

COLCHESTER INSTITUTE

Sheepen Road, Colchester CO3 3LL

Becoming a Governor

Introduction

College Governors are people from the local community who wish to make a positive contribution to the education of learners of all ages. Governors are a volunteer force that has an important part to play in raising standards through their three key roles of setting strategic direction, ensuring accountability and monitoring and evaluating college performance.

Further Education Colleges are Corporations constituted under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. Their activities are conducted within the Instrument and Articles of Government that are statutory. These set out the Responsibilities of the Corporation and the Principal that briefly are as follows.

The Corporation shall be responsible for the following functions

- determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution and the oversight of its activities;
- publishing 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;
- approving the quality strategy of the institution;
- Effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the Corporation and safeguarding their assets;
- Approving annual estimates of income and expenditure
- Appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of the pay and conditions of service of the holders of senior posts and the Clerk
- Setting a framework for the pay and conditions of service of all other staff.

The Principal shall be the Chief Executive of the institution (subject to the responsibilities of the Corporation) and shall be responsible for the following functions -

- Making proposals to the Corporation about the educational character and mission of the institution and implementing the decisions of the Corporation
- Determination of the institution's academic activities and the determination of its other activities;
- Preparing annual estimates of income and expenditure for consideration and approval by the Corporation, and the management of budget and resources within the estimates approved by the Corporation
- Organisation, direction and management of the institution and leadership of the staff;
- Appointment, assignment, grading, appraisal, suspension, dismissal and determination, within the framework set by the Corporation, of the pay and conditions of service of staff, other than the holders of senior posts or the Clerk, where the Clerk is also a member of the staff; and
- maintaining student discipline and, within the rules and procedures provided for within the Articles, suspending or expelling students on disciplinary grounds or expelling students for academic reasons

The Financial Memorandum sets out the terms and conditions under which the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) provides funds to colleges.

All Governors get a great deal of satisfaction from being on the Governing Body. This was confirmed by the results of a recent questionnaire, which also showed that they enjoy being able to contribute, at a strategic and policy level, to the education and skill training of young people as well as providing opportunities for older students to fulfil long held ambitions or to be trained for a career change.

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Colchester Institute

This is the biggest Further Education College in Essex with more than 10,000 students and over 500 staff. It has campuses in Colchester, Tendring and Braintree. It is a mixed provision College with some 1,000 Higher Education students studying degrees and diplomas awarded in partnership with Essex University.

Governor's Time Commitment?

Board members at Colchester Institute give a time commitment of at least six board meetings a year, and serve on at least one committee (which demands another 4 to 6 meetings or 10 to 15 hours a year). The rewards are not financial. You may claim out of pocket expenses but not for loss of income when attending governors' meetings. Most Governors get involved to use the skills they have to 'give back' something to a worthwhile enterprise.

All applications will be reviewed by a panel of existing Board members against the following questions. Does the applicant:

- Currently work in a responsible position in the public/private/voluntary sector?
- Have any knowledge of the Colchester Institute and support for its work?
- Have any involvement and interest in educational developments, particularly post school?
- Have skills and experience that compliment those of existing Board Members, or Potential gaps or that will replace and extend those of a retiring Member?
- Have any involvement in the wider North Essex Community?
- Have any other previous participation in Colchester Institute activities?
- Bring opportunities to project the Board and Colchester Institute to a wider constituency?
- Have the potential and present wish to consider two 4-year terms on the Board?
- Help maintain a gender balance on the Board.

Governor Development Opportunities

When new Governors are appointed, there is a short programme of induction to support them in their new role and to help them get to know the College and the strategic responsibilities that Governors have. The programme includes meetings with the Chairman, the Principal, the Clerk and the Director of Finance. The programme is tailored to meet individual interests. For more information visit the Governance pages on the

Colchester Institute website at www.colchester.ac.uk/governance or the **Association of Colleges website** at www.fegovernance.org/articles.asp?ArticleId=259

Being a college governor is a valuable job and well worth doing. It is not primarily about knowledge - the skills and personal resources that you have already can be put to use immediately. Having said that, developing your knowledge and skills as time goes on, together with a growing understanding and experience of the broader context of the role will make the job more satisfying and you more effective.

If you would like to be considered for appointment to the Board, please send your CV and covering letter to Hazel Paton, Clerk to the Governors, Colchester Institute, Sheepen Road, Colchester CO3 3LL or email Hazel.Paton@colchester.ac.uk. Alternatively phone Hazel on 01206 712606 for more information.