

Governor Development Involvement and Strategy 2019/20

College Mission

‘Inspiring our community through learning for all’.

1. Vision Statement

- 1.1. South Devon College aims to foster and promote a culture of development and involvement for governors through an effective and systematic approach. This paper sets out the development and involvement strategy for governors of South Devon College.
- 1.2. The strategy will provide governors with planned and relevant opportunities to be involved with the student learning experience in order to gain a contextualised understanding of teaching, learning and assessment and the broader student experience at the College.
- 1.3. The strategy will provide training and development in order to support the role of College governor to enable them to make an effective contribution.
- 1.4. The strategy provides a programme of activities planned for the College year 2019/20. The approach to governor development and involvement acknowledges that it is important to have a planned and forward-looking programme of events, but equally to be responsive to new and unforeseen needs, which may emerge during the year as a result of changes to the College’s operating environment, including government policies. As a consequence, the content of the governor development programme is expected to evolve during the year, with new topics being identified or planned activities being modified.

2. Aims and objectives of the Governor Development and Involvement Strategy

- 2.1. The College is committed to ensuring that:
 - a) High quality training and development are offered to all governors, and the governing body’s members have the knowledge and expertise to fulfil all of its responsibilities as detailed by its Instrument and Articles of Government, and set out in the AoC’s Code of Good Governance for English Colleges.
 - b) Training and development activities are focused on supporting the needs of individual governors and addressing issues of collective interest to the Governing Body and the College.
 - c) Effective induction arrangements are in place to ensure that new members are introduced to the work of the College and understand their roles and responsibilities to enable them to make an effective contribution to the work of the Governing Body. Governors can attend any Committee meeting of the Governing Body to broaden their understanding of its work by request to the Head of Governance.
 - d) Governors are involved in relevant ways to gain understanding and first-hand experience of the student experience.

3. Implementation of the Governor Development and Involvement Strategy

3.1. The strategy makes use of resources and development opportunities available from within the College, offered by regional organisations and nationally. Specifically, governor development events and information updates are provided by:

- a) Use of knowledgeable and trained College staff to provide updates on changes to government policies or information on specific activities or initiatives, eg safeguarding and prevent.
- b) Engaging with the Association of Colleges-South West (AoC-SW) programme for Chairs and governors
- c) Attending national events at which governance is a major theme, eg AoC Annual Conference, AoC/ETF Annual Governor Summit
- d) Governors will also be invited to:
 - i. attend College committees as appropriate - usually as Designated or Lead Governors
 - ii. undertake 'learning walks' to gain further understanding of good and outstanding teaching
 - iii. meet with staff
 - iv. meet with students
 - v. attend College events including prize giving and other student celebrations
 - vi. take a tour of off-site provision (another opportunity to meet staff and students)
 - vii. attend course representatives meetings and other learner focus groups (Staff/Student Governors)

4. Internally run training and development activities

4.1. Indicative content for the briefing sessions delivered prior to Governing Body meetings (45-50 minutes):

- a) **12 December 2019 from 3-4pm:** Employer Engagement and Work Placements
- b) **26 March 2020 from 3-4pm:** The risks around pursuing university status including the challenges around developing Research & Scholarly Activity.
- c) **16 July 2020 from 3-4pm:** 'Ofsted readiness' and the role of Governors in this process.

4.2. **Strategic Planning:** Two annual events planned to enable governors to have the opportunity to review and discuss the key strategic issues facing the College, including, as required, the opportunity to review and discuss the College's strategy. Each meeting normally takes place away from the Vantage Point building and lasts for approximately three hours. The dates of the events planned for 2019/20 are as follows:

- a) **17 October 2019:** Topics to include: Quality and Finance/Growth Performance Year End followed by focus for 2019/2020 re: draft SAR/revised Measures Matrix and new staffing structure. Government Policy Updates/Horizon scanning.
- b) **07 May 2020:** Topics to include: Review Strategic Planning/Vision Visuals, including HE Strategy; 'Ofsted readiness'; Curriculum Developments 2020/21, Government Policy Updates and Funding Environment/Horizon scanning.

4.3. Induction and mentoring support for new Governors:

- a) All newly appointed Governors receive an induction. The induction includes the opportunity for new governors to receive a detailed briefing about the College and its work from the Principal and the senior team, to receive an induction pack/Governor Handbook (providing copies of the College's key constitutional instruments) and the opportunity for the governor to undertake personalised training and development.
- b) Mentors are available to support new Governors, upon request.
- c) Governors are invited to have a 1:1 development discussion with the Chair annually.

4.4. Meet the Students:

This is a twice-a-year event during which Governors are able to meet a cross-section of the College's students and enter into dialogue on a number of previously chosen topics. Notes of the meeting, together with the responses by the senior leadership team are reviewed by the QTLA Committee. The dates for the 'meet the students' events in 2019/20 are:

- a) 21 November 2019
- b) 12 March 2020

4.5. Meeting the College Staff:

- a) Governors are able to meet staff at College events, including at the FE Day of Celebration (01 November 2019) as well as during Learning Walks (available on request).
- b) Designated and Lead Governors (see below) have contact with College staff for their area of designation.
- c) A 'Meet the Staff' event takes place annually. This has evolved into an informal networking event immediately before the May Strategy Meeting. The date for 2019/20 will be Thursday 07 May 2020.

5. Self-assessment and evaluation

- 5.1. All Governors are encouraged to self-assess annually with the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors. This self-assessment process will be reported to the Governing Body via the Search and Governance Committee minutes.
- 5.2. All Committees undertake a self-assessment at the end of their annual cycle of business to evaluate their effectiveness in fulfilling their responsibilities delegated to them by the Governing Body.
- 5.3. The Governing Body undertakes an annual self-assessment of its effectiveness during the summer term.
- 5.4. The Search & Governance Committee benchmarks the work of the Governing Body against the AoC Code of Good Governance once every three years and is responsible for identifying any potential areas for improvement.
- 5.5. The Governing Body reviews the draft Self-Assessment Report (SAR)/QIP (Quality Improvement Plan) at its Strategy Day in the autumn term. The SAR is the main document that Ofsted would refer to during an inspection, and as such all Governors need to be familiar with its contents.

6. Designated and Lead Governors

Designated Governors are appointed to comply with statutory requirements. Lead Governors are appointed to support strong systems of governance.

6.1. Child Protection, Safeguarding and Prevent (CP)

- a) Mark Waldron, the Designated Governor, will meet with the Assistant Principal for HCL, who is the Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility for Safeguarding, once a term. This Designated Governor also receives a standing invite to termly meetings of the Learner Safeguarding & Welfare Group.
- b) Ongoing training and support will be provided, re: Safeguarding and Prevent.
- c) The Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually and approved by the Governing Body. The Lead Governor will take an active part in this review process.
- d) The Governing Body will also receive an Annual Safeguarding and Positive Intervention Report. The Designated Governor is responsible for flagging anything of significance for the Governing Body to note.
- e) The QTLA Committee will receive a Safeguarding and Positive Intervention Report in the autumn and spring terms which has been 'signed off' by the Designated Governor. The Designated Governor is responsible for flagging anything of significance for the Committee to note.

6.2. Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and SEND (E&D)

- a) Judy Ravenscroft, Designated Governor, is a member of the College's Equality and Diversity Committee, which meets once a term.
- b) The minutes of these meetings are circulated to the QTLA Committee for information. The Designated Governor is responsible for flagging anything of significance for the Committee to note.
- c) The QTLA Committee also receives an annual E & D monitoring report.

6.3. Health and Safety (H&S)

- a) Lee Soden, Designated Governor, is a member of the College's Health and Safety Committee, which meets once a term.
- b) The minutes of this Committee are circulated to the People and Resources Committee for information. The Designated Governor is responsible for flagging anything of significance for the Committee to note.
- c) The Health and Safety Policy is reviewed annually by the People and Resources Committee and is approved by the Governing Body.

6.4. Teaching Learning and Assessment (TLA)

- a) Philip Gibson, the Chair of the Quality, Teaching and Learning and Assessment Committee is the Lead Governor for TLA and reports directly to the Governing Body via the QTLA Committee minutes.
- b) The Lead Governor will be closely acquainted with the College SAR and areas for improvement and development, be familiar with the committee structure in place to ensure high standards (FEAB/HEAB) and will encourage governor participation in Learning Walks.

6.5. Higher Education (HE)

- a) Jon Goldman is the Lead Governor for HE.
- b) The Lead Governor will be closely acquainted with HE Strategy, development plans and KPIs.
- c) The Lead Governor for HE will be a member of the College's HE Academic Board which meets termly and will report directly to the Governing Body via the QTLA Committee minutes.

6.6 Careers

- a) Caroline Lee is the Lead Governor for Careers.
- b) The Lead Governor will be closely acquainted with the College's Careers Strategy.
- c) The Lead Governor for Careers will attend termly College career meetings and forward any reports to the QTLA Committee.

7. External run training and development activities

- 7.1. Training and development activities will include invites to external conferences for governors especially for those with specific duties and roles such as Chairs of Committees and Staff/ Student Governors.
- 7.2. Governor attendance is encouraged at the AoC-SW Governor Seminars, which are held on a regular basis. These cover a variety of topics, and often include the presence of external speakers from, for example, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Ofsted, OfS or other key agencies.
- 7.3. Newly-appointed Governors have the opportunity to attend an AoC-SW New Governor Induction Seminar, which is held in the region.
- 7.4. The Chair or Vice Chair normally attend the Annual AoC Conference (November 2019), and/or the AoC/ETF Governance Summit (March 2020).

8. The Ambassadorial Role of Governors

- 8.1. Governors play an important ambassadorial role for the College in the wider community.
- 8.2. Governors are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the College website, especially the news section. College life can also be followed on social media: <https://www.southdevon.ac.uk/about-us>
- 8.3. Governors will also be kept abreast of College developments and achievements via the termly Principal's Report. This will include 'key messages' for governors to promote.