate information on the college's finances, curriculum, quality, and student performance;
- sets and regularly monitors targets for enrolments, retention, achievement and success rates and other such key performance indicators as the governing body determines; and

- carries out financial forecasts and monitoring in line with the financial memorandum agreed with the Skills Funding Agency or Education Funding Agency.

Four additional core responsibilities of the clerk are:

- to receive written notice that a member has been disqualified from continuing to hold the office of a member of the governing body;
- to receive written notice that a member wishes to resign from membership of the governing body;
- to maintain a register of the financial interests of members and to make this available during normal office hours at the college to any person wishing to inspect it; and
- to summon meetings of the governing body by sending to members written notice of the meeting and the proposed agenda at least seven calendar days before the meeting.

The actual responsibilities of the clerk are much wider than those listed above and will vary according to the needs of the individual governing body. The checklist in the next activity provides a typical example of the range.

## Activity

### Key elements of the clerk's responsibilities

1. Which of the responsibilities below do you think are most important for the clerk? Note these with a 'I' in the appropriate tick box.
2. Which activities do you think might pose most risk for the clerk? Note these with an 'R'.

### Checklist

The clerk is typically responsible for:

I	R	
		ensuring the governing body fulfils legal, statutory and public responsibilities
		providing advice and briefings to the governing body and acting as the reference point for enquiries
		determining the calendar of meetings, summoning meetings, preparing agendas, reports and minutes of meetings including committees of the governing body
		ensuring the cycle of business is carried out efficiently and effectively
		ensuring that the governing body receives appropriate information on the college's financial and student performance
		checking the quoracy of meetings of the governing body and committees
		advising the governing body on issues relating to membership
		facilitating communication on governing body matters between the chair, principal and other senior post holders
		attending (or by delegation to a named person) all meetings of the governing body and its committees
		holding the college's seal and preparing documentation to be executed under the seal
		providing administrative support to the chair, committee chairs and, where appropriate, individual governors
		ensuring compliance with the law regarding public access to governors' papers
		ensuring safe custody of the official records of the governing body's business and keeping a record of outstanding business
		administering any scheme for the reimbursement of governors' expenses
		taking appropriate action if and when the governing body, chair or a committee is at risk of acting outside their powers or proposing unlawful actions
		acting as a correspondent for the governors
		issuing letters of appointment for new governors
		keeping under review standing orders, membership and terms of reference of the committees
		maintaining the register of members' interests (other than financial)
		facilitating governor training including the induction of new members
		monitoring the public interest disclosure procedure, suggesting amendments and (where the governing body requires this) being the lead assessor in reviewing the proposed disclosure
		supporting the governing body in the annual self-assessment review of its performance
		contributing to succession planning for the governing body, including the roles of chair and vice chair of the board and its committees

## **Viewpoint**

Each person will respond differently to this question. It may be argued that all of these responsibilities are crucial for the successful performance of the governing body and the achievement of the clerk's duties. Many will overlap with each other. To fall short in any one responsibility might put at risk the effective governance of the college. Some responsibilities occur regularly, others occur at certain times of the year and some only from time to time.

The clerk will need continually to check the membership of, and attendance at, committees to make sure that the committees are working effectively and have clear reporting lines to the governing body.

## **Activity**

### **Reviewing your broader responsibilities**

Look again through the list of the key responsibilities above. Mark with a ✓ the areas in which you are reasonably confident, mark with 'x' those in which you feel less confident and mark with '?' those about which you require further information. You may also wish to identify other responsibilities that don't appear on the list.

## **Viewpoint**

Doing this activity may have helped you identify areas in which you feel you would like further training or development. Clerks have a range of different backgrounds and experience. Some have a wide knowledge of FE, some have experience in clerking other public bodies, while others are knowledgeable about the law underpinning the responsibilities of governing bodies. Note down any areas you want to clarify or follow up through training in your 'Action Planner' form.

## **Demonstrating your independence**

The governing body needs to know that the advice given by the clerk is unbiased and impartial on all occasions. The clerk will need to sign the register of interests in the same way as governors and senior managers. The clerk is the servant of the governing body and when inspectors examine how a college is governed, they will look for evidence of the clerk's independence. This is especially important if the clerk also holds another post within the college.

At the same time, the clerk is an important intermediary between the principal and other senior post holders, the chair and members of the governing body. The clerk plays an important role in relationship building but should not allow his or her independence to be compromised. The activity below suggests some of the ways in which you might provide evidence of your independence.

## Activity

### Are you independent?

There are a number of ways in which the clerk can be judged to be independent of the senior management. Can you answer 'yes' to all the questions below?

1. Do you have a clear job description in which independence is identified?
2. Have you completed the register of interests?
3. If you have management duties within the college, do you have a clear written statement clarifying your respective roles of clerk and senior manager?
4. Is your appraisal as clerk undertaken exclusively by the governing body?
5. Could you show an inspector that you provide independent advice to the governing body and work independently from the principal? If the answer is yes, how would you demonstrate this?

## Viewpoint

A clerk needs to be able to answer 'yes' to all these questions. The kind of evidence you might provide for an inspector could include your job description, arrangements for your appraisal and examples of situations where you gave advice directly to the governing body. If this activity has made you aware of further action you could usefully take to demonstrate your independence, note this down in the appropriate section of the 'Action Planner'.

## Appraisal

Appraisal is a process which allows individuals and those with whom they work, usually their line manager, to review their performance, strengths and weaknesses, identify areas for improvement, training and development needs, and targets to aim for in the future. Because of the pace of change in FE and the need to continually improve the governance process, an annual appraisal of the clerk's performance is a good idea.

There is more information about appraisal in Module 11: Human Resources. At this point you may find it useful to work through the activity below, which provides a quick checklist of the kind of appraisal arrangements that should be in place in your college.

## Activity

### Your appraisal

1. Has the governing body arranged for your appraisal?
2. Who carries out the appraisal?
3. How often does it take place?
4. Is a formal record of the appraisal agreed and kept by the appraiser and the clerk?
5. Does the appraisal include the setting of targets for the year ahead or beyond?
6. Is the governing body told when the appraisal takes place and about the outcome?
7. Is there a mechanism for a mid-year review of progress?

### Viewpoint

There is no single model of good practice for governing bodies. If you found it difficult to answer two or more of the questions above, you might need to remind the governing body of the importance of ensuring a review of your performance and that this review is reported back to them. The review might typically be carried out by the chair or another governor or group of governors as agreed by the governing body. The principal should not carry out this review.

### Getting professional support

The job of a clerk can be an isolated one; there is only one of you in the college. If you have a deputy clerk, you may be able to talk over professional issues together. If you are a newly-appointed clerk, you may want to get professional support by establishing links with other clerks. There will be a network of clerks in your area and there is also a [National Clerks' Network](#) supported by the [Association of Colleges](#) and the [Sixth Form Colleges' Forum](#). Continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities are available through AoC, some of which include certification. Recent research on clerking can be found in the document [Clerking in a new era](#) which includes invaluable information and support for clerks.

National organisations organise regular conferences. These provide useful opportunities to exchange information and good practice. Some clerks have colleagues who are clerks in other colleges, whom they can contact for advice or to share good ideas.

## Section 4 Integrity in working practices

The [Committee on Standards in Public Life](#), initially chaired by Lord Nolan, identified seven key principles for those serving in public life. These are:

- selflessness
- integrity
- objectivity
- accountability
- openness
- honesty
- leadership

All governors must uphold high standards of public conduct. They are custodians of large amounts of public money and have a key role in determining the education and training of the UK workforce. Inspection reports on governance have shown that governors in most colleges act with integrity. However, there are always a few cases where standards fall below those that are expected. Ofsted continues to regard the role of governor as a key aspect of the leadership of a college and the governing body receives appropriate attention from inspectors. The FE [Commissioner has written](#) to college governing bodies identifying areas of governance that he believes require attention.

Governors must ensure that there are no conflicts of interest on any matters being considered by the governing body. The clerk may be alerted to likely conflicts of interest through the register of interests and in serious cases may be in the position of a 'whistleblower'. However, it is the duty of every governor to declare an interest when the occasion arises. Conflicts of interest do not only cover financial matters. The test is whether the governor's individual independent judgement is affected in any way.

### Code of conduct and register of members' interests

All governing bodies should draw up, and all governors sign, a code of conduct and register of members' interests. Agreement to sign both of these should be a condition of appointment as a governor.

#### Activity

##### How is the code of conduct applied?

1. Look over the code of conduct drawn up for your own governing body and note down the key elements.
2. How can individual governors best ensure that they uphold the principles of your code?
3. In what circumstances and to whom would you be expected to declare a conflict of interest?

## Viewpoint

1. Your code of conduct is likely to include the seven Nolan principles (above). It may also make reference to the roles and responsibilities of governing bodies, how to behave in meetings, the meaning of openness and confidentiality, and the importance of a collective and corporate view. It may also make reference to [The English Colleges' Foundation Code of Governance](#) (currently under revision).
2. Governors need to be aware of the principles of the code of conduct and of the Foundation Code, perhaps by keeping a copy close to hand during meetings. It will be important that the governing body provides an account of how governors have upheld the principles contained in the code and that the code of conduct in particular is regularly reviewed and monitored.
3. If governors feel that their independence and judgement might be affected on any item, then they should report this before the meeting to the clerk or to the chair, or during a meeting to the chair. If the chair rules that there is a conflict of interest, the governor may be required to take no further part in the discussion on the item or to leave the meeting for the duration of the agenda item. When in doubt, a governor should always declare an interest. Not all conflicts of interest are financial.

For example, they may be related to a candidate for a senior post holder's position or to a person seeking membership of the governing body; they may be a member of a trade union seeking recognition in the college; or they may be in a position as a member of a local authority to use information as a governor to shape decisions affecting the college.

## Section 5. Rules and procedures of the governing body

Most governing bodies have standing orders, which determine how business is conducted. They might include rules covering membership, the quorum, the holding and organisation of meetings, the appointment of the chair, the procedure for drawing up the agenda, the work of committees, and how members should behave at meetings. Standing orders are not there to act as a bureaucratic check on what governors do, rather they help the smooth running of meetings. The clerk should ensure all governors have a copy of their standing orders and are familiar with their contents.

### Activity

#### How useful are standing orders?

1. What are the key elements of the standing orders for your governing body? When were they last reviewed?
2. Standing orders should give you some guidance on the right procedure to deal with the situations below. Read them through and note down what you would do.

#### Example 1

A new governor is unhappy with the way meetings are conducted. They think they go on far too long and are dominated by one or two governors. What steps might you advise they take?

#### Example 2

A governor wishes to raise a matter at the next meeting of the governing body but it is not covered by the agenda or the papers. What might you advise?

#### Example 3

A local community group asks a governor to raise an important matter with the governing body (perhaps concern over unavailability of public transport to the college). What is the appropriate way of dealing with this request?

## **Viewpoint**

1. Standing orders vary from college to college. They normally cover the rules and procedures to help the meetings of your governing body and committees work smoothly. If they include the remit of various committees, they should clarify the purpose of the committees, whether it has an advisory or decision-making role, and whether any powers have been delegated to it from the governing body. The standing orders should be regularly reviewed in the light of experience and to ensure that they take account of legislative changes and the requirements of bodies such as the Skills Funding Agency and Education Funding Agency.
2. The correct procedures are outlined below.

### **Example 1**

If a governor is concerned about the way meetings are conducted, they should raise this concern with the chair and/or yourself. You may wish to suggest that the governing body evaluates its own performance, which might include the effectiveness of meetings. Some colleges have a quick evaluation form for completion at the end of every meeting.

### **Example 2**

If a governor wishes to raise a matter at a meeting, they should approach you as the clerk or the chair well before the time when papers are due to be sent out. It is not appropriate for an item to be tabled (unless it is an emergency item or concerns an unforeseen event requiring a decision that has occurred since the sending out of the papers), as this will not allow governors time to give the topic careful consideration at the meeting.

### **Example 3**

If a governor is approached by an outside group to raise an issue with the governing body, the appropriate way of dealing with it is to inform the chair or you the clerk. It will then be for the chair to determine how to deal with the issue or whether it should be referred to the principal.

## Section 6. The relationship between the governing body, the clerk and the senior management team

An effective working relationship between the governing body and its chair, the clerk and the senior leadership team, under the leadership of the principal, is crucial for the success of the college. The responsibilities of the principal complement those of the governing body. The principal makes proposals to the governing body about the educational character and mission of the college, prepares annual estimates of income and expenditure and determines the pay and conditions of staff within the framework set by the governing body (apart from senior post holders and the clerk).

The principal has the responsibility for the day-to-day leadership and management of the college and for maintaining student discipline. The clerk has defined responsibilities in the Instrument and Articles which relate to governance practice but s/he will also be an important link between the governors and management. The chair's role is not defined in legislation but is regarded by many as crucial to the successful governance of a college. The relationship between the chair and the principal is particularly important.

The principal is appointed and employed directly by the governing body, and is its professional adviser and the college's accounting officer. The principal is also a full voting member of the governing body if s/he chooses to be. Where they exist, the governing body appoints senior post holders (these are no longer required under the terms of the Education Act 2011) and the clerk, determines their pay and conditions, and arranges their appraisal. The governing body will usually delegate to the principal the line management and appraisal of senior post holders. The clerk will report directly to the governing body and be appraised by the chair, governor or group of governors appointed to the task.

There is more information on the employment of the principal and senior post-holders and on relationship-building in Module 11: Human Resources and Module 4: Effective Working Relationships.

### **Governance and management**

Each governing body needs to define its working relationship with the principal and the senior leadership team; this is sometimes referred to as the 'grey area' between management and governance.

There is rapid change in the FE sector and education generally, and this may have implications for the relationship between the principal and governing body. The Foundation Code is intended to promote the development of effective governance where leadership of the governing body is given by the chair, supported by the principal and by the clerk. It also states that the governing body should ensure that the respective functions of governance and management and the roles and responsibilities of the chair, the principal and the clerk and individual governors are clearly defined.

For this to happen it may be helpful to review the relationships on an annual basis. This review might cover the general style of working, information and key tasks. It might also be useful for the senior management team to clarify what it expects from the governing body, and for the governing body to set down a set of delegations. This exercise might help avoid misunderstanding over the respective roles of governance and management.

Effective management will be hindered by governor interference in the day-to-day affairs of the college. On the other hand, a governing body that is completely detached from the work of the college will not be able to carry out its responsibilities effectively. An appropriate balance between interference and detachment needs to be found and this may depend on particular circumstances, e.g. where the college has recently received a poor inspection report.

Key features of a successful relationship are good communication and clarity of roles and responsibilities and it is essentially built upon mutual trust and respect, along with regular review and monitoring. Successful colleges have found that building trust between senior managers and governors is most effectively achieved by providing opportunities for the development of informal relationships including away-day discussions and interaction. Trust is more difficult to build when formal meetings are the only vehicle available.

## **Activity**

### **Relationship between governing body, the clerk and principal**

1. Write down what you think are the key elements of an effective working relationship between a governing body, the clerk and college principal and senior managers.
2. What in your view are the key differences between interference in the work of the college and taking an interest in the business of the college?

## **Viewpoint**

Your list of key elements might include some of the following:

- a shared common purpose, vision and values;
- a written statement setting out respective roles and responsibilities;
- ensuring the independence of the clerk;
- an annual review of the working relationship;
- appropriate and accurate information received by governors;
- mutual trust and respect;
- high quality leadership from the chair;
- governors acting as a critical friend and not being afraid to challenge rigorously and even reject management proposals should the occasion arise;
- scrutiny of management that is organised in a way that does not jeopardise effective working relationships with senior managers; and
- understanding the needs of students by listening to the learner voice and putting it at the centre of governor decision-making.

## Section 7. Putting students at the heart of things

Colleges are large and complex organisations with many elements to consider. They may have many thousands of students ranging in age from 14 to 90+. Some of these will be engaged on academic programmes, some vocational and others will be on work-based apprenticeships. There may be students from many different ethnic backgrounds and others with specific learning difficulties, part-time students studying for degree qualifications as well as adults undertaking community learning.

Most colleges identify the needs of their students as the most important aspect of their work and they establish a mission, values and ethos that are appropriate to their activity. However, with ever-present external pressures, including recent reductions in funding, the demands of the inspection system or the extent of local competition, the centrality of the learner can sometimes take a back seat. What is the role of the governing body with regard to students?

Governors will have at least two members of the governing body who have been elected to their position by an appropriate body: students, staff and parents (in sixth form colleges). They are also reminded that they are required by law to: *“publish the arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students on the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution and the oversight of its activities”*.

As many students only attend college for two years and even more are part-time, it is difficult for them to play as active a role on the governing body as they might wish. It can also be daunting for student governors to represent the interests of a large student body. The chair, principal and clerk can play an important part in ensuring the effective involvement of student governors. Here are a few examples:

- Ensure that student elections take place at such a time that the elected representatives can join the board at the beginning of an academic year.
- Involve students fully in governing body debates by making sure they are asked for opinions on key student-related issues.
- Consider the timing of meetings.
- Provide informal opportunities (e.g. at away-days) for students to make a contribution.
- Consider establishing a students’ panel or focus group to advise governors.
- Provide a good induction programme that gives student governors an opportunity to meet other governors.
- Give student governors specific responsibility for oversight of student voice issues.
- Ensure that the governing body receives well documented evidence of the student experience through face to face meetings, reports and student surveys.

### Activity

1. How would you describe the contribution of your college’s student governors? Write down ways in which you think they might be better supported in their role.
2. Arrange to meet your student governors and find out what courses they are following. Prepare a list of questions about their experiences. How has this helped you in understanding your own contribution?
3. If you have parent governors, make a similar arrangement to meet with them and compare the two sets of responses.

## **Viewpoint**

Students and their achievements in your college are the key to your college's success. They may too often be an untapped resource in finding out what the college is best at doing and where it needs to improve.

All governors need to make sure they have sufficient contact with and knowledge of their students' college activities. Local governors are in a good position to listen in a broader sense to the local community's opinions of college students. Governors with business experience can make sure that, for example, the views of work-based learners and apprentices are fully represented at the governing body.

## Section 8 Governor training and development

Being a governor is a highly responsible position. A governing body has major legal and financial responsibilities. Governors will help determine the future education and training of young people and adults, the success of which makes a vital contribution to the UK economy. It is essential therefore for all governors to undertake training and development to clarify their roles and responsibilities and improve their performance. New governors are expected to take part in training and experienced governors should do the same.

Training programmes are provided by national bodies including the Association of Colleges and [AoC Create](#). The updating and review of these governor training materials by the AoC with the support of the Education and Training Foundation is the result of evidence in the sector of a real need. Their availability online is intended to support those who prefer to work at home, but they can also be used in support of individually devised programmes or programmes designed to involve governors from different colleges. The sharing of experience with governors from other colleges is an important source of development and identification of best practice. The Annual Governance Conference has been an important focus for governors from across the English post 16 sector.

Ofsted also recognises the important role that governance plays in providing the vision, values, ethos and strategic leadership that every college needs. Where colleges are deemed by Ofsted to be outstanding, this is invariably reflected in their comments on the effectiveness of the governing body. The reverse is equally true. The 2012 [Ofsted common inspection framework](#) (updated in August 2014) suggests that governors should know more about the curriculum than is frequently the case. A 2012 Ofsted publication, '[How Colleges Improve](#)', provides good examples of what is currently expected.

Each governing body should draw up a training policy for its governors and produce an annual governor development and improvement plan. This will preferably be the result of an annual review of effectiveness of the governing body. Planned activities might include focused programmes for governors on funding or data issues and involve contributions from external facilitators. Team building and developing the skills of effective monitoring and questioning have proved very successful in many colleges. The policy might include:

- induction for new governors, including an induction pack;
- special training sessions held at the college;
- briefing sessions held before meetings of the governing body;
- input from curriculum leaders in the college at or before meetings;
- residential away-days or weekends, which provide opportunities for governors and senior managers to look at the long-term direction of the college, or for personal development;
- a mentor system in which experienced governors provide support and advice to newly appointed governors;
- individual governors linking up with curriculum areas in order to become more familiar with the work of the college; or
- training for governors who have taken on specific roles such as chair or member of the audit or finance committee, or responsibility for safeguarding or equality and diversity.

The governing body will find it helpful to set an overall budget for investing in its development and carrying out an annual review of the success of the programme. This budget might be held by the clerk who could take responsibility for governor training.

## Activity

### What can governor training offer?

1. What do you think are the major training needs of a new governor? Assuming they have a busy schedule, how best can these be met?
2. Obtain a copy of your governing body's training policy. How can you as a clerk best contribute to governor training?

## Viewpoint

1. New governors should be encouraged to identify their own development needs. For example, if they have financial expertise from the business world, they might need to know more about the college's curriculum and the services it provides. A staff governor may know a lot about the work of the college but need to learn more about budgets and balance sheets. Governors representing different groups or communities will all have different training needs. To ensure the governing body is effective, each governor needs to think of their own training needs as part of the development of the governing body as a whole.
2. Most governors are busy people and the governing body should aim to offer a range of flexible training and development options. Longstanding governors are likely to be able to contribute some of their own experience and expertise in helping the development of other governors, for example, by doing a presentation on a subject about which they are knowledgeable, or acting as a mentor to a less experienced governor.

As clerk, you should aim to be a useful source of advice for governors about training opportunities and relevant publications, papers and online opportunities, and to be able to offer tailored and one-to-one training, particularly for new governors.

## Section 9 Knowledge and skills of governors

Governors bring to their governing body a wide range of skills, expertise and experience. The background of governors varies widely. Some have experience of working in a wide range of business settings, and some will have a background in local authorities, trade unions, other public sector organisations or in local community groups with knowledge of local community needs. Some are employees of the college with direct experience of the business of the college and others are students, the direct recipients of the college's services, or parents of students aged under 19 years. The skills, expertise and experience of all governors need to be combined to the benefit of the college.

The personal qualities governors may be expected to have include strategic awareness, individual responsibility, sound judgement and communication skills. They should be able to work in a team. Governors will be expected to ensure that they have sufficient time available to devote to the work of the college. It may be helpful for the governing body to agree a person specification for a governor to complement the job description.

The governing body should carry out a skills audit to ensure an appropriate balance of experience and expertise in its membership. For example, your governing body may wish to include those with experience of vocational areas served by your college and of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also some specialist areas such as personnel, finance, capital projects and running a business. The governing body may co-opt specific governors to fill any skill gaps within the governing body.

### Activity

#### What skills and experience does the governing body need?

1. What, in your judgement, are the skills and experience required by your own governing body?
2. Which of the following areas of experience and expertise can individuals contribute?
  - knowledge of the local community
  - managing personnel
  - financial management
  - property management
  - running a company
  - employers' training needs
  - experience as a student of the college
  - knowledge of the college's academic and vocational work
  - knowledge of the needs of students with learning difficulties and / or disabilities
  - other.
3. How best can your governing body ensure that the views of groups not represented on the governing body are taken into account?

## **Viewpoint**

1. Every governor contributes areas of experience, knowledge and skills to the governing body. What is important is that there is a balance of expertise within the governing body as a whole. If you have strong views about weaknesses or gaps in your governing body, consider raising this issue with the chair, who might bring this to the attention of the search committee or full governing body.
2. What matters is not the number of areas that you can tick in the checklist, but that each governor is clear about what they can contribute, and that you and the chair know what the strengths of individual governors are. Personal qualities will be as important as specific areas of experience and expertise.
3. To take on board the views of groups in the wider community, the governing body might set up advisory groups of local stakeholders. These could act as a sounding board for ideas. Governors may participate in an annual public meeting at which the governing body presents the college's annual report and is available to answer questions. The college may also hold open days and student awards presentations, which are also useful opportunities to meet members of the community. In addition, individual governors, through their local contacts, will be able to obtain useful feedback on the overall performance of the college that can be passed on to the college senior management team.

## Section 10. Governors' information needs

Governors need appropriate information to ensure that they carry out their job effectively. Governors should determine with senior managers the type of information they require and how this information should be presented. Because of the importance of governing bodies being adequately and accurately informed, colleges often err on the side of giving governors too much information rather than too little. Information may be received as part of the agenda for a full governing body meeting, produced for members of committees and task groups, or be general information distributed between members.

The type of information given to governors varies from one governing body to another, depending on discussions between the governors and senior managers. It also depends on the time of year because of the annual cycle of business. However, governors should expect to receive information on the financial health of the college, its academic performance, and other matters relating to the work of the college, such as buildings and estates.

Information must be presented in a way that enables governors to monitor overall performance of the college. Many governing bodies prefer this to be presented in the form of an executive summary clarifying whether the paper is for decision, for information or for noting, with a risk assessment and setting out a number of clear options. To these summaries may be attached more detailed information. Some governing bodies divide the agenda into items requiring decision, reports from committees and working groups, and papers for noting. Statistical data reporting on performance against key performance indicators may be presented in a visual 'dashboard' format.

The agenda and papers should be sent out well in advance of meetings. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, papers should never be tabled. Some colleges have discussed and implemented an e-governance approach to their formal work whereby papers are available electronically and meetings are conducted without paper items.

### **Activity**

#### **What is the quality of papers presented to the governing body?**

Go back through the minutes of the last two meetings of your governing body.

1. How much of the agenda is devoted to the college curriculum, quality and to its financial health?
2. Comment on the style of papers. Are they written in a way that everybody can understand?
3. Write down three key features of an effective governing body paper.
4. What information does your governing body require to be effective?

## Viewpoint

1. The matters considered by your governing body will vary between meetings depending on the time of year and the annual cycle of meetings. The governing body will expect at every meeting a report on the financial health of the college and progress with respect to meeting retention, achievement and success rate targets. The cycle of meetings will set out when the annual budget has to be agreed and the previous year's accounts approved, when the strategic plan has to be approved and arrangements for monitoring progress in financial and academic matters. Governors need to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between curriculum, quality and financial matters.
2. If you think governors have a problem with style and presentation of the papers – they may be full of jargon – you should raise this with the chair. If governors cannot understand the content of papers or are unable to understand what it is they are expected to do with the papers, their effectiveness is reduced.
3. A governing body paper should be clearly written and jargon-free and be well-presented with an executive summary. It should set out whether the content is for decision, noting or information. If it is for decision, then there should be a number of clear options set out. Generally it should be as short as possible although it may need to include relevant appendices.
4. The governing body needs accurate information that will enable members to know whether the college is performing to a high standard. Information will be available on finance and academic performance. Financial data should show clearly whether the budget is on target as measured against certain key indicators. See Module 10: Finance for more detailed information.
5. It is important for governors to have the opportunity for strategic discussion as well as the monitoring of performance.

The information that governors receive may be influenced by their governing body's committee structure. For example, the governing body may have set up a finance and/or quality committee. These committees will be able to look in more detail at financial and academic information although there must be effective reporting to the governing body. A task group set up to consider the college's estates strategy may also provide specific information to the full governing body.

The governing body needs to agree on information requirements outside the normal cycle of information. In some colleges, governors are able to access a special governors' page on the college website. Others send governors copies of college newsletters or special updates.

An individual governor will need to receive information relevant to any positions they hold or to membership of committees. The chair of the governing body or of a committee will need to receive information to enable them to carry out their duties. Members of committees may require background information on the work of the committee. A new governor will require induction material and briefing materials about the duties of a governor. This may take the form of a governors' handbook.

Papers are an essential source of information for the effective working of the governing body but they are not the whole picture. It is useful to think about other ways in which you can quickly get a feel for how the college runs on a day-to-day basis.

## **Activity**

### **Helping governors develop their understanding of how the college operates**

1. List what you feel are the important things governors need to know about the college.
2. What steps do you need to take to ensure they have a good understanding of the way the college operates?

## **Viewpoint**

1. It is important for governors to find out about the work of their college, and to be well informed about its mission and educational character, its values and ethos, the extent of its land and estates, its students and its general curriculum offer. However, governors will not be expected to know the detail of what the college does. The governing body will be most effective if every governor has an appropriate knowledge of the work of the college.
2. Examples of how governors might find out more about how the college operates include:
  - attending college functions such as presentation evenings, annual public meetings, open days and student awards presentations;
  - linking up with curriculum departments/faculties within the college to enable them to meet staff and students in one part of the college;
  - receiving regular bulletins distributed by the college;
  - having opportunities to meet groups of students from different programme areas;
  - attending presentations by senior staff to the governing body on curriculum areas or other aspects of the college's work; and
  - visiting the college website frequently to keep abreast of the latest news.

# Module review

## Summary of key learning points

- The policy environment encourages a range of providers including colleges, academies, studio schools, university technical colleges, free schools, school sixth forms and private training providers. Colleges vary considerably in type, size and curriculum offer. They make a key contribution to the effective education and training of young people and adults, including the provision of informal education to local communities.
- The responsibilities, powers and duties of governing bodies are set out in the Instrument and Articles of Government.
- The main responsibilities of the governing body are to determine the educational character of the college, listen to the learner voice, ensure its overall well-being and financial solvency, and monitor its performance.
- Governing bodies may comprise members from business, staff, students and the local community. Sixth form colleges, which have a separate legal status to general further education colleges, also have parent members and former voluntary controlled sixth-form colleges have foundation members. The principal is a member of the governing body (although s/he may choose not to be) and other members can be co-opted on the basis of their experience and skill.
- Governing bodies are required to have an audit committee and may also establish a search committee and other committees to help them in their work.
- Governing bodies will approve a code of practice and register of members' interests. They may have approved the English Colleges' Foundation Code of Governance, which is currently under review.
- Governors should be familiar with their governing body's standing orders.
- An effective working relationship between the governing body, the clerk and the senior management team is crucial for the success of the college. Governing bodies should consider annually reviewing their working relationship with senior managers.
- Governors should agree a training and development policy for the governing body. They can find out about the governor training programme through their clerk. Training and development enhances governors' capacity to contribute to the governing body.
- The governing body should carry out an annual review of its performance and a formal evaluation at least once every three years.
- Students are central to the mission and purpose of colleges. Governing bodies need to have appropriate systems in place to listen and respond to the student voice.
- Governors bring a wide range of experience, skills and knowledge. The overall expertise within the governing body needs to be well balanced.
- Governors should get to know their college.
- Governors need to get clear information at and between meetings to ensure they do a good job. Papers for meetings of the governing body and its committees should be clearly written.

## Where next?

You have now completed work on Module 1: Overview of the Further Education System. If there are areas in which you need more guidance or information, they may be covered in other modules. Turn to 'Check your current knowledge and skills' in 'Using the Materials'. This self-assessment questionnaire

will help you to decide which modules or sections of modules may help to fill these gaps. Tick the useful sections for further study.

If you cannot find the information you need within these materials, turn to the 'Action Planner' in 'Using the Materials'. Note down what further information, support or guidance you would like. The 'Action Planner' gives advice on who may be able to help. Follow up the web links in the modules to support your general knowledge of relevant FE issues.

### **Putting it into action**

We hope that working through this module has raised useful questions, increased your knowledge and awareness of issues and given you ideas for practical action that you would like to follow up. The 'Action Planner' contains a section where you can note down any questions or action points that you want to follow up.

## Further Reading

For newly-appointed clerks the best place to start is with the materials available from your own college, for example:

- The prospectus, which gives details of all the programmes and qualifications available in the college;
- The college's strategic plan which will include the vision mission and values of the organisation as well as details about its resources, including staff and financial information;
- Any regular college newsletters.

All these materials are probably available on the college website which will include a news section and information from and about students. Many college websites have a discrete area on the web site for use by governors.

The latest [report of the Chief Inspector of Ofsted \(2012/13\)](#) will provide a good overview of quality in the sector.

The latest government policy statement [Rigour and Responsiveness in Skills](#) will provide a good summary of the government's latest direction of travel for the sector.

[The AoC governance resource library](#) provides a wide range of practical advice for clerks and governors.

**Challenges for FE college governance** is a recent report identifying key areas for governors' attention.

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# Overview of Delivery Partners



## Post-19 Further Education and Skills: Role of BIS and Partners

**BIS Sets policy, determines spending priorities and determines levers**



**UKCES**

Skills Forecasting

**Sector Skills Councils**

Determine the occupational standards

**Ofqual (1)**

**University (2)**

(1) Regulates qualifications and the apprenticeship framework

(2) Universities using powers given by the Privy Council validate degrees

**SFA  
HEFCE  
SLC**

Funding and settlement

Issue student numbers

**HE and FE Providers**

Can only draw down public funds for approved qualifications. Offer determined by local or national need

**Ofsted**

**QAA**

Inspection and Quality Assurance

**DSA**

**HESA**

Data services collect and publish data on performance

# Acronyms



<b>AB</b>	Awarding Bodies	<b>NHS BSA</b>	NHS Business Services Authority
<b>AoC</b>	Association of Colleges	<b>NUS</b>	National Union of Students
<b>AoCGC</b>	AoC Governors Council	<b>OFFA</b>	Office for Fair Access
<b>BIS</b>	Department for Business Innovation and Skills	<b>Ofqual</b>	Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation
<b>CUC</b>	Committee of University Chairs	<b>Ofsted</b>	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
<b>DAP</b>	Degree-awarding powers	<b>OIA</b>	Office of the Independent Adjudicator
<b>DfE</b>	Department for Education	<b>PSRBs</b>	Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies
<b>DH</b>	Department of Health	<b>QAA</b>	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
<b>DWP</b>	Department of Work and Pensions	<b>REO</b>	Review of Educational Oversight
<b>DLHE</b>	Destination of Leavers from Higher Education	<b>RPG</b>	Regulatory Partnership Group
<b>ENQA</b>	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education	<b>SFA</b>	Skills Funding Agency
<b>FEC</b>	Further education college or corporation	<b>SLC</b>	Student Loans Company
<b>HE</b>	Higher education	<b>NDPB</b>	Non-departmental public body
<b>HEBRG</b>	Higher Education Better Regulation Group	<b>NCTL</b>	National College for Teaching and Leadership
<b>HEDIIP</b>	Higher Education Data and Information Improvement Programme	<b>UCAS</b>	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
<b>HEE</b>	Health Education England	<b>UCT</b>	University College title
	Higher Education Funding Council for England	<b>UKCES</b>	UK Commission For Employment and Skills
<b>HEFCE</b>		<b>UKPSF</b>	UK Professional Standards Framework
<b>HEI</b>	Higher education institution	<b>UT</b>	University title
<b>HESA</b>	Higher Education Statistics Agency	<b>UUK</b>	Universities UK
<b>HMRC</b>	HM Revenue and Customs		
<b>HNC</b>	Higher National Certificate		
<b>HND</b>	Higher National Diploma		
<b>ITT</b>	Initial teacher training		
<b>LETB</b>	Local Education and Training Board		
<b>NCTL</b>	National College for Teaching and Leadership		
<b>NHS</b>	National Health Service		